



KARL  
MARX



# KARL MARX

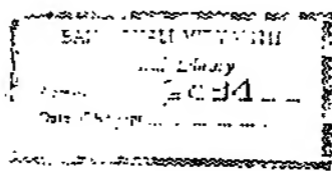
Man, Thinker, and  
Revolutionist

*A Symposium edited by*  
D. RYAZANOFF



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INTRODUCTION  
*by*  
D. RYAZANOFF



# INTRODUCTION

by D. Ryazanoff

THE aim of this symposium is to depict Karl Marx as man, thinker, and revolutionist. Surveying the whole course of history, we shall find it difficult to point to any other person in whom there was so perfect a combination of inspired and concentrated intelligence endeavouring to *understand* the contemporary capitalist world, with an inextinguishable hatred for this final form of exploitation of man by man and an unwearied endeavour to *destroy* the world of exploitation—to *revolutionise* it from its very foundations. At the same time Marx was a *man* to whom nothing human was alien; a man who, beneath a sometimes rough exterior, hid a boundless love for all who labour and are heavy laden.

We cannot form a really live picture of a man unless we can get him under direct observation. The more numerous the links that intervene between his live figure and the last copy of his portrait, the weaker and the more abstract will be our impression. Thus an original photograph will always be more precise than any subsequent reproduction of this photograph.

I therefore made up my mind that in this symposium I would try to portray Marx by bringing together a number of firsthand impressions formed by his closest associates.

The collection includes two biographies of Marx, one by his dearest friend, Friedrich Engels, and the other by his youngest daughter, Eleanor Marx. En-

gels was writing for the German workers, several years before Marx's death. He gave a sketch of his friend's career, with an admirable account of Marx's significance as thinker and revolutionist. A supplement to this biographical notice is formed by the letter from Engels to Sorge, penned the very day after Marx died; another supplement is Engels' funeral oration in Highgate cemetery on March 17, 1883. Both the letter and the speech provide additional data for the characterisation of Marx.

The biographical sketch written by Eleanor Marx a few days after her father's death is in large measure a reproduction of what Engels had said a few years earlier. But Eleanor was writing for British workers, and therefore stressed some characteristics which Engels had left almost unnoticed. Besides, she gave certain details about Marx's youth, information gathered from her mother and not to be found in any of the other biographical sketches.

Before giving space to any other authors, I thought it desirable to let Marx himself, as theoretician of the proletariat and indomitable champion of the workers' interests, say a few words. First of all we have his article dated Cologne, June 28, 1848—an article devoted to the memory of the numberless and nameless proletarian heroes who, during the June Days, fell on the Parisian barricades. The vigour, the concentrated energy and passion with which Marx scourges the bourgeois of all shades of opinion, make this article one of the best of his writings. It is only equalled by some of the pages of *The Civil War in France*.

Immediately following, comes a discovery of my own, the speech delivered by Marx on April 14, 1856, after a supper at which the Chartists celebrated the fourth anniversary of the founding of their central organ, the "People's Paper." Marx was one of its principal contributors. In a marvellously concise way he sketches the revolution of 1848 and expounds the historic mission of the proletariat. This speech (in conjunction with a few others which still remain to be collected) shows that Marx, unlike Engels, was an orator as well as a writer, and that only the circumstances of his life stood in the way of the development of his talents in this respect.

This series of essays devoted to the characterisation of Marx as thinker and as theoretician of the proletariat, begins with one by Plehanoff. It belongs to the best period of Plehanoff's literary activity, having been written to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Marx's death, and published in "Iskra" on March 1, 1903. It shows the international significance of Marx, and in especial his significance as regards the growth of the working-class movement in Russia.

The essays by Franz Mehring and Rosa Luxemburg, both written in 1903, amplify the picture of Marx as revolutionist and thinker. Mehring shows Marx as the theoretician of revolutionary strategy and tactics. Rosa Luxemburg deals with a question of very great interest, for she tries to account for the stagnation that was noticeable twenty years ago in the elaboration of Marxist theory. The practical experience of the Russian revolution has shown that

every new stage in the development of the class struggle of the proletariat discloses, in the inexhaustible arsenal of Marxist theory, the new weapons that are needed for the new phase of the struggle. Thus the getting ready for socialism, not as an ultimate aim shining somewhere in the distant future, but as something to be realised here and now, brought into the foreground Marx's teaching about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin's admirable sketch of Marxism, a concise exposition of the whole Marxist system, penned in the light of the experience of the first Russian revolution (that of 1905), elucidates the significance of Marx as philosopher, economist, politician, and tactician of the proletarian struggle.

Timofeeff, who stood out as a scientific revolutionist from among the dried-up and gelded Russian university professors of the old regime, makes a detailed comparison of Marx and Darwin, as the two greatest revolutionisers of the scientific thought of the nineteenth century.

The other articles in the symposium are mainly concerned with describing Marx as a *man*. Lafargue, who knew him intimately, does not merely portray him in his everyday domestic environment. We are also shown Marx in his study, the simply furnished laboratory where the great teacher did his work: and we are made acquainted with how things looked when the work was in the making. This last matter is of great interest to those who wish to follow the development of creative thought, since the vestiges of the process may have completely disappeared from the finished product.

Friedrich Lessner, one of the members of the Communist League, in "A Worker's Memories of Karl Marx," writes simply and unpretentiously, showing Marx as a pioneer member of workers' organisations and as one of the active organisers of the communist workers' movement in Germany.

Wilhelm Liebknecht's share in the symposium consists of an extract from his memoirs. These are not invariably notable for accuracy, especially when he is dealing with Marx as a theoretician. Here, however, we are given a vivid picture of the environment in which Marx passed his days during the London exile.

In his brief review of Hyndman's memoirs, discussing what Hyndman (recently deceased) has to say of Marx, Lenin shows that even in this distorting mirror we can get a clear picture of the great old man, who was quite unable to understand how any one, as he "grew older," and had therefore known capitalist society longer, could find it possible to become "more tolerant" of capitalism.

I have ventured to add a contribution of my own, in which I publish and comment upon the "confessions" written by Marx as an answer to a questionnaire drawn up by his daughters. In a humorous form, this contains a great deal of truth, which is daily confirmed by an abundance of new facts.



KARL MARX  
*by* FRIEDRICH ENGELS



# KARL MARX

*by Friedrich Engels*

**K**ARL MARX, the first to provide socialism and therewith the whole modern labour movement with a scientific foundation, was born at Treves in the year 1818. In his student days at Bonn and Berlin he devoted himself, to begin with, to the study of jurisprudence, but soon turned from this field to concentrate upon history and philosophy. In 1842 he was on the point of becoming an instructor in philosophy when he was involved in the political movement which had originated since the death of Frederick William III., and he was thus switched into a different career. He collaborated with the leaders of the Rhenish liberal bourgeoisie (Campa-hausen, Hansemann, etc.) in founding the "*Rheinische Zeitung*" at Cologne; and, in the autumn of 1842, his criticism of the proceedings of the Rhenish provincial diet having aroused widespread attention, Marx became editor-in-chief of the new journal. Of course, the "*Rheinische Zeitung*" was subject to the prevailing censorship, but the censorship was not equal to the task of controlling it.<sup>1</sup> The "*Rheinische Zeitung*" nearly always managed to

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<sup>1</sup> The first censor of the "*Rheinische Zeitung*" was Police Councillor Dolleschal. This worthy once blue-pencilled in the "*Kölnische Zeitung*" an advertisement of a translation of Dante's *Divina Comedia* (the translation was by "Philolethes," later King John of Saxony), with the remark: "No comedy must be written about divine affairs."

publish what it wanted. Sometimes articles of no importance, written to be censored, were sent in as a preliminary. At other times the official's hands were forced by telling him: "If you censor this article, we shall not be able to publish the paper to-morrow." Had there been ten newspapers as bold as the "Rheinische," ten journals whose editors had had a few hundred thalers more to squander upon type-setting, the German press censorship would already have become impracticable in 1843. But the German newspaper proprietors were timid folk, humdrum fellows with small ideas and limited means, so the "Rheinische Zeitung" had to fight alone. Its activities wore out one censor after another. At length a twofold censorship was imposed; after the matter for publication had been passed by the ordinary censor, it had to be submitted to the provincial governor for final approval. Even this was inadequate. Early in 1843, the government realised that the newspaper was too much for it, and the "Rheinische Zeitung" was unceremoniously suppressed.

Marx, who that summer married Jenny von Westphalen (the father was in later years a reactionary minister of State), now removed to Paris. There, in conjunction with A. Ruge, he issued the "Deutsche-französische Jahrbücher," beginning here the series of his socialist writings with a criticism of Hegel's philosophy of law. He also combined with the present writer in the publication of a book entitled *Die heilige Familie; gegen Bruno Bauer und Konsorten* (The Holy Family; against Bruno Bauer and Co.),

a satirical critique of one of the latest forms then assumed by German idealist philosophy.

While engaged in these activities and in the study of political economy and of the great French revolution, Marx still had time to spare for occasional attacks on the Prussian government. In the spring of 1845, the Prussian authorities revenged themselves by inducing the Guizot ministry to order the expulsion of the offender from France. (Alexander von Humboldt is said to have acted as intermediary in this matter.) Marx now set up house in Brussels, and there, in the year 1846, published his *Discours sur le libre échange* (Essay on Free Trade), and in 1847 *Misère de la philosophie* (Poverty of Philosophy), a criticism of Proudhon's *Philosophie de la misère* (Philosophy of Poverty). While thus engaged, he now made his first entry into the field of practical agitation by founding in Brussels a German Arbeiterverein (workers' association). His participation in the revolutionary movement became still more active when, in 1847, he and his political associates joined the Communist League, which had already been in existence for several years as a secret society. The whole nature of this body was now transformed. Hitherto it had been more or less conspiratorial in scope and method. Now it remained secret only because secrecy was forced upon it, becoming an organisation for communist propaganda, the first organisation of the German Social Democratic Party. The League struck root wherever German workers' associations existed. The leading members of nearly all such associations in England,

Belgium, France, and Switzerland, and those of many of the associations in Germany, were members of the Communist League, and this body played a notable part in the initiation of the German labour movement. Furthermore, our League was the first to stress the international character of the labour movement as a whole; the first to unite Englishmen, Belgians, Hungarians, Poles, etc., as active participants in a working-class organisation; the first to call international meetings of the workers (this especially in London).

The metamorphosis of the League was effected at two congresses held during the year 1847. At the second of these, it was agreed that the party principles should be formulated and published in a manifesto to be drafted by Marx and Engels. Such was the origin of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which appeared in 1848 shortly before the February revolution, and has since then been translated into almost all the languages of Europe.

In Brussels there was a German newspaper, the "Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung," which ruthlessly exposed the Fatherland's police-made paradise. Here the hand of Marx was once more at work, and the Prussian government therefore moved, though fruitlessly for the nonce, to secure his expulsion from Belgium. But when the February revolution in Paris was followed by a popular movement in Brussels, so that a revolution seemed imminent in Belgium likewise, the Belgian government laid hands on Marx and summarily expelled him from the country. Meanwhile the French provisional government

had, through Flocon, invited him to return to Paris, and he accepted the invitation.

In the French capital his chief business was to withstand the crazy scheme of the German workers there, who designed to form themselves into armed legions, bring about a revolution in Germany, and establish a German republic. Marx pointed out: first of all that it was Germany's task to make her own revolution; and, secondly, that the Lamartines and their kind in the provisional government would infallibly betray to the enemy any foreign revolutionary legion organised on French soil—as actually happened in Belgium and Baden.

After the March revolution, Marx went to Cologne where he founded the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung." This newspaper was issued from June 1, 1848, to May 19, 1849, and was the only organ of the democratic movement of that period to represent the outlook of the proletariat. It did this, above all, by its unqualified support of the June insurrection in Paris (1848)—a policy which almost all the shareholders of the journal repudiated. In vain did the "Kreuz Zeitung" complain of the "colossal impudence" with which the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" attacked everything sacred, from king and viceregent down to the ordinary policemen—and this in a Prussian fortress city then garrisoned by 8,000 men. In vain did the Rhenish liberals, who had suddenly become reactionaries, furiously rage. In vain did the local authorities of Cologne, where a state of siege had been declared, suspend the offending newspaper for a long period during the autumn of 1848. In vain

did the Ministry of Justice in Frankfort instruct the Cologne public prosecutor to take legal proceedings on account of article after article. The work of editing and printing the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" went on unhindered; and the circulation and the repute of the journal grew as the fierceness of its attacks on the government and the bourgeoisie increased. When the Prussian coup d'état occurred in November, 1848, at the head of each issue the "*Rheinische*" appealed to the people to refuse payment of taxes and to counter force with force. In the spring of 1849, it was prosecuted twice, once for this offence, and once for a specific article; but in both cases the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty. At length, however, when the May rising of 1849 in Dresden and Rhenish Prussia had been suppressed, and when the Prussian campaign against the insurgents in Baden and the Palatinate had been begun by the concentration and mobilisation of a large force of troops, the government felt strong enough to make an end of the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" by force. The last issue, that of May 19th, was printed in red ink.

Marx now returned to Paris, but within a few weeks after the demonstration of June 13, 1849, the French government confronted him with the choice of going to live in Brittany or of leaving France altogether. He chose the latter alternative, and went to London, where he has lived ever since.

During the year 1850, an attempt was made to re-issue the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" at Hamburg, in the form of a review; but the scheme was soon

dropped owing to the increasing violence of the reaction. Soon after the coup d'état in Paris (December, 1851), Marx wrote *Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte*.<sup>1</sup> In 1853 he wrote *Enthüllungen über den kölner Kommunistenprozess* (Revelations concerning the Cologne Communist Trial), first published in Boston, U.S.A.; subsequently reissued at Basle, and later still at Leipzig.

After the condemnation of the members of the Communist League in Cologne, Marx withdrew from the work of political agitation for the next ten years. During this period he was mainly devoted to the study of the treasures of economic literature to be found in the British Museum Reading Room. Throughout the earlier part of this period (down to the outbreak of the American civil war) he was a regular contributor to the "New York Tribune," which published, in addition to Marx's signed contributions, a considerable number of leading articles penned by him and dealing with European and Asiatic affairs. His attacks on Lord Palmerston, based upon a detailed examination of British official documents, were reissued in London as pamphlets.

The first fruit of his economic researches was en-

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<sup>1</sup> First published in the United States (1852), and reissued at Hamburg (1869) shortly before the Franco-German war. English translations, as *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, by Daniel De Leon, New York, 1897, and by Eden and Cedar Paul, London, 1926.

titled *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (published by Duncker, Berlin, 1859).<sup>1</sup>

This work contains the first coherent exposition of the Marxist theory of value together with the theory of money. During the Italian war, Marx (writing in "Das Volk," a German newspaper published in London) was busied in attacking Bonapartism, which was masquerading as a liberal movement for the freeing of oppressed nationalities; and also in onslaughts upon the Prussian policy of the day, showing how Prussia, under the pretext of neutrality, was trying to fish in troubled waters. In the same connexion it was necessary to attack Herr Karl Vogt, who, commissioned by Prince Napoleon ("Plon-Plon") and paid by Louis Bonaparte, was working to secure German "neutrality" (read "sympathy"). Assailed by Vogt with the most abominable and deliberate calumnies, Marx replied in the work *Herr Vogt* (London, 1860). Herein the machinations of Vogt and other gentlemen wearing false democratic colours were exposed, and on both external and internal evidence Vogt was accused of accepting bribes from the Second Empire. The justice of this accusation was confirmed ten years later, for in the list of the sums paid to Bonapartist hirelings (found in the Tuileries in 1870, and published by the September government) was an item among the V's:

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<sup>1</sup> Englished as *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, translated from the second German edition by N. I. Stone, second edition, London and New York, 1904.

"Vogt, handed over to him in August, 1859, frs. 40,000."

Finally, in the year 1867, there was published at Hamburg, *Das Kapital, Kritik der politischen Oekonomie, erster Band*, Marx's chief work, an exposition of his socialist economics and of the fundamentals of his criticism of the extant order of society, of the capitalist method of production and its consequences. The second edition of this epoch-making book appeared in 1872. The present writer is now engaged in the elaboration of the second volume.

Meanwhile the labour movement had been regaining strength in the various countries of Europe, so that Marx was now able to work for the realisation of a wish he had long cherished. This was for the foundation of a workingmen's association in the most advanced lands of Europe and America, which should give the workers, and also the bourgeois and the governments, a concrete demonstration of the international character of the socialist movement, should encourage and strengthen the proletariat, and should strike terror into the hearts of its enemies. An opportunity was provided at a public meeting, primarily summoned on behalf of the Poles (then suffering from renewed oppression at the hands of the Russian government), and held on September 28, 1864, in St. Martin's Hall, London. The proposal to found the International Workingmen's Association was enthusiastically adopted; and a provisional General Council, to sit in London, was elected at the meeting. In this General Council, and in all the subsequent General Councils down to the time of

The Hague Congress, Marx was the leading spirit. Almost all the documents issued by the General Council, from the *Inaugural Address* (1864) down to *The Civil War in France* (1871), were drafted by him. A description of Marx's activities in the International would be a history of the Association, which still lives in the memory of the European workers.

The fall of the Paris Commune made the position of the International untenable. It was thrust into the foreground of European history at a moment when all possibilities of successful practical action had been cut off. The events which raised it to the position of a seventh great power, made the mobilisation of its fighting forces and their use in the field out of the question—for defeat would have been inevitable, and thereby the working-class movement would have been checked for decades. Furthermore, the suddenly acquired fame of the Association had attracted to it elements spurred on by personal vanity, and individuals eager to turn it to account for the gratification of their own ambition, ignorant or regardless of the real position of the International. Heroic measures were needed, and once more it was Marx who conceived them and then carried them into effect at The Hague Congress. The International, in a formal resolution, disclaimed all responsibility for the doings of the Bakuninists, who were the most active among the before-mentioned foolish and unsavoury elements. Then, in view of the impracticability (under the shadow of the general reaction) of coping with the increased demands now

being made upon the International, and of continuing actively at work except at the cost of sacrifices which would have drained the labour movement of its life-blood, it was agreed that the organisation should temporarily withdraw from the stage, the seat of the General Council being transferred to the United States. This decision has often been criticised, but events have shown that it was sound. On the one hand, the step put an end to the endeavours to make the International responsible for futile insurrections. On the other hand, the continued and close association between the socialist labour parties of the various countries showed that community of interest and solidarity of feeling (once awakened among the workers of all lands through the formation of the International) were able to secure active expression without the existence of a formal International Workingmen's Association—which had for the time being become a hindrance to progress.

After The Hague Congress, Marx could at length find repose and leisure for the resumption of his studies in the theoretical field, and there is good reason to hope that ere long the second volume of *Capital* will be ready for the press.

Among the numerous important discoveries for which Marx's name will be famous in the history of science, two only can be mentioned here.

The first of these is the transformation he has brought about in our general conception of universal history. Hitherto the accepted view has been that the ultimate causes of historical changes are to be found in the changing ideas of human beings; and

that, among all historical changes, political changes are the most important—are dominant in history. People did not trouble to ask whence ideas came into men's minds, or to enquire what were the primary causes of political changes. Only upon the newer school of French historians, and to some extent also upon recent English historians, had the conviction forced itself that, since the Middle Ages at any rate, the chief motive force of European history had been the struggle of the rising bourgeoisie to wrest social and political power from the feudal nobility. But Marx has shown that all history down to the present day has been the history of class struggles; that in all the manifold and complicated political struggles, what is really at issue is nothing more or less than the social and political dominion of social classes—the struggle of an old-established class to maintain power, and the struggle of a subordinate class to rise to power. But how do these classes originate, and upon what does their existence depend? Classes arise out of, and their existence depends upon, the material conditions under which society at any given time produces and exchanges the means of life.

The feudal regime of the Middle Ages was based upon the self-sufficing economy of small communities of peasants, who themselves produced almost everything they needed, so that there was practically no system of exchange. The nobles, a fighting caste, protected these peasant communities against attack from outside, and gave them national, or at any rate political cohesion. But with the growth of the towns

there arose a system of handicrafts, and commerce developed—national at first and then international. Therewith the urban bourgeoisie came into being; and even before the close of the Middle Ages this new class, after a struggle with the nobility, secured acceptance into the feudal order of society. Then, from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards, and especially after the discovery of the extra-European world, the bourgeoisie began to find a much wider area for its commercial activities, and therewith to feel a new spur to its industry. Handicraft, in most fields of production, gave place to the factory system of manufacture. Then, thanks to the discoveries of the eighteenth century (and especially thanks to the discovery of the steam engine), the development of large-scale industry became possible; and this in its turn reacted upon commerce, for in the more backward countries it drove out the old handicrafts, and in the more advanced lands it brought into being new means of communication—steam transport, railways, and electric telegraphs. Thus the bourgeoisie was able to an increasing extent to concentrate social wealth and social power into its hands, whilst political power was still exclusively vested in the nobility and in the monarchy based upon the nobility. But at a certain stage the bourgeoisie is able to win political power as well (in France this happened through the great revolution), and thenceforward it becomes the governing class, holding sway over the proletariat and the lesser peasantry.

From this outlook we can find the simplest poss-

ible explanation of all historical happenings, provided we have sufficient knowledge concerning the economico-social conditions of the period we are studying—a knowledge which, however, our professional historians never possess! Thus, too, we can readily explain the prevailing ideas in any historical epoch as the outcome of the economic vital conditions of the time and the social and political relationships that issue from these conditions. Marx's discovery for the first time set history upon its true foundation. The obvious fact (which, though obvious, had previously been overlooked) that human beings must eat and drink, must have clothing and shelter, in a word *must work*, before they can fight for dominion or cultivate politics and religion and philosophy—this obvious fact was at last able to enter into its historical heritage.

The new philosophy of history was of supreme importance to socialist theory. It showed that hitherto all history had been the history of class contrasts and class struggles; that there had always been ruling and ruled, exploiting and exploited classes; and that the great majority of human beings had been invariably condemned to hard labour and little enjoyment. Why was this? For the simple reason that, in all earlier phases of social evolution, production had been so little developed that historical progress had been substantially dependent upon the activity of a small privileged minority, whilst to the vast majority had been left the task of producing their own bare subsistence and also the increasingly generous portion of the privileged minority. Such an

analysis of history gives a natural and reasonable explanation of class rule, which had previously seemed explicable only as the outcome of human malevolence. But it does more than this, for it leads us to the view that nowadays, thanks to the tremendous increase in the forces of production, the last pretext for a division of mankind into rulers and ruled, exploiters and exploited, has vanished—at any rate in the more advanced countries of the world. It shows us that the dominant great bourgeoisie has fulfilled its historic mission, that it is no longer competent to lead society on the forward march and has actually become a hindrance to the development of production (as we can see from the occurrence of commercial crises, and especially from the last great collapse and from the depressed condition of industry in all lands). It shows, likewise, that the historic mission of leadership now devolves on the proletariat, a class which, in virtue of its social position, can only free itself by doing away once for all with class dominion, subjugation, and exploitation. It shows, finally, that the social forces of production, which have outgrown the control of the bourgeoisie, only await seizure by the associated proletariat in order to bring about a state of affairs in which every member of society will not merely participate in the production of social wealth, but will have an equal share in the distribution and administration of this wealth; and it shows that, by the purposively organised control of production as a whole, the forces of production and the social yield will be so greatly intensified and expanded that there

will be guarantees for the satisfaction of every individual's reasonable needs to an ever-increasing degree.

The second of Marx's epoch-making discoveries is his definitive explanation of the relationship between capital and labour; in other words, his elucidation of the way in which, within existing society and under the dominion of the extant capitalist method of production, the exploitation of the workers by the capitalists is effected. As soon as economic science had proved that labour was the source of all wealth and all value, it became inevitable that people should go on to ask: "How can this demonstration be reconciled with the fact that the wage worker does not receive the whole of the value created by his labour, but is compelled to part with a portion of it to the capitalist?" The bourgeois economists and the socialists alike did their utmost to find an answer that should be scientifically valid, but all their attempts were vain until Marx solved the problem.

Here is the Marxist solution. The present capitalist method of production presupposes the existence of two social classes: on the one hand the capitalists, who own the means of production and life; and, on the other, the proletarians, who, being dispossessed, have nothing to sell but their labour power, and are forced to sell this in order to get the means of life. But the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour time incorporated in its production or requisite for its reproduction; and the value of the labour power

of an average human being for a day, a month, or a year, is thus determined by the amount of labour incorporated in the quantity of the necessities of life requisite for the maintenance of this labour power during a day, a month, or a year. Let us assume that the necessities of life requisite for the maintenance of a worker throughout a working day needed six working hours for their production, or (which is the same thing) that the labour incorporated in them represents a labour quantum of six hours; in that case the value of one day's labour power will be expressed by a sum of money which likewise incorporates six working hours. Let us assume, further, that the capitalist who employs our workman pays him this sum, which is the full value of his labour power. Then, as soon as the workman has worked six hours for the capitalist, he has fully repaid the capitalist's outlay—has given six hours' labour for six hours' labour. There is nothing left over for the capitalist, who therefore looks at the matter from a very different standpoint. The capitalist says: "I have bought this worker's labour power not for six hours only, but for a whole day"; and he therefore makes the workman stick to the job for eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, or more hours (as the case may be), so that the product of the seventh, eighth, and subsequent working hours is the outcome of unpaid labour, and finds its way into the capitalist's pocket. Thus the worker in capitalist employ produces, not merely the value of his labour power (which he receives as his wages), but also a surplus value which, in the first instance appropriated by

the capitalist, is subsequently distributed throughout the capitalist class in accordance with definite economic laws, and forms the source of land-rent, profit, the accumulation of capital—in a word of all the wealth that is consumed or hoarded by the leisure classes.

This demonstration shows that the acquisition of wealth by latter-day capitalists is just as much the appropriation of others' labour, of unpaid labour, as was the acquisition of wealth by the slave-owner or by the feudal baron imposing forced labour on his serfs; it shows that these various forms of exploitation are merely distinguished one from another by variations in the method whereby the unpaid labour is appropriated. It cuts the ground from under the feet of the hypocritical contention of the possessing classes that law and justice dominate the existing order of society, that in that order there are established equality of rights and duties and a general harmony of interests. Contemporary bourgeois society is seen, no less than its forerunners, to be a gigantic institution for the exploitation of the overwhelming majority of the population by a small and continually decreasing minority.

Modern scientific socialism is grounded upon these two salient facts. In the second volume of *Capital*, this and other hardly less important discoveries concerning the capitalist system of society will be further developed; and certain aspects of political economy not touched upon in the first volume will likewise be revolutionised. We may hope that Marx will soon be able to send it to the printers.

ENGELS'S LETTER TO  
SORGE CONCERNING  
THE DEATH OF MARX



# ENGELS'S LETTER TO SORGE CONCERNING THE DEATH OF MARX

London.

March 15, 1883, 11.45 p.m.

Dear Sorge,

Your telegram arrived this evening.

Most cordial thanks.

I could not send you regular reports about the state of Marx's health. The continual ups and downs made this quite impossible. But here is the gist of the matter.

In October, 1881, shortly before his wife's death, he had an attack of pleurisy. When convalescent, he was sent to Algiers in February, 1882. While he was travelling thither, the weather was cold and wet, and he was suffering from pleurisy once more when he reached his destination. The weather remained atrocious. Still, he got better for a time, and, as the hot season was drawing near, he was sent to Monte Carlo. Here he arrived with a third attack of pleurisy, a comparatively mild one. Weather abominable as before. When he had at length got over his relapse, he went to Argenteuil near Paris, to stay with his daughter Madame Longuet. Nearby are the sulphur springs of Enghien, and he took a course of the waters there for the relief of his long-standing bronchitis—with good effect, in spite of the persistence of wretched weather. Finally, he put in six

weeks at Vevey, and seemed almost his old self when he got back to London in September. The doctors had agreed that he might winter on the south coast of England. The fact was that he was utterly sick of aimless wanderings, and it is probable that a renewed exile to southern Europe would have done him more harm morally than it would have done him good physically. When the autumnal fogs began in London, he was sent to the Isle of Wight. There it rained persistently, and he caught a fresh chill. At the New Year, when Schorlemmer and I were planning to visit him, came news that made it necessary for 'Tussy'<sup>1</sup> to join him at once. Soon afterwards, Jenny [Longuet] died—and he got a fresh attack of bronchitis. At his age and in view of all that had gone before, this was dangerous. Numerous complications set in, the worst of these being an abscess in the lung and a terrible loss of strength. Nevertheless the illness as a whole seemed to be running a favourable course, and so recently as last Friday the chief among his doctors (one of the leading younger physicians in London, a man specially recommended to him by Ray Lankester), was extremely hopeful. But every one who has looked at lung tissue under the microscope knows that, when an ulcerative process is going on in the lung, there is great danger of hæmorrhage. For the last six weeks, therefore, every morning as I turned the corner into the street I was in terror lest I should see the blinds down. Yesterday afternoon (the after-

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<sup>1</sup> Pet-name for Eleanor Marx.

noon was the best time to visit him) when I arrived at 2.30 I found every one in tears, for it seemed that the end was at hand. I asked what had happened, and tried to make them look at the hopeful side. He had only had a slight hæmorrhage, but there had been a grave collapse. Our good old Lenchen, who has looked after him as assiduously as any mother ever cared for a sick child, went upstairs, and came back to tell me that he was in a doze, but I might go up. I found him lying there, asleep indeed, but in the sleep from which there is no waking. He was pulseless and had ceased to breathe. During the two minutes of Lenchen's absence he had quietly and painlessly passed away.

All things that happen by natural necessity bring with them their own consolation, however dreadful they may be. So was it now. Perhaps medical skill might have secured for him a few years more of vegetative existence; might—to the greater glory of the doctors—have made of him a man who should die by inches instead of slipping out of their hands all of a sudden. But our Marx could never have borne this. To go on living with so many works unfinished, to be tantalised by the vain longing to complete them, would have been far more bitter to him than an easy and speedy death. He was fond of Epicurus' saying: "Death is not a misfortune for the one who dies, but for the survivor." How could we wish that this mighty man, this man of genius, should have lived on as a wreck, a credit to medical science but an object of scorn to the Philistines whom in the days of his strength he had so often

smitten hip and thigh? No, things are a thousand times better as they are; it is a thousand times better that in two days from now we shall carry him to the tomb where his wife lies at rest.

Indeed, after all that has gone before (matters concerning which I am better informed than the doctors), I am convinced that the choice was only between death and a maimed life.

Be that as it may, mankind is shorter by a head, has lost the greatest head of our time.

The proletarian movement will continue on its course, but we no longer have the central figure to to whom the French, the Russians, the Americans, and the Germans spontaneously turned in decisive moments, and always received clear and irrefutable counsel such as nothing but genius and perfect knowledge could supply.

The local magnates, the lesser men of talent—not to say the humbugs—will now have a free hand. Ultimate victory is assured, but deviations, temporary and local aberrations (already unavoidable) will now become commoner than ever.

Well, well, we must worry through as best we may! What else are we here for? Certainly we shall not lose heart.

Yours,

F. ENGELS.

**SPEECH BY ENGELS  
AT MARX'S FUNERAL**



# SPEECH BY ENGELS AT MARX'S FUNERAL

Highgate Cemetery,  
March 17, 1883.

On Saturday, March 17th, Marx was laid to rest in Highgate cemetery, beside the remains of his wife, who had been buried there fifteen months earlier.

At the graveside, Comrade Lemke laid on the coffin two wreaths looped with red ribbon, one in the name of the staff of the "Sozialdemokrat," of Zurich, and the other in that of the Communist Workers' Educational Society of London.

Then Comrade Engels spoke as follows:

On March 14th, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest of living thinkers ceased to think. He had been left alone for barely two minutes; but when we entered his room we found that, seated in his chair, he had quietly gone to sleep—for ever.

The loss which his death has inflicted upon the fighting proletariat in Europe and America, and upon the science of history, is immeasurable. The gaps that will be made by the death of this titan will soon be felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history. He discovered the simple fact (heretofore hidden beneath ideological excrescences) that human beings must have food and drink, clothing and shelter, first of all, before they can interest

themselves in politics, science, art, religion, and the like. This implies that the production of the immediately requisite material means of subsistence, and therewith the extant economic developmental phase of a nation or an epoch, constitute the foundation upon which the State institutions, the legal outlooks, the artistic and even the religious ideas, of those concerned, have been built up. It implies that these latter must be explained out of the former, whereas usually the former have been explained as issuing from the latter.

Nor was this all. Marx likewise discovered the special law of motion proper to the contemporary capitalist method of production and to the bourgeois society which that method of production has brought into being. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light here, whereas all previous investigators (socialist critics no less than bourgeois economists) had been groping in the dark.

Two such discoveries might suffice for one man's lifetime. Fortunate is he who is privileged to make even one discovery so outstanding. But in every field he studied (the fields were many, and the studies were exhaustive), Marx made independent discoveries—even in mathematics.

I have pictured the man of science. But the man of science was still only half the man. For Marx, science was a motive force of history, was a revolutionary force. Whilst he took a pure delight in a purely theoretical discovery, in one which had not and perhaps never would have a practical application, he experienced a joy of a very different kind

when he was concerned with a discovery which would forthwith exert a revolutionary influence on industry, on historical evolution in general. For instance, he paid close attention to the advances of electrical science, and, of late years, to the discoveries of Marcel Deprez.

For, before all else, Marx was a revolutionist. To collaborate in one way or another in the overthrow of capitalist society and of the State institutions created by that society; to collaborate in the freeing of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to inspire with a consciousness of its needs, with a knowledge of the conditions requisite for its emancipation—this was his true mission in life. Fighting was his natural element. Few men ever fought with so much passion, tenacity, and success. His work on the "*Rheinische Zeitung*" in 1842, on the Parisian "*Vorwaerts*" in 1844, on the "*Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*" in 1847, on the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" in 1848 and 1849, on the "*New York Tribune*" from 1852 to 1861; a great number of pamphlets; multifarious activities in Paris, Brussels, and London; finally, as crown of his labours, the foundation of the International Workingmen's Association: there you have his record. Had Marx done nothing but found the International, that was an achievement of which he might well have been proud.

Because he was an active revolutionist, Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time. He was shown the door by various governments, republican as well as absolute. Bourgeois, ultra-democrats as well as conservatives, vied with one

another in spreading libels about him. He brushed these aside like cobwebs, ignored them, only troubled to answer them when he positively had to. Yet he has gone down to his death honoured, loved, mourned by millions of revolutionary workers all over the world, in Europe and Asia as far eastward as Siberian mines, and in America as far westward as California. I can boldly assert that, while he is still alive, he has many adversaries, he has now hardly a personal enemy.

His name and his works will live on through centuries.

KARL MARX : *by*  
ELEANOR MARX



# KARL MARX

by Eleanor Marx

**T**HERE is no time so little fitted for writing the biography of a great man as that immediately after his death, and the task is doubly difficult when it falls to one who knew and loved him. It is impossible for me to do more at present than give the briefest sketch of my father's life. I shall confine myself to a simple statement of facts, and I shall not even attempt an exposition of his great theories and discoveries; theories that are the very foundation of modern socialism; discoveries that are revolutionising the whole science of political economy. I hope, however, to give in a future number of "Progress" an analysis of my father's chief work *Das Kapital*, and of the truths set forth in it.

Karl Marx was born in Treves on May 5, 1818, of Jewish parents. His father a man of great talents—was a lawyer, strongly imbued with French eighteenth century ideas of religion, science, and art; his mother was the descendant of Hungarian Jews, who in the seventeenth century settled in Holland. Among his earliest friends and playmates were Jenny (afterwards his wife) and Edgar von Westphalen. From their father, Baron von Westphalen (himself half a Scot), Karl Marx imbibed his first love for the Romantic School; and while his father read him Voltaire and Racine, Westphalen read him Homer and Shakespeare. These always remained his favourite

writers. At once much loved and feared by his schoolfellows—loved because he was always in mischief, and feared because of his readiness in writing satirical verse and lampooning his enemies—Karl Marx passed through the usual school routine, and then proceeded to the universities of Bonn and Berlin, where, to please his father, he for a time studied law, and, to please himself, he studied history and philosophy. In 1842, he was about to take up a position at Bonn University as Privatdozent (instructor), but the political movement which had begun in Germany since the death of Frederick William III. in 1840 attracted him into another career. The chiefs of the Rhenish liberals, Camphausen and Hansemann, had founded the "*Rheinische Zeitung*" at Cologne, with the co-operation of Marx, whose brilliant and bold criticism of the provincial Landtag created such a sensation, that, although only twenty-four years old, he was offered the chief editorship of the paper. He accepted it, and therewith began his long struggle with all despotisms, and with Prussian despotism in particular. Of course the paper appeared under the supervision of a censor—but the unhappy censor found himself powerless. The "*Rheinische*" invariably managed to publish all its important articles; the censor could do nothing. Then a second, a "special" censor was sent from Berlin; but even this double censorship proved of no avail, and finally, in 1843, the government simply suppressed the paper altogether. In the same year, 1843, Marx had married his old friend and playfellow, to whom he had been engaged for seven years, Jenny von Westphal-

en, and with his young wife proceeded to Paris. Here, together with Arnold Ruge, he published the "Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher," in which he began the long series of his socialist writings. His first contribution was a critique on Hegel's philosophy of law; the second, an essay on the Jewish problem. When the "Jahrbücher" ceased to appear, Marx contributed to the journal "Vorwaerts," of which he is usually said to have been the editor. As a matter of fact, the editorship of this paper, to which Heine, Overbeck, Engels, etc., contributed, seems to have been carried on in a somewhat erratic manner, and a really responsible editor never existed. Marx's next publication was *Die heilige Familie* (The Holy Family), written jointly with Engels, a satirical critique directed against Bruno Bauer and his school of Hegelian idealists.

While devoting most of his time at this period to the study of political economy and of the French revolution, Karl Marx continued to wage fierce war on the Prussian government, and as a consequence, this government demanded of Monsieur Guizot—it is said through the agency of Alexander von Humboldt, who happened to be in Paris—Marx's expulsion from France. With this demand Guizot bravely complied, and Marx had to leave Paris. He went to Brussels, and there in 1846 published, in French, a *Discours sur le libre échange* (Essay on Free Trade). Proudhon now published his *Contradictions économiques ou philosophie de la misère* (Philosophy of Poverty), and wrote to Marx that he awaited his "fêrule critique" (critical rod). He did

not wait long, for in 1847 Marx published his *Misère de la philosophie, réponse à la philosophie de la misère de Monsieur Proudhon*,<sup>1</sup> and the "fêrule" was applied with a severity Proudhon had probably not bargained for. This same year, Marx founded a German Working Man's Club at Brussels, and, what is of more importance, joined, together with his political friends, the Communist League. The whole organisation of the League was changed by him; from a hole-and-corner conspiracy it was transformed into an organisation for the propaganda of communist principles, and was only secret because existing circumstances made secrecy a necessity. Wherever German Working Men's Clubs existed the League existed also, and it was the first socialist movement of an international character, Englishmen, Belgians, Hungarians, Poles, and Scandinavians being members—it was the first organisation of the Social Democratic Party. In 1847, a congress of the League was held in London, at which Marx and Engels were present as delegates; and they were subsequently appointed to write the celebrated *Manifesto of the Communist Party*—first published just before the revolution of 1848, and then translated into well-nigh all European languages. This manifesto opens with a review of the existing conditions of society. It goes on to show how gradually the old feudal division of classes has disappeared, and how modern society is divided simply into two classes—that of the capitalist or bourgeois class, and that of the pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Poverty of Philosophy, a Reply to Monsieur Proudhon's Philosophy of Poverty.

letariat; of the expropriators and the expropriated; of the bourgeois class possessing wealth and power and producing nothing, and the labour class that produces wealth but possesses nothing. The bourgeoisie, after using the proletariat to fight its political battles against feudalism, has used the power thus acquired to enslave the proletariat. To the charge that communism aims at "abolishing property," the *Manifesto* replied that communists aim only at abolishing the bourgeois system of property by which already, for nine-tenths of the community, property is abolished; to the accusation that communists aim at, "abolishing marriage and the family," the *Manifesto* answered by asking what kind of "family" and "marriage" were possible for the working men, for whom in all true meanings of the words, neither exists. The bourgeoisie has wrought great revolutions in history, it has revolutionised the whole system of production. Under its hands the steam engine, the self-acting mule, the steam hammer, the railways and ocean steamers of our days, were developed. But its most revolutionary production was the production of the proletariat, of a class whose very conditions of existence compel it to overthrow the whole of extant society. The *Manifesto* ends with the words:

"Communists scorn to hide their views and aims. They openly declare that their purposes can only be achieved by the forcible overthrow of the whole extant social order. Let the ruling classes tremble at the prospect of a communist revolution. Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They

have a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

In the meantime, Marx had continued in the "*Brüsseler Zeitung*" his attack on the Prussian government, and again the Prussian government demanded his expulsion, but in vain; only the February revolution caused a movement among the Belgian workmen, when Marx, without any ado, was expelled by the Belgian government. The provisional government of France, had, however, through Flocon, invited him to return to Paris, and this invitation he accepted. In Paris he remained some time, till after the revolution of March, 1848, when he returned to Cologne and there founded the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*"—the only paper representing the working class, and daring to defend the June insurgents of Paris. In vain did the various reactionary and liberal papers denounce the "*Rheinische*" for its licentious audacity in attacking all that was holy and defying all authority—and that, too, in a Prussian fortress! In vain did the authorities by virtue of the state of siege, suspend the paper for six weeks. It again appeared under the very eyes of the police, its reputation and circulation growing with the attacks made upon it. After the Prussian coup d'état of November, the "*Rheinische*," at the head of each number, called on the people to refuse payment of taxes, and to meet force by force. For this, and on account of certain articles, the paper was twice prosecuted—and acquitted. Finally, after the May rising (1849) in Dresden, the Rhine Provinces, and South Germany, the "*Rheinische*" was forcibly

suppressed. The last number—printed in red—appeared on May 19th, 1849.

Marx now returned to Paris, but a few weeks after the demonstration of June 13, 1849, the French government gave him the choice of retiring to Brittany or leaving France. He preferred the latter, and went to London—where he continued to live for over thirty years. An attempt to bring out the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" in the form of a review, published at Hamburg, was not successful. Immediately after Napoleon's coup d'état, Marx wrote his *Achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte*,<sup>1</sup> and in 1853 the "Revelations concerning the Cologne Communist Trial"—in which he laid bare the infamous machinations of the Prussian government and police.

After the condemnation at Cologne of the members of the Communist League, Marx for a time retired from active political life, devoting himself to the study of economics in the British Museum Reading Room, to contributing leading articles and correspondence to the "New York Tribune," and to writing pamphlets and leaflets attacking the Palmerston regime, widely circulated at the time by David Urquhart.

The first fruits of his long, earnest studies in political economy appeared in 1859, in his *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (Critique of Political Economy)—a work which contains the first exposition of his theory of value.

During the Italian war, Marx, in the German paper "Das Volk" published in London, denounced

<sup>1</sup> The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.

the Bonapartism that hid itself under the guise of liberal sympathy for oppressed nationalities; and the Prussian policy that, under the cloak of neutrality, merely sought to fish in troubled waters. On this occasion it became necessary to attack Karl Vogt, who, in the pay of the "midnight assassin," was agitating for German neutrality, nay sympathy. Infamously and deliberately calumniated by Karl Vogt, Marx replied to him and other gentlemen of his ilk in *Herr Vogt* (1860), in which he accused Vogt of being in Napoleon's pay. Just ten years later, in 1870, this accusation was proved to be true. The French government of national defence published a list of the Bonapartist hirelings, and under the letter V appeared: "Vogt received August, 1859, 40,000 francs." In 1867, Marx published at Hamburg his chief work *Das Kapital*<sup>1</sup> to the consideration of which I shall return in the next number of "Progress."

Meanwhile the working-class movement had progressed so far that Karl Marx could think of executing a long-cherished plan—the establishment in all the more advanced countries of Europe and America of an International Workingmen's Association. A public meeting to express sympathy with Poland was

<sup>1</sup> "Vogt—il lui a été remis en août, 1859. . . . 40,000 francs" is the literal text.

<sup>2</sup> A second edition appeared in 1872, and a third is about to be published. Translations in French and Russian were made in the 'seventies, and condensations of or extracts from the book have appeared in most European languages.

held in April, 1864. This brought together the working men of various nationalities, and it was decided to found the International. This was done at a meeting (presided over by Professor Bessly) in St. Martin's Hall, on September 28, 1864. A provisional General Council was elected, and Marx drew up the Inaugural Address and the Provisional Rules. In this address, after an appalling picture of the misery of the working classes, even in years of so-called commercial prosperity, he tells the working men of all countries to combine; and, as nearly twenty years before in the *Communist Manifesto*, he concludes with the words: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" The "Rules" stated the reasons for founding the International:

"Considering,

"That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working class themselves, that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means, not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;

"That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour, that is, the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms of social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

"That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinated as a means;

"That all efforts aiming at that great end have

hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

"That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries;

"That the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements;

"For these reasons, the undersigned . . . have taken the steps necessary for founding the International Workingmen's Association."

To give any account of Marx's work in the International would be to write a history of the Association itself—for, while never being more than the corresponding secretary for Germany and Russia, he was the leading spirit of the successive General Councils. With scarcely any exceptions the Addresses—from the Inaugural one to the last one—*The Civil War in France*, were written by him. In this last address, Marx explained the real meaning of the Commune—"that sphinx so tantalising to the bourgeois mind." In words as vigorous as beautiful he branded the corrupt "Government of National Defection" that had betrayed France into the hands of Prussia, he denounced the government consisting of such

men as the forger Jules Favre, the usurer Ferry, and the thrice infamous Thiers, "that monstrous gnome," the "historical shoeblack" of the first Napoleon. After contrasting the horrors perpetrated by the Versaillists and the heroic devotion of the Parisian working men, dying for the preservation of the very republic of which Monsieur Ferry is now Prime Minister, Marx concludes:

"Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be for ever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them."

The fall of the Commune placed the International in an impossible position. It became necessary to remove the General Council from London to New York, and this, at Marx's suggestion, was done by The Hague Congress in 1873. Since then the movement has taken another form; the continual intercourse between the proletarians of all countries—one of the fruits of the International Association—has shown that there no longer exists the necessity for a formal organisation. But whatever the form, the work is going on, must go on so long as the present conditions of society shall exist.

Since 1873, Marx had given himself up almost entirely to his work, though this had been retarded for some years by ill-health. The MS. of the second volume of his chief work will be edited by his oldest,

truest, and dearest friend, Frederick Engels. There are other MSS. which may also be published.

I have confined myself to strictly historical and biographical details of the *man*. Of his striking personality, his immense erudition, his wit, humour, general kindliness, and ever-ready sympathy, it is not for me to speak. To sum up all :

The elements

So mixed in him that Nature might stand up,  
And say to all the world : 'This was a man !'

THE JUNE DAYS  
*by* KARL MARX



# THE JUNE DAYS

*by Karl Marx*

Cologne, June 28, 1848.

**T**HE Parisian workers have been crushed by superior force, crushed but not destroyed; they have been defeated, and yet it is their opponents who are really vanquished. The momentary triumph of brute force has been purchased by the annihilation of all the disappointments and chimeras of the February revolution, by the liquidation of all the old republican parties, by the segregation of the French people into two nations—the nation of the owners and the nation of the workers. Henceforward the tricolour republic can have but one colour, the colour of the beaten, the colour of blood. It has become a Red republic.

There is no one with an established republican reputation, no one either from the group of the nationalists or from the group of the reformers, on the side of the people! With no other leaders and no other means than insurrection itself, the people withstood the united strength of the bourgeoisie and the soldiery for a longer period than any French dynasty fully equipped with military apparatus was ever able to withstand the bourgeoisie. To dispel the last illusions of the people, to bring about a complete break with the past, it was necessary that the customary enthusiastic supporters of French insurrectionists—the bourgeois youth, the pupils at the Polytechnic School, the wearers of three-cornered hats—should this time side with the oppressors. It was

necessary that the medical students of the University of Paris should refuse their aid to wounded plebeians. Science does not exist for the help of these common folk, for the help of those who have committed the infamous, the unspeakable crime of fighting for their own hands insteads of splintering a lance for Louis Philippe or Monsieur Marrast.

The Executive Committee, the last official vestige of the February revolution, has vanished like a mist-wraith. Lamartine's fire-balls have transformed themselves into Cavaignac's war-rockets.

The fraternity of the two opposing classes (one of which exploits the other), this fraternity which in February was inscribed in huge letters upon all the façades of Paris, upon all the prisons and all the barracks—its true and unsophisticated and prosaic expression is civil war, civil war in its most terrible form, the war between capital and labour. On the evening of June 25th, this fraternity was flaming from all the windows of Paris when the Paris of the bourgeoisie was illuminated while the Paris of the proletariat was burning and bleeding and lamenting.

Fraternity lasted just so long as the interests of the bourgeoisie could fraternise with the interests of the proletariat. Pedants of the old revolutionary traditions of 1793; socialist systematisers who begged the bourgeoisie to grant favours to the people, who were allowed to preach lengthy sermons, and were permitted to compromise themselves for just so long a time as was needed for the lulling of the proletarian lion to sleep; republicans who wanted the whole of the old bourgeois system, minus the crowned figure-

head; legitimists who did not wish to doff their livery, but merely to change its cut—these had been the people's allies in the February revolution! Yet what the people instinctively hated was not Louis Philippe, but the crowned dominion of a class, capital enthroned. Nevertheless, magnanimous as ever, it fancied it had destroyed its own enemies when it had merely overthrown the enemy of its enemies, the common enemy of them all.

The February revolution was a decorous revolution, a revolution made by general acclaim, because the oppositions which in it exploded against the monarchy were undeveloped, and slumbered harmoniously side by side; because the social struggle which formed its real background, had as yet won only an airy existence, the existence of a phrase or a word. The June revolution is an indecorous, a detestable revolution because in its substance has taken the place of phrase, because the establishment of the republic disclosed the head of the monster when it removed the sparkling guise of the crown.

"Order" was Guizot's watchword. "Order reigns in Warsaw," said Sebastiani, the Guizotin, when the Poles were crushed by the Russians. "Order!" shouts Cavaignac, the brutal echo of the French National Assembly and the republican bourgeoisie. "Order!" rattles his grape-shot, as it mows down the proletariat.

Not one of the countless revolutions made by the French bourgeoisie since 1789 was an attack upon order, for they left untouched the dominion of class, the slavery of the workers, bourgeois order—while

changing again and again the political form of this dominion and this slavery. But June laid hands upon bourgeois order. Woe, therefore, to June!

Under the Provisional Government it was the proper thing, nay it was essential, it was both politic and agreeable, to tell the "generous-hearted" workers (who, as thousands of official posters declared, "had placed three months' poverty at the disposal of the republic") that the February revolution had been made in their interest, or in their interest above all. But after the meeting of the National Assembly, a more prosaic tone made itself heard. All that was now necessary was, as Monsieur Trelat phrased it, to get labour back to its old conditions. In a word, the workers had taken up arms in February in order to involve themselves in an industrial crisis!

The business of the National Assembly is to make February as if it had never been, at any rate as far as the workers are concerned, for these are to be forced back into the old conditions. But the Assembly finds the task beyond its powers, for no more successfully than a king can a parliament say to a universal industrial crisis, "Thus far and no farther!" Even the National Assembly, in its brutal eagerness to have done with the tiresome February verbiage, failed to hit upon the one measure that was practicable upon the basis of the old relationships. It conscripted Parisian workers of ages from seventeen to twenty-five into the army, or flung them out on to the pavement: it ordered foreigners out of Paris, exiled them to Sologne, without even paying them what was due to them up to the day of dismissal;

it provisionally guaranteed grown-up Parisians a bare subsistence in workshops organised in military fashion, on the proviso that they should take no part in public meetings, that is on the proviso that they should cease to be republicans. Sentimental rhetoric after the February revolution did not suffice, nor yet the brutal activity of the legislature after May 15th. The issue must be decided practically. "Did you, the rabble, make the February revolution for yourselves, or for us?" The bourgeoisie propounded the question in such a way that it could only be answered (in June) with grape-shot and barricades.

Nevertheless, as one of the representatives of the people said on June 25th, the National Assembly is stupor-stricken. It is stupefied when question and answer drench the streets of Paris with blood; the representatives are stupefied, some of them because their illusions go up in gunpowder smoke, others because they cannot understand how the people can dare to defend its own most immediate interests. Nothing, in the view of these latter, but Russian money, English money, the Bonapartist eagle, the monarchist lily, or some other amulet, can account for so strange a phenomenon! Both sections of the Assembly feel, however, that between them and the people a great gulf is fixed; neither dares to raise a voice on the people's behalf.

As soon as the stupor has passed off, fury takes its place; and, with good reason, the majority expresses its fierce contempt for the pitiful utopians and hypocrites who perpetrate the anachronism of continuing to speak of fraternity. The essential thing is that we

should hear no more of this phrase, or of the illusions it harbours in its ambiguous bosom! When La Rochejaquelein, legitimist and chivalrous enthusiast, railed against the infamous way in which people were shouting "Vac victis" (Woe to the vanquished), the majority of the Assembly became affected with St. Vitus' dance, as if bitten by a tarantula. They cried "Woe to the workers" in order to hide that they themselves, and no others, were in truth the vanquished; that either they themselves must perish, or the republic. That was why they cried so convulsively: "Long live the republic!"

Are we to be led astray because this abyss has opened at our feet? Are we to succumb to the illusion that struggles concerning the form of the State are void of content or meaning?

Only weaklings and cowards can moot this question. The clashes that spontaneously arise out of the conditions of bourgeois society must be fought to the bitter end; they cannot be conjured out of existence. The best form of State is the one in which social oppositions are not slurred over; the one in which they are not forcibly, that is to say, artificially and no more than seemingly, fettered. The best form of State is one in which these conflicts secure free expression, and are thus resolved.

We shall be asked: "Have you no tears, no sighs, no words of sympathy, for the victims of the popular frenzy; are you indifferent to the losses of the National Guard, the Mobile Guard, the Republican Guard, the Line?"

The State will care for the widows and orphans of

these men. They will be honoured in decrees: they will be given a splendid public funeral; the official press will proclaim their memories immortal; the champions of the reaction will extol them from the east of Europe to the west.

But the plebeians, pinched by hunger, reviled in the newspapers, neglected by the surgeons, stigmatised by all "honest" folk as thieves and incendiaries and convicts, their wives and their children plunged in greater misery than ever, the best among the survivors transported—is not the democratic press fully entitled to crown their sad brows with laurels?



THE REVOLUTION OF 1848  
AND THE PROLETARIAT  
*A Speech by* KARL MARX



# THE REVOLUTION OF 1848 AND THE PROLETARIAT

A Speech

*by Karl Marx*

ON the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the founding of the "People's Paper," Ernest Jones entertained the compositors and the staff of the paper at a supper, "which was joined by a large number of the leading democrats of England, France, and Germany, now in London." After supper, Ernest Jones, as chairman, proposed the toast "the Proletarians of Europe," . . . "which was responded to by Dr. Marx as follows:

"The so-called revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents, small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. However, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisily and confusedly they proclaimed the emancipation of the proletarian, *i.e.*, the secret of the nineteenth century, and of the revolution of that century. The social revolution, it is true, was no novelty invented in 1848. Steam, electricity, and the self-acting mule, were revolutions of a rather more dangerous character than even Citizens Barbès, Raspail, and Blanqui! But, although the atmosphere in which we live weighs

upon every one with a twenty thousand pound force, do you feel it? No more than European society before 1848 felt the revolutionary atmosphere enveloping it and pressing it from all sides. There is one great fact characteristic of this our nineteenth century, a fact which no party dares deny. On the one hand there have started into life industrial and scientific forces which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman Empire. In our days, everything seems pregnant with its contrary. Machinery, gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labour, we behold starving and overworking it. The newfangled sources of wealth, by some strange, weird spell, are turned into sources of want. The victories of art seem bought by the loss of character. At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure life of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science, on the one hand, and modern misery and dissolution, on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive forces and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted. Some may wail over it; others may wish to get rid

of modern arts, in order to get rid of modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that so signal a progress in industry wants to be completed by as signal a regress in politics. For our part, we do not mistake the shape of the shrewd spirit that continues to mark all these contradictions. We know that if the newfangled forces of society are to work satisfactorily, they need only be mastered by newfangled men—and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself. In the signs that bewilder the middle class, the aristocracy, and the poor prophets of regression, we recognise our old friend Robin Goodfellow, the old mole that can work in the earth so fast, that worthy pioneer—the revolution. The English working men are the firstborn sons of modern industry. Certainly, then, they will not be the last to aid the social revolution produced by that industry—a revolution which means the emancipation of their class all over the world, which is as universal as capital-rule and wage-slavery. I know the heroic struggles the English working class has gone through since the middle of the last century; struggles not less glorious because they are shrouded in obscurity and burked by middle-class historians. To take vengeance for the misdeeds of the ruling class, there existed in the Middle Ages in Germany a secret tribunal called the Vehmgericht. If a red cross was seen marked on a house, people knew that its owner was doomed by the Vehm. All the houses of Europe are now

marked by the mysterious red cross. History is the judge; its executioner, the proletariat."

KARL MARX  
*by* G. PLEHANOFF



# KARL MARX

*by G. Plehanoff*

**T**HE thirty-fifth number of "Iskra" appears on the twentieth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, to whom the first place must therefore be allotted. If it is true that the great international working-class movement was the most remarkable social phenomenon of the nineteenth century, it follows that the founder of the International Workingmen's Association was the most remarkable man of that century. A fighter and a thinker rolled into one, he not only organised the forces of the international army of the workers, but forged for that army (in collaboration with his faithful friend Friedrich Engels) the powerful spiritual weapon with whose aid it has already inflicted many defeats upon its enemy, and will ere long win a complete victory. If socialism has become scientific, we owe this to Karl Marx. Furthermore, if awakened proletarians are now fully aware that the social revolution is an essential preliminary to the final deliverance of the working class, and that this revolution must be brought about by the workers themselves; if they now show themselves to be the implacable and indefatigable enemies of the bourgeois system of society—these things are due to the influence of scientific socialism. From the practical point of view, scientific socialism differs from utopian socialism in this respect, that it lays bare the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist social system, ruthlessly exposing the futility of

the various schemes (sometimes very ingenious, and always extremely benevolent) of social reform brought forward by utopian socialists of one school or another—schemes offered by them as the one and only way of putting an end to class struggles and making peace between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The workers to-day, having adopted the theory of scientific socialism, and remaining true to its spirit, cannot but be revolutionists both in thought and feeling, cannot fail to belong to the most “dangerous” variety of revolutionists.

Marx had the honour of being more detested by the bourgeoisie than any other socialist of the nineteenth century. On the other hand it was his enviable lot to be the teacher most highly esteemed by the proletariat during the same epoch. At the very time when the hatred of the exploiters was concentrated on him, his name was held in the greatest possible honour by the exploited. Now, in the opening years of the twentieth century, the class-conscious workers of all lands look upon him as their teacher, and regard him with pride as one of the most universal and profound geniuses, one of the most noble and self-sacrificing personalities, known to history.

“The saint in whose memory the first of May celebrations have been instituted is called Karl Marx,” wrote one of the Viennese capitalist newspapers in the end of April, 1890. In very truth, the huge May Day demonstrations organised every year by the workers throughout the world, though not designed for the express purpose of paying

honour to Karl Marx, are a gigantic tribute to the memory of the man of genius whose program united into one harmonious whole the daily struggle of the workers for an improvement of the conditions on which they sell their labour power, and the revolutionary struggle against the existing economic order. But the celebration has nothing in common with religious festivals; for the workers of our day honour their "saints" the more in proportion as they have tended to bring nearer the happy day when a freed humanity will establish the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and will leave the heavens at the disposal of the angels and the birds.

Among the malicious fables circulated regarding Marx, must be numbered the absurd statement that the author of *Capital* was hostile to the Russians. But it is quite true that he was an avowed enemy of Russian Tsarism, which has always played the odious part of international policeman, ready to crush any movement for the liberation of the oppressed, wherever it might begin.

Marx watched with intense interest every genuine manifestation of internal development in Russia, and showed in this respect a fundamental knowledge of the matter in hand such as was then possessed by hardly any of his contemporaries in western Europe. Lessner, the German worker, in his "A Worker's Memories of Karl Marx," tells us how delighted Marx was when the Russian translation of *Capital* was published, and how glad he was to know that there were persons in Russia able to understand and to spread the ideas of

scientific socialism. The preface to the Russian translation of the *Communist Manifesto* shows how Marx's sympathy with the Russian revolutionists and his ardent longing for their speedy victory had led him to undertake a notable reconsideration of our revolutionary movement of those days. His relations with Lopatin and Hartman prove how warm a welcome Russian exiles could count on receiving in his hospitable home.<sup>1</sup> His quarrel with Herzen was partly due to a chance disagreement, but in part to Marx's well-grounded distrust of the slavophil socialism whose herald in western European literature our brilliant fellow-countryman unfortunately became under the influence of the overwhelming disappointments of the years 1848-1851. Marx's onslaught on slavophil socialism in the first edition of the first volume of *Capital* deserves praise rather than blame, especially nowadays, when this kind of socialism has been revived in the party program of the so-called social revolutionaries. Finally, as regards the fierce struggle between Marx and Bakunin in the International Workingmen's Association, this had nothing to do with the Russian origin of the anarchist champion, and finds a much simpler explanation in the antithesis between the two men's views.<sup>2</sup> When the publications of the Deliverance

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<sup>1</sup> Lessner writes: "Marx's house was always open to trusty comrades."

<sup>2</sup> Mr. M. Tugan-Baranoffsky, sometime "Marxist" but now a bourgeois economist, in his "Sketches from the recent History of Political Economy" (p. 294), re-

of Labour group began to spread social-democratic ideas among the Russian revolutionists, Engels, in a letter to Vera Zassulich, said it was a pity that this had not happened while Marx was alive, for Marx (said Engels) would have extended a hearty welcome to the literary undertakings of the group. What would the distinguished author of *Capital* have said if he could have lived on to our own day, when so many of the Russian workers have become his followers? How joyful he would have been, could he have heard of such incidents as that which recently happened at Rostov-on-the-Don. In Marx's lifetime, a Russian Marxist was a rarity, and the best that such a Russian could hope from his fellow-countrymen was that they should regard him with good-natured pity. Nowadays, Marx's ideas dominate the Russian revolutionary movement. Those Russian revolutionists who, in conformity with ancient custom, reject Marxism wholly or in part, have really long since ceased to be in the vanguard, and (though most of them continue to shout revolutionary slogans) they have, without

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pears the anarchist gossip about Marx having been a party to the dissemination of a printed slander on Bakunin. This is not the place for the examination of the evidence that is usually adduced in support of the story. I shall deal with the matter fully in "Zarye," where the light-hearted assertion of Mr. Tugan-Baranoffsky will receive its proper valuation. But it is worth noting that our ex-Marxist did not trouble to examine his sources critically. He has simply repeated an accusation, which, being unsupported by any sort of proof, in its turn becomes a "slander."

being aware of it, entered the great camp of those who have been left behind.

Much nonsense has been written and repeated about Marx's polemic methods, about the frequency and violence of his attacks upon his adversaries. Peaceful and rather stupid folk have explained these broils as the outcome of his uncontrollable passion for controversy, which, in its turn, was said to be dependent upon a malicious disposition. As a matter of fact, the almost unceasing literary campaigning in which he was engaged (especially during the earlier days of his socialist activity) was not an expression of his personal character but was due to the importance of defending his ideas. He was one of the first socialists to adopt the outlook of the class struggle, unreservedly, and as a matter of practice as well as of theory; and he was one of the first to draw a sharp distinction between the interests of the proletariat and those of the petty bourgeoisie. It is not surprising, therefore, that he came into frequent and violent clash with the champions of petty bourgeois socialism, who were very numerous in those days, especially among the members of the German intelligentsia. To refrain from arguing with these gentry would have been tantamount to abandoning the thought of consolidating the workers into a party of their own, with its special historical aims, and not tied to the tail of the petty bourgeoisie. "Our task," wrote Marx in the "*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" in April, 1850, "must be unsparing criticism, directed even more against our self-styled friends than against our

declared enemies. Since this is our attitude, we shall gladly renounce the enjoyment of a cheap democratic popularity." The declared enemies were not so very dangerous, for they could not obscure the class-consciousness of the proletarians; whereas the petty-bourgeois socialists, with their programs which professed to be "above class," continued to lead many of the workers astray. A fight with these blind guides was inevitable, and Marx carried it on with his customary fervour and inimitable skill. We Russian social democrats must not fail to profit by his example, we who have to work under conditions very like those which prevailed in Germany prior to the revolution of 1848. We are surrounded by the petty-bourgeois apostles of a specifically "Russian socialism"; and we must never forget that the interest of the workers makes it incumbent upon us, too, to criticise our self-styled friends unsparingly (to criticise the social revolutionaries, for instance)—however disturbing this outspokenness may be to the well-meaning but foolish advocates of peace and harmony among the various groups of revolutionists.

Marx's teaching is the modern "algebra of the revolution." An understanding of it is essential to all who want to carry on an intelligent fight against the existing order of things. So true is this that many of the ideologues of the Russian bourgeoisie actually felt the need, at one time, of becoming Marxists. They found Marx's ideas indispensable in their campaign against the antediluvian theories of the narodniks, theories which sharply conflicted

with the new economic conditions in Russia. The younger bourgeois ideologues, being better acquainted than the others with contemporary sociological literature, realised this very clearly. They raised the Marxist banner, and, fighting under it, acquired considerable renown. But when the narodniks had been utterly routed, and when their antiquated theories lay in ruins, our new-made Marxists decided that Marxism had served their turn, and must now be subjected to stringent criticism. This criticism was undertaken on the pretext that sociological thought must not stand still; but its net upshot was that our sometime allies made a retreat into the positions occupied by the bourgeois social reformers of western Europe. How pitiful were the results of this loudly trumpeted "critical" campaign! How impracticable it was for the Russian social democrats to make common cause with these "critically" transformed people! At first, indeed, an attempt was made to join forces with them against the common enemy; the hope was entertained that an approximation of outlooks might be possible. But maturer consideration showed that this backsliding of our neo-Marxists into the camp of the bourgeois social reformers was not only the most natural thing in the world, but was also a signal confirmation of the truth of Marx's materialist conception of history. In 1895 and 1896 the Marxist current in Russia swept away persons who had nothing in common with the proletariat, and no concern with the struggle for the emancipation of the workers—from whose cause they were fundamentally estranged both by

their social position and by their mental and moral characteristics. At one time it was fashion to talk Marxism in the government offices of St. Petersburg. Had this continued, it would have been necessary to admit that the founders of scientific socialism were mistaken when they declared that people's way of thinking depended upon their way of living, and that the upper classes cannot become the champions of the modern social revolution. But the "criticism of Marx" which began soon after the fight against the reactionary attempts of the narodniks had been fought to a successful issue, showed once more that Marx and Engels were right. The "critics'" way of thinking was determined by their social position. In their revolt against the "fanaticism of dogma," they were really revolting against the revolutionary content of Marxist teaching. The Marx they needed was not the Marx who throughout a life of toil and struggle and want had never ceased to cherish the sacred fire of hostility to capitalist exploitation. Marx as leader of the revolutionary proletariat appeared to them unseemly and "unscientific." The only Marx they had any use for was the Marx who, in the *Communist Manifesto*, had declared his willingness to support the bourgeoisie in so far as this class showed itself revolutionary in the struggle against the absolute monarchy and the petty bourgeoisie. They were only interested in the democratic half of Marx's social-democratic program. Nothing could be more natural than their attitude. But these perfectly natural developments show that there is no warrant for regarding such persons as socialists.

Their place is among the forces of the liberal opposition, to which they have supplied (in the person of Mr. P. Struve, the editor of "Osvobozhdenie") vim, talent, and literary skill.

The future was to show the truth of Marxist theory—and not in Russia alone. Every one knows that for a very long time western scientists ignored Marxism, which was regarded as the outcome of nothing better than revolutionary fanaticism. But in the course of time it became more and more obvious, even to persons who looked through bourgeois spectacles, that this product of revolutionary fanaticism had at least one great advantage—it provided an extraordinarily fruitful method for the study of sociology. With the advance of the scientific investigation of primitive culture, history, law, literature, and art, investigators in ever greater numbers found it necessary to adopt the theory of historical materialism: even though most of them had never heard of Marx and his theories; while those who had heard of Marx were very much afraid of his theories, which were materialistic, and therefore (to bourgeois eyes) immoral and a menace to social tranquility. Nevertheless we find that the materialist explanation is already acquiring a right of domicile in the learned world. Last year (1902) Edwin R. A. Seligman, an American professor of economics, published a book entitled *Economic Interpretation of History*. This is evidence that the priests of official science are becoming aware of the great scientific importance of the Marxist materialist conception of history. Seligman goes so far as to expound the

causes which have hitherto prevented the adoption and understanding of this theory by the bourgeois scientific world. He says plainly and frankly that Marx's socialist deductions have alarmed men of science; but he tells his scientific brethren that these socialist deductions can be jettisoned, for all that need be retained is the historical theory upon which they are based. This ingenious notion (which, let me remark in passing, was clearly though timidly set forth at an earlier date by Struve in his "Critical Remarks"),<sup>1</sup> gives one more proof that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a bourgeois ideologue to reach a proletarian standpoint. Marx was a revolutionist to the fingertips. He was in revolt against God and capital, just as Prometheus was in revolt against Zeus. Like Prometheus, he could say of himself that his task was to educate persons who, knowing human sorrow and human joy, would have no respect for a deity hostile to human beings. But the bourgeois ideologues serve this deity. Their task is to defend his domain with spiritual weapons, while the police back them up with truncheons, and the soldiery with rifles and bayonets. The business of bourgeois scientists is to use those theories only which are not dangerous to God or to capital. In France and in other lands where French is spoken, men of science are much franker about this than they are elsewhere. For example, the famous writer Laveleye says that econo-

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<sup>1</sup> A Russian work published at St. Petersburg in 1894. The full title is "Critical Remarks on the Problem of the Economic Development of Russia."

mic science must be thoroughly renovated, for it has ceased to fulfil its purpose since the days when the frivolous Bastiat compromised the defence of the established order. Quite recently, A. Béchard, in a book dealing with the French school of political economy,<sup>1</sup> appraised the various economic doctrines by an interesting standard. He asked, "Which of them will supply the most efficient weapons for combating socialism?" It is obvious, therefore, that bourgeois ideologues, when adopting Marxist notions, will do so "in a critical spirit." The severity with which they "criticise" Marx gives the measure of the irreconcilability of the views of that dauntless and indefatigable revolutionist with the interests of the ruling class. It is likewise plain enough that a consistent bourgeois thinker will more readily accept Marx's philosophy of history than Marx's economic theory; for historical materialism is much less likely to do any harm than the doctrine of surplus value. This latter, to which one of the most vigorous among the bourgeois critics of Marx has given the expressive name of *the theory of exploitation*, is in bourgeois circles always described as "unfounded." The cultural bourgeois of our day prefer the "subjective" economic theory, according to which economic phenomena have no connection whatever with the conditions of production—in which the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie takes its source. To bourgeois economists, any allusion to such a

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<sup>1</sup> *Les Ecoles économiques au XX<sup>me</sup> siècle*, 3 vols., Paris, 1902-1912.

matter seems particularly undesirable at the present time, when the class-consciousness of the workers is advancing with giant strides.

The economic, historical, and philosophical ideas of Marx are not acceptable in all their formidable completeness, and with their full revolutionary content, except by the ideologues of the proletariat, whose class interest is linked, not with the preservation but with the overthrow of the capitalist system—in a word, with the social revolution.



KARL MARX AND  
METAPHOR  
*by* FRANZ MEHRING



# KARL MARX AND METAPHOR

by Franz Mehring

**I**N a note to the preface to the second edition of *Capital*, Marx writes: "The mealy-mouthed babblers of German vulgar economy fall foul of the style of my book. No one can judge the literary shortcomings of *Capital* more harshly than I do myself. But for the benefit of these gentry and their public, I shall seize the opportunity of quoting one English and one Russian press notice." The Russian critic tells us that this author "in no way resembles. . . the majority of German scholars, . . . who write their books in a language so dry and obscure that the heads of ordinary mortals are cracked by it."

Karl Marx's style certainly deserves careful study. Such an investigation would contribute notably to the understanding of the man and his work. But the task would be difficult, and it is not one of those immediately incumbent on his heirs. The last thing he would have wished would be that we should, for such a reason, neglect the practical diffusion of his ideas. Hitherto, therefore, there have been no more than scattered observations regarding his choice of words; and that is all that can be attempted here, when, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death, we venture to criticise the objection which bourgeois scientists are so fond of bringing against his style and his method of exposition.

From Herr Wilhelm Roscher down to the youngest university instructor, they all complain of his passion for metaphor. Marx's fondness for the use of figurative language is indisputable: but what these adversaries mean to convey by the accusation is that though his intelligence may have been brilliant, it was certainly not acute; that, entangled in "obscure mysticism," he could only elucidate even the doctrine of historical materialism quite vaguely, and with the use of a "patchwork of imagery."

Against these tirades, it will suffice to quote the dictum of Aristotle, that the mark of genius was the ability to *homoiou theorein*—to recognise likeness. No doubt it may be contended that this characteristic of the genius, is likewise a characteristic of the fool. Between the energy and freshness of Luther's phraseology in the sixteenth century, and the language of Goethe in the eighteenth century, there came, in the seventeenth century, the extravagances of cuphuism and Marinism, of which Albrecht von Haller remarked that it was "bombast swimming on metaphors as if on inflated bladders." In reality, however, this does not refute but confirms Aristotle's remark. The Marinists did not, in truth, recognise likeness, and therefore they forcibly coupled dissimilars. To raise the objection seriously shows merely that the objector is as blind as a mole, and cannot distinguish the blooming roses on a girl's face from the rouge with which an old maid tries to give a lively tint to her withered cheeks.

Among German classical writers, Lessing did more than any other to expound the philosophy of meta-

phor as a form of literary presentation. To himself, as a master of metaphor, applies what he says of himself (in a brilliant metaphor) as a poet—that he was not born a poet, but became one. In his earlier writings, we see little inclination to use figurative language; and when figures are used, their use is sometimes unhappy. Even in *Laocoon* he writes: "A mere metaphor proves nothing and justifies nothing." A few lines lower down on the same page he remarks: "But here the sense is nothing, and the imagery is everything; and imagery without sense makes of the liveliest poet a tedious chatterer." In a subsequent metaphor, Lessing compensates for the one-sidedness of these remarks by admitting that, in a complete presentation, thought and imagery belong to one another like husband and wife.

Lessing threw light on the problem from both sides. He did so from one side when he wrote: "What is it that makes an author bombastic, if not the unduly frequent and too far-fetched use of overbold metaphors." But he did so from the other side when he wrote: "When I work upon my reader's imagination, I am also trying to work upon his understanding. I regard it, not merely as useful, but also as essential, to clothe reasons in imagery, and to indicate by allusions all the subordinate ideas which either the reasons or the metaphors awaken. One who neither knows nor understands this, must straightway renounce the desire to become an author, for those who have become good authors have only done so by advancing along that road." Thus wrote Lessing in his *Anti-Goeze*, whose over-

whelming profusion of brilliant metaphors elicited from the unfortunate Hamburg pastor reproaches no less heart-breaking than those called forth by Marx's metaphors from Roscher and his associates.

In contradistinction to Lessing, Goethe was born, and did not become, a "metaphor-maker" (he used the term of himself). Well known is the verse in which he says that he must not be forbidden to use metaphors, since he cannot explain himself without them; while to Frau von Stein he wrote: "In metaphors I run a race against Sancho Panza and his proverbs." This metaphor is characteristic of Goethe's metaphors: proverbs are metaphors in which the folk thinks and poetises, fabulises; and Luther was fond of borrowing epithets from the folk vernacular that thereby he might make his words both pithy and picturesque. Furthermore, Hegel, the chief of our classical philosophy, was (like Goethe, the chief of our classical literature) a great "metaphor-maker." In this respect his writing marks a notable advance on that of Kant, who is mainly responsible for the dry-as-dust scholasticism of the German professorial literary style—and the worst count in the indictment is that Kant could write both elegantly and clearly when he chose. It is a gross exaggeration to say that Hegel's style is typical of cumbrous, obscure, thought-spinning. As Rosenkranz, his biographer, aptly remarks, Hegel's writing is saturated with all the elements of the German tongue, from mediæval mysticism to the phraseology of the Enlightenment; and it is often boldly and effectively metaphorical.

In this matter, as in others, Marx was the ablest

of Hegel's disciples. He, too, was a "metaphor-maker" from birth upwards, and in his thesis for his doctoral degree, imagery wells up as though from an inexhaustible spring. The whole essay—a discussion of the differences between the natural philosophy of Democritus and that of Epicurus—was one prolonged metaphor, showing how the Epicurean natural philosophy celebrates its greatest triumph in the doctrine of the heavenly bodies, and all the same wholly collapses thereafter. To Marx's youthful days likewise belongs the image in which he declares that "Religion is for us the illusory sun, which, to man, seems to circle around him, until he realises that he himself is the centre of his own turning." So is the image: "One and the same mind builds philosophical systems in the brains of philosophers, and railways with the hands of the operatives." Especially free in the use of metaphor is *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. In the preface to this work he may be said to have given a rather sketchy exposition of the historical-materialist method, in a "patchwork of imagery"; and again in the first chapter of *Capital*, where he summarises the contents of the *Critique*.

In this chapter it seems to me that Marx achieves his highest level of stylistic excellence (looking at the matter solely from the outlook of literary craftsmanship). Here we can get the clearest, the most precise grasp of the nature of his imagery; and here we find the explanation of the hostility with which bourgeois professors have always regarded Marx's metaphors. Let me quote from Section 4, on "The

Fetishism of Commodities, and the Secret thereof"; "A commodity appears, at first sight, a trivial thing, and one easily understood. But analysis shows that it is a very queer thing indeed, full of metaphysical subtleties and theological whimsies. So far as it is a use value, there is nothing mysterious about it . . . . When we make wood into a table, the form of the wood is altered; none the less, the table is still wood, an ordinary thing appreciable by our senses. But when it presents itself to us as a commodity, it has become transformed into something which, though sensual, is also beyond the scope of the senses. It does not merely stand with its legs upon the ground; but, confronting all other commodities, it stands upon its head, and within its wooden head it evolves fantastical notions which are far more wonderful than if it began to dance of its own volition." Is not that a shrewd dig at all the wooden-heads who produce metaphysical speculations and theological whimsies in such vast quantities, but are not competent to manufacture as much substance appreciable by the senses as would represent an ordinary, everyday table?

In Marx's writings, a metaphor is never introduced for its own sake, as a mere ornament. Nor is it only, as with Lessing, an aid to fuller and easier understanding, or an attempt to influence the imagination as well as the reason. It is a primal contemplation of the two like objects at one and the same time; it is the realisation of the ideal of that perfect mode of presentation wherein, as Lessing phrased it, thought and imagery belong to one another like

husband and wife. Metaphor, as Marx uses it, is the sensorily appreciable mother of the thought, which receives from that mother the breath of life.

Our bourgeois professors fail to understand this, and we should be wrong to suppose that their lack of understanding is due to ill-will on their part. They cannot understand, and indeed they ought not to understand. What would happen to capitalist society if the racy metaphors of revolutionary dialectic were to come to life in the professorial chairs of its universities? That is why these good patriots talk so glibly of "obscure mysticism" and of a "patchwork of imagery." Marx's use of metaphor is, to a supreme degree, one of the secrets of genius, and must for ever remain an enigma to such critics as these.

They contrapose to it their "conceptual analysis," the unending shadow-dance of metaphysical notions, which monotonously glides along the walls of the capitalist prison-house; and they are full of pride that no "obscure mysticism," no "patchwork of imagery," is requisite to prove that the mutual embraces of these shadows can never procreate a living child. In the world of nonentity, metaphor too has lost its rights!



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STAGNATION AND PROGRESS OF  
MARXISM : *by* ROSA LUXEMBURG



# STAGNATION AND PROGRESS OF MARXISM

by Rosa Luxemburg

**I**N his shallow but at times interesting causerie entitled *Die soziale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien* (The Socialist Movement in France and Belgium), Karl Grün remarks, aptly enough, that Fourier's and Saint-Simon's theories had very different effects upon their respective adherents. Saint-Simon was the spiritual ancestor of a whole generation of brilliant investigators and writers in various fields of intellectual activity; but Fourier's followers were, with few exceptions, persons who blindly parroted their master's words, and were incapable of making any advance upon his teaching. Grün's explanation of this difference is that Fourier presented the world with a finished system, elaborated in all its details; whereas Saint-Simon merely tossed his disciples a loose bundle of great thoughts. Although it seems to me that Grün pays too little attention to the inner, the essential, difference between the theories of these two classical authorities in the domain of utopian socialism, I feel that on the whole his observation is sound. Beyond question, a system of ideas which is merely sketched in broad outline proves far more stimulating than a finished and symmetrical structure which leaves nothing to be added and offers no scope for the independent efforts of an active mind.

Does this account for the stagnation in Marxist

doctrine which has been noticeable for a good many years? The actual fact is that—apart from one or two independent contributions which mark a certain theoretical advance—since the publication of the last volume of *Capital* and of the last of Engels' writings there have appeared nothing more than a few excellent popularisations and expositions of Marxist theory. The substance of that theory remains just where the two founders of scientific socialism left it.

Is this because the Marxist system has imposed too rigid a framework upon the independent activities of the mind? It is undeniable that Marx has had a somewhat restrictive influence upon the free development of theory in the case of many of his pupils. Both Marx and Engels found it necessary to disclaim responsibility for the utterances of many who chose to call themselves Marxists! The scrupulous endeavour to keep "within the bounds of Marxism" may at times have been just as disastrous to the integrity of the thought process as has been the other extreme—the complete repudiation of the Marxist outlook, and the determination to manifest "independence of thought" at all hazards.

Still, it is only where economic matters are concerned that we are entitled to speak of a more or less completely elaborated body of doctrines bequeathed us by Marx. The most valuable of all his teachings, the materialist-dialectical conception of history, presents itself to us as nothing more than a method of investigation, as a few inspired leading thoughts, which offer us glimpses into an entirely

new world, which open to us endless perspectives of independent activity, which wing our spirits for bold flights into unexplored regions.

Nevertheless, even in this domain, with few exceptions the Marxist heritage lies fallow. The splendid new weapon rusts unused; and the theory of historical materialism remains as unelaborated and sketchy as it was when first formulated by its creator.

It cannot be said, then, that the rigidity and completeness of the Marxist edifice are the explanation of the failure of Marx's successors to go on with the building.

We are often told that our movement lacks the persons of talent who might be capable of further elaborating Marx's theories. Such a lack is, indeed, of long standing; but the lack itself demands an explanation, and cannot be put forward to answer the primary question. We must remember that each epoch forms its own human material; that if in any period there is a genuine need for theoretical exponents, the period will create the forces requisite for the satisfaction of that need.

But is there a genuine need, an effective demand, for a further development of Marxist theory?

In an article upon the controversy between the Marxist and the Jevonsian schools in England, Bernard Shaw, the talented exponent of Fabian semi-socialism, derides Hyndman for having said that the first volume of *Capital* had given him a complete understanding of Marx, and that there were no gaps in Marxist theory—although Friedrich

Engels, in the preface to the second volume of *Capital*, subsequently declared that the first volume with its theory of value, had left unsolved a fundamental economic problem, whose solution would not be furnished until the third volume was published. Shaw certainly succeeded here in making Hyndman's position seem a trifle ridiculous, though Hyndman might well derive consolation from the fact that practically the whole socialist world was in the same boat!

The third volume of *Capital*, with its solution of the problem of the rate of profit (the basic problem of Marxist economics), did not appear till 1894. But in Germany, as in all other lands, agitation had been carried on with the aid of the unfinished material contained in the first volume; the Marxist doctrine had been popularised and had found acceptance upon the basis of this first volume alone; the success of the incomplete Marxist theory had been phenomenal; and no one had been aware that there was any gap in the teaching. Furthermore, when the third volume finally saw the light, whilst to begin with it attracted some attention in the restricted circles of the experts, and aroused here a certain amount of comment—as far as the socialist movement as a whole was concerned, the new volume made practically no impression in the wide regions where the ideas expounded in the original book had become dominant. The theoretical conclusions of Vol. III. have not hitherto evoked any attempt at popularisation, nor have they secured wide diffusion. On the contrary, even among the social democrats

we sometimes hear, nowadays, re-echoes of the "disappointment" with the third volume of *Capital* which is so frequently voiced by bourgeois economists—and thus these social democrats merely show how fully they had accepted the "incomplete" exposition of the theory of value presented in the first volume.

How can we account for so remarkable a phenomenon?

Shaw, who (to quote his own expression) is fond of "sniggering" at others, may have good reason here, for making fun of the whole socialist movement, in so far as it is grounded upon Marx! But if he were to do this, he would be "sniggering" at a very serious manifestation of our social life. The strange fate of the second and third volumes of *Capital* is conclusive evidence as to the general destiny of theoretical research in our movement.

From the scientific standpoint, the third volume of *Capital* must, no doubt, be primarily regarded as the completion of Marx's critique of capitalism. Without this third volume, we cannot understand, either the actually dominant law of the rate of profit; or the splitting up of surplus value into profit, interest, and rent; or the working of the law of value within the field of competition. But, and this is the main point, all these problems, however important from the outlook of pure theory, are comparatively unimportant from the practical outlook of the class war. As far as the class war is concerned, the fundamental theoretical problem is the origin of surplus value, that is, the scientific explanation

of exploitation; together with the elucidation of the tendency towards the socialisation of the process of production, that is, the scientific explanation of the objective groundwork of the socialist revolution.

Both these problems are solved in the first volume of *Capital*, which deduces the "expropriation of the expropriators" as the inevitable and ultimate result of the production of surplus value and of the progressive concentration of capital. Therewith, as far as theory is concerned, the essential need of the labour movement is satisfied. The workers, being actively engaged in the class war, have no direct interest in the question how surplus value is distributed among the respective groups of exploiters; or in the question how, in the course of this distribution, competition brings about rearrangements of production.

That is why, for socialists in general, the third volume of *Capital* remains an unread book.

But, in our movement, what applies to Marx's economic doctrines applies to theoretical research in general. It is pure illusion to suppose that the working class, in its upward striving, can of its own accord become immeasurably creative in the theoretical domain. True that, as Engels said, the working class alone has to-day preserved an understanding of and interest in theory. The workers' craving for knowledge is one of the most noteworthy cultural manifestations of our day. Morally, too, the working-class struggle denotes the cultural renovation of society. But active participation of the wor-

kers in the march of science is subject to the fulfilment of very definite social conditions.

In every class society, intellectual culture (science and art) is created by the ruling class; and the aim of this culture is, in part to ensure the direct satisfaction of the needs of the social process, and in part to satisfy the mental needs of the members of the governing class.

In the history of earlier class struggles, aspiring classes (like the Third Estate in recent days) could anticipate political dominion by establishing an intellectual dominance, inasmuch as, while they were still subjugated classes, they could set up a new science and a new art against obsolete culture of the decadent period.

The proletariat is in a very different position. As a non-possessing class, it cannot in the course of its struggle upwards spontaneously create a mental culture of its own while it remains in the framework of bourgeois society. Within that society, and so long as its economic foundations persist, there can be no other culture than a bourgeois culture. Although certain "socialist" professors may acclaim the wearing of neckties, the use of visiting cards, and the riding of bicycles by proletarians as notable instances of participation in cultural progress, the working class as such remains outside contemporary culture. Notwithstanding the fact that the workers create with their own hands the whole social substratum of this culture, they are only admitted to its enjoyment in so far as such admission is requisite to the satisfactory performance of their functions in

the economic and social process of capitalist society.

The working class will not be in a position to create a science and an art of its own until it has been fully emancipated from its present class position.

The utmost it can do to-day is to safeguard bourgeois culture from the vandalism of the bourgeois reaction, and create the social conditions requisite for a free cultural development. Even along these lines, the workers, within the extant form of society, can only advance in so far as they can create for themselves the intellectual weapons needed in their struggle for liberation.

But this reservation imposes upon the working class (that is to say, upon the workers' intellectual leaders) very narrow limits in the field of intellectual activity. The domain of their creative energy is confined to one specific department of science, namely social science. For, inasmuch as "thanks to the peculiar connexion of the idea of the Fourth Estate with our historical epoch," enlightenment concerning the laws of social development has become essential to the workers in the class struggle, this connexion has borne good fruit in social science, and the monument of the proletarian culture of our day is—Marxist doctrine.

But Marx's creation, which as a scientific achievement is a titanic whole, transcends the plain demands of the proletarian class struggle for whose purposes it was created. Both in his detailed and comprehensive analysis of capitalist economy, and in his method of historical research with its in-

measurable field of application, Marx has offered much more than was directly essential for the practical conduct of the class war.

Only in proportion as our movement progresses, and demands the solution of new practical problems, do we dip once more into the treasury of Marx's thought, in order to extract therefrom and to utilise new fragments of his doctrine. But since our movement, like all the campaigns of practical life, inclines to go on working in old ruts of thought, and to cling to principles after they have ceased to be valid, the theoretical utilisation of the Marxist system proceeds very slowly.

If, then, to-day we detect a stagnation in our movement as far as these theoretical matters are concerned, this is not because the Marxist theory upon which we are nourished is incapable of development or has become out-of-date. On the contrary, it is because we have not yet learned how to make an adequate use of the most important mental weapons which we had taken out of the Marxist arsenal on account of our urgent need for them in the earlier stages of our struggle. It is not true that, as far as the practical struggle is concerned, Marx is out-of-date, that we have superseded Marx. On the contrary, Marx, in his scientific creation, has outstripped us as a party of practical fighters. It is not true that Marx no longer suffices for our needs. On the contrary, our needs are not yet adequate for the utilisation of Marx's ideas.

Thus do the social conditions of proletarian existence in contemporary society, conditions first cluci-

dated by Marxist theory, take vengeance by the fate they impose upon Marxist theory itself. Though that theory is an incomparable instrument of intellectual culture, it remains unused because, while it is inapplicable to bourgeois class culture, it greatly transcends the needs of the working class in the matter of weapons for the daily struggle. Not until the working class has been liberated from its present conditions of existence will the Marxist method of research be socialised in conjunction with other means of production, so that it can be fully utilised for the benefit of humanity-at-large, and so that it can be developed to the full measure of its functional capacity.

MARXISM  
*by* NIKOLAI LENIN



# MARXISM

by Nikolai Lenin

MARX continued and brilliantly rounded off the three main currents of nineteenth-century thought, the currents that flowed in the three most advanced countries in the world: classical German philosophy; classical British political economy; and French socialism. Even his adversaries admit that his views form a consistent whole, and it will be well, before expounding the main content of Marxism, to make a brief study of his general philosophical outlook.

## PHILOSOPHIC MATERIALISM

From 1844 and 1845, when his opinions were definitely formed, Marx was a materialist, and in especial a follower of Feuerbach, although as time went on he came to see that that thinker had his weak side—that Feuerbach's materialism was not consistently applied, was not universal in its scope. For Marx, Feuerbach's world-historical and "epoch-making" significance depended upon his having decisively broken away from the idealism of Hegel and upon his proclamation of materialism, which already "in the eighteenth century (especially in France) had become a struggle against every form of metaphysics" (*Holy Family* and *Posthumous Papers*). "For Hegel," wrote Marx in the preface to the second edition of the first volume of *Capital*, "the thought process, which he even transforms—under the name of the 'idea'—into an independent subject, is the demiurge [the creator, the maker] of

the real . . . But for me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing other than the material, which has been transplanted into the human head and transformed there." In full conformity with Marx's materialist philosophy, and expounding it, Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring* (*Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft*): "The unity of the world consists, not in its existence, . . . but in its materiality, as is proved . . . by the course of the long and laborious development of philosophy and natural science. . . . Motion is the form of existence of matter. Never and nowhere has there been or can there be matter without motion, or motion without matter. . . . If we enquire . . . what thought and consciousness are, whence they come, we find that they are products of the human brain, and that man himself is a product of nature, developing in a known natural environment and together with it. Obviously, therefore, the products of the human brain are, in the last analysis, products of nature; they do not conflict, but harmonise, with the continuity of nature." Again: "Hegel was an idealist: that is to say, for him the thoughts in our heads were not the more or less abstract reflexions of real things and processes; but, on the contrary, things and processes were, for Hegel, the reflexions of ideas existing somewhere before the creation of the world." In his *Ludwig Feuerbach*, in which Engels expounds his own and Marx's views upon Feuerbach's philosophy, and which Engels sent to the press after re-reading the manuscript work on Hegel, Feuerbach, and the Materialist Conception of His-

tory penned by himself and Marx in 1845 and 1846, Engels writes: "The basic question for every philosophy, and especially for a new philosophy, is the question of the relationship between thought and existence . . . between spirit and nature; . . . the question which is prior to the other; whether spirit precedes nature, or nature precedes spirit. Philosophers are divided into two great camps, according to the way in which they have answered this question. Those who have declared that spirit exists before nature, and who have in the last resort assumed that the world was created, have belonged to the idealist camp. But those who have regarded nature as primary and thought as secondary, have belonged to one of the various schools of materialists." It is especially important that we should note Marx's opinion concerning freedom and necessity: "Necessity is blind until it becomes conscious. Freedom is the consciousness of necessity" (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*)—an acknowledgment of the objective reign of law in nature, and of the dialectical transformation of necessity into freedom (on all fours with the transformation of the unknown but knowable "thing-in-itself" into the "thing-for-us," into the "essence of things," into the "phenomenon"). The fundamental inadequacy of the earlier materialism of Marx and Engels (including Feuerbach's materialism, and, a fortiori, the "vulgar" materialism of Buchner and Vogt and Moleschott) is due to the following points: (1) it was "predominantly mechanical," not giving due weight to the recent developments of chemistry and bio-

logy; (2) it was non-historical, non-dialectical (was metaphysical, in the sense of being anti-dialectical), and failed to adopt consistently an all-round developmental outlook; (3) it regarded "human nature" abstractly, and not as a "synthesis" (concretely and historically determined) "of all social relationships"—and thus only "explained" the world instead of trying to change it, overlooking the significance of practical revolutionary activity.

#### DIALECTIC

Marx and Engels regarded the Hegelian dialectic as rich in content, as a many-sided and profound contribution to thought, to the theory of development; and they looked on it as the most valuable product of the classical German philosophy. All other formulations of the principle of development, of the theory of evolution, seemed to them one-sided, poor in content, distorting and mutilating the actual course of the development of nature and society (sometimes by making jumps, or by needlessly introducing cataclysms and revolutions). "Marx and I," writes Engels, "were almost the only persons who made it their business to save a reasonable dialectic out of the ruins of idealism, Hegelian idealism not excepted, and to transform it into the materialist conception of nature. . . . Nature is a confirmation of dialectic; and modern science provides this confirmation in the form of an extraordinarily vast and daily increasing mass of material which bears witness to the fact that, in the last analysis, things subsist in nature dialectically and not metaphysically."

Again, Engels writes: "The basic thought that the world does not consist of complete and fully fashioned objects, but is an assemblage of processes, in which the objects, seemingly unchangeable, equally with the copies of them made inside the head (notions), are undergoing incessant changes, arising here and disappearing there—this basic thought has since the time of Hegel become so widely diffused throughout the general consciousness, that hardly any one will now venture to dispute it in its general sense. But it is one thing to accept this in words, quite another thing to put it in practice on every possible occasion and in every field of investigation." Once more: "For the dialectic philosophy, nothing is ever established for all time, absolute or sacred. On everything it sees the stamp of an inevitable decline, to which all things are subject save the unceasing process of formation and destruction, of unending progression from the lower to the higher. That philosophy itself is only a simple reflexion of the process, a reflexion within the thinking brain." Thus dialectic, according to Marx, is "the science of the general laws of motion both in the external world and in the human brain."

Marx adopted and developed this revolutionary side of Hegel's philosophy. Dialectic materialism "does not need a philosophy based upon the other sciences." Of former philosophies there remain "the science of thought and its laws, formal logic, and dialectic." But dialectic, as the term is used by Marx (in conformity with Hegel's usage), includes what is now called the theory of cognition, or epis-

temology, or gnoseology, or the science of understanding, which must contemplate its subject matter in the same way—historically, studying and generalising the origin and development of cognition, the change from unconsciousness to consciousness.

#### MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Becoming aware of the inconsistency, the incompleteness, and the one-sidedness of the older materialism, Marx realised that it was necessary "to harmonise the science of society with the material foundation, and to reconstruct it in accordance with this foundation." If, speaking generally, materialism explains consciousness as the outcome of existence, and not conversely; in the particular application of this doctrine to the *social* life of mankind, materialism must explain *social* consciousness as the outcome of social existence. "Technology," writes Marx in the first volume of *Capital*, "discloses the active relationship between man and nature, the immediate process of production of his life; but in addition it discloses his social conditions of life, and the mental products that issue from these." In the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx gives an integral formulation of the fundamental contentions of materialism, as applied to human society and its history. Here are his words: "In the social production which human beings carry on, they enter into definite relationships which are determined, that is to say, independent of their will—productive relationships which correspond to a definite evolutionary phase of the material forces of production. The totality of these

productive relationships forms the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political superstructure develops and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political, and intellectual processes of life. *It is not the consciousness of human beings that determines their existence, but, conversely, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness.* At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing productive relationships, or (to express the matter in legal terminology) with the property relationships within which they have hitherto moved. These relationships, which have previously been developmental forms of the productive forces, now become metamorphosed into fetters upon production. A period of social revolutions then begins. Concomitantly with the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. When we contemplate such transformations we must always distinguish: on the one hand, between the material changes in the economic conditions of production, changes which can be watched and recorded with all the precision proper to natural science; and, on the other, the legal, political, religious, artistic, or philosophical forms (in a word, the ideological forms) in which human beings become aware of this conflict and fight it to an issue. Just as little as we form an opinion of an individual in accordance with what he

thinks of himself, just so little can we appraise a revolutionary epoch in accordance with its own consciousness of itself; for we have to explain this consciousness as the outcome of the contradictions of material life, of the extant conflict between social productive forces and productive relationships. No type of social structure ever perishes, until there have been developed all the productive forces for which it has room; and new and higher forces of production never appear upon the scene, until the material conditions of existence requisite for their development have matured within the womb of the old society. That is why mankind never sets itself any tasks which it is not able to perform; for when we look closely into the matter, we shall always find that the demand for the new enterprise only arises when the material conditions of existence are ripe for its successful performance—or at any rate have begun to ripen. In broad outline we can describe the Asiatic, the classical, the feudal, and the modern (capitalist) forms of production, as progressive epochs in the economic development of society. Bourgeois relationships of production are the last of the antagonistic forms of the social process of production."

The materialist conception of history, or (to put the matter more precisely) the extension of materialism to the domain of social phenomena, filled the two chief gaps in earlier historical theories. For, in the first place, even the best of such theories attended only to the ideological motives of the historical activity of human beings; they made no attempt to discover the origin of these ideological

motives, or to grasp the objective conformity to law in the development of the system of social relationships, or to discern the roots of these social relationships in the degree of development of material production. In the second place, the earlier historical theories ignored the working masses of the population, and historical materialism first made it possible to study with scientific accuracy the social conditions of the life of the masses and to trace the changes in these conditions. In the best event, pre-Marxist "sociology" and historiography gave an accumulation of dry facts, collected in fragments; and supplied a description of isolated aspects of the historical process. Marx pointed out the way to a comprehensive, an all-embracing study of the process of the genesis, the development, and the decay of social and economic structures; showing how all opposing tendencies could be combined, and could be brought into relationship with precise determining conditions in the mode of life and the method of production among the various classes of society; discarding subjectivism and freewill in the choice of distinct "leading" ideas or in the explanation of these; showing how all the ideas and all the tendencies, without exception, had their roots in the condition of the various forces of production. How people make their own history; what determines their motives, or at any rate the motives of people in the mass; what gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and endeavours; what is the sum total of all these clashes among human societies; what are the objective conditions of production (the

material conditions of life) that form the basis of people's historical activity; what is the law of the development of these conditions—to all these matters Marx directed attention, pointing out the way to a scientific study of history as a unified and law-abiding process despite its apparent multiplicity and contradictoriness.

That in every society the wishes of some of the members conflict with the wishes of others; that social life is full of clashes; that history discloses to us a struggle among peoples and societies, and also within each nation and each society, manifesting in addition an alternation between periods of peace and war, revolution and reaction, of acceleration or retardation of progress or regression—these facts are generally known. Marx provides a clue which enables us to discover the reign of law in this seeming labyrinth, this apparent chaos. His clue is the theory of the class struggle. Nothing but the study of the totality of the impulses of all the members of a given society, or group of societies, can lead to the scientific determination of the result of these impulses. Now, the conflict of impulses depends upon differences in the conditions of life of the classes into which society is divided.

"The history of all human society, past and present, has been the history of class struggles," wrote Marx in 1848, in the *Communist Manifesto*. (In a note to later editions Engels pointed out that primitive communism formed an exception to this generalisation). "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild-burgess and journey-

man—in a word, oppressor and oppressed—stood in sharp opposition each to the other. They carried on perpetual warfare, sometimes masked, sometimes open and acknowledged; a warfare that invariably ended, either in a revolutionary change in the whole structure of society, or else in the common ruin of the contending classes. . . . Modern bourgeois society, rising out of the ruins of feudal society, did not make an end of class antagonisms. It merely set up new classes in place of the old; new conditions of oppression; new embodiments of struggle. Our own age, the bourgeois age, is distinguished by this—that it has simplified class antagonisms. More and more, society is splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly contraposed classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. . . .

"Among all the classes that confront the bourgeoisie to-day, the proletariat alone is really revolutionary. Other classes decay and perish with the rise of large-scale industry, but the proletariat is the most characteristic product of that industry. The lower middle class—small manufacturers, small traders, handicraftsmen, peasant proprietors—one and all fight the bourgeoisie in the hope of safeguarding their existence as sections of the middle class. They are, therefore, not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they are trying to make the wheels of history turn backwards. If they ever become revolutionary, it is only because they are afraid of slipping down into the ranks of the proletariat; they are not defending their present interests, but their future interests; they are forsaking

their own standpoint, in order to adopt that of the proletariat."

Since the time of the great French revolution, the class struggle as the essential motive force of history has been more than usually manifest in all the countries of Europe. During the Restoration period in France, there were already several historians (Thierry, Guizot, and Thiers, for instance) who could not but recognise in the class struggle the key to the understanding of all the history of France. In the modern age—the epoch of the complete victory of the bourgeoisie, of representative institutions, extended (where not universal) suffrage, cheap and widely circulated daily newspapers, powerful and ever-expanding organisations of workers and employers, etc.—the class struggle, though sometimes in a peaceful and constitutional form, has shown itself still more obviously to be the mainspring of events. In a number of historical works, Marx, on the basis of the materialist conception of history, gave brilliant and profound examples of historical studies containing an analysis of the position of each separate class, and sometimes of that of various groups and strata within a class, showing plainly why and how "every class struggle is a political struggle." He disclosed the structure of the network of social phenomena, showing the transitional stages between one class and another, between the past and the future, and drew up the balance sheet of the resulting historical evolution.

Marx's *economic* doctrines are a more profound,

more many-sided, and more detailed confirmation and application of the foregoing theory.

#### MARX'S ECONOMIC DOCTRINES

"It is the ultimate aim of this work to reveal the economic law of motion of modern society" (that is to say, capitalist society), writes Marx in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*. The study of the productive relationships in a given, historically determinate society, in their genesis, their development, and their decay—such was the essential content of Marx's economic teaching. In capitalist society the dominant feature is the production of *commodities*, and Marx's analysis therefore begins with an analysis of the commodity.

A commodity is, first and foremost, something that satisfies a human need; and, secondly, it is something that is exchanged for something else. The utility of a thing gives it *use value*. Exchange value (or simply, value) presents itself first of all as the proportion, the ratio, in which a certain number of use values of one kind are exchanged for a certain number of use values of another kind. Daily experience shows us that by millions upon millions of such exchanges, all and sundry use values, in themselves very different and not comparable one with another, are balanced off against one another. Now, what is the common quality in these various things—the common element which enables them to be weighed one against another in a definite system of social relationships? That which is common to them is that they are one and all *products of labour*. In exchanging products, people balance off

against one another very different kinds of labour. The production of commodities is a system of social relationships in which different producers produce various products (the social division of labour), and in which all these products are balanced off against one another in exchange. Consequently, the element common to all the commodities is not concrete labour in a definite branch of production, not labour of one particular kind, but *abstract* human labour—human labour in general. All the labour power of a given society, representing in its totality the values of all the commodities, is one and the same human labour power. Millions upon millions of the facts of exchange prove this. Consequently, each particular commodity represents only a known part of socially necessary labour time. The amount of the value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour, or by the labour time that is socially requisite for the production of the given commodity, of the given use value.

“When exchanging their different products one for another, people are exchanging their different kinds of labour. They do not know that they are doing this, but they do it.” As one of the earlier economists said, value is a relationship between two persons; to round off his statement he should have added that it is a relationship hidden beneath a wrapping of material things. We can only understand what value is, when we consider it from the outlook of a system of social productive relationships in one particular type of society; furthermore, a system of social relationships which present them-

selves in a massed form, so that the incidents of exchange are repeated millions upon millions of times. "As values, commodities are only definite quantities of congealed labour time." Having made a detailed analysis of the twofold character of the labour incorporated in commodities, Marx goes on to analyse the *form of value and of money*. His main task, then, is to study the *origin* of the money form of value, to study the *historical process* of the development of exchange, beginning with isolated and casual acts of exchange ("simple, isolated, or casual value form," in which a given quantity of one commodity is exchanged for a given quantity of another), and passing on to the universal form of value, in which a number of different commodities are exchanged for one and the same particular commodity—gold becoming the universal equivalent. Being the ultimate product of the development of exchange and of commodity production, money masks the social character of individual labour, hides the social tie between the various producers who come together in the market. Marx analyses the functions of money; and it is essential to note that here (as generally in the opening chapters of *Capital*) what appears to be an abstract and at times purely deductive mode of exposition is in reality the production of a gigantic collection of facts concerning the history of the evolution of exchange and commodity production: "Money presupposes a definite development of commodity exchange. The various forms of money (simple commodity equivalent or means of circulation, or in-

strument of payment, treasure, and international money) indicate, in spite of the different extent to which this or that function is put into application according to the comparative predominance of one or other of them, very different grades of the social process of production" (*Capital*, Vol. I.).

At a particular stage in the development of commodity production, money becomes transformed into capital. The formula of commodity circulation was  $C-M-C$  (commodity—money—commodity); that is, the sale of one commodity in order to buy another. But the general formula of capital is  $M-C-M$  (money—commodity—money); that is, purchase in order to sell—at a profit. The name of *surplus value* is given by Marx to the increase upon the original value of money that is put into circulation. The fact of this "growth" of money in capitalist society is familiar. Indeed, it is the "growth" which transforms money into capital, as a special, historically definite, social relationship of production. Surplus value cannot arise out of the circulation of commodities, for this represents nothing more than the exchange of equivalents; and it cannot arise out of an increase in prices, for the mutual losses and gains of buyers and sellers equalise one another in the long run; and we are concerned here, not with what happens to individuals, but with a mass or average or social phenomenon. In order that he may be able to receive surplus value, "the owner of money must find in the market a commodity whose own use value contains within itself the original source of value"—a commodity the actual process of whose

use is at the same time the process of the creation of value. Such a commodity exists. It is human labour power. Its use is labour, and labour creates value. The owner of money buys labour power at its value, which is determined, like the value of every other commodity, by the socially necessary labour time requisite for its production (that is to say, the cost of maintaining the worker and his family). Having bought labour power, the owner of money is entitled to use it, that is to set it to work for the whole day—twelve hours, let us suppose. Meanwhile, in the course of six hours ("necessary" labour time) the labourer produces sufficient to pay back the cost of his own maintenance; and in the course of the next six hours ("surplus" labour time), he produces a "surplus" product for which capital does not pay him—produces surplus value. In capital, therefore, from the outlook of the process of production, we have to distinguish between two parts: first, constant capital, spent upon the means of production (machinery, tools, raw materials, etc.), the value of this being, all at once or by instalments, transferred to the finished product; and, secondly, variable capital, spent upon labour power. The value of this latter capital is not constant, but grows in the labour process which creates surplus value. To express the degree of exploitation of labour power by capital, we must therefore compare the surplus value, not with the whole capital, but only with the variable capital. Thus, in the example, just given, the rate of surplus value (to use Marx's own term) will be  $6:6=100\%$ .

There are two historical prerequisites to the genesis of capital. First of all, there must be an accumulation of a considerable sum of money in the hands of various persons living under conditions in which there is a comparatively high development of commodity production. Secondly, there must be "free" labour. The worker must be "free" in a double sense of the term. No constraint or restriction must be imposed on him as regards the sale of his labour power. Furthermore, he must be freed from bondage to the soil and to the means of production in general; he must be a masterless man, a "proletarian," who can procure the means of subsistence by no other method than by the sale of his labour power.

There are two fundamental ways in which surplus value can be increased: by an increase in the working day ("absolute surplus value"); and by a reduction in the *necessary* working day ("relative surplus value"). Analysing the former method, Marx gives an impressive picture of the struggle of the working class for shorter hours; and of governmental interference, first (from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth) in order to lengthen the working day, and subsequently (factory legislation of the nineteenth century) to shorten it. Thenceforward, as *Capital* shows, the history of the working-class movement in all lands provides a wealth of new facts to amplify this picture.

Analysing the production of relative surplus value Marx studies the three fundamental stages of the process whereby capital has increased the produc-

tivity of labour: 1. simple co-operation; 2. division of labour, and manufacture; 3. machinery, and large-scale industry. How far-reaching is the significance of Marx's discovery of these three basic features of capitalist development is shown by the fact that the study of the so-called "kustar" industry of Russia (small-scale industry, handicraft, and home industry) furnishes abundant material for the illustration of the two first of these stages. But during the fifty years since, in 1867, Marx drew attention to the revolutionising effects of large-scale machine production, those effects have become increasingly conspicuous in quite a number of "new" countries, such as Russia, Japan, etc.

But to continue. Of extreme importance and originality is Marx's analysis of the *accumulation of capital*; that is to say, the transformation of a part of surplus value into capital, this portion of surplus value being devoted to additional production instead of being used to supply the needs or to gratify the whims of the capitalist. Marx pointed out the mistake made by the earlier political economists (the classical economists from Adam Smith onwards), who supposed that all the surplus value which was transformed into capital became variable capital. In actual fact, it is assigned to the *means of production* as well as to variable capital. The more rapid growth of the amount of constant capital as compared with variable capital, is of immense importance in the process of the development of capitalism and in that of the transformation of capitalism into socialism.

The accumulation of capital, accelerating the replacement of workers by machinery, creating wealth on the one hand and poverty on the other, gives birth to what is called the "reserve army of labour," to a "relative scarcity of labour," to "capitalist overpopulation." This assumes the most diversified forms, and enables capital to speed up the process of production enormously. The possibility of doing so (in conjunction with enhanced facilities for credit, and with the accumulation of capital in the means of production) furnishes the key to the understanding of the *crises* of over-production that occur periodically in capitalist countries—first about every ten years, on an average; but subsequently in a more continuous form and with a less definite periodicity. From the accumulation of capital upon a capitalist foundation, we must distinguish what is called *primitive accumulation*: the forcible severance of the worker from the means of production, the driving of the peasants off the land, the seizure of common land, the system of colonies and national debts, protective tariffs, and the like. "Primitive accumulation" creates, at one pole, the "free proletarian"; at the other, the owner of money, the capitalist.

The "historical tendency of capitalist accumulation" is described by Marx in the following terms (*Capital*, Vol. I., pp. 788-789): "The expropriation of the immediate producers is effected with ruthless vandalism, and under the stimulus of the most infamous, the basest, the meanest, and the most odious of passions. Self-earned private property, the private

property that may be looked upon as based on a coalescence of the isolated, individual, and independent worker, with his working conditions, is supplanted by capitalist private property, which is maintained by the exploitation of others' labour, but of labour which in a formal sense is free. As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently disintegrated the old society, has decomposed it through and through; as soon as the workers have been metamorphosed into proletarians, and their working conditions into capital; as soon as the capitalist method of production can stand upon its own feet—then the further socialisation of labour and the further transformation of the land and of the other means of production into socially exploited (that is to say, communal) means of production, which implies the further expropriation of private owners, takes on a new form. What has now to be expropriated, is no longer the labourer working on his own account, but the capitalist who exploits many labourers. This expropriation is brought about by the operation of the immanent laws of capitalist production, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist lays a number of his fellow capitalists low. Hand in hand with this centralisation, concomitantly with the expropriation of many capitalists by a few, the co-operative form of the labour process develops to an ever-increasing degree; therewith we find a growing tendency towards the purposive application of science to the improvement of technique; the land is more methodically cultivated; the instruments of labour tend to assume forms

which are only utilisable by combined effort; the means of production are economised through being turned to account only by joint, by socialised labour; all the peoples of the world are enmeshed in the net of the world market, and thus the capitalist regime tends more and more to assume an international character. While there is thus a progressive diminution in the number of the capitalist magnates (who usurp and monopolise all the advantages of this transformative process), there occurs a corresponding increase in the mass of poverty, oppression, enslavement, degeneration, and exploitation; but at the same time there is a steady intensification of the wrath of the working class—a class which grows ever more numerous, and is disciplined, unified, and organised by the very mechanism of the capitalist method of production. Capitalist monopoly becomes a fetter upon the method of production which has flourished with it and under it. The centralisation of the means of production and the socialisation of labour reach a point where they prove incompatible with their capitalist husk. This bursts asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated. . . . With the inexorability of a law of nature, capitalist production begets its own negation."

Of great importance and quite new, moreover, is Marx's analysis (in the second volume of *Capital*) of the reproduction of social capital, taken as a whole. Here Marx is dealing, not with an individual phenomenon, but with a mass phenomenon; not with a fractional part of the economy of society,

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but with the economy of society in all its completeness. Having corrected the before-mentioned mistake of the classical economists, Marx divides the whole of social production into two great sections: first, the production of the means of production; and, secondly, the production of articles for consumption. He makes a detailed examination (under the stipulated conditions) of the circulation of all social capital taken as a whole—both its production in its previous proportions and its accumulation.

The third volume of *Capital* solves (upon the basis of the law of value) the problem of the transformation of the *average rate of profit*. An immense advance in economic science is this, that, in the matter we are now considering, Marx conducts his analysis from an outlook upon massed economic phenomena, upon the aggregate of social economy and not from an outlook upon individual cases, upon the purely superficial aspects of competition—a limitation of view so often met with in the vulgar economists and in contemporary advocates of the "theory of marginal utility." To begin with, Marx analyses the origin of surplus value, and goes on to consider its transformation into profit, interest and land-rent. *Profit* is the ratio between the surplus value and all the capital invested in the undertaking. Capital with a "high organic composition" (that is to say, capital containing an above-average proportion of constant capital as compared with

above-average rate of profit. Competition among the capitalists, who are free to transfer their capital from one branch of production to another, leads in both cases, to the normalisation of the rate of profit, which falls or rises (as the case may be) to the average. The sum total of the values of all the commodities in a given society coincides with the sum total of the prices of all the commodities; but in separate undertakings, and in separate branches of production, commodities are sold, not in accordance with their values, but in accordance with the prices of production, which are equivalent to the expended capital plus the average profit.

In this way the familiar and indisputable fact that prices differ from values, and that profits become equalised, are explained by Marx in conformity with the law of value; for the sum total of the values of all the goods coincides with the sum total of all the prices. But the adjustment of value (a general matter) to price (an individual matter) does not proceed by a simple and direct way. It is an exceedingly complex affair. Naturally, therefore, in a society made up of separate producers of commodities, linked solely through the market, conformity to law can only be an average, a general manifestation, a mass phenomenon, with individual and mutually compensating deviations to one side and the other.

An increase in the productivity of labour leads to a more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital. But inasmuch as surplus value is a function of variable capital alone, it

is obvious that the rate of profit (the ratio of surplus value to the whole capital, and not to its variable part taken by itself) has a tendency to fall. Marx makes a detailed analysis of this tendency and of the circumstances that incline to favour it or to counteract it.

Without pausing to give an account of the extraordinarily interesting parts of the third volume of *Capital* that are devoted to the consideration of interest-bearing capital, commercial capital, and money capital, I shall turn to a very important matter, the theory of *land-rent*. The price of production of agricultural products is determined (seeing that the area of cultivable land is limited, and that in capitalist countries it is all privately owned and occupied) by the cost of production, not on soil of average quality, but on the worst soil, and by the cost of bringing goods to the market, not under average conditions, but under the worst conditions. The difference between the cost of production on the worst soil and on the best (and between the cost of bringing the produce to market under the worst conditions and the best) gives *differential rent*. Analysing this in detail, and showing how it arises out of variations in the fertility of the soil and out of variations in the extent to which capital is applied to land, Marx fully exposes (see also the *Theorien über den Mehrwert* [Theories of Surplus Value], 3 vols., Stuttgart, 1905, especially the criticism of Rodbertus) the error of Ricardo, who considered that land-rent represented nothing more than the difference between the cost of agricultural produc-

tion on the best land and the worst. Advances in agricultural technique, the growth of towns, and so on, may transfer land from one category into the other; and it is a great mistake to do what the famous "law of diminishing returns" does—to charge upon nature the insufficiencies, limitations, and contradictions of capitalism. The equalisation of profit in all branches of industry and agriculture, presupposes complete freedom of competition, the free mobility of capital from one branch to another. But the private ownership of land, creating monopoly, hinders this free mobility. Thanks to monopoly, the products of agriculture (where a low organic composition of capital prevails, that is to say a high proportion of variable capital as compared with the proportion of constant capital, so that individually a higher rate of profit can be secured) are not exposed to a perfectly free process of equalisation of the rate of profit. The landowner, being a monopolist, can keep the price of his produce above the average, and this monopoly price is the source of *absolute rent*. Differential rent cannot be done away with so long as capitalism exists; but absolute rent can be abolished even under capitalism—for instance, by nationalisation of the land, by making all the land State property. Nationalisation of the land would put an end to the monopoly of private landowners, with the result that free competition would be consistently and fully applied in the domain of agriculture. That is why the radical bourgeois, as Marx points out, have again and again demanded land nationalisation. In a letter to

Engels under date August 2, 1862, Marx gives a popular, concise, and clear exposition of his theory of average profit and of absolute land-rent. (See *Briefwechsel*, i.e., Correspondence between Marx and Engels, Vol. III., pp. 77-81; also the letter of August 9, 1862, Vol. III., pp. 86-87). It is important that students of the history of land-rent should make themselves acquainted with Marx's analysis of this topic. He shows how rent paid in labour service (the *corvée*, when the peasant was a serf, and had to create a surplus product by labouring on his lord's land) was transformed into rent paid in produce or rent in kind (the peasant creating a surplus product on his own land, and handing this over to the lord of the soil under stress of a non-economic constraint); subsequently into monetary rent (which was the monetary equivalent of rent in kind, the "obrok" of Old Russia, money having replaced produce thanks to the development of commodity production); and finally into capitalist rent, when the place of the peasant had been taken by the agricultural entrepreneur (the tenant farmer) cultivating the soil with the help of wage labour. In connexion with this analysis of the "genesis of capitalist land-rent" must be considered Marx's profound study of the *evolution of capitalism in agriculture* (this is of especial importance in its bearing on the conditions that prevail in backward countries, such as Russia). In the third volume of *Capital* (see Untermann's translation, p. 928), Marx writes: "Not only is the transformation of rent in kind into money rent necessarily accom-

panied, it is even preceded, by the formation of a class of propertyless day labourers, who hire themselves out for wages. During the initial period, when the members of this class have as yet made only a sporadic appearance, the custom necessarily develops among the comparatively well-to-do rent-paying farmers of exploiting agricultural labourers on their own account, just as in feudal days the serfs who were fairly well-off used to keep serfs of their own. In this way they are gradually enabled to accumulate a certain amount of wealth, and even to transform themselves in due course into capitalists. The old-time peasants, farming their own land, thus become a nursery for capitalist tenant farmers, whose rate of development is determined by the general speed of the development of capitalist production in the non-rural areas of the country." See also the second German edition of Marx's *Capital*, where we read on p. 778: "The expropriation of part of the rural population, and the hunting of it off the land, has the effect, not merely of "setting free" the labourers with their means of life and their tools, setting these free for the purposes of industrial capital; it also has the effect of creating a home market."

The impoverishment and the ruin of the agricultural population lead, in their turn, to the formation of a reserve army of labour for capital. In every capitalist country, part of the rural population is continually being transformed into an urban or manufacturing (*rural*, perhaps, but not *agricultural*) population. This source of relative surplus popula-

tion never dries up. The rural worker is very badly paid, and he always has one foot in the morass of pauperism. (See second German edition of *Capital*, Vol. I., p. 668). The basis of small-scale production is that the peasant, the smallholder, owns the land he tills. It is thanks to this smallholding system that petty production flourishes in agriculture, and acquires there its classical form. But such petty production is only compatible with a narrow and primitive type of production, with a narrow and primitive framework of society. Under capitalism, "the exploitation of the peasants differs from the exploitation of the industrial proletariat only in point of form. The exploiter is one and the same—the capitalist. Individual capitalists exploit individual peasants by means of mortgages and other kinds of usury; the capitalist class as a whole exploits the peasantry as a whole by means of State taxes."—"Peasant agriculture, the smallholding system, is merely an expedient whereby the capitalist is enabled to extract profit, interest, and rent from the land, while leaving the peasant proprietor to pay himself his own wages as best he may." As a rule, the peasant hands over to capitalist society, i.e., to the capitalist class, part of the wages of his own labour, "being reduced to the position of a rack-rented Irish tenant farmer while retaining to outward seeming that of a peasant proprietor." Why is it that "in countries where the smallholding system of agriculture predominates, the price of wheat is lower than in countries with a capitalist method of production"? The answer is that the

peasant presents part of his surplus product as a free gift to society (i.e., to the capitalist class). Thus the low price of wheat "is an outcome of the poverty of the agricultural producers, and is in no sense whatever the result of the exceptional productivity of their labour." Peasant proprietorship, the small-holding system, which is the normal form of petty production, degenerates, withers, perishes, under capitalism.

#### SOCIALISM

From the foregoing it is manifest that Marx deduces the inevitability of the transformation of capitalist society into socialist society wholly and exclusively from the economic law of motion of contemporary society. The chief material foundation of the inevitability of the oncoming of socialism is the socialisation of labour in its myriad forms, advancing ever more rapidly, and conspicuously so, throughout the half century that has elapsed since the death of Marx—being especially plain in the growth of large-scale production, of capitalist cartels, syndicates, and trusts; but also in the gigantic increase in the dimensions and the power of financial capital. The intellectual and moral driving force of this transformation is the proletariat, "disciplined, unified, and organised" by capitalism itself. The contest of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, assuming various forms which grow continually richer in content, inevitably becomes a political struggle aiming at the conquest of political power by the proletariat ("the dictatorship of the proletariat"). The socialisation of production cannot fail

to lead to the transfer of the means of production into the possession of society, to the "expropriation of the expropriators." An immense increase in the productivity of labour; a reduction in working hours; the clearance of obsolete rubbish; the ruin of petty, primitive, and individual production through the development of collective and perfected labour—such will be the direct consequences of this transformation. Capitalism breaks the ties between agriculture and industry; but at the same time, in the course of its development, it prepares new elements for the establishment of a connexion between the two, for a union between industry and agriculture upon the basis of the application of science to the association of labour and to a redistribution of population (putting an end at one and the same time to rural seclusion and unsociability and savagery, and to the unnatural concentration of enormous masses of population in huge towns). A new kind of family life, changes in the position of women and in the upbringing of the younger generation, are outcomes of the more advanced forms of modern capitalism; the labour of women and children, the break-up of the patriarchal family by capitalism, necessarily assume in contemporary society the most terrible, the most disastrous forms. Nevertheless, large-scale production, assigning to women and to adolescents and children of both sexes an important role in the socially organised process of production away from the domestic hearth, creates the economic foundation for higher forms of the family and of the mutual relationships between the

sexes. It would, of course, be absurd to suppose that the purely Christian and Teutonic form of the family, the ancient Greek or ancient Roman form, and the oriental form (which, by the way, constitutes a link between the one and the other) represent a historically unified developmental series. It is evident that the formation of an associated labour personnel of both sexes and various ages—though at present it is in an elementary, crude and capitalistic form, when the worker exists for the process of production instead of the process of production for the worker, so that as yet it is a pestiferous source of ruin and slavery—will in due course become a factor in human development (*Capital*, Vol. I., end of Chapter XIII.). The factory system “is the embryonic form of the educational system of days to come, when, for all children above a certain age, productive labour will be combined, not only as a means of increasing social production, but also as the only method of bringing about a many-sided development” (*Ibid.*). Upon the same historical foundation, not with the sole idea of throwing light on the past, but with the idea of boldly foreseeing the future and boldly working to bring about its realisation, the socialism of Marx propounds the problems of nationality and the State. The nation is a necessary product, an inevitable form, in the bourgeois epoch of modern society. The working class cannot grow strong, cannot consolidate its forces, except by “organising itself within the confines of the nation,” except by being “national” (although in a very

different sense from that in which the word is understood by the bourgeoisie). But the development of capitalism tends more and more to break down the partitions that separate the nations one from another, annihilates national particularism, substitutes class antagonisms for national antagonisms. In the more developed capitalist countries, therefore, it is true that "the workers have no country," and that "united action, among civilised countries at least, is one of the first of the conditions requisite for the emancipation of the workers." (*Communist Manifesto*). The State is the organisation of force. It comes into being inevitably at a certain stage in the development of society, when this has become sundered into classes whose interests are irreconcilable, and when it cannot exist without an "authority" standing as it were above society and to some extent individualised apart from society. Having arisen within this society that is made up of opposing classes, the State becomes "the State of the strongest, the economically dominant class, which, in virtue of the powers of the State, makes itself also the politically dominant class, and in this way acquires new means for the subjugation and exploitation of the oppressed class. Thus the State of the classical world was, first and foremost, the State of the slaveowners and it existed to keep the slaves in subjection; the State of the feudal epoch was the instrument by means of which the feudal nobility kept the serfs in subjection; and the modern State, based on 'representative government' is an expedient for promoting the exploitation of the wage workers by

the capitalists (cf. Engels, in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*—a work in which the writer is expounding his own views and Marx's). This condition of affairs persists even in the democratic republic, the freest and most progressive kind of bourgeois State; there is merely a change of form, the government becoming linked up with the stock market, and the officialdom and the press being corrupted by direct or indirect means. Socialism, putting an end to classes, will thereby put an end to the State. "The first act," writes Engels in *Anti-Dühring*, "whereby the State becomes the representative of society as a whole, namely the expropriation of the means of production for the benefit of society as a whole, will likewise be its last independent act as a State. The interference of the State authority in social relationships will become superfluous, and will be discontinued in one domain after another. The government of persons will be transformed into the administration of things and the management of the process of production. The State will not be 'abolished'; it will 'die out.'" To quote Engels once more (*Origin of the Family*): "A society which organises production upon the basis of a free and equal association of producers, will put the State where it will then belong—in the museum of antiquities, beside the spinning-wheel and the bronze axe."

If, finally, we wish to understand the attitude of Marxist socialism towards the lesser peasantry, which will continue to exist on into the period of

the expropriation of the expropriators, we must turn once more to Engels' exposition of Marx's views. I quote from an article on "The Agrarian Problem in the West," which appeared in the "Neue Zeit": "When we seize the powers of the State, we shall never dream of forcibly expropriating the poorer peasants, the smallholders (with or without compensation), as we shall have to expropriate the great landowners. Our business as regards the smallholders will be to see to it that their individual production and individual ownership are transformed into communal production and communal ownership, but the change must not be effected forcibly. We must act on them by way of example, and by offering social help with this end in view. We shall then have the means of showing the poorer peasants all the advantages of this change—and even now we are able to demonstrate these advantages to the smallholders."

#### TACTIC OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT

As early as 1844 or 1845, Marx came to realise that one of the chief defects of the earlier materialism was its failure to understand the conditions or recognise the importance of practical revolutionary activity. For the rest of his life, therefore, he was not content to work only in the field of pure theory, but also gave unremitting attention to the tactical problems of the working class struggle. All Marx's writings bear witness to the fact, but of especial importance in this connexion are the four volumes of his correspondence with Engels (*Briefwechsel*

*zwischen Engels und Marx*), published in 1913. Masses of other material bearing upon these practical activities still remain to be collected, expounded, and elaborated. Here I shall have to be content with a very brief account of the matter; emphasising the point that Marx (with good reason) considered materialism without *this* side no more than a half measure, something that was dead-alive. The fundamental lines of proletarian tactic were laid down by Marx in strict conformity with the general principles of his materialist-dialectical outlook. Nothing but an objective account of the sum total of all the mutual relationships of all the classes of a given society, and consequently an account of the objective stage of development of this society with an account of the mutual relationships between it and other societies—nothing short of this can suffice for the sustaining of the right tactic of the class that forms the vanguard. Furthermore, all classes are to be regarded, not statically, but dynamically; they are to be looked upon, not as motionless, but as in motion (the laws of their motion being determined by the economic conditions of existence of each class). This movement, in its turn, is to be contemplated, not only from an outlook upon its past, but also from an outlook upon its future; and, moreover, not only in accordance with the commonplace conception of the “economists,” who look merely at slow changes—but dialectically. “In great historical processes, twenty years are but as one day—and then may come days which are the concentrated essence of twenty years,” wrote

Marx to Engels (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III., p. 127). At each stage of development, from moment to moment, the proletarian tactic must make due allowance for this objectively necessary dialectic of human history. Sometimes (in phases of political stagnation, when things are moving at a snail's pace, in periods of what is called "world" evolution), attention must be chiefly paid to the encouragement of class consciousness and to the furtherance of strength and fighting capacity in the most advanced class; and at other times (during the great days "which are the concentrated essence of twenty years"), we must seize the opportunity on behalf of the "final aims" of the particular class, and must cultivate its faculty for the practical performance of great tasks. Two of Marx's arguments are of especial importance in this connexion: one of these is in the *Poverty of Philosophy*, and relates to the industrial struggle and to the industrial organisation of the proletariat; the other is in the *Communist Manifesto*, and relates to the workers' political activities.

The former runs as follows: "Large-scale production brings together in one place a mass of persons not previously acquainted with one another. Competition severs their interests. The defence of their rate of wages, giving them a joint interest as against their employer, plucks them out of their isolation, and consolidates them into a group. Animated by a general idea of resistance, they form a union. These unions, isolated to begin with, are themselves forced into combination as a means of defence against the employers, who on their side

are steadily consolidating their forces for attack. In time, the defence of the unions comes to seem to the workers even more important than the defence of their wages. . . . In the struggle (the extant form of civil war), there are unified and developed all the elements of the coming general engagement. Having reached this point, the combination assumes a political character." Here Marx sketches, some decades in advance, the program and the tactic of the industrial struggle and the trade union movement for the long period in which the workers are preparing for "the coming general engagement." We must place side by side with this a number of Marx's utterances to Engels in the correspondence. For instance (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. I., p. 136), referring to the British working-class movement, Marx says that, industry being in a flourishing condition, attempts are being made "to buy the workers," to distract them from the struggle, and that, generally speaking, prolonged prosperity "has demoralised the workers" (Vol. II., p. 218), so that the British workers are getting a bourgeois stamp. He says (Vol. II., p. 290): "the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all lands would seem to be to establish a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat side by side with the bourgeoisie." Again, he declares (Vol. III., p. 124) that the "revolutionary energy" of the British proletariat has oozed away; and says that (Vol. III., p. 127) it will be necessary to wait for a considerable time "before the British workers can shake off their bourgeois infection"; that (1866, Vol. III., p. 305) the British

movement "lacks the mettle of the old Chartists"; that (Vol. IV., p. 209) Holyoake, the working-class leader, is "a mere go-between between the radical bourgeoisie and the workers." Under date August 11, 1881, Engels writes to Marx: "The British working man will go no further at present; he must be shaken out of his rut by the loss of the industrial monopoly." The tactic of the industrial struggle, and the present course and probable future of the working-class movement, are in these letters considered from a broad, many-sided, dialectical, and genuinely revolutionary outlook.

The second argument, the one relating to the political struggle, is from the closing section of the *Communist Manifesto*, where we read: "Communists fight on behalf of the immediate aims and interests of the working class, but in their present movement they are also defending the future of that movement." That was why in 1848 Marx supported the Polish party which advocated an agrarian revolution—"the party which initiated the Cracow insurrection in the year 1846." In Germany during 1848 and 1849 he supported the left wing of the revolutionary democrats, nor subsequently did he always dissent from their views on tactical questions. He looked upon the German bourgeoisie as "inclined from the very first to betray the cause of the people" (nothing but an alliance with the peasantry would enable the bourgeoisie to fulfil its aims), "and to compromise with the crowned figure-heads of the old order of society." Consider Marx's summary account of the attitude of the German bourgeoisie in the days

of the bourgeois-democratic revolution—a masterpiece of materialist analysis, contemplating society in motion, and not looking only at that part of the movement which faces *backwards*. Here is what he wrote in the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" in 1848 (see *Literarische Nachlass* (Posthumous Papers), Vol. III., p. 213): "Lacking faith in themselves, lacking faith in the people; grumbling at those above, and trembling in face of those below. . . . dreading a world-wide convulsion; nowhere with energy, everywhere with plagiarism. . . ; without initiative . . . . a miserable old man, doomed to guide and misguide in his own senile interests the first youthful impulses of a young and vigorous people." About twenty years afterwards, writing to Engels under date February 11, 1865 (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III., p. 224), Marx said that the cause of the failure of the revolution of 1848 had been that the bourgeoisie had preferred peace with slavery to the mere prospect of having to fight for freedom. When the revolutionary epoch of 1848-1849 was over, Marx was strongly opposed to any playing at revolution (Schapper and Willich, and the contest with them), insisting on the need for getting to work under the new conditions, when new revolutions were in the making—quasi-peacefully. The spirit in which Marx wanted the work to be carried on is plainly shown by his estimate of the position in Germany during the worst phase of the reaction. In 1856 he wrote (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. II., p. 108): "In Germany the whole depends on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by a sort of

second edition of the peasants' war." Marx considered that until the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany was finished, those who in that country were guiding the tactic of the socialist proletariat should concentrate attention upon developing the democratic energy of the peasantry. He held that Lassalle, objectively considered, "was betraying the whole working-class movement to the Prussians" (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 210), saying also that Lassalle "was giving free rein to the junkers and to Prussian nationalism." On February 5, 1865, writing to Marx about an article or pamphlet that the two were drafting, Engels said (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 217): "We must, if we can, bring in an allusion to the fact that in a predominantly agricultural country like Prussia it is preposterous to fall foul of the bourgeoisie exclusively in the name of the industrial proletariat, while saying not a word about the way in which the feudal territorial magnates practise a birch-rod method of patriarchal exploitation on the rural proletariat." During the period from 1864 to 1870 (that in which the epoch of the bourgeois revolution in Germany was rounded off, that in which the struggle of the exploited classes in Prussia and Austria for this or that means of completing the revolution *from above* had come to an end), Marx not only condemned Lassalle for coquetting with Bismarck, but also blamed Wilhelm Liebknecht for his lapse into Austrorussianism and for his defence of particularism. Marx insisted upon the need for a pitiless fight against both Bismarck and the Aus-

trophils, a revolutionary tactic which would not only not conform to the wishes of the "conqueror" (the Prussian jûnker), but would and actually did ere long lead to the renewal of the struggle with him upon the platform created by the Prussian military successes. (See *Briefwechsel*, Vol. III., pp. 134, 136, 147, 179, 204, 210, 215, 418, 437, 440-441). In the famous Address issued by the International Workmen's Association under date September 9, 1870, Marx warned the French proletariat against an untimely rising; but when in 1871, the insurrection actually took place, Marx hailed the revolutionary initiative of the masses with the utmost enthusiasm, saying in a letter to Kugelmann that they were "storming the heavens." In this situation, as in so many others, the defeat of a revolutionary onslaught seemed to Marx (from the outlook of dialectical materialism) less disastrous to the general course of the proletarian struggle than would have been a retreat from a position that had been occupied, than surrender without striking a blow. Such a surrender would have demoralised the workers, would have taken the fight out of them. Marx fully recognised the importance of using all the available legal and constitutional means of struggle during periods of political stagnation, and when the bourgeoisie itself was working constitutionally. In 1877 and 1878, when exceptional legislation against the socialists had been passed in Germany, he strongly condemned the "revolutionary phrasemaking" of Most. But he was equally opposed, perhaps more fiercely opposed, to the opportunism

then prevailing for a season among the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party, who lacked steadfastness and resolution, and shrank from engaging in an unconstitutional struggle as an answer to the anti-socialist law. (See *Briefwechsel*, Vol. IV., pp. 397, 404, 418, 422 and 424; also one of the letters to Sorge, under date September 19, 1879.)



DARWIN AND MARX  
*by* K. TIMIRYAZEFF



# DARWIN AND MARX

by R. Timiryazeff

THE year 1919 is not only the "diamond jubilee" year of the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. It is even more important to remember that Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* also first saw the light in 1859, sixty years ago.<sup>1</sup> This is not a fortuitous coincidence. Although the *Origin of Species* and the *Critique of Political Economy* are concerned with such widely differing spheres of human thought, we can detect in the two books certain

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<sup>1</sup> To my shame I must admit that it was not until after 1909 that I first became acquainted with the contents of Marx's preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, through reading an article by V. I. Ilyin (Lenin) in Vol. XVIII. of the Brothers Grant's *Encyclopaedia*. But I can console myself by remembering that I must have been one of the very first persons in Russia to read *Capital*. This was very long ago, before Vladimir Ilich was born, and when Plehanoff (whom many Russian Marxists regard as Lenin's teacher), was only ten years old. In the autumn of 1867 I removed from Simbirsk (where I had been engaged in chemical researches on the lines laid down by Mendeleeff) to join P. A. Ilyenkoff in the newly opened Petrovsk Academy. I found Ilyenkoff sitting at his writing table in his library. In front of him was a new book, a thick volume in German with the paper-knife still amid its pages. It was the first volume of *Capital*; and at this date, in the close of the year 1867, very few more copies than this could as yet have found their way into Russia. Then and there, Ilyenkoff, rapturously and with characteristic shrewdness, gave me a whole lecture on as much of the book as he had already been able to read. He had seen Marx

common characteristics which justify us in comparing them, though only in a brief sketch. The last page of Darwin's book, and the remarkable and brilliant fifth page of the preface to Marx's,<sup>2</sup> contain amazingly clear and concise summaries of the respective authors' fundamental ideas. Now, just as Darwin's fundamental idea, as expounded in the *Origin of Species*, was the crown of the previous twenty-five years and more of the great biologist's activities, so Marx's fundamental idea, as expounded in the preface to the *Critique*, was for the great sociologist "a guiding thread" (I use his own expression) for a quarter of a century thereafter, and until he was snatched away by death while his mental powers were still unimpaired. I propose, therefore, to consider the parallelism between these two works, which have left so deep a trace in the history of the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century—and will, of course, continue to leave their trace in ages yet to come.

It was said of Darwin that he was "the greatest at work, for he had spent the year 1848 in western Europe (chiefly in Paris); also he had personal knowledge of the doings of the sugar-refiners who were among the pioneers of Russian capitalism, and was thus able to illustrate Marx's doctrines by examples drawn from his own experience. In this way it came to pass that the professor of chemistry in the recently opened Petrovsk Academy was one of the first persons to diffuse Marxist ideas in Russia.

<sup>2</sup> Pages 11-13 of N. I. Stöckel's translation of the *Critique*; the passage quoted by Lenin on pp. 122-124 of the present volume.

revolutionist in modern science, and, indeed, in the science of all ages"; that "from his peaceful work-room at Down he guided the thoughts of all reflective persons into a movement which is almost unexampled in the history of the world." Compare with this the other revolutionary movement, the one that started from Marx's little room in Dean Street, Soho, the movement that has modified people's "existence" as well as their "consciousness"—this, too, has been a movement without parallel in history.

In what consists the general similarity of trend of these two revolutionary movements, both initiated in the year 1859? In this, that both of them, each dealing with a vast assemblage of phenomena (in one case the phenomena of organic life, and in the other the phenomena of the social life of mankind) which theology and metaphysics have hitherto claimed as their own, withdraw these phenomena from theological and metaphysical jurisdiction, and explain them as the outcome of "material changes . . . which can be watched and recorded with all the precision proper to natural science" (quoted from the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*).

Darwin, doubting the validity of the biblical explanation of the origin of the forms of organic life, and disregarding the requirement that science must conform to the teaching of the Bible, rejected scriptural theology and metaphysics, and found the real explanation of the origin of species in the "material conditions" of their genesis. In like manner Marx,

having (as he himself tells us) begun to doubt the validity of Hegel's philosophy of law, went on to take as his "guiding thread," for all his subsequent researches, the inference that sociological forms and relationships are not self-existent, nor yet existences determined by the activities of the human mind, but are the outcome of the material conditions of life. Both these doctrines work along the general lines of the quest for a primary explanation that shall be rooted in scientifically demonstrable material phenomena. Marx indicated this by speaking of his whole scientific trend as "economic materialism," or the "economic interpretation of history." The mode of production of material life forms the "real basis" upon which are erected "as a superstructure" all the "legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical forms (in a word, the ideological forms)" of human life. But "at a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing productive relationships," and these latter, "which have previously been developmental forms of the productive forces, now become metamorphosed into fetters upon production. A period of social revolutions then begins. Concomitantly with the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed." I continue these quotations from Marx's classical aphorisms down to and including his use of the word "revolution," for the reason that the dispute about the relationship of his teaching to Darwin's turns most often around this word.

We are told that Darwinism is a theory of evolution, and that evolution is the antithesis of revolution. It is true that the word "revolution" is not to be met with in Darwin's writings, but that was because it would have called up recent memories of Cuvier's *Discours sur les révolutions du globe*. In geology, Cuvier belonged to the "catastrophic school." He believed that, in the course of the earth's geological history, there had been frequent cataclysms, quick changes of scenery like those that take place in a theatre, whereby whole populations of living creatures had been destroyed and new ones brought into being. On the other hand George Howard Darwin (a noted astronomer, and the only one of Charles Darwin's five sons to inherit a considerable share of the father's genius) notes that there is a homological connexion, and not a mere rhetorical analogy, between revolution in the domain of political phenomena and revolution in the domain of cosmic and purely mechanical phenomena.<sup>1</sup>

In their explanations of the world, both Darwin and Marx started from an objective study of the present; but whereas Darwin was chiefly concerned

<sup>1</sup> Cf. an article of my own, "Cambridge and Darwin." Let me add that, when developing this idea that the phenomena of revolution are subject to the reign of law (a notion likely to be distasteful to a bourgeois audience), Sir George Darwin was careful to make the following reservation: "One who, when expressing an opinion upon evolution, invokes the name of Darwin, must do so with a full sense of the responsibility that devolves on him."

with throwing light on the obscure past of organic life, Marx's main desire was to foretell the future and to disclose the "trends"<sup>1</sup> of the present. Nay more, Marx did not merely wish to foretell the future; he wanted to act upon it. To quote his own words: "Philosophers have been busied in trying to *explain* the world, each after his own fashion. But the real question is, How are we to *change* it?"<sup>2</sup>

Here, however, a reservation is needed. We must point out that Darwin, by giving, not "his" philosophical explanation, but an explanation grounded upon the scientific study of the facts, compelled biologists to turn their attention to the process of creating new organic forms (artificial selection), which had previously been applied half-consciously, but was in due course to achieve such marvellous results—as, for instance, in the hands of Luther Burbank, the modern miracle-worker, creator of new species.

Marx considers that economic factors are the essential material determinants of human history, and looks upon all the other alleged causes as "ideological superstructure." Darwin tells us that the main factor in the evolution of organic forms has

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<sup>1</sup> Eduard Bernstein vainly rails at Marx for using this expression.

<sup>2</sup> This was written by Marx in 1845, but was not published till after his death. It will be found in the appendix to Engels' book on Ludwig Feuerbach. The German original runs: "Die Philosophen haben die Welt verschieden *interpretiert*, es kommt aber darauf an sie zu *verändern*."

been the historical process to which he gives the figurative name of "natural selection" (according to Auguste Comte, "elimination"), this being the outcome of the law of over-population, usually termed Malthus' law. As is well known, some (Chernyshevsky, and especially Dühring) have blamed Darwin for this, not knowing or forgetting that Malthus only borrowed his law from the naturalists, who had already applied it to animals and plants (Linnaeus, Franklin).

Now, what is the essence of this process of natural selection? Fundamentally, it is the adaptation of organisms to the conditions of existence. Herein, as Darwin explains in the opening pages of his book, we find the key to the understanding of the organic world, the answer to its riddles. The word "adaptation" has become the slogan of modern biology. That which is adapted, becomes comprehensible to the biologist; for, studying the process of adaptation, he understands the historical genesis of what he contemplates. Haeckel, a master in the art of word-building, has given the name of "ecology" to this branch of the science of biology. But this word is derived from the same Greek root as "economy" and "economics."<sup>1</sup> The word is not much used in England, but has caught on in the United States where, side by side with the

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<sup>1</sup> The root of the first half of both words is "oikos," which means "house," "habitation." Derivatively, "economy" means "the management of the household," and "ecology," means "the science of habitat, or of environing conditions."

physiology of plants, botanists speak of vegetable ecology. But instead of coining a new word, would it not be better to retain the old one, and to explain its full significance? For my part, a few years ago I proposed to call this branch of botany "the economy of plant life." Thus we find that there is a general agreement between Darwin and Marx as regards what they teach about the primary determinants of evolutionary processes—a likeness which extends even into the field of terminology.

But the similarity is not confined to generalities. It also concerns the products of this economic process. Marx tells us that the first stages in the development of a typically human activity, in the growth of man out of the animal, took the form of the discovery of instruments of production. He writes: "The use and fabrication of instruments of labour although existing in the germ among certain species of animals, is specifically characteristic of the human labour process, and Franklin therefore defines man as a tool-making animal."<sup>1</sup> Karl Kautsky, expounding Marx's thought, makes use of a word-play which cannot be translated from the German. He says that an animal can "finden" (=find) tools in nature, but man alone can "erfinden" (=discover, elaborate) them. Ernest Rutherford, in one of his lectures, gives a very picturesque description of these first stages of the human inventive faculty. He is speaking of the special kind of tools known as weapons, and he says that their evolution is

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Moore and Aveling's translation of *Capital*, Vol. I., 1896, p. 159.

marked by the concentration of energy upon an ever more limited area. Thus the club strikes a surface of considerable extent; the axe or knife strikes a line; the spear or arrow strikes a point.

For in what can the process consist whereby living animals and plants are adapted to the conditions of existence, if not in the elaboration of organs, i.e., tools.<sup>1</sup>

Darwin tells us that we must look upon every complicated mechanism or instinct as the sum of a long historical series of useful adaptations just as much as any of the arts is. Consequently, the basis of Darwin's explanation of the forms of animal and vegetable life, like the basis of Marx's explanation of the forms of human society, is—the economic conditions of existence. And the elaboration of tools was one of the first manifestations of a typically human activity. But are we to suppose that this trend of activity is peculiar to primitive man? Do not we encounter the same phenomenon at higher stages of human evolution? Francis Bacon (whom Marx and Engels regard as the herald of the outlook on the world which led in due course to the formulation of historical materialism<sup>2</sup>), Bacon, who announced the coming of the kingdom of man (this meaning the reign of science, and the victory of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the note to p. 367 of Moore and Aveling's translation of *Capital*, Vol. I, where Marx writes: "Darwin has interested us in the history of nature's technology, i.e., in the formation of the organs of plants and animals, which organs serve as instruments of production for sustaining life."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Die heilige Familie*, pp. 201-203.

man over nature), wrote the following words anent the rise of experimental science, then just beginning: "*Nec manus nuda nec intellectus sibi permissus multum valet; instrumentis et auxiliis res perficitur.*" Nor does this apply only to the dawn of modern science. The statement is equally valid as regards the scientific advances of the twentieth century. The celebrated physicist, Otto Wiener, in his lecture on "The Widening of the Domain of our sensory Perceptions," points out that the most important achievements of physical science have been closely connected with the perfectionment of instruments which can only be regarded as extensions of our sense organs—as (to use J. P. Payloff's apt phrase) "analysers of the outer world." Ludwig Boltzmann, finally, expressed the same thought with his usual clearness when, speaking of Kirchhoff as the discoverer of the spectroscope, he said: "Kirchhoff made our eyes into a new organ." Thus whether we interest ourselves in the origin of organic forms as a whole or in the origin of human society, at bottom we are concerned with economic processes, with processes of production. In one case it may be the production of organic matter by a plant; in the other it may be the crown of all human activity, the production of knowledge, of science. In either event, our first concern must be to study the origin of the organs or instruments (tools) whereby this production is carried on.

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<sup>1</sup> "Neither the bare hand nor the unaided intelligence can achieve much; by tools and by helping-means, a thing is carried through."

Such is the analogy between historical materialism and Darwinism in the departments where the objects under study are very different, being man, on the one hand, and the animal and vegetable world, on the other. But there is one department of Darwinism in which the topic of study is the same as that studied by historical materialism. Darwin's *Descent of Man* was published twelve years after the appearance of the *Origin of Species* and Marx's *Critique*. In this new work, the author did not limit his attention to the biological side of the question. In so far as was necessary for the proof of his thesis that man was descended from lower animal types, Darwin entered into sociological discussions. In two remarkable chapters he showed that man's intellectual and moral superiority over other animals (the ideological superstructure, as Marx would phrase it) took its rise out of two material peculiarities: first, the greater development of the higher parts of the nervous system, of the brain, and the consequent improvement in the intellectual powers; and, secondly, the greater development of the "social instinct" which was already present in the higher animals. Thus for Darwin, as for Marx, the development of the social instinct, the growth of sociality, is the starting-point of the natural-historical process by which the intellectual and moral characteristics of mankind are evolved. With good reason, many British and German writers look upon Darwin as the founder of the new realistic school of ethics. To expound the parallelism between Darwinism and Marxism in

this respect would, however, require more space than can be allotted here,<sup>1</sup> and would take us away from the year 1859, with which we are at the moment chiefly concerned.

Such are the main lines of agreement in the fundamental notions set forth in these two great works, which were published almost simultaneously, so that neither can have exercised a direct influence upon the other. But one question remains to be considered. Here were two supremely great men, living quite near one another—not more than an hour's journey. Did they ever come into direct touch with one another? Upon this matter we can appeal to the testimony of Marx's son-in-law, Ave-ling. The latter tells us that Marx, an indefatigable and omnivorous reader, had made a careful study of all Darwin's writings; that when the second edition of the first volume of *Capital* was published in 1873, Marx sent a copy to Darwin; and that Darwin acknowledged the receipt of the book in the following letter:

October 1st, 1873.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for the honour which you have done me by sending me your great work on *Capital*; and I heartily wish that I were more worthy to receive it, by understanding more of the deep and important subject of political economy. Though our studies have been so different, I believe that we both earnestly desire the extension of knowledge; and this, in the long run, is sure to add to the happiness of mankind.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES DARWIN.

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<sup>1</sup> It would also be interesting to discuss the relationship of both Marxism and Darwinism to John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*, which was published in 1864.

I shall conclude this brief sketch by repeating, for the sake of emphasis, what I wrote at the outset. When we commemorate the "diamond jubilee" of the publication of these two books, when we think of it as a joint commemoration of Marx and Darwin, we do so recognising that the two men marched side by side under the banner of natural science. Both of them regarded natural science as the one solid foundation of their revolutionary views—views that were destined to shake up both the "consciousness" and the "existence" of all mankind very thoroughly indeed! Is it not plain that the way to the overthrow of the outworn culture of the bourgeoisie, the way to the upbuilding of the proletarian culture of to-morrow, is the way of science, of natural science which has discarded the mystical and metaphysical formulas of the past? Auguste Comte proclaimed this as long ago as 1831, when he declared that of all the classes the proletariat was the one most ready to understand and to accept the mental revolution that positive philosophy, the philosophy of science, brings in its train.



PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF KARL MARX  
*by* PAUL LAFARGUE



# PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF KARL MARX

*by Paul Lafargue*

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**T**HE first time I ever saw Karl Marx was in February, 1865. The International had been founded on September 28, 1864, at a meeting in St. Martin's Hall. I was sent from Paris to bring tidings of the progress made there by the young organisation. Monsieur Tolain, now a senator of the bourgeois republic and one of its representatives at the Berlin Conference, had given me a letter of introduction.

I was twenty-four years old. Never in my life shall I forget the impression made on me by that first visit. Marx was in poor health at the time, and was hard at work upon the first volume of *Capital* (published two years later, in 1867). He was afraid he might be unable to finish it, and was therefore particularly glad to receive young people, saying: "I must train up men who will go on with communist propaganda after I am gone."

Karl Marx was one of the men who are fitted for the front rank both in science and in public life. So intimately were his activities in these two fields intertwined, that we shall never understand him unless we contemplate him simultaneously as man of science and as socialist fighter. While he

was of opinion that every science must be cultivated for its own sake, and that when we undertake scientific research we should not trouble ourselves about the ultimate consequences of what we are doing, nevertheless he held that the man of learning, if he wishes to escape a decline in his powers, must never cease to participate in public affairs—must not be content to shut himself up in his study or his laboratory, and to shun the life and the social and political struggles of his contemporaries.

"Science must not be a selfish pleasure. Those who are so lucky as to be able to devote themselves to scientific pursuits, should be the first to use their knowledge in the service of mankind." One of his favourite phrases was, "Work for the world."

Though he deeply sympathised with the troubles of the working class, what had led him to the communist standpoint was not any sentimental consideration, but the study of political economy. He maintained that every unprejudiced person, every one uninfluenced by private interests, every one unblinded by class prejudices, must perforce come to the same conclusions. Though he studied the economic and political development of human society without any preconceived notions, when he came to put pen to paper it was with the definite aim of spreading far and wide the results of his studies. His fixed design was to provide a scientific foundation for the socialist movement, which down to his day had been lost in utopian mists. As far as public activity was concerned, he took part in this

only in order to work on behalf of the triumph of the working class, whose historic mission it is to establish communism as soon as it has attained to the political and economic leadership of society. In like manner the mission of the bourgeoisie, as soon as it rose to power, was to break the feudal bonds which hampered the development of agriculture and industry; to inaugurate free mobility for commodities and human beings, and free contract between the employers and the workers; to centralise the means of production and exchange—and thus, without knowing it, to prepare the material and intellectual groundwork of the coming communist society.

Marx did not restrict his activities to the land of his birth. "I am a citizen of the world," he would say, "and I work wherever I happen to be." In actual fact, he played a leading part in any and every revolutionary movement that developed in the countries (France, Belgium, and England) to which events and political persecutions drove him.

But at my first visit, when I saw him in his study in Maidland Park Road, he was to me, not the indefatigable and unequalled political agitator, but the man of learning. This room has become historical. From all parts of the civilised world those who wished to consult the master of socialist thought flocked to it. Any one who wants to realise the intimate aspects of Marx's intellectual life must form a mental picture of this workroom. It was on the first floor, well lighted by a broad window looking on the park. The fireplace was opposite the window, and was flanked by bookshelves, on the top of

which packets of newspapers and manuscripts were piled up to the ceiling. On one side of the window stood two tables, likewise loaded with miscellaneous papers, newspapers, and books. In the middle of the room, where the light was best, was a small and plain writing table, three feet by two, and a windsor armchair. Between this chair and one of the bookshelves, facing the window, was a leather-covered sofa on which Marx would lie down to rest occasionally. On the mantelpiece were more books, interspersed with cigars, boxes of matches, tobacco jars, paperweights, and photographs—his daughters, his wife, Friedrich Engels, and Wilhelm Wolf. Marx was a heavy smoker. "*Capital* will not bring in enough money to pay for the cigars I smoked when I was writing it," he told me. But he was still more spendthrift in his use of matches. So often did he forget his pipe or his cigar that he had constantly to be relighting it, and would use up a box of matches in an incredibly short time.

He would never allow any one to arrange (really, to disarrange) his books and papers. The prevailing disorder was only apparent. In actual fact, everything was in its proper place, and he could put his hand on any book or manuscript he wanted. When conversing, he would often stop for a moment to show the relevant passage in a book or to find a numerical reference. He was at one with his study, where the books and papers were as obedient to his will as were his own limbs.

He disdained appearances when arranging his books. Quarto and octavo volumes and pamphlets

were placed higgledy-piggledy as far as size and shape were concerned. What interested him was their content. To him books were intellectual tools, not luxuries. "They are my slaves," he would say, "and must do as I bid them." He had scant respect for their form, their binding, the beauty of paper or printing; he would turn down the corners of the pages, underline freely, and pencil the margins. He did not make notes in his books, but could not refrain from a question mark or a note of exclamation when an author kicked over the traces. His system of underlining enabled him to refer back to any desired passage. Every few years he would re-read his notebooks and salient passages in the books he had read, in order to refresh his memory—which was extraordinarily vigorous and accurate. From early youth he had trained it in accordance with Hegel's plan of memorising verses in an unfamiliar tongue.

He knew much of Heine and Goethe by heart, and would often quote these poets in conversation. Indeed, he read a great deal of poetry, in most of the languages of Europe. Year after year he would read Aeschylus again in the original text, regarding this author and Shakespeare as the two greatest dramatic geniuses the world had ever known. For Shakespeare he had an unbounded admiration. He had made an exhaustive study of the English playwright whose lesser characters, even, were familiar friends. There was a veritable Shakespeare cult in the Marx family, and the three daughters had much of the Bard's works by heart. Shortly after 1848, when

Marx wished to perfect his knowledge of English (which he could already read well), he sought out and classified all Shakespeare's most characteristic turns of phrase; and he did the same with some of the writings of William Cobbett, for whom he had a great esteem. Dante and Burns were among his favourite poets, and it was always a delight to him to hear his daughters recite Burns' satirical poems or sing the Scottish author's love-songs.

Cuvier, an indefatigable worker and scientific expert, when curator of the Paris Museum (Muséum d'histoire naturelle, now Jardin des plantes), had a number of workrooms installed for his personal use. Each of these rooms was devoted to a particular branch of study, and for this purpose was equipped with the necessary books, instruments, anatomical accessories, etc. When wearied by some particular occupation, Cuvier would move on to another room, finding that a change of mental work was just as good as a rest. Marx, like Cuvier, was always at work, but he had not, like the French comparative anatomist, financial resources for the provision of several workrooms. He rested his mind by pacing up and down the room, so that between door and window the carpet had been worn threadbare along a sharply defined track, like a footpath through a meadow. Sometimes he would lie down on the sofa to read a novel, and had often two or three novels going at the same time, reading them by turns—for, like Darwin, he was a great novel-reader. He had a preference for eighteenth-century novels, and was especially fond of Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

Among modern novelists, his favourites were Paul de Kock, Charles Lever, the elder Dumas, and Sir Walter Scott, whose *Old Mortality* he considered a masterpiece. He had a predilection for tales of adventure and humorous stories. The greatest masters of romance were for him Cervantes and Balzac. *Don Quixote* was the epic of the decay of chivalry, whose virtues were depicted by the rising bourgeoisie as absurdities and follies. His admiration for Balzac was so profound that he had planned to write a critique of *La comédie humaine* as soon as he should have finished his economic studies. Marx looked upon Balzac, not merely as the historian of the social life of his time, but as a prophetic creator of character types which still existed only in embryo during the reign of Louis Philippe, and were not to undergo full development until the days of the Second Empire, after Balzac's death.

Marx could read nearly all the leading European languages, and could write three (German, French, and English) in a way that aroused the admiration of all who were well acquainted with these tongues; and he was fond of saying "A foreign language is a weapon in the struggles of life." He had a special talent for languages, and this was inherited by his daughters. He was fifty when he began to learn Russian. Although the dead and the living languages already known to him were of no help in the mastery of Slavic roots, he had made such progress in six months as to be able to enjoy reading in the original the works of the authors he chiefly prized: Pushkin, Gogol, and Shchedrin. But his

main reason for learning Russian was that he might be able to read certain official reports—which the government had suppressed because the revelations they contained were so appalling. Some devoted friends had managed to procure copies for Marx, and there can be little doubt that he was the only western economist who had cognisance of them.

Besides the reading of poetry and novels, Marx had recourse to another and very remarkable source of mental relaxation, this being mathematics, of which he was exceedingly fond. Algebra even gave him moral consolation; and he would take refuge in it during the most painful moments of a storm-tossed life. In the days of his wife's last illness, he found it impossible to go on with his ordinary work, and his only escape from the thought of her sufferings was to immerse himself in mathematics. At this distressful period he wrote an essay upon the infinitesimal calculus. Professional mathematicians who have read it, describe it as being of the first importance, and it is to be published in his collected works. In the higher mathematics he could trace the dialectical movement in its most logical and at the same time in its simplest form. According to his way of thinking, a science was not properly developed until it had reached a form in which it could make use of mathematics.

Marx's library, comprising more than a thousand volumes laboriously got together in the course of a lifetime of research, was insufficient for his needs and for many years he was a regular attendant the British Museum Reading Room, whose catalogue

he greatly prized. Even his opponents are constrained to admit that he was a man of profound and wide erudition; and this not merely in his own speciality of economics, but also in the history, philosophy, and belletristic literature of many lands.

Although he invariably went to bed very late, he was always afoot between eight and nine in the morning. Having drunk a cup of black coffee and glanced at his newspapers, he would go to his study and work there till two or three next morning—breaking off only for meals, and (when the weather was fine) for a constitutional on Hampstead Heath. In the course of the day he generally slept for an hour or two on the sofa. When a young man, he would often keep at work all through the night. For Marx, work had become a passion, and one so absorbing that it was apt to make him forget to take food. Not infrequently he had to be summoned again and again before he would come down to the dining room; and hardly had he finished the last mouthful before he would make his way back to his desk. He was a poor trencherman, and sometimes found it necessary to stimulate his flagging appetite with highly seasoned food, such as ham, smoked fish, caviare, and pickles. His stomach had to pay forfeit for the colossal activity of his brain, to which, indeed, all his body was sacrificed. Thinking was his supreme enjoyment. I have often heard him quote from Hegel, the master of the philosophy of his youthful days, the saying: "Even the criminal thought of a scoundrel is grander and more sublime than the wonders of the heavens."

No doubt he must have had a very strong constitution, for otherwise he could never have endured so unusual a way of living or such exhausting intellectual labours. He was, in fact, very powerfully built. A man over the middle height, he had broad shoulders and a deep chest, and his limbs were well proportioned on the whole, though his legs were rather too short for his body (as is apt to be the case in members of the Jewish race). In youth he was an accomplished gymnast, and this had helped to strengthen him beyond the generality of men. The only exercise he had kept up was walking. He could walk for hours, and even climb hills, talking and smoking the whole time, without showing a sign of fatigue. It is not too much to say that he did a great deal of his work while walking up and down his study. Only at intervals would he sit at his desk in order to commit to paper what he had excogitated while pacing the floor. He was fond, too, of conversing while thus engaged in sentry-go, only pausing in his walk from time to time, when the subject matter became especially engrossing.

For years it was my custom to join him in his evening strolls on Hampstead Heath, and across the fields beyond, and it was then that I acquired the elements of economics. Without noticing what he was about, in these talks he developed for my benefit the whole of the first volume of *Capital*, which he was writing at the time. As soon as I got home I would, to the best of my ability, jot down the substance of what I had heard; but at first I found it very difficult to follow Marx's profound and com-

plicated thought-process. Unfortunately I no longer possess these invaluable notes, for after the fall of the Commune my papers in Paris and Bordeaux were seized by the police. Especially do I regret the loss of the notes made one evening when Marx, with a characteristic abundance of proofs and reflexions, had been expounding his brilliant theory of the development of human society. It was as if a veil had been lifted. For the first time I clearly grasped the logic of universal history, and became able to refer to their material causes the phenomena of the evolution of society and ideas—phenomena which to outward seeming are so contradictory. I was dazzled at the brilliancy of the prospect, and this impression lasted for years. The theory had the same effect upon the Madrid socialists when I expounded it to the best of my poor abilities. It is the greatest of all Marx's theories. More than this, it is unquestionably the greatest theory ever yet formulated by the human mind.

Marx's brain was stored with an incredible quantity of historical and scientific facts and philosophical theories, and he was amazingly skilled in the art of drawing weapons from this armoury. At any time, and upon any conceivable topic, he could supply a thoroughly satisfactory answer to any enquiry, an answer adorned with philosophical reflexions of far-reaching significance. His brain resembled a warship which lies in harbour under full steam, being ready at a moment's notice to set forth into any of the seas of thought. Indubitably, *Capital* discloses to us the workings of a mind remarkable for

its energy and richly stored with knowledge. But for me, as for all who know Marx well, neither *Capital* nor any of his other writings shows forth the full extent of his knowledge or the full grandeur of his genius. The man towered above his writings.

I worked with Marx. I was nothing more than the secretary to whom he dictated, but this gave me the opportunity of watching how he thought and wrote. His work was and was not easy. It was easy because, whatever the theme, the apposite facts and reflections surged up in his mind whenever he needed them; but this very abundance made the exposition of his ideas a long and difficult process.

Vico wrote: "Only for God, who knows all, is the thing a substance; for man, who knows externals merely, it is nothing more than a surface." Now, Marx grasped things after the manner of the God of whom Vico was thinking; he did not see the surface only, but penetrated into the depths, examining all the corporate parts in their mutual interactions, isolating each of these parts and tracing the history of its development. Then he passed on from the thing to its environment, watching the effect of each upon the other. Last of all he went back to the origin of the object of study, considering the transformations, the evolutions and revolutions, through which it had passed, and tracing even the remotest of its workings. He never saw a thing as a thing-by-itself, out of touch with its setting; but contemplated it as part of a complicated and mobile world of things. His aim was to expound all the life of this world of things, in its manifold and in-

cessantly varying actions and reactions. The writers of the school of Flaubert and De Goncourt complain of the difficulty of giving an accurate account of what we see; and yet that which they wish to describe is nothing more than the surface of which Vico spoke, nothing more than an impressionist picture. Their literary task was child's play compared with that undertaken by Marx. He needed quite exceptional powers of thought to comprehend the reality; and not less exceptional talent for exposition, if he was to make intelligible to others what he saw and wanted them to see. He was never content with what he wrote, altering it again and again, to feel in the end that the presentation remained inadequate to the idea. One of Balzac's psychological studies, *Le chef d'œuvre inconnu* (pitifully plagiarised by Zola), made a great impression on him because it was in part a description of his own feelings. A talented painter tries again and again to limn the picture which has formed itself in his brain; touches and retouches his canvas incessantly; to produce at last nothing more than a shapeless mass of colours; which nevertheless to his prejudiced eye seems a perfect reproduction of the reality in his own mind.

Marx possessed both the qualities essential to a brilliant thinker. He had few equals in his power of analysing an object into its constituent parts; and he was a master in the art of resynthesising this object, in all its details and in its various phases of development, and also in the art of discovering its inner connexions. His method of demonstration

does not consist (as so many economists declare) in playing with abstractions which are incapable of being accurately conceived; he does not employ the device of the geometers who, having isolated their definitions away from the environing world, then go on to deduce conclusions in a realm quite out of touch with reality. We do not find in *Capital* a unique definition, or a unique formula; what we find there is a series of subtle analyses which disclose the most fleeting shades and the most fundamental but inconspicuous distinctions. He begins by insisting on the obvious fact that the wealth of the societies in which the capitalist mode of production is dominant consists of an enormous accumulation of commodities. Commodities, therefore, concrete objects and not mathematical abstractions, are the elements or cells out of which capitalist wealth is built up. Marx now takes firm hold of the commodity, twists it in every direction, turns it inside out, and thus reveals its secrets one after another—secrets of which the official economists have never had an inkling, and which are none the less more numerous and profounder than the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Having studied the commodity from every angle, he goes on to consider its relationships to its like, as shown in exchange; then he passes to its production, and to the historical prerequisites of its production. He contemplates the phenomenal forms of the commodity, and shows how it passes out of one form into another, how one form necessarily gives rise to another. The logical developmental sequence of the phenomena is displayed with

such consummate art that we might imagine Marx to have invented it; and yet it issues from reality, and is a reproduction of the actual dialectic of the commodity.

Marx was an extremely conscientious writer. He never gave facts or figures which he could not substantiate from the best authorities. In this matter he was not content with second-hand sources, but went always to the fountain head, however much trouble it might entail. Even for the verification of some subsidiary item, he would pay a special visit to the British Museum. That is why his critics have never been able to convict him of an error due to carelessness, or to show that any of his demonstrations were based on facts which could not be corroborated. Thanks to his habit of consulting originals, he would often quote authors whose names were known to very few besides himself. *Capital* contains a number of such quotations—so many that it might be supposed they were introduced to make a parade of learning. But Marx was moved by a very different impulse. He said: "I am performing an act of historical justice, and am rendering to each man his due." It seemed to him obligatory to name the author, however insignificant and obscure, who had first expressed a thought, or had expressed it more precisely than any one else.

His literary conscience was no less strict than his sense of scientific responsibility. Not merely would he never mention a fact of whose authenticity there could be the slightest doubt, but he would not allude to a topic at all unless he had made a thorough

study of it. He would not publish anything until he had worked over it again and again, and until what he had written seemed to him satisfactory in point of form. He could not bear to offer half-finished thoughts to the public. It would have been most distressing to him to show one of his manuscripts before it had been finally revised. This feeling was so strong in him that he said to me one day he would rather burn his manuscripts than leave them behind him unfinished. His methods of work often involved him in tasks enormously more arduous than the readers of his books could imagine. For instance, in order to write the twenty-odd pages of *Capital* dealing with British factory legislation he had consulted a whole library of blue-books containing the reports of special commissions of enquiry and of the English and Scottish factory inspectors. As the pencil markings show, he read them from cover to cover. He regarded these reports as some of the most important of the documents available for the study of the capitalist method of production; and he had so high an opinion of the men who had made them that he declared it would be hard to find in any other nation "men as competent, as unbiased, and as free from respect of persons as are the English factory inspectors." This remarkable tribute will be found in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*.

Marx drew an abundance of facts out of these blue-books—which many of the members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords (to whom they were distributed) used only as targets

in order to ascertain the power of their weapons by counting the number of pages the bullets would penetrate. Others sold them by weight as waste paper. That was the best use they could make of them, for it enabled Marx to get his copies cheap from a paper-merchant in Long Acre. According to Professor Beesly, Marx was the man who most highly esteemed these official enquiries made by the British government, and was indeed the man who made them known to the world. But Beesly did not know that as long ago as 1845 Engels had been an attentive student of the British blue-books, and had culled from them many facts for his treatise on *The Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844*.

## II.

Those who would know the man's heart and love it, that heart which beat so warmly beneath the outer wrappings of the scholar, had to see Marx when his books and manuscripts had been thrust aside—in the bosom of his family, and on Sunday evenings in the circle of his friends. At such times he was a most delightful companion, sparkling with wit and bubbling over with humour, one whose laugh came from the depths. His dark eyes would twinkle merrily beneath his bushy eyebrows when he listened to some bright sally or apt rejoinder.

He was a gentle, tender, and considerate father. A favourite phrase of his was: "Children must educate their parents." His daughters loved him ardently, and in the relationship between him and them there never lowered any shadow of paternal authority. He never ordered them about, being content to ask them to do him a favour, or to beg them not to do something which he would rather they left undone. Yet seldom was a father's counsel more gladly listened to than his. His daughters looked on him as their friend and playmate. They did not address him as "Father," but as "Mohr"<sup>1</sup>—a nickname which had been given him because of his dark complexion and his ebony locks and beard. On the other hand, as far back as 1848, when he was not yet thirty, to his fellow-members of the Communist League he was "Father Marx."

He would spend hours playing with his children. They still remember fierce sea-fights. Having made

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<sup>1</sup> Blackamoor.

whole fleets of paper boats, and put them to sail in a bucket, he would then—amid jubilation—set fire to his mimic warships. On Sundays the girls would not allow him to work; he was theirs for the day. When the weather was fine, the whole family would go for a country walk, stopping at a wayside pub for a modest luncheon of bread and cheese with ginger beer. When the children were still quite small, he would shorten the miles for them by telling them stories without an end, fairy tales invented as he went along and spun out to fit the length of the tramp, so that his hearers forgot their fatigue. Marx had a fertile imagination, and his first literary ventures were poems. His wife treasured these youthful efforts, but would not let any one see them. Marx's parents had intended their son to become a man of letters or a university professor. In their view he degraded himself by adopting the career of socialist agitator, and by devoting himself to the study of political economy (a subject then little esteemed in Germany).

Marx once promised his daughters that he would write them a play about the Gracchi. Unfortunately this scheme never ripened. It would have been interesting to see what "the knight of the class war," as he was sometimes called, would have made of the theme—a dread and splendid episode in the class struggles of the antique world. This was but one of many plans that were never carried out. For instance, he designed to write a work on logic, and another on the history of philosophy, the latter having been one of his favourite studies in earlier days.

He would have needed to live to a hundred to have a chance of writing all the books he had planned, and of presenting to the world a fair proportion of the wealth with which his mind was stored.

Throughout his married life, his wife was a companion in the fullest sense of the word. They had known one another in childhood, and had grown up together. Marx was only eighteen when they were betrothed. They had to wait seven years before their marriage in 1843, but thenceforward they were never separated until Frau Marx died, not long before her husband. Although she had come from a German noble family, no one could have had a more lively sense of equality than she. For her, social differences and class distinctions did not exist. In her house, at her table, workmen in their working clothes were welcomed with as much cordiality as if they had been dukes or princes of the blood royal. Many workers from all lands enjoyed her hospitality, and I am sure that none of those whom she received with such simple and unfeigned kindness ever dreamed that their hostess was descended in the female line from the dukes of Argyll, or that her brother had been minister of State to the king of Prussia. Nor were these things of any moment to her. She had left them all to follow Karl Marx's stormy fortunes; and she never regretted the step, not even in the days of their greatest poverty.

She had a serene and cheerful temperament. Her letters to her friends, effortless outpourings of her facile pen, were the masterly productions of a lively and original mind. Her correspondents regarded

the days on which these letters arrived as days of rejoicing. Johann Philip Becker has published a number of them. Heine, the ruthless satirist, dreaded Marx's mockery, but he had a great admiration for the keen and sensitive intelligence of Frau Marx. When the pair visited Paris, he was a frequent guest in their house. Marx had so much respect for his wife's critical faculties that (as he told me in 1866) he submitted all his manuscripts to her, and greatly valued her judgment upon them. She copied his writings before they went to press.

Frau Marx had a good many children. Three of these died quite young during the phase of penury through which the family passed after the revolution of 1848, when they were refugees in London living in two small rooms in Dean St., Soho. When I got to know the family, they had only three children left, all girls. Then, in 1865, the youngest (now Mrs. Aveling) was a delightful child, more like a boy than a girl. Marx was wont to say that his wife had made a blunder about the sex when she gave Eleanor to the world. The two other daughters formed the most charming and harmonious contrast that can be conceived. The elder (now Madame Longuet) was of a swarthy complexion like her father, with dark eyes and raven locks; the younger (now Madame Lafargue) took after her mother, having a fair skin, rosy cheeks, and a wealth of curly hair, sun-kissed, with a golden sheen.

In addition to those already named, there was another important member of the Marx family,

Helene Demuth by name. Of peasant birth, she had become a servantmaid in the Westphalen family when quite young, long before Jenny von Westphalen married Karl Marx. When the marriage took place, Helene would not part from Frau Marx, but followed the fortunes of the Marx family with the most self-sacrificing devotion. She accompanied Marx and his wife in their wanderings, and shared in their various expulsions. The practical spirit of the household, she knew how to make the best of the most difficult situations. It was thanks to her orderliness, thrift, and mother-wit that the family never had to endure the worst extremity of destitution. A mistress of all domestic arts, she acted as cook and housemaid, and also cut out the children's clothes, stitching them with Frau Marx's help. She was simultaneously housekeeper and major-domo. The children loved her like a mother; and she, returning their love, wielded a mother's influence over them. Both Marx and his wife regarded her as a dear friend. Marx played chess with her, and sometimes got the worst of the encounter. Helene's love for the Marxes was uncritical. Everything they did was right, and could not be bettered; any one who found fault with them had to reckon with her. All the intimates of the household were mothered by her, for she had, so to say, adopted the family and its friends. Having survived Marx and his wife, she has now transferred her kindly attentions to the Engels' household. She had made Engels' acquaintance in youth, and became almost as fond of him and his as of the Marxes.

Besides, Engels might for practical purposes be looked upon as a member of the Marx family. The girls spoke of him as their second father. He was Marx's alter ego. In Germany for years they were invariably spoken of together as "Marx and Engels," and history has united their names on the title-pages of their joint works. In our modern age, Marx and Engels realised the ideal of friendship portrayed by the writers of classical antiquity. They had become acquainted in youth, had undergone a parallel development, had lived in the most intimate community of thoughts and feelings, had participated in revolutionary agitation, and had worked side by side as long as they could. Presumably they would have done so throughout life, had not circumstances forced them apart for twenty years. After the defeat of the revolution of 1848, Engels had to go to Manchester, whilst Marx was compelled to stay in London. None the less they continued to share their intellectual life by means of an exchange of letters. Almost daily they wrote to one another about political and scientific happenings, and about the work on which they were respectively engaged. As soon as Engels could break the chains which fettered him to Manchester, he hastened to set up house in London only ten minutes' walk from his beloved Marx. From 1870 till Marx's death in 1883, hardly a day passed on which they did not see one another, either at Marx's or at Engels'.

During the period of Engels' residence in Manchester, there were always great rejoicings in the Marx household when Engels announced his inten-

tion to visit London. The coming was a topic of conversation for days in advance; and when the time drew near, Marx was so impatient that he could not work. At length came the hour of reunion, and then the two friends would spend the whole night together, smoking over their beer, and talking of all that had happened since their last meeting.

Marx valued Engels' opinion more than any one else's. Engels was the man he deemed worthy to be his collaborator. In fact, Engels was for him a whole audience, a whole public. To convince Engels, to win Engels over to an idea, no labour seemed to Marx excessive. For instance, I have known him re-read entire volumes in search of facts required to change Engels' opinion concerning some minor detail (I cannot now recall what it was) in the political and religious war of the Albigenes. To convince Engels was a triumph.

Marx was proud of Engels. He luxuriated in numbering off to me all his friend's moral and intellectual merits; and he made a special journey to Manchester in order to show Engels off to me. He admired the remarkable versatility of Engels' knowledge; and he was uneasy at the possibility of any accident that might befall his old companion. "I am terrified lest he should be thrown, on one of his mad cross-country gallops," said Marx to me one day.

Marx was as good a friend as he was a loving husband and father. His wife, his daughters, Helene Demuth, and Friedrich Engels, were beings worthy the love of such a man as himself.

## III.

Marx, who had begun as one of the leaders of the radical bourgeoisie, found himself forsaken by his associates when his position became too sharply defined, and treated as an enemy as soon as he became a socialist. A hue and cry was raised against him, he was vilified and calumniated, and then he was driven out of Germany; thereafter a conspiracy of silence was organised against him and his works. His *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*—which showed that of all the historians and publicists of the year 1848, Marx was the only one who understood the true nature of the causes and effects of the coup d'état of December 2, 1851, and the only one who elucidated them—was completely ignored. Not a single bourgeois journal made any mention of the work, despite its actuality. *The Poverty of Philosophy* (an answer to Proudhon's *The Philosophy of Poverty*) and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* were likewise ignored. At length, after fifteen years, the foundation of the International Workingmen's Association and the publication of the first volume of *Capital* broke the spell. Marx could no longer be ignored. The International grew, and filled the world with the fame of its deeds. Although Marx kept in the background and let others appear as the chief actors, the identity of the manager was soon discovered. In Germany, the Social Democratic Party was founded, and speedily became a power which Bismarck courted before he attacked it. Schweitzer, a follower of Lassalle, published a series of articles (Marx

thought very well of them) which made *Capital* known to working-class readers. One of the congresses of the International adopted J. P. Becker's resolution recommending the book to international socialists as the bible of the working class.

After the rising of March 18, 1871, in which it was supposed the handiwork of the International could be traced, and after the defeat of the Commune (which the General Council of the International defended against the onslaughts of the bourgeois press of all lands), the name of Marx became world-famous. He was universally recognised as the invincible theoretician of scientific socialism, and as the organiser of the first international labour movement. *Capital* was now the textbook of socialists everywhere; socialist and labour journals popularised his theories; and during a great strike in New York extracts from his writings were published as leaflets, in order to enhearten the workers for the struggle and to expound to them the justice of their own demands. *Capital* was translated from the German into the other most widely read European languages; into Russian, French, and English. Extracts from the book appeared in German, Italian, French, Spanish, and Dutch. Whenever, in Europe or America, opponents have tried to refute Marx's theories, socialist economists have been able to find an effective answer. To-day, in very truth, *Capital* is what the before-mentioned congress of the International declared it to be, the bible of the working class.

But Marx's active participation in the international

socialist movement left him too little time for scientific work; and further blows were struck at this work by the death of his wife and that of his eldest daughter, Madame Longuet.

Marx and his wife were intimately associated by ties of mutual dependence. Her beauty had been his joy and his pride; her gentleness and her devotion had made it far easier for him to bear the poverty inseparable from his life as revolutionary socialist. During her long and painful illness, Marx was worn out—mentally by distress; and physically by sleeplessness and by lack of fresh air and exercise. These were predisposing causes of the pulmonary inflammation which was to make an end of him.

On December 2, 1881, Frau Marx died as she had lived, a communist and materialist. Death had no terrors for her. When she felt that it was close at hand, she said: "Karl, my strength is broken." These were her last articulate words. On December 5th, she was buried in unconsecrated ground in Highgate cemetery. In accordance with her lifelong sentiments and those of her husband, the funeral was kept as private as possible, and only a few intimates accompanied the body to its last resting place. At the graveside, Friedrich Engels, spoke as follows:

"Friends, the high-minded woman whom we are burying here to-day was born at Salzwedel in the year 1814. Soon afterwards her father, Baron von Westphalen, was transferred to Treves as councillor of State, and there became an intimate of the Marx family. The children grew up together. The two highly-gifted natures were mutually attractive.

When Marx's student days at the university began, they had already made up their minds to join their lives.

"They were married in 1843, after the suppression of the "*Rheinische Zeitung*," which Marx had edited for a time. Ever since, Jenny Marx has not simply shared the fortunes and the labours and the struggles of her husband, but has passionately and actively and with the fullest understanding made them her own.

"The young couple went to Paris, for an exile which was at first voluntary, but soon became enforced. The Prussian government extended its persecution of Marx even to that distant spot, and with grief I have to say that no less a man than Alexander von Humboldt did not shrink from being intermediary in the negotiations which led to the Marxes' expulsion from France. They removed to Brussels. Then came the February revolution. During the disturbances that ensued in Brussels, the Belgian government was not content with arresting Marx, but thought fit (without a shred of evidence against her) to throw his wife into prison as well.

"The revolutionary movement begun in 1848 collapsed in 1849. Further exile ensued for the Marxes, at first in Paris, and then, thanks to a renewed decree of expulsion by the French government, in London. This time for Jenny Marx it was indeed exile with all its terrors. She bore up against the material difficulties thanks to which three of her children, two boys and a girl, died. But it was a terrible blow to her when the [Prussian] govern-

ment and the bourgeois opposition, both the liberals and the democrats, made common cause against her husband; when they bespattered him with the most detestable calumnies; when the whole press closed its columns against him, so that for a while he stood defenceless against the onslaught of foes whom he and his wife could not but despise. This state of affairs lasted for a long time, but not for ever. The European proletariat once more secured conditions of existence in which a certain amount of independent mobility became possible. The International was founded. The class struggle of the workers spread from land to land, and Karl Marx, her husband, fought in the front rank of the vanguard. Now began a period in which she received compensation for many of the grievous troubles of the past. She saw the calumnies which had been showered on Marx, scattered like chaff before the wind; she saw his doctrines, which the reactionaries of all shades of opinion from the feudalists to the democrats had done their utmost to suppress, being preached from every house-top in all the languages of the civilised world; she saw the proletarian movement, which to her seemed bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh, shaking the foundations of the old order from east to west, from Russia to America, and pressing forward to victory despite the most strenuous opposition. One of her last joys was to note the striking proof of inexhaustible energy so recently given by our German workers in the elections to the Reichstag.

"What such a woman, with so keen and critical

an understanding, with so much political tact, so much energy and impetus, with so much devotion on behalf of those who fought shoulder to shoulder with her in the working-class movement—what such a woman has done during the last forty years, is not recorded in the annals of the contemporary press. It is known only to those who have lived through it all. But this much I am sure, that the wives of the refugees from the Commune will often think of her, and that many of us will sadly miss her bold and prudent advice—bold but never boastful, prudent but never dishonourable.

"I need not speak of her personal qualities. Her friends know them, and will not forget them. If there was ever a woman whose supreme delight it was to make others happy, it was she."

After his wife's death, Marx's life was nothing more than a sequence of stoically endured physical and moral sufferings, which were intensified when, a year later, his eldest daughter, Madame Longuet, died suddenly. He was broken, and never recovered. The end came on March 14, 1883, when he fell asleep, sitting in his study chair.

A WORKER'S MEMORIES OF  
KARL MARX  
*by* FRIEDRICH LESSNER



# A WORKER'S MEMORIES OF KARL MARX

by *Friedrich Lessner*

SINCE the death of our great champion, much has been written about him, his life, and his work—and this both by adherents and by opponents.

But the writers of these essays, with few exceptions, were not (I use a phrase current among certain trade unions in "free" England) bona-fide workers. Either by origin or position in life, most of them belonged to what is called the middle class.

I do not think, then, that my forerunners will take it amiss if I, as a workman, as a plebeian knight of the needle, write down for the benefit of my younger comrades, on the occasion of this commemorative festival, my memories of our immortal champion. These memories are based upon many years' personal intercourse with Karl Marx. In part they will describe the impressions which Marx made on myself and others, and in part they will amplify the picture of his life.

I was still a very young man when, in the middle forties, I first came across the name of Karl Marx in the columns of the "*Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*." In 1847, during the discussion and acceptance of the draft of that historical document the *Communist Manifesto*, I became more closely acquainted with his doctrines. At that time I was working in London, and was a member of the Communist Workers' Educational Society, which met at 191 Drury

Lane. Here, in the end of November and the beginning of December, 1847, was held a conference of the members of the central committee of the Communist League. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels attended this conference, having journeyed from Brussels to give the members of the League their views concerning modern communism and its relationship to politics and the working-class movement. The sittings of this conference were, of course, held in the evenings. Only delegates were admitted, but we who were not delegates were keenly interested in the progress of the discussions, and were kept informed as to what was going on. Ere long we learned that, after prolonged debates, it had been unanimously agreed to accept the principles expounded by Marx and Engels, who were commissioned to write a manifesto embodying their outlooks. When, early in 1848, the manuscript of the manifesto reached London, I was privileged to play a modest part in the publication of this epoch-making document, for I took the manuscript to the printer and in due course brought back the proofs for correction to Karl Schapper, the principal founder of the Communist Workers' Educational Society.

In 1848, after the outbreak of the revolution, the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" was founded at Cologne by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who had various members of the Communist League and a number of convinced democrats as collaborators. I, too, went to live in Cologne, and did my utmost to help the comrades in their propaganda. Wherever I hap-

pened to be working, I distributed copies of the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung," and often, while at work, read some of the articles aloud to my fellow-workers, who usually formed an enthusiastic audience. In May, 1849, after the Prussian government had again and again taken legal proceedings against the newspaper, it was forcibly suppressed, and Marx was expelled from Cologne. Soon afterwards I shared this fate. In the year 1851, I was arrested in Mainz. After spending two years in prison on remand, I was, at the famous trial of the Cologne communists, sentenced to three years' imprisonment in a fortress. I served my time in Graudenz, and in Silberberg on the Silesian frontier.

During the trial, Marx (now settled in London) did all he could on our behalf; but his labours and those of his friends were rendered fruitless by the machinations of Police Commissary Stieber and other saviours of society, by the class prejudice of the jury, and—I must sadly admit—by the stupidity of some of our own folk for whose blunders we were held responsible.

Already in those days there were quite a number of so-called men of action, ultra-revolutionary by profession, for whom nothing was radical enough. They cherished the illusion that the revolution could be brought about at any moment by "putsches" or extemporised insurrections. Nine out of ten of them, however, were men of words and not of deeds, phrase-makers who had never done any serious work in the movement. The most rabid among them, whose clamour was designed to make

you feel that they longed to fix their teeth in every exploiter's throat, have since then become the worst exploiters of the lot. Some of them were to be seen in later years driving in their private carriages through the streets of London.

When my term of detention in a fortress was over I returned to London in 1856, and there I at length came into personal contact with Marx.

In 1850 he and his intimates had left the Communist Workers' Educational Society, because the putschists, under the leadership of Willich, had gained the upper hand in that body. But when Kinkel, who in his day was one of the ultra-revolutionists, had been expelled, I was able to induce Marx to visit the Society once more, and to give lectures there upon political and economic topics. Liebknecht and other party comrades also rejoined the organisation.

Kinkel had founded a periodical called "Hermann," and in the days of the Italian war this voiced the Bonapartist slogans. As a counterblast, "Das Volk" was published in the spring of 1859, and Marx was invited to contribute to its columns. He wrote for it some very interesting articles upon Prussia's attitude towards the Italian imbroglio, and also sent a whip round among his friends for funds to support the new paper. The same year appeared *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy—see above, p. 24); and in 1860 Marx published *Herr Vogt*, to expose the Bonapartist machinations of this gentleman and those of "his patrons and confeder-

ates." This work was penned to refute the shameless calumnies that were being circulated by Vogt and his friends. It contains a great deal of information concerning the history of the refugee movement after the revolution of 1848, and a valuable account of the diplomatic intrigues of the European cabinets.

At length, in 1864, the International was called to life. I played an active part in its foundation, and became a member of the General Council, being thus brought into closer relationship with Marx.

He was always especially delighted to get into touch with manual workers, and to have opportunities for conversing with them. He especially sought the company of those who did not hesitate to oppose his views frankly, and those who did not trouble him with flattery. The views of manual workers concerning the movement were of great interest to him. He was always ready to discuss important political and economic problems with them, quickly discovering whether they really knew what they were talking about, and being overjoyed when this was the case. During the lifetime of the International, he never missed a sitting of the General Council. After the sittings, most of us, Marx included, usually adjourned to a quiet tavern and continued the discussions informally over a glass of beer. On the way home, Marx often talked about the normal working day, for as early as 1866 we had begun agitating on behalf of the eight-hour day, and this became part of our program at the Geneva Congress in September, 1866. Marx was fond of saying: "We

want to get an eight-hour day established as the normal, but we ourselves are apt to work at least twice as long!" It is unfortunately true that Marx was too prone to work overtime, that he suffered from overwork. The International alone cost him a vast amount of time and energy—how much, no outsider can possibly realise. Besides this, he had to work for his living, and to spend innumerable hours in the British Museum Reading Room gathering material for his historical and economic writings. I lived not far from the Museum, and on his way back to his home, in Maitland Park Road, Haverstock Hill, North London, he would often drop in to have a word with me about some matter connected with the affairs of the International. When he got home, he would sup, and then take a short rest. After that he usually set to work again, often working far into the night and even into the small hours—more especially when he had been kept away from his desk too long after supper by visits from comrades.

Marx's house was always open to a trusty comrade. I can never forget the happy hours which I, like so many others, spent in his family circle. Here his wife was the most striking figure. She was a tall and very beautiful woman, of distinguished appearance, but at the same time so kind-hearted, so amiable, so full of life and withal so natural and so free from stiffness, that visitors felt as much at home with her as if she had been their own mother or sister. Her whole personality irresistibly recalled the words of Thomas Otway: "Woman, lovely

woman, nature made thee to temper man." She was an enthusiast for the workers' cause; and she rejoiced at any victory, however small, won by the workers in their fight with the bourgeoisie.

The three daughters, too, were from earliest childhood keenly interested in the modern working-class movement, which was always the main topic of conversation in the Marx household. The relationships between Marx and the girls were the most intimate and unconstrained that can be imagined. They treated him more like a brother or a friend than a father, for Marx had no love for the role of authoritative parent. In serious matters, he was his children's counsellor; and when he could spare the time, he was their playmate. He had, in fact, an intense love for children, and would often say that what he liked best in the biblical figure of Jesus was the latter's fondness for the little ones. When nothing called him to central London, and his walks took him towards Hampstead Heath, the author of *Capital* would, as likely as not, be seen having a romp with a crowd of children of the streets.

Like all truly great men, Marx was quite free from arrogance, giving due credit to all honest endeavour, and valuing every opinion grounded on independent thought. As I have said before, he was always eager to learn what simple manual workers thought about the labour movement. In the afternoons he frequently came to see me, took me out for a walk, and talked to me of anything and everything. Of course, I left the conversation to him as far as I could, for it was such a delight to listen to

the development of his thoughts and also to hear him when he was in lighter vein. I was enthralled on such occasions, and found it difficult to tear myself away from him. The charm of his companionship impressed, one might almost say bewitched, all who came in contact with him. He had an inexhaustible fund of humour, and his laughter invariably rang true. If some of our own folk had gained a success anywhere, no matter in what country, he would express his jubilation with such heartiness that those in his company were irresistibly swept into the current of exultation. He was overjoyed at every electoral victory won by the German workers, and at every victorious strike. What intense pleasure he would have had could he have lived to witness the huge May Day demonstrations we are now able to organise. The attacks of his opponents only amused him, and I loved to hear the ironical and sarcastic way in which he spoke of them. Very remarkable was his nonchalance in the matter of his own works, once they had played their part. Should the name of one of his earlier books crop up in the conversation, he would say to me: "If you want to see a complete collection of my writings, you must apply to Lassalle, who keeps track of them all. For my part, I have not even one copy of most of them." This was not a rhetorical exaggeration, but the simple truth. Again and again, he asked for the loan of some book of his of which I happened to have a copy.

For many years, Marx's writings remained quite unknown to the masses; and even to-day they have

never been sufficiently appreciated. This applies, above all, to the works written before and during the revolution of 1848 and in the years next ensuing—works whose circulation at that time encountered very serious difficulties. But there is no widespread knowledge even of his other books, for he was never the man to blow his own trumpet. Those who collaborated with Marx and Engels from the earliest days cannot but laugh when they hear the foundation of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein (the General Union of German Workers) described as the beginning of the modern working-class movement. The organisation of this body took place in the early sixties, when Marx, Engels, and others had been busily engaged in propaganda for twenty years. I do not write this in any spirit of opposition to Lassalle. I knew him personally during the years 1848 to 1850, prized the man for his volcanic energy, and am glad to acknowledge the powerful effect of his agitational work. Thanks to Lassalle, the movement took a great stride forwards. The last time I saw him was in October and November, 1852, during the trial of the Cologne communists, which he attended as an interested spectator. I did not meet him during any of his repeated visits to London. He did not come to the Communist Workers' Educational Society, and I missed him at Marx's.

^ In the beginning of October, 1868, Marx told me gleefully that the first volume of *Capital* had been translated into Russian and was in the press in St. Petersburg. He had a very high opinion of the Rus-

sian movement, referring with much respect to the Russians, who were making such great sacrifices for the study and spread of works on scientific theory, and commending them for their grasp of modern thought. When the first copy of the Russian edition of his book came to hand, this seemed to him a notable sign of the times, and was an occasion for rejoicing, not to Marx alone, but to his family and his friends as well.

Whenever the workers sustained a defeat in their conflict with the exploiting class, Marx took the cause of the vanquished very much to heart, and rallied vigorously to their defence against the never-failing taunts of the conquerors. Such was his reaction after the June Days (Paris, in 1848), after the defeat of the 1848 revolution in Germany, and after the fall of the Paris Commune in 1871—when the reactionaries all over the world and even the majority of the unenlightened workers turned furiously on any who dared to espouse the cause of the Communards. Marx was the very first to champion the massacred and persecuted fighters for the Commune; and the Address of the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association, called *The Civil War in France*, shows with what splendid energy he did this. Verily, it is after a defeat that we know our true friends.

After the downfall of the Commune, work in the International became continually more irritating to Marx and brought him less and less inward satisfaction. Every revolution attracts, in addition to all the doughty fighters, a number of undesirable

characters, adventurers of one sort and another who hope to derive personal advantage from the situation. There were many such undesirables among the Communard refugees; and, for the very reason that they had derived loss instead of profit from what had happened in Paris, they now did their utmost to sow dissension. To do this was all the easier because there already existed a conspicuous lack of harmony in the ranks of the Communards. The Blanquists, the Proudhonists, the autonomists, the anarchists, and "ists" of various other denominations were perpetually flying at one another's throats. The troubles were reflected in the sittings of the General Council. These were often stormy, and Marx had the utmost difficulty in persuading his fellow-members to be reasonable. The patience he usually displayed on these occasions beggars description. But from time to time the distorted views and the crazy schemes of the disappointed Communards exasperated him beyond endurance.

The worst hotheads, the most unreasonable, were the Blanquists. They already had the revolution in their pockets once more, and were ready to deal out death-sentences right and left.

So far, these disputes were amusing rather than serious; but the quarrels among the French dragged the delegates of other nations into the fray. Some sympathised with one faction, some with another. Since, in addition, Bakunin, an arch-intriguer, was busily at work, the sittings in High Holborn (where the General Council then met) were more lively

than words can tell. There was incessant friction. The babel of tongues, the conflict of temperaments and outlooks, made it a Herculean task to keep the peace. Those who are in the habit of blaming Marx for his intolerance should have watched the skill and the patience with which he entered into the ideas of the disputants, and showed them where their reasoning was erroneous.

In certain respects and to a certain degree, every political warrior must be intolerant; and in my opinion we should be extremely grateful to Marx for having done everything he could to keep contentious and ambiguous elements out of the International. In the early days of the organisation, a very mixed lot of people applied for membership—among others, Bradlaugh, the high-priest of atheism. To Marx, chiefly, we owe it that these worthies were given to understand that the International Workingmen's Association was not a nursery for sectarians, whether religious, anti-religious, or of any other persuasion.

It was a great satisfaction to Marx when his daughters, Jenny and Laura married two excellent fellows of the same way of thinking as himself. Jenny's husband was Charles Longuet, and Laura's was Paul Lafargue. The youngest girl, Eleanor, likewise ultimately married a talented socialist, Edward Aveling; but, alas, this was not until after the death of both her parents. With what keen enjoyment would they have watched their children's activities on behalf of the emancipation of the workers; and how delighted would they have been to

acclaim the advances made by the working-class movement during the last ten years!

Marx's eldest daughter, Jenny, was endowed with all the qualities of her mother, qualities that were good without exception. Her untimely death in 1882 was a misfortune which occurred at a particularly unfavourable moment for Marx. The elder Jenny, Marx's lifelong companion, had died barely twelve months earlier, on December 2, 1881, and he never recovered from these two terrible blows. He was already suffering from an extremely bad cough, which was so violent that it seemed as if it would shake his powerful frame to pieces. But for years before this, his constitution had been weakened by persistent overwork. About seven years earlier, his doctor had forbidden him to smoke. He had always been a heavy smoker, and this was a great sacrifice. The first time I saw him after the prohibition had been issued, he proudly told me how many days had elapsed since his last smoke, and said he was determined not to smoke any more until the doctor gave him leave. On subsequent visits, it was just the same; he always told me the exact sum in days and weeks since this severe regimen had been enforced on him, and assured me that he had never broken the rule. In fact he could hardly believe in the reality of his own abstinence. All the greater, then, was his pleasure when, after a while, his medical adviser allowed him one cigar a day.

There can be no two opinions as to the fact that Karl Marx's death was premature. Those who were in confidential intercourse with him had long been

anxious about his health, for Marx would take no proper precautions when the interest of his scientific studies and that of the labour movement were at stake. None of his friends and none of the members of his family circle could influence him in these matters. His posthumous papers suffice to show what a wealth of knowledge has gone with him into the grave, though they do not contain as much as a tenth part of what he had planned to write. Still, these papers have come down to us as his legacy, and will be made accessible to us. We can congratulate ourselves that Marx's oldest and most intimate friend, Friedrich Engels, is still with us in full vigour of mind and body. He will make himself responsible for the editing of these posthumous works of Marx.

While Marx is thus supplying us, even after his death, with new knowledge and new outlooks, his teachings are spreading ever more widely throughout the fighting proletariat, and everywhere the working-class movement is being more and more influenced by these teachings. For Marx was not content with giving the masses the mighty slogan, "Workers of the world, unite"; he also furnished the platform upon which their union could take place and is taking place. The International, whose animating spirit Karl Marx was, has been reborn, more powerful than ever; and the banner round which the working-class battalions of the international labour movement throng, is the banner which Marx raised in 1848, the one which the fighting proletariat has carried for a whole generation.

Beneath this banner the workers' army is now  
marching onward from victory to victory.



MARX AND THE CHILDREN  
*by* WILHELM LIEBKNECHT



# MARX AND THE CHILDREN

*by Wilhelm Liebknecht*

LIKE all people of strong and wholesome nature, Marx had a great liking for children. Not only was he the tenderest of fathers, one who, for hours on end, could be a child with his own young folk; he was likewise drawn as by a magnet to helpless, needy children who happened to cross his path. Hundreds of times I have known him wrench himself away from our company in order to stroke the hair or press a small coin into the hand of some poor, ragged wail sprawling on the doorstep of a slum dwelling. He became mistrustful of beggars, for mendicancy is practised as a fine art in the streets of London, and has a golden background though the income is mostly in copper coins. Although at first, whenever he had any money, he would give to beggars, after a while he sought shy of them. He cherished a fierce resentment against those who made a display of the most horrible diseases, the symptoms of which had been induced by cunning devices. Marx felt that such shameless exploitation of human sympathy was beneath contempt, and was a robbery of the poor. But when a male or female beggar approached him, leading a whimpering child by the hand, then he was irrevocably lost, even if trickery was writ large on the face of the accoster. Marx could not withstand the beseeching eyes of the child.

Physical weakness and helplessness stirred him to the highest pitch of compassion and sympathy. He would willingly have thrashed a wife-beater to within an inch of his life. (At that time, wife-beating was common in London). His headstrong behaviour on such occasions often brought him and his associates into scrapes. One evening he and I were driving on the box seat of an omnibus, along the Hampstead Road. The bus stopped in front of a gin-palace where a row was going on. A woman's voice shrieked: "Murder! Murder!" Like a flash of lightning Marx had hurled himself from his perch. I followed with almost equal celerity, hoping to restrain him. I might just as well have tried to stop a speeding bullet with my hand! In a twinkling we were in the midst of the fray, and the sea of people closed in on us. "What's up?" The matter was soon made clear. A drunken slattern had started a fight with her husband, who wished to take her home. She withstood him, fighting like one possessed. So far, so good. Any intervention on our part was superfluous, that was clear. The fighting couple saw this too, and immediately made peace with one another in order to launch an attack on us. The mob around us became denser and denser. Cries of "damned foreigners," arose on all sides. The woman came to fisticuffs with Marx, and clung viciously to his beautiful glossy beard. I tried to calm the troubled waters. In vain! Had not two constables come to the rescue, we might have paid dear for our philanthropical intervention. We were glad to escape with a whole skin, and, once more

stated aloft on the bus, to drive home without further ado. In later years, Marx became more cautious of intervening on such occasions.

Marx should have been seen with his own children if the onlooker was fully to realise the depth of feeling and childlike simplicity of this great man of learning. In leisure hours, or when out walking, he would carry them about, or would play the wildest, jolliest games with them. In very truth he became a child among children. On Hampstead Heath we played a wonderful game called "cavalry." Marx shouldered one little girl and I the other, then we would vie with each other in curvetting and trotting. Sometimes we would have a cavalry charge. The girls were regular tomboys, and could bear hard knocks without shedding tears.

The society of children was a prime necessity for Marx; he came forth from their company refreshed and invigorated. When his own children grew up or died, then he found his grandchildren could fill the gap. Little Jenny, who married Charles Longuet (the Communard refugee) in the early seventies, brought several children into the Marx household. Wild young devils they were, too! The elder, Jean or Johnny, now in France, doing his year of military service, most unwillingly, was Marx's favourite. The lad could twist his grandfather round his little finger—and knew his power only too well. The Longuets, as was their custom several times a year, had sent Jean on a visit to his grandparents in England. One day, when I, too, was staying in

London, the boy had the brilliant idea of converting Mohr into an omnibus. He sat on the box seat, i.e., Marx's shoulder, while Engels and myself had to become a pair of horses. We were duly harnessed to the vehicle, and what a wild time we had in the little back garden of Marx's house in Maitland Park Road! At least, I think it was there we had the splendid romp, but it may have been at Engels' house near Regents Park. London houses are as like as two peas, and are difficult to differentiate one from the other. The gardens, in especial, are all similar. They consist of a few square yards of grass and paths, smeared over with London soot—"black snow" as it is called—the prevailing dirt making it almost impossible to distinguish where grass ends and gravel begins!

Gee up! Mohr had to trot round, encouraged by an international selection of encouraging exclamations; "Go on! Plus vite! Hurrah!" The sweat streamed from our brows. If Engels or I slackened our pace, the ruthless whip descended upon us, wielded by the relentless little coachman. "You naughty horse! En avant!" So the game went on until Marx was at the end of his tether. Johnny was persuaded to let us off, and a truce declared.

Another trait in Marx was touching and at the same time rather comical. Although in political and economic discussion he was not wont to mince his words, often making use of quite coarse phrases, in the presence of children and of women his language was so gentle and refined that even an English

governess could have had no cause for complaint. If in such circumstances the conversation should turn upon some delicate subject, Marx would fidget, and would blush like a sixteen-year-old maiden. We young refugees were rather a wild lot, and were fond of singing without much restraint, though it was rare to find any among us with a creditable voice. Political enthusiasts, and in especial socialists and communists, are poorly endowed by the muse of lovely sounds! One day, however, a young fellow of the company, who had a charming voice, began to sing a song of dubious taste in Marx's sitting room. Mrs. Marx was not present, Lenchen and the girls were out. We were just ourselves. At first Marx had joined in the singing, or, rather the bawling. Of a sudden he looked uneasy, and we could hear sounds in the next room, sounds of people moving about. Marx wriggled about on his chair the picture of embarrassment. Then he sprang to his feet and, his cheeks aflame, he whispered, or, to speak more accurately, hissed: "Sh! sh! The girls!"

The lasses were, indeed, still too young to have their morals corrupted by the song we were singing. We youths were inclined to giggle, but Marx said that such songs must not be sung where they could be overheard by children. From that day unseemly songs were never again sung under Marx's roof.

Mrs. Marx was even more particular than her husband. She would not tolerate any joking on such matters, and could freeze us with a look when an impropriety was about to fall from our lips. Her influence over us was perhaps even greater than was

Marx's own. The simple dignity with which she kept anything that was not quite proper out of the conversation, had a most beneficial effect upon us free and easy young men.

I remember an adventure which made a great impression on one of our company, Ferdinand Wolff, generally known as "Red Wolf."<sup>1</sup> This young fellow had been in Paris, and had adopted many of the ways of that city. He was, likewise, very short-sighted. One evening he saw a graceful female form walking along in front of him. He hastened in pursuit. Although he circled round the veiled figure, the lady took not the slightest notice of him. Then, becoming bolder, he peered into her face at such close quarters that even his short-sighted eyes could not fail to recognise her. "The devil take me! It was Mrs. Marx," he exclaimed next day when relating the adventure. "Well, what did she say?"—"Nothing! That's just what makes it so infernally awkward."—"What did you do? Did you beg her pardon?"—"The devil take me! I did a bunk!"—"Oh, but you'll have to ask her forgiveness. After all, it's nothing so very dreadful."

But Red Wolf took a whole year before he could make up his mind to set foot in Karl Marx's house again, he who prided himself upon his dare-devil ways. He could not be persuaded to put in an appearance, although the very next day I told him that

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<sup>1</sup> He had been one of the collaborators on the "New Rhenish Gazette." He was called "Red Wolf" to distinguish him from "Prison Wolf" or "Lupus," whose real name was Wilhelm Wolff—the comrade to whom Marx dedicated *Capital*.

Mrs. Marx had treated the whole adventure as a huge joke, and had burst into gay laughter as she recalled the crestfallen appearance and flight of the would-be Don Juan.

Mrs. Marx was the first to teach me the power a good woman can exercise in the training of youth. My mother died when I was so young that I preserved only the most shadowy remembrance of her. During practically all the subsequent years of my childhood and adolescence I was wholly deprived of the company of women who could have helped me in the formation of my character and in the correction of my faults. Before meeting Mrs. Marx, I had never understood Goethe's couplet, which runs :

Do you wish to learn what is seemly behaviour?

You need only ask a noble-minded woman.

At times Frau Marx seemed to me like Iphigenia, who tamed and educated the barbarians; at others, she was Eleanor who gave peace to those who were at war with themselves, and lacked self-confidence. She was mother, friend, confidant, counsellor. She was, and still is, my ideal of what a woman should be. I wish to repeat, if, during my London days, I did not succumb both physically and mentally, I owe my salvation in very large measure to Mrs. Marx, who, when it seemed that I must be engulfed in the stormy waters of refugee misery, appeared to me like Leukothea to the shipwrecked Odysseus and gave me courage to strike out and swim once more.







# SUNDAY OUTINGS ON THE HEATH

*by Wilhelm Liebknecht*

**O**UR pilgrimages to Hampstead Heath! Were I to live a thousand years, I could never forget them. The "Heath" lies on the farther side of Primrose Hill; and both Heath and Hill have become endeared to Londoners and non-Londoners alike by associations conjured up by Dickens and his immortal Pickwickians. The Heath is still hardly built upon; it is covered with gorse, and groups of trees shade its uplands. The miniature mountains and valleys are free to roam about on at will without fear of "trespass," i.e., of penetrating into private property where a keeper may stop your progress and exact retribution. Hampstead Heath is still a favourite haunt of London excursionists; and on Sundays, when the weather is fine, the place is black with manly forms and gay with female dresses. The ladies have a special predilection for putting the patience of the all-too-patient donkeys and hack horses to the test by taking innumerable rides on these poor beasts. Forty years ago, Hampstead Heath was a far wider place than it is to-day; the growth of its trees was more natural and more luxuriant. A Sunday spent on the Heath was one of our greatest joys. The children would talk about going there a whole week in advance; and even we grown-ups, old and young, eagerly looked forward to the excursion. The very journey

thither was a treat. The girls were excellent walkers, lithe and untiring as cats. From Dean Street (where Marx was living at the time, a few doors away from Church Street where I myself had found anchorage) to the Heath was a good hour-and-a-quarter's walk. We usually started about eleven o'clock. Sometimes, however, we started later, for in London it is not customary to rise early on the Sabbath, and by the time everything was in order, the children washed and dressed, and the basket of provisions packed, the hour was somewhat late.

The basket! It stands there, or, rather, it hangs there before my mental eyes endued with so much life; it is so real, so alluring, so appetising, just as if I had seen it but yesterday swinging from Lenchen's arm.

This basket was the provisions warehouse. When one has a healthy appetite and very often lacks the wherewithal to satisfy it (we had little ready cash in those days, and large sums were quite out of the question), the food problem plays a very important rôle. Lenchen knew this only too well; she kept a sympathetic heart in her breast for her ill-fed and hungry guests. A roast of veal was the traditional dish for a Sunday excursion to Hampstead Heath. The basket was of unusual girth for London streets. It had been rescued from Treves days. It was a kind of holy of holies, a tabernacle. Tucked into the corners there would be tea and sugar, and occasionally some fruit. Bread and cheese could be bought on the Heath. Here likewise, as in the Berlin coffee gardens, we could procure knives and forks, boiling

water, milk, butter, beer, shrimps, watercress, and periwinkles, according to the fatness of our purses. For a short time the beer had not been procurable. The aristocratic hypocrites who can have any liquor they like in their clubs or their homes, and for whom every day is a Sunday or a holiday, tried to make the common people virtuous and moral by forbidding the sale of beer on Sundays. Londoners can't see the joke when an attack is being made upon their bellies. In hundreds of thousands, therefore, they foregathered in Hyde Park to make their protest. Scoffingly they bade the aristocrats of both sexes lolling in their carriages or riding in the Row to "Go to church!" The fine ladies and gents were quite shocked at such rough whoops. The following Sunday a quarter of a million people were in the park crying, "Go to church!" with renewed energy and increased earnestness. By the time the third Sunday came, the law had been repealed.

We refugees had helped as far as we were able in this "Go to church" revolution. Marx, who very easily lost his head on such occasions from sheer excitement, hardly escaped being collared by a policeman and brought up before the beak. But the man of law was tamed by a friendly enquiry whether he didn't like a glass of beer himself now and then.

The triumph of the hypocritical lawmakers did not last long, and save for this short interregnum, we could console ourselves during the shadeless walk to Hampstead Heath with the thought that,

once there, we could slake our thirst with a cool and refreshing draught.

This was the order of the march. I went forward as scout, accompanied by two of the girls. Sometimes I would entertain them with tales; sometimes I would show them some gymnastic exercises; sometimes we would hunt for wild flowers—which at that time were not so rare as they are now. Friends would follow not too far behind. Then came the main army: Marx with his wife and some one who had come to pay a Sunday call and who claimed a certain amount of consideration and attention. Lenchen brought up the rear with a bevy of the more hungry members of the party, who were eager to help her carry the basket. If more company was present it divided itself among the main groups already described. I need hardly say that the order of march could be changed according to individual caprice or needs.

Arrived on the Heath, a spot was sought where we could unfurl our tent, and most commodiously brew the tea or procure beer. Having drunk and eaten our fill—we found a pleasant resting place, and here we read our Sunday papers (bought on the way up)—though it was not forbidden to take a snooze if any one felt inclined. We elders would read, and talk politics, while the children (who soon made friends with little folk of their own age) would play hide-and-seek among the gorse bushes.

But we did not take our ease all the time. Change of occupation was needed. So we ran races, wrestled, threw stones at a target, and enjoyed similar sports.

One Sunday we discovered a horse-chestnut tree covered with ripe nuts. "Let's see who can bring down the most!" someone cried. "Hurrah!" we all shouted, and set to work. Mohr [Marx] was like a madman, and certainly the bringing down of chestnuts was not his strong point. Still, he was indefatigable—so were we all. The bombardment never ceased until the last chestnut fell to earth amid triumphant cries from all concerned. Marx could not use his right arm for a week afterwards; and I was in the same plight.

The great treat was a ride on the donkeys. How we laughed! What queer scenes ensued! How jovial Marx was and how he delighted us all—and himself. He gave us a twofold amusement: first because of his more than primitive equestrian art, and secondly because of the fanatical zeal with which he belauded his skill in this art. His skill consisted in the fact that, as a student, he had had riding lessons (Engels maintained that he had never got beyond the third), and that on his yearly visit to Manchester he went a-riding with Engels on a venerable Rosinante—apparently a great grandchild of the lamblike mare that old Fritz had once bestowed on the worthy Gellert.

Our return home from Hampstead Heath was very jolly, in spite of the fact that all the fun lay behind us instead of in front of us. We were safeguarded against any lapse into melancholy (though we might have excellent reasons for it) by our spirit of reckless merry-making. The sorrows of the refugee were not to be pandered to, and if anyone

began to complain he was straightaway reminded of his social duties.

The homeward march was somewhat differently ordered. The children, wearied with romping, lagged in the rear with Lenchen, who was now lighter of foot and better able to give them a hand, since her basket was empty. We usually sang as we walked. Political songs were seldom permitted, but folk-songs, songs full of feeling, and—I am not kidding you—"patriotic" songs from the "Fatherland." One which was a great favourite with us was: "O Strasburg, wonderfully beautiful city." Or the children would strike up a coon song, and would trip along to the lilt, if their little legs had recovered somewhat from their erstwhile fatigue. Politics, like refugee sorrows, were taboo. On the other hand, we talked glibly of literature and art, and it was in such converse that Marx showed his amazing powers of memory. He would recite long passages by heart, either from the Divine Comedy (of which he knew almost every line), or scenes from Shakespeare in which his wife (who was likewise an authority on the Bard) would from time to time help him out. If he happened to be in specially high fettle he would give us an imitation of Seidelmann as Mephistopheles. In his student days in Berlin, he had seen and heard this actor, and had preserved a great admiration for him. Also, *Faust* was Marx's favourite German literary work. It would be an exaggeration to say that Marx recited well, for he was too declamatory; but he never failed to make his points, or to interpret the author's meaning satis-

factorily. In a word, he was effective; and the sense of the ridiculous, which was apt to be aroused by the overstrained mannerisms of his opening passages passed away when the auditor realised that the reciter was thoroughly immersed in his role, and was fully equal to the occasion.

Little Jenny, the elder of the two girls (Tussy, or Eleanor, who ultimately became Aveling's wife, had not yet been born) was her father's image. She had his black eyes and his noble forehead. At times she would pass into pythoness-like ecstasies. Her eyes would flash and she would begin to declaim—often the most amazing fantasies. Once when we were on our way home from Hampstead, she had one of these paroxysms, speaking of life in the stars, in the most poetical phraseology. Her mother, with the alarm comprehensible in a woman who had lost several children, was nervous, saying: "It is unnatural to a girl of her age. Such precocity must be morbid." Mohr gently chided her for her anxiety, and I hastened to point out that the young pythoness looked the picture of health when she awakened from her prophetic trance, laughing merrily and jumping about just like any other child. It is true that Jenny died young, but her mother was spared the pain of outliving her.

When Jenny and Laura grew older, there was a change in the character of these Sunday excursions. Still, there was never any scarcity of young folk in our circle.

The Marxes lost several children. Both the boys died; the one born in London passed away in in-

fancy; the other, born in Paris, succumbed after a long illness and his death was a terrible shock to Marx. Well do I recall the sad weeks of hopeless malady. The boy (Edgar was his real name, after an uncle; but he was always known as Musch or Mouche) was highly gifted, but sickly from the first. A sad sight, this boy with lovely eyes and a fine head that was too heavy for his weakly body! Poor Musch might have had a reasonable chance of life if he could have been better cared for, and could have spent most of his time in the country or at the seaside. But he had to share the hardships of his refugee parents, who were hunted from place to place, and were poverty-stricken for years after they settled in London. Though they loved him tenderly, it was beyond their means to provide what was needed for the strengthening of this frail shoot. Every detail of the last scene is still vivid in my memory: the mother weeping bitterly as she bent over the dead child; Lenchen sobbing nearby; Marx terribly moved, fiercely, almost angrily, rejecting any attempt at consolation; the two little girls, with tear-stained faces, clinging to their mother, who embraced them convulsively, as if she would defend them against the death which had snatched away her boy.

HYNDMAN ON MARX  
*by* NIKOLAI LENIN



# HYNDMAN ON MARX

*by Nikolai Lenin*

Nor long ago, Henry Mayers Hyndman, one of the founders and leaders of the British Social Democratic Federation, published a bulky volume of memoirs. It is called *The Record of an Adventurous Life*, and runs to nearly five hundred pages, being a brightly written account of the author's political activities and of the notable personalities with whom he came in contact. The book provides much interesting material for the characterisation of British socialism and for the appraisal of some of the important problems of the international working-class movement.

I think it will be timely, therefore, to give a little space to the consideration of Hyndman's book—especially in view of the onslaught penned by Dioneo, the liberal, which appeared on October 14th in "Russky Vedomosty," the right-cadet (i.e., right constitutional democrat) paper. The article is an excellent example of the way in which the liberals spread light—or darken counsel—when they discuss such questions.

Let us begin with the study of what Hyndman has to say about Marx. Hyndman did not make Marx's acquaintance till 1880, being at that time (obviously) very ill-informed concerning Marx's doctrines and concerning socialism in general. It is characteristic of British conditions that Hyndman, who was born in 1842, had, for most of the time prior to his meeting with Marx, been nothing more

than a vague sort of "democrat" with tory leanings. However, he became a socialist after reading *Capital* (in a French translation) during one of several voyages to America in the period 1874 to 1880.

When setting out in the company of Karl Hirsch to make the acquaintance of Marx, Hyndman mentally compared the latter to (of all people in the world) Mazzini!

The futility of this comparison is manifest from the fact that Hyndman tells us how "Mazzini's influence on those around him was personal and individually ethical," whereas "Marx's was almost wholly intellectual and scientific." He went to Marx "compelled to recognise a supreme analytic genius and eager to learn as a student." To Mazzini he had gone, years before, "with admiration for his character," and he had "remained devoted to him for his elevation of thought and conduct." He tells us: "that Marx's was the far more powerful mind cannot be disputed." It certainly cannot be disputed that in 1880 Hyndman failed to understand (and, as will be shown later, still fails to understand) the difference between a bourgeois democrat and a socialist.

"The first impression of Marx as I saw him was that of a powerful, shaggy, untamed old man, ready, not to say eager, to enter into conflict, and rather suspicious himself of immediate attack. Yet his greeting to us was cordial, and his first remarks to me, after I had told him what a great pleasure and honour I felt it to be to shake hands with the author of *Capital*, were agreeable enough; for he told me

that he had read my articles on India with pleasure and had commented on them favourably in his newspaper correspondence. . . .

"When speaking with fierce indignation of the policy of the Liberal Party, especially in regard to Ireland, the old warrior's small, deep-sunk eyes lighted up, his heavy brows wrinkled, the broad, strong nose and face were obviously moved by passion, and he poured out a stream of vigorous denunciation which displayed alike the heat of his temperament and the marvellous command he possessed over our language. The contrast between his manner and utterance when thus deeply stirred by anger, and his attitude when giving his views on the economic events of the period, was very marked. He turned from the role of prophet and violent denunciator to that of the calm philosopher without any apparent effort, and I felt from the first that on this latter ground many a long year might pass before I ceased to be a student in the presence of a master.

"I had been surprised in reading *Capital* and still more when perusing his smaller works, such as his pronouncement on the Commune of Paris and his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, how he combined the ablest and coolest examination of economic causes with the most bitter hatred of classes and even individual men such as Napoleon III, and Monsieur Thiers, who, according to his own theories, were little more than flies upon the wheels of the great juggernaut car of capitalist development. Marx, of course, was a Jew, and to me it seemed that he combined in his own person and nature, with his commanding forehead

and great overhanging brow, his fierce glittering eyes, broad sensitive nose, and mobile mouth, all surrounded by a setting of untrimmed hair and beard, the righteous fury of the great seers of his race, with the cold analytical powers of Spinoza and the Jewish doctors. It was an extraordinary combination of qualities, the like of which I have known in no other man.

"When I went out with Hirsch deeply impressed by the great personality we had left, Hirsch asked me what I thought of him. 'Well,' I replied, 'I think he is the Aristotle of the nineteenth century.' And yet as I said it I knew that this did not cover the ground. For one thing it was quite impossible to think of Marx as acting the courtier to Alexander while carrying on the profound studies which have so deeply influenced later generations, and besides he never so wholly segregated himself from immediate human interests—*notwithstanding much that has been said to the contrary*—as to be able to consider facts and their surroundings in the cold, hard light of the greatest philosopher of antiquity. There can be no doubt whatever that his hatred of the system of exploitation and wage-slavery by which he was surrounded was not only intellectual and philosophical, but bitterly personal.

"I remember saying to him once that as I grew older I thought I became more tolerant. 'Do you,' he said, '*do* you?' It was quite certain he didn't. It has been, I think, Marx's deep animosity to the existing order of things which has prevented many of the educated well-to-do class from appreciating his

masterly life-work at its full value, and has rendered third-rate sciolists and logomachers, like Böhm-Bawerk, such heroes in their eyes, merely because they have misrepresented and attempted to 'refute' him. Accustomed as we are nowadays, especially in England, to fence always with big soft buttons on the point of our rapiers, Marx's terrible onslaughts with naked steel upon his adversaries appeared so improper that it was impossible for our gentlemanly sham-fighters and mental gymnasium men to believe that this unsparing controversialist and furious assailant of capital and capitalists was really the deepest thinker of modern times."

In 1880, Marx was practically unknown to the British public. His health had been undermined by his arduous labours, for "sixteen hours a day was quite an ordinary day's work for him, and not infrequently he put in an hour or two more!" But now his medical adviser forbade him to do any work after his supper. For this reason, Hyndman, so he tells us, was able to have a good many evening talks with Marx during the winter of 1880-1881.

"Our method of talking was peculiar. Marx had a habit, when at all interested in the discussion, of walking up and down the room, as if he were pacing the deck of a schooner for exercise. I had acquired on my long voyages, the same tendency to pacing to and fro when my mind was much occupied. Consequently, master and student could have been seen walking up and down on opposite sides of the table for . . . hours in succession . . . discussing the affairs of the past and the present."

Hyndman, however, give us no detailed information regarding Marx's opinions upon any one of the questions that were discussed at such length between them. From what has already been quoted it will have become plain that the author's attention is concentrated upon anecdotal matters—this applies, not only to his account of his relationships with Marx, but to all the rest of the book. Hyndman's reminiscences are the autobiography of a British bourgeois philistine who, being an exceptionally bright specimen of his class, made his way, at last, into the road leading towards socialism, but has never been able to divest himself wholly of bourgeois views and prejudices.

He makes philistine charges against Marx and Engels for their "mistakes" in their dealings with the International, speaking of "their singularly autocratic view as to the rightful management of what was supposed to be a democratic body." He says that Marx, great thinker though he was, was weak "in his judgment of current events and practical measures, as well as in his estimate of men." But never once does Hyndman make his way through this crust of general charges to the appreciation of some essential fact, to some concrete and circumstantial explanation of what is really at work.

He tells anecdotes, instead of giving us the historical analysis we expect from a Marxist. "Even in the affairs of Germany, Marx and Engels opposed Liebknecht's policy of conciliation and consolidation with the Lassalle Party, when this was absolutely essential to the success of our movement in that

country." Hyndman does not trouble to tell us how, time and again, Marx and Engels were right in matters of principle when Lassalle and the Lassallists were wrong. He does not even enquire whether, in the days of the International Workingmen's Association, the appeal to "democracy" may not have been a mask for the opposition of bourgeois sectarians who were opposed to the upbuilding of proletarian social democracy.

As regards the story of the breach between Marx and Hyndman, the latter has absolutely nothing to tell us but gossip (of Mr. Dioneo's kind). Engels, forsooth, was "exacting, suspicious, and jealous"; Frau Marx told Mrs. Hyndman more than once that Engels was Marx's "evil genius." Engels, whom Hyndman "never spoke to, nor even saw" (these are Hyndman's own words, whatever Mr. Dioneo may write in the "Russky Vedomosty"), was "not disinclined to give full weight to the exchange value of his ready cash in his relations with those whom he helped." [Engels, it will be remembered, was well-to-do, whereas Marx was needy.] Engels, says Hyndman—being afraid that Hyndman (also in easy circumstances), might take his own place as Marx's helper in money matters—determined to promote a quarrel between Marx and Hyndman!

It need hardly be said that nothing can delight the liberals more than to transcribe such ineffable stupidities. Far is it from them, however, to acquaint themselves with the letters from Marx and Engels to Sorge, and to study them carefully where necessary—letters which Hyndman himself has obviously

read (though he does not specifically mention them). The information obtainable from the Sorge correspondence (Dietz, Stuttgart, 1906), and a comparison of these letters with Hyndman's reminiscences will at once enable us to decide the matters in dispute.

In 1881, Hyndman published a booklet entitled, *England for All*, intended to announce his conversion to socialism, while it showed that the writer was still very much entangled in the ideas of bourgeois democracy. Marx wrote of this book to Sorge (in English) under date December 15, 1881: "It pretends to be written as an exposé of the program of the Democratic Federation—a recently formed association of different English and Scotch radical societies, half bourgeois, half prolétaires. The chapters on Labour and Capital are only literal extracts from or circumlocutions of *Capital*." Hyndman, however (Marx goes on to say) quotes neither *Capital* nor its author, "but remarks at the end of his preface: 'For the ideas and much of the matter contained in Chapters II. and III., I am indebted to the work of a great thinker and original writer,' etc., etc." Engels, implies Hyndman, seized this opportunity to embroil him with Marx; and then he reproduces a letter from Marx to himself under date December 8, 1880, from which we learn that Hyndman has himself told Marx that he (Hyndman) does not share the views of Marx's party as far as the prospects of an English revolution are concerned.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "I can only reply," writes Marx, "that that party considers an English revolution not *necessary*, but, according to historic precedents, *possible*."

Obviously there was a divergence of outlooks, a fundamental disagreement which Hyndman misunderstands, misconstrues, or ignores, because he is no more than "half bourgeois, half prolétaire," because he is (to quote further from Marx's letter to Sorge) nothing more than an "amiable middle-class writer." Obviously, too, if a man became acquainted with Marx, got into close contact with Marx, spoke of himself as Marx's pupil, and then wrote a mutilated and disfigured exposition of Marxism in which he failed to mention Marx—Marx could not be expected to endure this without protest. And protest there certainly was! Apart from what Hyndman tells us, we read in Marx's letter to Sorge: "Vis-à-vis myself, he [Hyndman] wrote letters of excuse; for instance, that 'the English don't like to be taught by foreigners,' that 'my name was so much detested,' etc."—Hyndman writes, "I unfortunately destroyed most of Marx's letters to me," so we cannot look to this source for light.

Fine excuses, these! Yet all the time the real reason for the difference of opinion between Marx and Hyndman is perfectly plain. Hyndman's own book of reminiscences is full of evidence that the author's views were in many respects philistine and bourgeois. (Witness the reasons he gives on pp. 53 to 56 in defence of capital punishment.) In spite of this he must attribute the breach between himself and Marx to the machinations of Engels—who for forty years had shared Marx's essential outlooks! Even if all the rest of Hyndman's book seemed sound, this one rotten spot would taint the whole.

The divergence of outlooks, as between Marx and Hyndman, is very characteristically revealed by what Hyndman tells us about Marx's opinion of Henry George. What Marx really thought of George we know from Marx's letter to Sorge under date June 30, 1881. Hyndman tells us that in conversation with Marx he defended George by arguing as follows: "George will teach more by inculcating error than other men can impart by complete exposition of the truth."

Hyndman goes on to say: "Marx would not hear of this as a sound contention. The promulgation of error could never be of any good to the people, that was his view. 'To leave error unrefuted is to encourage intellectual immorality. For ten who go further, a hundred may very easily stop with George, and the danger of this is too great to run.' So far Marx."!!

Then Hyndman tells us he still holds that Henry George's temporary successes favoured the spread of Marxist ideas in Britain; and in the same breath he adds "that George's fluid inconsequence should be uncongenial to Marx's scientific mind is not surprising. George was a boy with a bright farthing dip fooling around within the radius of a man using an electric searchlight."

The simile is an admirable one—but Hyndman made rather a mistake to put it into his readers' minds at the very time when he himself was recording such paltry gossip about Engels!

KARL MARX'S  
"CONFESSIONS"  
*by*  
D. RYAZANOFF



# KARL MARX'S "CONFESSIONS"

*by D. Ryazanoff*

## I.

"**A** CALUMNIOUS, insolent, cantankerous, and snarling monster!" Such was Marx, if we are to believe his chief opponents. He was a sullen and morose revolutionist, a man whose dark spirit was brimming over with hatred and contempt, one whose mind was full of malice and sarcasm, one to whom "the sublime and the beautiful" were utterly alien. Since to him nothing was sacred, he took a fiendish delight in the contemplation of all the more repulsive aspects of human nature. Sombart goes so far as to assure us that Marx was constitutionally incapable of discerning good in his fellows. Marx, we are told, suffered from a hypertrophy of the intellectual faculties, and this was the explanation of his "heartlessness."

Our Russian ex-Marxists go even further. Formerly, in their quarrel with the "subjectivists" and with the narodniks (who were sentimentalists), they made such a parade of the objectivism of Marx's teaching, they insisted so vehemently that Marxism was non-moral, that now, in parrot fashion, they continue to repeat: "Marx had no heart, and he was absolutely non-moral."

Bulgakoff doubts whether love of his fellows and sympathy with their sufferings can have played any part within the psyche of such a creature as Marx.

Tugan-Baranoffsky declares that Marx was "soul-blind" to all the nobler promptings of the human spirit. "He could experience a feeling of dislike for evil, but sympathy with the oppressed had very little part in this sentiment. . . . He knew almost nothing of love for his fellows. On the other hand, he was amazingly prone to hate, so that in him hatred of the oppressors had extinguished love of the oppressed. Who can be surprised that persons capable of softer feelings are horrified when they contemplate this moral anomaly?"

I do not question the sincerity of those cordial sympathies with human sufferings which have always distinguished our sometime Marxists. On the contrary, I am sure that in their case love of the oppressed has long cre this extinguished hatred of the oppressors. But they are not original in their assertion that nature deprived Marx of a heart while compensating him by giving a double allowance of brain. The worthy officer Tychoff, said as much sixty years ago. Meeting Marx in London, he made "a thorough study" of the author of *Capital* (he was in Marx's company for about an hour and a half!) He gave his impressions in a letter to his friends in Switzerland, saying: "If only Marx had as much heart as intelligence, as much love as hatred!" Obviously Tychoff himself was endowed with more heart than brain!

When the "kindly" Vogt, wishing to hammer in to the minds of all well-disposed persons the conviction that Marx was a monster, printed Tychoff's letter, Marx cynically rejoined: "Tychoff is making

a great to-do about my 'heart.' I magnanimously refuse to follow him into this domain. 'Ne parlons pas morale' [Don't let us talk about morality], as the Parisian grisette said when her friend strayed into politics."

Nor have I any desire to safeguard Marx's reputation as the possessor of a "heart." No one will trouble to deny (Marx himself would never have denied) that some of the feelings of the human heart were less congenial to him than others. "Il y a fagots et fagots" (Various kinds of sticks are made up into a faggot—i.e., people are variously compounded bundles of qualities). It is true that Marx never appeals to the "heart"; but he would be a rash reasoner who should deduce from this that Marx had no feeling of sympathy with the oppressed. Indeed, he himself tells us that love for mankind is one of the sources of communist philosophy. But this is a small matter. It is not enough to have a "heart" which suffers in sympathy with others' suffering; we must also have a "head"—must possess an understanding of the historical process. Marx, therefore, was implacable in his hostility to all sentimentalism, and to the socialism of sheep who are eager to advocate the morality of the wolves.

It is also true that Marx remorselessly exposed all the acrobats (whether Christians or freethinkers) who are so fond of talking about love, and who in their tedious writings (whether learned or popular) tell us we must "sympathise with the oppressed," but are so "loving" that there is no room in their hearts

for wrath against the offenders, while they urge the workers to be moderate and to trust in the "distributive justice" of the capitalists.

Moreover, it cannot be denied that Marx, in his fierce struggle to promote the interests of the working class, was prone to make "savage" onslaughts, not only upon declared enemies, but also upon half-hearted allies. That was characteristic of the man even in those early days when he was a bourgeois democrat, and when his comrades in Berlin were horrified by his ferocity.

It is true, likewise, that Marx did not open his heart to every chance comer. But even though Jesus the son of Sirach may exaggerate when he says "the heart of fools is in their mouth" (*Ecclesiasticus*, xxi., 26), still he must be a fool who attributes "heartlessness" to every one that chooses to keep his feelings to himself.

Madame Roland tells us in her memoirs that her singing-master used to complain because she did not put enough heart into her songs. "The good man," she says, "failed to understand that I had too much heart to put it into my songs."

Marx was by no means expansive, was never "gushing" even in his letters to his nearest and dearest. Seldom if ever has there been a more ardent affection than his love for his wife and daughters. The loss of his wife was a cruel affliction; and the death of his eldest daughter, Jenny Longuet, was a blow from which he never recovered. Yet he was reserved even in his letters to the younger Jenny, the only one of his daughters who had shared the

worst hardships of her parents during the early days of their exile—the girl who had been helpmate and companion in his work. The letters, indeed, are most loving. Especially towards the close of his life, when Marx himself was already in very bad health, they bear witness to the writer's earnest endeavour to avoid saying anything that may add to the ailing Jenny's anxieties. He does his utmost to keep her cheerful. Nevertheless, even these letters do not contain a single "sentimental" phrase. The same remark applies to the letters to Engels, from whom Marx hid nothing. He writes about "business" or about theoretical questions, but is remarkably sparing in personal effusions. How much anguish, however, finds vent in the following lines, written to Engels under date March 1, 1882, from Algiers, whither he had been sent in the hope of recruiting his health after Jenny Longuet's death:

"By the by, you know that few people [are] more averse to demonstrative pathos; still, it would be a lie to confess [deny] that my thought [is] to great part absorbed by reminiscences of my wife, such a part of my best part of life! Tell my London daughters to write to old Nick instead of expecting him to write himself first."<sup>1</sup>

No doubt this aversion to "demonstrative pathos," to "sentimentalism" of all kinds, interferes with the

<sup>1</sup> Marx's letters to Engels are written mainly in German, but he is continually breaking into some other tongue—especially English. This English is vigorous and idiomatic, but not always grammatical. The passage just quoted was penned by Marx in English. The bracketed words are conjectural emendations.

portrayal of Marx's inner life, impedes the discovery of his most intimate sympathies and antipathies. We generally learn very little about these from the man himself. If at times he becomes autobiographical (as in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, or in *Herr Vogt*), this is only in so far as will promote the interests of the matter in hand, or will elucidate his theoretical views. It is as if he wanted to say: "Judge me by my works, not by what I tell you about myself."

This is why any attempt to delineate Marx, the man, upon the basis of his own utterances, encounters almost insuperable obstacles. His inner world was hidden away from strangers. The tenderness of his heart; his sensitiveness, which was a source of attraction to Heine, the most vigorous and most subjective of the German lyric poets, and also to Freiligrath, the singer of freedom; his ungrudging readiness to share his intellectual riches with others; his willingness to make allowance for others' weaknesses, in conjunction with a pitiless self-criticism—all these qualities were hidden from the world beneath armour of proof.

Only in the memoirs of Lafargue and Liebknecht do we find an attempt to portray Marx as a man. Both of them had plenty of experience of the chastisements inflicted by this "ferocious" teacher. Alike in conversation and in writing he often gave them "sound scoldings" for their political activities, berating them in a way that was very damaging to their self-conceit. They often thought him mistaken, and at times they considered his handling of them un-

duly rough; but these little differences were easily smoothed out. Paul Lafargue and Wilhelm Liebknecht were men of strong character. They knew that Marx's little weaknesses (when these, and not their own deficiencies, had caused the trouble!) were but "the obverse of the medal"; and they were not inclined to call him to account for every trifle. If, in contrast to the critical pictures limned by Marx's adversaries, Liebknecht and Lafargue in their memoirs incline to the other extreme, they err, not so much in respect of their portraiture of Marx as a man, as in respect of their account of him as a thinker and a revolutionist. Liebknecht, more than Lafargue, goes astray in these matters. But he excels when describing Marx as father, friend and comrade. The more knowledge we gain of Marx's private life (from his friends' letters, from various sources hitherto unutilised), the more fully is Wilhelm Liebknecht's account confirmed.

A brilliant light is thrown upon Marx's inner life, upon his personal psychology, by the document here published, the "Confessions" which a lucky chance has preserved for us.

## II.

In the summer of 1910, I was working for a few weeks at Draveil in the house of Lafargue, who had generously placed a mass of Marx's posthumous papers at my disposal. Laura Lafargue was good enough to let me use her study, one of the greatest ornaments of this room being the portrait of Marx which is badly reproduced in Spargo's biography. A white-haired old man smiled down on us from the wall, smiled good-naturedly through half-closed eyes. To me this was a new Marx, not the profound thinker whose face is preserved for us in the most familiar of his photographs (one of the best, according to Laura Lafargue). One might have thought that this kindly old fellow's chief ambition had been to master the art of being a good grandfather. How vividly this portrait called up in my mind Liebknecht's spirited description of the author of *Capital* turned into an "omnibus," with his grandson Johnny riding on the box-seat—i.e., Marx's shoulder. Johnny was "coachman," with a whip; and Liebknecht and Engels were the much-belaboured "horses."

During one of my conversations with Laura about her father (I cannot now recall in what connexion), I said it was a great pity that there was so little "subjective" material among Marx's posthumous papers. Laura suddenly remembered that she and her elder sister, Jenny, had once made their father answer a set of questions, this game of "Confessions" being popular at the time. By good fortune,

she was able to put her hand on the document, and she gave me a copy of it, which I reproduce here.

CONFESSIONS.

Your favourite virtue.—Simplicity.

Your favourite virtue in man.—Strength.

Your favourite virtue in woman.—Weakness.

Your chief characteristic.—Singleness of Purpose.

Your idea of happiness.—To fight.

Your idea of misery.—Submission.

The vice you excuse most.—Gullibility.

The vice you detest most.—Servility.

Your pet aversion.—Martin Tupper.

Favourite occupation.—Bookworming.

Poet.—Shakespeare, Aeschylus, Goethe.

Prose writer.—Diderot.

Hero.—Spartacus, Kepler.

Heroine.—Gretchen.

Flower.—Daphne.

Colour.—Red.

Name.—Laura, Jenny.

Dish.—Fish.

Favourite maxim.—*Nihil humanum a me alienum puto.*<sup>1</sup>

Favourite motto.—*De omnibus dubitandum.*<sup>2</sup>

KARL MARX.

Obviously in these "confessions" we must not take everything in dead earnest. The framework is one of jest—but we shall see that a good deal of the content is earnest after all.

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<sup>1</sup> I regard nothing human as alien to me.

<sup>2</sup> Doubt everything.

First, a word or two as to the date when the "confessions" were written. Laura Lafargue could not give me precise information. However, from the answer to the question as to the favourite name<sup>1</sup> we may infer that we have to do with the early sixties, when the third daughter, Eleanor, was still too young to understand the joke.

Some of the answers are manifestly playful. "Daphne" is his favourite flower; daphne is a kind of laurel (*laurus*), and this brings us to Laura. In giving "fish" as his favourite dish, he is simply guided by the rhyme.

The answer to the third question is the expression of good-humoured irony. Marx's wife was his valiant fellow-soldier in all the hard fights in which he was engaged. She had endured with truly "virile" fortitude the blows of fate, the death of four children—victims of the dire poverty in which she and Karl had had to live during the earlier fifties. But she had found it less easy to bear the inward struggles of their expulsions. Though Marx had kept his own counsel about the worst happenings, she had learned enough to disturb her peace of mind. Especially had she taken the Vogt affair to heart. She was too "weak" to accept all this without repining.

"Simplicity," which Marx mentions as his favourite virtue, was, in fact, his own most characteristic quality. There was nothing which stirred his bile so much as posing, play-acting, showing off.

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<sup>1</sup> Jenny was his wife's name as well as that of his eldest daughter.

"Marx," writes Wilhelm Liebknecht,<sup>1</sup> "was one of the few persons I have ever known (whether great, small, or average), who were quite free from pretentiousness. He was too great and strong for this—and too proud. He never posed, and was always his natural self." Professor Kowalewski, too, in his memoirs, tells us that Marx, in contradistinction to other great men he had known, "never put on side."

Frau Marx was equally simple. Let me quote Kowalewski once more: "I have rarely known a woman who welcomed guests so cordially as Frau Marx did in her modest home; and seldom can any one in such simple surroundings have so admirably preserved the manners of what the French style '*une grande dame*.'"

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<sup>1</sup> Liebknecht's memories are not free from errors, especially when he is describing Marx as a thinker and as a politician. He does not always record the facts accurately. But his account is unique in so far as it conveys the impression which Marx, the man, made upon him.

<sup>2</sup> "Marx is usually described as a gloomy and arrogant man who flatly rejected all bourgeois science and culture. In reality he was a well educated, a highly cultured, Anglo-German gentleman, a man whose close association with Heine had developed in him a vein of cheerful satire; and one who was full of the joy of life, thanks to the fact that his personal position was extremely comfortable." Kowalewski is, of course, wrong in what he says about Heine's influence, and in his belief that Marx had an "extremely comfortable" position in life; but as regards the matters of education and culture he is certainly quite as competent a judge as the professors in Freiburg and Breslau.

A fortnight after his wife's death, Marx wrote to Jenny as follows: "These letters of condolence which are pouring in from far and near, and from persons of such various nationalities and of so many different professions, etc., are, in their estimate of Möhmchen, animated with a truthfulness and inspired with a profound sensibility such as are not often to be met with in letters of this kind—which for the most part are purely conventional. I account for this by the fact that everything about her was natural, sincere, and unconstrained; that nothing was artificial. That is why the impressions formed of her by these others are so vivid and luminous."

With the foregoing considerations in our mind, we can understand why Marx tells us that "Gretchen" is his favourite heroine. He may be jesting, but there is an underlying current of earnest. In the whole of German literature, there is no more wonderful embodiment of naturalness, sincerity, and simplicity.

## III.

"Singleness of purpose," Marx tells us in his confessions, is his chief characteristic. It would in truth be hard to point to any one whose life was a more typical manifestation of this than the life of Karl Marx. To quote the Russian poet Lermontoff, he knew only "the power of one thought, one single but burning passion." He offered up everything to the cause he had most at heart. For decades, he toiled day and night, with the one goal always before his eyes, and never allowing himself to be diverted from his aim. Unceasingly he strove to provide a firm foundation for the workers' struggle for freedom, to supply the proletariat with an inexhaustible arsenal of weapons for the fight with bourgeois society. With iron consistency, he battled for this throughout his career. Singleness of purpose was equally characteristic of the man and his work, both being fashioned out of the same substance.

Marx is perfectly serious, too, when he writes that his idea of happiness is "to fight," and his idea of misery is "submission." He was always a fighter, both in the theoretical and in the practical field. In the Communist League and in the International Workingmen's Association, he was never weary of calling upon the workers of all lands to join forces for the struggle against subjection and slavery in every form—against poverty, mental degeneration, and political dependence. Though he was never declamatory, never emotional in his appeals, he could always find simple but moving words when

it was fitting to speak of those who had fallen in the struggle.

The vice he detested most was "servility." This was the simple truth. There was nothing he loathed more, whether in public life or in private. Though he was never straitlaced, never fond of preaching morality, in this matter he was inexorable. Above all, he hated servility towards the powers that be. Marx pilloried servility in his criticism of the speech Kinkel made in his own defence; and he censured the servility of Schweitzer's attitude towards Bismarck. With good reason did he extol the sturdy simplicity that made Rousseau avoid even the semblance of compromise with those in authority. He was ruthless, too, in his condemnation of that form of servility which manifests itself in concessions to what is called public opinion. He hated a sycophant; and the more talented the sycophant, the more remorseless was Marx in his judgment. Liebknecht is right in saying that Marx had a sovereign contempt for popularity. Successes of the moment were nothing to him; and public applause was valueless. He was equally averse to scientific charlatany and to political opportunism, both of which spring from the same source.

"Martin Tupper" as his pet aversion symbolises for Marx the acme of all that is trivial and commonplace, which can flaunt in popular favour. Tupper, now forgotten, and absolutely ignored by most of the historians of English literature, was born in 1810 and died in 1889. In the fifties he was one of the most popular and successful of British writers, his

*Proverbial Philosophy*, the book which made his fame, having sold to the extent of more than a million copies. He was throughout life the butt of serious critics in his own land, and elsewhere; but I will quote what a German writer has to say of him, G. Kellner, in a history of Victorian English literature, published in 1909: "His poems were characterised by a complete want of talent; they were the opposition and the repudiation of all poetic faculty, combined with a pitiful stupidity. . . . He was blind to poetry, deaf to rhythm, unthinking and uncritical to the finger-tips." Marx refers to him thus in *Capital* (Moore and Aveling's translation of Vol. I., p. 622): "Bentham is among philosophers what Martin Tupper is among poets. Both could only have been manufactured in England." Here, I think, Marx errs. There are similar poets in other lands—in Germany and Russia, for instance. But so striking a success on the part of so commonplace a writer could perhaps have been secured only in England, where servility to "public opinion" is peculiarly dominant even to-day.

A study of Marx's writings shows that he is telling the simple truth in his confessions when he says that his favourite poets are "Shakespeare, Aeschylus, and Goethe." We know what Paul Lafargue had to say of Marx's Shakespearean studies. Furnivall, the Shakespearean scholar, who died as a very old man in 1920, was a friend of the Marx family. What Marx wrote of Shakespeare in some of his English articles was often masterly in point of style, and his aroused the wonder of competent English critics.

In Aeschylus, Marx admired the great poet who was the first to wrest from the ancient Prometheus myth the profoundly moving image of one who is a dauntless champion in the fight against the existing order. In the preface to his doctoral dissertation (penned early in 1841) on the "Difference between the Democritean and the Epicurean Natural Philosophy," tells us that "Prometheus is the most distinguished among the saints and martyrs in the philosophical calendar," and quotes the bound Prometheus' reply to Hermes, the "servile messenger" of the Gods:

I prefer my unhappy lot to thy bondage.

Be sure of this, I would never change places  
with thee;

For I deem it better to be chained to this rock  
Than to be the servile messenger of All-Father  
Zeus.

A surprise is in store for us when Marx tells us that "Diderot" is his favourite prose writer. Even Paul Lafargue, in his reminiscences of his father-in-law, makes no mention of his eighteenth-century compatriot. But Marx shared with the greatest of German poets, with Lessing and Schiller and Goethe, this fondness for the renowned French encyclopædist. Moreover, modern historians of French literature sound the same note. Diderot has withstood the criticism of time better than any of the other apostles of the eighteenth-century enlightenment—both as thinker and as writer. *Le neveu de Rameau* (Rameau's nephew), which Marx doubtless had in mind, remains to-day a masterpiece of French

prose. More than all his colleagues, Diderot shunned phrasemaking. His language was clear, and closely in touch with the actualities of life; his reasoning and his wit were equally brilliant; he was a genius in the clarity with which he could describe all the happenings of daily existence; he lashed French society pitilessly, through the very mouths of its parasites—have we not here enough, and more than enough, to explain why Marx and Engels valued him so highly?

We learn that Marx's favourite heroes are "Spartacus and Kepler"; the former, obviously, as man of action, and the latter as thinker. It may well be that these names came into his mind under the promptings of recently read biographies of the two men. We get a hint as to this, as far as Spartacus is concerned, in a letter to Engels under date February 27, 1861, where Marx writes: "In the evenings, for recreation, I have been reading Appian's account of the Roman civil wars, in the original Greek. A most valuable book. The fellow was an Egyptian to begin with. Schlosser declares he has 'no soul'—presumably because Appian looks for the material causes of these wars. Spartacus is presented to us as the finest figure in classical history. A great general (not a Garibaldi), a man of noble character, a real representative of the antique proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

It is as a proletarian hero that Spartacus is depicted

<sup>1</sup> In *Anti-Dühring*, Engels speaks of *Rameau's Nephew* as a masterpiece of dialectic. Marx quotes Diderot in the *Holy Family* and again in *Capital*.

<sup>2</sup> Mommsen, too, was most friendly in his handling of Spartacus.

in Giovagnoli's well-known historical novel, which is widely read by the revolutionary youth, not in Italy alone, but also (in Russian translation) in the Soviet Republic. Spartacus may, of course, be viewed from a very different angle. But what interests us here is to know what qualities Marx prized in this leader of a slave rebellion.

What attracted Marx to Kepler? Was it the scientific honesty for which Ricardo praised the astronomer so highly? Or was it the "freedom of the spirit" which, as Kepler's biographers say, enabled him to lift himself far above earthly cares and activities into the aether of a scientific speculation directed towards the noblest ends?

Like Marx, Kepler had throughout life to battle with the direst poverty. He, too, never faltered in his devotion to principle. Neither force nor lures could make him deviate from the path traced out for him by his convictions. He worked unrestingly to disclose the laws of the universe, and was as poor as a church mouse when he died.

No mortal, yet, e'er rose so high, 'tis true,

As Kepler rose—to die in want of bread.

To please men's minds was all the art he knew,

And so their bodies left him quite unfed.

Again and again Marx must have recalled these words, above all in the early sixties, when he was once more harassed by want and illness, which came near to making an end of him<sup>1</sup>—so that he began

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<sup>1</sup> This was when the American Civil War had cut him off from sending regular contributions to the "New York Tribune," which were at that time one of his chief means of livelihood.

to feel seriously afraid that he would never be able to finish the work in which he was disclosing the main laws regulating the motions of the capitalist universe.

Marx never wearied in the pursuit of knowledge. This may make some readers feel that it was rather contradictory of him to say that his favourite motto was: "Doubt everything." But the contradiction is only on the surface. He does not mean doubt for doubt's sake; he does not mean crude scepticism. His doubt is directed against the *semblance* that veils reality. Distrust of *appearances* in nature and in political and social life, was for Marx the starting-point of all critical investigation. The task of science is to strip off this *semblance*, to apply everywhere the sharp scalpel of analysis, in order to discover that which is hidden beneath the vesture of appearances, to disclose the underlying essentials, to reach the core of actuality. We must not allow ourselves to be fooled by the fair visage of capitalist society, in which, to outward seeming, liberty, equality, and justice prevail. Armed with this doubt, to which nothing is so sacred that it can be permitted to wear a veil, Marx probed to the innermost secret of bourgeois society—the fetishism of commodities, thanks to which the producers become the slaves of the products of their own labour.

When Marx declared that his favourite occupation was "bookworming," he was making fun of a passion which his friends had often good-humouredly derided. Engels, himself a bookworm, would try to curb his intimate's excesses in this matter.

With each new language that Marx learned, he plunged into a new ocean of books in order to widen his knowledge. The passion was closely interconnected with the meticulous conscientiousness of all his work, and with the desire to master every detail of the subject under consideration. But his wife and Engels were right in contending that his enthusiasm for detail was what prevented his finishing *Capital*!

Marx is laughing at himself, too, when he says that "gullibility" is the vice he is most ready to excuse. Marx was no recluse. He was far too much busied in practical matters for this. But intense and prolonged intellectual labour always has a seamy side. The person over-engrossed in mental work tends to become "absent-minded," as far as the things of everyday life are concerned—and Marx was certainly absent-minded at times. He did not mix enough with his fellows to be able to rely upon his judgment of personal character. Furthermore, as Wilhelm Liebknecht rightly insists, he was constitutionally incapable of wearing a mask and of giving himself out to be other than he was. For all these reasons combined, he was often gullible when he came into contact with charlatans—whether in the political field or elsewhere. It is true that in due course he was usually able, even without the help of Engels or his other friends, to detect the humbug under the quack's fair seeming. None the less, as Marx frankly acknowledged, he was gullible at times, and it would not be difficult to quote some striking instances of this little weakness.

When his daughters (who must have known his eagerness better than any one else) asked his favourite maxim, Marx quoted Terence, writing, "I regard nothing human as alien to me." He might have made the same answer to his adversaries, to all those who with much parade of wit and lively self-satisfaction were so fond of dilating upon his deficiencies. However much an individual may have reason to complain of the manifold faults of contemporary society, he always remains bound to that society by a thousand threads. It is difficult, almost impossible, for any human being to rid himself of his share of our common heritage from primitive man. Marx did not escape his portion. He erred at times, both as a man and as a politician.

Any one who has read his letters to Engels, Becker, and Weydemeyer, cannot but marvel at the way in which he endured the manifold troubles of poverty. (It was not until 1869 that he found himself in comparatively easy circumstances.) His cheerfulness was amazing to all his friends and acquaintances. The rude blows of fate sometimes drew from him harsh and angry words, even towards his nearest and dearest. But he always rallied, always threw off the burden of daily troubles, always applied himself with renewed energy to his life's work.

When Engels, in one of his letters (not for the first time) urged his friend to make up his mind at long last, and send *Capital* to the press, Marx replied, under date June 31, 1865: "I cannot decide to send any part of the book to the printer until the whole work lies ready before me. Whatever

shortcomings they may have, the merit of my writings is that they form an artistic whole, and this is, only attainable thanks to my decision never to print them until they are quite finished."

The same may be said of Marx's life. Whatever its shortcomings, in the entirety it forms an artistic whole of such rare beauty as can hardly be equalled in the history of our race.

Bewley

The complex fate