

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL CONDITIONS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Growth of Trade, and Free Trade.

About the middle of the eighteenth century there was a significant revolution in the attitude which the most eminent minds found it expedient to recommend men to take up towards one another. This change found its strongest manifestation in David Hume's and Adam Smith's new understanding of the conditions of human co-operation. Hume actually created a new national economy by emphasizing the productive and co-operative character of trade and rejecting its character of mutual plunder. In the same years in which Hume's *Essays* saw the light, came also Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiment" (1759), which emphasized mutual sympathy and joy as the decisive factor in social life. During the negotiations for peace (1763) Hume caused the final peace to be characterized by the new ideas of mutual good-will as the expression of something different from weakness, and in the circle of Physiocrats he found men in whom related ideas were developing. Adam Smith's mature and epoch-making work: *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776, bore profound evidence of his interchange of thought with the Physiocrats. It came in the year in which Turgot fell and in which Hume died. It shaped in its doctrine of free trade a formula for the understanding of the interdependence of nations and the good-will which ought to animate their inter-relations as well as those of the individuals, while war and all attempts at customs-barriers are marks of lack of understanding and of mutual ill-will.

English society especially was influenced at that time by a number of changed trade conditions, the expansion of the colonial empire and the introduction of machinery, which held many possibilities of turning Adam Smith's points of view to advantage. After the close of the American War of Independence, which broke out precisely in the same year as Adam Smith's work was published and which, in its conduct, proved a living example of the justness of his assertions, William Pitt when Prime Minister succeeded in making a series of steps forward towards Free Trade, until the wars with France from the end of the nineties until the fall of Bonaparte once more gave sovereignty to the war-tariffs, and the post-war period created a great number of economic catastrophies, which were only remedied by an energetic and protracted struggle for free trade.

The demand for a removal of the obstacles to the activities of the citizen was nothing new. It was, on the whole, a return to Edward the Third's economic policy of the 14th century. The fundamental purpose of this had been to encourage foreign trade in order to promote the consumers' interests by procuring more and cheaper articles. This policy had under his successor been replaced by one that directly opposed it, because it was then all-important to create a strong State who could use every possible means for enforcing her will, in internal as well as external matters. To the more short-sighted the consumers' interests became a question of less importance. It was not of much consequence whether they possessed anything; it was of more importance that the producers were favourably situated. They were to get the highest possible prices for their products, in order that the country's store of money might be the largest possible. The government, it was thought, must therefore watch over what is called a favourable balance of trade. The sales abroad must fetch a profit irrespective of the interests of the home consumers.¹⁾

The quantity of gold and silver was regarded as the only real wealth. It was not seen that, when all comes to all, gold and silver are only values because things can be bought for them. A man like the later chancellor, Sir Thomas More, railed in his work *Utopia* at

¹⁾ Suviranta, *The Theory of Balance of Trade in England*, 1923.

this idolization of money and at the idea that kings might consider themselves the richer for having a well-filled exchequer, even though the citizens were destitute. In the course of a short time his work went through a great number of editions, which shows that there was no lack of interest in his description of a happy society, where the consumers' interests predominated, and where nobody suffered want, but real wealth reigned everywhere. But his very description of this well-regulated society, where all the consumers' interests were satisfied by regulated work, caused his viewpoint to have no influence on the government of society as it really was. Utopia was a society resting in itself, without any remarkable interest in carrying its will through against any outward opponent, and without an executive which must fight the population in order to preserve or establish its power at home. It was, however, just that strong executive which the age wanted. The mercantilistic policy had its roots in the fact that people thought they could measure their own power, and that of the State, not by the well-being of the consumers, but by their own organs of power. The finding of money for the army and navy, for the diplomatic service and for a thorough organization of the action of the State was the task which must first and foremost be performed in order to introduce life and activity and unity in the State. And to cope with that task it was thought that the possession of gold and silver, in their quality of being different from all that grew and developed, was the *sine qua non*.

It was not any decrease in the desire to create a strong, powerful and enterprising State which towards the end of the eighteenth century enabled Adam Smith, with such powerful effect, to revert to the older idea; it was the consumer's interest which now acquired a new significance from being the expression of the nation's inner life and activity. Adam Smith does not measure the wealth of the nations by their passive riches, but by their active social processes, by the manifold variety of their strong mutual interdependency. The condition of existence for production lies in the consumer's interest. The division of labour and the specialization of production, the greatest possible facility for admission to the markets, and the fewest possible artificial barriers to the freedom of trade are the conditions of the creation of wealth, and legislature's unscrupulous favouring of the rich at the cost of the poor is a direct hindrance

to the formation of wealth.¹⁾ The main point is to promote the increase of all real values such as habitations, trades, ships, etc.

In this manner war was made on the whole existing system of government regulations, laws and customs which hampered the free play of the forces of trade.

That the main thing was to gain victory on this point was the driving thought wherever it was felt that a world was to be gained if only the barriers fell. The policy of the nineteenth century was what we call the *laissez-faire* policy, what its opponents named hopeless anarchy, its adherents the policy of free trade.

Poverty.

But amongst the conditions which made themselves felt, partly as a consequence of the existing state of affairs, partly as new consequences of the more unhampered activity, was the overwhelming poverty in the working-class everywhere. The difficulty arose from the workers' dual position as being at the same time consumers and material of production. The new industrialists were only interested in the latter aspect. The idea was to exploit the workers as much as possible, to reduce their wages as far as possible and to extend their working hours as much as possible. No interest was taken in their mode of living as human beings, so long as it was cheaper to throw them on the waste-heap and replace them by others than to increase their wages. So long as only general Christian charity and not trade interests induced sympathy, the care of the poor remained a question of alms only and could not become a question of paying them higher wages.

The English Poor Law bore drastic testimony of the wavering attitude in which the question was considered. The old Elizabethan Act, which gave the unemployed maintenance in the workhouses where work was enforced, was in 1784 followed by the so-called Gilbert's Act, which provided that the parishes should make allowances in aid of wages in order to raise these to a suitable amount. The consequence of this alteration was, in the first place, that the masters were able to reduce wages still more relentlessly than before

¹⁾ See Adam Smith, Book IV, Chapter VIII.

and, in the second place, that the workers' own interest in obtaining higher wages was weakened. The expenditure of the parishes increased at such a rate that they were on the brink of bankruptcy. After the carrying of the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832 one of the first steps taken was the abolition of Gilbert's Act and the reestablishment of the Elizabethan Act (in 1834).

Interference with the question of wages went counter to the prevailing economic doctrine and the only moderate step which the government early found itself called upon to take was a police regulation of factory conditions. As early as 1802 Robert Peel the elder took the initiative in the passing of some measures regulating working conditions and hours in the cotton and woollen mills. But it was only after the passing of the Parliamentary Reform Act and in connection with a growing opposition against the laissez-faire principles that the impetus was given to an active factory legislation concerning female and child labour, holidays and hygienic measures. Towards the end of the century this legislation reached a rather high degree of perfection; its carrying into effect was watched over by a factory inspectorate. But however significant this organization was, the existing antagonism between capitalist and worker was left untouched, and, if labour riots occurred, the government always took the side of capitalism. It was a long time before the workers were given the right of forming unions in order to improve their conditions. The severe laws which had formerly prohibited Trade Unions as conspiracies were certainly abolished in 1824; but right up to 1871 Trade Unions led a lawless existence, as they could not as such possess property, exercise rights or enter into engagements.

Thus, in the early days, Christian charity was the only force to take up the fight against poverty; but, by being alone in the struggle, it became in various ways antagonistic to progressive trade, seeking either to hamper it or to force it into moulds which were alien to it. There were those who dreamed of preventing the violent increase of a landless town-population, and others whose aim became the establishment of a both nationally and internationally organized set of associations, whose leaders would in a paternal way watch over the masses. The former movement was especially marked in England, the latter in France.

At the end of the fourteenth century the lack of labour, which was a consequence of the Black Death, had already induced the landowners in England by means of a stricter enforcement of the old village laws, which had partially sunk into oblivion, to retain the landworkers in the villages. This had occasioned riots and was one of the chief causes of the Lollard Movement, which attached itself to Wycliff's fight against the extortions of the Pope's emissaries. The lack of labour in the country, however, made the landowners try to dispense with labour. They transformed the cornfields into pastures for sheep, for the tending of which only a few shepherds were needed. The wooltrade became a source of riches and was one of the causes of the mercantilistic policy's caring for the producers' interests at the cost of the consumer's. Many people were in this way driven away from the land and had difficulty in finding other work by which they might subsist. Poverty and legal insecurity ensued.¹⁾

Thomas More.

Thomas More, whom we mentioned above, criticized this state of affairs severely. He was bitingly derisive at those who, as a testimony to the high state of justice in England, pointed to the scores of thieves who might be seen dangling on the gallows. It is, he maintains, impossible and unjust thus to fight theft, when the causes remain which make people thieves. "The sheep", he writes, "have now become such savage animals, that they devour men and whole villages. When men are driven from the farm, and large stretches of land which had formerly given food to many people, now only give maintenance to a few shepherds, those who have lost house and place of work and who, however willing to work, can find no work because nobody wants them, must inevitably find themselves reduced to beg and steal. A law ought to be made to the effect that those who have broken up farms and villages, should re-build them or give compensation to those whom they have thus deprived of their

¹⁾ See the description of English land conditions in J. Rogers, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, 1884; Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, 6. Aufl., 1909, I. pp. 782—699; R. Prothero, *English Farming past and present*, 1912; S. A. R. Marriott, *The English Land System*, 1914.

subsistence. So long as there is in existence such private power, as can at will leave the land unutilized, there will always be men who must become thieves in order to live".

Then Thomas More proceeds to describe the working society in Utopia, where no land is allowed to lie uncultivated, where work, of which everybody performs his share, is organized so as to produce sufficient for all, but where no superfluous work is performed and where everybody can provide himself from the stores with what he wants without any special payment, and where, for this reason, money is unknown and gold and silver despised. Money only makes people adopt a false standard of riches and causes them to feel its glory, to a great extent, to be conditioned by the poverty of others. So long as private property exists there will be enmity among men; they will plunder each other and he who plunders most will do so in the name of public welfare. Through two centuries of deliberate legislation which finally culminated at the end of the 18th century, Parliament endeavoured to enable the land-owners to force labour wages down to starvation level.¹⁾

Spence, Ogilvie, Charles Hall.

At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries when the poverty of the workers had become terrible, Thomas Spence and William Ogilvie, who were strongly influenced by More's description, set up a claim for a land-reform which was to be founded upon equal rights of all men to the possession of land, land being not the product of the work of any single person.²⁾ The great land-owners are to be considered as freebooters, who appropriate the profit from the farmer's work, their large incomes are only the wages of laziness. The cultivator of the land should enjoy the full profit from his work and for his use of the land only pay a rent to the parish. Such an arrangement would abolish poverty at the same time as it would make the cultivation of the land more intensive.

¹⁾ S. Th. Rogers, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, Ed. 1919, pp. 488 f.

²⁾ *The Pioneers of Land Reform. Essays by Thomas Spence, William Ogilvie, Thomas Paine. With an introduction by M. Beer, 1920; M. Beer, A History of British Socialism I—II 1920. I. pp. 101—132.*

Similar ideas were propounded by Thomas Paine and men like Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey. They were all profoundly moved with sympathy for the poor and indignation at the sudden accumulation of riches in a few hands. Such a state was counter to natural right and had been created by artificial and unjust forms of government. But the strong stressing of the significance of the land-question was, in the form in which it was set forth, antagonistic to the preponderance which had been gained by industrial development and thus their ideas took the semblance of being an attack on the free flowing of the sources of riches themselves. Sympathy for the poor could not easily hold its own against the enthusiasm for the sweeping development of trade which had seized all minds.

A more pronounced attempt to give the sympathy with the poor a closer connection with the interests of trade was made by Charles Hall (1805). Poverty is, in his opinion, not only a state provoking to our feelings, but a sign of sickness in trade. It was not only the hasty growth of industry and trade at the cost of agriculture, which lay at the bottom of this vicious state of affairs, but the state of lawlessness which had been rendered possible by the severance of the workers from the land. What is named the interests of trade are but the interests of capital and the main thing is to understand the antagonism between capital and labour. Through divers statistical computations Hall arrived at the result that the four fifths of the population of England, who by their work created the values, only got one eighth of them, while the seven eighths fell to the one fifth who created nothing. It is absurd to say that there is a free contractual relationship between the employer and worker; the latter has only the choice of slaving or starving. Capital and labour have directly opposite interests, the gain of the former spells loss to the latter. Trade and industry are therefore so far from being in themselves marks of the wealth of a nation that, on the contrary, they may become the means by which the minority impoverish the majority. The capitalist adds no value to what has been created by labour, he merely buys the products of labour from those who create them, at a price which is below their value. Only in this way can a profit be gained by the capitalist. But the lower the majority of the population sinks into poverty,

the weaker becomes the nation. The only strength of capital lies in its power to accumulate riches; this power it also displays by creating war among the nations in order that it may the better plunder and extend trade. But what is the good of such accumulation? Without work property cannot be turned to profit, but becomes a dead, valueless collection of things. The poorer the workers, the weaker the nation. All creation of wealth must rest on agriculture; land must therefore be given back to the people and the economic development must be based on a dense population of small farmers. If everybody owned a stretch of land, on which he could subsist when everything else failed, the worker's relation to the capitalist would be changed, as nobody then could force a man to work for him against his will, or deprive him of his profit by underpaying his work.

The whole capitalistic system is destructive and should be pulled up by its roots. It is not the fruit of conscious calculation but a displacement of the worker's natural relation to his work. Poverty was thus, according to Hall, not only an expense that was incurred in order to obtain the far greater advantages which trade and industry were thought to afford, but a testimony that the entire artificial edifice of power and riches floated in the air.

Thus two ideas prevailed on the subject of poverty. One was governed by human sympathy, which condemned suffering; it was in their quality of being poor that the property-less had a right to demand a change of their conditions. The other idea was this, that poverty was caused by plunder; the poor did not get their due. These two view-points were constantly intermixed, and the uncertainty as to which was the principal one had its root in a confused understanding of the moral principles themselves. What is right, what is duty, how far should man's law accord with the law of God?

The great problem with which the existence and growth of poverty faced the age was — whether it was God's command to love one's fellow-creatures that created an obligation, which must be met, so that one man should not covet riches while another starved — or, whether it was only our hearts' desires which made us help our fellow-beings. The fact that human suffering can arouse our sympathy gives us a moral perfection which the hard of heart must do without; but can the want of the poor by this means be changed

into a legal claim (of the same character as that which any man can make, that nobody must deprive him of his belongings) and the abolition of poverty become a principle for the judicial organization of society?

Communism and the Doctrine of Utility.

The Christian train of ideas demanded originally a communistic organization of human society and it was only the Fall that created private property and the division between rich and poor which we find in our societies. But our social organization is not only a consequence of the Fall, — it is also a means ordained by God of ridding ourselves of the consequences of the Fall. Every claim to authority and property originates with God, and nobody possesses authority and property lawfully when he does not use them in the right way. But it is always the communistic society that expresses perfection, and especially must it be held asserted that if it be possible to bring such a society into existence it will be disobedience to God not to do so. Such a society becomes possible where it is not a society of asceticism and renunciation, but, on the contrary, the organization which is best fitted for creating general wealth. In this way Thomas More had described his communistic Utopia. Communism is the social organization which builds on the interests of the consumer.

In the moral philosophy of the eighteenth century this view found its philosophical formula in the doctrine of utility and its principle: The greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number. All morality and right demand an unconditional obligation and can therefore only rest on the decision of God. Human decisions are always conditional and changeable and can thus hold no absolutely valid obligation. The principle of utility builds therefore on the will of God. But how are we to know what is the will of God? The essence of God being love, only that which inspires benevolence towards one's fellow-men can be acknowledged as the will of God and, in this way, the welfare of humanity becomes the criterion of the Divine Law.

This intricate train of thought, that the criterion of virtue is the will of God, but the criterion of the will of God is the happiness of

humanity is only a way of expressing the fact that you cannot by means of logic prove to man that universal welfare is his highest interest. Especially John Gay formulated this viewpoint in all its conciseness.¹⁾ In reality it only means that universal welfare should be the leading principle in our conduct of life. A few years later Hume sought to build our morals on our natural feelings — but under the control of justice. The latter is the expression of what is demanded in order that a society may exist, the desire of living in society being our deepest instinct. The conditions for living together in society are that society is capable of carrying through an equal valuation, of maintaining impartiality and of securing safety. Thus society takes the place of the will of God, but while God's will is known to be love, and universal welfare consequently becomes his will, it is not, in the same way, certain that welfare is the aim of society. The question may at any rate be asked, whether we should strive for universal welfare because it conditions society, or whether we strive for social life because it renders universal welfare possible.

Jeremy Bentham.

The latter view was held by Bentham, who gained an extremely powerful influence on the attitude of the age towards public as well as private right. Already in his first pamphlet "A Fragment on Government", which came in the same years as Adam Smith's great work, he sets up universal welfare in itself as the valid principle for every social organization and in his chief work "Principles of Moral and Legislation" (1780) he maintains that sympathy as "benevolence" is the motive which induces us both to act in accordance with universal welfare and to decide in what it consists. We use our experience and our intellect to judge of the consequences of our actions and to decide whether these or those laws are useful or injurious. We may make mistakes, but we have no other way to go than to employ our sagacity and power of thinking. Also our own

¹⁾ John Gay, Preliminary Dissertation concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue or Morality, 1731; Albee, A History of English Utilitarianism, 1902, pp. 69 ff.

welfare matters, and Bentham relies on being able to prove that the welfare of all depends on the welfare of each, so that social organization should aim at the construction of such harmony. Adam Smith had intended to prove that such harmony exists in the economic domain so that the best possible main result is attained when everybody with caution and judgment freely seeks his own happiness. In order to attain to a moral harmony, Bentham must, however, count with more than individual wisdom. "The first law of nature is to wish our own happiness; the united voices of prudence and active benevolence add, — Seek the happiness of others — seek your own happiness in the happiness of others."¹⁾ But even though we must have consideration for ourselves most at heart, we must admit that happiness obtained at the sacrifice of others will prove wanting also in regard to ourselves.

When we talk of natural right, of the value of selfabnegation, of the moral sense, all these expressions are manners of speech only. Those who believe that there is any other scale of virtue than happiness are like the dog who, snapping at the shadow, lost the substance.²⁾ Moral sense is said to lead to magnanimity. But does it also tell us what is magnanimous? It leads us to justice, but can it decide what is just?³⁾ The present organization of the State sins against the consideration of universal welfare on innumerable points; it has caused countless misfortunes by overlooking that it is quite beyond its task to decide what is welfare. That is determined by nature, and jurisprudence is but the science which tells us how to utilize the law for the promotion of welfare.⁴⁾ The course of the stars is no more dependent on our opinions than are our opinions decisive as to whether our society shall prosper or fall into ruins. Thomas More has already set forth this viewpoint; we must know the law of the life or death of society if we are not to act blindly. To take our recourse to God's will is only to believe that we can ascertain the laws of society in any way but by experience. Society is only the sum of the individuals, and if therefore everybody is allowed liberty to do all that he himself judges to be desirable only,

¹⁾ I. Bentham, *Déontologie ou science de la Morale*. 1834. I. p. 32.

²⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 58.

³⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 20.

⁴⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 44.

provided that it does not interfere with the liberty of others, the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number will ensue.

What burned deepest in Bentham's soul was anger at the indifference with which the State, often sheltered by false religious or traditional principles, looked at many conditions of the age which made people fall victims to misery and refused them legal protection against violence and fraud.¹⁾ But he did not only feel resentment when the weak were abandoned to the mercies of the strong, the mentally poor to those superior in intellect. He thought it unwise. Among the tasks which the State must take upon herself in order to promote universal welfare, one must be to see that the weak are not hampered in the development of their minds, their knowledge and judgment. In spite of the near relationship between Bentham and Adam Smith it would be quite unjustifiable to transfer the latter's laissez-faire principle to Bentham's doctrine. He wanted us all to regard the consideration of the welfare of society as the supreme claim, only supposing society to be such as to be worthy of the love of each single individual. Men are not poor creatures who need guardians; but, on the other hand, they should not be made victims of conditions which stunt their growth, so that they become unable to use their freedom. Bentham was in his later years an eager spokesman for political liberty; he demanded equal and general franchise for men and women. Only through the people's power over legislation could the indifference be dispelled with which those in power allowed the atrocious miseries to exist. Bentham died in 1832, the very year in which the Parliamentary Reform was carried through.

William Godwin.

Bentham's thoughts led Godwin to demand a quite new social organization.²⁾ We are all to endeavour to promote the welfare of the whole of society. To live in society is always happiness, nay, it

¹⁾ R. Wilson, *The Province of the State*, 1911, XI.

²⁾ *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and Its Influence On General Virtue and Happiness*, 1793; P. Eltzbacher, *Der Anarchismus*, 1900, Kap. 3; G. F. Steffen, *Den materialistiska samhällsuppfatningens historia för Karl Marx*, 1914, pp. 288 f.

is the condition of happiness, but the State is at best a necessary evil. Every kind of legal organization is an arbitrary and stereotyped system which gives no scope for taking into consideration the constantly changing quality of men and conditions. It is not according to tradition and custom, the usages of our ancestors, or any written law that all necessary decisions should be made; but intelligent and capable men should discuss the cases and make decisions thereon. Such discussions and decisions are, however, only possible in narrow circles, and therefore Godwin sets forth a demand for the breaking up of the nation into a variety of small self-supporting groups, whose mutual connection should be reduced to a minimum. To this small independent society each member is attached by all his interests. What holds these people together is something quite different from a contract; it is intelligent men's common discernment of what is the best. In such a society private property will therefore be out of the question. What interest can we take in accumulating property which far exceeds our capacity of spending?

Godwin's description of the bliss to be found in such a system of small self-sufficient communistic societies accords in all essentials with Thomas More's. It can be brought into existence by convincing men of its excellence; no other way is open. All use of power only creates misfortunes and offers no security that justice is carried through. At the core of Godwin's social doctrine is the close connection between his high valuation of human liberty as authoritative and conscious self-determination and his belief that this can only be brought about in small co-operative groups of trade. His theory has been called anarchism, because he wages war against that great organ of central organization, the modern State. England must return to or revive the old state, where the citizens lived in small farming communities eking out their income by some home industry. We find the same train of thought about twenty years later in Robert Owen's co-operative village organization.

Godwin's social doctrine was determined by his opposition to the dissolution of the old village organization which was just then being accomplished.

His theories went directly counter to the prevalent admiration for the violent development of large scale commerce and trade; and his accusation that this preponderant admiration oppressed the

people into poverty, ignorance and indifference called forth in protest a book, which came to play an important part in the defence of the new development by proving, in a seemingly unimpeachably objective way, that poverty was not due to this or that social organization, but to unchangeable conditions of nature. It was Godwin's anarchistic pastoral idyl which occasioned Malthus to write his famous work: *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). The fact, asserts Malthus, that there is only room for a definitely limited number of men at the table of life, cannot be altered; the rest must die. The population increase at a quicker rate than the articles of food. Already in 1786 a clergyman, John Townsend¹⁾ had, under the impression of the then new Poor Law (Gilbert's Act) maintained, that the attempt to try to remedy poverty was a misunderstanding. Poverty is the necessary condition of riches and the fact that there are poor people who are willing to take upon themselves the lowest kinds of work and, by this means, enable the more delicate to apply themselves uninterruptedly to more elevated pursuits, enhances the happiness of society. "Poor Laws", he writes, "have a tendency to disturb the harmony and beauty, the symmetry and order, which are contained in this system and which God and Nature have created". At the back of Townsend's utterances lurked a fear that a decline in civilization would ensue if the privileges of riches disappeared. This fear was at that time much to the fore; it still plays an important part and it has during the industrial development taken on a new shape: as a belief in the theory that enterprise and progress rest with the small group of people who have the means and powers of starting new undertakings and who as a reward accumulate great riches.²⁾

Malthus, Owen, Ricardo, Chartism.

Malthus's work gave those who felt pangs of conscience at the growing poverty an excellent opiate. This was the course of nature and it could not be helped. Manufacturers bought children without compunction from the masters of orphanages and forced them with

¹⁾ Cited from Marx, *Das Kapital*, the sixth impression, 1909, I. p. 612.

²⁾ For Malthus's relation to Adam Smith, see Steffen, *Den materialistiska samhällsuppfattningens historia för Karl Marx*, 1914, p. 292.

whips into the factories where they let them work for nineteen hours at a payment of 6d. Thus people who really felt sincere pain at seeing all this misery, would oppose attempts to remedy the injuries through factory legislation. Harriet Martineau protested against the attempts which were made to limit child labour in 1833.¹⁾ It went counter to the economic laws. The only way out of the children's sufferings was death.

Malthus's doctrine was, however, seriously shaken by the experiences which were involved in the first great economic crisis of 1815. This crisis was a reaction which followed on the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars. Everybody had expected peace to bring a great boom in trade, but this optimistic hope was deceived and the feverish production which had been started on these expectations had produced unsaleable goods. Everywhere an increasing want was visible not on account of a scarcity of goods but, on the contrary, caused by an excess of production. It was not, as Malthus had said, that production could not keep up with the consumption of the increasing population, but the direct opposite was the case, it being consumption that proved incapable of absorbing production. Faced by these conditions Robert Owen maintained that there must be some lapse in the social organization when such great poverty could exist amidst all this superfluity. The consumer's capacity for buying must be increased; poverty was a threat to production and this would have nothing to stand on and be a source of the decay of the nation if it lowered the standard of living of the working-class. It was the contrast between social production for social aims and individual production for personal profit which could now, for the first time, be based on actual experience. The fact that the producers, as had been perceived by Adam Smith, were in a constant conspiracy to keep wages down was now proved to result in their depriving themselves of their customers.

At the same time Ricardo (1772—1823) set forth a somewhat different explanation.²⁾ He maintained that capital was the creative agent of wealth. The Science of Economics occupies itself with the laws of the production of such commodities as can be increased by

¹⁾ Cited from Simkowitz, *Marxism versus Socialism*. 3. Ed. 1923. p. 107.

²⁾ Ricardo, *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817.

human activity. But land cannot be regarded as such a commodity; the only thing that can happen is that men can be forced to bring constantly poorer land under cultivation. But the poorer the land which must be cultivated the greater the proportionate surplus profit on the better land, and this surplus profit or ground-rent falls to the land-owner. Under the industrial development the population will grow, poorer land will be taken into use, the ground-rent will increase and the prices of corn rise. Subsistence will become dearer and wages rise; but in this way the profits of capital will go down. Therefore Ricardo thinks it possible to assert that the greater the activity which capital puts forth, the less becomes its profit when the land-owners' incomes grow. This state of affairs is still further aggravated to the detriment of the collective trade interest, but in favour of the landed proprietors who have contributed nothing to the development, by measures of protection like the one carried through by the Corn Law of 1815.

Ricardo's doctrines contributed to relieve the tension between the industrial capitalists and the workers while at the same time it increased the animosity towards the landed proprietors as a self-centred class who sought their own advantage at the cost of the rest of the population. Thus it operated partly in the opposite direction to that of Owen. Owen's dream of a society of small villages with agriculture for the principal occupation supplemented by home industry rested on conditions which at his time had disappeared and therefore could hardly gain favour with the working-class, as it would require an entire retrograde migration of the population. The workers in the factories did not want to move back into the country; it was as factory workers that they desired an improvement of their condition; but their demands for higher wages were met with powerful opposition from the factory owners; and in Ricardo's doctrine of the limited capital, which as circulating might be utilized for paying wages, the factory-owners found a support for their assertion that they were unable to pay higher wages.

During the strained conditions of the time the pressure on the part of the industrial magnates for parliamentary reform was constantly gaining headway and was carried in 1832. The belief that the way forward to the furthering of one's interests went through access to parliamentary representation, grew, and the work-

ers, who had lately been stirring up riots about the country, but who had always been met with firm resistance from the custodians of peace, now united in the demand for the franchise. Thus Chartism was formed, the first attempt on the part of the workers to organize themselves under their own leaders. For about a dozen years this political unrest continued, but at length it was suppressed and was followed by a calm which was further encouraged by great industrial undertakings, especially the construction of railways, affording better openings for work. The workers gave up their political fight and instead they concentrated their power on the development of their organizations, the Trade Unions. Chartism failed, because the movement lacked a definite group of ideas on which to concentrate and did not find the means of incorporating itself into existing conditions. In various circles there was much understanding of the workers' miserable conditions and by way of a repartee to the Whigs for their defeat at the Parliamentary Reform of 1832 the Tories especially stretched out a hand to support their demand for aid. But this meant in reality that they considered the workers' demand as a kind of relief on a large scale, in the essence of poor-relief. In the course of the movement the view had gradually gained ground with the workers that it was right and not relief which was wanted. Their misery was due to exploitation, to the fact that they did not get the full profit of their labour. But how they were to obtain higher wages without ruining industry they were unable to solve. They would have none of Godwin's and Owen's communistic ideas as set forth in their agrarian garb, and they were incapable of drawing up the outlines of an industrial communistic society, as they wholly lacked the knowledge and education to support the technical apparatus of industry. Owen's powerful claim for a better elementary education as being perhaps the sine qua non consequently won many adherents among the workers. Later on it was advocated with great force by Richard Cobden.¹⁾

It is a strange evidence of the vagueness which marked Chartism that Cobden in his fight for the repeal of the Corn Law of 1815, which Owen had foretold would have a destructive effect on foreign

¹⁾ For Cobden's attitude see C. N. Starcke, *Personlighedens Moral*, 1912, p. 450; J. Morley, *The Life of Richard Cobden*, 1879, 12th Ed. 1905.

trade, was met with the most vehement resistance in labouring circles; he was regarded as a biased spokesman for the employers' interests, and it was not understood that it was in the interests of the workers, who constituted an indispensable link in the whole industrial structure, that the expansion of industry was not hampered by short-sighted protective measures. Ricardo's doctrine of the reverse proportion between wages and profit also made it more difficult for the workers to believe that the growth of industry led to higher wages.

F. Engels and Karl Marx entered into communication with the leading men within the Chartist movement. Engels came to Bradford in 1842 in order to study the English labour movement, and in November 1847 Marx came to London to participate in the negotiations which had for their result the publication of the communistic manifesto by him and Engels. Here Marx became acquainted with the revolutionary English labour-leader Harvey, the admirer of Marat. But prior to Harvey's personal influence Marx had been under the influence of a number of writers, who demanded Owen's communistic principle of association carried through in the organization of society and were desirous of replacing the political legal machinery by the organizations of labour, the Trade Unions. The Reform of 1832 did not give the labour a representation in parliament and then for a time they went their own ways. It was of the greatest importance that the views of the Physiocrats on the significance of land and the ownership of land at the same time took a new direction, and gave way to the demand that all ownership of land should be communistic, as only in this way could the workers guard themselves against the ground-rent and its unequal distribution. John Gray and Thomas Edmonds, but above all John Francis Bay (*Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy*, 1839) pointed out that it was only by combining that the workers could obtain the profit of their work. The total profit of production was then estimated at 400 million pounds sterling. Out of this one half was given in wages to the workers, 50 millions were paid in taxes. Thus the employers appropriated to themselves 150 millions.¹⁾ How intensely Marx was seized by this entire movement is proved by his minute representa-

¹⁾ M. Beer, *The Pioneers of Land Reform* 1920, I, p. 238.

tion of it in his polemical pamphlet against Proudhon.¹⁾ The communist industrial society must be based on the new methods of production, which burst the boundaries of the old middle-class society that had been built up on isolated private property. He who cannot get into possession of the new implements is mercilessly knocked out.²⁾ The communist manifesto laid down these points of view. Under the new conditions of production private capital is bound to exploit the working class. The manifesto therefore appeals to the workers' consciousness of their profound common antagonism to the private capitalist as employer and their whole solidarity, it calls upon them to organize themselves as a class and endeavours to create a connection among the working classes of all countries. A dozen years earlier Chartist circles had already endeavoured to create an international workers' combination and had entered into connection with Polish workers. But it was only the manifesto which made international solidarity a banner.

Babeuf.

Thus in England Communism became the immediate expression of the organization of labour under the modern factory system, after having had for its basis, during the course of ages, the general idea of the solidarity of mankind. But one significant change had occurred; the English worker, who only a short time before in the communist organization had seen an essentially agrarian organization and claimed his right of ownership to the village land, had now taken up a new attitude. He no longer wanted to go back to the land. He desired an improvement in his condition as a citizen of the town. This led to different developments in commercial, industrial England and agrarian France. In the agrarian sphere there was not much sympathy with the communistic efforts; it was here and there in the group of the town-labourers that this interest made itself felt as the idea on the basis of which the general feeling of fraternal community might be realized. Already before the revolution Ba-

¹⁾ Karl Marx, *La misère de la philosophie*, 1847. German edition. *Das Elend der Philosophie*. Deutsch v. Bernstein und Kautsky. 1885, p. 45.

²⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 181.

beuf, the first French socialist, discussed with his friends how far it accorded with the laws of nature to form a society where all were equal and no difference was made between rich and poor. In Thomas More's Utopia he found the ideal construction of such a society, where only modern industry needed to be incorporated. The revolution disappointed Babeuf, as it was only a revolution of the middle classes; and when by means of a conspiracy he attempted to carry through his communist ideas he was executed.

France, however, was under the influence of this idea, however imperfectly it was carried through. The nation was the sovereign and it was a contradiction that the sovereign should be condemned to poverty. The people became an expression for the idea of fraternity and this dominated the minds in the time after the Revolution, partly in the shape of the old Christian charity, partly as an idea of a logically systematic nature, a thorough organization, an organized association. The actual form of government was a government by the elect, at first the divine traditions of the Bourbons, later the citizen king's new staff of financiers and university teachers, but in both cases a narrow circle of the elect who alone were able to support the three fundamental ideas on which France rested: the true, the beautiful, and the good. Through these ideas France became one with humanity. In the men, who found this new France unsatisfactorily organized, the aim of social effort became therefore large constructions of associations and the possibility for their being carried through was thought only to depend on man's will to do right. Therefore the principal object with them was to arouse the understanding of the inner connection of the plans and an enthusiasm for the idea of the unity of humanity on which they rested.

St. Simon, Ch. Fourier.

The "New Christianity" of St. Simon¹⁾ demanded a society, where an industrial and mental élite provided for the people's material and mental necessities. His thoughts developed into the

¹⁾ M. G. Hubbard, *Saint Simon sa vie et ses travaux*, 1857; G. Weill, *Saint Simon et son Oeuvre*, 1894; By the same author, *L'école saint-simonienne*, 1896; S. L. Puech, *La Tradition socialiste en France et la Société des Nations*, 1921.

formation of an international alliance, in which the parliaments of the great powers were to form a supreme government common to all nations. His pupil and follower Auguste Comte opined that the historical development would lead to the formation of a unity of human kind, which would harmonize the citizen's activities, just as the unity of the organism explains and determines all the organs' different shapes and mutual interplay. The St. Simonians set out to prove how love binds the whole spiritual world together just as gravitation keeps the physical world together, but it finds its principal sources of power in those people whom we call the great financiers and consequently it was first and foremost these whom the St. Simonians tried to subject to their influence. They played no insignificant part during the reign of Louis Philippe, they planned great industrial and commercial undertakings, the construction of railways, the cutting through of the isthmus of Suez, etc. in order to establish an easier and quicker connection among people living far apart. Comte became the founder of a scientific sociology which was to enable us to create organized and happy social conditions just as natural science had given us modern technique.

Fourier¹⁾ was also filled with the idea of the interconnection of all things, the masses are so closely interrelated in Nature that nothing can happen in one place without its effects extending to the farthest parts. From a social point of view this leads to a thorough interconnection, and the societies must, like groups of phenomena in Nature, be constructed in series which consist of differently composed combinations, which can perform work and do so with greater precision than any single individual. If all things were alike the composition would only be a shapeless thing; as it is, they become as machinery which can perform many different things and at the same time create the safest basis of peace and harmony. The contrast between rich and poor is irrational because it is neither the consequence or the occasion of co-operation. But for this reason it will create nothing lasting and a contest will ensue until the very

¹⁾ Fourier, *Théorie des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales*, 1808; *Traité de l'association domestique-agricole*, 1822; *Nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire*, 1829; Ch. Adam, *La Philosophie en France*, 1894; F. Ravaisson, *La Philosophie en France au XIX Siècle*, 5me Ed., 1904; Mad. Cathi de Gamond, *Fourier et son système*, 1838.

contest produces order. In his first and most important work "Théorie des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales" he maintained that there are four spheres of existence, the social, the animal, the organic, and the material, where instead of conflict the activities of association should be carried through. He saw in Napoleon the "omniarch" whose mission it was to force everything into order. He was the great victor who has to gather all the scattered nations. Possibly he is only a stage on the way, the final supremacy will probably fall to Russia, but the decisive point is that what will happen is that a magnate will, with main force, compel all the parts into a common organization and government. The sacrifices of blood it will cost are nothing to the lives that will be spared by a general peace being created with happiness and favourable conditions, when men have learnt that every single individual should live for the whole. In the present state of things, you can steal, murder and ruin other people, slander and dishonour them openly without being punished by the laws. Instead of fighting each other men should co-operate. Nothing can happen anywhere without its effects spreading to the farthest regions, nothing can happen in a small citizen's home in a remote corner of France without its effects being traceable in China. Like Saint Simon he traced an analogy between the force of attraction in the physical world and the social attraction, sympathy; thus the inmost characteristic of society becomes solidarity, an idea which was destined to play an important rôle in the following years. Influenced by Owen, Fourier tried later on to develop his thoughts of association in "phalansteries", villages with a common management and minutely divided labour. He loses himself in a minutely detailed description of how life should be led under such a common management. He draws up the sharpest boundaries between his phalansteries and the Saint Simonian communistic fellowship. Everybody has his completely private property, and one of the most characteristic features of a Fourierian phalanstery is the fact that an exact register is kept of each member's account with the phalanstery from his fifth year.

Fourier had adopted that living faith in peace and the co-operation of men in individual societies and among the nations mutually out of which the ideas of free trade were to grow. For the moment the work for social peace made itself more strongly felt. But ori-

ginally they are co-ordinate and they can scarcely be solved separately. Men like Pecqueur and Leroix got into touch with representatives of the labouring population, who suffered under indescribably bad conditions. Frequent riots without plan and without inner connection bore testimony to the severity of the pressure. In the reigning middle classes, however, this produced no desire to learn to know the causes of poverty, still less to take up work to improve the conditions. It was not until 1840 that men like Proudhon and Louis Blanc made the whole state of affairs the object of a systematic treatment on the basis of the idea of association, and from the middle of the century the discussion of Fourier's ideas practically ceased.

The discussion of the problem of poverty was combined with the question of the interrelations of men towards each other in the society to which they belonged. It was the question of an alteration in the powers of government and the maintenance of civil order. In England, France and Germany the form of government had been called into question and in the most different shapes an arrangement was demanded which gave free play to industrial forces. Everywhere, however, people were frightened as to what might happen when once steps were taken to change the established order. Who was to be represented, where were the limits to be drawn, was it, on the whole, possible to draw any limits? Everywhere the feeling was about that the age of democracy had come and anxiety was felt at the idea of government by the people. The terror from the time of the guillotine still lived in the minds of the people. These fears which were felt at the thought of a free people were further aggravated by the tension between capital and labour as described above. The fear of democracy coincided with the fear of the supremacy of the working class.

Democracy. Tocqueville.

A strange attempt to decide what a democratic government would really import, was made by Tocqueville (1806—1859) in a masterly description of the democracy of America¹⁾ where democracy seemed to have succeeded in creating a firm, middle-class government.

¹⁾ De la démocratie en Amérique, 1835, 8th ed. I—IV, 1840.

Tocqueville set out to indicate the decisive features which determined the social and mental life of such a society.

He came to the conclusion that democracy is the force of the future which, as if by divine ordainment, will gain supremacy everywhere. All hindrances will be washed away; it has borne away the rule of king and clergy, it will bear away the bourgeoisie as well. No human efforts will be able to stop it.¹⁾ Tocqueville's book obtained an immense circulation and the main features in his characterization of democracy proved so apposite that they influenced future development.

The basis on which America succeeded in establishing a regular central government was the carrying through of the principle of self-government; the State governs, but does not administrate. Everything rests on the principle that everybody is the best judge of what concerns him only and is best able to guard his own interests. The municipalities and counties therefore each watch over their own particular interests.²⁾ The most unlimited liberty prevails in America as regards the right of the citizen to associate in political parties, and this right which may seem to hold the greatest danger of chronic anarchy has become an active means of protecting the minorities against the tyrannical supremacy of the majority. The danger of anarchy is constantly there, but this danger is the means the Americans use to fight the still greater danger of the government's omnipotence. The victorious party holds the whole public power in its hands; against this the vanquished party can only oppose the moral power which is given by the free right of association. There may be turbulent characters in America, but there are no secret societies and no conspiracies.³⁾

In Europe the parties are militant and their aim is war against the government, and they regard themselves as the organs of the nation, which itself is unable to make its opinion heard. They consider themselves the actual majority as against the governing minority. In America this is impossible. The government is the majority, the opposition is the minority. In Europe the objects of

¹⁾ Opus cit. I, pp. 7 f.

²⁾ Opus cit. I, p. 128.

³⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 35 f.

the parties are to act, not to speak, to strike, not to convince; the party members are like soldiers who obey the command of the party, and the party as such loses in this way a great deal of its moral power. In America such party discipline is unknown. It is true that the Americans have party administrations, but the members of the party hold their personal free-will intact, nobody ever sacrificed his free will or his personal power of judgment by joining a party.¹⁾

A people, thinks Tocqueville, will never in its entirety be able to attain to full intellectual development. The greater or lesser facility with which people are able to live without working form the necessary limit to their mental progress. It is just as impossible to find a society where all are highly educated as it is to find one where all the citizens are rich. The two things are interdependent. The people are therefore apt to judge rashly and instinctively of public affairs and they become an easy prey to charlatans who know how to flatter them while their real friends obtain no influence. It is rarely that the really great men are elected. This is, however, not because the people cannot see who are the most capable, but because they have neither the desire nor the taste to elect them. This circumstance is accounted for, says Tocqueville, by democracy giving rise to a certain degree of envy. Equality is demanded and those who are above the average are excluded from power.²⁾

But this dangerous democratic instinct is counteracted by the power that, under threatening circumstances, is gained by the national instinct and which causes us to subordinate ourselves to the leaders who are best suited to avert the danger. The intellectual level of the Senate is therefore far higher than that of the House of Representatives.

Democracy is always swayed by an indefinable zeal for alterations and improvements of the conditions of the people because the sovereign i. e. the great masses are always in poor circumstances. This makes great demands on the finances of the State. In America the majority are, it must be admitted, people in modest circumstances, the class of property-less is, however, small and the danger of their claim on society becomes thus immaterial.³⁾ But, on the whole, it

¹⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 39 f.

²⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 44 f.

³⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 67 f.

is the national character and its instincts that determine what claims can be made on the finances of the State rather than the desire for economic goods. It may be disputed whether greediness and corruptibility are greater under an upper-class government than in a democracy. They may be of different kinds, but, when all is said and done, the aristocratic forms of government are perhaps the most corrupt.¹⁾ Tocqueville believed that democracy will, in the course of time, increase the strength of society; but it will scarcely be able, in any given moment, to collect all its forces as is possible under an aristocratic government. It will be particularly difficult for a democratic people to waive regard for the present moment for the benefit of the future.

Democratic government will more easily allow itself to be guided by the principle of utility and the consideration of the greatest possible number of people than will aristocracy. The latter will, on the contrary, endeavour to monopolize riches and power. There is in democracy no direct antagonism between the interests of the governors and the governed as is the case in oligarchies, and this antagonism is so dangerous that it may be said completely to supersede all the virtues of those in power.²⁾

Patriotism is at times instinctive and violent, at times of a more reflective nature. The latter should be allowed to gain the upper hand as it is the more lasting even though it is less violent. But the best means of transforming the instinctive, elementary patriotism into a feeling of a more rational kind is to allow all the citizens to share in the government in order to make them interested in the fate of their country.³⁾ The sense of justice becomes greater in a democracy because everybody possesses rights. Anywhere else people may regard the political rights which are given them as troublesome tasks which take up their time; in America political interest is alive and the citizens would feel a void in their lives if they had not the interests of their country to guard as well as their own.⁴⁾ A majority may, of course, abuse their power and make unjust laws. A law does not become just, because

¹⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 83 f.

²⁾ Opus cit. II, p. 105.

³⁾ Opus cit. II, p. 111.

⁴⁾ Opus cit. II, p. 113.

the majority want it, but there is just as little guarantee that the will of the ruling upper class is just. God alone may without danger of erring be almighty. Democracy, however, has the advantage that the ruling majority may quickly be altered.¹⁾ The dangerous thing is that democracy leaves less liberty of thought, i. e. of discussion, than other forms of government, as public opinion mercilessly punishes him who entertains opinions different from the common run.²⁾ As courtiers cringe to the king you cringe to the people in America. The choice lies in reality between admitting the whole people to political power and leaving their liberty to educate them, and placing an unlimited power in the hands of a single man, which will deprive all of their liberty;³⁾ but whilst liberty may create hate and discord among men, despotism will produce that which is far worse, a general indifference.⁴⁾

What democracy demands of the upper classes is not so much that they should renounce their riches but rather that they should leave off their arrogance.⁵⁾ It is true that every poor man yearns to participate in the goods of the rich, but he has also the hope of becoming rich; the rich have most of them been poor themselves and the mental contrast between them is not so great as in the countries where there is scarcely any hope for the poor and where the rich were born to their riches.

The more equal the individuals become the more will the idea of the right of society supersede the idea of individual privileges. Democracy will therefore have a natural tendency to centralize the administration and will acknowledge no kinds of privileges.⁶⁾ In a democratic age the single individual will become constantly more averse to obeying somebody else, but all will obey the social authority which represents the will of the people.⁷⁾ Privileged rights and local peculiarities will thus in a democratic age tend to disappear for the benefit of a centralized uniformity. The growth of the cen-

¹⁾ Opus cit. II, pp. 132—140.

²⁾ Opus cit. II, p. 143.

³⁾ Opus cit. pp. 247 f.

⁴⁾ Opus cit. III, p. 208.

⁵⁾ Opus cit. III, p. 211.

⁶⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 259.

⁷⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 269.

tral power itself, which is a striking feature in all States at the present day, might be interpreted as a proof of the coming victory of democracy. Administration will not only become more centralized but it will interfere more in people's private affairs and go much more into details.¹⁾ The administration of people's money affairs will become constantly more subjected to collective authorities; you will borrow the money of the rich and make use of that of the poor through saving-banks.²⁾ Tocqueville perceives clearly that the very development of trade gives the State more and more tasks to solve. As in the Middle Ages the king's intervention was demanded by trade and handicrafts to watch over the safety of the travellers and provide roads of communication, the same happens now only on a larger scale. The State becomes the largest tradesman and claims a superiority over all the others.³⁾ In times where democracy strives to overthrow an oligarchy its leaders will be imbued with a living spirit of independence, but when once equality has conquered this passion will decrease and the power of the State will grow quite beyond the control of the citizens and become centralized.⁴⁾ The thing to be feared from a democracy is that it will create a kind of administrative guardianship of a paternal nature. It is neither disturbance, disorder, plunder, nor anarchy which should be apprehended, but the creation of a paternal State despotism. Tocqueville's picturesque description of this democracy's tendency to play the guardian, to make everything uniform and centralized is well worth reading.

"Over all the citizens looms an immense protective power which takes it upon itself to secure their necessities and watch over their fates. It is absolute, goes into details, is firmly established and gentle. It would be like the paternal power if like this it had for its purpose to prepare men for their manhood; but, on the contrary, it only seeks to keep them irrevocably fixed in childhood; it delights to see the citizens amuse themselves provided that amusement is their only end. It works willingly for their happiness: but it wants to do so unaided and to judge unaided. It provides for their

¹⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 291.

²⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 292.

³⁾ Opus cit. IV, pp. 294 f.

⁴⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 306.

safety, foresees and secures their necessities, facilitates their amusements, conducts their most important businesses, administrates their industry, and divides their inheritances. Why should it not be able to save them entirely from the toil and moil of living? Thus it will day by day make the use of independent judgment more useless and rare; it will restrict the will to the farthest extent and gradually deprive every citizen of his right of self-determination. Equality has prepared men for all this, it has accustomed them to suffer it and often even consider it a blessing."¹⁾

"Those dangers", concludes Tocqueville, "with which equality threatens human independence I have wanted to throw into a sharp relief, because I am profoundly convinced that those dangers are both the most terrible that futurity holds in store and also those of which we are least sensible. But I do not regard them as inevitable."²⁾ Unfortunately Tocqueville does not describe how they are to be averted. He only trusts that men will find the power in themselves which may determine their fate for the best. But he has no doubt that the inevitable development will be democratic. The old society disappears, the new shapes itself; whether it will be better nobody can tell, but it will be different. It seems to him that the lines of development will tend to distribute good and evil equally in this world. Great riches will disappear, the number of small fortunes will increase. Wants and necessities will increase, but there will be neither uncommon chances of happiness or irremediable misery. The single individual will become isolated and weak, but society will become active, foreseeing and strong. Men individually will be set many petty tasks and the State immeasurably large ones.³⁾

In this way did Tocqueville wind up his description of democracy in America i. e. in the form it took where it formed itself into society. Whether this might be taken as a portent of what a democratic Europe would become is a different question. Tocqueville's description impresses us strangely as a mixture of a prophetic clairvoyance and an entirely erroneous judgment, as he had no means of judging to what extent European conditions would infect America

¹⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 314.

²⁾ Opus cit. IV, p. 336.

³⁾ Opus cit. IV, pp. 340 f.

or vice versa. It is only in our own time that we have come to an understanding of the real basis of the American States and their democratic constitution and have perceived what it meant that the people in America were free and had always been so. It was the eminent German legist G. Jellinek who in a short sensational treatise "Die Erklärung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte" threw light on the sources of the development of political liberty and its democratic nature. It was the Reformation which gave the demand for liberty of conscience a decisive political turn, where it was not a question of rights which the State was to grant, but of claims which the individuals made on the State, concerning restrictions of its powers, to which the State must submit. During the 16th and 17th centuries the demand developed with religion for its starting-point into the individual's claim to the right to live his life fully, not as a right which had been granted by the State, but as his own recognized right. Impelled by their religious individualism many people left the old country to seek a new home across the sea. There forms of society were instituted on condition that the new societies were to respect the claims of the individuals. Thus the American societies became perhaps the only ones which were formed by a free contract among men who made their own conditions for subjecting themselves to the power of the State. The State rested on a liberty which could not be granted by any earthly power and which consequently no earthly power could violate. Societies were created in which the citizens' ideas of the restricted power of the State were still alive and where the task to be fulfilled was to ascertain the right boundary line between ego and society.¹⁾ In Europe a nation could only become independent through overthrowing existing conditions, and the French Revolution did not hold out any promise of a society growing up out of its ruins similar to that in America. The American Declaration of Independence, "the Bill of Rights", is the complete model of the French "Declaration of Human Rights", but it gives all through a different and more prominent place to the function of the State. In Europe democracy appeared as a phase in the

¹⁾ G. Jellinek, Die Erklärung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte, pp. 43, 56, 67, and 75.

fight against riches which was made by poverty. In America there were, as Tocqueville pointed out, very few who were without property and the way to gain riches was open to everybody. Everybody was entitled to protection of life and liberty and property, and of those things the last was the most important, for without security of property there was no safety for life and liberty. In Europe the lie of the land was quite different and communism scarcely offered a way out. This does not mean that the struggle for property did not in America also give rise to all the same difficulties as in Europe. On the reception of the great Chartist Petition in parliament in 1839 Lord John Russell pronounced on behalf of the government that the government could see no way of securing a constant state of well-being for the whole society; he referred to America who already possessed those liberties for whose introduction in England the Petition craved and asked whether America knew nothing of mercantile crises, low wages and unemployment?

Whether democracy was fitted to take up the fight for the abolition of poverty was not easy to perceive where only American conditions were considered. The influence of democracy on the train of human thought might seem to make itself felt principally in other spheres. In the present day where America's development has taken a capitalistic turn, a few significant features of a democratic character seem to remain. The forming of American workers into a social class seems to halt because he who is a labourer to-day may be a boss to-morrow.¹⁾ The constitution secures to whoever gets the political power in America their private enterprise and private property against the interference of the State. In his minute description of American conditions James Bryce²⁾ emphasizes the point that the man in America who is openly immoral or personally vulgar or dishonest will find the doors of society closed against him. In England, on the contrary, great wealth cleverly spent will more easily open the doors. For in England great wealth may by availing itself of the right methods buy rank from those who bestow it. No small importance should be attached to this moral difference, but it

¹⁾ Bonn, Amerika und sein Problem, p. 102.

²⁾ James Bryce, The American Commonwealth, II, pp. 749 f.

should be taken into consideration whether Europe can offer the chances of trade which are not solely to be attributed to America's lack of family privileges, but also to the large elbow-room which has existed up till now and which, in spite of the immense immigration, is still in existence. What influence man's whole attitude towards land has on his mental development we shall not yet examine.