

LIBERTY

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The so-called "Progressives" of the London County Council, and the Duty of Socialists.

By T. BOLAS.

The London County Council has far outdone the old Metropolitan Board of Works in the proportion of superfluous officials to useful workers, and it has actually raised the previously enormous salaries paid by the old Board. The party on the Council which falsely calls itself Progressive, supports one of the worst and most disgraceful forms of corruption, grasping at the letter of a law, as against the spirit; and this to secure private advantage.

The Municipal Corporations Act very properly provides against public councils trading with their own members; but it contains a clause which allows advertisements to be inserted in a newspaper even though a councillor may have a share in such newspaper. So-called Progressives on the Council have taken advantage of this exception to have a journal owned, mainly by themselves, and they support this journal by such Council advertisements as they vote to it. This scandal was ably protested against by Mr. Boulnois and other members; but the party of straightforwardness and honour was outvoted by the traitor Progressives.

As it has been claimed that the Progressive party on the London County Council in some way represents Socialism, or Socialistic action, it becomes necessary for Socialists of every grade to repudiate action which in its spirit and essence is unsocialistic; and is calculated to disgrace Socialism in the eyes of honest persons.

In order to make clear how the action of the London County Council is essentially in opposition to the aspirations and aims of the real Progressive party, it is desirable to briefly refer to such social conditions as have led to the formation of the Socialistic party.

The basis of the Progressive or Socialistic movement is to abolish the present system of giving the least pay to those who work hardest; while hereditary landlords who, like the Duke of Westminster, do no work, receive the largest incomes.

One third of the produce of industry in Great Britain is taken by landlords, bondholders, and shareholders, who do no work for that which they take; and of the remaining two thirds, one portion goes to such workers as have an income of £150 per annum or less, and the remaining third goes to a much smaller class of persons, who are largely engaged in work of supervision, and who have incomes of more than £150 per annum. This class subsists mainly on what has been called "extra wages of superior ability;" but a little observation will show the "extra wage" is mainly taken by useless hangers-on of the landholding, bondholding and shareholding classes. Their "extra wage", indeed their whole wage, is for the most part paid to them for assisting the absolutely idle class in securing that third of the national income which they now take. This parasite class apes the manners and extravagant habits of the class it serves and so insists on a high salary. On the other hand, persons of notable ability or genius do not make a large salary the condition of exercising that genius; indeed they are generally willing to make a pecuniary sacrifice in order that they may do such work as they are specially qualified to do; and the early history of most great men contains a chapter recording some such sacrifice. In a competitive system it is probable that persons of exceptional genius would be quite ready to exercise that genius at less than the usual rate of remuneration. Suppose, for example, that the painter Millais had the option between road scraping or bricklaying on the one hand and painting on the other hand; can it be supposed that he would fail to choose the latter, even if the pay were somewhat less.

The main objects of all real Progressives are threefold: First to prevent the idle classes (landlords, bondholders, shareholders) from appropriating their usual third of the produce of industry. Secondly to bring into the ranks of the useful workers, not only all idlers; but also those who have hitherto been engaged in the pernicious operation of diverting value from the workers into the pockets of the idle class. Such increase in the number of the workers should be so organised as to shorten working hours for all and ensure leisure for high education and culture. Thirdly, the Socialist party aims at securing for all workers, as nearly as practicable the same rate of remuneration.

Those who, like the so-called Progressive section of the London County Council, have preferred to obtain efficient directors of industry by giving enormous salaries, have completely failed; the first result being to prevent capable persons applying, as they know it is useless contending against the influence mercenary office-seekers can bring into play. In spite of the fact that most notorious cases of bribe-taking and other corruption have occurred in the case of officials taking high salaries, some of the false Progressives of the London County Council have actually asserted that it is necessary to pay high salaries in order to keep their officials from bribe-taking and other forms of robbery. If the officials are such that they can only be kept from peculation by getting the "swag" in another and more secure way, we had better have a change at once.

Until the time arrives when all workers, whether handicrafts men, professional men, councillors, members of Parliament, or superintendents of public works, receive substantially the same rate of remuneration, there will be no far reaching social reform, no hope of securing the best and most specially qualified persons in each department; till then, there must be a full measure of jobbery, and that strife for positions of special advantage in which the worst mostly triumph. If all industry were now organised on the basis (numerous officials

taking enormous salaries) adopted by the false Progressives of the London County Council, the workers in Great Britain would be far worse off than under the most grinding forms of capitalism, and would receive a smaller share of the proceeds of their industry; political wire-pullers, chairmen and deadhead officials taking far more than landholders, shareholders and bondholders now take.

Until members of Parliament and all public officials are paid for their services the people will have no free choice in sending representatives, and scarcely any option but to send those who belong to that class which lives idly upon interest, usury, or profit; as the workers cannot now spare time to serve in Parliament. Members of Parliament now too often use their position as a means by which they can still further fill their pockets to the detriment of the workers; as for example—jobbing with companies and other business concerns, or getting office. In short, although Parliamentary members are not at present paid in England, and by this reason the straightforward workers are kept out, there are high speculative rewards which attract the corrupt and unscrupulous. Members of Parliament who devote their whole time to the work should be paid normal wages (at present from 38s. to 40s. per week), and a grave danger to society must result if they are paid more than normal wages. We see this in the United States of America, where the high pay to legislators has attracted the worst and made the political system a sink of corruption.

Above all, workers should beware of those false and place seeking agitators who contend that senators and officials should have specially high rates of pay; all social reform and purity of public bodies hinges on the normal rate of pay for all public representatives and officials. By this course not only will the place-hunters be kept out, but there will be a constant tendency towards raising normal wages and bringing about that equality of condition which will pave the way to abolishing socially wasteful systems of special payment for each use of the means of transit, or of the common necessities of life.

The London County Council has vainly tried to organise industry by commencing with overpaid officials and working downwards; the reverse of the ordinary course of the evolution of industry. Had the electors of London, instead of sending a set of loud-mouthed political wire-pullers to the Council, elected those Collectivists who have studied history and evolution, this mistake would not have been made. Real action would have been taken towards nationalizing those industries which have become organized in the gradual evolution of society—such as gas supply, water supply and railway or tramway transit. This would have been done by the very obvious plan of prosecuting the companies for every infraction of duty, and at the same time striving to obtain legislative consent to the very obvious principle that each at emptied extortion, fraud, or failure in duty, should be punished by a fine on the capital value, or *pro rata* writing in of public ownership on the share list. This would be confiscation it may be said, but, even according to Tory principles, misused property may be legally confiscated; as, for example, burglars' tools or the stock of an illicit liquor seller. All taxation is confiscation, and misused property should be taxed until nationalized.

Now for the practical conclusion, as bearing on the coming contest:

Oppose at every opportunity and denounce as traitors to the Socialistic Cause all who will not pledge themselves to support

1. Normal Wages and no more, for all who hold public offices, and devote their whole time to the work.
2. The immediate nationalisation—as far as circumstances allow—of industries, which like gas, water, railways and tramways are already organized and ready for public ownership.
3. Prosecution of monopolist companies for every offence, and advocating of a *pro rata* writing in of public ownership on the share books for every offence or failure in duty. This would be the creation of new shares to be owned by the people at large.

A New Magazine.

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE is the title of a new quarterly review, edited by the Société Internationale Artistique, and published at Paris. The object of this periodical is stated in the words of Goethe: "National literature has no more meaning to-day: the time for universal literature is coming, and every one must now work to hasten the time." In the first number English literature is well-represented by Swinburne. There are also short contributions by Walt Whitman, and others. Our comrade Bernard Layare has an article upon the New University of Brussels, where are our comrades Elisée Reclus, Bernard Layare, Fernand Broué, etc. We wish this new review a long and active life, because it has a useful mission to help in the destruction of frontiers between all countries.

The Commune Celebration.

The North London Progressive Society will hold a meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the Commune of Paris, at Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, on Tuesday, March 17th. P. Kropotkin, Louise Michel, J. Turner, E. Leggatt, A. Smith, J. Tochetti, and others will speak. All London Anarchists should attend and make this meeting a success.

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

By LOUISE MICHEL.

PART II.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE FOURTH OF SEPTEMBER, KNOWN AS
"THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE."

CHAPTER I.

On Sept. 2nd, rumours of victory circulated in Paris. They emanated from suspicious sources, and had recurred at each defeat. The graver the defeat, the more persistent were such rumours. Paris was turbulent the whole day. During the following night, and on the 3rd and 4th of Sept. the truth was increasingly suspected. At the demand of Palikao, who admitted that disturbing despatches had been received, a night sitting was held of the Corps Legislatif. Groups waiting about in the Place de la Concorde, or wandering along the boulevards, felt a presentiment of the final break-up. A young man who affirmed the defeat in face of the post of good news, was mortally wounded by the sergeants de ville.

The next day (Sunday) those who during their night vigil had not already witnessed its affixing on the walls of Paris, read the following announcement:—

PROCLAMATION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE.

"Frenchmen, a great misfortune has befallen the country. After three days of heroic struggle on the part of Marshal MacMahon's army against 300,000 of the enemy, 40,000 men have been taken prisoners. General Wimpfen, who, in consequence of Marshal MacMahon being seriously wounded, had taken command of the army, has signed a capitulation. This cruel reverse, however, does not shake our courage. Paris is at present in a state of defence. The military forces of the country will be organized in a few days, and there will be a new army beneath the walls of Paris. Another army is being formed on the banks of the Loire. Your patriotism, your union, your energy will save France. The Emperor has been made prisoner in the struggle. The Government, in concert with the public authorities, will take all measures required by the gravity of the situation. (Council of Ministers.) Count de Palikao, Henri Chevreau, Admiral Regault de Genouilly, Jules Brame, Latour d'Auvergne, Grand Perret, Clement Duvernois, Magne, Busson Billaut, Jerome David."

Clever though this proclamation was, the idea that the empire could survive entered nobody's head. In a few hours Paris was on its feet. The Place de la Concorde was quickly crowded. The sense of a break-up—of catastrophic change—was in the air.

Only a few sergeants de ville drew their swords in face of the battalions of the National Guard, who, with beating of drums, marched to the Corps Legislatif. The blades of the sergeants de ville flew right and left, and the railings were broken through. The crowd constantly increasing, persisted in invading the Corps Legislatif, pushing before it the National Guards, and shouting—"It is all up! (Decheance!) Vive la République!" And out beyond the "Marseillaise" was sung.

The Republic was proclaimed, and the Government of National Defence was conducted to the Hotel de Ville. It was composed as follows: 1, Emanuel Arago; 2, Cremieux (Minister of Foreign Affairs); 3, Jules Ferry; 4, Gambetta (Minister of the Interior); 5, Garnier Pagès; 6, Glais Bizioin; 7, Eugene Pelletan; 8, Ernest Picard (Minister of Finance); 9, Jules Simon (Minister of Public Instruction); 10, Henri Rochefort; 11, Trochu (Governor of Paris, and Minister of War).

The word "Republic" electrified Paris; and full of new courage as we felt, defence seemed possible.

The fifteen forts, armed like war-ships, were garrisoned by hardy marines. On the ramparts there were a thousand guns, good, bad, and indifferent; and the Government swore that Paris should never be surrendered. Even though our confidence was not great in many members of the Defence, we were far from supposing them so pusillanimous as they proved in the event. It would have seemed that, entering as they did into the wheel-works as left by the Empire, they must of necessity reverse the wheels. But since they were afraid of revolution, they were of course unable to represent it.

Jules Favre, in his "History of the Government of National Defence" admits the difficulty they had not to be compelled to accept revolutionists as its members. "Violent appeals were made to Mons. Gambetta, who energetically repudiated the name of Felix Piat, on the very same grounds, however, which made it impossible to reject that of Mons. Rochefort." Moreover, it is known that Jules Favre had said in reference to Rochefort, "He is safer inside than outside."

At the sitting of the Corps Legislatif, the names of the members of the Government were officially announced.

Meanwhile, what mattered the lack of spirit on the part of the

directors? the people had spirit enough. The name of "Republic" would, we thought, now guarantee victory, as in 1792 it had availed to produce a thicker harvest under the hands of the labourers, who, stimulated by believing themselves free, had thrown more energy into the loosening of the soil.

The necessity of boldness was so thoroughly felt that even in so moderate a journal as *Le Siecle*, P. Joignaux wrote (under the heading "To us, the audacious") in the following terms: "In difficult circumstances it is prompt intelligence, and unwonted hardihood that are needed. To us belong the young, the daring, the venturesome; and the undisciplined savants are our men. Idea and Action must alike be free. Do not interfere with us, nor regulate us; but relieve us, once for all, of old yokes and leading strings. Such is the advice given us the other day by our friend Jourdan; and the advice is sound."

Not only were these currents of audacity dried up in an interminable succession of delays and treacheries that supervened, but there were inadequate and falsified munitions, provisions granted on paper but never supplied; on this hand, every sort of privation endured by the combatants (whose courage nevertheless remained unshaken); on the other hand, scandalous fortunes made by the providers. Moreover, by the avowal of the officers themselves, the War Office was a necropolis whence all possibility of progress was banished. The single battalion which had been armed completely and with weapons of better quality, was that which was appointed to guard the Ministers themselves, and was composed entirely of their own employes. General Guind had replied to those who spoke to him of breach-loading cannons—"Don't speak to me of that stupid business; Dorian was so long in obtaining the wherewithal to get the guns made, that they were only ready too late; and after all, the arming of the suburbs was only extorted by fear."

Strasbourg, which had been invested by the Prussians on August 13th, capitulated on Sept. 28th. On that very day volunteers went about Paris, their numbers augmenting at every step, asking to be sent off to help Strasbourg to deliver herself, or at least to die with her at the foot of the ramparts. These demonstrations were dispersed, and their delegates, André Leo and I, were only granted an audience in order to be taken into custody. The detention, however, was of no duration, a member of the Government having ordered us to be set at liberty. We were not told which member did us this service, but we were very sure as to which of them had not done it. "What can it matter to you whether Strasbourg perish or not? You are not there!"—This was said to us at the Hotel de Ville by a colonel of Trochu's army.

In the midst of the general depression the courage of the women, whether bourgeois or proletarian, did not flag for an instant; it seemed as if the spirit of the Gaul lived again within them. The middle-class woman on the "Society for Aiding the Victims of War," the women of the people on the "Committees of Vigilance,"—these and those were alike busy on the ambulances, while none of them would hear a word of surrender.

During this time the wicked dwarf whom the bourgeoisie knew as Mons. Thiers, and whom we called "Fontriquet," was making the round of the courts of Europe.

On Oct. 31st, Paris on awakening read the following poster, which accompanied the news of the surrender of Metz by Bazaine:—

"Mons. Thiers has to-day arrived in Paris, and repaired at once to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in order to report to the Government the result of his mission. Thanks to the strong impression produced throughout Europe by the resistance of Paris, four great neutral Powers—England, Russia, Austria, and Italy—have rallied to a common idea. They propose an armistice to the belligerents, having for its object the convocation of a National Assembly. It is, of course understood that such an armistice should have as its conditions a re-victualling proportionate to its duration and the election of the assembly by the whole country."

Signed. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, *par interim*, for the Minister of the Interior, Jules Favre."

Then just as on Sept. 4th there had been heard the cry "Vive la République!", so now on Oct. 31st there were shouts of "Vive la Commune!" Paris did not wish to surrender. Moreover, she desired to save herself: she had had enough of "deliverers." Groups gathered, repeating persistently "The Commune! the Commune!" And as the people had gone on Sept. 4th to the Corps Legislatif, so now on Oct. 31st they trooped to the Hotel de Ville.

Floquet, who spoke of dipping the municipality of Paris once more into universal suffrage, could not make himself heard. Neither could Trochu, nor Jules Simon; the shouts of "La Commune!" drowned all else, and the crowd displayed a sheet on which one read: "No Armistice! Vive la République! Resist to the Death!"

It rained. The weather was in keeping with the strange scene. Curious incidents occurred. The crowd had pressed to the door of the building with a strong disposition to force it open. One or two, however, bethought them of knocking, or of simply beating upon the door. It was supposed inside that some members of the Government had arrived. The door was opened, and the crowd invaded the Hotel de Ville.

To be continued.



"LIBERTY" is a journal of Anarchist-Communism; but articles on all phases of the Revolutionary movement will be freely admitted, provided they are worded in suitable language. No contributions should exceed one column in length. The writer over whose signature the article appears is alone responsible for the opinions expressed, and the Editor in all matters reserves to himself the fullest right to reject any article.

We would ask our contributors, to write plainly and on one side of the paper only.

All Communications should be addressed.—The Editor, Liberty, 7 Beadon Road, [Hammer-smith, W.

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NOTICE.

The day of the Commune celebration is Sunday, March 17th, at Milton Hall, not Tuesday, as stated on page 114. A meeting will also be held on Monday, March 18th, 8 p.m., at the Lecture Hall, Hack Road, Tidal Basin, when P. Kropotkin and others will speak.

LIBERTY,
LONDON, MARCH, 1895.

Between Ourselves

This paragraph is strictly in order. You want to know why LIBERTY for this month has been delayed in publication. The reason is that the editor and several of his co-workers have been seriously ill; this, we venture to think, will be sufficient explanation; this also accounts for several important notes being crowded out.

KROPOTKIN ON COLONIZATION.

A number of our comrades resident in the North of England; have decided to establish a communistic colony, and are negotiating for plots of land, and unless unforeseen difficulties present themselves at the eleventh hour, the colony will be established either on Tyneside or Wearside. Our comrade Kropotkin having been invited to become treasurer of the fund, has returned the following answer:—

Viola Cottage, Bromley, Kent, Feb. 16, 1895.

Dear Comrade,—Thank you very much for your kind letter and extremely clear statements of the facts. Thank you still more for your trust in me. But I must say at once that by no means could I act as treasurer. To this I am the least appropriate person, as I never was able to keep accounts of my own earnings and spendings. Moreover, I really have no time.

As to your scheme, I must own that I have little confidence in schemes of communist communities started under the present conditions, and always regret to see men and women going to suffer all sorts of privations in order, in most cases, to find only disappointment at the end; retiring for many years from the work of propaganda of ideas among the great masses, and of aid to the masses in their emancipation, for making an experiment which has many chances for being a failure.

But I must also say that your scheme undoubtedly has several points which give it much more chance of success than some previous experiments were in possession of. For years I have preached that once there are men decided to make such an experiment, it must be made.

(1.) Not in distant countries, where they would find, in addition to their own difficulties, all the hardships which a pioneer of culture has to cope with in an uninhabited country (and I only too well know by my own and my friends' experience how great these difficulties are), but in the neighbourhood of large cities. In such case every member of the community can enjoy the many benefits of civilization; the struggle for life is easier, on account of the facilities for taking advantage of the work done by our forefathers, and for profiting by the experience of our neighbours; and every member who is discontented with communal life can at any given moment return to the individualist life of the present society. One can, in such case, enjoy the intellectual, scientific, and artistic life of our civilization without necessarily abandoning the community.

(2.) That a new community, instead of imitating the example of our forefathers, and starting with extensive agriculture, with all its hardships, accidents, drawbacks, and amount of hard work required, very often superior to the forces of the colonists, ought to open new

ways of production as it opens new ways of consumption. It must, it seems to me, start with intensive agriculture—that is, market gardening culture, aided as much as possible by culture under glass. Besides the advantages of security in the crops, obtained by their variety and the very means of culture, this sort of culture has the advantages of allowing the community to utilise even the weakest forces; and every one knows how weakened most of the town workers are by the homicidal conditions under which most of the industries are now organized.

(3.) That the first condition of success, as proved by the Anama peasant communities, the Young Icarian, and several others, is to divest communism from its monastery and barrack garments, and to conceive it as the life of independent families, united together by the desire of obtaining material and moral wellbeing by combining their efforts. The theory, according to which family life has to be entirely destroyed in order to obtain some economy in fuel in the kitchen, or in the space of the dining rooms, is utterly false; and it is most certain that the Young Icarians are absolutely correct in introducing as much as possible of family and friendly grouping life, even in the ways they are taking their meals.

(4.) It seems to me proved to evidence that, men being neither the angels nor the slaves they are supposed to be by the authoritarian Utopians—Anarchist principles are the only ones under which a community has any chances to succeed. In the hundreds of histories of communities which I have had the opportunity to read, I always saw that the introduction of any sort of elected authority has always been, without one single exception, the point which the community stranded upon; while, on the other side, those communities enjoyed a partial and sometimes very substantial success, which accepted no authority besides the unanimous decision of the folk-moot, and preferred, as a couple of hundred of millions of Slavonian peasants do, and as the German Communists in America did, to discuss every matter so long as a unanimous, decision of the folk-moot could be arrived at. Communists, who are bound to live in a narrow circle of a few individuals, in which circle the petty struggle for dominion are the more acutely felt, ought decidedly to abandon the Utopias of elected committees' management and majority rule; they must bend before the reality of practice which is at work for many hundreds of years in hundreds of thousands of village communities—the folk-moot—and they must remember that in these communities majority rule and elected government have always been synonymous and concomitant with Disintegration—never with consolidation.

To these four points I have come, from what I know of communist communities, such as has been written down by numbers of Russians and West Europeans who had no theoretical conceptions, promoted no theoretical views, but simply put down on paper or verbally told me what they had lived through. Misery, dullness of life, and the consequent growth of the spirit of intrigue for power, have always been the two chief causes of non-success.

Now, as far as I see from your letter, the community which you try to bring into existence takes the above four points as fundamental, and in so doing it has, I believe, as many more chances of success.

To these four points I should also add a fifth, in which you are agreed, of course, beforehand. It is to do all possible for reducing household work to the lowest minimum, and to find out for that purpose, and to invent if necessary, all possible arrangements. In most communities this point was awfully neglected. The woman and the girl remained in the new society as they were in the old one—the slaves of the community. Arrangements to reduce as much as possible the incredible amount of work which our women uselessly spend in the rearing of children, as well as in household work, are, in my opinion, as essential to the success of a community as the proper arrangement of the fields, the greenhouses, or the agricultural machinery. Even more. But while every community dreams of having the most perfect agricultural or industrial machinery, it seldom pays attention to the squandering of the forces of the house slave, the woman. Some steps in advance have been made in Guise's familistere. Others could wisely be found out. But, with all that, a community started within the present society has to cope with many almost fatal difficulties.

The absence of communist spirit is, perhaps, the least of them. While the fundamental features of human character can only be modified by a very slow evolution, the relative amounts of individualist and mutual aid spirit are among the most changeable features of man. Both being equally products of an anterior development, their relative amounts are seen to change in individuals and even societies with a rapidity which would strike the sociologist if he only paid attention to the subject, and analysed the corresponding facts.

The chief difficulty is in the smallness itself of the community. In a large community, the asperities of everyone's character are smoothed, they are less important and less remarked. In a small group they attain, owing to the very conditions of life, an undue importance. More contact between neighbours than exists nowadays is absolutely necessary. Men have tried in vain to live isolated, and to throw upon the government's shoulders all the petty affairs which they are bound to attend themselves. But in a small community, the contact is too close, and, what is worse, the individual features of character acquire an undue importance, as they bear upon the whole life of the community. The familiar example of the 20 prisoners shut up in one room, or of the 20 passengers of a steamboat, who soon begin to hate each other for small defects of individual character, is well worthy of note.

In order to succeed, the communist experiment, being an experiment in human accommodation, ought to be made on a grand scale. A whole city of, at least 20,000 inhabitants, ought to organize itself for self-managed consumption of necessities of life, houses, and essential furniture, food and clothing, with a large development of free groupings for the satisfaction of the higher artistic, scientific, and literary needs and hobbies—before it be possible to say anything about the experimentally tested capacities, or incapacities, of our contemporaries for communist life. (By the way, the experiment is not so unfeasible as it might seem at the first sight.)

The next great difficulty is this. We are not savages who can begin a tribe life with a hut and a few arrows. Even if no hunting laws did exist, we should care—the majority, at least—for some additional comfort and for some better stimulants for higher life than a drop of whisky supplied by the trader in exchange for furs. But in most cases, a communist community is compelled to start with even less than that, as it is burdened by a debt for the land it is permitted to settle upon, and is looked at as a nuisance by the surrounding land and industry lords. It usually starts with a heavy debt, while it ought to start with its share of the capital which has been produced by the accumulated labor of the precedent generations. Misery and a terrible struggle for the sheer necessities of life is therefore the usual condition for all the communist colonies which have hitherto been attempted, to say nothing of the above hostility. This is why I could not insist too much upon your wise decision of starting intensive culture under the guidance of experienced gardeners—that is, the most remunerative of all modes of agriculture.

And then comes in the difficulty of men being not accustomed to hard agricultural work, navvies' work and building trades work—that is, exactly those sorts of work which are most in request in the young colony.

And finally, there is the difficulty with which all such colonies had to contend. The moment they begin to become prosperous, they are inundated by new comers—mostly the unsuccessful ones in the present life, these whose energy is already broken by a long series of out of work life and privations, of which so few of the rich ones have the slightest idea. What they ought to have before setting to work would be rest on good food, and then set to hard work. This difficulty is not a theoretical one; all the communist colonies in America have experienced it; and unless the colonists throw overboard the very principles of communism and proclaim themselves individualists—small bourgeois, who have succeeded and will keep for themselves the advantages of their own position—in which case, the communist principle having once been abandoned, the community is doomed to fail under the duality which has crept in; or, they accept the new comers with an unfriendly feeling ("they know nothing of the hardships we have had to go through," the old stock say), and gradually they are really inundated by men whose numbers soon exceed the capital to be worked with. For a communist colony, the very success thus becomes a cause of ultimate failure.

This is why some of the Labor leaders in America and their sympathisers from the Chicago middle classes who intended during the last Chicago strike to retire to some remote state of the Union, and there start with a socialist territory which they would have defended against aggression from without, had more chances of success than a small communist colony.

Here is, dear comrade, what I had to say in answer to your letter. By no means should I like to discourage you and your comrades. I simply think that "forewarned means forearmed." The better one sees the difficulties in his way, the better he can cope with them. Once you feel inclined to attempt the experiment, although knowing all its difficulties, there must be no hesitation in making it. Earnest men will always find out in it something to learn themselves and to teach their comrades.

Once your inclinations go this way, certainly go on! You have some more chances of success than many of your forerunners, and I am sure you will find sympathies in your way. Mine will certainly follow you, and if you think that the publication of this letter can bring you sympathisers, publish it as an open letter to comrades intending to start a Communist colony.—Yours fraternally,

P. KROPOTKIN.

[This expresses the Anarchist-Communist's point of view with regard to colonization so well, that there is no occasion to answer Comrade Phipson's article.—Ed.]

WHY I AM A BELIEVER IN COLONIZATION.

By E. A. PHIPSON.

Because, however magnificent the idea of arousing the whole world to overthrow the power of the landlord and landlord, the forces sustaining vested interests are so enormous that generations must elapse before they succumb to direct attack, whether by political, revolutionary or hortatory methods; whereas I want to see those who are actually suffering enabled to escape from their poverty and misery.

Because the desire among the mass of mankind, and even many of the poorest, to become themselves "independent" (i.e., to live on the labor of others) is so widespread, the gambling instinct so strong, and the

willingness to earn an honest living by steady work so rare, that even those who would chiefly benefit by the abolition of capitalism would for the most part oppose it.

Because reform cannot be simultaneous over the whole earth, and if one country may adopt a new social system before another so may one part of a country, or a colony settled expressly for the purpose.

Because the great majority of people, though impregnable to theorizing and argument, are convinced at once by solid facts, and a single colony where men were actually enjoying the full fruits of their industry could not fail, when these had become appreciably larger than wages outside, to convert the most obtuse.

Because there are so many schools of reformers, whose efforts simply neutralize and defeat each other when endeavouring to convert a whole country; while colonies, into which the adherents of each could converge, would enable them without hindrance to carry out their views. Thus any country could be divided into districts, all having their own distinct systems, and then the relative prosperity of each would be the best criterion of the soundness of its principles.

Because, while the adherents of any school when isolated can do but little, they would have complete power, when congregated into a colony, to give effect to their ideas, being unhindered by the apathetic or hostile.

Because, the pleasure of living together with those holding similar views would render such a colony most agreeable to members and attractive to outsiders.

Because, such colonies require nothing but the small initial expenses of buying or emigrating to the land chosen, and making the first start, for when industry was once organized, wealth would grow so rapidly that further aid from outside would be needless.

Because, even if the advantages of co-operation in manufactures are attainable without removal to a colony, combination in the equally important matter of domestic work is impossible among those living in isolated dwellings, scattered in different parts of a city or country, while the heavy expenses of distribution over such extended areas, and above all, the high ground rents which would have to be paid to town landowners, and which would be gradually raised as the prosperity of the community increased, would absorb most of the pecuniary benefit resulting from members' efforts.

Because in this manner, without any direct attack on vested interests or consequent interference by law or public opinion, the power of capital would indirectly but most effectually be undermined by withdrawing labor from the market and progressively increasing the standard of comfort. And as the colonies would be open to all who agreed with their principles, outside workers would be able to demand a constantly higher rate of wages under threat of joining the colonies.

Because there is thus no question of forming little Arcadias, or of deserting the general Labor cause. Every such colony would exert the most immediate and powerful effect on the condition of workers everywhere, and would form at once a refuge and a citadel in which workers could make sure of obtaining their full earnings and could defy the power of their former oppressors.

Because any propaganda work that was necessary could be far more effectively carried on from such a colony where all were in the enjoyment of plenty and had ample leisure than in odd moments snatched under great difficulties from time needed to earn a living under capitalism.

Because the average man does not care one jota for reforms that will only benefit future generations, but will throw his whole strength into a scheme which he clearly sees will benefit himself.

PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT.

By ERICO MALATESTA.

II.—SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENTARIANISM (continued from No. 14).

From the very beginning socialism, in its critical judgment, had estimated universal suffrage and the whole parliamentary fraud at its true value. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no reason for the existence of socialism as a separate party, as it would have been mistaken, as far as regards practical purposes that constitute the life of parties, for the absurd Liberal Utopia that expects harmony, peace and general well-being from "free" competition between rich and poor, and from putting into practice the principle of "one man one vote."

Socialism in the broadest and most authentic meaning of the word signifies society constituted an instrument of well-being, of liberty and integral development and progressive for all its members—for all human beings. Starting from the fundamental truth that the moral and intellectual faculties can only be evolved when material wants have been previously satisfied, and that there can be no liberty where there is no equality and solidarity, Socialism recognized that slavery in all its forms, political, moral and material, results from the economic dependence of the workers on those who possess the land, the raw material, and the instruments of production. And after having groped about and having put forward several fallacious and Utopian systems, Socialism found at last a firm basis in the principle, scientifically demonstrated, of the justice, utility and necessity of socialising wealth and power.

The aim being thus determined, it was necessary to seek the ways and means of maintaining it. During this pursuit, the Socialists, as soon as they emerged from the period of abstract speculation and began to convince the masses and to try their strength in the practical struggles of life, perceived that they were bound by an iron circle that could only be broken by violence. Socialism had proved it impossible to be free without being economically independent. On the other hand how can economical independence be attained if man is a slave? Man, deprived of all that nature has created for his maintenance and of all that human labor added to the work of nature, depends for his existence on the goodwill of the owners, and is reduced by misery to a state of degradation and impotence. And he is besides compelled to obey by the governments which defend the system of private ownership with all the forces of the army, the police, and finance.

What legal means of emancipation can exist when the law has been purposely framed to protect a system that ought to be destroyed?

It cannot be by "legal" political action of the masses—in other words by voting, because this weapon to have any value presupposes consciousness and independence in the numerical majority of the people, and it is precisely the problem to render these qualities possible and to conquer them. And moreover the bourgeoisie only concedes the vote to the workers when convinced of its harmlessness, or, when terrified by their threatening demands, they see therein a means of leading them astray and lulling them to sleep. In this latter case, from every point of view, it were folly to be satisfied with it. After having conceded the vote, the bourgeoisie, knows how to govern it and to juggle with it, and if by chance it proved itself hostile to their interests, they know how to suppress it. Then the only thing left to the people is the Revolution, that the vote ought to have rendered useless.

Neither can legal means of emancipation be found in economic action—mutual help, saving's banks, co-operation, strikes—because the crushing and ever increasing power of capitalism and the material and moral condition of the proletariat are such, that some of their resources are absurd and ridiculous, and the others are powerless and illusory as long as they remain within legal bounds.

Thus there are only two ways out of the difficulty: either the governing classes must voluntarily give up exclusive possession of the wealth and privileges which they enjoy; under the influence of good feelings that Socialist propaganda may awaken in them, or by revolution, by the illegal and violent action of the masses put in motion by the conscious minority that is organizing itself on the ranks of the Socialist party. The first of these ways, in which reformers as generous as they were simple placed their hopes, has proved to be illusory, not only by past history, but also by the sanguinary experience of contemporary events. Never has a government or a privileged class given up dominating, or made real concessions, unless compelled to by force. And the present behaviour of the capitalists, the ferocious and blind persecutions with which they answer the claims of the proletariat, the massacres that has dishonoured their victories, the excessive armaments that they are preparing, do not leave any grounds of hope that their fall will be less stormy and less contested than that of their predecessors in power.

There remains the Revolution; and all Socialists to whom socialism was not a simple intellectual amusement, but a practical programme to be realized as soon as possible, were revolutionists.

The Socialists, to be sure, were divided into two large groups, corresponding to two currents of thought. The one composed of authoritarians who wished, for emancipating the masses, to make use of the same mechanism which enslaves them to-day, and they aimed at the conquest of political power—that is to say of the government. The other composed of Anarchists thought that the State exists only to

represent and defend the interests of a class, and would disappear on the day that power and initiative became general, and so they aimed at the destruction of government.

The one party wished to control government and decree, in a dictatorial manner from above downwards, socialistic production and distribution. The other wished to abolish political power and private property simultaneously, and reorganize production, consumption and all social life, by the direct and voluntary co-operation of all forces and capacities that exist in mankind and that seek to manifest themselves. But both parties, I repeat, wanted a Revolution—an appeal to force, and to bring about this Revolution, they determined to carry on an indefatigable propaganda of the truths discovered by socialism, and to organize the conscious forces of the proletariat. They attracted to themselves that small number of bourgeois susceptible of rising above class interests and prejudices, and prepared to sacrifice their own privilege to the grand ideal of a free and happy humanity; they inspired the masses with the spirit of revolt, and prepared phalanx, that making use of every propitious occasion was to initiate the storming of existing institutions.

The struggle would no doubt have been long and hard, but the path was clear, and we should have attained by direct means, at least so it was thought, a complete and entire victory.

But certain Socialists arose, who, putting themselves in opposition to the tendencies of the programme and propaganda, which they themselves had initiated with so much zeal and intelligence, must needs enter the tortuous and endless path of parliamentarianism.

To be continued.

"Questions for Anarchists."

The following answers are from E. Pouget (*Pere Peinard*).

(1) Our idea has nothing in common with that of the Christian paradise: it does not imply passive acceptance of evils, and still less inaction in the face of them. To say that it is useless making an effort to ameliorate the present state of things, leads to foolish resignation, and to the admission, as truth, of a host of absurdities, of which the greatest consists in believing that "the greater the misery, the greater the spirit of revolt." Were this true, there would be nothing left for us but to fold our arms, rejoice at the sufferings we endure and wish them more intense in order that the Revolution should come more rapidly. In reality the spirit of revolt declines in proportion as misery is intensified, and grows when misery diminishes. Therefore the better social conditions become, the more violent will be the spirit of revolt and the more we will approach the realization of the anarchist ideal.

(2) It follows from what I have just said that the revolt is not to be limited by action in a more or less remote future, it must be of all times must, manifest itself in all directions, and as much as possible in all our actions, in anticipation of the final cataclysm: The Social Revolution. If we go from theory to practice in economics, Anarchists must aim at depriving capitalists of their privileges, by driving them into bankruptcy by their extreme demands, so that the employer may begin to consider his condition a troublesome burden. And never lose sight of, never forget that all present claims are but accessories, the final aim is communistic expropriation. In politics, anarchist activity must tend to cut down more and more the prerogatives of the State, till they are reduced to zero; to baffle legality till it crumbles completely. Under which system has this resistance the greater chance of bearing fruit? If you go in for governmental action, (even in the opposition) you put yourself in an inferior position, because by that fact you have acquiesced in the existence of the state, you have given it a part of your own strength. The best way is to fight the state without taking part in its functions: by creating a void around it you weaken it. Besides, you must enter all institutions that depend on private initiative. Where State influence is nil, or where it is felt, endeavour to destroy it. Act, in these surroundings so as to prepare in the present society by the development of individual initiative, the aggregation of elements that in a future society, the State being destroyed, will replace it in the few real economic functions it had monopolized, to make believe in the necessity of its existence.

No Necessity to work.

PULLEN: "I worked hard trying to get a Government clerkship, but I'm going to take a rest now."

PUSCH: "You've given up trying, have you?"

PULLEN: "Oh, no; I secured the place."

Assuming the working age to be from twenty to sixty years, and counting only male workers, 500 persons in this country (United States) live on the labor of every 100 workers. But if we advocate a system by which all could work four hours a day, and all have a chance to enjoy the proceeds of their toil, and all have plenty and be happy, contented, and prosperous, we are called "Anarchists, revolutionists, and lunatics."

One afternoon, near the end of my first summer, when I went to the village to get a shoe from the cobbler's, I was seized and put into jail, because, as I have elsewhere related, I did not pay a tax to, or recognize the authority of, the state which buys and sells men, women, and children, like cattle at the door of its senate-house.—THORNTON.

SOCIAL WILD-FIRE

Set the social wild-fire flaming!

Set the social wills alight!

Dullard rulers finely shaming

Who would force men to do right.

Comrades! ye who trust your fellows,—

Men and women, brave and true,

Up, while yet coercion falters,

Prove it vain by what ye do.

Tired toilers! ye who feed us,

Hungry idlers, crowded out,

Form your ranks in free-will order,

Put things to the right about.

Thief,—and food-adulterator;

Drunkard,—poison-mixer too;

Prostitute,—and purse-proud matron,

Fatted priest, and greedy Jew;

Victims, hand in hand with spoilers,

Join your venture and your fate;

Needs are like, while powers are diverse,

Work, and trust, and federate.

Lay aside your pen and paper,

Mammon-flattering Sophistry;

Wait to press your last conclusion

Till you've known men, Mammon-free.

Social wild-fire! spreading, spreading,

Settings wills and souls alight,

Superseding law's brute "order,"

Truncheon, gallows, dynamite.

Lay the bomb—tense social impulse

Charged with sharp-edged words of truth,

At the doors of institutions,

Senates, Churches, Schools of youth.

Set all hearts on fire! Oh, free them!

Risk your all for what is just;

Trust a happier human nature

To be faithful to its trust.

So shall magnates find their safety,

So shall scholars find their peace,

When they freely rise to stake them

For the People's last Release.

Revolution! Choose your champions,

(Life's Whole Freedom for the prize)

Men and women, true and trusty,

Social wild-fire in their eyes.

SOCIALISM IN DANGER.

By F. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS.

Continued from No 14.

Indeed they can go far. Not long ago Caprivi in a jocular spirit called Bebel "Regierungskommissarius", and although Bebel replied "We have not spoken as government commissioners, but governments have adopted Social Democratic measures," everybody sees the point, and the incident is an invincible proof of how closely the once antagonistic parties have drawn together, and suggested that the spirit of fraternization may work wonders.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that the bold saying "Not a man nor a farthing to the government" is quite out of date, and Bebel indeed promised his support to the government when, to meet the new situation created by the invention of smokeless powder, it asked for a grant to provide dark uniforms to the army. If they yield to militarism the sow's tail it will seize the whole hog. To-day they vote credits for dark uniforms, to-morrow for improved artillery, and the day after for an additional army corps, etc., always with the same justification.

Yes, compromise of principle marched in step with success at the polls, so that at length the exploiting classes found that an anti-socialist law was not needed. "We would be simple indeed to imagine that they repealed the law from a sense of its injustice! It was the inoffensiveness of Social Democracy that brought about the abolition; and do not subsequent events go far to prove that they had weighed up the party to a nicety? Has not its degeneracy since then made progress with leaps and bounds?"

Liebkecht in 1874 thus summed up the political situation:

"Every attempt at action in Parliament, every effort to help in the work of legislation, necessitates some abandonment of our principles, deposits us upon the slope of compromise and of political give-and-take, till at last we find ourselves in the treacherous bog of parliamentarianism, which by its foulness kills everything that is healthy."

Notwithstanding, what is the upshot of all this searching of heart? Why, we resolve to go on working at the dirty business. Surely that conclusion is in direct opposition to the premises, and we are surprised that a thinker like Liebkecht does not perceive that by his conclusion he destroys the whole structure of his argument. Admire the logic if you can. Very suggestive are the following remarks of Steck

on the two methods of work, the parliamentary and the revolutionary:

"The party of reform would achieve political power just after the style of any bourgeois party. For that purpose it avoids isolation, does not present to the world any programme of principles, and advances towards its object much the same as any other political party. It is indefinite on all sides in its working and in its scope. Sometimes here and there, but very rarely, it acts as might a Social Democratic party, but almost always it reveals itself as a Democratic party, an Economic Democratic party, or a Workmen's Democratic party."

"The progressive democracy seeks its end in the acquisition of palliative reforms, as if that were its sole object." It accepts them thankfully from the bourgeois, with all the modifications and reductions thought necessary by the donors. It seeks alliance, if possible with the more progressive elements of the middle-class parties. In this way it is only recognised as the head and forefront of middle-class reform. There is no gulf between it and the ordinary political factions of the progressive type, because it no longer proclaims the revolutionary principles of Social Democracy. That kind of tactics may achieve some small success, such as the other parties might obtain; only such success, measured by our programme of principles, is very small and often of doubtful utility, and at its best it may be of the color but it is not of the essence of Social Democracy.

"We must not fancy, however, that a matter of tactics is unimportant. The risk of losing sight of the chief end of Social Democracy is great, although less to be dreaded among the leaders than among the rank and file. But the temporary eclipse of the socialistic ideal is already perceptible, chiefly from the fact that the minds of the people are bent on the acquisition of palliative reforms, which have been rated at far more than their intrinsic value."

"Again it is unquestionable that the habitual resort to compromise not only hinders but aggressively damages the propaganda for the principles of socialism, and prevents its healthy development. Often active workers in the cause are induced to barter their principles for some immediate political advantage."

"If this compromising spirit in the party be allowed to have the ascendancy it might easily happen that graver consequences would ensue, and perhaps even some arrangement might be made with the conservative parties by which a slightly ameliorated form of the present social order would be tolerated. The effect of such a state of things would be a reduction of privileges and an increase in the number of a still privileged class; it would improve the social position of a large number at the inevitable expense of the exploited masses, whose position would still be one of economic subjection."

"It would not be the first time a revolutionary agitation has been brought to an end by satisfying one section of the discontented at the expense of the other sections. Besides it is quite in keeping with the action of political reformers to refrain from upsetting capitalism, and slowly to transform it and make it by degrees more tolerable to the socialistic spirit of the age."

"In reply to the assertion that the organized proletariat would not be satisfied with a partial success, but would insist, in spite of leaders, in obtaining its complete emancipation, there stands out the fact that gradually the proletariat is being divided against itself, and that a higher class is being evolved from its ranks, an 'aristocracy of labour', that will have the power to block revolutionary measures. A keen eye can already discern here and there symptoms of such a division."

"The revolutionary party, on the other hand, desires to obtain political power in the name of Social Democracy only, and with the party's grand object inscribed upon its banner. It will be obliged for a long time to struggle as a minority, to endure defeat after defeat, and to suffer bitter persecution. But ultimately its triumph will be undiluted and complete, for a Social Democratic society will be in existence and supreme."

Steck likewise recognises that "in reality the revolutionary method is the most direct." "Our party," says he, "ought to be revolutionary inasmuch as it possesses a decidedly revolutionary programme, and that it reveals such a character in all its political manifestoes and measures. Let our propaganda and our claims be for ever revolutionary. Let us meditate continually on our sublime purpose, and let us always act as becomes those devoted to such an ideal. The straight road is the best. Let us for ever be and remain, in life as in death, Revolutionary Social Democrats and no other. So will the future be ours."

Now, there are two points of view taken by Parliamentary Socialists. Some there are who desire to obtain political power in order to possess themselves of economic powers; and that is the professed object of the German Social Democratic party, as witness the formal declarations of Bebel, Liebkecht, and others. But we also find there are those who will only engage in political and parliamentary actions as a means of agitation. For them all elections are merely instruments of propaganda. But here is the danger of coquetry with evil: a door should be either open or shut. We commence by nominating candidates for purposes of protest, but as the movement gets stronger they become serious candidates. At first Socialist members of Parliament assume an irreconcilable attitude, but when their numbers increase they introduce bills and try to imitate legislation. In order to make their projects successful they are forced to enter into compromises, as Singer has well remarked. It is the first step which costs, and once on the slope they are obliged to descend. Is not the practical programme

authorised at Erfurt almost the same as that of the French Radicals? Is there a single subject in the work of the later International Congresses which is definitely Socialist? The real and central ideal of Socialism is relegated for its fulfilment to a distant future, and in the meantime labor is spent on paltry 'palliatives, which could just as readily be obtained through the Radicals.

To put the case with undressed candour, the reasoning of Parliamentary Socialists is as follows: We must first obtain among the voters a majority, which will then send Socialist representatives to Parliament, and whenever we have a majority in the House, even of one, the trick is done. We have only then to make such laws as we wish for the common good.

Even losing sight of a common form of obstruction in most countries, a second or rather a fifth wheel to the parliamentary chariot, known as the House of Lords, a Senate, or an Upper Chamber, of which the members are invariably the unbending and arbitrary representatives of capital, we would be very silly to think that the executive government would get into a sweat in carrying out the wishes of a Socialist majority in the Lower Chamber. This is the way Liebnicht ridicules such an idea: "Let us suppose that government does not interfere, perhaps in quiet assurance of its innate strength, perhaps as a matter of policy, and at last the dream of some imaginative Socialist politicians comes true, and there is a Social Democratic majority in Parliament—what would happen? Here is the Rubicon: it must be crossed! Now has come the moment for reforming society and the state! The majority makes up its mind to do something that will make the day and the hour memorable in history—the new era is about to start! O, nothing of the kind. . . . A company of soldiers bids the Social Democratic majority begone or be chucked, and if these gentlemen do not leave quickly a few policemen will show them the way to the State prison, where they will have ample time to reflect on their quixotic conduct. Revolutions are not made by permission of the government; the Socialistic idea cannot be realised within the sphere of the existing State, which must be abolished before the fetters of the future can enter into visible life. *Down with the worship of universal suffrage.* Let us take an active part in elections, but only as a means of agitation, and let us not forget to proclaim that the returning officer will never issue into the world the new Democratic State. Universal suffrage will only acquire complete influence over the state and over society after the abolition of police and military government."—(Ueber die politische Stellung, pp. 11 and 12.)

This is temperate but striking testimony that will command a powerful allegiance.

To be continued.

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