

Economic Evolution

BY PAUL LAFARGUE

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

On May 21, 1892, a joint debate on socialism was held between Paul Lafargue, then socialist deputy from Lille, and M. Demolins, editor of the *Science Sociale* and founder of the Anti-Socialist League. The auditorium of the Geographical Society, holding a thousand people, was well filled, the audience mainly consisting of capitalists, deputies, academicians, university professors, priests and magistrates. Lafargue, having certain things to say to this sort of an audience, had reserved only fifty tickets for his socialist friends.

The present booklet is in the main a translation from a stenographic report of Lafargue's speech on this occasion. I have, however, taken more liberties with it than with any of my other translations from this author. I have omitted most of the references to affairs of the day in France and to side issues raised by M. Demolins, and have occasionally supplied a few words to make the author's meaning clearer to American workmen.

C. H. K.

ECONOMIC EVOLUTION

Certain writers think that the evolution of our society will end in an intensified form of individualism, while we Marxians believe on the contrary that economic development tends inevitably to reintroduce communism, that is to say, the common ownership of the means of production, already partly accomplished, and the common ownership of the means of enjoyment, now monopolized by a class already small in number and growing still smaller from day to day by the very fact of economic development.

Those of our opponents who try to be courteous treat us as utopians, as dreamers; they tell us: "Yes, the Society of your dreams is admirable; it would be a fine thing if equality could rule among men; but you do not understand human nature, which is fundamentally bad. Begin by reforming men before reforming Society."

We are so far from being utopians that, unlike politicians and philanthropists, we do not think man can be changed by moral sermons, religious or secular; to reform him we must transform the environment within which he i

evolving; for if man is the creator of his social environment, he is also its creature. Modify the environment, and at one stroke you change the customs, the habits, the passions and the feelings of men. We dreamers are studying the social environment; we are analyzing economic phenomena, tracing them to their origin, following their development, observing their action on the family and the body politic, and we dare draw our own conclusions without fear or prejudice.

Economic phenomena operate not only on social customs, but also on the organization of the family and the state, and even upon the philosophical and religious ideas that haunt the human head. Here is an example which to me seems conclusive. At a certain stage of development, when the means of production are imperfect, all nations must practice slavery. For everybody, even the boldest thinkers, slavery is at that time a just and natural thing, and for religious people it is divinely ordained. One of the world's greatest thinkers, Aristotle, was forced to believe that nature had created a race of men especially destined for servitude. In this he was in accord with the book of Genesis, which declared that the progeny of Ham was to furnish slaves for the other races descended from Noah. But at least the Greek philosopher had a glimpse of something not seen by the God of the Jews and the Christians, namely, that certain modifications in the tools of production would necessarily in-

volve the suppression of slavery. This remarkable passage is found in his "Politics":

"If each tool without compulsion, of its own power, were to execute its function, as the masterpieces of Dædalus moved of themselves, or as the tripods of Vulcan set themselves spontaneously at their sacred work, if for example the weavers' shuttles wove of themselves, the chief of the workshop would have no further need of helpers, nor the master of slaves."

Thus Aristotle, after affirming that slavery was established by nature, had the genius to foresee that by the transformation of the mode of production, its end would come. And it is because this economic transformation has been realized, it is because the machines of the great industry accomplish of themselves, automatically, their sacred work, that we socialists affirm that wage labor, that last and worst form of servile toil, will inevitably disappear.

The Industrial Revolution.

The machine has taken possession of all industries, from the primitive and simple to the most artistic. Butter-making, which comes down to us from the remotest historical times, is carried on today by the aid of machinery which takes milk fresh from the cow and transforms it into butter. The sun, by the aid of lenses and chemicals, paints, or rather draws; it is in a fair way to become a color-painter. Drawings of all kinds are repre-

duced in any quantity desired by a rapid chemical and mechanical process. Calculating machines are doing more accurate work than the mathematicians. So with all industries; machinery is everywhere.

What has been the effect of the machine?

The machine has transformed individual production into communistic production.

To explain: Formerly spinning and knitting were done in families, and weaving in every village. These industries, once scattered over the whole surface of the country, are today concentrated into certain districts, where spinning, knitting and weaving are done mechanically for everybody. The tools for spinning and weaving are *used in common* in great cotton and woollen mills.

The product of labor has lost its individualist character. A shoemaker of the old school made the entire shoe; it was his *individual* product. Now in a shoe factory the work passes through hundreds of hands, so that the pair of shoes is the *common* product of a collectivity made up of a certain number of producers. Once individualistic, the product is now communistic.

The same change can be seen in commerce. A century ago every shop has its specialty, to which it was strictly confined. Today in the great department stores all possible varieties of goods are brought together under one roof, and under the *common ownership* of a single corporation.

Financial Centralization.

So long as industry remained individualistic, the tools being simple, it required only a little capital to procure them. Every producer, with his own little savings, could set himself up as an employer, owning his shop and working for himself with his children and a few apprentices and companions. That time has gone by. Before machine production began, that hope could be realized—was realized every day; it has now become a utopia.

The tools of modern industry are so gigantic that it is no longer a question of a hundred dollars, but of a hundred thousand or a million, to procure them. A new class of men has appeared called "promoters"; their special function being to unite, in other words to *socialize*, the small capitals possessed individually, in order to provide the means for building railroads, developing mines, equipping cotton mills, blast furnaces, etc. I know our official economists declare that to divide the great industrial organisms into stocks and bonds is a method of widely distributing property—democratizing it. But they do not observe that this democratization of property has enabled the financiers to extract money from all the old stockings and other secret hiding-places, to centralize it in their hands and monopolize its management, until such time as they can grab the whole property for themselves by the familiar

process of "freezing out" the little stockholders. Thus have been built up the enormous fortunes counted by hundreds of millions. This sort of diffusion of the property invested in great industrial and commercial enterprises has simply stripped the country of its capital, to the profit of a few trust magnates.

You see, the organisms of production and exchange are taking on the communist form. This transformation from individualist production and exchange has been the inevitable, necessary consequence of economic development; it has been produced independently of the human will and even counter to it; nothing could have stopped it in its evolution; nothing can hinder it from arriving at its final result. *The collective operation of the means of production must inevitably, necessarily result in collective control of the product of labor, of the things the workers make and wish to enjoy.*

But if the organisms of production and exchange have become communistic, their mode of appropriation has thus far remained individualistic. For example, the great instruments of production, such as cotton mills, factories and railroads, and the great department stores of Paris, New York and Chicago, although communistic in their mode of operation, are possessed by one or several individuals, or by a collectivity of stockholders and bondholders. Possession has remained individual, as it was when industry and commerce, being of little importance, took on the

individualistic form. There is thus an antagonism, a contradiction, between the communist method of production and exchange, and the individualist method of appropriation. Because of this contradiction, pain and wretchedness exist, and society is marching on to a crisis which will solve it.

The inevitable, necessary development of economic phenomena has created the communistic organization of production and of exchange; this same development is giving birth to the means for solving the contradiction between the communistic method of production and exchange and the individualistic method of appropriation. That is to say, that while economic evolution was socializing the means of production and exchange, it has been preparing the way for socializing the means of enjoyment.

To point out in our present environment the existing elements of a revolution which is to socialize all the tools of production and exchange is the second part of my task.

The Problem of Production Solved.

The first and greatest consequence of the socialization of the means of production is to multiply the productive force of men two-fold, even a hundred-fold. Today there are no human or social needs that can not be satisfied over and over.

The proof: In the second half of the nineteenth century there was an unprecedented demand

for iron and steel to build railways and steamships and to develop the machinery of industry and of agriculture. Production took up the task; it was equal to all demands and more, since there have been periodic crises of over-production in the iron trade; times when so much was produced that there was no outlet, no demand. And yet in those fifty years the earth has been covered with machines and gridironed with rails; literally the world has been put in irons. If the machines, rails and metal produced were heaped up, they would make mountains of iron higher than the Himalayas. That is one of the marvels of social production.

Here is another: To produce wheat in sufficient quantities is the first condition of social existence; this problem has been solved, and to spare. (The details given at this point by the author, speaking sixteen years ago, are out of date. The development of the Canadian Northwest, which he went on to predict, has been realized, and as this translation goes to press the discovery is announced of "Alaska Wheat," a new variety said to produce 220 bushels to the acre.—Translator.)

I have taken for examples wheat and iron, the two most necessary products; I might take all products, one after the other, and show you how everywhere production is so colossal that it outstrips consumption; thus the problem of manufacturers is no longer how to produce but how to

find consumers; in search of them they go to Asia, to Africa, to the devil.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the European nations disputed over colonies that they might steal their furs, spices, costly woods and precious metals, now they dispute over them still more in order to export to them goods stolen from the producers; robbery is the very essence of capitalist society.

This abundance, even super-abundance of production, unknown in previous times, might have resulted in well-being for all producers; on the contrary it is the cause of their poverty. The lock-outs that starve the laborer come when the warehouses are bursting with goods; people die of hunger because they have produced too much. In the Middle Ages famines decimated the population, but only when the harvests were bad. Today abundance brings want. This evident paradox, which is preparing working-class heads for the revolution, grows from the contradiction, already mentioned, between the communistic method of production and the individualistic method of appropriation. The producers stagnate in misery, because the capitalists rob them daily of the fruits of their labor.

This appropriation of the fruits of toil has transformed society into an immense bazaar where everything is sold, not merely the products of human exertion, but man himself. Manual laborers are bought for their muscular power, and in-

tellectual laborers for their brain power, because they are engineers, chemists, architects, because they have capacities for organizing or directing. The contradiction between the communism of production and the individualism of appropriation degrades man, makes merchandise out of him and an immense shop out of society.

"What honorable thing can come out of a shop?" said Cicero in the closing days of the Roman republic, and he voiced the opinion of his epoch, of all antiquity, of all societies not based on commerce and capitalist production.

"What honorable thing can come out of a shop, and what honest thing can commerce produce?"

"Everything called shop is unworthy of an honest man, since merchants can gain nothing without lying, and what is more shameful than falsehood? Therefore we must regard as low and vile the trade of all those who sell their labor and their industry, for whoever gives his labor for money sells himself, and ranks himself with slaves."

What more crushing proof of human degradation, than to sell one's labor of hand or brain? This act, too degrading for any citizen of Sparta or Rome, is the only resource left to the producer in our capitalist society; wage labor is a form of slavery.

Cicero was right; out of a shop nothing can come but lies. Nothing but lies in the immense

shop we call capitalist society? Its products? All imitations, all adulterated.

Our boasted capitalist civilization will pass down into history as the age of trash. Not only natural products are imitated, but the imitations also. Butterine is an imitation of butter, and in its turn is imitated.

Capitalist Lies.

But it is not only in the material world that people lie, that things lie—still more in the moral world. Never were social lies so common; it may even be said that all the morals and all the politics of the day are lies. I can not recount the lies put out soberly by the most respectable men of the ruling classes; the list is too long, so I will merely take a few to illustrate.

Remember that property is the basis of society; the conservation of private property is the constant concern of the ruling classes. Yet the priests of the golden calf, the economists, chant impressively of the order and harmony of capitalist society. All lies! Never was a society with more trouble and antagonisms; civil war, without quarter and without mercy, rends the harmonious capitalist society. Two merchants selling the same merchandise, two manufacturers making the same product, are they not in continual war? Does not each struggle to take away his commercial brother's customers, to drive him from the

market, to ruin him, to lay him out? This war is called competition.

It is the struggle of all against all, to quote Hobbes, implacable in his logic. In the middle ages this war,, suspended by occasional truces, was waged from castle to castle; but that war, carried on with sword and lance, developed in the feudal baron certain physical and moral qualities, courage, loyalty, truthfulness, strength, endurance of fatigue, inclemency and pain, which ennobled man's body and soul. The ruling passion of capitalist society is money, the insatiable thirst for riches acquired without work. Economic competition engenders in the human soul only the spirit of intrigue, trickery, lying, avarice, egoism. Perish society, perish country, perish humanity, so that I make a fortune—that is the heart-cry of the capitalist.

The economic war between capitalists has an outcome like that of the war between the barons—the centralization of property. The feudal lord merged into his own estate the land and the serfs of the vanquished; the manufacturer annexes the factory and the customers of his ruined competitor.

Big capital absorbs little capital; small properties daily disappear in the process of building up great estates. Thus this society based on property becomes the destroyer of small properties, allowing only immense properties to survive.

In the French Revolution of 1789, the rising capitalist class offered itself as the defender of the

rights of humanity, the avenger of wrongs, and it announced the speedy realization of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. These words are written in constitutions and engraved on prison walls, but there is no reality answering to them. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity are the three cardinal lies of capitalism.

The prophets of capitalism announced and still announce that the machine is to diminish man's work. Another impudent lie. Mechanical progress in capitalist society increases work. Before the Revolution night work was forbidden; today in the capitalist factories, veritable prisons, men, women and even children toil day and night.

In France a century ago, State and Church protected the laborer, assuring him a certain number of rest days each year, 52 Sundays and 40 holidays, without counting the local and guild feasts; everything was then a pretext for rejoicing; there was leisure for banqueting and amusements in honor of Saint Laziness. In our days there is no more time; we must labor seven days a week; our Catholic employers forget that their good God, all-powerful though they call him, needed to rest after six days of work.

Woman and the Family.

The family! Another solid and sacred foundation of society! No praise too great for it! Everybody—employers, financiers, moralists and politicians are, so they say, concerned with nothing

but preserving it, developing it, adorning it. Unhappily, things have turned out just the other way! Capitalist society dismembers and destroys the family. The factory snatches the woman and the child from the home! It robs the baby of its mother and the father of his wife. Young girls who have passed their childhood in the factory become mothers without knowing how to handle either a **needle** or a frying-pan.

The philanthropists, always ready with fine phrases to gloss over horrible conditions, tell us that the woman and child are employed in capitalist prisons merely to improve the condition of the family, merely to increase its income. Lies, and impudent lies! Woman has rather been condemned to forced labor to reduce her husband's wages, and afterwards they have taken the child, to reduce hers. The philanthropic capitalists have introduced disunion, competition, into the family; they force father, mother and child to fight for the chance to sell their labor power cheapest.

Under individualist industry, the labor of the father had to provide food for the whole family; under capitalist industry not only do the mother and child have to provide their own food by their work, but it often happens that the wages of the mother, and even those of the children, support the father. In the United States there are manufacturing towns where women are preferred to men; to such an extent that the husband stays

at home to look after the children and keep the pot boiling; they are called "she-towns."

Woman is still more of a sufferer than man, but the industrial work, the social work, which today tortures her, will free her from the marital yoke more completely than the dowry system freed the patrician women of the Roman decadence.*

Women, withdrawn from domestic work, and sharing the social work with men, have the right and the obligation to concern themselves with politics, to take part in the socialist movement. We shall open our ranks to them; in the Socialist Party they can be active in any work for which they find themselves fitted, and in the communist society they will find again their citizen rights which they lost when the matriarchal family was supplanted by the patriarchal.

Freed from the marital yoke and the oppression of man-made morality, woman will be able to develop freely her physical and intellectual faculties; she will resume the commanding role of initiator which she filled in the early ages—a role preserved in memory for us by the myths and legends of primitive religions. For in India, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, those ancient cradles of human evolution, it is to goddesses, not gods, that inventions in the practical, industrial arts

*See Lafargue's *The Right to Be Lazy and Other Studies*, page 112.

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are attributed. These mythical recollections suggest that woman's brain was the first to take shape; even today little girls are more wide-awake and intelligent than little boys; if later they lose these superior qualities, the fault is in the absurd system of moral, intellectual and physical education to which they have been condemned for centuries. "Woman is inferior," our capitalistic pedants say, but they forget to add that she has been kept in a strait-jacket from her girlhood. The hare would be slower than the tortoise if its feet were tied.

The Dignity of Labor.

Our century is the century of labor. Labor is honored; intelligence and knowledge are rewarded, so they say. But, oh, what lies!

In the small industry of the past, the laborer was an artisan, combining manual and intellectual work in his own person. A woodworker, for example, formed a conception of a piece of furniture in his head before making it; his brain directed his hand in the work. Not so today; the worker no longer thinks; he is like a wheel geared into a machine that does the thinking. Capitalist production degrades the laborer until he is a mere slave of the machine.

The lot of the intellectual laborer is scarcely more enchanting. The mass of the manual laborers being mere cogs in the machine, a select working class had to be created that it might invent,

think and direct; intellectual laborers had to be produced, to serve as managers, superintendents, foremen, engineers, chemists, etc. If it were true that science and intellect were rewarded, these workers, who constitute the brain of the producing organism, should occupy the foremost place in capitalist society, like the priests in the ancient theocracies, when religion was the only science.

On the contrary, the intellectual laborers bow like the hand-workers under the degrading yoke of capitalism; they are mere hirelings, they exhaust their brains to enrich the big capitalist, who need not trouble himself to acquire knowledge, since he finds chemists, engineers and scholars on the market at forty or fifty dollars a month. He has learned how to produce everything in abundance, socks or abilities, it is all the same. Chemists and electricians are manufactured as abundantly as a market-gardener makes carrots grow; so their price has fallen considerably. To degrade science and intelligence is all that capitalism has done for brain workers.

The Evolution of the Capitalist.

Now for the other side. We have seen the sufferings of the toilers, manual and intellectual, growing out of the communistic centralization of production, in the grasp of a few individual capitalists. Has this monopoly of the means of production and of the social wealth developed the capitalist proprietor intellectually and morally?

Do his services to society correspond to the honors he receives and the pleasures he takes?

In the individualist industry, the proprietor was essentially a useful man. He produced, aided by his family and a few apprentices and companions. If he fell ill or dissipated, his industry was in peril; he was the moving spirit of his factory or shop.

In the communist industry, the employer has disappeared. Look for the proprietors in a refinery, a railroad, a mine, a machine shop. You will not find them in the workroom, but at the banking house where interest and dividends are drawn; they live far away from the labor that enriches them—they live at Paris, or Berlin, or Peking, and they might equally well live in the moon for all the services they render in connection with their property.

At the beginning of the capitalistic concentration of the means of production and exchange, the proprietor plays a useful role of oversight and direction; but this centralization once accomplished, he hands over his work to others, so that the "master's eye," which once saw everything, has been put out of business.

But when capitalist property takes on the form of a corporation, with its bonds and stocks, its most developed form, then the utter uselessness of the proprietor stands out for all to see. And because he is useless, he becomes hurtful. This horrible statement comes not from me but from

a member of the Institute, a celebrated economist, editor of a great economic review, M. de Molinari. He writes in his work on Economic Evolution:

“In an enterprise organized as a corporation, the manager may own but a small fraction of the capital. Strictly speaking, he might own none at all, and, contrary to the generally received opinion, this arrangement might be the best for the corporation—a non-stockholding manager having no right of control. Enough that he possess the capacity, the knowledge and the morality requisite for his functions, all qualities which are found more easily, and at less cost, on the market, separated from capital than united to it.”

M. de Molinari merely states a fact, but he is entitled to some credit for having dared to tell the truth, something that official economists usually hide under a cloud of words.

The capitalist proprietor no longer performs any function in production. On the day when the communist organization of industry and commerce stripped him of all his useful functions, it signed the death warrant of the capitalist class. It will go the way of the aristocracy.

History repeats itself: the evolution of the feudal aristocracy presents striking analogies with that of the capitalist class. So long as the barons lived on their lands, fulfilling a useful function, it would have been impossible to suppress the nobility, as was done in 1789. In the

earlier days they defended their serfs and vassals, protecting them against the numerous enemies by whom they were surrounded; the feudal retainers were the defensive armies of European states. But on the day when the noble discarded his armor for court dress, when he exchanged his heavy battle-sword for the slender blade of the duelist, when the feudal lord became the courtier of Versailles, the death warrant of the nobility was signed. And the social Revolution which inevitably, necessarily, is to close the capitalist era will carry out the death warrant of the capitalist class pronounced by economic phenomena.

The Rise of the Proletarian.

The economic phenomena which have deprived the producers of their tools, centralizing and socializing these in vast factories, have agglomerated the laborers, formerly scattered over the country, have centralized them in manufacturing cities, have put them under common control in the same workshops. There they have been relieved of all the small-proprietor instincts which they retained for a while as a souvenir of their lost individual property. Living in the presence of the colossal machinery which employs them, they understand, instinctively, that they can never possess it individually, that its collective proprietorship alone is possible. Machine production has swept out of the proletarian head the idea of individual property; it has implanted there the

idea of common property. This brain transformation has come about quite apart from the efforts of the socialists; it is the result of machine production organized under the direction of the capitalists. Socialist ideas exist latent in the brains of the wage-workers; our propagandists merely uncover them and put them in action.

The capitalist class by centralizing the proletarians, by putting them under common control in its workshops, has given enormous strength to socialist propaganda; not only has it prepared the brains, but also furnished means for acting on them. When we go into the industrial cities, we find masses of workers ready to welcome the socialist ideas, which we do not bring, but which we merely disentangle from the economic phenomena of which the workers are the playthings and the victims.

The capitalist class, which for the exigencies of production has predisposed the proletarian masses toward the socialist propaganda, also furnishes us with the means for agitating them, organizing them politically, and preparing them for their revolutionary role.

The capitalist class, possessing the political power, wishes to monopolize it; everywhere, in France as in England, Germany, Holland, it has established restricted suffrage to shut out the non-possessing class from political control. But in most civilized countries it has been compelled more or less rapidly to grant universal suffrage.

(It should be observed that Lafargue is referring to Europe. In America universal manhood suffrage was established when small individual producers controlled the means of production, and the suffrage is now being restricted by various devices.—Translator.)

The capitalist class itself has thus been forced to put this terrible weapon into the hands of the wage-workers; true, this double-edged sword has thus far wounded the working class, unskilled in using it. Since 1848, we have possessed universal suffrage, and yet each successive parliament, by an immense majority, has been composed of capitalists or of men representing capitalist interests. Laborers have elected capitalists to represent them. To defend their interests, they have chosen their worst enemies. In spite of universal suffrage, the government is in the hands of the possessing class, which legislates only in its own interests.

But the socialists are beginning to educate the working class; to teach them how to use universal suffrage; it has lately proved that it has taken its lessons to heart. At the recent municipal elections the Socialist Party (Parti Ouvrier) of which I am a member, contested 77 cities; in 27 municipalites we elcted a majority of the council, and in several its entire membership; in others we obtained representation. The number of votes obtained at this first attempt exceeded 102,000.

That is a start toward grasping the powers of the municipalities.

The working class, and by that we mean manual and intellectual laborers alike, since both are wage-workers, has today the task of producing everything and at the same time of directing all production. It is today the only useful class; only one thing remains for it to do, and that is to manage the political affairs of the nation. And it is in these municipal councils, which the socialists are beginning to capture, that the men will be trained who are needed to administer the nation.

The proletariat, once in control of the cities and the State, will follow the example set it by the Bourgeoisie of 1793; after having expropriated the capitalist class politically it will expropriate it economically; it will end the contradiction which we stated at the outset, between the communist organization of production and the individualist appropriation of the tools and the fruits of labor; it will socialize capitalist property. Then it will have established not only common ownership of the means of production but also common ownership of the means of enjoyment.

And as machine production has increased man's productive powers to such an extent that he can produce up to and beyond all that is required to satisfy all the normal wants of human beings, then in spite of Jesus' words repeated and paraphrased by the moralists and politicians of all

privileged classes, the poor will no longer be with us; well-being will be universal.

Dreaming, or Seeing?

You see I have not been dreaming; I have not assumed that the social movement must be shaped according to absolute ideas or sentiments of justice, of equality; what I have done is to study the phenomena evolving under our eyes, and point out to you their persistent trend.

I have shown you the economic organism of production assuming the communist form, while the appropriation of the product remained individualistic. We have seen this social production modifying the character of individual property, centralizing it, destroying the family, engendering misery in the midst of plenty, changing the old conditions of labor, separating brain work from hand work and isolating them in two fixed groups of wage-workers; making useless the capitalist proprietor, whose class privileges are no longer earned by any service, private or social; crowding the wage-workers into industrial cities; sweeping their heads clean of all the instincts of the capitalist proprietor; sowing communist ideas in their brains, preparing them for the socialist propaganda, for the wielding of universal suffrage and for the grasping of the powers of the municipality and the State to bring about the passage from the individualist proprietorship of the capi-

talist class to the common proprietorship of the whole nation.

Is that dreaming? Is it not rather seeing clearly? Is it preaching murder and pillage to prepare the laboring masses for the revolutionary mission which they are called to fulfill for the good of humanity?

Economic phenomena are the great criminals, the terrible revolutionists that are upsetting all human customs and all the foundations of society; we Marxian socialists are but the heralds of economic phenomena; if like the seabirds that warn the sailors of storms, we announce to the ruling classes the storm which will sweep away their privileges, it is not we who raise the storm.

When society, which this social revolution will overthrow, with less pain than is suffered in the periodic crises of capitalist over-production, shall have settled into the order and harmony that will preside over the equalitarian creation and distribution of wealth, then the machine, the most terrible instrument of oppression ever put into the hands of a possessing class, will become the redeemer of humanity, then, as the powerful genius of Aristotle saw ahead through all the centuries, servile toil will have passed away forever.

The State and the Individual.

Our opponents attack the State, saying that to extend its power will arrest the development of

the individual. But we also attack the State; we wish to suppress it; we regard it as merely the stronghold of capitalism; if the capitalist class had not its policemen, its soldiers, its judges and its jailers to protect it, its weakness in numbers is such that the first uprising of the working class would sweep it off the earth. All history shows that the State is simply the organized force at the disposal of the privileged classes, and furthermore that the conquest of the State has always assured to a class social dominance.

In ancient France, royalty personifying the nobility possessed the State, which then protected the privileges of the aristocrats. On the day when it fell into the hands of the capitalist class, this class became mistress of society, and now uses the State for its own protection.

In a communist society there will be no privileged class, only workers, only men with the same rights and the same duties; consequently there will be no need of a State. For there will be no classes to defend, every one will be in a position to defend himself, because all will be equal, and no one will find it to his interest to injure others, while in capitalist society not only does the privileged class injure the working class, but the members of both classes injure each other.

In our society there is constant war, manufacturer against manufacturer, merchant against merchant, the prosperity of one being possible only through the misfortune of another. The more

sickness, for example, the better for the doctors. In a society different from ours, where individual interests will not be in conflict, individuals will not make war on each other and will not need protection.

Our opponents confound communism with officialism, and by this they mean the officialism of the State. But do not the railways, mines, banks, department stores and other great organisms of capitalist production also bristle with officials? The work of the ordinary employee, in bank, store or postoffice, is always the same toil, degrading and brutalizing to the human personality. But the state employees are at least a little better paid than those of corporations, so that to be a state employee is greatly desired in all capitalist countries. So that not even by suppressing the state will you suppress the officialism you so deplore. We socialists alone shall be able to destroy it. When these social organisms of production, now in private hands, shall belong to the whole nation, it will turn them over to the labor unions. It is true that in England and America, these unions have often seemed reactionary, but economic development is making them revolutionary, and when the great instruments of production become the property of the nation, they will be turned over to the organized laborers. Then there will be no more functionaries overseeing the work in the interest of a small privileged class; there will be only associated workers, each doing

his part, and all knowing that all the fruits of their toil will belong to them.

It has been said that a communist system would stifle human energy, would deaden individual activity, each depending on his neighbor to do the work, on account of the fruit of labor not belonging to the individual. But that is precisely what happens in capitalist society. Today the laborer knows perfectly well that the fruit of his toil does not belong to him, that he gets back only a small part in the form of wages and that the larger part goes to the capitalist. In a communist society he will know that all he produces, the common needs of society once provided for, will belong to himself.

We can determine today how much wheat is required to feed a country; it will be easier still to determine how many shoes, how many clothes, how many houses are required. The work of supplying these will be apportioned among the active members of society and the number of hours to be required from each individual will be fixed. And the only trade in the future will be that of the machinist, man will turn from one occupation to another, to his infinite gain in physical and mental development.

• It is because they have in some measure been able to do this that the Anglo-Saxon race in America have developed qualities for which they are admired; the men of the Far West are masters of several trades and are constantly acquiring

new ones. The passage from one trade to another is the best way to develop brain, individuality. It is only in a communist society that man, freed from the cares of individual property, and having only to fulfill his social duty in order to enjoy all that society has to offer, may travel freely from north to south, may pass from spinning to plowing or any other work, and develop unhindered rounded individuality.

A Socialist Success.

Our publishing house started in 1886. It was incorporated in 1893. It began publishing socialist books in 1899. It now has a capital of about \$30,000, owned by over 2,050 socialists, and it publishes nearly all the low-priced socialist books in the English language that are worth reading.

In 1900 we started the **International Socialist Review**. For eight years this was read and praised by a few hundred earnest students of socialism, but it was published at a loss, and was a heavy burden to carry. In 1908 we made a radical change, and since then the **Review** has been edited in a way to interest working people. Its circulation has doubled twice in less than a year. We expect to double it again this year.

The **Appeal to Reason** of Girard, Kansas, the greatest socialist weekly in the world, has until lately published socialist books. We have now bought its book business and consolidated it with our own.

A few hundred shares of stock in the publishing house are still for sale at ten dollars each. They draw no dividends, but they entitle the holders to buy books at cost.

Full particulars in **What to Read on Socialism**, an 80-page booklet, mailed free on request. Send 10c for the last number of the **Review**.

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