

BOOKS

MORRIS'S SOCIALISM.

The Socialism of William Morris. By John Spargo. Ariel Press: Westwood, Mass. Cloth, 50 cents; paper, 25 cents.

Mr. Spargo vehemently repudiates the frequent assertion that Morris was more of an anarchist than a Marxian socialist. But by his own showing Morris held no clear view of Marxian economics, though he believed in their tendencies. And Mr. Spargo's own failure to grasp the principles of philosophic anarchism is betrayed by his argument for the impossibility of Morris's being an anarchist—that he was constructive, not destructive. It is not unlikely that Morris will still be classed as a communist-anarchist in spirit, whatever may have been his own classification of himself, or Mr. Spargo's classification of him. But this brief history of his economic progression is a necessary appendix to the biographies of the author and artist from pens unsympathetic with the social movement of which in his later years Morris was so great a leader, and for which he was the greatest of the prophets.

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Incidentally we discover from this uncompromising note on page 20 of Mr. Spargo's book, how *some* history is written:

It is perhaps worth while calling attention here to an article by Elbert Hubbard, in the *Phillistine*, December, 1903, more especially since Mr. Hubbard is by many uncritical persons regarded as a sort of American William Morris, and an unimpeachable authority upon all that pertains to the English poet-artist. In the article in question, Mr. Hubbard devotes many pages to a circumstantial account of the relations which existed between William Morris and Karl Marx, their intimate friendship, rivaling that of Damon and Pythias, ended by a bitter quarrel. Every word of that account is untrue. The two men never met and Morris never saw Marx in his life! When Morris joined the Socialist movement, early in 1883, he had never even heard of Marx. And the latter was a dying man then, the end coming on the fourteenth of March, 1883. In all literature I know of nothing more scandalous than Hubbard's article.

ALICE THACHER POST.

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