William Morris
E. Belfort Bax

Socialism: Its Growth and Outcome

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Socialism: Its Growth and Outcome

William Morris and E. Belfort Bax

EDITION BASIS

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PREFACE

In offering this book to the public, we have to say that we thought it useless to go over the ground covered by so many treatises on Socialism, large and small, hostile and friendly, that have appeared of late years. We have dealt with our subject from the historical point of view; this, we are aware, is a less exciting method than the building up of “practical” Utopias, or than attempting the solution of political problems within the immediate purview of the Socialist struggle of to-day. On the other hand, a treatise on abstract economics, furnished with a complete apparatus of statistics, would have been more congenial to another class of mind.

Nevertheless, a continuous sketch of the development of history in relation to Socialism, even as slight as it is here, should have its value if efficiently done. Our plan also necessarily deals with the aspirations of Socialists now living, toward the society of the future.

We have only further to add that the work has been in the true sense of the word a *collaboration,* each sentence having been carefully considered by both the authors in common, although now one, now the other, has had more to do with initial suggestions in different portions of the work.

W. M.
E. B. B.

INTRODUCTION

IN one of Edgar Allen Poe's tales he recounts how a little group of wrecked seafarers on a water-logged vessel, at the last extremity of starvation, are suddenly made delirious with joy at seeing a sail approaching them. As she came near them she seemed to be managed strangely and unseamanly as though she were scarcely steered at all, but come near she did, and their joy was too great for them to think much of this anomaly. At last they saw the seamen on board of her, and noted one in the bows especially who seemed to be looking at them with great curiosity, nodding also as though encouraging them to have patience, and smiling at them constantly, showing while he did so a set of very white teeth, and apparently so anxious for their safety that he did not notice that the red cap that he had on his head was falling into the water.

All of a sudden, as the vessel neared them, and while their hearts were leaping with joy at their now certain deliverance, an inconceivable and horrible stench was wafted to them across the waters, and presently to their horror and misery they saw that this was a ship of the dead, the bowing man was a tottering corpse, his red cap a piece of his flesh torn from him by a sea-fowl; his amicable smile was caused by his jaws, denuded of the flesh, showing his white teeth set in a perpetual grin. So passed the ship of the dead into the landless ocean, leaving the poor wretches to their despair.

To us Socialists this Ship of the Dead is an image of the civilisation of our epoch, as the cast-away mariners are of the hopes of the humanity entangled in it. The cheerfully bowing man, whose signs of encouragement and good-feeling turn out to be the results of death and corruption, well betokens to us the much be-praised philanthropy of the rich and refined classes of our Society, which is born of the misery necessary to their very existence. How do people note eagerly, like Arthur Gordon Pym and his luckless fellows, the beautiful hope of the softening of life by the cultivation of good feeling, kindness, and gratitude between rich and poor, with its external manifestations; its missionary enterprises at home and abroad—hospitals, churches, refuges, and the like; its hard-working clergy dwelling amidst the wretched homes of those whose souls they are saving; its elegant and enthusiastic ladies sometimes visiting them; its dignified, cultivated gentlemen from the universities spreading the influences of a refined home in every dull half-starved parish in England; the thoughtful series of lectures on that virtue of thrift which the poor can scarcely fail to practise even unpreached to; its increasing sense of the value of moral purity among those whose surroundings

forbid them to understand even the meaning of physical purity; its scent of indecency in Literature and Art, which would prevent the publication of any book written out of England or before the middle of the 19th century, and would reduce painting and sculpture to the production of petticoated dolls without bodies. All this, which seems so refined and humane, is but the effect of the distant view of the fleshless grinning skull of civilisation seeming to offer an escape to the helpless castaways, but destined on its nearer approach to suffocate them with the stench of its corruption, and then to vanish aimlessly into the void, leaving them weltering on the ocean of life which its false hope has rendered more dreadful than before.

Let us then go through some of the forms through which this universal hypocrisy of modern society, which 1s its special characteristic, manifests itself. Our present family of blood relationship, based on assumed absolute monogamy, recognises feeble responsibility outside itself, and professes to regulate the degrees of affection to be felt between different persons according to the amount of kinship between them, so that, for instance, the brotherhood of blood would almost extinguish the sense of duty in that other brotherhood of inclination or of mutual tastes and pursuits, and in fact scarce admit that such ties could be real. Or again, in cases when, as sometimes happens, the sham blood family is broken into by the adoption of a strange child, the proceeding is cloaked by change of name, assumption of mystery, and abundance of unconscious ceremonial; and all this time, though doubtless there are plenty of examples of disinterested affection between the members of a family, as between those outside of it, yet the rule is, and our satirists are never tired of playing on this string, that though to a certain extent the bond of obligation is felt, it is burdensome none the less, and is utterly powerless to prevent the wrangling and hatred caused by the clashing of the discordant dispositions of persons doomed always to pose before the world as special friends. Another point to be noticed is the different way in which family bonds are looked upon amidst different nations even in the circle of modern Europe. In England it is true, as we have said, that all virtue, honour, and affection are supposed to be embraced within the pale of the family; this superstition is by no means so strong in France: nevertheless there is a conventional bond, there, apparently a survival of the tyranny of the civil law of the Roman Empire, that is much stronger than any family tie in England. The family council is submitted to by all Frenchmen and Frenchwomen as a piece of unwritten law which is inexpugnable: a Frenchman cannot marry without leave of his parents before the age of twenty-five; the relationship of mother and child, which with all exaggerations is more or less natural in England, is almost sacerdotal in France, and is illuminated by a curious kind of conventional sentiment in literature, which

sometimes fairly degrades for the time even the greatest authors into the rank of twaddlers. We do not say that a certain amount of sentiment bred by the family system is not genuine: it is reasonable to feel tenderness for the persons who have taken the pains and trouble of cherishing us in our helplessness, and to wish to pay them back with some little kindness when we no longer need that care, even when time has shown us to have no special sympathy for them: not unreasonable too to look with some special sentiment on brothers and sisters, even when manhood has drifted them away from our lives and their aspirations, since in years past we were living with them in such familiarity when they and we were innocent and undeveloped. But what relation does this light and easy yoke of sentiment bear to the iron chain of conventional sham duty which all of us, even the boldest, are oppressed by so sorely: a chain too that is broken amidst various circumstances of real and conventional disgrace whenever necessity, as to-day understood, that is, commercial necessity, compels it? In short, the family professes to exist as affording us a haven of calm and restful affection and the humanising influences of mutual help and consideration, but it ignores quietly its real reason for existence, its real aim, namely, protection for individualist property by means of inheritance, and a nucleus for resistance to the outside world, whether that take the form of other families or the public weal, such as it may be.

But this shows after all but the best side of the modern conventional family, as it works in the middle classes. In the lower classes, where the family of blood-relationship might afford some real protection and help to its members, it is completely broken up by the action of the factory system, under which father, mother, - brothers, sisters, husband, and wife, compete against each other in the labour market, the end of which is to provide a profit for the capitalist employer ; and this “family,” which as now constituted exists for middle-class needs, being useless to the working-classes, they have nothing to turn to to supply the lack of a true social unit.

To most men it will be more obvious that similar charges may be brought against the religion of modern society: most intelligent persons will allow that it means nothing more than mere sets of names and formulas, to one or other of . which every reputable man is supposed to be attached; in one or other of which he will be sure to find a conventional solution of the great problem of the universe, including our life and its aspirations. If he fails in his duty to society in this respect he suffers accordingly; and indeed few men of any position are bold enough to avow that they are outside all such systems of ecclesiasticism; the very unorthodox must belong to some acknowledged party—they must be orthodox in their unorthodoxy. But as a fact the greater part of cultivated men dare not go so far as that, and are contented

with letting society in general feel happy in believing that they subscribe to the general grimace of religion that has taken the place of the real belief, not as yet become a superstition, which allowed practice to be deduced from its solid dream.

Meanwhile it is common, and especially in the more reactionary circles, to find men who privately admit a cynicism that to their minds relieves them from any ethical responsibility, while in public they keep up the farce of supporting a religion that at least professes to have an ethic of its own.

Yet even now it is necessary that a certain code of morality should be supposed to exist and to have some relation to the religion which, being the creation of another age, has now become a sham. With this sham moreover its accompanying morality is also steeped, although it has a use as serving for a cover of a morality really the birth of the present condition of things, and this is clung to with a determination or even ferocity natural enough, since its aim is the perpetuation of individual property in wealth, in workman, in wife, in child.

The so-called morality of the present age is simply commercial necessity, masquerading in the forms of the Christian ethics: for instance, commercial honour is merely the code necessitated by the needs of men in commercial relations which without it could not subsist, and which has *au fond* nothing in common with the Christian "do unto others as thou wouldst," *etc.*, maxim, in the name of which it is on occasion invoked. The only connection that current commercial ethics has with the Christian is, as we said above, a purely formal one. The mystical individualist ethics of Christianity, which had for its supreme end another world and spiritual salvation therein, has been transformed into an individualist ethic having for its supreme end (tacitly, if not avowedly), the material salvation of the individual in the commercial battle of this world. This is illustrated by a predominance amongst the commercial classes of a debased Calvinistic theology, termed Evangelicalism[1], which is the only form of religion these classes can understand—the poetico-mystical element in the earlier Christianity being eliminated therefrom, and the "natural laws" of profit and loss, and the devil take the hindmost, which dominate this carnal world, being as nearly as possible reproduced into the spiritual world of its conception.

It may surprise some to be told that politics share this unreality to the full, since it is generally supposed that democracy has at last really triumphed and is now entering into its kingdom. Doubtless the political events of this century have convinced every one that change in the relations of men to each other is at hand; but before that change can come, it must be understood that the development of the people must be on other lines than politicians now dream of. It is true that political

freedom is thought to have been gained, but what is the nature of the gain? What is the end and aim of that political freedom which all parties in the State profess to be striving to accomplish? Once more it is a sham, designed really to keep the mass of men helpless and divided, so that they may still be the instruments of the strong and successful. It takes various forms: for example, the land is to be freed from the last remains of feudality and so become more completely a mere portion of profit-breeding capital, thus helping the monstrous aggregation of riches that is reducing all life to a misery. Parents and parsons are to be free to teach children what they will, thus depriving the unfortunate creatures of the most necessary aids to human development. Trade and manufacture are to be freed from all trammels, so that the mass of the people may be compelled to serve the needs, both as producers and as buyers, of those who have but one object, to sell at a profit.

For the sustaining of this glorious "freedom," otherwise spoken of as the "sanctity of contract," government by party is a recognised and effective instrument. In this arrangement the members of Parliament are divided into two sides, much as lads about to play a game at football; the two sides do not differ much in their principles, though there is sometimes a violent faction squabble as to the amount of concession that it is safe to give to or withhold from the demands of the people: not seldom even this difference does not exist—the legislation proposed by both parties is almost identical, and some safe excuse for quarrel has to be sought for before the game can be played. Thus is carried out the crowning sham of modern politics under the absurd title of Representative Government, and the name of democracy is used to cloak an oligarchy more or less extended, while once more all decent people who may profess an interest in politics are expected to range themselves under one or other of the great political parties, now become almost less than mere names, the very shadows of shadows.

When all life, domestic, religious, moral and political, is thus fallen into mere pretence, when all these branches of men's energy have come to professing aims which, when they have any, are not their real aims, and on which they will not and cannot act, when they do not know what they really are and are blind to their real destiny, how can it be possible that Art, the expression of the life of society, can be otherwise than a sham also? Here and there indeed the irrepressible genius of an individual expresses itself by dint of toil and anxiety undreamed of in better days, and produces works of art that are beautiful and powerful, however damaged by the souring effects of a desperate struggle against monstrous surroundings, and by the restlessness that comes of the overexertion even of great powers. But otherwise the fine arts no longer exist *for the people at large.* How could they? The one reality of modern society is industrial slavery, far-reaching and intimate, supreme over every

man's life, dominating every action of it from the greatest to the least: no man and no set of men can do anything that does not tend towards the support of this slavery unless they act as conscious rebels against it. Men living under such conditions cannot produce social art or architecture (with all that grasp of the decorative cycle of the arts which that word means), or even desire to do so; they have lost all understanding of what it is; the mass of the people have nothing to do with Art architectural except so far as they are compelled to produce the sham of it mechanically as a trade finish to wares, so as to give them a higher marketable value. Space fails us here to contrast this condition of things with that of the epochs that produced Art, or to show the consequences of the difference. Suffice it to say once more that, except for the very few works produced by men of exceptional genius, which works the general public does not relish or understand in the least, Art is for the most part dormant.

In this brief review of the various phases of modern life,—its family relations, morality, religion, politics, and art,—the reader who has not yet studied socialism may see nothing but pessimism.

For until recently amongst cultivated people, enjoying whatever advantages may be derived from civilisation, there has been an almost universal belief, not yet much broken into, that modern or bourgeois' civilisation is the final form of human society. Were this the case we should be pessimists indeed, but happily we know that civilisation is only a stage in the development of the human race, just as barbarism was, or the savagery of the progressive nations. Civilisation must of necessity develop into some other form of society, the *tendencies* of which we can see, but not the *details*; for it is now becoming clear that this new state of society can only be reached through the great economic, moral, and political change which we call Socialism; and the essential foundation of this is the raising of the working classes to a point that gives them a control over their own labour and its product.

In order that our readers may get a correct view of this, it is necessary to use the historic method—that is to say, to trace the development of society from its early times up to the full expression of the commercial period, which has created and is now creating such a vast mass of discontent, not only amongst the working classes who suffer directly from the oppression that is a necessary part of it, but also in various and sometimes discordant forms amongst the well-to-do, who on the face of things are benefited by its working. We propose to finish the book by giving our own impressions both of the immediate issue of the present stir and commotion in socio-political life, and also of what may be reasonably expected from the new society when it has at last supplanted the ever-increasing confusion of the present

day. Only it must be premised that this last part can be nothing more than the expression of our own individual views, and that we do not claim any further weight for it. Although it has been often attempted, it is impossible to build up a scheme for the society of the future, for no man can really think himself out of his own days; his palace of days to come can only be constructed from the aspirations forced on him by his present surroundings, and from his dreams of the life of the past, which themselves cannot fail to be more or less unsubstantial imaginings.

At least we can boldly assert that those who think that the civilisation of our own time will not be transformed both in shape and in essence, hold their opinion in the teeth of the witness of all history. This cannot be set aside by taking refuge in platitudes about “human nature,” which are really deduced from orthodox theology and an obsolete view of history. Human nature is itself a growth of the ages, and is ever and indefinitely moulded by the conditions under which it finds itself.

Footnotes

1. If it be said that Evangelicalism is no longer flourishing, that is true in the Church of England; but the large and exceedingly influential body of dissenters still remains intact.

CHAPTER I
ANCIENT SOCIETY

IT is, or has been, a commonplace with many that the system of to-day has been made by the growth of ages, and that our wills in the present are impotent to change it: but those who put this forward from their position of “standing on the ancient ways,” fail to see that this very fact condemns that position. The business of progressive minds is to recognise the coming change, to clear away obstacles to it, to accept it, and organise it in detail. Reactionists, however, although they deny it and profess to accept moderate, *i.e.* non-essential change, are trying consciously to stay that very evolution at the point which it has reached to-day: they are attempting to turn the transient into the eternal: therefore by persistently reading the spirit of the present into the records of the past, they really annihilate history, which is not a mere series of actual events through which society, crystallised at once and for ever as to its essentials in the form that it assumes now, has cut its way, but is really one with the present society of which we are ourselves a part; is in fact society as regarded from its dynamic aspect, as the agent and patient of change. The 18th century view of history was entirely based on the abovementioned narrowness of conception,[2] which forced men to look on "Homer" as a literary man, like, say Dryden and Pope, and on Lycurgus as an early Dr. Johnson.

The hopes for the social life of the future are involved in its struggles in the past; which indeed, since they have built up the present system, and created us out of its conflict towards fresh change, have really forced us, whether we will it or not, into our present position of seeking still further change.

Modern civilised society has been developed by the antagonism between individual and social interests, between the holding of property in severalty and in common; and between the simple and limited kinship group, and the complex and extended political whole, or impersonal state, which has transformed primitive society into civilisation.

The difference between these opposing circumstances of society is, in fact, that between an organism and a mechanism. The earlier condition in which everything, art, science (so far as it went), law, industry, were personal, and aspects of a living body, is opposed to the civilised condition in which all these elements have become mechanical, uniting to build up mechanical life, and themselves the product of machines material and moral.

That all our industry and art is produced by a system of machinery is a fact too obvious to need enlarging on in this place.[3] But it may not be so clear to many that the system is dominant over other departments of human life; for instance, the blood-feud and the weregild were the foundation of early or "customary" *criminal law:* the penalty of the offender being rather negative than positive. In customary law the protection of society was withdrawn from the offender: in political law, society itself delegates certain men, who, without having any personal or social relations to the criminal or his victim, have to undertake his *punishment,* that is, to injure him by a mechanical procedure, so that the offender, instead of being a person excluded from the benefits of society, and merely ignored by it, has become an enemy with whose destruction, or existence in a mutilated condition society must charge itself.

The machine of criminal law is first set in motion by the police: the judge gives the law to the jury as a hard and fast mechanical rule, on that rule the verdict is given by the jury, the prisoner is sentenced by the judge by the same method, and is handed over after sentence to the jailor, who in his turn has to torture him by prescribed mechanical process, knowing maybe nothing of his crime or his history, distinguishing him from his fellow-prisoners not by a name but by a number.

The same thing clearly applies to civil procedure, which is, if anything, of a still more routine character. It guards wealth, not as wealth, but as *property* only. Thus when it has to deal with the case of a lunatic, its interest lies in preserving his estate while the dealings with his person are put in another and subsidiary category. The difference between this machine law, and the arbitration, according to customary usage, of the chief, or *primus inter pares,* is sufficiently obvious.

It must now be admitted that no traces exist of any race of mankind living otherwise than in a society of some kind or other; the few examples, in which this was supposed to be the case, proving to be instances not of survival but of degradation. This primitive society at the lowest stage discoverable had little knowledge of tools even when co-operation in matters of detail was considerably advanced. An instance may be given in the act of cultivation before the invention of the spade, where a gang of tillers thrust mere stout sticks into a ridge of earth, and by means of a combined heave turned the soil over. Indeed labour, as far as it went, was, under the conditions of the mere nomadic horde, co-operative. But the beginnings of a greater power over nature, mainly brought about by an advance in the co-operation of labour, produced a more complex form of society, which is the first society of which we have any definite knowledge. The land began to be accepted as the source of the wealth of the community, and as such, whether for

pasture or tillage, was recognised as the definite property of the community as against other communities. The right of the individual holding (as opposed to ownership) of Property was based entirely on use, so that there was none that was not common, except the man's personal gear, such as clothes, arms, and the like; this is illustrated by the primitive customs which at first sight seems to contradict it, of the interment of the warrior's arms, *etc.*, with him, for these were so buried because they were supposed to be necessary for his use in the continuous life which he was to lead in the land of shadows.

This primitive community took the form of a narrow and exclusive group based on the kinship, real or supposed, of its members. The three integral bodies in this society are the Gens, the Tribe, and the þeoð or People. The Gens is a group founded on actual blood relationship, in which intermarriage is forbidden; it cannot exist separately therefore, but must have another Gens for its complement: thus, since no "Eagle" man can have sexual intercourse with an "Eagle" woman, there is at hand a "Wolf"-gens for intermarriage.

These Gentes have a tendency to coalesce and form the Tribe, in which kinship is still supposed, but is not necessarily actual; as time goes on, the Gentes tend to lose their autonomous existence in the Tribe; but the Tribe in its turn tends to merge itself into a higher unity, the þeoð or People, which is a federation of tribes, and in which the formal traditional kinship is in general merely mythical.

The opinion first put forward by Bachofen is now commonly held, that, at first, descent in the Gens was traced wholly through the mother, and that consequently the women were the recognised predominant element therein, the stock historical instance being that of the Lycians, as mentioned by Herodotus.

Among the Oriental Races at this period the patriarchal family had tended to supersede the Gens as the unit of social life. In Europe something the same in essence, but modified in form, grew up as the Roman Familia, of which we shall treat later on. It may be added that the existing conditions of life among the Bedouins in Arabia seem to show a curious blending of patriarchal society with that of the Gens and the Tribe. For the rest the primitive Patriarchal family, generally speaking, arose from the privilege of primacy of sexual intercourse held by the elder brother of the Gens. This 1s indicated, amongst other things, by the custom known as the Levirate, "the raising up seed to the brother," mentioned in Genesis and in the Gospels. The last survival of it was the *jus primae noctis* of medieval customary law, and its accompanying tenure of Borough English. It was along this line that patriarchal property-polygamy developed, and at last the modern monogamous family.

These groups above mentioned, whether People, Tribe, or Gens, were essentially exclusive; within their limits peace and community of property was the rule—without, a state of war was assumed; it was not war that had to be declared, but peace; the market, for instance, was originally held on the neutral zone between two social groups, where they could meet, to exchange commodities.[4]

The continuous wars which resulted from this condition of things necessarily produced slavery. This slavery was of two kinds more or less distinct from one another. A migratory tribe or people, In conquering a settled population, after the fighting was over, allowed the vanquished to live on a portion of the conquered lands, on the conditions of rendering service to their lords; they were the serfs of their conquerors.

Frequent raids by the gentes or clans on each other produced another kind of slaves: the captives taken in battle ceased to be slain on the field, as soon as the captors found out that they could be used for labour which produced more than their bare subsistence: this was the origin of the Chattel Slave, who was the actual property of the conquering group, as the horses or oxen were.

The head of the kinship society, by virtue of his position as representative of the original ancestor, was the custodian of its wealth, and its leader in battle. But the frequency of wars often made other leaders necessary besides this hereditary chief, and these naturally began to have predominance over the undistinguished kinsmen. Meantime the power of production was ever on the increase: stone tools gave place first to bronze, and then to iron. The nomad tribes began to settle when they discovered the art of producing grain from the original wild grasses, and supplemented their milk and flesh diet with meal and bread; wealth began to increase beyond the immediate needs of a limited population amidst limitless natural resources.

Since therefore there was an excess of wealth over bare necessity, its distribution began to be unequal, and the hereditary and elected leaders were allowed to consume more than the general average of that wealth, and class society began to appear, its first representatives being the chief and his immediate household.

By this time the older nomadic tribes had turned into settled communities living in villages, and surrounded by tillage, the whole enclosed by a stockade. In mountainous or hilly countries this was dominated by a fortress on an elevation, called the Bury or Burg. And in this burg and stockaded village we have the first element of the City.

The religion of Barbarism was ancestor-worship coupled with universal animism, —that is to say, the conception of every thing in the world, animate and inanimate, as a being endowed with human will and consciousness. The meeting point of these two elements of barbaric religion was the totem of the group, which was usually an animal or plant to which special religious honours were paid, and which was something more than a mere symbol of the ancestor, and was in fact looked upon almost as being the ancestor himself. It is the more difficult for us moderns to conceive of the state of mind that produced this notion, because we are so much further removed from nature than was primitive man; the development of the faculty of reflection has blunted the intuition of the senses, so that much that was assumed as real by early man has become preposterously inconceivable to us, though it seems as if there were examples of the survival in children of their near relation to nature, for some of them certainly accept their pets, toys, *etc.*, as companions of a similar living race to themselves.

We would say here that some anthropologists, in drawing analogies between the condition of the present savage races and that of the ancestors of the progressive races, seem to us to be too confident in accepting those conditions as being identical. May it not be possible that there is an essential difference between the savage peoples of to-day and the early historical races; a difference which forbids the former to develop beyond a condition of savagery, and that therefore these historical races have never passed through a state of society precisely identical with those of the modern savage?

Footnotes

2. It is curious to note how this view has acted on a man of such insight and such capacity for research as the late Lewis H. Morgan, who seeks the American democratic constitution in the beginnings of social evolution, alike in the Iroquois tribe, in the Greek πολις, and in the Roman city of the regal period.

3. It has, moreover, often been dwelt upon by the present writers.

4. *Cf.* Sir Henry Maine, *Village Communities.*

CHAPTER II
THE FIRST HISTORICAL OR ANCIENT SOCIETY

ANCIENT barbarism developed naturally into Ancient Civilisation, which, as the name implies, took the form of city life. This development was furthered by the fact that, when the tribes began to settle, those dwellings throve most which were naturally protected by the lie of the land, so that the anxiety for the safeguarding of the wealth of the community was not constantly pressing. And these best protected and consequently most thriving places became the nuclei of the great cities of antiquity, such as Memphis, Thebes, Babylon, Jerusalem, Corinth, Athens, Rome, *etc.* Babylon, by the way, if the accepted measurements of its walls are anywhere near correctness, seems to have been rather a walled-round district than what we should now call a city, and may therefore be considered a very direct development from the stockaded home-field of the tribal group.

As the tribe or people settled, there as a tendency towards a further development of the cultus of the ancestor, which gradually fixed his imagined deeds and tomb in a certain locality. The sanctity of this place made it the centre of the life of the community, and the members of the groups, which were now increasing in numbers, flocked to it for common worship and intercourse, as well as for protection. This greater centralisation tended to obscure the lesser centres (the clan, tribe, *etc.*), and at last left them rudimentary, mere local names, sometimes with religious rites attached to them[5]

The arts of building which began with the settlement of the tribe, and which were used in completing the raising of the burg and the walling of the common homestead, now received further impetus from being used for the great temple of the *eponomous* ancestor (that is, the original father of the tribe, real or supposed) of the whole community, in which each clan (of the þeoð) had its own shrine or chapel dedicated to its own special ancestor.

By the time this was accomplished the city was the one unit of life and centre of worship, and of the group-organisations, the lands of the community surrounding it being the property of those clans, and exploited by them for their livelihood, while their social and religious home was in the city itself.

But in the city social was being fast transformed into political life by the destruction of the independence of the ancient groups, and the dying out of real

personal relations between their members; for this was accompanied by the change in the ownership of land which now made the citizen a representative and possessor of a portion of the city territory; whereas heretofore the land was an affix to the social group, the individual member of which enjoyed its advantages simply as a member of that corporation.[6] In short, in the earlier times the land belonged to the group; now the individual belonged to the land.

Accompanying this change there took place a development of the market, which before this centralisation was infrequent and spasmodic, depending on periods of truce between warring tribes, but which now became a regular and settled institution under the protection of the burg and its citizens, and was thus one of the chief elements in the growth of the importance and power of the cities. And the communication between different districts and countries which this settled and protected market set on foot, also tended to the federation of the cities, which was one of the leading ideas of the ancient historical period.

Slavery of the chattel kind now grew rapidly, with the result that the usufruct of the land became much more valuable, as raw material was worked up by the constant labour of slaves into marketable wares. This growing wealth created a narrow aristocracy, the members of which were the freemen of the old clans. These were imbedded in a population composed to a great degree of slaves as aforesaid, but also of men who, though not in a servile condition, did not share in the privileges of the original kinship and founders of the city. These were the fragments of broken-up clans of the neighbouring country, or emancipated slaves who had drifted towards the paramount city. The great historical instance of this is the story of the Roman plebs, which, it must be remembered, is not an accident peculiar to Roman society, but was going on at various periods throughout the whole of inchoate ancient civilisation, and also in the Teutonic countries of Early Medieval Europe.

We believe that this, or something like it, was the origin and condition of all the great cities of antiquity, alike of the great oriental empires, Egypt included, and of the Greek and Italian communities. As for the empires of the East they were originally only federations of great cities, just as the cities themselves originated in federations of clans and tribes. The semi-godlike position of the king in these empires was doubtless a recurrence of the worship of the tribal ancestor, now transferred to the embodied symbol of the collective ancestor-worship of the federation. As the progressive races issue from the prehistoric times, we find them segregated into four great sections, or civilisations, the first and most important

dwelling in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates; the next in importance in the valley of the Nile; the third on the Yang-tsze-kiang; and the fourth on the Ganges.

At a later period, when the energies of the progressive races required fresh developments, the shores of the eastern portion of the Mediterranean were peopled by the most adventurous and most progressive of those races, to whom we will now turn as affording the most typical instances of the development of city life, and as those of whom we have the most definite information.

With the period of the Homeric poems this civilisation of the classical peoples emerges from its prehistoric beginnings. In the literature of this period there are few indications on the surface of the barbaric group-society, although search reveals at least some of these, amongst which may be mentioned the account in the *Iliad* of the household of Priam, which seems to have been a complete and recognised Gens. Again, the end of the *Odyssey*, which appears from the modern literary point of view such a purposeless anti-climax, was once a history that the rhapsodist could not possibly evade, of the bloodfeud after the suitors, the slaying of whom, according to modern ideas of ancient manners, was a perfectly justifiable homicide. But in an earlier society it was not *crime* that had to be *punished*, but a tribal injury, which had to be atoned for either by blood or the price of blood. Whatever the merits of the quarrel might have been, the ethics of kinship would compel the Gentes, to whom the slain men belonged, to follow up the feud to appeasement, which even in the present state of the text takes place in the *Odyssey*.

The remains of so-called cities, as at Mycenæ and Tyryns, turn out on investigation to have been the dwelling of the chieftain of the clan, or the burg, that is to say, the germ of the city of civilisation. The two typical forms of this city which went through a long development, very obscure at certain stages, are Lacedæmon and Athens. The former retained in its constitution a great part of the communal organisation, and even habits of the group-society, out of which it had grown. This is shown on one hand by the common dinner of the freemen, and the general tendency of the Lycurgan legislation, some of the instances of which have been so curiously misunderstood by later exponents, who saw in them mere artificial and arbitrary regulations having the conscious end of sustaining the warlike spirit of the citizens, instead of being, as they were, survivals crystallised from the early stage of development. An obvious example is the well-known story of the boy who had stolen the fox, which is given as an illustration of the Lycurgan law which legalised theft if done with formal secrecy, a law which was felt as so directly opposed to the more modern institution of private property that it needed a euhemeristic explanation, which of course has no foundation in fact.

In Athens the change was much more radical, the idea which wielded it much more thoroughly new: it involved the complete transformation of the personal relationship of the free men into a political society.

But in the revolution which bears the names of Solon and Kleisthenes, the group-society had, first of all, become thoroughly corrupted; since the old Gentes had grown to be close corporations amidst a disorganised society of free men who did not share in their privileges, and who were economically oppressed by the outrageous and bald system of usury practised by the privileged. In Sparta, as above said, the old gentile Community retained a great amount of vitality, even amidst the new political order.

It may be remembered, by the way, that the earlier stages of a new social development always show the characteristic evils of the incoming system, not perhaps in their really worst, but, at least, in their most direct and obvious form. For instance, in all early civilised Communities (recently emerged from group-organisations) usury and litigation are rampant, as, amongst other instances, the elaborate account of the life of the time given in the Icelandic sagas shows us. Again, the earlier days of the great capitalistic industries give us examples, worse on the surface, of the cynical brutality which is an essential of Capitalism, than any that are current to-day, although the present evils reach both deeper and wider than they did in its beginnings, and for that very reason are more irremediable under the system.[7]

As the change took place at Athens, then, the old Gentes were entirely broken up, except for certain ceremonial and religious purposes, and the free citizens were placed on the lands on certain localities of the territory without any topographical relation to their former position in the kinship clans. Except for the purposes of a few ritual usages, property in severalty took the place of corporate ownership, and the society of the ancient historical city was thus rendered complete as to its essentials: the federations of the cities so formed, such as the Doric and Ionian confederacies, had no tendency to consolidate into empires as in the East, but remained true federations, the units of which were still sovereign cities, and which developed no overlord destined to grow gradually into the despotic head of a quasi-bureaucratic system.[8]

The development of the native Italian cities, as distinguished from Greek colonies in Italy, was not in any essential respect different from that of Athens, which may be regarded as the general type of the ancient classical city apart from the Dorian developments, which always retained some show of the ancient survivals.

In Rome, the most historically important of the native Italian cities, the very same resolution took place that we have described as to Athens. The first instalment of it was embodied in the legislation ascribed to "Servius Tullius," which created the Centuries, political bodies based on the possession of property. These were thrust into the kinship groups, the Curiæ and tribes, and gradually assimilated the latter to their conditions. The bodies so formed became the free men or burgesses of early historical Rome. The plebs, which originally constituted the unprivileged free men, was, thus taken into the political system and attained a measure of privilege, the struggle for the increase of which forms the staple of Roman history for the next three centuries; these plebeian citizens at first were in the main the craftsmen of the city; slave-labour at that period apparently not touching that side of production much. But from the first the idea of conquest was always dominant in the Roman community, so that this organisation of free men was the political side of a system mainly directed towards the upholding of an effective army. This was, of course, conspicuous in early days owing to the necessities of the case; but in later times the army organisation was the engine by which the plutocratic classes impressed their power on the State. The Equestrian order, as the name implies, was originally the cavalry of the Roman army, composed of the richer citizens, since their equipment was more expensive; but in later times, when the bureaucracy was being formed, it became little more than a formal title of honour, indicating the possession of riches.

The Gracchan legislation points to the rise of this plutocracy, and its struggles with the older nobility, the patrician order, which by this time had diminished to a very small part of the population. It became finally dominant in the last days of the republic, and after having produced the chaotic period, during which Roman history is a record of the struggles of great individualities amongst the rich, was reduced to order by the early empire. The latter was a definite and stable bureaucratic system, which was at least so much of an improvement as to make life tolerable for most people. All rights indeed, both political and social, had disappeared, except the rights of property as interpreted by the law courts; but the lower ranks of society, including the slaves, were decidedly bettered by the change; while the well-to-do were 1n a state of material ease unrivalled in the world's history.

The institutions of marriage and slavery played a great part in the above-mentioned development of society. The group-marriage of the early kinship Communities, on the change in the holding of property becoming marked, grew to be superseded by a quasi-monogamy, which was in force at least as early as the Homeric period, though it is clear from that literature that it was *personally,* apart from the rights of property and succession, a very loose tie, and was supplemented. by widespread

recognised concubinage. Throughout the whole of the classical period practically the same state of things obtained. But as the republic of Rome drew near to its fall, the monogamic institution was still further weakened, and became little more than a contract dissoluble by will; and advantage of this fact was commonly taken. In the end, in the later days of the Empire, marriage was looked upon as so irksome that it was little resorted to, its place being supplied by intercourse with the female slaves, with the result that the population began obviously to decrease owing to the nonrearing of children.

This subject leads naturally to the consideration of the Roman familia, which consisted of wife, children, and slaves, all under the absolute power of the head of the household, or paterfamilias ; attached to this family through their relations to the paterfamilias were the clients, who, though not directly under his absolute power, were practically bound to him by economic and social ties, since he was their guardian and their protector generally. The relation of this, amidst all differences, to the kinship group is clear, as well as its demarcation from the polygamic patriarchal family of the East. It must be remembered that the power of life and death, in short of jurisdiction, of the paterfamilias over all the members of the family was real and not merely formal. It will be seen therefore that the monogamic family was the lowest unit in classical society, as the Gens was in the early group-society; and also 1t must be said that the working of the transformation of personal into political society is very clearly marked by the differences between the classical family and the barbaric Gens, Curia, or Clan.

The oligarchies which became the masters of this social state, owing to the ambition of their more able members, who found their support in the democracies, were self-destructive, and before long gave way to the absolutist power which was the core of them, and their place was taken in the Greek world by the so-called Tyrannies, and in the Roman world by the Empire.

Footnotes

5. The great Epos of Troy, in which the Holy City plays a central and predominating part, is a good illustration of the growth of the burg into the city, and it may be noted that the Holy City was the centre of the Hellenes of Asia, where civilisation was more advanced, whereas their ruder European brethren felt themselves the enemy of the new development, just as in England the incoming Teutonic þeoð fell on the Roman cities then existing, which, when conquered, they could make no use of, but merely destroyed.

6. It is worth while noting, as showing that there are yet left definite survivals of tribal life, that one of the incidents in the recent anti-Christian movement in China was a solemn

proclamation from certain of the tribes calling on another tribe much infected by Christianity to purge itself of the offence by expelling the offending members if they proved to be obstinate.

7. As for instance the actual chattel-slavery of the workhouse children consigned to the manufacturers of the northern towns, and their torture to keep them awake during the monstrous duration of the hours of labour, that obtained before the passing of the Factory Act.

8. The Tyrannies cannot be considered as a development of city life but rather as sporadic disease of its corruption; and seldom covered more than a single city.

CHAPTER III
THE TRANSITION FROM THE CLASSICAL TO THE MEDIÆVAL PERIOD

ANCIENT civilisation used to be considered as the direct parent of modern society, with nothing between them but a chaos of merely negative lapse of time, as is sufficiently indicated by the name given to the latter period—the *Middle* Ages.

But it is now recognised that this supposed chaos had an order of its own, and was an integral and necessary part of the evolution of primitive into modern life. And it may here be said that the close resemblance on many points between the pre-classical period of antiquity, the epoch of the Homeric poems, and the Middle Ages is very noteworthy. We have now to inquire into the transition which brought about the change from the one system to the other.

first as to the economical side. The classical system of production was founded on chattel-slavery, the mediæval on serfdom, and it was the change from the one labour-system to the other which was the special characteristic of the transition.

Agriculture was the dominating industry of the classical world, and this part of labour was almost entirely the work of chattel-slaves, the property of the great landowners. As long as the Empire was at peace about its great centres, this system went on without serious check, since the servile insurrections belong to the times of civil brawl before the Empire; though it is true that reflection of the miseries of the slaves is to be found in the chronic brigandage and piracy that infested ancient civilisation during its whole period. But as the Empire contracted its boundaries, and actual war drew near its centre, while its grasping and corrupt tax-gathering bureaucracy dried up its resources, destroyed its markets, and withered its population, the approach of sheer ruin shattered the foundation of chattel-slavery on which it rested. And it must be remembered, once for all, that neither prosperity nor adversity, neither good emperors nor bad, neither peace nor war, could release Roman society from this plague of tax-gathering, any more than any increasing sense of the responsibility of the rich for the lives of the poor, or any fresh aspirations towards individual righteousness, can free modern society from the thraldom of the hunt for profit.

The great commercial estates of the Romans, under the name of Latifundia, had absorbed all the agricultural industry of the earlier Roman state, which had once been in the hands of the blood relations and household slaves of the paterfamilias. But now the profit of working these lands by the instrument of wellorganised slavery was vanishing, owing to the break up of the ancient world-market, and the consequently impending ruin. Nothing now remained for the masters of these slaves but to shake off the responsibility for their livelihood, and allow them to cultivate the land in a rough and unorganised way, as partially independent peasants, paying rent in kind and service to the landowners. This seems to have been one of the methods of the merging of the chattel-slave into the medieval serf.

At the same time, not only did this go on very gradually, but domestic slavery and the servile condition of the craftsmen was synchronous with it.

The other element towards the birth of the feudal system was added by the tribal barbarians who broke in on the last days of the Empire. These bore with them ideas and customs that differed in detail rather than in essence from those of the earlier classical epoch; and though they no doubt had “thralls,” *i.e.* chattel-slaves, yet those thralls at worst were in as good a position as he household slaves of the peasant-lord of early Rome, were frequently manumitted, and remained the freedmen of their former masters, still doing service to them.

And this idea of service in return for protection, which had been once a Roman idea, was still an essential part of the life of the barbarian tribes, and they imported it into the society that was gradually growing up from the débris of classical society.

Thus met the two elements necessary for the social life of the new epoch— one the result of the internal decay of the old system; the other, the growth of the unbroken original barbaric constitution.

But the ethical and religious conditions were also changing, along with the economical: the break-up of the constitution of the cities destroyed the social religion of city-worship; and though some of the forms of the old ancestor religions and nature-cults of the ancient tribes still survived, the real characteristics of that religion had vanished.

To fill the void so created in men’s minds after the fall of this public faith, there arose another that concentrated the interest on the individual personality, now completely dissociated from its old social ties; concentrated it indeed on this individuality as being something supernatural, and bearing a mysterious relationship with the supreme supernatural power of the universe. Thus it created a

religion of the holiness of the soul, as distinct from that righteousness of the material man shown through his actions under a sense of his responsibility to his fellow-men, as embodied in the society of which he was a part.

This personal religion took the form of Mysteries, some of which were of ancestral or nature-worship origin, but which now received a new application, and symbolised in their ritual spectacles the state of the soul after death, and its ultimate union, when thoroughly purified, with the Supreme Essence or the Divinity of things. In its pagan form as a matter of course it implied a complete distinction between the cultivated, who could aspire to an understanding of such high matters, and the unleisured vulgar herd, who saw in the Mysteries mere ceremonies, with an exoteric significance only. As this new religious spirit developed into Christianity, that exclusiveness proved to be the ruin of its pagan garb since Christianity proclaimed the accessibility of all men, "learned and lewd," to a full share in all its benefits: though, after all, the exclusiveness soon reasserted itself and created a distinction, not this time between the initiated and the profane, or the philosopher and the common man, but between those devoted to a holy life and those living in the world. Christianity was thus enabled to carry through the whole of society a tendency before confined to certain classes of the population alone. Thus the church triumphed, nor was its victory without direct economical causes, for the accumulation of wealth in the hands of men whose profession forbade luxury, which wealth was actually largely spent in the maintenance of the poor, had a strong propagandist influence in times which, to judge from the hints left us by history, immediately preceded the official establishment of the Christian religion.

It is also undoubted that the contests which took place throughout the 4th century, and which were practically ended by the edicts of Theodosius suppressing the public exercise of the pagan rites, were mixed with desire on the part of the church to enter into the inheritance of the treasures of the various pagan priesthoods. Thus the official religion of Europe was revolutionised without hope of return.

With the change in economics and religion went also the change in the arts. The Archaic art of the classical nations was expressive, spontaneous, and ornamental; in the hands of a people so full of talent of all kinds as the Greeks it rapidly developed in skill of execution, until men aspired to perfection in it where perfection was possible; their strong logical sense perceived the necessary limit herein, and checked all attempts on the outside of that limit; and as a consequence they attained the desired perfection at the expense on the one hand of the full possibilities of epic expression, and on the other of architectonic ornament. As the public feeling—the sense of delight in the service of the city—died out, so what

life there was in this perfect but limited art died with 1t, and at last a caput mortuum of mere plausible academic art was all that was left, which, however, lasted a long time, until, in fact, Classicism had fallen before Christianity. Then after an interregnum of inferiority at once rude and timid, the new art began, influenced doubtless by the communication with the East. Finally, it becomes obvious to us in the buildings raised by - Justinian, especially St. Sophia at Constantinople, which show a new creation, bearing with it indeed tokens of its birth out of classicism, but yet totally different even as to detail, both in form and spirit. The full weight of the causes which lay behind this transformation will be better appreciated when we come to deal with the art of the fully developed Middle Ages. It is enough here to say that a new style was created, that it only awaited the influence of the barbaric tribes to attain completeness, and that it developed step by step along with the development of the new society in complete accord with all its necessities and aspirations.

The broken fragments of the Roman Empire amidst all this overturn, had to reckon with that element of the change which was at once most formidable on the surface and most potent for the reconstruction of society, to wit, the incursions of the northern barbarian tribes.

The political change was brought about in this way: Gaul and Spain, Northern Africa, Roman Germany, Britain, countries all populated by colonists and Romanised natives, and even part of Italy itself, fell under the domination of the Teutonic tribes, and the ancestral tribal leaders became their kings and governors, not seldom under the recognised Roman titles of Patrician, Comes, *etc.* The law of the countries so conquered was the Roman civil law, with the tribal customs grafted on to it. Whatever oral works of imagination they might have carried with them, their literature soon became that of Rome only; for the great epical and mythological poems of the race have been kept alive solely by those tribes who never crossed Roman civilisation.

Their tribal religion soon gave way, nominally at least, to the official religion of the Empire, but nevertheless they impressed some of their customary traditions on the Mediæval Church of the West, and took away some of its eastern character. Medieval Catholicism retained in consequence a certain portion of the this-worldliness and the solidarity of barbarian society, and so shows on one side a communistic interest in the corporation, whether church, guild, parish, or even monastery, which is quite alien to the individualistic introspectivism of the Christianity of the decaying Empire; the latter appears, on the other hand,

sporadically, throughout the Middle Ages, in later times gathering volume under the Lollards, and at last culminating in the Protestantism of the Reformation.

This interpenetration of progressive barbarism and decaying Roman civilisation, so essential to the life of the new epoch, began with the first invasion of Italy by the Goths (406), and went on through centuries of confused war and struggle, till the process of welding together the varying elements grew complete about the time of Charles the Great, who was crowned at Rome in the year 800. Thus was created the phantom of the Holy Roman, really the German, Empire of the Middle Ages, which continued the legend of Roman domination after the feudal system itself had fallen, while Rome became merely a memory of past history, an ideal for men to look backward to in an age particularly prone to forming such ideals.

CHAPTER IV
MEDIÆVAL SOCIETY—EARLY PERIOD

WE have now to deal with that Mediæval Society which was based on the fusion of the ideas of tribal communism and Roman individualism and bureaucracy respectively.

The transition from the Pax Romana, the final establishment of the Roman Empire, the high-water mark of classical civilisation, to the apparent chaos which followed the successful inroads of the barbarian tribes in the 5th century is long and obscure. But the fact before hinted at of the corruption of the Empire into a mere centralised tax-gathering machine is obvious enough to the careful student of history. The ancient aristocratic families of the provinces were, under the name of the Decuriones, made responsible for the taxes, and had the odium of acting as tax-gatherers, their own estates suffering if they failed to obtain the full amount decreed. As the resources of the Empire began to decline, the central government squeezed so much the harder, and, as before stated, the position of these Decuriones became intolerable, so that they were driven to the wholesale manumission of their slaves. These now became serfs, owing service to their former masters, and being the necessary human live-stock of the great estates once owned by those masters. It seems most probable that these necessary circumstances, fused with the system of the Teutonic Mark, gradually produced the Manor, which was the basis of mediaeval economic life. This, of course, only applies to those countries which had been more or less definitely Romanised. In other non-Romanised lands the serfs were the descendants of the conquered tribe, while the freemen of the conquering tribe, the “gentle-men,” or men of the Gens, were the holders of the land, under some tenure or other. The irresistible tendency of the new society, therefore, whatever circumstances it had to deal with, was towards a hierarchical system, under which, while no man was positively owned by another, no man was free of service to another; even the serfs, the lowest rank, had certain rights, the chief of which was the use of a portion of the Manor; the right of livelihood, in fact, was not withheld from them, in theory at least. The theory of the feudal system is an unbroken chain of service from the serf up to the kaiser, and of protection from the kaiser down to the serf. It recognised no absolute ownership of land. God was the owner of the earth, the kaiser and his kings were His viceregents there, who might devolve their authority to their vassals, and they in turn to theirs,

and so on till it reached the serf; the difference being in the quality of the service, the men of the conquering tribe paying none but military duties of some kind, while the serf paid productive labour. Except the right of livelihood guaranteed by custom, the latter had in general no rights, but his lord, nevertheless, was bound to protect him against wrongs from outside. And the *theory* of the system at least invested the lord with a quasi-religious character.

The change to this system was much furthered by the domination of the Teutonic races in Italy, France, and Spain, so that the old Roman, or Roman provincial slave-owning noble, was gradually superseded by the barbarian lord of the manor, who naturally carried with him the custom of the tribe, developing little by little into the complete feudal system. This was helped on by the break-up of the world-market of ancient civilisation; which break-up brought about at last conditions under which the land was the only source of livelihood, and, as we have seen, was cultivated mainly for the behoof of the lords by a population of serfs and of tenants in villeinage,—although there were everywhere in Teutonic countries remains of the old holding by the freemen of communal lands.

As already hinted this hierarchical system was mixed up with religious ideas. Accordingly, we find that the Middle Ages had a distinct religion of their own, developed from, but by no means identical with, that early Christianity, which was one of the forces that broke up the Roman Empire. As long as that empire lasted in its integrity Christianity was purely individualistic; it bade every man do his best for his future in another world, and had no commands to give about the government of this world, except to obey the “powers that be” in non-religious matters, in order to escape troubles and complications which might distract the attention of the Christian from the kingdom of God.

But in mediaeval Christianity, although this idea of individual devotion to the perfection of the next world still existed, it was kept in the background, and was almost dormant, except sporadically (as exemplified by St. Thomas à Kempis, St. Francis, St. Bernard, *etc.*) in the presence of the idea of the Church. The latter was not merely a link between the earthly and the heavenly kingdoms, but may even be said to have brought the kingdom of heaven to earth by breathing its spirit into the temporal power, which it recognised as another manifestation of its own authority. The struggles between the temporal and the spiritual power, which form so large a part of the history of the Middle Ages, were not the result of any antagonism of ideas between the two, but came of the tendency of one side of the great organisation of society to absorb the other, without rejecting its theory.

In short, on the one hand, the Church was political and social as much as religious, while, on the other, the State was at least as much religious, as it was political and social.

For instance, all the great corporations, which were such a prominent feature of the Middle Ages, from the fraternity of knighthood to the guilds of craft, were on the one hand religious institutions, though on the other they were devised for obvious practical purposes. Again, in both physicians and lawyers a certain religious character was formally recognised, of which some shadow of a memory still exists in their official garments and formulae.

As an example of the closeness with which this idea of the gradation of ranks for service-protection clung to the religious, as well as to the secular, polity of the Middle Ages, we may cite the Mystery Plays, in which not only heaven and earth are furnished each with its due hierarchy, but hell also has a like constitution. The simple medieval man conceived of the universe, it must be remembered, as divided into three parts, heaven above, earth in the midst, and hell below, though this was modified with the more learned by a curious mixture of quasi-Ptolemaic lore.

But the relations between the feudal lords, their vassals and their serfs, as such, only show us one side of the society of the Middle Ages. The tendency to association within that society is one of its most marked features. In fact, nothing could be done in those days without such association. Life seemed impossible to the medieval mind without common action. All men, as we have seen, both great and small, belonged to the great corporation of the Church; damnation in this world and the next was the only alternative. The ecclesiastics proper, and those specially devoted to the religious life, including those whose business was fighting for the Church, formed themselves into strictly regulated orders. The nobles were bound by the ties of the fraternity of knighthood in one or other of its forms.

Production and Exchange were in the hands of great associations formed by traders and craftsmen for protection of commerce and organisation of industry. The mediæval towns had two origins: first, there was the town, which was a survival of the city of Roman times and is mostly found in the south of Europe, Italy, Spain, France, *etc.* although there are examples in Britain and Western Germany. And next there were the new towns which grew up for reasons of convenience out of the “Mark,” and for the most part became incorporated into the feudal manorial system. The freemen—that is, the landholders of the mark, formed a municipal aristocracy in these inchoate towns, and from them the governing body was chosen. When the towns began to be incorporated through privileges granted to them by their feudal overlord, the old semi-independent inhabitants, who were probably the

survival of the conquered tribe, joined to those who had flowed into the town for protection and convenience, formed a population of craftsmen and traders. Of these, the traders, who fetched and carried wares from the east of Europe, mainly Byzantium, still the centre of organised commerce as in the later Empire, were the most important as to position, although very few in numbers. They were the first founders of the Merchant Guild, which, as its name imports, was purely commercial in tendency, although organised like all associations of the Middle Ages on quasi-religious grounds, and including some survivals of the fellowship of the freemen. A recent work on the Merchant Guild by Mr. Grosse shows conclusively that it was not deduced from the old Frith-gild; neither, on the other hand, was it identical with the corporation of the towns, since non-residents could be members of it, whereas the members of the corporation (*Les Lineages, Geschlechte, Porterey, Ehrbarkeit, Patricians, etc.*) were bound to be holders of the lands which were once tribal.

But the principle of association was ~sure to have further development amongst the useful classes of the time; as handicraft began to grow in its capacity for production, guilds for the special crafts were founded all over Europe, till they embraced every department of craftsmanship in the widest sense of the word; thus the ploughman’s guild was the most important one in the villages and small towns of England. The constitution of these guilds was strictly on the received model of mediæval associations, but concerned itself also with the minutest details of the craft. They were thoroughly recognised legal bodies, having the power of enforcing penalties for the breaking of their special rules; and before long they became partakers In the supreme government of the towns, being commonly represented on the corporation by members of their own body. In the later period of the Middle Ages they even went beyond this, and in not a few cases the representatives of the craft-guilds pushed out the original aristocracy, the men of the Lineages, Geschlechte, or Patricians. For example, towards the close of the 15th century, in Zurich, Hans Waldmann, the famous Burgermaster of that town, who had originally been a member of the tanner’s guild, on attaining to power, altered the constitution of the executive, which had at first been composed, half of the municipal aristocracy, and half of the guildsmen, and gained a definite perpetual majority for the latter by increasing the proportion of their representatives to two-thirds. Even earlier than this, in the latter half of the 14th century, the account given us by Froissart of the famous war of Ghent and its allies against their feudal lord, the Earl of Flanders, shows us that the municipal aristocracy had little power unless backed by the craft-guilds. Wherever in Flanders "the lesser crafts” (*i.e.* mainly the handicrafts) were powerful, the corporation had to give way, and take

up the war against the Earl; where the “greater crafts” (such as the mariners) had sway, the corporation was able to hold the town for him.

To sum up, the corporation was the direct descendant of the mark, *i.e.* the tribal land-holding body, and the common tendency was for the craft-guilds to supplant this aristocracy after the Merchant Guilds had been overshadowed by their growing power. We may again mention that these corporations and guilds, the industrial associations in short, were accepted as due and legal members of the feudal hierarchy. It is necessary now to take note of the relations between them and the kings and their nobles.

As soon as feudalism became paramount in Europe, the tribal mark lost its independence, and came under the domination of the baron or lord of the manor, although much of its constitution and most of its customs remained intact under the feudal lordship,[9] as they had done under Roman bureaucracy. As the mark became consolidated into the town, with the land attached thereto, it began to acquire fresh privileges from its new lords, lay and ecclesiastic. These privileges were for the most part *bought* from the overlords under the compulsion of the need of money, bred by the wars they were engaged in, or, in the church territories, by the overweening love of splendid building, and the intrigues with Rome and foreign courts in which they were involved. These privileges consisted mainly of independent jurisdiction, rights of market and tolls, freedom from military service, *etc.*, *etc.*

It was the interest of the towns to favour the growth of power in the king or monarch, since he was far off, and his domination was much less real and much less vexatious than that of the feudal neighbour, their immediate lord. The king, on his side, always engaged in disputes with his baronage, found his interest in creating and supporting free corporations in the towns, and thereby curbing the overweening power of his vassals; while at the same time the growing production of the towns added to his exchequer, by creating a fresh source of supply, easier to exploit than that which the military nobles yielded.

This process of the gaining of independence of the growing medieval towns began as early as the 11th century, and culminated in the 14th. The first English charter was granted by Edward the Confessor. In France the first charter was granted to Le Mans in 1072, to Cambrai 1076; Laon, Beauvais, Amiens, and other towns followed. In later times the kings themselves founded free towns, as notably Edward I., both in Guienne and England; Kingston upon Hull (*hodie* Hull) and Winchelsea are examples of such places still remaining, though fortune has dealt with these two in such a widely different way.

In Spain, in quite early days the Visigothic code, a blending of Roman law and Teutonic custom, recognised the corporations definitely: the first charter was granted to Leon in 1020.

In Germany the towns were in the early Middle Ages appanages of the vassals of the Empire, and were governed by the bishops as their vicars: the process of emancipation here was that at first, in the 12th century, the townsmen carried on a government side by side with the bishop, and in the 13th century got rid of him either by purchase or main force, and so at last reached the goal of holding directly of the Empire. When this was accomplished, they were more completely freed than elsewhere in Europe, and ensured their independence by the formation of confederacies of cities, of which the Hanseatic League was the most famous.

In Flanders, owing to the great development of production by handicraft, the cities, though not theoretically so free, were powerful enough to carry on a struggle with their feudal lord through almost the whole of the 14th century, and were not altogether crushed, even when the battle of Rosebeque and the death of Philip van Artavelde closed the more dramatic phase of that struggle. As an example of the completeness of the legal recognition of the status of these cities, it may be mentioned that, in the second act of the war with the Earl of Flanders, when the younger Artavelde was entering on the scene, the city of Ghent summoned to its banner certain knights and lords to do it due military feudal service, while these very lords were in the Earl's camp preparing to do battle against Ghent: but it 1s clear that the historian recognises to the full the right of the city in the matter, though he applauds the refusal of the vassals on “gentlemanly” grounds.

Footnotes

9. *Cf.* Gomme’s *Village Communities.*

CHAPTER V
THE ROUGH SIDE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

THE sketch just concluded of the composition of society during the Middle Ages by no means accords with the idea of that epoch which still holds its place in the mind of the general public. In spite of the researches and labours of enlightened historians in recent times, such as Hallam in the early part of the century, and, of late years, of men like Green, Freeman, and Stubbs, the representation of the Middle Ages put forward by bourgeois historians, whose aim was the praising of the escape of modern society from a period of mere rapine and confusion, into peace, order, and prosperity, is generally accepted.

Doubtless there was a rough side to the Middle Ages as to every other epoch, but there was also genuine life and progress in them. This, as we have seen, expressed itself on one side in the hierarchical order of feudal society, which was so far from being lawless that, on the contrary, law received somewhat undue observance therein. And on the other side that there were certain compensations to the shortcomings of the epoch, which we shall have to consider before long.

At present, however, let us look at the rough side of the mediæval cloth, with the preliminary remark, that those who have drawn so violent a contrast between mediæval disadvantages and the gains of modern life, have been by nature and circumstances incapable of seeing the compensations above-said.

The shortcomings of the life of the Middle Ages resolve themselves in the main, firstly, to the rudeness of life and absence of material comforts: secondly, to the element of oppression and violence in which men lived; and thirdly, to the. ignorance and superstition which veiled so much of our truth from their minds.

As to the rudeness of life it must be remembered that men do not suffer from the lack of comforts which they have never had before their eyes, and of which they cannot even conceive. Indeed, in our own day, though we can conceive that flying would be a pleasanter method of progression than an express train, nevertheless we are not made unhappy by the fact of our not being able to fly. The sensitiveness of men adapts itself easily to their surrounding conditions, and such inconveniences as may exist in these are not felt by those who consider them unavoidable. It is true that this argument can only be put forward when the shortcomings are not of a nature to degrade those who have to bear them; but it must be admitted that there is

no degradation in mere external roughness of life. For the rest, though it would be a shock for the modern man to be transplanted, without preparation, into mediæval conditions, the mediæval man in his turn would probably be as ill at ease amid the "comforts" of modern London.

Another consideration is far more serious than this, and far more calculated to shake our complacency in modern civil1sation, to wit that whatever advantages we have gained over the Middle Ages are not shared by the greater part of our population. The whole of our unskilled labouring classes are in a far worse position as to food, housing, and clothing than any but the extreme fringe of the corresponding class in the Middle Ages.

Let us look next at the ignorance and superstition of the Middle Ages. In the main this ignorance meant a *naiveté* in their conceptions of the universe, which was partly a survival of the animism of the earlier world. The ignorance was not a matter of brutal choice; on the contrary, there was a keen and disinterested search after truth and knowledge : and the very fact of the region of discovery being so unknown added the charm of wonder and scientific imagination to the research. Nor should it be forgotten that what to us has become superstition was to them science, and that in all probability our science will be the superstition of future times. It is being acknowledged every day that modern accepted scientific explanations of the "nature of things" are becoming more and more inadequate to the satisfaction of true knowledge. The Ptolemaic theory of astronomy was good enough for the data of its day; and though it has been superseded by the Copernican system, that in its turn is limited as an explanation by the present condition of our knowledge of the universe. Though the world will never go back to Ptolemy's explanation, it will go forward to something more complete than any yet put forth.

There remains the charge of violence and misery to be dealt with. As to the misery, the result partly of that violence and partly of the deficient grasp of the resources of nature, its manifestations were so much more dramatic than the misery of our time produces, that at this distance they have the effect of overshadowing the everyday life of the period, which in fact was not constantly burdened by them. What misery exists in our own days is not spasmodic and accidental, but chronic and essential to the system under which we live. The well-to-do bourgeois of the nineteenth century may indeed make light of this misery, while he shudders at the horrors of torture, and sack, and massacre of the Middle Ages, because he does not feel the modern misery in his own person: but the proletarian of our commercial age, though he be hardened to bear his lot, is not only degraded by the constant pressure of sordid troubles, but cannot fail to note the contrast which every hour thrusts

before his eyes between that lot and the easy life of his masters—the possessing classes. In mediæval times the violence and suffering did not spare one class and fall wholly upon another, the most numerous in the community. Even the king's person was found by many examples to be by no means sacred: "Strike the lords and spare the commons" was the cry that went up in the chase of the bloody battles of the Roses. The unsuccessful politician did not retire to the ease and pleasure of a country house, flavoured with a little literary labour and apologetics for his past mistakes, but paid with his head, or the torment of his body, for his miscalculations as to possible majorities.

Furthermore, the very roughness and adventure of life of those days made people less sensitive to bodily pain than they are now. Their nerves were not so high-strung as ours are, so that the apprehension of torture or death did not weigh heavily upon them. Of this history affords abundant evidence. Death, moreover, to them seemed but a temporary interruption of the course of their life. Men in those days really conceived of the i*continuity of life* as a simple and absolute fact. The belief in a future state had not as yet become a mere vague and metaphorical expression, as it is to-day, when no one attempts even in thought to realise it for himself; it was as real to them as palpable everyday matters. In this it will be evident that it was different from the spiritualised belief in a union with God or Christ which seems to have animated the early Christian, and which survived in some of the medieval saints and mystics, such as St. Francis and St. Catherine of Siena. In short it is clear that such misery as existed in the Middle Ages, was different in essence from that of our times; one piece of evidence alone forces this conclusion upon us: the Middle Ages were essentially the epoch of *Popular* Art, the art of the people; whatever were the conditions of the life of the time, they produced an enormous volume of visible and tangible beauty, even taken *per se*, and still more extraordinary when considered beside the sparse population of those ages. The "misery" from amidst of which this came, whatever it was, must have been something totally unlike, and surely far less degrading than the misery of modern Whitechapel, from which not even the faintest scintilla of art can be struck, in spite of the idealising of slum life by the modern philanthropic sentimentalist and his allies, the impressionist novelist and painter.

We have thought it necessary to meet objections as to over-valuing the importance of the Middle Ages, but it must be understood that we do not stand forward as apologists for them except in relation to modern times. The part which they played in the course of history was not only necessary to the development of the life of the world, but was so special and characteristic that it will leave its mark on future ages in spite of the ignorant contemplation of them from which we are slowly emerging.

They had their own faults and miseries, their own uses and advantages, and they left behind them works to show that at least happiness and cheerful intelligence were possible sometimes and somewhere in them, even amongst that working class, which now has to bear the whole burden of our follies and mistakes.

CHAPTER VI
THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

BY about the year 1350 the craft-guilds received all the development possible to them as societies of freemen and equals; and that date may conveniently be accepted as the end of the first part of the Middle Ages.

By this time serfdom generally was beginning to yield to the change introduced by the guilds and free towns: the field serfs partly drifted into the cities and became affiliated to the guilds, and partly became free men, though living on lands whose tenure was unfree. This movement towards the break-up of serfdom is marked by the Peasants' War in England, led by Wat Tyler and John Ball in Kent, and by John Lister (dyer) in East Anglia, which was the answer of the combined yeomen, emancipated and unemancipated serfs, to the attempt of the nobles to check the movement. But the development of the craftguilds and the flocking of the freed serfs into the towns laid the foundations for another change in industrialism: with the second part of the mediæval period appears the journeyman, or so-called free labourer. Besides the craftsmaster and his apprentices, the workshop now has these "free labourers" in it—unprivileged workmen, that is, who are nevertheless under the domination of the guild, and compelled to affiliation with it. But so completely was the idea of association innate in medieval life that even this first step towards disruption came for a time under the guild-influence: in Germany especially, the guilds of journeymen Were so important as to form a complete network through all central Europe. The journeyman if he presented himself before the guild in any town was taken charge of, and livelihood and employment found for him. In England the attempt at founding journeymen-guilds had little success, probably because it came too late.

After this the guildsmen began to be privileged workmen; and with them began the foundation of the present middle-class, whose development from this source went on to meet its other development on the side of trade which was now becoming noticeable. In 1453 Constantinople was taken by the Turks, and as a consequence Greek manuscripts were being discovered and read; a thirst for new or revived learning outside the superstitions of the medieval church, and the quaint, curiously perverted, and half-understood remains of popular traditions, was arising. The new art of printing began to spread with marvellous rapidity from about the year 1470; and all was getting ready for the transformation of medieval into modern or commercial society.

Before the beginning of the sixteenth century the craft-guilds had gradually reduced the others to insignificance, but the spirit in which they were founded was dying out in the meantime. They were originally societies of equal craftsmen governed by officers of their own choice, and their rules were obviously directed against the growth of capitalism, as *e.g.* those of the clothiers of Flanders, which limited the number of looms in any master's shop to four. Inferiority in the guild was only temporary; every apprentice, or bachelor, was bound to become a master in time. But now this had been changing for some while, and the journeyman made his appearance in the workshops under the name of servant. The entrance-fee increased so much that it is clear that it denotes more than the mere fall in the value of gold, and meant the buying of a share in a monopolist company rather than the necessary contribution to a craftsman's society. In short, by the middle of the sixteenth century the guilds were organisations including somewhat more than the germs of capital served by labour; nothing more was needed than external circumstances for the development from this of complete capitalistic privilege.

Apart from the guilds, the two classes of capitalists and free workmen were being created by the development of commerce, which needed them both as instruments for her progress. Mediæval commerce knew nothing of capitalistic exchange; the demands of local markets were supplied by the direct barter or sale of the superfluity of the produce of the various districts and countries. All this was now being changed, and a world-market was being formed, into which all commodities had to pass; and a mercantile class grew up for the carrying on of this new commerce, and soon attained to power, amidst the rapid break-up of the old hierarchical society with its duly ordered grades.

The fall of Constantinople was followed in thirty years by the discovery of America, and about the same time of the Cape passage, which ultimately superseded the old trade route overland by the Levant and the Bavarian cities. And now the Mediterranean was no longer the great commercial sea, with nothing beyond it but a few outlying stations. The cities of Central Europe—*e.g.* Augsburg, Nuremberg, Munich, and the Hanse towns—were now sharing the market with Venice and Genoa, the children of Constantinople: there was no longer one great commanding city in Europe. But it was not only the rise in the commercial towns that was overturning feudal society. As they conquered their enemy, the feudal nobles, they fell into the clutches of bureaucratic monarchs, who either seized on them for their own possessions, or used them as tools for their projects of conquest and centralisation. Charles V., *e.g.*, played this game through South Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands, and with Venice, under cover of the so-called "Holy Roman Empire," while at the same time he had fallen into possession of Spain by

marriage; and disregarding his sham feudal empire, he bent all his efforts into turning these countries into real bureaucratic states. In France the liberties of the towns were crushed out by Louis XI. and his successors. In England the plunder of the religious houses enabled Henry VIII. to found a new nobility, subservient to his own absolutism, in place of the ancient feudal nobility destroyed by their late civil war.

Everywhere the modern centralised bureaucratic *nation* was being developed. In France the long and fierce wars of the Burgundian and Armagnac factions gave opportunity for the consolidation of the monarchy, at last effected, as above said by Louis XI., the forerunner of the most successful king of France and the last successful one—Louis XIV. In England the Wars of the Roses were not so bitter as the French wars, and the people took small part in them, except as vassals or retainers of the households of the contending nobles; but they nevertheless played their part in the disruption of feudality, not only by the thinning-out of the nobles slain in battle or on the scaffold, but also by helping directly to draw England into the world-market.

Under the medieval system the workmen, oppressed and protected by the lords of the manor and the guilds, were not available for the needs of commerce. The serfs ate up the part of the produce spared them by their lords; the guild craftsmen sold the produce of their own hands to their neighbours without the help of a middleman. In neither case was there anything left over for the supply of a great market.

But England, one of the best pasture countries of the world, had in her even then capacities for profit-grinding, if the tillage system of the manor and the yeoman's holdings could be got rid of. The landowners, ruined by their long war, saw the demand for English wool, and set themselves to the task of helping evolution with much of the vigour and unscrupulous pettifogging which has since won for their race the temporary command of the world-market. The tenants were rack-rented, the yeomen were expropriated, the hinds were driven off the land into the towns, there to work as "free" labourers. England thus contributed her share to commerce, paying for it with nothing more important than the loss of the rough joviality, plenty, and independence of spirit, which once attracted the admiration of foreigners more crushed by the feudal system and by its abuses than were the English.

CHAPTER VII
THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

THUS all over Europe commercialism was rising. New needs were being discovered by men who were gaining fresh mastery over nature, and were set free from old restraints to struggle for individual pre-eminence. A fresh intelligence and mental energy was shedding its light over the more sordid side of the period of change. The study of the Greek literature at first hand was aiding this new intelligence among cultivated men, and also, since they did but half understand its spirit, was warping their minds into fresh error. For the science of history and the critical observation of events had not yet been born; and to the ardent spirits of the Renaissance, there had never been but two peoples worth notice—to wit, the Greeks and Romans, whom their new disciples strove to imitate in every thing which was deemed of importance at the time.

Now also, as at all periods of intellectual ferment, Occultism, that is the magical conception of nature, obtained a numerous following. This, of course, was partly the result of the study of the recently-discovered writings of the last period of transition,—that of the early Christian centuries,—the Neo-Platonic and other Hermetic literature, joined to the fact that science, in the modern acceptation of the word, was in its first dawning. The science of the Renaissance is mainly a systematisation of medieval traditional science, with an admixture of the later classical and oriental theories, to which no doubt is added a certain amount of the results of genuine observation. It is represented by such men as Paracelsus, Nostradamus, and Cornelius Agrippa, and, we may add, by the mythical Dr. Faustus.

Amidst all this it is clear that the old religion would no longer serve the new spirit of the times. The mediæval church, the kingdom of heaven on earth, in full sympathy with the temporal hierarchy, in which also every one had his divinely appointed place, and which restricted commerce and forbade usury, such was no religion for the new commercialism ; the latter’s creed must have nothing to do with the business of this world; so the individualist ethics of early Christianity, which had been kept in the background during the period of the mediaeval church, were once more brought to the front, and took the place of the corporate ethics of that church, of which each one of the “faithful” was but a part.

A new form of Christianity, therefore, had to be found to suit the needs of the new Europe which was being born: but this adaptation of Christianity took two shapes, so widely different from each other that they have usually been opposed as contrasting religions, which is an inaccurate view to take of the matter, since they are but two sides of the same shield. These two forms were Protestantism, and modern or Jesuitised Catholicism; the protagonists of either side being nameable as Martin Luther and Ignatius Loyala. Almost the whole Teutonic race adopted Protestantism in one or other of its forms, and the leading men among them accepted its teachings with depth and sincerity: amongst the Latinised nations it made no real progress, and wherever it gained many adherents, as in the case of the French Huguenots, it was little more than a political badge. It is worthy of remark, too, that, at the present day, in Geneva, the city of Calvin, which is really a French city, the Catholics considerably outnumber the Protestants. It may be noted, as showing the real strength of the Protestant feeling in the north of Europe, that in those countries where the religious struggle was most severe—as in Scotland, England, Holland, and Switzerland—the quality that finally predominated made the form of religion the furthest removed from medieval Catholicism: while in places where the Reformation *made itself,* so to say, as in Scandinavia and the north of Germany, the outward change was comparatively slight.

The Protestant Puritanism which 1s even yet so strong in these islands, has no analogue in the Protestantism of the rest of Europe, but is a strange isolated fact, the result probably of some qualities inherent in the population, and developed by circumstances: indeed there are traces of it discoverable in medieval England, and that not amongst the Lollards only; and it must be confessed that the origin of this spirit is as obscure as the fact of its existence is baneful. Its long-enduring and deep-seated strength may be gauged by the success that always attends appeals made to it in the present day by time-serving politicians and popularity-hunting journalists.[10]

Modern

Catholicism, as above said, is personally represented by Ignatius Loyala, whose order of Jesus practically changed the whole face of the religion.

Mediæval

Catholicism was the natural growth of that simple and naive conception of the universe which we have commented on before, and a member of the church of the Middle Ages was always surrounded

by the sense of his membership, and could not step out of it in the performance of the ordinary acts of his life. Protestantism was a recrudescence of the individualist religion of early Christianity. Jesuitical Catholicism, while retaining all the old medieval forms, was really more akin to the Protestantism of the times which had created both. It was no growth of the ages, but a product of the necessities of the ecclesiasticism of the Renaissance. The humanist learning of the period, which at first disregarded Christianity altogether, passed in the end into this Jesuitised, casuistical form of Christianity; and it must be noted here that the education of Catholic countries in the centuries that followed the Reformation fell almost entirely into the hands of the Jesuits. It is true that the missions carried on amongst barbarous peoples by the Order, so famous for their complete organisation, and the unshrinking devotion of the brethren, were also distinguished by the humanity of their treatment of these peoples, and offer a strong contrast to the brutality of the commercial bureaucracies

and their buccaneering fringes. Yet though they showed the good side of the change from mediæval to modern life, the end of their powerful organisation was the establishment of that spirit of commercial society to which both this modified Catholicism and the so-called Reformed religions were but adjuncts. It is significant that they carefully abstained from following the example of the mediæval church in condemning the grosser forms of commerce such as usury; and, in short, their religion, like that of the Protestants, was not of this world.

Hence

they were essentially allies of the rising bureaucratic system in equal measure with their opponents,

As regards politics, Charles V. is the personality representing the great change on that side of things. The welding of Spain into a nation, begun under Ferdinand and Isabella, the conquerors of Granada, was accomplished by him. Under the pressure of his attempts to unify Germany in the same manner, the rulers of the great territories, the princes of the Empire, consolidated their lands, and turned them from feudal domains into political nations, as Prussia, Brunswick, Saxony, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse Cassel, Wurtemberg, and others of less importance.

Charles V.’s rival, Francis I., continued the consolidation of the French kingdom, begun with such vigour, astuteness, and consequent success, by Louis XI. In England the Tudor monarchy put the last touch to the creation of a political nation, under the cover of the strange phantasm of the divine right of kings,—so contrary to the mediæval idea of the responsibility of the king to the feudal hierarchy in

general,—which seems to have been partly the outcome of the Puritan worship of the Old Testament with its despotic oriental principles.

All this meant the crushing out of the old feudal vassals, the creation of a fresh nobility wholly dependent on the king, mere courtiers waiting on his person, or functionaries appointed to manage his estate; for the new political nation was regarded as the *property* of the king, who no longer owned any responsibility to any one, as a king, not even to his God.

All this change, ecclesiastical and civil, was not accomplished without a certain amount of protest in the form of direct revolt, the most noteworthy event of which was the Peasant War in Germany (1525-1526). At this time, throughout Europe, the increase in luxury drove the lords of the land to harsher exactions than ever for the procuring of money for dealing with the merchants, and the usurer grew in importance at the same time. Against this oppression there rose, and spread with extraordinary rapidity (at the above-mentioned date), an insurrection more widespread than any previous revolts of the Middle Ages, one of the leading figures in which was Thomas Münzer. He put forward a sort of mystical commission, which proclaimed the brotherhood of Christians, and the economical and social equality of all men. His doctrines were widely accepted, but he was, after some weeks of power, defeated, and executed near Mülhausen (in Turingia) in 1525. It must be said, however, that there was more than one strain in the Peasant War. The great princes of the Empire, under cover of suppression of the rebels, sought to consolidate their power, and to complete the subjugation of the smaller feudal nobility, “the knighthood.” These had had their last champion in the celebrated Ulric von Hutten, who, amidst a life of romantic adventure and studious occupation, attacked the higher nobles with the full power of his literary genius, and worked hard on the side of the knights under the leadership of Franz von Sickingen in 1522-1523. The princes triumphed, and therewith the political side of medieval Germany came to an end.

As for Münzer, he may be considered as the precursor of the later Anabaptist revolt; for the movement in which he worked, after this collapse, sprang up again, and, continuing in an underground manner, culminated at last in the Anabaptist rising under John of Leyden, the last act of which was the siege and capture of Münster, and the massacre of the rebels in that city.

The religious wars of France, and the revolt of the Huguenots against the reigning monarchs, can hardly be brought within the category of these popular movements; but were rather contests between factions, neither of whom had really any special principles to maintain.

In England a series of revolts took place during the reigns of the last two Henries, and into the reign of Elizabeth, which were mostly directed against fiscal oppression, the necessary result of the new bureaucratic rule. The most important of these was that led by Kett in Norfolk. They were one and all put down with various degrees of wholesale massacre and cruelty.

The middle of the sixteenth century, therefore, brings us to this, that the animating spirit of feudal society is dead, though its forms still exist, and are used for its own purposes by the bureaucratic system, which has now supplanted feudalism throughout the length and breadth of Europe. This must be considered as the beginning of the first period of modern History.

Footnotes

10. *Cf.* the case of the late Mr. Parnell, overthrown by it in the very hour of his triumph.

CHAPTER VIII
MODERN SOCIETY: EARLY STAGES

BY the opening of the seventeenth century the centralising bureaucratic monarchies were fairly established: nay, in France at least, they were even showing the birth of modern party government, which since—carried on, indeed, under the veil of constitutionalism—has been the type of all modern government. Richelieu—the Bismarck of his time and country—begins the series of prime ministers or real temporary kings, who govern in the interest of class society, not much encumbered and a good deal protected by their cloaks, the hereditary sham-kings. In England this prime-ministership was more incomplete, though men like Burleigh approached the type. Elizabeth reduced the Tudor monarchy to an absurdity, a very burlesque of monarchy, under which flourished rankly an utterly unprincipled and corrupt struggle for the satisfaction of individual ambition and greed. This grew still more rankly, perhaps, under James I., who added abject cowardice to all the other vices which are more common to arbitrary high place and power.

As to the condition of the people during the latter years of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, the economical and religious revolution which had taken place had oppressed them terribly, and the “free workman” had to feel the full force of the causes which had presented him with his “freedom” in the interest of growing commerce. In England, on the one hand, the expropriation of the yeomanry from the land and the conversion of tillage into pasture had provided a large population of these free labourers, who, on the other hand, were not speedily worked up by the still scanty manufactures of the country, but made a sort of semi-vagabond population, troublesome enough to the upper and middle classes. The laws made against such paupers in the time of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. were absolutely ferocious, and men were hanged out of the way by the thousand.

But in the reign of Elizabeth it was found out that even this was not enough to cure the evil, which of course had been much aggravated by the suppression of the religious houses, part of whose function was the housing and feeding of any part of the workmen temporarily displaced. A Poor Law, therefore, was passed (1601) for dealing with this misery, and, strange to say, it was far more humane than might have been expected from the way in which the poor had been dealt with up to that time; so much so, indeed, that the utilitarian *philanthropists* of the beginning of this century felt themselves obliged to deal with it in a drastic way, which left us a Poor

Law as inhumane as could well be. Toward the middle of the seventeenth century things began to improve with our working population: the growth of the towns stimulated agriculture, and tillage began to revive again, though of course under the new system of cultivation for profit. Matters were in fact settling down, and preparing the country by a time of something like prosperity for the new revolution in industry.[11]

The condition of the people was on the whole worse on the Continent than in England. Serfdom was by no means extinct in France, Hungary, or Germany, and that serfdom was far more burdensome and searching side by side with the exploitation of the market than it had been in the feudal period. Other survivals of the medieval epoch there were also—thus in Germany the guilds had still some life and power, and the people were not utterly divorced from the land as in England, although the predominant competition: of the markets destroyed much of the good that lingered in these half-extinct customs. At the same time the populations were crushed by the frightful wars which passed over them—in all which religion was the immediate excuse.

The first of this series was the war carried on in Holland and the Netherlands against the Catholic foreigners— the Spaniards—into whose hands they had been thrown by the family affairs of the house of Austria. Although noblemen took up the side of the rebels—*e.g.* Egmont and Horn, executed for so doing—this war was in the main a war of the bourgeois democracy on behalf of Protestantism, embittered by the feeling of a Teutonic race against a Latinised one. There is to be found in it even some foretaste of the revolutionary *sanscullote* element, as shown by the eagerness with which the rebels took up the nickname of gueux, or beggars, flung at them in scorn by their foes, as well as by the extreme bitterness of the ruder seafaring population, the men whose hats bore the inscription, “Better Turk than Pope.”

In Germany the struggle known as the “Thirty Years’ War” was between the two opposing parties amongst the great vassals of the German Empire, whose power was used for the aggrandisement of the house of Austria, and also for the enforcement of Catholicism on the more northern countries. The reader must not forget, moreover, that these countries were to the full as oppressively governed as those which obeyed the bidding of the emperor.

This miserable war, after inflicting the most terrible suffering on the unhappy people, who were throughout treated with far less mercy and consideration than if they had been beasts, after having crushed the rising intelligence of Germany into a condition from which it has only arisen in days close to our own, dribbled out in a

miserable and aimless manner, leaving the limits of Protestant and Catholic pretty much where it had found them; but it also left the people quite defenceless against their masters, the bureaucratic kings and princes.

In France the religious struggle took a very bitter form, but it was far more political than in Germany. The leaders were even prepared to change their creed when driven into a corner—as Henry of Navarre at the time of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. In France the popular sympathy was by no means in favour of Protestantism: the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which inflicted such a terrible blow on the Huguenot cause, would otherwise have been hardly possible. It is true that the great Huguenot leader, Henry of Navarre, became king of France, but his accession, the result of his personal genius, did not carry with it a Huguenot triumph as a consequence. Henry had to abjure Protestantism,—a Protestant King of France was impossible.

The great struggle in England came later, and probably in consequence the victory was more decided on the Puritan side. The enthusiasm with which Mary Tudor—"Bloody Mary"—was received, and the Catholic insurrections in the reign of her successor, show that there was at first some popular feeling on the Catholic side; but by the time of James I., Catholicism was practically dead in England[12] The Book of Sports issued by his Government, which encouraged the people to play various games on Sunday after the fashion of the Middle Ages, was widely received as an outrage on the feelings of the growing middle class in town and country. We have here the first manifestation of that curious Sabbatarianism, which seems to be confined to these islands, and the origin of which is very obscure, since the original Calvinists, such as John Knox, and even Calvin himself, were not enthralled by it.

The maritime power of England has its beginning in the later Tudor period in contrast to the Middle Ages, when seafaring matters were of little national importance in England, the carrying of the northern seas being almost entirely in the hands of the Flemings and the Hansers. But under Elizabeth the English seamen, gentlemen adventurers and merchants, stimulated by the discovery of America, the prosaic accounts of practical money-getting, and the legends of fabulous wealth that there awaited the fearless and boundless greed of the new knight-errantry of commerce, fitted out ships for filibustering expeditions to the New World. They practically went to war on their own account with the Spaniards in that hemisphere; and there their reckless courage and superior seamanship won for them pretty much all the wealth which was not fabulous, and laid the foundation of the commercial enterprise of England. By this they converted a

people once jovial, indolent, and generous into a nation of sordid, if energetic traders and restless money-getters, whose very courage was the courage of the counting-house, and the greater part of this was exercised vicariously at the expense of their hardliving employés by land and sea.

All was tending towards the irreconcilable quarrel which took place in the next reign between the court and the bourgeoisie, and which was nearly as much religious as political.

Meantime in France the last remnants of the old feudalism struggled in the party warfare of the "Fronde" against Mazarin and his bureaucracy of simple corruption. Finally Louis XIV. put the coping-stone on the French monarchy by forcing his nobility, high and low, into the position of his courtiers, while his minister Colbert developed the kingdom as a tax-gathering machine by the care and talent with which he fostered the manufactures of France, just before his time at a very low ebb indeed. There was no need, therefore, to touch the revenues of the nobility, who were free to spend them in dancing attendance on the court; nay, were not free to do otherwise. The century began with the French monarchy triumphant over all its great vassals; it finished by reducing all its vassals, great and small, to the condition of courtiers, with little influence in the country-side, and diminished rents — mere absentee landlords of the worst type, endowed with privileges which could only be exercised at the cost of the starvation of the people, and the exasperation of the bourgeoisie, who furnished the funds for the court glory.

Footnotes

11. For a fuller exposition of this period Hyndman's *Historical Basis of Socialism in England* may be consulted.

12. Yet the curious countryman's book called the *Shepherd's Calendar,* translated and printed here first about 1520, was reprinted literally, with all its Catholic prayers, *etc.*, several times till as late as 1656.

CHAPTER IX
PREPARATIONS FOR REVOLUTION—ENGLAND

WE must here say a few words about the meaning of the great struggle which took place in England between the King and the Parliament. The King, Charles I., aimed at completing the monarchical absolutism begun by the Tudors, while at the same time his course was clearer to him, because the old feud between nobles and King had quite died out, and, as before said, the nobles, from being powerful and often refractory feudal vassals, had become mere courtiers whose aims and interest were identified with those of the monarch. On the other side stood the bourgeoisie, who had thriven enormously on the growing commerce, were becoming powerful, and aiming not merely at social and economical freedom, but also at supremacy in the State. To the bourgeoisie also adhered the yeomen and the major part of the country squires, to which group Cromwell himself belonged.

The struggle began on the Parliamentary side with the assertion of the rights of Parliament, and the profession of an almost pedantic devotion to the quasi-historical constitution, which was, nevertheless, in the main a figment of the period. Perhaps the most constitutional act of the rebels was the trial of the King for his life, one precedent, at least, for which existed in the condemnation of Edward II. But as the Parliamentary struggle gave place to civil war, and it became clear that the rebels would be worsted unless the bourgeoisie were given the leading part, this sham-historical constitutionalism gave place first to republicanism, with an infusion of theocracy, and finally to the dictatorship of the victorious general, who in the end could scarcely brook the thin veil of a nominally independent Parliament. The effects of the disappointment of the purist republicans, like Colonel Hutchinson, were sternly repressed, and still more so the little spurts of rebellion tried by the religious enthusiasts, amongst whom we must count the Levellers, whose doctrines included a commission of a similar character to that put forward by John of Leyden in the first half of the sixteenth century.

It is worth noting, as illustrating the growth of a widespread Puritanism in England, which in fact embraced the whole population, and which no political change has much affected, that both sides in the struggle were steeped in Bible phrases and illustrations, showing, amongst other things, the extent to which the English version was being read by the population.

On the other hand, the severity of triumphant Puritanism, and the iron rule of the Lord Protector, made his government unpopular amongst a people who have always resented harsh mechanical organisation of any kind. The latitudinarians, always the most numerous, became the most powerful, and at last it was an easy matter for a ambitious self-seekers to bring about the restoration of the hereditary monarchy in Britain.

This restoration of the Stuart was, however, after all but a makeshift put up with because the defection from the high-strung principle of the earlier period of the revolution left nothing to take the place of Cromwell's absolutism. The nation was mainly out of sympathy with the Court, which was unnational and Catholic in tendency, and quite openly debauched. The nation itself, though it had got rid of the severity of Puritanism, was still Puritan, and welcomed the Sunday Act of Charles II., which gave the due legal stamp to Puritanism of the duller and more respectable kind. But though enthusiastic Puritanism was no longer dominant, it was not extinct. John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* shines out, though a religious romance, amidst the dulness of the literature of the time. The Quakers, who represented in their beginning the peaceable and religious side of the Levellers, arose and grew and flourished in spite of persecution; the Cameronians in Scotland made an ineffectual armed resistance to the dying out of enthusiasm; while across the Atlantic the descendants of the earlier Puritans carried on an almost theocratic government, which, among other things persecuted the Quakers most cruelly.

Little by little, however, all that was not quite commonplace and perfunctory died out in English Protestantism, and respectable indifferentism had carried all before it by the end of the century. Politics and religion had no longer any real bond of union, and the religious side of Puritanism, Evangelicanism, disappears here, to come to light again in the next century under the leadership of Whitfield.

English Puritanism had left behind it a respectable, habitual, and formal residuum strong enough to resent James II.'s Papistry, and to make its resentment felt; while at the same time the constitutionalism, which began the anti-absolutist opposition in Charles I.'s time, and which had been interrupted by Cromwell's iron and Charles II.'s mud absolutism, gathered head again and soon assumed definite form. The Stuart monarchy, with its "divine right" of absolute sovereignty, was driven from England in the person of James II, a constitutional king was found in William of Orange, and constitutional party government began.

Thus, in spite of interruption, was carried out the middle-class revolution in England; like all other revolutions, it arrived at the point which it really set out to gain; but not until it had shaken off much which at one time helped forward its

progress, and which was and still is mistaken for an essential part of it. Religious and Republican enthusiasm, although they (especially the former) played their part in abolishing the reactionary clogs on the progress of the middle classes, had to disappear as elements which would have marred the true historical end of that revolution; to wit, the creation of a powerful middle class freed from all restrictions that would interfere with it in its pursuit of individual profit, derived from the exploitation of industry. Thenceforth, till our own times, respectable political life in England has been wrapped up in whiggery; tinged, on one side, with the last faint remains of feudalism in the form of a quite unreal sentiment, involving no practical consequences but the acceptance of the name of Tory; and on the other by as faint a sentiment towards democracy, which was probably rather a traditional survival of the feeling of the old days of the struggle between King and Parliament, than any holding out of the hand towards the real democracy that was silently forming underneath the government of the respectables.

The first part of the eighteenth century, therefore, finds England solid and settled; all the old elements of disturbance and aspiration hardened into constitutional bureaucracy; religion recognised as a State formality, but having no influence whatever on the corporate life of the country, its sole reality a mere personal sentiment, not at all burdensome to the practical business of life; the embers of the absolutist re-action on the point of extinction, and swept off easily and even lazily when they make a show of being dangerous; the nobility a mere titled upper order of the bourgeoisie; the country prosperous, gaining on French and on Dutch in America and India, and beginning to found its colonial and foreign markets, and its navy fast becoming paramount on all seas; the working classes better off than at any time since the fifteenth century, but hopeless, dull, neither adventurous nor intellectual; Art, if not actually dead, represented by a Court painter or so of ugly ladies and stupid gentlemen (Sir Joshua the king of the said painters); a literature produced by a few word-spinning essayists and prosaic versifiers, like Addison and Pope, priding themselves on a well-bred contempt for whatever was manly or passionate or elevating in the past of their own language; while their devotion to the classical times, derived from the genuine and powerful enthusiasm of the Renaissance, had sunk to nothing but a genteel habit of expression.

Here then in England we may begin to see what the extinction of feudality was to end in, for the time at least. Mediaeval England is gone, the manners and ways of thought of the people are utterly changed; they are called English, but they are another people from that which dwelt in England in the fifteenth century when “forestalling and regrating” were misdemeanours; when the guild ruled over the production of goods, and division of labour was not yet; when both in art and

literature the people had their share,—nay, when what of both there was, was produced by the people themselves. Gone also is militant Puritanism, buried deep under mountains of cool formality. England is bourgeois and successful throughout its whole life; without aspirations, for its self-satisfaction is too complete for any, yet gathering force for development of a new kind, —as it were a nation taking breath for a new spring.

For under its prosperous self-satisfaction lies the birth of a great change—a revolution in industry—and England is at the time we are writing of simply preparing herself for that change. Her prosperity and solid bureaucratic constitutional government—nay, even the commonplace conditions of life in the country, are enabling her to turn all her attention towards this change, and towards the development of the natural resources in which she is so rich.

The fall of the feudal system, the invasion of the individualist method of producing goods, and of simple exchange of commodities, were bound to lead to the final development of the epoch—the rise of the great machine industries—and now the time for that development is at hand. The growing world-market is demanding more than the transitional methods of production can supply.

In matters political prejudice is giving way to necessity, and all obstacles are being rapidly cleared away before the advent of a new epoch for labour; an epoch of which we may say that if no great change were at hand for it in its turn, it would have been the greatest disaster that has ever happened to the race of man.

CHAPTER X
PREPARATIONS FOR REVOLUTION—FRANCE

THE civil war called the Fronde (1648-1654) ushered in the period of the Grand Monarque. Of this faction fight it should be noted that the bourgeoisie, led by the Councils of lawyers called Parliaments, who were at first on the side of the Minister Mazarin, and were used by him, were driven to take part with the "Princes" who opposed him, and who in their turn used them and flung them away, after they had drawn the chestnuts out of the fire for them; the Fronde, however, has its interest as being the germ of the disaffection of the middle classes with the nobility and government. As we have said, Louis XIV. succeeded in making the French monarchy a pure autocratic bureaucracy, completely centralised in the person of the sovereign. This with an ambitious King like Louis XIV. involved constant war, for he felt himself bound to satisfy his ideal of the necessary expansion of the territory and influence of France, which he looked upon as the absolute property of the King. The general success of Louis XIV. brought with it the success of these wars of aggrandisement, and France became very powerful during his reign.

Under the rule of his minister Colbert, industrialism in France was, one may say, forced as in a hothouse. Colbert developed the new modes of production that were inevitably coming, and thereby established the workshop, or division of labour system, which is the transition from handicraft to machine production. He spared no pains or energy in bringing this about. Often, with more or less success, he drove an industry forward artificially, as with the silk and woollen manufactures. For he was eager to win for France a foremost place in the world-market, which he thought but the due accompaniment of her monarchical glory; and he knew that without it that glory would have died of starvation, since the taxes would not have yielded the necessary food. It is true that even in England growing commercialism was subordinate to constitutionalism, the English form of bureaucracy; but the idea was already afoot there that the former was rather an end than a means, whereas in France commercialism was completely subordinated to the glory of the autocratic monarchy—a mere feeder of it. This overshadowing of commerce by the sovereign, and the irritation it caused to the manufacturing bourgeoisie, was undoubtedly one of the causes of the revolution.

The religion of this period of the "Grand Monarque" shows little more than an ecclesiastical struggle between Gallicanism on the one hand, which claimed a feeble spark of independence as regards Rome for the French Church, and is represented by Fénélon and Bossuet, and Jesuitry on the other hand, which was the exponent of Roman centralisation. The leading intelligence of the time was on the Gallican side; but the king in the long run favoured the Jesuits, as being the readier instruments of his bureaucratic rule. Outside this ecclesiastical quarrel there was no life whatever in religion, except what was shown by the existence of a few erratic sects of mystics, like the Quietists and Jansenists. The former of these may be said to have put forward the complete abnegation of humanity in the presence of God, while the latter attempted a revivification of the pietism of the Catholic Church, accompanied by a galvanism of the mediæval faith in miracle-working. Finally the advent of the revolutionary writers, heralded by Helvetius, Condillac, and others, and culminating in the influence of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and the Encyclopædists, destroyed the last vestiges of religious belief among the educated classes of France.

Two struggles, we may mention, were going on during the early reign of Louis XV.,—that with the Jesuits, with their bull Unigenitus, which declared the necessity of uniformity with the Roman See, in which the Parliaments took the Gallican side, while the Court generally took that of the Jesuits: and the contest between King and parliaments (law courts) for prestige and authority. These parliaments were at first councils, called by the King from his baronage to give advice as to the laws of the realm. The barons gradually fell out of them, and the lawyers (probably their legal assessors) took their place; so that at the time we speak of they were wholly composed of professional lawyers. They had been largely used by the kings for consolidating their power over the feudal nobles, since they were in the habit of deciding all doubtful points of customary law in favour of the King: but by Louis XV.'s time they had in fact become the champions of the quasi-constitutional rights of the respectable citizens from the formally legal point of view, and were invariably opposed on the one hand to the Jesuits and on the other to the Freethinkers.

The Regency which succeeded to the reign of Louis XIV. saw the definite beginnings of the last corruption which betokened the Revolution. The wars of aggrandisement still went on but were now generally unsuccessful; the industrialism set agoing by Colbert progressed steadily; but the profits to be gained by it did not satisfy the more adventurous spirits of the period, and the Regency saw a curious exposition of stock-jobbery before its time in the form of the Mississippi scheme of Law, which had its counterpart in England in the South-Sea

Bubble. It was a financing operation—to get something out of nothing—founded on the mercantile theory of economy then current, which showed but an imperfect knowledge of the industrial revolution beginning under men's very eyes, and assumed that the wealth of a country consists in the amount of the precious metals which it can retain. This assumption, we may observe, is curiously exemplified in the half-commercial, half-buccaneering romances of Defoe.

The free-thinkers before-named were the essence of the bourgeois party from its intellectual side, as the parliaments were from the legal side. These two elements formed all that there was of opposition till the first mutterings of definite revolution were heard, though of course the importance of the thinkers was out of all proportion to that of the lawyer-parliaments. The accession of the once Dauphin, now Louis XVI, to the throne, was hailed by the *philosophers*, especially as his calling Turgot to reform the finances was justly considered a sign of his sincerity. But his attempts in this direction were frustrated by the Court oligarchy; and as a result the discontent of the respectable bourgeois opposition became a rallying-point for the elements of the actual revolution; for though it meant nothing but intelligent conservatism, it formed a screen behind which the true revolutionary forces could gather for the attack on privilege.

It is necessary to say something about the literature and art of France before the Revolution, because that country is the especial exponent, particularly in art, of the degradation which indicated the rottenness of society.

As in England, literature was formal and stilted, and produced little except worthlessly clever essays and still more worthless verses that have no claim to be called poetry. The French verse-makers, however, aimed at something higher than the English, and produced works which depend on pomp and style for any claim to attention they may have, and for the rest are unreal and lifeless. Amidst them all one name stands forward as representing some reality—Moliére, to wit. But the life and genuineness of his comedies serves to show the corruption of the times as clearly as the dead classicalism of Racine: for he, the one man of genius of the time, was driven into the expression of mere cynicism. In one remarkable passage of his works he shows a sympathy for the ballad-poetry of the people, which, when noticed at all in England at the same period, and even much later, received a kind of indulgent patronage rather than admiration. At the same time, as there was a sham tragedy current at this period, so also there Was a sham love of simplicity. The ladies and gentlemen of the period ignored the real peasants who were the miserable slaves of the French landlords, and invented in their dramas, poems, and pictures sham shepherds and peasants, who were bundles of conscious unreality,

inane imitations of the later classics. This literature and art would be indeed too contemptible Tor mention, if it were not a sign of a society rotting into revolution. The fine arts, which had in the end of the sixteenth century descended from the expression of the people's faith and aspirations into that of the fancy, ingenuity, and whim of gifted individuals, fell lower still. They lost every atom of beauty and dignity, and retained little even of the ingenuity of the earlier Renaissance, becoming mere expensive and pretentious though carefully-finished upholstery, mere adjuncts of pomp and state, the expression of the insolence of riches and the complacency of respectability. Once again it must be said of the art, as of the general literature of the period, that no reasonable man could even bestow a passing glance at it but for the incurable corruption of society that it betokens.

Here, then, we have in France a contrast to the state of things in England. No constitutionalism was here; nothing but an absolutism despised even by the privileged classes; a government unable to move in the direction of progress, even when, as in the case of Louis XVI, its head had a tendency to the intelligent conservatism above mentioned; bankrupt also amidst a people broken down, and a commerce hampered by the exactions of the hereditary privilege which was its sole support; discredited by unsuccessful wars, so that the door was shut to its ambition on that road; at home it had to face uneasily the new abstract ideas of liberty and the rights of man. These ideas were professed, indeed, by those who had an interest in preserving the existing state of things, but were listened to and pondered over by people who found that state of things unbearable.

The contrast between the condition of England and France, produced in either case by the unconscious development toward essential change, is remarkable. In England the material condition of the country was good, under the regime of successful whiggery; the middle classes were prosperous and contented; the working classes were keeping their heads above water in tolerable comfort, and nothing was further from their thoughts than that revolutionary change, to which nevertheless they were drifting swiftly but quietly.

On the other hand, France was impoverished by the long wars of the Grand Monarch; the lower classes were sunk in misery obvious to the most superficial observer. The commercial middle classes were discontented and uneasy under the pressure of the remains of feudalism, which seemed to them to be still flourishing, though it was but the lifeless trunk of the old tree, already sapped by Louis XIV. To crown all there was a spirit of intellectual dissaffection in the air. The theories of liberty and rationalism, though originally derived from English thinkers, were developed and put into literary form by the coterie of French writers (already

mentioned) who took the name of Les Philosophes, and in this form they produced far more effects than they did in the country of their birth, supplying the formulae of the actual Revolution. The names of Voltaire and Rousseau, even apart from the Encyclopædists, show how eagerly the new theories were being received. In short the whole aspect of affairs was far more dramatic in France than in England; as was likely to be the case, since in France the Revolution was doomed to be primarily political, and in England mainly industrial.

CHAPTER XI
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: CONSTITUTIONAL STAGE

THE bankruptcy towards which France was staggering under the regime of an untaxed privileged noblesse drove the Court into the dangerous step of attempting to do something, and after desperate efforts to carry on the old corruption by means of financing operations under Calonne and others, aided by an assembly of the "Notables," which was a kind of irregular taxing council, the Court was at last compelled to summon the States-General to meet on the 4th May 1789. This was a body which was pretty much analogous to a Parliament of our mediæval kings, that is little more than a machine for levying taxes, but which attempted to sell its fiscal powers to the King for redress of certain grievances. This States-General had not met since 1614. Bickering between the three houses,—Clergy, Noblesse, and Commons,—immediately began, but the latter, which was middle-class in spirit though including some of the lower nobility, gave tokens of its coming predominance from the first. On the 20th of June the Court attempted a *coup d'état,* and the Third Estate held its celebrated session in the Tennis Court, and so broke with the old feudal idea, and became the constituent "National Assembly," the Court making a feeble resistance at the time.

Concurrently with this legal and constitutional movement came what M. Taine well calls "the spontaneous anarchy" of the peasants in the Provinces, with which the attack of Réveillon's Factory in Paris was in sympathy. The King, Queen and Court expected to put down these disturbances easily, but the occurrences on the night of the Necker demonstration, in which the French guards (who had not hesitated to fire on the Réveillon rioters) assisted the people against the cavalry called the Royal German regiment, became an event which really made an end of the hopes of the Court of crushing the movement by military force.

The next act of the popular revolution was the taking of the Bastille: this ancient castle was obnoxious to the revolutionists for being from its earliest foundation a royal fortress for the repression of the vassals, and in its later times had become a symbol of royal privilege, and the prison where the infamous *lettres de cachet* were executed.

The slaying of Berthier and Foulon, the types of fiscal extortioners, that followed this event should be noted here as the first example of that wild popular justice, in which the element of revenge played so great a part.

The Court gave way at once; the King visited Paris as a sign of submission, and certain of the higher nobility fled from the coming ruin.

The ground thus cleared for it, the Constitutional Revolution went on apace; feudal titles were abolished, the Church reduced to a salaried official department; the very geography of the country was changed, the old provinces with their historic names abolished, and France divided into eighty-three departments called after the rivers and other natural features; everything was to be reduced to a pattern, constitutional, centralised, bourgeois, bureaucracy.

But the other element of revolution was also stirring. The alliance of the mere starvelings could not be done without by the bourgeoisie, and they had 1t whether they would or no. A Jacquerie had arisen in the country, and armed peasants everywhere burned the chateaux or country-houses of the gentlemen, and hunted away their occupants. The Revolution was necessarily accompanied by the dislocation of all industry, aggravated by bad harvests, and the scarcity was bitterly felt everywhere.

In the midst of this the Court, recovering from the first blow of the taking of the Bastille, began to plot counterrevolution, and devised a scheme for getting the King away from Versailles to Rouen or elsewhere, and putting him at the head of a reactionary army and an opposition reactionary Assembly. A banquet given by the Court to a regiment supposed to be loyal, practically exposed this plot, and amidst all the terror and irritation which it gave rise to, a popular rising headed by the famous march of the women on Versailles came to the aid of the Assembly, and forced the King to go to Paris and take up his abode at the Tuileries. In this affair the mere Sansculotte element became very obvious. It was stirred up by the artificial famine caused by the financial and stock-jobbing operations of the Court, and of private persons, the popular middle-class minister, Necker, having been the immediate cause of it by his issue of small paper money. It was opposed by the bourgeois soldiery, the National Guard, headed by Lafayette, who was the embodiment of the Constitutional Revolution. This was followed by a further flight of the noblesse and higher bourgeoisie from France, which flight, as it were, gave a token of the complete victory of Constitutionalism over the Court party.

For some time the King, or rather the Queen and Court carried on a struggle against the victorious middle classes, apparently unconscious of its extreme hopelessness; while the bourgeois government for its part was quite prepared to put down any

popular movement, all the more as it now had a formidable army in the shape of the National Guard. But by this time there had arisen a kind of People's Parliament. outside the Assembly, the famous Jacobins Club and the Cordelier Club to wit, and the sky was darkening over for triumphant Constitutionalism.

That triumph was celebrated by the great feast of the Champ de Mars, 13th July 1790, when the King in the presence of delegates from all France swore to the Constitution. But Royalist plots went on all the same, and settled down at last into a fixed conclusion of the flight of the King to the north-eastern frontier, where were the remains of what regular army could be depended on, with the threatening Austrian troops at their back. As a trial the King attempted at Easter to get as far as St. Cloud, announcing his determination as a matter of course; but he was stopped by a mixed crowd not wholly Sansculotte, though Lafayette did his best to help royalty turned quasi-constitutional, in the pinch. At last on the 20th June, the King and the royal family made the great attempt, in which they would most probably have succeeded, if they had not hampered themselves with all kinds of absurd appliances of wealth and luxury, and if they had had any idea of the kind of stake they were playing for. As it was in spite of, or perhaps partly because of, their having arranged for various detachments of troops to meet them on the way as escorts, they were stopped at the little town of Varennes and brought back again to Paris. It was a token of the progress of ideas, that by this time the King's presence in Paris was looked at from a twofold point of view. By the pure constitutionalists as the necessary coping stone to the Constitution, without which it could not stand; but by the revolutionists as a hostage held by the French people in the face of hostile reactionary Europe. Also now the word Republic was first put forward, and at last it became clear that there were two parties amongst those who were making the Constitution,— the constitutional Royalists and the Republicans.

The latter were supported by the people, who flooded the Assembly with petitions for the deposition of the King; the Assembly decided against it on the ground of the legal fiction familiar to the anti-Royalist party in our Parliamentary wars, that the King had been carried off by evil and traitorous councillors. But the split between the parties was emphasised by bloodshed. A Jacobin petition lay for signature on the altar of the Country in the Champ de Mars, and great crowds were about it signing and looking on. In the evening Lafayette marched on the Champ de Mars with a body of National Guards, proclaimed martial law by the hoisting of the red flag, according to the recently made enactment, and finally fired on the people, killing many of them.

But in spite of this "massacre of the Champ de Mars," the Constitutionalists triumphed for a time. The National Assembly completed its work, and produced a constitution wholly bourgeois and monarchical, which was accepted by the King amidst one of those curious outbursts of sentiment of which the epoch was so fruitful, and which generally, as on this occasion, included the exhibition of the little Dauphin in the arms of his mother to the crowd. The National Assembly dissolved itself after enacting that none of its members could be elected to the new legislative body or first Parliament of the Revolution. Of this Parliament the bourgeois Republicans, the aristocracy of talent, became apparently far the most powerful party: whatever there was of talent that had frankly accepted the alliance of the Sansculottes was outside the Legislature. But another element was now added to the contest, that of foreign war, Austria beginning the attack. The obvious and necessary sympathy of the King and Court with what had now become their only chance of salvation, was met by the equally necessary terror and indignation of the revolutionists of all shades, which of course strengthened the extreme party, who had everything to lose from the success of a foreign invasion. In spite of this the King, driven into a corner, was in constant contention with the Legislature, and used his constitutional right of veto freely, yet was driven to accept a revolutionary Ministry with Roland at its head; but as the hope of deliverance from the invasion grew on him he dismissed it again, and the Court found itself ticketed with the name of the *Austrian Committee*. On the 20th June a popular demonstration invaded the Tuileries, which was organised by the Girondists (at that time the dominant revolutionary party whom Louis was attacking directly), an event that marked the failure of the King's attempt to reign constitutionally by means of party government.

As a constitutional counter-stroke Lafayette, quite misunderstanding his strength, left the army, and tried to stir up the Constitutionalists to attack the Jacobins, but failed ignominiously and presently fled the country. The King once more swearing to the Constitution at the Feast of the Federates, wore armour underneath his clothes, and insurrection was obviously brewing. The Court fortified the Tuileries and gathered about them whatever Royalist force was available, including the Swiss Guard; and a desperate resistance was prepared for with the faint hope of the King being able to cut himself out and reach the frontier; but the 10th of August ended the matter. Those Constitutionalists who had any intention of supporting the Court found their hearts failing them, and even the "constitutional" battalions of the National Guard were prepared to take the popular side. The King and royal family left the Tuileries for the Legislature, leaving no orders for the unlucky Swiss, who with mechanical military courage stood their ground. The

insurrectionary sections attacked the Tuileries and carried it, though not without heavy loss—1200 killed, the Swiss being all slain except a few who were carried off to prison. On the 13th August, the King and his family were bestowed as prisoners in the Temple, and the first act of the Revolution had come to an end.

CHAPTER XII
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: THE PROLETARIAN STAGE

THE insurrection of the 10th August, which culminated in the final downfall of the monarchy and the imprisonment of the King and royal family in the Temple, was headed and organised by a new body definitely revolutionary, intended to be the expression of the power of the proletariat, to wit, the Commune of Paris, the moving spirit of which was Marat, who even had a seat of honour assigned to him in its hall. Already, before the King had been sent to the Temple, the Girondin Vergniaud, as president, had moved the suspension of the “hereditary representative” and the summoning of a national Convention. Danton was made minister of justice; and a new Court of Criminal Justice was established for the trial of political offences. The members of the Convention were chosen by double election, but the property qualification of “active and passive citizens" was done away with.

While all this was going on, the movement of the reactionary armies on France was still afoot; and the furious flame of French national enthusiasm, which was afterwards used by the self-seeking conqueror Napoleon, was lighted by the necessity of the moment—not to be extinguished in days long after his. We mention this here because, in order to appreciate what follows, it must be remembered that an armed coalition of the absolutist countries was gathering together, threatening to drown the Revolution in the blood of the French people, and especially of the people of Paris; that one of its armies, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, a famous general of Frederick the Great, was already within a few days’ march of the city; that nothing was between Paris and destruction but undisciplined levies and the rags of the neglected army formed under the old regime; while at the same time the famous royalist insurrection had broken out in La Vendée. Every republican in Paris, therefore, had good reason to feel that both his own life and the future of his country were in immediate danger at the hands of those who did not care what became of France and her people so long as the monarchy could be restored.

Danton now demanded a search for arms, which was carried out on 29th August; and the prisons were filled with prisoners suspected of royalist plotting, and many of them surely guilty of it.

Verdun fell on the 2nd September, and the Duke of Brunswick boasted that he would presently dine in Paris; and on the same night the irregular trials and slaughter of the prisoners in Paris, known as the September Massacres, took place.

The next day a circular was issued by the Committee of Public Safety, approving of the massacre, signed by Sergent, Panis (Danton's friend), and Marat, with seven others.

The Girondins in the Assembly and elsewhere kept quiet for the time, though they afterwards used the event against the Jacobins.

Meanwhile the French army, under Dumouriez, had seized on the woodland hills of the Argonne, checked Brunswick, defeated him at Valmy, and Paris was saved.

The Convention now met—on the 20th September—and the parties of the Girondins and the Mountain, or extreme revolutionists, were at once formed in it. It is noteworthy that while it declared as its foundation the sovereignty of the people and the abolition of royalty, it also decreed that landed and other property was sacred for ever. Apropos of which, it may here be mentioned that the bookseller Momoro, having hinted at something like agrarian law, and some faint shadow of Socialism, had to go into hiding to avoid hanging.

So far, therefore, we have got no further than the complete triumph of bourgeois republicanism. The possibility, notwithstanding, of its retaining its position depended, as the event showed, on the support of the proletariat, which was only given on the terms that the material condition of the workers should be altered for the better by the new regime. And those terms, in the long run, bourgeois republicanism could not keep, and therefore it fell.

The Girondins or moderate party in the Convention began their assault on the Jacobins on the subject of the September Massacres, and also by attacking Marat personally, which attack, however, failed egregiously. The Girondins, as their name implies, leaned on the support of the provinces, where respectability was stronger than in Paris, and tried to levy a bodyguard for the defence of the Convention against the Paris populace; but though they got the decree for it passed, they could not carry it out. In their character of political economists, also, they resisted the imposing of a maximum price on grain, a measure which the scarcity caused by the general disturbance made imperative, if the proletariat were to have any share in the advantages of the Revolution. In short, the Girondins were obviously out of sympathy with the mass of the people.

The trial of the King now came on, and tested the Girondins in a fresh way; they mostly voted his death, but as if driven to do so from a feeling that opinion was

against them, and that they might as well have some credit for it. Louis was beheaded on the 21st January 1793, and as an immediate consequence England and Spain declared war. But this business of the King made a kind of truce between the parties, which, however, soon came to an end. Marat was the great object of attack, and on the 25th February 1793 he was decreed accused on account of some passages in his journal approving of the bread riots which had taken place, and suggesting the hanging of a forestaller or two. On the other hand, on the 10th March the section Bonconseil demanded the arrest of the prominent Girondins. Meantime, Danton had been trying all along to keep the peace between the two parties, but on 1st April the Girondins accused him of complicity with Dumouriez, who had now fled over the frontier, and so forced him into becoming one of their most energetic enemies. The position of the Girondins was now desperate. On the 24th March Marat was acquitted and brought back in triumph to the Convention.

The Girondins got a packed committee of twelve appointed in the interest of the Convention as against the Paris sections. As an answer to this a central committee of the sections was formed, which on 31st May dominated the Municipality (not loth to be so dealt with) and surrounded the Convention with troops. After an attempt on the part of the Girondins to assert their freedom of action, the Convention decreed them accused, and they were put under arrest. They died afterwards, some by the guillotine, some even more miserably, within a few months; but their party is at an end from this date. All that happened in the Convention from this time to the fall of Robespierre in “Thermidor” was the work of a few revolutionists, each trying to keep level with the proletarian instinct, and each falling in turn. They had not the key to the great secret; they were still bourgeois, and still supposed that there must necessarily be a propertiless proletariat led by bourgeois, or at least served by them; they had not conceived the idea of the extinction of classes, and the organisation of the people itself for its own ends.

Marat’s death at the hand of Charlotte Corday, on 14th July, removed the only real rival to Robespierre, and the only man who could have modified the extravagance of the Terror.

The law of maximum was now passed, however, and a cumulative income tax, so that, as Carlyle remarks, the workman was at least better off under the Terror than he had ever been before.

Robespierre, Danton, and the Hebertists were now what of force was left in the Convention, and the first of these was not slow to make up his mind to get the reins of power into his own hands. Meantime, an attempt was made to institute a new

worship founded on Materialism; but, like all such artificial attempts to establish what is naturally the long growth of time, it failed. Chaumette, Hebert, and their followers were the leaders in this business, which Robespierre disapproved of, and Danton growled at.

The Extraordinary Tribunal under Fouquier Tinville, the agent of the Terror, speedily got rid of all *obstacles* to the Revolution, and of many of the foremost rank of its supporters. Robespierre became at last practical dictator, partly owing to his adroit steering between the parties, and his industry and careful painstaking, and partly to his reputation for incorruptibility and republican asceticism.

The Hebertists, who were so called from Hebert, their leader, and who represented the proletarian instinct or germ of Socialism, under the name of the "Enragés" (rabids), were accused at Robespierre's instance, found guilty and executed. Danton, giving way it would seem to some impulse towards laziness inherent in his nature, let himself be crushed, and died along with Camille Desmoulins on 31st March 1794, and at last Robespierre was both in reality and appearance supreme. On the 8th June he inaugurated *his* new worship by his feast of the Supreme Being, and two days later got a law passed (the law Prairial) which enabled him to condemn any one to the guillotine at pleasure; and at this ominous grumblings began to be heard. According to a story current, Carnot got by accident at a list of forty to be arrested, among whom he read his own name.

On the 26th July Robespierre was met by unexpected opposition in the Convention. The next day he was decreed accused at the Convention, and Henriot deposed from the commandership of the National Guard; but there was a respite which a more ready man, a man of military instinct at least, might have used. Robespierre lacked that instinct; Henriot failed miserably in his attempt to crush the Convention. The armed sections of Paris, on being appealed to by the Convention, wavered and gave way, and Robespierre was arrested. In fact, Robespierre seems to have worn out the patience of the people by his continued executions. Had he proclaimed an amnesty after his Feast of the Supreme Being, he would probably have had a longer lease of power; as it was he and his tail died on the 28th July.

There was nothing left to carry on the Revolution after this but a knot of self-seeking politicians of the usual type; they had only to keep matters going until they were ready for the dictator who could organise for his own purposes people and army, and who came in the shape of Napoleon. The proletarians were no longer needed as allies, and disunited, ignorant of principles, and used to trust to leaders, they could make no head against the Society, which they had shaken

indeed, owing to its internal dissensions, but which they were not yet able to destroy.

One event only there remains to be mentioned, the attempt of Baboeuf and his followers to get a proletarian republic recognised; it has been called an insurrection, but it never came to that, being crushed while it was yet only the beginning of a propaganda. Baboeuf and his followers were brought to trial in April 1796. He and Darthes were condemned to death, but killed themselves before the sentence could be carried out. Ten others were condemned to prison and exile; and so ended the first Socialist propaganda.

It is commonly said that Napoleon crushed the Revolution, but what he really did was to put on it the final seal of law and order. The Revolution was set on foot by the middle classes in their own interests; the sentence that Napoleon accepted as the expression of his aims, “la carriére ouverte aux talens”—“the career thrown open to talent”—is the motto of middle-class supremacy. It implies the overthrow of aristocratic privilege and the setting up in its place of a money aristocracy, founded on the privilege of exploitation, amidst a world of so-called “free competition.” The middle-class, the first beginnings of which we saw formed in mediæval times, after a long and violent struggle, has conquered and is supreme from henceforth.

CHAPTER XIII
THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

IN the last chapter, wherein the condition of England was dealt with, we left it a prosperous country, in the ordinary sense of the word, under the rule of an orderly constitutionalism. There was no need here for the violent destruction of aristocratic privilege; it was of itself melting into money-privilege; and all was getting ready for the completest and securest system of the plunder of labour which the world has yet seen.

England was comparatively free in the bourgeois sense; there were far fewer checks than in France to interfere with the exaction of the tribute which labour has to pay to property to be allowed to live. In a word, on the one hand, exploitation was veiled; and on the other, the owners of property had no longer any duties to perform in return for the above-said tribute. Nevertheless, all this had to go on on a small scale for a while.

Population had not increased largely since the beginning of the seventeenth century; agriculture was flourishing; one-thirtieth of the grain raised was exported from England; the working classes were not hard pressed, and could not yet be bought and sold in masses. There were no large manufacturing towns, and no need for them; the presence of the material to be worked up, rather than the means for working it mechanically—fuel, to wit—gave a manufacturing character to this or that country-side. It was, for example, the sheep-pastures of the Yorkshire hillsides, and not the existence of coal beneath them, which made the neighbourhood of the northern Bradford a weaving country. Its namesake on the Wiltshire Avon was in those days at least as important a centre of the clothing industry. The broadcloth of the Gloucestershire valleys, Devonshire and Hampshire kersies, Witney blankets and Chipping Norton tweeds, meant sweet grass and long wool, with a little water-power, and not coal, to turn the fulling-mills, to which material to be worked up was to be brought from the four quarters of the globe.

The apparent condition of labour in those days seems almost idyllic, compared with what it now is; but it must be remembered that then as now the worker was in the hands, of the monopolist of land and raw material; nor was it likely that the latter should have held his special privilege for two hundred years without applying some system whereby to develop and increase it.

Between the period of the decay of the craft-guilds and this latter half of the eighteenth century there had grown up a system of labour which could not have been applied to the mediæval workmen; for they worked for themselves and not for a master or exploiter, and thus were masters of their material, their tools and their time. This system is that of Division of Labour; under it the unit of labour is not an individual man, but a group, every member of which is helpless by himself, but trained by constant practice to the repetition of a small part of the work, acquires great precision and speed in its performance. In short, each man is not so much a machine as a part of a machine. For example, it takes five men to make a glass bottle: it is the group of these five men that makes the bottle, not any one of them. It is clear that under this system the individual workman is entirely at the mercy of his master the capitalist in his capacity of superintender of labour: in order not to be crushed by him, he must combine to oppose his own interests to those of his employer.

It was by this method, then, that the demands of the growing world-market were supplied down to the end of the eighteenth century. The great political economist, Adam Smith, whose book was first published in 1771, marks the beginning of the transition between this system and that of the great machine industries; but his work implies throughout the Division of Labour system.

That system was now to melt into the new one: the workman, from being a machine, was to become the auxiliary of a machine. The invention of the spinning-jenny by Hargreaves in 1760 is the first event of the beginning of this Industrial Revolution. From thence to the utilisation of steam as a motive-force, and thence again to our own days, the stream of invention has been continuous. The discovery that iron could be made with pit-coal removed the seat of the iron manufacture from the wooded countries of the south and west, where on iron-works, called “bloomeries,” used to be carried on, and in which wood was the fuel used, to the northern and midland coal districts, and all manufacture of any importance flowed to the seat of fuel, so that South Lancashire, for instance, was changed from a country of moorland and pasture, with a few market towns and the ancient manufacturing city of Manchester, into a district where the “villages,” still so called, but with populations of from fifteen or twenty to thirty thousand souls, are pretty much contiguous, and the country has all but disappeared. Of course a great part of this is the work of the years that have followed on the invention of railways; but even in the earlier period of this industrial revolution the change was tremendous and sudden, and the sufferings of the working classes very great, as no attempt was made to alleviate the distress that was inevitably caused by the change from the use of human hands to machinery. Nor indeed could it have been made in

a country governed by bourgeois constitutionalism until measures were actually forced on the Government.

In 1811 the prevailing distress was betokened by the first outbreak of the Luddites. These were organised bands of men who went about breaking up the machinery which was the immediate cause of their want of employment and consequent starvation. The locality where these riots were most frequent was the northern midland counties, where the newly-invented stocking-frames were specially obnoxious to them. The Luddites became the type of bodies of rioters who by a half-blind instinct throughout this period threw themselves against the advancing battalions of industrial revolution.

In 1816, the year which followed the peace with France, the cessation of all the war industries threw still more people out of employment, and in addition the harvest was a specially bad one. As a consequence, this hunger insurrection was particularly vigorous in that year. The riots were put down with corresponding violence, and the rioters punished with the utmost harshness. But as times mended somewhat, this insurrection, which was, as we have said, a mere matter of hunger, and was founded on no principle, died out, although for a time riots having for their object destruction of property, especially of the plant and stock of manufacturers, went on through the whole of the first half of the century. The “Plug Riots,” in the middle of the Chartist agitation, may be taken for an example of these[13]

It was a necessary consequence of the introduction of elaborate machinery that women and children should be largely employed in factories to diminish the number of adult males. This resource for the development of the profits of the new system was used by the manufacturers with the utmost recklessness, till at last it became clear to the bourgeois government that the scandal created by its abuse would put an end to its use altogether, unless something were done to palliate its immediate evils. Accordingly a series of Factory Acts were passed, in the teeth of the most strenuous and unscrupulous resistance on the part of the capitalists, who grudged the immediate loss which resulted in the hampering of the “roaring trade” they were driving, even though it were for the ultimate benefit of their class. The first of these Acts which was really intended to work was passed in 1830, and they were consolidated finally in 1867. It should be understood that they were not intended to benefit the great mass of adult workers, but were rather concessions to the outcry of the philanthropists at the condition of the women and children so employed.

It must be remembered also that the political conflict between the landed gentry and the manufacturers forced on this reform.

Meanwhile, in spite of all the suffering caused by the Industrial Revolution, it was impossible for the capitalists to engross the whole of the profits gained by it, or at least to go on piling them up in an ever-increasing ratio. The class struggle took another form, besides that of mere hunger riots and forcible repression, the Trades Unions to wit. Although the primary intention of these was the foundation of benefit societies, which had been one of the practical uses to which the guilds of the early Middle Ages had been put, like them also they had at last to take in hand matters dealing with the regulation of labour.

The first struggles of the trades unions with capital took place while they were still illegal; but the repeal of the law against the combination of workmen in 1824 set them partially free in that respect, and they soon began to be a power in the country. Aided by the rising tide of commercial prosperity, which made the capitalists more willing to yield up some part of their enormous profits rather than carry on the struggle *à l'outrance,* they prevailed in many trade contests, and succeeding in raising the standard of livelihood for skilled workmen, though of course in ridiculous disproportion to the huge increase in the sum of the national income. Further than this it was and is impossible for them to go, so long as they recognise the capitalists as a necessary part of the organisation of labour. It was not at first understood by the capitalist class that they did so recognise them, and consequently in the period of their early successes the trades unions were considered rather as dangerous revolutionists than as a part of the capitalist system, which was their real position, and were treated to that kind of virulent and cowardly abuse and insult which the shopkeeper in terror for his shop always has at his tongue's end.

The abolition of the corn-laws in 1846 and the consequent cheapening of necessary food for the workers, the discovery of gold in California and Australia, the prodigious increase in the luxury and expenditure of the upper and muddle classes, all the action and reaction of the commercial impulse created by the great machine industries, gave an appearance of general prosperity to the country, in which, as we have said, the skilled workmen did partake to a certain extent; and the views of middle-class optimists as to the continuance of bourgeois progress, and the gradual absorption of all the "thrifty and industrious" part of the working classes into its ranks seemed confirmed until within the last few years; all the more as the practical triumph of the Liberal party had ceased to make "politics" a burning question. Nevertheless, as a sign that the underground lava had not ceased flowing, it was noticed that ever since the ripening of the great industries, in periods of about ten years came recurring depressions of trade. These were accounted for in various ingenious ways, but otherwise did not trouble the capitalist mind, which got to

consider this also, because of its regular recurrence, to be a sign of the stability of the present system, merely looking upon it as something to be taken into the general average and insured against in the usual manner. But within the last few years this latest eternal bourgeois providence has failed us. In spite of the last partial revival of trade, depression dogs us with closer persistence. The nations whom we assumed would never do anything but provide us with raw materials, have become our rivals in manufacture, and our competitors in the world-market; while owing to the fact that America has enormous stretches of easily tilled virgin soil, which does not need manure, and that the climate of India makes it easy to support life there, those two countries supply us with such large amounts of grain, and at so cheap a rate, that raising it in England has become unprofitable; hence the farmers are poor, and the landlords cannot get the same rents for agricultural land as formerly. The exports have fallen off; towns where a dozen years ago trade was flourishing and wages high, are now encumbered with a population which they cannot find employment for; and though from time to time there are rumours of improvement in trade, little comes of them, and people are obliged to await some stroke of magic that shall bring us back our old prosperity “of leaps and bounds.” A new commercial revolution has been for some time supplementing the first one, and we are now in the epoch of the *perfecting* of the machines *invented* in the earlier years of the great industry. Its result is the condensation of cognate businesses and vastly improved organisation of production. This means the gradual extinction of the “merchant” or middleman between the manufacturer and the retail dealer, and lastly and especially an extremely rapid progress in the supplanting of hand industry by machinery; so that the time seems not far distant when handicraft will have entirely ceased to exist in the production of utilities.

The fact is that the commerce of the great industries has entered insensibly into its second stage, and sheer cut-throat competition between the different nations has taken the place of the benevolent commercial despotism of the only nation which was thoroughly prepared to take advantage of the first stages of Industrial Revolution—Great Britain, to wit.

This second stage is assuredly preparing the final one, which will end with the death of the whole bourgeois commercial system. Meanwhile, what is the real social product of the Industrial Revolution? We answer the final triumph of the middle classes, materially, intellectually, and morally. As the result of the great political revolution in France was the abolition of aristocratic privilege, and the domination in the world of politics of the bourgeoisie, which hitherto had had little to do with it, so the English Industrial Revolution may be said to have created a new commercial middle class hitherto unknown to the world. This class on the one

hand consolidated all the groups of the middle class of the preceding epoch, such as country squires, large and small, big farmers, merchants, manufacturers, shopkeepers, and professional men; and made them so conscious of their solidarity, that the ordinary refined and thinking man of to-day cannot really see any other class at all, but only, outside his own class, certain heterogeneous groups to be used as instruments for the further advancement of that class, On the other hand, it has attained such complete domination that the upper classes are merely adjuncts to it and servants of it. In fact, these also are now of the bourgeoisie, as they are all engaged in commerce in one way or other: thus the higher nobility are all either house-agents, spirit merchants, coal-factors, or company-promoters, and would be of no importance without their "businesses." Moreover, striving ever to extend itself downwards as well as upwards, the middle class has absorbed so much in that direction, especially within the last thirty years, that it has now nothing left below it except the mere propertiless proletariat. These last are wholly dependent upon tit, utterly powerless before it, until the break up of the system that has created it (the signs of whose beginning we have just noted), shall force them 1nto a revolt against it. In the course of that revolt this great middle class will in its turn be absorbed into the proletariat, which will form a new society in which classes shall have ceased to exist. This is the next Revolution, as inevitable, as inexorable, as the rising of to-morrow’s sun.

Footnotes

13. This meant destruction of boilers in factories, the rioters pulling out the plugs to ensure their bursting.

CHAPTER XIV
POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN ENGLAND

DURING the French Revolution, especially during its earlier stages, there was a corresponding movement in England. This was partly an intellectual matter, led by a few aristocrats—like the Earl of Stanhope—and had no connection with the life of the people; it was rather a piece of aristocratic Bohemianism, a tendency to which has been seen in various times, even our own. But it was partly a popular ferment in sympathy with the general spirit of the French Revolution, was widespread, and was looked upon as dangerous by the Government, who repressed the agitation with a high-handed severity which would seem almost incredible in our times.

The French Revolution naturally brought about a great reaction, not only in absolutist countries, but also in England, the country of Constitutionalism; and this reaction was much furthered and confirmed by the fall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons in France, and all the doings and incapacities of the Holy Alliance. We may take as representative names of this reaction the Austrian Prince Metternich on the Continent and Lord Castlereagh in England. The stupid and ferocious repression of the governments acting under this influence, as well as the limitless corruption by which they were supported, were met in England by a corresponding progressive agitation, which was the beginning of Radicalism. Burdett and Cartwright are representatives of the early days of this agitation, and later on Hunt, Carlile, Lovett, and others. William Cobbett must also be mentioned as belonging to this period—a man of great literary capacity of a kind, and with flashes of insight as to social matters far before his time, but clouded by violent irrational prejudices and prodigious egotism; withal a peasant rather than a literary man of cultivation—a powerful disruptive agent, but incapable of association with others.

This period of Radical agitation was marked by a piece of violent repression in the shape of the so-called Peterloo Massacre (1819), where an unarmed crowd at a strictly political meeting was charged and cut down by the yeomanry, and eleven people killed outright.[14]

At last, when the country was on the verge of civil war, the Reform Act of 1832 secured the practically complete political emancipation of the new middle class,

which then at once quietly settled down and deserted the proletariat, although the latter had given both its numbers and its blood to aid it in its struggle for political freedom.

Consequently this agitation, which was partly middle-class and partly popular, was succeeded by the further demands of the proletariat for freedom, in the Chartist movement, which was almost exclusively supported by the people, though some of the leaders—as Feargus O'Connor and Ernest Jones—belonged to the middle class. Chartism, on the face of it, was nearly as much a political movement as the earlier Radical one; its programme was largely directed towards parliamentary reform; but, as we have said, it was a popular movement, and its first motive power was the special temporary suffering of the people, due to the disturbance of labour caused by the growth of the machine industry. The electoral and parliamentary reforms of its programme were put forward because it was supposed that if they were carried ultimately, they would affect the material condition of the working classes: at the same time, however, there is no doubt that the pressure of hunger and misery gave rise to other hopes besides the above-mentioned delusion as to reform, and ideas of Socialism were current among the Chartists, though they were not openly put forward on their programme.[15] Accordingly the class-instinct of the bourgeoisie saw the social danger that lurked under the apparently political claims of the charter, and so far from its receiving any of the middle-class sympathy which had been accorded to the Radical agitation, Chartism was looked upon as *the* enemy, and the bourgeois progressive movement was sedulously held aloof from it. It is worthy of note that Chartism was mainly a growth of the Midland and Northern Counties—that is, of the great manufacturing districts newly created—and that it never really flourished in London. In Birmingham the movement had the greatest force, and serious riots took place there while a Chartist conference was sitting in the town. The movement gave birth to a good deal of popular literature, especially considering that the press was very strictly controlled by the Government.

The Chartist movement went on vigorously enough in the Northern and Midland Counties; but, as stated, it never took much hold on London and the South, where there was opposition between the skilled and unskilled workmen, the former belonging to the trades mostly carried on by handicraft. In the North the industrial revolution which had produced the *factory* had mainly done away with this distinction. The insufficiency of its aims, and of knowledge how to effect them, at last found out the weak places in Chartism. The Chartists were mostly, and necessarily so, quite ignorant of the meaning and scope of Socialism; and the economical development was not enough advanced to show the real and permanent cause of the industrial distress. With the first amelioration of that distress therefore

the Chartist party fell to pieces. But the immediate external cause of its wreck was the unfortunate schism that arose between the supporters of moral force and physical force in the body itself. For the rest it seems clear enough to *us* that they had little chance of succeeding on constitutional lines, considering the immense amount of resistance (not all constitutional) with which their demands were met. The historical function of the movement was to express the intense discontent of the working classes with the then state of things; and to pass on the tradition to our own days.

It may here be mentioned that the trump-card which the Chartists were always thinking of playing was the organisation of an universal strike, under the picturesque title of the Sacred Month. In considering the enormous difficulties, or rather impossibilities of this enterprise, we should remember that its supporters understood that the beginnings of it would be at once repressed forcibly, and that it would lead directly to civil war.

From 1842, when the above schism came to a head, Chartism began to die: out. Its decay, however, was far more due to the change that was coming over the economical state of affairs than even to its incomplete development of principle and ill-considered tactics. Things were settling down from the dislocation caused by the rise of the great industries. Apart from the fact that the Chartists were gradually worn out by the long struggle, the working people shared in the added wealth brought about by the enormous expansion of trade, however small that share was; and in consequence became more contented. The trades unions began to recover from the disasters of 1834, and improved the prospects of the skilled workmen. So-called co-operation began to flourish: it was really an improved form of joint-stockery, which could be engaged in by the workmen, but was and is fondly thought by some to be, if not a shoeing-horn to Socialism, at least a substitute for it; indeed Chartism itself in the end became involved in a kind of half co-operative, half peasant-proprietorship land scheme, which of course proved utterly abortive.

As the improvement in the condition of the working classes weakened that part of the life of Chartism that depended on mere hunger desperation, so the growing political power of the s middle classes and the collapse of the Tory reaction swallowed up the political side of its life.

Chartism, therefore, flickered out in the years that followed 1842, but its last act was the celebrated abortive threat at revolt which took place in April 1848. And it must be said that there was something appropriate in such a last act. For this demonstration was distinctly caused by sympathy with the attacks on absolutism

then taking place on the Continent, and Chartism was always on one side of it a phase of the movement which was going on all over Europe, a movement directed against the reaction which followed on the French Revolution, as represented by the "Holy Alliance" of the absolutist sovereigns against both bourgeoisie and people.

On the fall of Chartism, the Liberal party—which as an engine of progress was a party without principles or definition, but has been used as a thoroughly adequate expression of English middle-class hypocrisy, cowardice, and short-sightedness—engrossed the whole of the political progressive movement in England, and dragged the working classes along with it, blind as they were to their own interests and the solidarity of labour. This party has shown little or no sympathy for the progressive movement on the Continent, unless when it deemed 1t connected with current anti-Catholic prejudice. It saw no danger in the Cæsarism which took the place of the corrupt Constitutionalism of Louis Philippe as the head of the police and stock-jobbing regime that dominated France in the interests of the bourgeoisie, and it hailed Louis Napoleon with delight as the champion of law and order.

Any one, even a thoughtful person, might have been excused for thinking in the years that followed on 1848 that the party of the people was at last extinguished in England, and that the class struggle had died out and given place to the peaceable rule of the middle classes, scarcely disturbed by occasional bickerings carried on in a lawful manner between Capital and Labour. But, under all this, Socialism was making great strides and developing a new and scientific phase, which at last resulted 1n the establishment of the International Association, whose aim was to unite the workers of the world in an organisation which should consciously oppose itself to the domination of capitalism.

The International was inaugurated in England in 1864, at a meeting held in St. Martin's Hall, London, at which Professor Beesly took the chair. It made considerable progress among the Trades Unions, and produced a great impression (beyond indeed what its genuine strength warranted) on the arbitrary Governments of Europe. It culminated as to the Socialistic influence it had, in the Commune of Paris, of which we shall treat in a separate chapter. The International did not long outlive the Commune, and once more for several years all proletarian influence was dormant in England, except for what activity was possible among the foreign refugees living there, with whom some few of the English working men had relations. In the year 1881,[16] an attempt was made to federate the various Radical clubs of London under the name of the Democratic Federation. Part of the

heterogeneous elements, mainly the mere political radicals, of which this was composed, withdrew from it in 1883; but other elements, connected with the literary and intellectual side of Socialism, joined it, and soon after the body declared for unqualified Socialism, and took the name of the Social Democratic Federation. This was the first appearance of modern or scientific Socialism in England, and on these grounds excited considerable public attention, though the movement, being then almost wholly intellectual and literary, had not at that time reached the masses.

Differences of opinion, chiefly on points of temporary tactics, caused a schism in the body, and a rival, the Socialist League, was formed, both Societies carrying on an active socialist propaganda, and in process of time often acting in concert. The West-end riots on Monday 8th February 1886, and the consequent trial of four members of the Social Democratic Federation, brought the two organisations much together. A good many branches both of the Federation and the League were founded and carried on with various fortunes. But in the year 1890 dissensions in the League, caused by a considerable anarchistic element, broke it up. In the meantime the Fabian Society, which took form as a Socialist body about the same time as the League, has been actively engaged in propaganda, directing its efforts chiefly to forcing existing political parties to take notice of social questions; and largely also to educating middle-class persons in Socialism. There are other bodies more or less independent, scattered up and down the country, amongst whom may be mentioned the Bristol Socialists, Societies in Aberdeen and Glasgow, and the Hammersmith Socialist Society, the latter being an offshoot of the Socialist League. It must not, however, be supposed that the spread of Socialistic doctrine 1s, in any way, confined to the areas surrounding these local centres of propaganda; on the other hand, its influence will be clearly discernible throughout every industrial community. In spite of mishaps and disputes the movement has taken root in England, and Socialism is beginning to be understood by the working classes at large, the Socialistic instinct being now obvious in all strikes and trade disputes, and having caused the growth of a new unionism based on a frank recognition of the class struggle. And, moreover, the governing classes have been forced to turn their attention to the condition of the workers, so that Parliament, however unwillingly, can no longer ignore their demands as a class, and all existing parties are bidding for their favour and votes. In fact, what has happened to the Socialist agitation is that which happens in all movements beginning with insignificant minorities. If it has lost somewhat for the present in *intention*, it has gained enormously in *extension*, and only awaits increased education and the force of inevitable economic events for it to become general as an opinion; the result of

which will be a corporate action, destined to carry the evolution of modern life into the next great stage—the realisation of a new society with new politics, ethics, and economics, in short, the transformation of Civilisation into Socialism.

Footnotes

14. The improvement in our political position since the end of the eighteenth century is sufficiently shown by such examples as those of John Frost, Winterbotham, William Cobbett, and others, who were fined heavily and imprisoned for the simple expression of opinions that carried with them not the least intention of incitement to revolt.

15. The term Socialists was at this time used to indicate the Utopian Co-operationists, who were blindly opposed to all political movement. There was far more Socialism in our sense of the word amongst the ranks of the Chartists.

16. Since the history of this part of the movement is so recent that it cannot at present be written in any detail, the authors think it advisable not to mention personal names.

CHAPTER XV
REACTION AND REVOLUTION ON THE CONTINENT

WHEN the great war which Napoleon waged against Europe came to an end by his defeat and ruin, France was once more handed over to the Bourbons, and Europe, as we have already seen, fell into the arms of reaction and sheer absolutism. The Holy Alliance, or union of reactionary monarchs, undertook the enterprise of crushing out all popular feeling, or even anything that could be supposed to represent it in the person of the bourgeois.

But the French Revolution had shaken absolutism too sorely for this enterprise to have more than a very partial success even on the surface. The power of absolutism was undermined by various revolutionary societies, mostly (so-called) secret, which attracted to them a great body of sympathy, and in consequence seemed far more numerous and immediately dangerous than they really were. Still there was a great mass of discontent, mostly political in character, and by no means confined to the poorer classes.

This discontent went on gathering head, till in 1830, and again in 1848, it exploded into open revolt against autocracy all over Europe. This revolt, we must repeat, was in the main a mere counter-stroke to the reaction that was diligently striving to restore the aristocratic privilege which the French Revolution had abolished, and to maintain what of it had escaped its attack. In 1830 the revolt was purely bourgeois in character, and was in no sense social, but, as above said, political. In 1848 it had in some places a strong infusion of the proletarian element, which, however, was dominated by middle-class patriotism and ideas which led to the assertion and consolidation of nationalities. This has gone on ever since, and the feeling still exists and in some cases is even rampant. Poland, Hungary, Italy, Servia, Ireland, and France, as represented by her Chauvinists, have all once and again contributed their quotas to this nuisance of “Patriotism,” which has so often in these latter days dragged the red herring over the path of the Revolution.

But a new element was present in these latter revolutionary movements, though at first it did not seem to influence their action much. This was the first appearance in politics of modern or scientific Socialism, in the shape of the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, first published in 1847. The rise and development of this phase will be dealt with in detail further on; at present we can do no more

than call attention to the steady and continuous influence of this last-born Socialism, compared with the rapid extinction of Baboeuf's propaganda, although he had a numerous body of adherents; for this fact marks a very great advance since the end of the eighteenth century.

The general effect, however, at least as seen openly, of these insurrections was little more than the shaking of absolutism and the supplanting of it in various degrees by middle-class constitutionalism; and also, as aforesaid, an added impulse toward the consolidation of nationalities, which later on produced the unification of Italy and of Germany, and the assertion of the independence of the Hungarian state.

In France the outward effects of the insurrection were most obvious and lasted the longest; but the bourgeois institution that took the place of Louis Philippe's corrupt monarchy asserted itself tyrannically enough against the proletariat, and in consequence had no strength left to meet the political adventurer Louis Napoleon, whose plot against the republic received just as much resistance as gave him an excuse for the massacre of 4th December 1851, by means of which he terrorised France for many years. Notwithstanding, as to numbers it was quite insignificant compared with the slaughter which followed the taking of Paris by the bourgeois troops at the time of the fall of the Commune 1n 1871.

This successful stroke had really no relation to any foregoing reactionary dictatorship. It even professed to be founded on democratic feeling, though as a matter of fact it was the expression of the non-political side of bourgeois life—the social and commercial side—the ideal of the shopkeeper grown weary of revolutions and anxious to be let alone to make money and enjoy himself vulgarly. Accordingly France settled down into a period of "law and order," characterised by the most shameless corruption and repulsive shoddy splendour. She got at last into full swing of the rule of successful stock-jobbery, already established in England, and carried it on with less hypocrisy than ourselves, and consequently with more open blackguardism.

To sustain this regime various showy military enterprises were undertaken, some of which it was attempted to invest with a kind of democratic sentiment. It was also of some importance to make at least a show of giving employment to the working classes of France. This principally took the form of the rebuilding of Paris and the restoration, or vulgarisation, of the mediæval cathedrals and public buildings, in which France is richer than any other country; so that this apotheosis of middle-class vulgarity has left abiding tokens of its presence in a loss that can never be repaired. Yet in spite of this militarism and the attempt to gain the support of the proletarians by gifts of "bread and pageants," discontent of various kind

sprang up and steadily increased. Moreover, the new birth of Socialism was beginning to bear fruit; the Communistic propaganda got firm hold of the city proletariat of France. Socialism was steadily preached in Paris at La Villette and Belleville, the latter, originally laid out and built upon as an elegant suburb for rich bourgeois, having proved a failure, and become a purely workman's quarter in consequence.

While all this was going on as it were underground, the Cæsarism of the stock-exchange was also beginning to get the worst of it in the game of statecraft, until at last the results of the consolidation of nationalities, which was the chief aim of the bourgeois revolt of 1848, became obvious in the revival of the old animosities between Germany and France. Bismarck, who had become the attorney-dictator of Germany, had got to know the weakness of the showy empire of Louis Napoleon, and had a well warranted confidence in that carefully elaborated machine, the Prussian army. He laid a trap for the French Cæsar, who fell into it, perhaps not blindly, but rather driven by a kind of gambler's last hope, akin to despair.

A great race war followed, the natural and inevitable outcome of which was the hopeless defeat of the French army, led as it was by self-seekers and corrupt scoundrels of the worst kind, most of whom lacked even that lowest form of honour which makes a Dugald Dalgetty faithful to the colours under which he marches. The Second Empire was swept away. The new Republic proclaimed after the collapse of Sedan still kept up a hopeless resistance to the unbroken strength of Germany—hopeless, since the corruption of the Empire still lived on in the bourgeois republic, as typified in the person of the political gamester, Gambetta. Paris was invested, and taken after a long resistance that reflected infinite credit on the general population, who bore the misery of the siege with prodigious patience and courage, but no less disgrace on those who pretended to organise its defence, but who were really far more inclined to hand over the city to the Germans than allow it to gain a victory under the auspices of the proletariat.

All this must be looked upon by Socialists as merely the prelude to the great drama of the Commune, whose aims and influence will form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER XVI
THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871, AND THE CONTINENTAL MOVEMENT FOLLOWING IT

IN dealing with the great event of the Paris Commune, we must take for granted a knowledge of the facts, which are to be found in Lissagaray's work, now translated into English by Mrs. Aveling.

As we have stated before, the International was founded in 1864, under the leadership of Beesly, Marx, and Odger. In 1869, at the Congress of Basel, Marx drew it into the compass of Socialism; and though in England it still remained an indefinite labour body, on the Continent it became at once decidedly Socialistic and revolutionary, and its influence was very considerable.

The progress of Socialism and the spreading feeling of the solidarity of labour was very clearly shown by the noble protest made by the German Socialists[17] against the war with France, in the teeth of a "patriotic" feeling so strong in appearance that it might have been expected to silence any objectors from the first. The result of the war seemed to offer at least a chance for action to the rapidly increasing Socialist party, if they could manage to take advantage of it, and get into their hands the political power; accordingly under guidance of the International, the French Socialists determined to take action if an immediate opportunity offered. Neither did the opportunity fail. The final defeat of the French army at Sedan brought on the fall of the Empire, when Republican France might perhaps have made terms with the invaders, whom the men of the Empire had challenged. But a resistance was organised by Gambetta, at the head of a stock-jobbing clique, whose interests, both commercial and political, forbade them to let the war die out, lest they should find themselves face to face with a people determined to be fleeced no longer. In saying the above we do not deny that this sham patriotism was backed up by a wave of genuine patriotic enthusiasm common to the whole people. The resistance, however, was always quite hopeless from a military point of view,and brought the country to the verge of ruin. It also necessarily involved the German siege of Paris, the result of which was to throw a great deal of power into the hands of the city proletariat, since they at least were in earnest in their opposition to the foreign enemy, and the theatrical resistance necessary to the ambition of the political adventurers who posed as their leaders could not have had a decent face to

put upon it without their enthusiasm. In October, while the siege was still at its height, a rising headed by Blanqui nearly succeeded in overthrowing the bourgeois domination; and after the siege the possession of arms, especially cannon, by the proletariat, in the face of the disarmed and disorganised army under the bourgeois, afforded the opportunity desired by the Socialists. On the failure of Thiers' attempt to disarm Paris—whether he expected it to succeed, or only designed it as a trap to enable him to fall with force of arms on the city we will not decide—on this failure the insurrection took place, and the Central Committee, largely composed of members of the International, got into their own hands the executive power, a great deal of which they retained during the whole existence of the Commune. Their position was strengthened by the fact that, apart from their aims towards the economical freedom of the proletariat, they were, in their aspirations towards genuine federalisation, in appearance at least, in accord with the Radicals who wished to see an advanced municipalism brought about.

As the movement progressed, it became more and more obvious that if the resistance to Thiers and the attempt to establish municipal independence for Paris was to succeed, it must be through the exercise of Socialist influence on the proletariat: the Radicals, therefore, were forced by the march of events into alliance with the Socialists. The Socialist element therefore came to the front, and enactments of a distinctly Socialistic nature were passed, involving the suspension of contract, abolition of rents, and confiscation of means of production; and both in these matters and in the decentralisation which was almost the watchword of the Commune, the advance from the proceedings of the earlier revolutionists is clearly marked. Also, although the opportunity for the establishment of the Commune was given by the struggle against foreigners, the international character of its aspirations was shown by the presence of foreigners in its Council, in its offices, and in command of its troops. And though in itself the destruction of the Vendome Column may seem but a small matter, yet considering the importance attached generally, and in France particularly, to such symbols, the dismounting of that base piece of Napoleonic upholstery was another mark of the determination to hold no parley with the old jingo legends.

It should be noted that the risings that took place in other towns in France were not so much vanquished by the strength of the bourgeoisie, which at first found itself powerless before the people, but rather fell through owing to a want of a fuller development of Socialism and a more vigorous proclamation of its principles.

The whole revolt was at last drowned in the blood of the workers of Paris. Certainly the immediate result was to crush Socialism for the time by the

destruction of a whole generation of its most determined recruits. Nevertheless the very violence and excess of the bourgeois revenge have, as we can now see, tended to strengthen the progress of Socialism, as they have set the seal of tragedy and heroism on the mixed events of the Commune, and made its memory a rallying-point for all future revolutionists.

The fall of the Commune naturally involved that of the International. The immediate failure of its action was obvious, and blinded people to its indestructible principles. Besides, a period of great commercial prosperity visited the countries of Europe at this time. The French milliards which Germany had won as the prize of war were being turned over and over by the German bourgeois in their merry game of "beggar-my-neighbour." It was a time now called by the German middle classes themselves the "swindle period." England was at the height of her era of "leaps and bounds." Even France, in spite of her being the plundered country, recovered from the condition into which the war had thrown her with a speed that made the plunderer envy her. In short, it was one of those periods which prove to the bourgeois exploiter that he is positively right, in which the bettermost workman grows quite unconscious of the chain that binds him, and is contemptuously regardless of that which lies heavy on the labourer below him, to whom the prosperity or adversity of the rest of the world makes little or no difference.

Internal dissensions, also, were at work within the International, and at the Congress of the Hague in 1872 it was broken up; for though it still existed as a name for the next year or two, the remaining fragments of it did nothing worth speaking of.

In Vienna, in 1871, the movement in sympathy with the Commune became threatening, but was repressed by the authorities, and several of the prominent members of the party were imprisoned for the part they had taken in a Socialist demonstration—amongst others, Johann Most and Andreas Scheu.

For a while after the fall of the Commune the interest in the active side of the movement turns to Germany and Russia. In 1878 Nobiling and Hodel shot at the Emperor William; which event gave the occasion for the attack by Bismarck on the rapidly increasing Socialist party in October 1878, when the repressive laws were enacted which were maintained up to 1890.

The remarkable organisation of the German Socialist party calls here for some notice. Socialism owes its origin in Germany to the Workman's Party founded by Ferdinand Lasalle in 1862. Lasalle was one of those semitic geniuses of huge learning and untiring energy who occasionally spring up to astonish the world. He started the party on a basis of State Socialism involving the resumption by the

people of their rights in the land, and there was generally a strong infusion of nationalism in his scheme. Although in the beginning his party excited great enthusiasm, at his death in 1864 it only numbered about five thousand avowed adherents. Four years afterwards the body came under the influence of the International and of Marx, owing to the zeal of Bebel and Liebnecht. Up to the Congress of Eisenach in 1869 the Lasalle party and that of Marx were at daggers drawn. At Gotha in 1875 by a fusion of the two parties the present Social Democratic Party was founded. Since then that party has steadily grown, till it now numbers more than a million and a half of adherents. Owing to this rapid progress and its practical organisation the German party must be said to have taken the lead in Socialism since the time of the Commune.

In Russia the Socialist movement was, on the face of it, mixed up with nationalist and political agitation, which was natural in a country in the bonds of the crudest form of absolutism. Nevertheless the ultimate aim of the party is unmistakable, and the propaganda has been carried on with a revolutionary fervour and purity of devotion which have never been surpassed, if they have ever been equalled. The slaying of the Czar on 13th March 1881, with the tragic scenes that followed it, has been the most dramatic event that the Russian movement has given to the world. The courage and devotion that went to the accomplishment of this lightning stroke, and the fact that it was directed against the acknowledged representative of reactionary oppression, has had great effect on progressively-minded persons by the mere force of sympathy, and has directed men’s thoughts very much to the struggles of the Russians against the tyranny which throttles them.

Footnotes

17. They also protested, at the end of the war, against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine.

CHAPTER XVII
THE UTOPISTS: OWEN, SAINT SIMON, AND FOURIER

It is now necessary for us to turn for a while from the political progress of Socialism, to note the school of thinkers who preceded the birth of modern scientific or revolutionary Socialism. These men thought it possible to regenerate Society by laying before it its shortcomings, follies, and injustice, and by teaching through precept and example certain schemes of reconstruction built up from the aspirations and insight of the teachers themselves. They had not learned to recognise the sequence of events that *forces* social changes on mankind whether they are conscious of its force or not, but believed that their schemes would win their way to general adoption by men's perception of their inherent reasonableness. They hoped to convert people to Socialism, to accepting it consciously and formally, by showing them the contrast between the confusion and misery of civilisation, and the order and happiness of the world which they foresaw.

From the elaborate and detailed schemes of future Society which they built up they have been called the Utopists. The representatives of the different phases of this school are three most remarkable men, born within a few years of each other, whose aspirations and insight did, in their day, a very great deal to further the progress of Socialism, in spite of the incompleteness of their views.

Robert Owen was born at Newtown, Montgomeryshire, in 1771, of a lower middle-class family. He became a successful manufacturer through his own industry and quick-wittedness in the beginning of the rise of the Great Machine Industries, when "manufacturing" was advancing "by leaps and bounds." He was a born philanthropist in the better sense of the word, and from the first showed in all matters unbounded generosity and magnanimity. In the year 1800, when he was not yet thirty, he became the manager of the New Lanark Mills, and set to work on his first great experiment, which was briefly the conversion of a miserable, stupid, and vicious set of people into a happy, industrious, and orderly community, acting on the theory that man is the creature of his surroundings, and that by diligent attention to the development of his nature he can be brought to perfection. In this experiment he was entirely successful, but it was not in him to stop there, as the plain words he said of his success showed clearly enough: "Yet these men were my slaves."[18] He took part in all kinds of projects of a philanthropic nature, still founding all his action on his theory of the perfectibility of man by the amelioration

of his surroundings, and became the first great champion of co-operation, although he did not suppose, as the co-operators of the present day do, that anything short of universal co-operation would solve the social question. In 1815 he pressed a meeting of Glasgow manufacturers to petition Parliament to shorten the hours of labour in the cotton mills, and the change which he experienced from the approbation of the governing classes to their reprobation, may very well date from that proceeding, as a bourgeois biographer of his hints. But he still kept his position as a popular philanthropist, even after his declaration in favour of co-operation, until he at last cut himself off from respectability by openly attacking Respectability through its received religion (21st August 1816), from which date onward he was scouted by all that "Society," of which he was now the declared enemy. But he was in nowise daunted. In 1823 he proposed communistic villages as a remedy for the distress in Ireland. He established, in 1832, an exchange in Gray's Inn Road, in which labour was equitably exchanged against labour; in 1825 he bought New Harmony from a community already established there (the Rappites), and made his great experiment in living in common; and late in life he published his *Book of the New Moral World*, which contains the exposition of his doctrine.

It will be thus seen that he was unwearied in practical experiments. His shortcoming was the necessary one of the Utopist,—a total disregard of the political side of progress. He failed to see that his experiments, useful as they were from that point of view, could never develop out of the experimental stage as long as the constitution of Society implies the upholding of the socalled "rights of property." He ignored also the antagonism of classes which necessarily exists under this system, and which in the long run must bring about the Socialism that he, the most generous and best of men, spent his whole life in attempting to realise. He died in 1858.

Saint Simon was born of a noble family at Paris in 1760. He acquired and ran through a fortune, deliberately experimenting in the various forms of "life" from extravagance to abject poverty. There was in him none of that tendency to practical experiment in quasi-Socialistic schemes which characterised Robert Owen. His philosophy was mingled with a mysticism which had a tendency to increase—a tendency to form a new religion rather than to realise a new condition of life—and which was carried into the absurdities of a kind of worship by his immediate followers, more or less imitated by the Positivists of our own day, whose founder, Auguste Comte, was his most cherished disciple. His Socialism was of a vague kind, and admitted the existence of classes of talent as expressed by the motto of Saint Simonism, "From each according to his capacity; to each according to his

deeds." In spite, however, of the tendency to mysticism, he showed singular flashes of insight in matters historical and economic, and intellectually was certainly ahead of Robert Owen. He may be said to have set himself the task of learning all life by whatever means and at whatever expense, in order to devote himself to the new religion, "whose great aim is the swiftest possible amelioration of the moral and physical condition of the poorest and most numerous class."

Frederick Engels well says of him: "As early as his *Letters from Geneva,* Saint Simon laid down that all men ought to work, and that the Reign of Terror had been the reign of the non-possessing masses. To face the fact in 1802 that the French Revolution was a struggle between the noblesse, the bourgeoisie, and the non-possessing classes was a discovery of genius. In 1816 he asserted that politics were but the science of production, and predicted their absorption by economy. The knowledge that economic conditions serve as the base of political institutions only shows itself here in the germ; nevertheless, this proposition contains clearly the conversion of the political government of men into an administration of things and a direction of the process of production; that is to say, the abolition of the State, of which such a noise has since been made."

Internationalism also was clearly enunciated by Saint Simon. We quote Engels again: "With an equal superiority over the views of his contemporaries, he declared in 1814, immediately after the entry of the allies into Paris, and again in 1815, during the war of the hundred days, that the sole guarantee of the peace and prosperous development of Europe, was an alliance between France and England, and of those two countries with Germany. Certainly it needed a courage by no means common to preach to the French of 1815 alliance with the victors at Waterloo."

It is worth noting that one of the schemes of the Saint Simonians, which was most ridiculed at the time, was the cutting of the Isthmuses of Suez and Panama, and that M. de Lesseps was a Saint Simonian.

Saint Simon died in great poverty in 1825, with words of hope for the future of the party on his lips.

Charles Fourier was born in 1772 at Lyons; his father was a draper. He lost his property in the Revolution, and afterwards went into business as a broker. Amidst his dealings with Society, he was early struck by the shortcomings and injustices of individualism and competition. In his first book, *The Theory of the Four Movements,* he elaborates the proposition that human nature 1s perfectible through the free play of the appetites and passions, and asserts that misery and vice spring from the restraints imposed by Society. His criticism of modern Society is most

valuable as anticipating that of scientific Socialism ; unlike his contemporaries he has an insight into the historical growth of mankind: “He divides it into four periods of development, Savagery, Barbarism, Patriarchalism, and Civilisation, meaning by the latter the Bourgeois Civilisation.”[19] His saying, “In civilisation poverty is born even of superabundance,” may well be noted in these days, and compared with Robert Owen’s in 1816, “our best customer, the war, is dead.”

As a basis of the reconstruction of Society, Fourier advocated Industrial Co-operation; but here his Utopianism led him into the trap of formulating dogmatically an elaborate scheme of life in all its details, a scheme which could never be carried out, however good the principles on which it was based might be. His proposal arranges for phalansteries as the unit of co-operation, in which all life and all industry, agricultural and other, should be carried on, and all details are carried out by him most minutely, the number of each phalanstery being settled at 1600 souls. The most valuable idea was the possibility and necessity of apportioning due labour to each capacity, and thereby assuring that it should be always pleasurable, and his dictum that children, who generally like making dirt-pies and getting into a mess, should do the dirty work of the community, may at least be looked on as an illustration of this idea, though laid down as a formal law. His system was not one of pure equality, but admitted distinctions between rich and (comparatively) poor, and advocated a fantastic division of wealth between labour, capital, and talent. The abolition of marriage was a point he laid special stress upon.

In 1812 Fourier’s mother died and left him some property, and he retired into the country to write his *Treatise on the Association of Domesticity and Agriculture.* Afterwards he came to Paris again, became a clerk in an American firm, and composed in 1830 his *New Industrial World.* It is lamentable to have to relate that in 1831 he wrote attacking both Owen and Saint Simon as charlatans, in spite of the curious points of resemblance he had to both of them. He died in 1837, but not till he had founded a school, of which Victor Considérant, author of the *Destinée Sociale,* was the most distinguished member. The Fourierists started a paper in 1832, which expired in two years, but was revived in 1836, and finally suppressed by Government in 1850. A scheme for realising the phalanstery experimentally was set on foot in 1832 by a deputy of France, but it failed for lack of funds; so that of the three great Utopists, Owen was the only one who had the fortune, good or bad as it may be considered, of seeing his schemes tried by experience. Cabet, indeed, a revolutionist of ’48, founded a community in America under the name of Icaria, which was (and is, for it still exists) more nearly an approach to genuine Communism than any of the other communities which have owed their origin to

Utopian Socialism. Of these communities there remains a word to be said as a warning to those who are young in the movement. Although as experiments in association something may be learned from them, their conditions of life have no claim to the title of Communism, which most unluckily has often been applied to them. Commun1sm can never be realised till the present system of Society has been destroyed by the workers taking hold of the political power. When that happens, it will mean that Communism is on the point of absorbing and transmuting Civilisation all the world over.

Footnotes

18. In 1806, when owing to the rise in cotton he could not continue manufacturing, he stopped the mills and paid his people their full wages till he could go on again in four months' time, a proceeding that cost him £7000.

19. Frederick Engels in *Socialisme Utopique et Socialisme Scientifique*, as also the quotations above.

CHAPTER XVIII
THE TRANSITION FROM THE UTOPISTS TO MODERN SOCIALISM

OF the Socialist thinkers who serve as a kind of link between the Utopists and the school of the Socialism of historical evolution, or scientific Socialists, by far the most noteworthy figure is Proudhon, who was born at Besançon in 1809. By birth he belonged to the working class, his father being a brewer's cooper, and he himself as a youth followed the occupation of cowherding.

In 1838, however, he published an essay on general grammar, and in 1839 he gained a scholarship to be held for three years, a gift of one Madame Suard to his native town. The result of this advantage was his most important though far from his most voluminous work, published the same year as the essay which. Madame Suard's scholars were bound to write: it bore the title of *What is Property? (Quest-ce que la propriété?)* his answer being, Property is Robbery (*La propriété est le vol*).

As may be imagined, this remarkable essay caused much stir and indignation, and Proudhon was censured by the Besançon Academy for its production, narrowly escaping a prosecution. In 1841 he was tried at Besançon for a letter he wrote to Victor Considérant, the Fourierist, but was acquitted. In 1846 he wrote his *Philosophie de la Misère* (Philosophy of Poverty), which received an elaborate reply and refutation from Karl Marx.

In 1847 he went to Paris. In the Revolution of 1848 he showed himself a vigorous controversialist, and was elected Deputy for the Seine. He wrote numerous articles in several journals, mostly criticisms of the progress of the revolution. In the Chamber he proposed a tax of one-third to be levied on all interest and rent, which was, as a matter of course, rejected. He also put forward a scheme for a mutual credit bank, by which he hoped to simplify exchange and reduce interest to a vanishing point; but this scheme was also rejected.

After the failure of the revolution of '48, Proudhon was imprisoned for three years, during which time he married a young woman of the working class.

In 1858 he fully developed his system of "Mutualism" in his last work, entitled *Justice in the Revolution and the Church.* In consequence of the publication of this book he had to retire to Brussels, but was amnestied in 1860, came back to France, and died at Passy in 1865.

Proudhon's opinions and works may be broadly divided into two periods: In his *What is Property?* his position is that of a communist pure and simple; but after this one clear development of a definite thesis, we meet in his writings, and we must add, in his political actions also, with so much paradox that it is next to impossible to formulate in brief any definite Proudhonian doctrine. At one time a communist, at another the vehement opponent of Communism; at one time professing anarchy, at another lending himself to schemes of the crudest State socialism; at one time an enthusiastic theist, at another apparently as strong an atheist; in one passage of his works giving his eager adhesion ta Auguste Comte's worship of women, in another a decided contemner of the female sex,—it is with a sense of confusion that one rises from the perusal of his productions.

His connection with the revolution of '48 seems to have been the turning-point in his history; in his address to the electors of the Seine, in which he put forward the scheme for a credit bank backed by a number of decrees of a State-socialistic nature, and strongly smacking of Bismarck, he announces himself as the man who said Property is Robbery, says that he still maintains that opinion, and then goes on to defend the rights of property which he had so successfully annihilated in his first work.

But as to his political career, the element he had to work in was an impossible one for the success of a man holding definite socialistic ideas. On the one hand were the Jacobins with their archaeological restorations of the ideas and politics of 1793; on the other Socialism showing itself, taking hold of people's minds, but attempting to realise its doctrines by crude, dislocated, and consequently hopeless schemes of action. Into all these affairs Proudhon looked shrewdly and with insight, and his bitter criticisms of the confusion of the period were shown by the event to have been well founded.

Proudhon defended the modern family and monogamy in its strictest sense, and does not seem to have troubled himself to study the history of those institutions even superficially: in short, he seems to have been singularly lacking in the historical sense, and had not formed any conception of the evolution of society. Those who read his works will find themselves forced to return to his first essay, *What is Property?* if they are seeking in him for any consistent series of ideas. He was an eager and rough controversialist, and his style is brilliant and attractive in spite of its discursiveness. Throughout his life he was thoroughly single-hearted and disinterested. In spite of his inconsistencies much of his teaching has lived, especially the side of it that thought that economic society must be based on the mutual exchange of services, and the equality of the reward of labour. Proudhon

had a great influence on the French proletariat in the latter years of his life and in those immediately following his death. This influence is now completely gone. In spite of his recurrence to the crudest ideas of authoritative repression, he is the protagonist of the individualist anarchist school represented to-day by Mr. Benjamin Tucker and by his paper *Liberty,* published at Boston, U.S.A.

We may now mention the names of two men of no great importance in themselves, but worth noting as forerunners of the Sentimental Socialists and Christian Socialists of the present day. Hugues Felicité Robert de Lamennais (born 1782, died 1854) is the type of the Christian Socialist: he was intended for a priest from the first, and duly took orders. He began by efforts to reform the Catholic Church, so as to make it an effective instrument for happiness and social morality and reform. He expected to be helped and encouraged by the clergy in these efforts, and at first, before they perceived their real tendency, he received some support from them. At last, in his paper *L' Avenir* (the future), he took so decidedly a democratic turn that he incurred the animosity of the whole Church, especially of the then Pope Gregory XVI. The signal for his complete rupture with the Church, however was the publication (in 1834) of his *Paroles d'un Croyant* ("Words of a Believer "), which the Pope characterised as "small in size but immense in perversity." After that he became thoroughly democratic or even Communistic, as Communism was then understood. A series of political works and pamphlets followed, all in the sense of his new departure. He started, in 1848, two papers, one after another, which were suppressed. He sat in the Republican Constituent Chamber until the *coup d'état*; and, while Deputy, drew up for the Left a plan of Constitution which was rejected as too revolutionary. He was buried by his own direction without ecclesiastical rites.

Pierre le Roux (born 1798, died 1871) was originally a disciple of Saint Simon. In 1840 he published his most important work, *De L' Humanité,* whence the name of his school, the Humanitarians. He joined George Sand and Niardof in a literary review, and it was owing to this connection that the humanitarian tendencies of some of her novels are to be traced. In 1843 he set on foot a co-operative printing association, and started a journal advocating co-operation, Or as he termed it, "the pacific solution of the problem of the proletariat." He also sat in the Republican Chamber of 1848: he was exiled in 1851 and lived in Jersey, not returning to France till 1869. He died in Paris under the Commune, and two of its members were deputed to attend his funeral, in the words of the *Journal Officiel,* "not in honour of the partisan of the mystical ideas of which we now feel the evil, but of the politician who courageously undertook the defence of the vanquished after the days of June." This is an allusion to the unpractical and non-political tendency of

his teaching, which undertook to reform society by the inculcation of morality blended with mysticism, the result of which was to be the gradual spread of voluntary industrial co-operation.

We finish this series with the wellknown name of Louis Blanc, a personage more important than the last-named; and more definitely Socialistic in principles than either he or Lamennais, though his political career finished in a way unworthy of those principles. It should be remembered, however, that he never grasped the great truth that only through the class struggle can the regeneration of society be accomplished. He was born in 1813, of a middle-class family which, on the maternal side, was Corsican, and an incident of the relations between him and his brother Charles is said to have suggested to Dumas his famous novelette and play of the *Corsican Brothers.*

In 1838 he quarrelled with the proprietors of the journal of which he was editor, *Le Bonsens,* on the subject of the railways then being projected, he maintaining that these ought to be owned and managed by the State, and retired from the editorship in consequence.

In 1840 he published his *Organisation of Labour,* the ideas of which he attempted to realise in the famous "National Workshops," by which he is best known. * In this work he put forward the genuine Socialistic maxim of "From each according to his capacity; to each according to his needs" as the basis of the production of a true society.

He took an active part in the Revolutionary Government of 1848, and got an edict passed abolishing the punishment of death for political offences.

In 1848 he got the National Workshops founded. These failed; but their failure was not necessarily due to anything wrong in Louis Blanc's conception, imperfect as it was: but to the fact that Bethmont, the Minister of Trade and Agriculture, had intentionally organised them for failure, inasmuch as it was not articles of real and prime necessity, or even those for which there was a genuine demand which were allowed to be produced in them, but merely articles outside the true commercial market; the object being, as in our prisons, not to interfere with the "legitimate" trade and industry of the country. Under such circumstances they naturally caused a heavy drain on the resources of the Republic. Loud demands were made by the middle classes for their suppression, to which the Government at last listened, and their imminent abolition was one of. the causes which led to the insurrection of June 1848.

In consequence of the events of June, Louis Blanc was compelled to flee from France to England, where he wrote his *History of the French Revolution.* He returned to France in 1869, was elected to the legislative body, but played only a subordinate part in the stirring times that followed. It remains, indeed, an indelible stain on his character that he deserted the cause of the people in the days of March, 1871, leaving Paris to sit amongst the “Liberals” in the reactionary Chamber at Versailles.

He died in 1882, having outlived his reputation and his influence.

CHAPTER XIX
SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM: KARL MARX

THE foregoing chapters on earlier Socialists may be regarded as leading up to the full development of the complete Socialist theory, or as it is sometimes called, "scientific" Socialism. The great exponent of this theory, and the author of the most thorough criticism of the capitalistic system of production, is the late Dr. Karl Marx.

He was born in 1818 at Treves, his father being a baptized Jew holding an official position in that city. He studied for the law in the University of Bonn, passing his examination with high honours in 1840. In 1843 he married Jenny von Westphalen, sister of the well-known Prussian statesman of that name. Philosophy and political economy, with especial reference to the great social problems of the age, were his special studies on leaving the university. These studies led him towards Socialism, the result of which was that he felt compelled to decline the offer of an important Government post. About this time he left Treves for Paris, where he became co-editor with Arnold Ruge of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,* and he also edited the Socialist journal *Vorwärts*; but in less than a twelvemonth he was compelled to leave France for Brussels. In March 1848 he was driven from Belgium and fled to Cologne, where the revolutionary ferment was at its height. He at once undertook the editorship of the *Rheinische Zeitung,* the leading revolutionary journal, which was suppressed on the collapse of the revolutionary movement in 1849.

We should mention that in 1847, in conjunction with his life-long friend, Frederic Engels, he put forward the celebrated "Communist Manifesto," which subsequently served as the basis of the International Association.

After 1849 he went to Paris again, where he continued but a short time, and then left France for London, remaining there with brief intermissions till his death, which took place in the spring of 1883.

The principal part he played in political action during his sojourn in England was the organisation of the International Association.

The most important among his works, besides *Das Kapital,* are *Die Heilige Familie,* written in conjunction with Frederic Engels; the *Misére de la Philosophie* the answer to Proudhon mentioned in our last chapter; *18 Brumaire,* an

anti-Napoleonic pamphlet; and *Zur Kritik der Politischer OEconomie,* which laid the foundation for his great work, *Das Kapital.*

The importance of this latter work makes it necessary for us to indicate the contents of the principal chapters, so as to form a brief sketch of the Socialist economy.[20]

Part I. deals with Commodities and Money. The first chapter defines a commodity. A commodity, according to Marx, is briefly expressed as a socially useful product of labour which stands in relation of exchange to other useful products of labour. The value of such a commodity is primarily the amount of necessary social labour contained in it: that is to say, the average amount of labour carried through a certain portion of time necessary to its production in a given state of society. The student must take special note that when Marx uses the word value by itself it is always employed in this sense, that is, to put it in a shorter form, as embodied average human labour. The term use-value explains itself. Exchange-value means the actual relation of one commodity to another or to all others in the market. The ultimate issue of the various expressions of value is the money-form: but in the words of Marx the step to the money-form "consists in this alone, that the character of direct and universal exchangeability—in other words, that the universal equivalent form—has now by social custom become identified with the substance gold."

The second chapter deals with exchange. Exchange, says Marx, presupposes guardians or owners of commodities, since these cannot go to market of themselves. An article possesses for the owner no use-value where he seeks to exchange it: if it did, he would not seek to exchange it. "All commodities," says Marx, "are non-use values for their owners and use-values for their non-owners. Consequently they must all change hands But this change of hands is what constitutes their exchange, and the latter puts them in relation with each other as *values,* and realises them as *values.*" Hence commodities must be realised as *values* before they can be realised as use-values."

Commodities, then, find their universal value represented by one commodity from among them, which has in itself no use-value unless it be that of embodying and of symbolising the abstract quality of value.

Chapter III. deals with the circulation of commodities under the money-form. Here Marx very justly observes, "It 1s because all commodities as values are realised human labour, and therefore commensurable, that their values can be measured by one and the same special commodity, and the latter be converted into the common measure of their values—*i.e.* into money. Money as a measure of value is the phenomenal form that must of necessity be assumed by that measure of *value* which is immanent in commodities, labour-time."

This long and important chapter proceeds to discuss the theory of circulating money or of currency at considerable length and in great detail.

The problem to be resolved is as follows. The owner of money has to buy his commodities at their value, and to sell them at their value, and nevertheless at the end of the process to realise a surplus. This is the end and aim of his existence as a capitalist, and if he does not accomplish it, he is as a capitalist a failure. So that his development from the mere money-owner to the full-blown capitalist has to take place at once within the sphere of circulation and without it: that is, he must follow the law of the exchange of commodities, and nevertheless must act in apparent contradiction to that law. This problem cannot be solved merely by means of the money which he owns, the value of which is, so to say, petrified. As Ricardo says, "In the form of money, capital has no profit." As money, it can only be hoarded.

Neither can the surplus originate in the mere re-sale of the commodity, "which does no more than transform the article from its bodily form back into its money-form." The only alternative left is that the change should originate in the use-value of the article bought with the money in the first instance, and on which the capitalist has to operate.

"In order to be able to extract value from the consumption of a commodity, our friend Moneybags must be so lucky as to find within the sphere of circulation, in the market, a commodity whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value, whose actual consumption therefore is itself an embodiment of labour, and, consequently, creation of value. The possessor of money does find on the market such a special commodity in capacity of labour, or labour-power."

By labour-power or the capacity of labour Marx understands the whole of the mental and physical capacities in a human being which are brought into action in the production of commodities; in short, the man and all that is in him as a wealth-producing machine.

Now in order that the possessor of money should find this necessity to the accomplishment of his end and aim—*viz.* labour-power as a commodity of the market, various conditions are requisite.

"The man who is to exercise the labour-power for the capitalists' benefit—the labourer—must be free," that is, his labour must be at his own disposal, and also he must have nothing else to dispose of for his livelihood but his labour-power. On the other hand, any one who has to live by selling commodities other than labour-power must own the means of production, and also the means of subsistence

while the commodities are being got ready for the market, and being converted into money.

As to the value of this article necessary to the life of the capitalist, this labour-power, it is estimated like the value of every other commodity by the average time necessary for its production or reproduction; that is, the average time necessary in a given state of society; and in plain language this reproduction of labour-power means the maintenance of the labourer. “Given the individual, the production of labour-power consists in the reproduction of himself—or his maintenance.”

Labour-power is realised only in action, that is, when it has become actual *labour*, and is producing a commodity; so that, “the value of labour-power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence. It therefore varies with the value of those means, or with the quantity of labour requisite for their production.”

The minimum limit of the value of labour-power is therefore determined by the value of these means. If the price of labour-power falls below that minimum, it is destroyed: a higgling as to its price has to be gone through between the buyer and the seller, and the price is fixed by contract, though it is not realised until the labour-power is used up or embodied in the article produced by it. From what is stated above, it will be seen that this contract is made between two parties; on the one hand the workman or producer, who has no means of producing, on the other the possessor of money, who has all the means necessary for the producer to effectively exercise his faculty of production, and has therefore become a capitalist. “He who was before the money-owner now strides in front as a capitalist; the possessor of labour-power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business: the other timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market, and has nothing to expect but—a hiding.”

The labour-process necessary to capitalism exhibits two characteristic phenomena: first the labourer works under the control of a capitalist, and secondly the product of the labourer is the property of a capitalist, and not of the labourer, its immediate producer. This product appropriated by the capitalist is a use-value, “as for example yarn, or boots;” says Marx with a grin, “but although boots are in one sense the basis of all social progress, and our capitalist is a decided ‘progressist,’ the capitalist does not for his special purpose look upon them as boots, or any other use-value. He has primarily two objects in view: first he wants to produce a use-value, not, again, for the sake of its use, but in order that he may exchange it; and next, in order that his exchange may be fruitful to him, he wants to produce a

commodity the value of which shall be greater than the sum of the values used in producing it—that is, the means of production and the labour-power."

This he is able to accomplish as follows. He buys the use of the labour-power of the workman for a day, while a certain duration of labour in the day is enough to reproduce the workman's expended labour-power—that is, to keep him alive. But the human machine is in all cases capable of labouring for more hours in the day than is necessary for this result, and the contract between the capitalist and the labourer, as understood in the system under which those two classes exist, implies that the exercise of the day's labour-power shall exceed this duration necessary for reproduction, and it is a matter of course that the buyer of the commodity labour-power should do as all buyers of commodities do—consume it altogether for his own advantage.[21]

It is by this avocation, the buying of labour-power in the market, and the consumption of all the results of its exercise beyond what is necessary for its reproduction, that the capitalist lives, just as the avocation by which the workman lives is the actual production of commodities.

Capitalism cannot be said even to begin before a number of individual owners of money employ simultaneously a number of workmen on the same terms, that is to say, before the development of a concert of action towards profit among the employers, and a concert of action towards production for the profit of the employers among the employed.

"A greater number of labourers working together at the same time in one place (or, if you will, in the same field of labour), in order to produce the same sort of commodity under the mastership of one capitalist, constitutes, both historically and logically, the starting-point of capitalist production."

It differs from the medieval system, that of the guilds and their craftsmen, by the greater number of the workmen employed; but this change to a new form of organisation made at once considerable difference in the rate and manner of production; there was less comparative expense of the means of production, such as buildings, tools, warehouses,*etc.*[22] A consequence of this concentration of workmen under one roof was the development of the function of direction in the master as independent of his qualities as a craftsman, and the forcing on the system of this function as a necessary part of production. The master of the guild-craftsman period held his place because he was a better workman and more experienced than his fellows; he did not differ from them in kind but in degree only; if he fell sick, for instance, his place would be taken by the next best workman without any disturbance in the organisation of the workshop; but the

master of even the earliest period of capitalism was from the beginning unimportant as a workman (even when he worked, as he often did at first), but all-important as a director of work. “Simple co-operation,” says Marx, “is always the prevailing form, in those branches of production in which capital acts on a large scale,and division of labour and machinery play but a subordinate part.” This sentence leads to the next development of capitalism, that of the division of labour, and this brings us to the system of manufacture, as the word is generally understood; though it has a final development, that of machinery and the factory. This period of the division of labour, more or less pure, extends from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth centuries, when it was brought to perfection; but it must be understood that these systems overlapped one another considerably.

The division-of-labour or manufacturing system starts under two conditions.

The first is where the employer collects into one workshop workmen of various crafts, the results of whose labours are combined into one article, as, for example, a carriage-maker’s, in which wheelwright, coachbuilder, upholsterer, painter, *etc.*, work each at his own occupation, and their products are combined into the one article, a finished carriage.

The other is the system in which the employer collects his workmen under one roof, and employs the whole of them as one machine in the simultaneous production of one article which has to go through various processes, these processes being apportioned to various parts of the workman-machine. This system affords a distinct example of evolution by means of survival of the fittest; sudden increase of production seems to have been called for, and the work accordingly had to be reorganised by being apportioned to different workmen in order to save time. Thus this system is the reverse of that illustrated by the carriage-making, in which a number of crafts had to be combined into the manufacture of one article; whereas in this (pin or needlemaking may be taken as an illustration) a number of processes which once formed portions of one craft, now become each of them a separate craft in itself.

From this follows the complete interdependence of each human being forming a part of the workman-machine, no one of whom can produce anything by himself. The unit of labour is now no longer an individual, but a group.

But all these processes, however subdivided, and however combined, were still acts of handicraft; the same necessities which forced the simple co-operation of the first capitalistic period into division of labour, now forced the latter system to yet further development; though, indeed, other causes besides merely economic ones

were at work, such as the growing aggregation of people in towns and the consequent increasing division of labour in Society itself as to the occupations of its members.

This final development was the substitution of the machine and the complete factory-system for the "division-of-labour" and "workshop" systems. Under the new system the group of workmen, every member of which by the performance of a special piece of handicraft turned out some special part of the article made, gave place to a machine which produces the results of all these manoeuvres combined together; or to an association of machines acting in a group, as the workmen acted. The workman is no longer the principal factor in the work, the tools that he handled are now worked by a mechanism connected by another mechanism with the power, whatever it may be, that puts the whole in motion. This is the true machine of modern times, as contrasted with the mere tool-machine of the earlier period, which was an aid to the workman and not a substitute for him. Furthermore, the workshop gives place to the factory, which is not a mere assemblage of machines under one roof, but rather a great machine itself, of which the machines are parts; as Marx says: "An organised system of machines to which motion is communicated by the transmitting mechanism from a central automaton is the most developed form of production by machinery. Here we have in place of the isolated machine a mechanical monster, whose body fills whole factories, and whose demon power, at first veiled under the slow and measured motion of his giant limbs, at last breaks out into the fast and furious whirl of his countless working organs."

This is the machine that has produced the great revolution in production of our epoch. The workman once a handicrafts man, having all control over the article he produced, next became a part of a human machine, and finally has become the servant and tender of a machine; and by means of all this the fully developed modern capitalist has been brought into existence.

We have now come to the point where it is necessary to consider the circulation of commodities; the first means to this circulation being the establishment of a *tertium quid*, or universal equivalent. And in order to have a really universal equivalent it is necessary that use-value should be eliminated from it, since such an equivalent is required to express not the diverse qualities of all the various commodities, but the relative quantity of embodied human labour which they severally contain.

Money as a mere measure of value is imaginary and ideal, but the bodily form of it must express quantitatively equivalent abstract value—*i.e.* labour—and takes the form of the precious metals, finally of gold.

Gold has come to be the bodily form taken by the universal measure of value, partly because of its natural qualities—portability, durability, *etc.*, but chiefly because the course of history has invested it with this function; and also because its value, instead of changing from, say, week to week, as is the case with other commodities, changes rather from century to century, so that it may be considered stable relatively to them, just as one speaks of indigo as a permanent dye, which it is relatively to other dyes, although none are absolutely permanent.[23]

Paper money is promises to pay gold, which is directly exchangeable with all other commodities. Paper money, therefore, is merely a symbol of the exchange really effected by gold.

This universal equivalent takes the place of barter, which is the primitive and direct form of exchange,[24] and at which stage the distinction between buyer and seller has not arisen. It now gives place to the first form of indirect exchange, in which a third term is interposed between the articles that are to be parted with and acquired. Now for the first time the above distinction takes shape. The seller has a commodity which he does not propose to consume, and therefore he acquires with it money, with which money he buys in turn another commodity equal in quantity to that with which he has parted, but different from it in quality. Marx has indicated this transaction by the wellknown and useful formula, Commodity, Money, Commodity: C—M—C.

The habit of hoarding, which is common amongst ancient societies, and also among barbarous peoples, is a natural concomitant of this stage of exchange, and is the first germ of capital. It 1s brought about by the arrest of the above process at its first phase thus, C—M— , the seller of the commodity does not go on to buy. Under these conditions money becomes a social power; and being a commodity like other commodities, can be acquired by private persons, whom it invests with social power. Therefore in those states of society which had not outgrown their primitive social ethics, money was considered the embodiment of all evil.

This stage of exchange marks the precommercial use of money; after a while it tends to develop into another stage, which carries the exchange a step further. The holder of a commodity which he does not propose to consume exchanges it for money, which he again exchanges for a commodity to be used, not for his personal consumption, but to be exchanged once more for money. He would have no object in doing this if his aim were merely that of the simple exchanger (C. M. C.), namely, to obtain an article of consumption different in kind from that which he has exchanged, since in money there is no inherent difference of quality, and therefore whatever difference there may be must be one of quantity. Accordingly

the object of the exchanger in this second stage is amount, not kind. In going through his process of exchange (the formula for which may be stated thus—

C-M-C-M-C),

[include figure here]

the second quantum of money must be more than the first, or else he will have failed in his object; will have made a bad bargain, as the phrase goes. On the other hand, though this form of exchange differs essentially it nevertheless connects itself with the earlier form, in which money occurs only as the middle term between commodity and commodity, thus distinguishing it from simple barter, because even in the later form the result of the merchant's transaction is a commodity with which he intends to begin a fresh transaction—

C-M-C-M-C.

[same figure again]

This is the form of exchange which was the practice of the developed classical world in its commercial operations. The break up of the Roman Empire, and the confusion that followed, dislocated this commerce, and largely brought exchange back again to its earlier and simple form of the exchange of a commodity for money with which to buy another commodity to be consumed, which was for the most part the character of the exchange of the Middle Ages.

The second form of exchange leads without a break into the third or modern form of Capitalistic Exchange, in which the exchanger, beginning with money, buys a commodity in order to exchange it for money; which money, as in the foregoing stage, must be more in quantity than that with which he began, or his transaction will be a failure. This process differs from that of the lastmentioned stage of exchange in that the result of the transaction is always money, and not a true commodity (that is, a use-value), the latter in the long-run appearing only nominally in the transaction.

To make this clearer, we may give concrete examples of the three forms of exchange.

In the first stage, illustrated by the proceedings of the craftsman of the time of Homer, which were pretty much those of the medieval craftsman also, the village potter sold his pots, and with the money he got for them, which, possible trickery apart, represented just the *value* or embodied labour of the pots, he bought meal, oil, wine, flesh, *etc.*, for his own livelihood, and consumed them.

The merchant of the later classical period shipped, say, purple cloth from Sidon to Alexandria, sold his cloth there, and with the money bought gum-Arabic (from the Soudan) and frankincense (from Arabia), which he sold at Athens, where again he shipped oil for another market. He always handled the actual goods he professed to trade in, and the wares which he thus exchanged against the universal equivalent, money, were of various kinds. Similar commerce went on in the Middle Ages, as with the merchants of Amalfi, Venice, *etc.*, side by side with the primitive barter of the feudal manor, and of the market-town with its corporation and guilds.

The modern man of commerce, on the contrary, necessarily begins his transaction with money. He buys, say, indigo, which he never sees, receives for it more money than he gave for it, and goes on steadily in this process, dealing (unlike the ancient carrier-merchant) with one class of goods only; and all the goods in which he deals represent to him so much money: they are only present in his transactions nominally. Money is the be-all and end-all of his existence as a commercial man.

This is an example of the pure form of capitalistic exchange, wherein money is exchanged for commodities, and these again for money plus an increment; the formula for which, as given by Marx, is M-C—M.

The next question we have to consider is how the surplus, the increment above-mentioned, obtained by this process of exchange, is realised,—or, in plain language, where it comes from.

Marx now shows “how the trick 1s done,” that is, the process by which the capitalist exploits the labourer under the present system of wages and capital.

We now come to the two instruments which the capitalist uses in his exploitation of labour, and which are named constant and variable capital; constant capital being the raw material and instruments of production, and variable capital the labour-power to be employed in producing on and by means of the former.

The labourer, as we have seen, adds a value to the raw material upon which he works; but by the very act of adding a new value he preserves the old; in one character he adds new value, in another he merely preserves what already existed. He effects this by working in a particular way, *e.g.* by spinning, weaving, or forging, that is, he transforms things which are already utilities into new utilities proportionately greater than they were before.

“It is thus,” says Marx, "that the cotton and spindle, the yarn and the loom, the iron and the anvil become constituent elements of a new use-value.” That is, in order to acquire this new value, the labour must be directed to a socially useful end, to a general end, that is, to which the general labour of society is directed, and the value

added is to be measured by the average amount of labourpower expended; *i.e.* by the duration of the average time of labour.

Marx says: "We have seen that the means of production transfer value to the new product so far only as during the labour-process they lose value in the shape of their old use-value. The maximum loss of value that they can suffer in the process is plainly limited by the amount of the original value with which they came into the process, or in other words by the labour-time necessary for their production. Therefore, the means of production can never add more value to the product than they themselves possess independently of the process in which they assist. However useful a given kind of raw material, or a machine, or other means of production may be, though it may cost £150, or say 500 days' labour, yet it cannot under any circumstances add to the value of the product more than £150. Its value 1s determined not by the labour-process into which it enters as a means of production, but by that out of which it has issued as a product. In the labour-process it only serves as a mere use-value, a thing with useful properties, and could not therefore transfer any value to the product unless it possessed such value previously. The matter is succinctly put as follows: "The means of production on the one hand, labourpower on the other, are merely the different modes of existence which the value of the original capital assumed when from being money it was transformed into the various factors of the labour-process. That part of capital that is represented by the means of production, by the raw material, auxiliary material, and the instruments of labour, does not in the process of production undergo any quantitative alteration of value. I therefore call it the constant part of capital, or more shortly *constant capital*."

At first sight it might be thought that the wear and tear of the machinery, and the seeming disappearance of part of the auxiliary material (as *e.g.* the mordants used in dyeing cloth or yarn, or the gums, *etc.*, used in textile printing) contradict this statement as to the alteration of value; but on closer view it will be seen that the above wear and tear and apparent consumption enter into the new product just as much as the visible raw material does; neither are really consumed, but transformed.

In the following chapters Marx enters into an elaborate and exhaustive analysis of the rate of surplus-value, *i.e.* of the rate at which the creation of surplus-value takes place; and he also deals with the important subject of the duration of the working-day. But as this 1s after all a matter of detail, in spite of its very great interest and importance we must omit it, as it would carry us beyond the scope of this chapter.

Marx distinguishes between *absolute* and *relative* "surplus-value"; the *absolute* being the product of a day's labour over and above the necessary subsistence of the workman, whatever the time necessary for the production of a definite amount of product may be. The *relative* "surplus-value," on the other hand, is determined by the increased productivity of labour caused by new inventions, machinery, increased skill, either in manipulation or the organisation of labour, by which the time necessary for the production of the labourer's means of subsistence may be indefinitely shortened.

It will be seen once again from all this, that whatever instruments may be put into the hands of the labourer to bring about a result from his labour, in spite of all pretences to the contrary, the one instrument necessary to the capitalist is the labourer himself living under such conditions that he can be used as a mere instrument for the production of profit. The tools, machinery, factories, means of exchange, *etc.*, are only intermediate aids for putting the living machine into operation.

Marx now goes on to trace the development of the capitalist in the present epoch, indicating the latest phase of the class-struggle; he points out the strife of the workman with the machine, the intensification of labour due to the constant improvement of machinery, *etc.* He then gives what may be called a history and analysis of the Factory Acts, the legislation to which the employing class found themselves compelled, in order to make it possible for the "free" workman to live under his new conditions of competition; in order, in short, to keep the industrial society founded by the machine-revolution from falling to pieces almost as soon as it was established.

The point of the intensification of labour is so important that it demands a word or two in passing; the gist of the matter as put forward by Marx resolves itself into this: As the organisation of production progresses towards perfection, the wear and tear of the workman in a given space of labour-time is increased; and this is true of the organisation of the "division-of-labour" period, only it is limited by the fact that the man himself is the machine, and no such limitation exists in the period of fully-developed machinery, in which the workman is an adjunct of the machine, which latter dictates to its supplement, the workman, in its constant craving for increasing productivity, the amount of wear and tear of his body in each hour's work. This emphasizes as plainly as possible the subjection of the man to the machine.

Marx also deals with the theory of compensation to the workman displaced by machinery; that is, the common view, that by the labour-saving of machinery,

which at first sight would seem to tend to the lessening of the number of men employed, more capital is set free for employment. But, says Marx: “Suppose a capitalist to employ 100 workmen at £30 a-year each in a carpet factory. The variable capital annually laid out amounts therefore to £3000. Suppose also that he discharges fifty of his workmen, and employs the remaining fifty with machinery that costs him £1500. To simplify matters we take no account of buildings, coal, *etc.* Further, suppose that the raw material annually consumed costs £3000 both before and after the change. Is any capital set free by this metamorphosis? Before the change the total sum of £6000 consisted half of constant, half of variable, capital. The variable capital, instead of being one-half is only one-quarter of the total capital. Instead of being set free, a part of the capital is here locked up in such a way as to cease to be employed in labour-power ; variable has been changed into constant capital. Other things remaining unchanged, the capital of £6000 can in future employ no more than fifty men. With each improvement in machinery, it will employ fewer.”

And again: “The labourers when driven out of the workshop by machinery, are thrown upon the labour-market, and there add to the number of workmen at the disposal of the capitalists. In Part VII. of this book it will be seen that this effect of machinery, which, as we have seen, is represented to be a compensation to the working class, is on the contrary a most frightful scourge. For the present, I will only say this: The labourers that are thrown out of work in any branch of industry, can no doubt seek for employment in some other branch. If they find it, and thus renew the bond between them and the means of subsistence, this takes place only by the intermediary of a new and additional capital that is seeking investment; not at all by the intermediary of the capital that formerly employed them, and was afterwards converted into machinery.” The remainder of this Part V. of Marx deals with various questions connected with the Great Industry, and the changes produced by it on Society. Part VI. deals with the transformation of the value or price of labour-power into wages; with time wages, piece wages, and the national differences of wages. Part VII. deals with the important subject of the accumulation of capital; first, with its simple reproduction, afterwards with the conversion of surplus-value itself back into capital, and with the transition of the laws of property, that characterise the production of commodities, into the laws of capitalistic appropriation. This part also contains a sarcastic refutation of the now exploded stupidity (scarcely to be called a theory) of “abstinence” as the source of interest; it also deals with the old wages-fund theory and other fallacies of bourgeois economy, concluding with a long and elaborate chapter on the general law of capitalistic accumulation in its various aspects. The last Part (XIII) treats of

the socalled primitive accumulation, of which Marx says: “This primitive accumulation plays in political economy about the same part as original sin in theology. Adam bit the apple, and thereupon sin fell upon the human race. Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote of the past. In times long gone by there were two sorts of people, one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal *élite*; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance and more in riotous living. The legend of theological original sin tells us certainly how man is to be condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us that there are people to whom this is by no means essential. Never mind! Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority, that, despite all its labour, has up to now nothing to sell but itself, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly although they have long ceased to work. ... In actual history it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, briefly *force*, play the great part. In the tender annals of Political Economy, the idyllic reigns from time immemorial. Right and ‘labour’ were from all time the sole means of enrichment, the present year of course always excepted. As a matter of fact, the methods of primitive accumulation are anything but idyllic.”

Marx then proceeds to give an instance of one important form of “Primitive Accumulation,” the expropriation of the peasants from the land, taking affairs in England as a type of this idyllic proceeding; as also the legislation at the close of the Middle Ages against vagrants, *etc.*, that is, against those who had been expropriated; and the enactments for the forcing down of wages. He then describes the birth of the capitalist farmer of modern times, and the reaction of the agricultural revolution on the town industry; the creation of the home-market for industrial capital, *etc.* A chapter follows on the historical tendency of capitalistic accumulation to work out its own contradiction; it becomes necessary again to quote a passage as it bears reference to the future of Society: “The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property,[25] as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalistic production begets with the inexorability of a law of Nature its own negation. It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer, but gives him property based on the acquisitions of the capitalistic era; *i.e.* on co-operation, and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production. The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalistic private property, is naturally a process incomparably more protracted,

violent, and difficult than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialised production, into socialised property. In the former case we had the expropriation of the mass of the people by a few usurpers; in the latter we have the expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people."

A chapter on certain middle-class economist notions respecting colonisation ends the first volume of Marx's epoch-making work, a volume expounding the salient principles of the new economy.[26]

20. We must remind the reader that we do not profess to offer more than some hints to the student of Marx. Anything approaching to an abstract of *Das Kapital* would take up space far beyond the limits of the present little work.

21. Says Mr. Boffin in Dickens's *Mutual Friend,* when he wants to make a show of striking a somewhat hard, but reasonable bargain: "When I buy a sheep, I buy it out and out, and when I buy a secretary, I expect to buy him out and out," or words to that effect; and the reasonableness of the conditions are accepted on all hands.

22. The master worker of the guild-system was not really a master at all even after he began to employ journeymen, because their number was limited very closely, and they were all sure to become masters in their turn: the real "employer of labour" was the guild, and the "master" of that period was simply a foreman of the guild; the great change consisted in the breaking down of the position of the guild as employer, and the turning of its foreman into a real owner or capitalist.

23. As a deduction from this, we may say that while on the one hand there was no abstract necessity for the measure of value taking the form of gold, though there was a necessity for it to take a form embodying a certain definite amount of labour, yet, on the other hand, since it has taken that form, labour notes, or mere promises to pay which are of no value in themselves, cannot, as long as exchange lasts, take the place of gold, which is a commodity having a value in itself, and the particular commodity that has assumed that function through historical selection.

Footnotes

24. There are transitional stages between barter pure and simple and exchange operated by a universal equivalent, which only partly fulfilled this office: *e.g.* cattle, in the primitive ancient period, from which the name for money (*pecunia*) is derived; or ordinary woollen cloth, as in the curious and rather elaborate currency of the Scandinavians before coin was struck in Norway: which currency, by the way, has again, in the form of blankets, been used even in our own times in the Hudson Bay Territory.

25. It is important not to misunderstand this phrase as used here. The labour of the Middle Ages, though individual from its mechanical side, was from its moral side quite definitely dominated by the principle of association; as we have seen, the "master" of that period was but a delegate of the guild.

26. A second volume was published the year after Marx’s death, and Frederic Engels is now at work preparing the third and final volume for publication.

CHAPTER XX
SOCIALISM MILITANT

WE have now come to the point at which we must leave our account of what has taken place in the development of society, and must give our views as to how the inevitable transformation of Civilisation into Socialism is most likely to happen; what is going on at present that tends towards this; and what the tactics of those should be who desire the change and are working for it.

We are driven to consider these matters from the point of view of our own British population, as it is through these that the British socialist must work directly, although with the assured hope that in so doing he is furthering the cause of social transformation throughout all modern civilisation.

As above hinted, things have much changed since scientific Socialism has been definitely promulgated in this country.

Ten years ago, from the time at which we are writing, the British working classes knew nothing of Socialism, and, except for a few who had been directly influenced by the continental movement, were, on the surface and by habit, hostile to it. A Socialist lecturer in those days almost invariably found himself in opposition, not only to the members of the middle classes who might be present, but also to the working men amongst his audience; who, not being able even to conceive of the ideas which he was putting forward, at the best took refuge in the Radicalism to which they were accustomed.

In short the working man of our generation, even when an advanced politician, looked on himself as a free citizen like any other man, and had no consciousness of his position as a proletarian, or that the reason for his existence, as a workman, was that he might produce profit by his labour for his master. His ideal (again as a workman) was good wages and constant employment; that is, enough to enable him to live without much trouble in a constant condition of inferiority. His ideal of prosperity as an individual was becoming a master and extracting profits from his old associates, like the French soldier, who is conventionally supposed to carry the Marshal's baton in his knapsack. This is now so much changed that the mass of the working classes is beginning to feel its position of economical slavery; there is no longer amongst 1t any hostility to Socialism; and those working men who take genuine interest in general politics are in favour of Socialist tendencies as far as they understand them; so that nowadays the Socialist lecturer rather finds a

difficulty in drawing out opposition to his views, until he begins to deal with details.

On the other hand, though the working class is awakening to a consciousness of its condition, it is sluggish in political activity. But this is, no doubt, a passing phase with the workmen, easily accounted for by their absorption in the immediate industrial struggle; and on this side also, progress is certainly being made. The old battle between the workmen and the manufacturers is still, necessarily, going on; but is changing its character. There is in it less of the mere dispute between two parties to a contract admitted as necessary by either, and more of an instinct of essentially opposed interests between employers and employed, and even of revolt; the working men are beginning to assume that they have a right to some share 1n the control of manufacture; the masters for their part perceive this new spirit, and have begun a definite attack on the organisations which are instinct with it. One occasion has arisen which has appealed strongly to the instincts of the working classes generally, and has united them in a socio-political demand, to wit the eight hours legal day; whatever may be said as to the effect that an enactment in this sense would have, the demand at any rate expresses the desire of the workmen to manage their own affairs, and to curtail the power of the capitalist class.

Moreover, it is a demand which can only be sustained with the collaboration of the workmen of Europe at least, if not of all civilisation, so that it has the further advantage of bringing the British proletarian into friendly contact with his continental brother for the furtherance of a tangible and immediate common gain.

A necessary accompaniment of the wages and capital system, with its competition for employment amongst the propertiless proletariat, is the floating mass of workmen rejected for the time by the labour-market; this mass of unemployed has a continuous tendency to increase as machinery and the organisation of the factory grow toward perfection, the complement to this phenomenon being the cycles of inflation and depression, which are also a necessary consequence of the great machine industry, and the worldmarket which it feeds. At every fresh depression this matter of the unemployed becomes more pressing and harder to be dealt with, and although the regular recurrence of these crises was denied for a long time, it has now been generally admitted. The periods of depression, which were at first short and sharp, and separated by long times of prosperity, have grown to be of longer duration if comparatively not so severe. As a consequence, the lack of employment over large sections of the population is becoming chronic. It is thought by some of those who further the legal eight hours' day that this measure would do much towards absorbing the mass of the unemployed; but though its

immediate effect might be felt in this direction, yet when the labour-market steadied after the change, it would be found that the evil was little lessened. The chronic lack of employment will have to be dealt with by more direct methods, which will more definitely attack the Freedom of Contract (so-called), of which more hereafter.

It has been said that the condition of the working classes has much improved within this century; this is true in an *absolute* sense of the skilled artisans; though the improvement has not touched the fringe of labour at all. Even as to skilled workmen, relatively to the *enormous increase of wealth in the country*, they are in a worse and not in a better condition; this combined with the fact that their political power has grown, makes it certain that they will claim an ever-increasing share in the wealth that they produce; and such betterment they can obviously only obtain at the expense of the capitalist class. The improvement therefore on these terms of a part of the workmen by no means indicates stability in the present fabric of society. For the prosperity of the middle classes gives a standard of comfort to the workmen; and on the other hand it is growing clearer to them that the obstacles to attaining a like welfare are artificially economical, and not essential, and can be done away with by means of combined action in industrial and political directions.

Meantime, though the middle class has increased enormously in numbers, and become very much richer as a class, yet it has its own unprosperous fringe, which has grown beyond measure, mostly because of the great diffusion and consequent loss in market-value of education. This intellectual proletariat, as it has been called, is one of the most disruptive elements of modern society, as it is largely in sympathy with the wage-earners, and is quick to catch up with new ideas, while the position of most of its members is worse than that of an average skilled workman. It must be said by the way that in Germany this element of the poor but educated section of the middle classes is even more important than here.

We have then a large body of proletarian producers, with important allies among the middle classes themselves, who are in an inferior economic position to those whose sole business is making a profit out of them, who do not produce at all. But this better-off working class is above the condition of abject poverty, and its intelligence and education is as a body little, if at all, inferior to that of the class that keeps it in subjection. Added to that, it has, as above said, now obtained considerable political power, which is shared to a great extent by the unskilled workmen, with whom they now make common cause.

It seems certain therefore that the workmen, with their eyes fixed on the necessity for their bettering themselves as a class, and the growing consciousness that this

can only be done by limiting the power and consequent riches of their masters, will press forward their case politically; that is, by forcing legislation in their favour from the present possessing classes; which will in the long run come to this, that they will deprive those classes of all the privilege that makes them a master-class.

It seems to us that it is along this line, which the workmen are now beginning to take up of themselves, that progress towards revolution will be made. For it must be remembered once more that the great mass of those who are pushing forward by this road, are only very partially conscious of whither it is tending; seeing, not the birth of a new society founded on general equality of condition, but rather a higher and less precarious standard of livelihood and something more of social recognition from their superiors; in short, it is the ideal, not of *Socialists,* but of men moved by the growing *instinct towards Socialism.* It must here be noted as to this commonplace and unideal side of the movement, that, throughout modern history, there has been in all democratic fermentations a discrepancy, indeed often an instinctive antipathy, between the theoretic movement, as conceived of by thinkers, and the actual popular or working-class struggle. The latter intent on immediate advantages, and unconscious of any ideal; the former full of the ideal which they have grasped intuitively from the first, but finding the necessary steps towards it so repulsive to them, that they are incapable of taking action. Sir Thomas More, for example, who imagined a society free from the evils of privileged commercialism, which was first raising its head in his time, had no sympathy with the western rebels in England or with the Peasant War in Germany. The French Utopists condemned popular revolutionary action. Robert Owen, though the most humane of men, looked upon Chartism as an interruption to his cooperative schemes, and deprecated it.

The progress of the revolutionary idea is shown by the fact that, in our own times, there is nothing but a *trace* of this jarring left. The workmen are not unwilling to accept the theorists as leaders; while the theorists fully and frankly recognise that it is through the instinctive working-class movement towards the bettering of life, by whatever political-economical methods, that their ideal of a new society must be sought. This period of practical unity of aim between the theorist and the agitator for immediate gains, must be considered to date from the Communist Manifesto published by Marx and Engels in 1847.

In short, while it is essential that the ideal of the new society should be always kept before the eyes of the mass of the working-classes, lest the *continuity* of the demands of the people should be broken, or lest they should be misdirected; so it is no less essential that the theorists should steadily take part in all action that tends

towards Socialism, lest their wholesome and truthful theories should be left adrift on the barren shore of Utopianism.

The demands for legislation at present formulated by the working-classes generally, and adopted, so far as they go, by Socialists, are manifestly incomplete, and if granted would still leave us with the evils of the capitalist system little touched. For example, the legal eight hours' day, if carried, would, as above pointed out, result in a quite temporary absorption of the unemployed, and also it would not of itself permanently increase the wages of the employed. In order that the condition of the unskilled workmen should be raised to something like a human level, it would be necessary in our opinion that, first of all, a minimum legal wage should be enacted; and this also would be illusive if it were not supplemented by the enactment of a legal maximum for all the necessaries of life; since, otherwise, prices would rise in some sort of proportion to the higher wages enforced by the new legislation. But it must not be supposed that any such measures would be of permanent value except as preludes to the assumption by the community of all the means of production and exchange, to wit, the land, the mines, the railways, the factories, *etc.*, and the credit establishments of the country. It is a matter of course that we do not expect to see this done by catastrophe,—that some Monday morning the sun will rise on a communised state which was capitalistic on Saturday night.[27]

Various schemes for accomplishing this transfer gradually have been suggested. These must be tested by experience; suffice it here to say that the pith of them is to work by municipalities and trade organisations for the decentralisation of administration, and the acquirement of control over the industries of the country. It is an encouraging sign of the times that even now, both in Paris and London, there seems to be a tendency for the municipal bodies to supplement, and even to supersede the functions of the national legislatures. The Bill prepared by the present Government (clearly with the intention of pleasing the country electors) for the formation of District and Parish Councils, though their powers will be but small, is nevertheless an important step, if only as providing a democratic machinery, which can be hereafter used for socialistic purposes.

It should here be stated that there are current amongst Socialists two views on the method of dealing with the modern bureaucratic state, not involving any ultimate opposition to each other, but the result of looking on the matter from different points of view. To some the national-political systems seem so difficult of attack, and to serve so clearly the end of keeping some kind of society together during the transition period, that they look forward to the new society developing itself under the political shell of the old bureaucratic states, which could to a certain extent be

used by the revolutionists, rather than to any disruption of them prior to the realisation of the new social system.

Others again agree with us in the above stated views, that while the national systems cannot at present be directly attacked with success as to their more fundamental elements, yet that these can, and should be, starved out by the continuous action of two principles, one federal and international, the other local. That is to say, there should take place a gradual and increasing delegation of the present powers of the central government to municipal and local bodies, until the political nation should be sapped, and give place to the federation of local and industrial organisations. We consider that this is essential in view of the fact that these latter would have much greater capacity for dealing with the details of the change. And indeed much of their work could go on during the period in which the old political nations were weakening into dissolution, or, as may be better said, were becoming rudimentary. For example, in the steps towards communisation of industries which would result from the law of minimum and maximum, the regulations would necessarily have to be in the hands of these local bodies (County and District Councils, *etc.*) It is becoming clear to every one that it is absurd for the central legislation to have to do with the details of life in places of which it knows little or nothing. Instances of such cases will keep on multiplying, until it will be found that the centre has nothing to do herein, and the interest in it will be then transferred to the localities. A similar line of argument applies to the trades. Even now there is at least a foreshadowing of practical unanimity of the miners, masons, cotton operatives, and others of this country, agreeing first of all amongst themselves, and then with the same trades in France, Germany, *etc.* This is, there is little doubt, the beginning of the Industrial Federation, to which we shall revert in the next chapter.

But the central state being supplanted by local bodies in local administration and by the industrial bodies independent of locality, there would remain the third function which it exercises at present, to wit the regulation of international affairs; and it is clear that in modern times the question of peace and war is almost altogether wielded by capitalistic exigencies, so that this function also would fail the political nation when capitalism fell. There would be nothing left for it to do; it would simply die out. Indeed we may be sure that the growing understanding on industrial questions is already tending, by destroying national jealousies, to the making an end of the destructive part of the functions of central governments. Hence, even before the political nation falls into its last stages of decay, we may hope to see a central arbitrating body depriving it of the business which in the past has seemed especially essential to it.

This is already gone so far that an important proposal is on foot as a plank in the socialist programme: namely, the suggestion of the formation of an international board of arbitration, immediately for the purpose of avoiding war by the adjudication of disputes. This might easily be made to develop into an international Parliament. The substitution of arbitration for war would not indeed of itself bring Socialism about, but, by getting rid of an obvious and acknowledged brutality, it would bring into relief the veiled economic tyranny oppressing us, and thus advance Socialism.

Such to our mind is the only means, joined to the gradual shifting of the opinions and aspirations of the masses, for bringing about the beginning of the Socialistic system. Armed revolt or civil war may be an *incident* of the struggle, and in some form or another probably will be, especially in the latter phases of the revolution; but in no case could it supplant the afore-mentioned change in popular feeling, and it must, at all events, follow rather than precede it.

It is clear that the first real victory of the Social Revolution will be the establishment not indeed of a complete system of communism in a day, which is absurd, but of a revolutionary administration whose *definite and conscious aim* will be to prepare and further, in all available ways, human life for such a system—in other words, of an administration whose every act will be of set purpose with a view to Socialism.

We can therefore see clearly before us a struggle which will end in realising a society wherein the means of production are communised, and a relative equality of condition as compared with modern capitalistic society will be attained. This and nothing less than this will be the beginning of Socialism in the true sense of the word; but it cannot stop at this point, but must have an immediate further development, and one which we can conceive of as being directly deducible from it. This must form the subject of our next and concluding chapter.

Footnotes

27. On the ridiculous assumption that this is intended rests many a “crushing” indictment of Socialism, *e.g.* it constitutes the marrow of Herr Eugene Richter’s *Socialdemocratische Zukunfts-bilder* [London 1893] (*Pictures of the Socialistic Future*).

CHAPTER XXI
SOCIALISM TRIUMPHANT

It is possible to succeed in a manner in portraying to ourselves the life of past times: that is, our imaginations will show us a picture of them which may include such accurate information as we may have of them. But though this may be a vivid delineation, and though the information may be just, yet it will not be a picture of what really took place; it will be made up of the present which we experience, and the past which our imagination, drawing from our experience, conceives of—in short, it will be our picture of the past. If this be the case with the past, of which we have some concrete data, still more strongly may it be said of the future, of which we have none, nothing but mere abstract deductions from historic evolution, the logical sequence of which may be interfered with at any point by elements whose force we have not duly appreciated; and these are abstractions also which are but the skeleton of the full life which will go on in those times to come.

Therefore, though we have no doubt of the transformation of modern civilisation into Socialism, yet we cannot foretell definitely what form the social life of the future will take, any more than a man living at the beginning of the commercial period, say Sir Thomas More or Lord Bacon, could foresee the state of society at the end of the nineteenth century.

Admitting that we are unable to realise positively the life of the future, in which the principle of real society will be universally accepted and applied in practice as an everyday matter, yet the negative side of the question we can all see, and most of us cannot help trying to fill up the void made by the necessary termination of the merely militant period of Socialism. The present society will be gone, with all its paraphernalia of checks and safeguards; that we know for certain. No less surely we know what the foundation of the new society will be. What will the new society build on that foundation of freedom and co-operation? That is the problem on which we can do no more than speculate.

It must be understood therefore that in giving this outline of the life of the future, we are not dogmatising, but only expressing *our* opinion of what will probably happen, which is of course coloured by our personal wishes and hopes. We ask our readers, therefore, not to suppose that we have here any intention of making a statement of facts, or prophesying in detail the exact form which things will take; though in the main, what we here write will be accepted by the majority of Socialists.

As to the political side of the new society, civilisation undertakes *the government of persons* by direct coercion. Socialism would deal primarily with *the administration of things,* and only secondarily and indirectly would have to do with personal habit and conduct. Civil law, therefore, which is an institution essentially based on private property, would cease to exist, and criminal law, which would tend to become obsolete, would, while it existed, concern itself solely with the protection of the person. It is clear, therefore, that there is no foundation for the outcry sometimes raised against Socialism for proposing to interfere with the liberty of the individual, which would be, in fact, only limited by the natural and inevitable restrictions of individual will incident to all societies whatever.

As to the machinery by means of which this administration of things would be carried out, we ask our readers to try to conceive of some such conditions as these.

As we hinted in our last chapter, during the transitional period the federal principle would assert itself; and this, we believe, would develop at last into a complete automatic system.

As indicated above, this principle would work in a twofold way. First, locally, as determined by geographical and topographical position, race, and language. Second, industrially, as determined by the occupations of people. Topographically, we conceive of the township as the lowest unit; industrially, of the trade or occupation organised somewhat on the lines of a craft-guild. In many instances the local branch of the guild would be within the limits of the township.

On the other hand, the highest unit would be the great council of the socialised world, and between these would be federations of localities arranged for convenience of administration. The great federal organising power, whatever form it took, would have the function of the administration of production in its wider sense. It would have to see to, for instance, the collection and distribution of all information as to the wants of populations and the possibilities of supplying them, leaving all details to the subordinate bodies, local and industrial. But also it would be its necessary duty to safeguard the then recognised principles of society; that is, to guard against any country, or place, or occupation reverting to methods or practices which would be destructive or harmful to the socialistic order, such as any form of the exploitation of labour, if that were possible, or the establishment of any vindictive criminal law. Though in the lower units of this great Federation direct expression of opinion would suffice for carrying on the administration, we cannot see any other means than delegation for doing the work of the higher circles. This means that the development of society beyond what we may call the administrative period cannot be foreseen as yet.

We now deal with the religious and ethical basis of which the life of communal society may be called an expression; although from another aspect the religion is an expression of that life—the two thus forming a harmonious whole.

The word religion is still in most minds connected with supernatural beliefs, and consequently its use has been thought unjustifiable where this element is absent. But, as we shall proceed to show, this element is rather accessory to it than essential.

At first religion had for its object the continuance and glory of the kinship-society, whether as clan, tribe, or people, ancestor-worship forming the leading feature in its early phases. That religion should then have been connected with what we now call superstition was inevitable, since no distinction was drawn between human and other forms of existence in animal life or in inanimate objects, all being alike considered conscious and intelligent.

Consequently, with the development of material civilisation from the domination of things by persons to that of persons by things, and the falling asunder of society into two classes, a possessing and dominating class, and a non-possessing and dominated one, there arose a condition of life which gave leisure for observation and reflection to the former, that is, the privileged class. Out of this reflection arose, the distinction of man as a conscious being apart from the rest of nature. From this again was developed a dual conception of things: on the one hand was man, familiar and known; on the other nature, mysterious and relatively unknown. In nature itself there grew up a further distinction between its visible objects, now regarded as unconscious things, and a supposed motive power or “providence” acting on them from behind. This was conceived of as man-like in character, but above mankind in knowledge and power, and no longer indwelling in natural objects, but without them, moving and controlling them.

Another set of dual conceptions arose along with this: firstly, the distinction between the individual and society, and secondly, within the individual, the distinction between the soul and the body. Religion now became definitely supernatural, and at last superstitious, in the true sense of the word (*superstites,* surviving), as far as the cultured class was concerned, since it had gradually lost its old habit of belief in it.

At this stage there arose a conflict not only of belief but also of ethical conceptions; the ceremonies and customs based on the earlier ideas of a nature composed of beings who were all conscious, became meaningless and in many cases repulsive to the advanced minds of the epoch; hence was born a system of esoteric explanation, often embodied in certain secret ceremonials termed Mysteries. These Mysteries

were a cultus embodying a practice of the ancient rude ceremonies, treated as revelations to certain privileged persons of this hidden meaning, which could not be understood by the vulgar. That is, people began to assume that the ancient rude and sometimes coarse ceremonies (belief in which directly as explanations of actual events now appeared to them incredible) wrapped up mystical meanings in an allegorical manner; *e.g.* a simple sun-myth would be turned into an allegory of the soul and the divinity,—their relative dealings with a present and future life. An importance began to be attached to the idea of such future life for the individual soul, which had nothing in common with the old existence of a scarcely broken continuity of life, founded not on any positive doctrine, but on the impossibility of an existing being conceiving of its non-existence. This idea is naively expressed in the burial ceremonies of all early races, in which food, horses, arms, *etc.*, are interred with the dead man as a provision for his journey to the unknown country. Similar notions, and the doctrines and ceremonies embodying them, grow in number and bulk as the stream of history broadens down, till they finally issue in the universal or ethical religions (as opposed to the tribal or nature-religions). Of these religions Buddhism and Christianity are the great historical examples, and in them the original ceremonies and their meanings have become fused with each other, and with the new ethics, which they are supposed to express more or less symbolically. An illustration of what has here been said may be found in the fusion of the ancient notions of sacrifice in the Christian dogma of the atonement.[28]

We have said that with the rise of civilisation tribal society became divided into classes, owing to the growth of *individual*, as opposed to *corporate* ownership of property. The old relations of persons to society were thus destroyed, and with them much of the meaning of.the old ethical ideas. In the tribal state the responsibility of the individual to the limited community of which he formed a part was strongly felt, while he recognised no duty outside this community. In the new conception of morality that now arose he had, it is true, duties to all men as a man, irrespective of his social group, but they were vague, and could be evaded or explained away with little disturbance of the conscience; because the central point round which morality revolved was a spiritual deity, who was the source and goal of all moral aspiration, and directly revealed himself to the individual conscience. These two are the two ethical poles, first, the tribal ethics, the responsibility to a community however limited, and, secondly, the universal or introspective ethics, or responsibility to a divinity, for whom humanity was but a means of realising himself. In these ethics the duties of man to man were of secondary importance. But though the tendency was in this direction from the beginnings of civilisation, it

took historically many centuries to realise itself, and only reached its final development in Christianity. ‘

As regards the future form of the moral consciousness, we may safely predict that it will be in a sense a return on a higher level to the ethics of the older world, with the difference that the limitation of scope to the kinship group in its narrower sense, which was one of the causes of the dissolution of ancient society, will disappear, and the identification of individual with social interests will be so complete that any divorce between the two will be inconceivable to the average man.

It will be noticed that we have above been speaking of religion and morality as distinct from one another. But the religion of Socialism will be but the ordinary ethics carried into a higher atmosphere, and will only differ from them in *degree* of conscious responsibility to one’s fellows. Socialistic Ethics would be the guide of our daily habit of life; socialistic religion would be that higher form of conscience that would impel us to actions on behalf of a future of the race, such as no man could command in his ordinary moods. As to the particulars of life under the Socialistic order, we may, to begin with, say concerning marriage and the family

that it would be affected by the great change, firstly in economics, and secondly in ethics. The present marriage system is based on the general supposition of economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her, which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant that came into the world would be born into full citizenship, and would enjoy all its advantages, whatever the conduct of its parents might be. Thus a new development of the family would take. place, on the basis, not of a predetermined lifelong business arrangement, to be formally and nominally held to, irrespective of circumstances, but on mutual inclination and affection, an association terminable at the will of either party. It is easy to see how great the gain would be to morality and sentiment in this change. At present, in this country at least, a legal and quasi moral offence has to be committed before the obviously unworkable contract can be set aside. On the Continent, it is true, even at the present day the marriage can be dissolved by mutual consent; but either party can, if so inclined, force the other into subjection, and prevent the exercise of his or her freedom. It is perhaps necessary to state that this change would not be made merely formally and mechanically. There would be no vestige of reprobation weighing on the dissolution of one tie and the forming of another. For the abhorrence of the oppression of the man by the woman or the woman by the man

(both of which continually happen to-day under the ægis of our would-be moral institutions) will certainly be an essential outcome of the ethics of the New Society. We may here note, as an example of the hypocrisy of the modern marriage system, that in the highest circles of our society morganatic marriages incur no blame at all.

The next point we have to call attention to is the occupations of mankind under Communism. In the present state of things, which is dominated by capitalism and wage-earning, the repulsiveness of *all* labour is assumed, the sole motive power being economic coercion from one end of the scale to the other. Now it is true that the original root of incitement to labour is necessity; but throughout the sentient world this is accompanied by pleasure in the successful exercise of energy. Indeed, as beings rise in the scale of development, the proportion of pleasure due to the latter as compared with the pain produced by coercion increases, always presupposing the absence of *artificial* and *privileged* coercion. For example, the horse in his natural state delights in running, and the dog in hunting, while in the elementary conditions of savage human life, certain ceremonies, and adornments of weapons and the like, point to a sense of pleasure and dignity even in the process of the acquisition of food. When we emerge from vague primitive into early historic barbarism, we find that this expression of some degree of pleasure in labour receives fresh impetus, and is everywhere present in needful occupations. It was from this turning of a necessary work into amusement that definite art was finally born.

As Barbarism began to give place to early Civilisation, this solace of labour fell asunder into duality like everything else, and art became incidental and accessory on the one side and independent and primary on the other. We shall take the liberty here of coining words, and calling the first *adjective,* and the second *substantive* art: meaning by *adjective* art that which grew up unconsciously as an amusement blended with the production of ordinary wares more or less permanent, from a house to a garment-pin ; and by *substantive,* a piece of craftsmanship whose *raison d'ètre* was to be a work of art, and which conveyed a definite meaning or story of some kind.

In the civilisation of Greece, which was so vigorous in throwing off barbarism, substantive art progressed very speedily, more or less to the prejudice of adjective art. As Roman despotism dragged the ancient world into staleness the triumphant *substantive* art withered into lifeless academicism, till it was met by the break-up of classical society. Under the new access of barbarism, art, acted on and reacting by, the remains of the classical life, changed completely. Substantive art almost disappeared and gave place to a fresh development of adjective art, so rich and

copious as to throw into the shade entirely the adjective art of the past, and to fill up the void caused by the waning of substantive art. Architecture, complete and elastic to adapt itself to our necessities, was the birth of this period; the blossoming time of which is dated by the name of the Emperor Justinian (c. 520 a.d.) This great adjective art developed into perfection in the early Middle Ages, its zenith being reached at the middle of the thirteenth century. But its progress was marked by the birth and gradual growth of a new substantive art; which, as the architecture of the Middle Ages began to decline, became, if not more expressive, yet at least more complex and more completely *substantive* till the Middle Ages were on the verge of dissolution. At last came the great change in society marked by the Renaissance enthusiasm and the Reformation: and as the excitement of that period began to pass away, we find adjective art almost gone, and substantive unconscious of any purpose but the display of intellect and dexterity of hand, the old long enduring duality dying out into mere nullity.

The upshot of this, so far as it concerns the solace of necessary occupation is, that while substantive art went on with many vicissitudes, amusing the upper classes, commercialism killed all art for the workman, depriving him necessarily of the power of appreciating its higher and the opportunity of producing its subsidiary form. In fact popular art and popular religion were alike unsuitable to the working of the new system of society, and were swept away by it.

It is no wonder then that almost all modern economists (who seldom study history, and never art), judging from what is going on before their eyes, assume that labour generally must be repulsive, and that hence coercion must be always employed on the necessarily lazy majority. Though it must be said, to the credit of the Utopist socialists and of Fourier especially, that they perceived instinctively how futile was any hope of the improvement of the race under such circumstances.

We have seen that the divorce of the workman from pleasure in his labour has only taken place in modern times, for we assert that, however it may be with artless labour, art of any kind can never be produced without pleasure. In this case then, as in others, we believe that the New Society will revert to the old method, though on a higher plane. With a very few exceptions Fourier was right in asserting that all labour could be made pleasurable under certain conditions. These conditions are, briefly: freedom from anxiety as to livelihood; shortness of hours in proportion to the stress of the work; variety of occupation if the work is of its nature monotonous; *due* use of machinery, *i.e.* the use of it in labour which is essentially oppressive if done by the hand; opportunity for every one to choose the occupation suitable to his capacity and idiosyncrasy; and lastly, the solacing of labour by the

introduction of ornament, the making of which is enjoyable to the labourer. As to this matter of occupation we may here say a word on machinery, which, as is now supposed (not without reason), will one day do away with all handiwork except, as is thought, with the highest arts.

We should say that machinery will be used in a way almost the reverse of the present one. Whereas we now abstain from using it in the roughest and most repulsive work, because it does not pay, in a socialist community its use will be relegated almost entirely to such work, because in a society of equality everything will be thought to pay which dispenses the citizen from drudgery. For the rest it must be admitted that the tendency of modern industrialism is towards the entire extinction of handiwork by machinery; but there is no doubt that in the long run this will work out its own contradiction. Machinery having been perfected, mankind will turn its attention to something else. We shall then begin to free ourselves from the terrible tyranny of machinery, and the results of the great commercial epoch which it has perfected; we fully admit that these results seem destined to overlap from the capitalistic into the socialistic period.

We have dealt first with the adjective arts because the practice of them is directly affected by the change in economics which is at the basis of the transformation of Civilisation into Socialism; let us now look at the substantive arts, beginning, however, with architecture, which is the link between the two categories, embracing as it does, when complete, all the arts which appeal to the eye.

Architecture, which is above all an art of association, we believe must necessarily be *the* art of a society of co-operation, in which there will certainly be a tendency towards the absorption of small buildings into big; and it must be remembered that of all the arts it gives most scope to the solace of labour by due ornament. Sculpture, as in past times, will be considered almost entirely a part of fine building, the highest expression of the beauty which turns a utilitarian building into a great artistic production.

Pictures again will surely be mostly used for the decoration of buildings which are specially public; the circumstances of a society free from chronic war, public, corporate, and private, cannot fail to affect this art largely, at least in its subjects, and probably will reduce its independent importance. The arts deduced from it, such as engraving, will be no doubt widespread and much used by persons in their private capacities.

As to literature, fiction as it is called, when a peaceful and happy society has been some time afoot, will probably die out for want of material. The pabulum of the modern novel in its various dressings is mostly provided by the anomalies and

futilities of a society of inequality wielded by a conventional false sense of duty, which produces the necessary imbroglio wherewith to embarrass the hero and heroine through the due number of pages. Literature, however, need by no means die; for we can neither limit nor foresee the development of the great art of poetry which has changed so little in essentials since the Homeric epics.

We must also note the difference (not generally considered) between literature as a fine art and the numberless useful books which are adjuncts, or tools rather, for other occupations, physical science in all its branches amongst the number. Science again will be freed from the utilitarian chains which commerce has cast over it, and, cultivated once more for its own sake, and not merely as a servant of profit-making industrialism, may be expected to develop in a manner at present undreamed of.

To return again to the subject of art proper. Of ancient Music we know little in spite of Aristotle and Boetius. Modern music begins at the close of the Middle Ages with the birth of counterpoint; its great development has been during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and has been in its earlier period synchronous with the most degraded period of all the other arts. Classical music (technically so-called) would seem to have reached its zenith about the middle of the present century; but the great revolution in dramatic music, effected by Wagner during the second half of the century, has occupied the field for the present, though what future developments it may have we cannot foresee. Of one thing, however, we may be very certain, that under a quite changed social condition Music will develop completely new styles of its own no less than the other arts. And in our belief Music and Architecture, each in its widest sense, will form the most serious occupation of the greatest number of people. In this connection we may observe that Music is on the executive side largely dependent on co-operation, notwithstanding that on the creative side it is more, rather than less, individual than painting.

A word may be said about the Drama, connected as it is on one side with Music and on the other with Literature. It is again as to its execution wholly a co-operative art, while its creation is necessarily subordinate to the possibilities of execution inherent in a given time and place. For the rest its production does not require the same amount of training as any other of the arts; and therefore could be more easily and pleasantly dealt with by a communal society working co-operatively.

Though the question of costume may seem a petty one, it has much to do with the pleasure of life. In the future the tyranny of convention will be abolished; reason and a sense of pleasure will rule. It must be remembered that bad costume, of

which there are hardly any examples before the Tudor period, always either muffles up or caricatures the body; whereas good costume at once veils and indicates it. Another fault may be noted in all bad periods (as in the present), that an *extreme* difference is made between the garments of the sexes. It is not too much to hope that the future society which will revolutionise architecture, will not fail to do as much for costume, which is as necessary an adornment as architecture.

To turn to some other phases of life under the new order. We believe that on no consideration will the dirt and squalor which now disgrace a manufactory or a railway station be tolerated. As things go this wretchedness of externals is unchallenged because, once more, it does not *pay* even to reduce the filth to a minimum. But, as we said before, everything that makes towards the pleasure of life in a communal state will pay if it be possible to be done. Therefore it is clear that the degradation of a whole country by careless industrialism will not be allowed. Granted the dirt and squalor reduced to a minimum, which we think would leave but a small residuum, how is the burden of even that small residuum to be dealt with? It being understood that the manufacture in question is a necessary one, say, for example, iron-founding, there would be two ways, either of which might be chosen. First, to have volunteers working temporarily in a strictly limited and comparatively small "black-country," which would have the advantage of leaving the rest of the country absolutely free from the disorder and dirt. And secondly, to spread the manufacture in small sections over a territory so large that in each place the disadvantages would be little felt. This would have the gain of enabling those who worked at it to live amidst tolerably agreeable surroundings.

A difficulty of the same sort would have to be met with in the towns. Great aggregations of houses would clearly not be absolutely necessary. These are now of two kinds: first, the manufacturing towns, which are seldom capitals, or of importance as centres of anything else than the commerce connected with their special industries, Manchester being an obvious example of this class of great town. The other kind of overgrown town gives us examples of great capitals, which are essentially seats of centralised government, and of general financial operations, and incidentally and consequently of intellectual movement. For example, institutions like the British Museum, the Louvre or Bibliotheque Nationale, the Berlin Royal Library, or the Galleries at Dresden could hardly exist except in capital cities. As to the manufacturing towns, it is clear that according to either of the theories of factory work put forward above, they would be superfluous, while on the other hand there would be no great centres of government or finance to attract huge populations or to keep them together. In the future therefore towns and

cities will be built and inhabited simply as convenient and pleasurable systems of dwelling-houses, which would include of course all desirable public buildings.

Again we give three theories of the transformation of the modern town, industrial or capital, into the kind of entity to suit the new social conditions. The first would leave the great towns still existing, but would limit the population on any given space; it would insist on cleanliness and airiness, the surrounding and segregation of the houses by gardens; the erecting of noble public buildings; the maintenance of educational institutions of all kinds— of theatres, libraries, workshops, taverns, kitchens, *etc*. This kind of town might be of considerable magnitude, and the houses in it might not be very different in size and arrangement from what they are now, although the life lived in them would have been transformed. It is understood, of course, that any association in dwelling in such places would be quite voluntary, although in view of the limitation above mentioned, no individual or group could be allowed to engross an undue area.

The second method of dealing with the unorganised and anarchic towns of to-day proposes their practical abolition, and the supplanting of them in the main by combined dwellings built more or less on the plan of the colleges of our older English universities. As to the size of these, that would have to be determined by convenience in each case, but the tendency would be to make them so large as to be almost small towns of themselves; since they would have to include a large population in order to foster the necessary give and take of intellectual intercourse, and make them more or less independent for ordinary occupation and amusement.

It is to be understood that this system of dwellings would not necessarily preclude the existence of quite small groups, and houses suitable to them, although we think that these would tend to become mere eccentricities.

Yet another suggestion may be sketched as follows:— a centre of a community, which can be described as a very small town with big houses, including various public buildings, the whole probably grouped about an open space. Then a belt of houses gradually diminishing in number and more and more spaced out, till at last the open country should be reached, where the dwellings, which would include some of the abovementioned colleges, should be sporadic.

We might go on furnishing suggestions, in which, however, as above, cross divisions are sure to occur. What we have given, however, we think quite enough, for they are clearly the birth of our own prepossessions. One thing, however, all such schemes must take for granted as a matter of principle, to wit the doing away of all antagonism between town and country, and all tendency for the one to suck the life out of the other.

As regards Education, it should be borne in mind that it must of necessity cease to be a preparation for a life of commercial success on the one hand, or of irresponsible labour on the other; and therefore in either case a short and perfunctory exercise with a definite object, more or less sordid in view. It will become rather a habit of making the best of the individual's powers in all directions to which he is led by his innate disposition; so that no man will ever “finish” his education while he is alive, and his early training will never lie behind him a piece of mere waste, as it most often does now.

In what we have been stating we have only been dealing with some of the elementary principles of Socialism Triumphant, and certain of those aspects of life resulting from them that lie nearest the surface; but at least we have tried to make our belief clear, that in the new order of things, while no one will be hampered by false ideas of duty, every one will have before him a broad ideal by which he may regulate his conduct with assurance and peace of mind. He will find his pleasure in the satisfaction, first, of his bodily desires, and then of the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic needs which will inevitably arise when a man is not at odds with his body, and 1s not exhausting his intellect in a vain combat with its urgent promptings. It will be necessary for him then as always to labour in order to live, but he will share that labour in equitable proportions with all his fellows; and, moreover, he will at last be able to turn man’s mastery over nature to account in relieving him of the mere drudgery of toil. What remains of labour, by wise use of opportunity and due observation of the various capacities of mankind he will turn into a pleasurable exercise of his energies; and thus between his rest and his work will at the least lead a life of happiness, which he will be able to enjoy without imputing it to himself for wickedness; a habit of mind which, under the prevailing ethical ideas, casts a gloom over so many of those who may be considered to belong to the more intellectual of the well-to-do classes.

As to his external surroundings, the society of the future will be wealthy enough to spare labour from the production of the only things now allowed to be utilities, for cultivating the decencies of life, so that all manufacture will be carried on in an orderly and cleanly manner, and the face of the earth will be beautified and not degraded by man’s labour and habitation. Another tyranny will be overthrown in our release from the compulsion of living in over-grown and over-crowded towns, and our houses and their surroundings will be dealt with in a reasonable manner.

Education will no longer be applied to the fortuitous cramming of unwilling children, and of young men intensely desirous of doing anything else than being educated,—and only submitting to that process for the sake of getting on in their

careers,—and will become one of the most serious businesses of life even to men of the greatest natural capacities. Such a life, it is clear, will be pretty much the reverse of that which some opponents of the new order, scientists as well as meaner personages, profess to see in the advancing "tyranny of Socialism." But we are convinced that this life, which means general happiness for all men, free from any substratum of slavery, will be *forced* on the world. Yet that world will not be wholly conscious of the gradual and natural compulsion which it will have to yield to, and which it will find by its results to have been wholly beneficent.

We may be asked, since we have been continuously putting forward the doctrine of evolution throughout these pages, what Socialism in *its* turn will evolve. We can only answer that Socialism denies the finality of human progress, and that any particular form of Socialism of which we can now conceive must necessarily give way before fresh and higher developments, of the nature of which, however, we can form no idea. These developments are necessarily hidden from us by the unfinished struggle in which we live, and in which therefore for us the supreme goal must be Socialism as we have here expounded it. We would be the very last to wish to set any bounds to human ideals or aspirations; but the Socialism which we can foresee, and which promises to us the elevation of mankind to a level of intelligent happiness and pleasurable energy unattained as yet, is to us enough as an ideal for our aspirations and as an incentive to our action.

Footnotes

28. *Cf.* the article on "Sacrifice," by Professor Robertson Smith, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edition.

NOTE ON THE "CITY"

(*Cf.* Cap. II.)

In Hebrew history the point referred to in the text may be remarked in the confusion of ideas between the mere Burg or hill fortress (Zion or Sihon) of the earlier days of Jerusalem and the later developed Holy City, schism from which was criminal in the eyes of the pious Hebrew, as the earliest seat of the federalised nation. The same thing is obvious in the genealogical history of Early Greece, of which we may take Athens as a type; the great tragedies, as the trilogies of Aeschylus, illustrate this, the actual city playing its part in the scenery as in the *Eumenides.* Here then we have three great cities—Troy, Jerusalem, Athens, proclaiming themselves obviously as centres of the new society and rising conspicuously above the welter of the tribes and the þeoð; but though these are obvious cases, the same thing was going on throughout the whole of the growing world of ancient civilisation. The Oriental monarchies, when looked at closely, turn out to have been compressed confederacies of cities. These flourished so long as the cities composing them retained some individuality, but their life was at last crushed out by monarchical and despotic centralisation. As a consequence the system which they formed was either broken up by the surrounding uncivilised tribes, as Accadian Babylon by the Assyrians, and Assyria in its turn by the Medes, or stagnated into huge lifeless bureaucracies, as in the case of China or Egypt. The life of the latter existed in the emulation of the cities of Memphis, Thebes, *etc.*, and lay in abeyance between the time of the Persian invasion and the rise under the Ptolemies of the Greek city of Alexandria.

Everywhere, in short, in the ancient world, one is struck by the preponderance of the city. Tyre is a mighty power, Carthage a great empire; nay, the mere material aggregation of buildings, the shrine, so to say, of the city-organisation, is all-important, and the territory a mere farm or recruiting ground; the long walls fall to the music of Lysander's flutes, and Athens becomes an appanage of the Dorians; Carthaginian walls are breached, and the huge Semitic empire becomes a part of the realm of the mightiest city of all. Nowhere is there independence, unity, progress, save where a city knits up the energies and gives form to the aspirations of men, providing an aim for which their virtue (valour) may expend itself.

It may here be noted that during all this time ethics and religion were developing on one line; in the earlier barbarism there was no distinction between society and

nature; man was the sole rational type; the gods were wholly anthropomorphous, and even amidst the delicate poetry of Homer at times grotesquely so; man was everything, the rest was homogeneous with him. Nature-gods were the ancestors of society, the heads of gentes and tribes traced their descent quite frankly by mere begettal from the highest. Heracles, Jove, Mavors, Woden were no forces exterior to the life of the existing people of the Hellenes, the Latins, or the Goths, but veritable material ancestors, so many counted generations back. Their most tragic stories, embodied in the noblest poetry which the world has seen, and perhaps will ever see,—looked upon as no chance fictions or literary inventions, but rather as pieces of inspired history,—were but episodes of the great story, blossoms of the genealogical tree of the existing child of Atreus or Wolsmeg. This tendency for the identification of man with everything sensible or insensible, animate or inanimate, is again illustrated by totem worship, necessitated also by the more obvious reason of the early absence of monogamous or even polygamous institutions. The gods themselves change without degradation into the forms of beast and bird, so that the chiefs of the gens could feel no shame in taking their names from the bear, the wolf, or the eagle, and giving them in turn to the whole groups. Amongst the Hebrews, too, it is clear that the so-called patriarchs were really nature-gods; the names of chiefs were frequently compounded of the word Baal—that is "god," a fact naively recognised by the historians of the later and orthodox period by their changing Baal into El or Ja, the special names of the Hebrew tribal God. Similarly Abram is the high heaven, like Zeus or Jove.

This line of religion was still followed up in the period of ancient civilisation; the state and religion were one, as is indicated amongst other things by the temples having been used as popular meeting-places for pleasure, law or business. In short, in the ancient world, religion was ancestor-worship, developing, as the gens and the þeoð gave place to the city, into city-worship, in which the individual only felt his more elevated life as a part of the Holy City that had made him and his what they were, and would lead them to all excellence and glory.

We have mentioned that the city-confederacies of the East which assumed the appearance to later ages of great despotic monarchies fell either into demoralisation or languid bureaucracy. From Asia the lead in civilisation passed to Europe, and the progress of humanity became speedy and brilliant. But the Ancient Civilisation, incomplete, founded on oligarchy, political and intellectual, and on industrial slavery of the crudest kind, had to undergo the law of change. The Greek cities, after fierce struggles among themselves for the leadership of their world, fell, destroyed by individual greed for position and fame, that took the place of the old city-worship. Their fall was helped by the new system of individualistic ethics,

which put forward as the aim of life the excellence and moral qualities of the individual, looked at in himself, instead of those of the society of which he formed a part. Thus Greek civilisation fell into the clutches of the Tyrants, and again the lead passed westward into the hands of Rome—the most complete, self-contained and powerful development of the city-world. But again, as her power grew and the wealth of her oligarchy with it, the doom was awaiting; the boundless greed of the great slave-holding and tax-gathering capitalists, the conquerors of the ancient world, led them into a condition of chaos, from which they had to be rescued by an imperial bureaucracy. It was the function of the latter, on the one hand, to keep peace between the competitors for monstrous wealth, and, on the other, to hold down and pacify the proletariat and subject barbarians, on whom the oligarchy fed.

Steady degradation followed the Augustan *"Pax Romana";* the whole of the mighty power of Rome, the growth of so many centuries of energy and valour, was prostituted to the squeezing of taxes from the Roman world; the very form of the city-society was reduced to an absurdity by the sale of citizenship, until Caracalla abolished its mere form, extending it to all freed men. At last the Roman armies were wholly composed of Gauls and Goths, Armenians and Arabs; no Italian could be found willing to fight for his life much less for the sham state, good only for tax-gathering, which now represented the once great city. Rome fell, and with it the Ancient World.

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