

THE INFLUENCE OF KARL MARX ON CONTEMPORARY SOCIALISM

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I

For many years the words "socialism" and "Marxism" have been practically synonyms. There could be no ampler proof of the greatness of Karl Marx than this simple fact. Over a large part of the Old World today socialism is the dominant political issue, and in the parliamentary bodies of several nations its leaders are conspicuous for their ability no less than for their earnestness, devotion, and courage. Throughout the world the movement has a voting strength of nearly ten millions, representing, probably, at least five times as many human beings.

It would be idle to deny that great and important differences exist among those who call themselves socialists. However much they may have in common, it is obvious that M. Jaurés, the eloquent and scholarly French socialist, and Mr. Hyndman, the equally eloquent and scholarly English socialist, hold very different views concerning the program essential to the attainment of the socialist goal, if not as to the goal itself.

Both these men are pure "intellectuals." Although they are great leaders in a proletarian movement, neither of them has had to experience the proletarian struggle. But if we take socialists who are equally typical proletarians we shall find exactly the same divergence of thought and method. Keir Hardie, the British socialist, and Eugene V. Debs, the American socialist, both belong to this class. Each came to the socialist movement through his trade-union experience. Yet, despite the apparent similarity of their evolution as socialists, the two leaders represent opposing poles of socialist policy and thought.

Such obvious facts as these have caused many critics, sympathetic and otherwise, to attempt a classification of socialists.

Even within the movement itself, crude efforts are made in this direction. The socialist press teems with references to arbitrarily arranged groupings, indicated by such terms as "impossibilists," "opportunists," "intellectuals," "proletarians," and so on. Such groupings have some value in that they describe, however vaguely, some characteristics which roughly differentiate various phases of contemporary socialism. Their arbitrary character should not be forgotten, however, for a single moment. He who trusts them too completely will be utterly misled. The "opportunist" of today may tomorrow be found taking a position which places him among the "impossibilists," and the most vociferous attack upon the "intellectuals" is likely to come from an intellectual, much to the amusement of the proletarians in the movement.

It is quite remarkable that practically all socialists, whether they be opportunists or impossibilists, proletarians or intellectuals, or even anti-intellectuals, claim to be "Marxists." The English socialist who works with the trade unionist, through the Labor Party, claims to be a pure Marxist. The same claim is made by the impatient "syndicalist" of the Latin countries, with his faith in the mass strike and his ill-concealed disdain for parliamentary action. In practically all socialist factional discussions Marx is the prophet of all the factions.

This identity of Marxism and socialism has long been recognized as one of the most striking facts in the whole range of socialist phenomena. Recently, however, there has been much talk of the waning influence of Marx upon contemporary socialist thought and action. We have been assured, both from within and without the socialist ranks, that the teachings of Marx are going out of fashion, being rapidly and more or less openly abandoned. One lady has, indeed, written a book about *The New Socialism*,¹ assuring us that "Marx called up a swathed and terrifying figure, in which the world sees the dread spectre of revolution," whereas the "new" socialists are devoting themselves to the task of stripping away the disguise, and unveiling "the kindly features of a radical and comprehensive social reform."

¹ J. T. Stoddard, *The New Socialism*. London, 1909.

The New York Chapter of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society has announced as one of its study topics the question, "Are the Teachings of Karl Marx Being Abandoned by Present-Day Socialists?" and it is to that question I desire to address myself here.

As a biographer of Marx, it has been my special task, during more than a dozen years, to try to understand the man. It has become my habit to view the developments of the socialist movement throughout the world from what I believe to be his point of view; to interpret his writings by what I know of his life; to bring all that I know of his life and his intimate conversation and correspondence with friends to my aid in studying his formally stated theories as they appear on the printed page. Whatever disadvantages such methods may have are more than outweighed, in my judgment, by the numerous and obvious advantages.

II

As to the question itself, I feel strongly that neither an unqualified negative nor an unqualified affirmative reply is possible. My belief is that the socialist movement of the present day is both breaking away from and drawing closer to the teachings of the great German revolutionist. Recent criticism has compelled all thoughtful and sincere socialists to admit some defects in Marxian theory, and to recognize the necessity of a readjustment of their theoretical position, and of their policies so far as they have rested upon the mistaken theoretical premises. But, for all that, the unmistakable tendency of present-day socialism is toward a closer adherence to the essential and fundamental teachings of Marx, not away from them. Paradoxical as this statement may seem, a careful and candid study of the life of Marx in connection with recent developments in the international socialist movement will reveal its truth.

"As for me, I am no 'Marxist,' I am glad to say," was a saying frequently upon the lips of Marx. With the words went that half-sneering expression with which his best portraits have made us familiar. If we can fathom the meaning of the cryptic and paradoxical utterance, it may assist us very materially in our

attempt to find a satisfactory answer to our question. Who, then, were the "Marxists" thus scornfully repudiated by Marx, and what were the reasons for the repudiation?

During his lifetime, as now, there were many disciples of Marx who regarded his theoretical work as being his greatest achievement, and his most important contribution to the cause of the proletariat. He was to them primarily a political economist. They spoke of his great work, *Das Kapital*, as the "Bible of the proletariat," and as a Bible they regarded it. With a passion which can only be adequately described as religious, tens of thousands of working-men laboriously read and studied that difficult work. It was to them an "impregnable rock of Holy Scripture." Those who could not comprehend the work as a whole satisfied themselves with a few memorized passages. Like all Bibles, it became a book of texts, much quoted but little read.

Naturally, those who regarded the book as a Bible made it the basis of a creed. Naturally, also, their creed became the basis of a sect. Doctrinal tests decided the fitness or unfitness of men and women to enter the socialist fellowship and to be reckoned with the elect. Just as religious sectarianism based upon creedal and doctrinal tests has barred many a rare and beautiful religious spirit from the church, while it placed the word "orthodox" as a stamp of approval upon many an unworthy and irreligious spirit, so this sectarian "Marxism" imposed its stamp of "orthodox" and "unorthodox" to determine the fitness or unfitness of men and women to be called socialists. Many who believed in the whole program of socialism, who saw the necessity of a working-class political party to bring about the realization of that program, and were willing to work with and through such a party for the immediate interests of the working-class, and, ultimately, the collective ownership of the social productive forces, were denied the right to call themselves socialists, and a place in the socialist ranks, simply because they could not subscribe to all the economic and philosophical teachings of Marx.

In every country socialism has had to outgrow this dogma-

tism and sectarianism before attaining political importance. In almost every country the movement had its inception in a theoretical propaganda. A few earnest souls devoted themselves to the task of studying the works of a Fourier or a Marx and getting others to study them. To fully understand the master's teachings naturally became the chief ambition of such disciples. To the average person, the zeal and devotion of such men and women is incomprehensible. I have known a working-man, of scant education, to walk a distance of ten miles every Sunday morning for years, no matter what the weather, to study with a fellow socialist the first volume of *Das Kapital*. After seven or eight hours of labored study, the patient student would undertake the homeward journey of ten miles supremely happy if he had mastered a single new passage.

Of course, his joy was due to something other than mere intellectual satisfaction and triumph. It rested upon a much nobler passion than that. Mastery of the difficult and abstract text was not an end in itself, but a means to an end of great grandeur. Only through a knowledge of Marx could the proletariat ever be saved. The psychology of this attitude is not difficult to understand. It is precisely that of theological sectarianism: Marx is the only true prophet, his book the one and only true gospel, and every question is to be decided by an appeal to its text.

It is almost unnecessary to say that Karl Marx was too great and wise a man not to recognize the folly of the attitude here indicated, and the positive perils to the movement which it involved. He certainly did not deny the importance of correct thinking, or underrate it. On the contrary, he was apt to expect and demand too much in the way of theoretical knowledge from those engaged in the social movement. But he knew that the great mass of the workers could never be expected to fully understand such philosophical doctrines as the materialistic conception of history, or theories of political economy such as surplus value. He was not foolish enough to believe that a great movement could be founded upon a correct understanding of such subtle and difficult theories. At most he believed that the

movement could be guided by such knowledge. In other words, while he expected and desired that the leaders of the movement should possess a thorough theoretical training, he did not expect anything of the kind from the rank and file.

When his overzealous and impatient disciples sought to push the importance of theoretical training beyond this limit, and to insist upon making the acceptance and understanding of his theories a test of membership, Marx was impatient. It was in such moods that he expressed his gratitude that he was not a "Marxist."

There was another reason for the cryptic and paradoxical epigram. Like all great thinkers upon whose work a definite school of thought has been founded, Marx has suffered greatly at the hands of his own followers, through their wild exaggeration of his theories. The prayer of his heart might well have been: "Save me from my friends—I can take care of my enemies myself!"

The case of Ricardo, the great English economist, may be pertinently cited as a well-known example of the discredit which intellectual leaders incur as a result of the unwise zeal of their followers. Ricardo took for his theme the law of wages and concluded that wages, as a rule, *tended* to approximate the cost of maintaining a given standard of living at a given time and place. Ricardo surrounded this statement with numerous qualifications, setting forth a generalization of great importance. But Ricardo's followers, more "Ricardian" than Ricardo himself, ignored all the qualifications and stated the theory in a grotesquely exaggerated manner, which found its complete expression in Lassalle's inflexible "iron law of wages." A great and profoundly true generalization of the master became, in the hands of his disciples, a grotesque and dangerous error.

In like manner, Marx suffered from his more Marxian than Marx followers. For example: in one of the earliest of his socialist writings, the *Communist Manifesto*, he developed his famous class-struggle theory and emphasized the historic rôle of the proletariat. If the workers are ever to be emancipated, he declared, it must be through their own efforts. Here was a

great generalization of tremendous importance, the basis for a working-class movement. But some of his followers, disregard his abundant warnings, made this generalization the basis of another, which, if generally accepted, would have robbed the working-class movement of the service of many of the finest intellects and devoted consciences ever enlisted in its support, including that of Marx himself. Their reasoning was very simple and naïve: Because the emancipation of the proletariat must be the work of the proletariat itself, it follows that no one who is not actually a proletarian can loyally desire to serve the movement for proletarian emancipation. Determined efforts were made by some "Marxists" to exclude Marx himself from the movement upon these grounds!

One other example of the exaggeration of his theories of which Marx was the victim must suffice, though the number of such illustrations might be indefinitely extended. The materialistic conception of history, a doctrine of the highest philosophical and sociological importance, is perhaps the greatest of the intellectual achievements of Marx. The gist of this theory is that the principal factor in social evolution is the economic one, the method of producing and distributing wealth. This has become nowadays a commonplace, but it was a revolutionary idea when Marx first proclaimed it.

Now, Marx never dreamed of asserting that the economic force acts as the sole determinant of social evolution. In order to focus the attention of the thinkers of his time upon his theory, and in meeting the attacks of opponents, he, quite naturally, at times overemphasized this one factor. Yet he did not fail to warn his disciples against falling into the error of regarding the economic factor as the only active influence in social evolution. His followers, many of them, disregarded these warnings and carried the tendency to exaggerate which Marx himself manifested to the most absurd length. In their hands the theory became one of simple economic fatalism and predestination. According to their caricature of the theory, no other factors have influenced the rate or direction of the evolution of society: race, religion, patriotism, ideals of all kinds have been meaningless.

This economic fatalism has been carried to the most absurd lengths, especially in America. In the name of Marx the preposterous claim has been set up that, because men in general are prone to act, consciously or unconsciously, in accordance with their material interests, there must be an ascertainable economic motive for every act of an individual; that if one whose material interests are such as to identify him with the capitalist class, the exploiters, enters the movement of the working-class, the exploited, the sincerity of his action must be denied, and a secret, hidden, ulterior motive suspected! In actual experience this grotesquely stupid conception of Marx's great generalization has wrought great mischief in the socialist movement.

These two sets of his disciples—those who regarded him as a pope, at least, and sought to make an orthodox creed of his theories, and those whose crude and wild statements of the most profound truths transformed them into nightmares of error—were the “Marxists” against whom Marx so often directed his withering satire. Marx chafed and groaned in spirit when such followers as those comprised in the two groups we have considered reduced his important philosophical and economic principles to a jumble of meaningless absurdity. And, with that fine loyalty which marked his whole life, Friedrich Engels carried on the warfare against such “Marxists” long after the death of his friend and associate.

Fortunately, the last ten years have been marked by an ever-increasing reaction against both types of “Marxism.” It is notably rare nowadays for the stupid anti-intellectualist cry to receive serious attention. The movement itself, in practically every country in the world, is becoming more liberal and tolerant. It refuses to heed the stupid demagogic suspicion of those who do not actually come from the proletarian class, which was at one time so potent a source of factionalism; it no longer indulges in heresy-trials, but permits the fullest possible freedom of opinion. A Bernstein who rejects some of the most important of Marx's generalizations is suffered to remain in the Social Democratic Party of Germany, and his right to disagree with Marx is upheld.

By many very thoughtful observers this liberalizing tendency has been hailed as a sure and certain sign of the waning influence of Marx. It has been interpreted as showing that the theories of Marx are being abandoned by those who call themselves Marxian socialists. But in point of fact—so far as the liberalizing tendency amounts to the abandonment of crudely exaggerated forms of Marxian theories, and of all attempts to create a sect or cult, with an orthodox philosophical and economic creed—it must be otherwise interpreted. It is not a reaction against Marx, but against that “Marxism” which Marx himself so despised, and which consisted of a perverse and cruel misrepresentation of his theories. In revolting against this “Marxism” the socialist movement is in fact following the leadership of Marx himself, and the tendency represents a wholesome return to the teachings of Marx.

III

It is quite true that the socialist movement has, in most countries, ceased to concern itself mainly with the propagation of theories; that all the socialist parties of the world pay an increasing amount of attention to practical work in the direction of social and political reform. There has been a rather striking development of opportunism, not alone in Germany, but in every land where socialism has attained political importance. When that splendid socialist leader, Wilhelm Liebknecht, was first elected to the German Reichstag he was strongly anti-parliamentarian. He feared that the revolutionary spirit of socialism would be engulfed in parliamentary issues. His avowed policy then was to enter the Reichstag, make a speech denouncing the capitalist system, and then march out, quite like the hero of the nursery rhyme! That was the naïve idea of revolutionary progress which prevailed at that time, even among astute leaders of the revolutionary party.

It is a far cry from that *opéra bouffe* attitude of Liebknecht's to that which characterized the last years of his life, and which characterizes the German social democracy today. I hardly need say here that the Social Democratic Party of Germany is devoted to a broad comprehensive policy of social and industrial reform;

that it does not send its representatives to the imperial parliament merely to make denunciatory speeches and then walk out, refusing to participate in the work of legislation. On the contrary, it is by the zeal and ability with which the representatives of the party work for social reform that the confidence of such a vast number of voters has been won. Singer, Bebel, and the other leaders of the party know very well that this is the case: that only a very small minority of their supporters understand or care for socialist theories.

It must be freely admitted that the temper and policy of the socialist movement have undergone a great change. This change has been both a cause and a result of growth. Where the socialist movement is numerically weak, it is invariably characterized by fanatical bitterness and sectarian intolerance and dogmatism. Its first political victories, often almost insignificant in themselves, are won in spite of these characteristics, most often, perhaps, through peculiarly favorable circumstances leading to the election of the socialist candidate in spite of, rather than because of, his socialism.

It has been the universal experience that, as soon as the socialists of any country succeed in electing a single representative to an important legislative office, a change begins to manifest itself. The propaganda becomes less sectarian and theoretical, and more practical. The temper of the party loses much of its arrogant intolerance. Its representatives abandon wild, irresponsible talk of a sudden revolution, and cheap sneers at social reforms, and devote themselves with energy to the task of securing legislation for the immediate betterment of the lot of their class.

The reason for this change is apparent. Brought face to face with great opportunities to better the lot of the toiling masses, they dare not neglect them. No matter how small the specific reform may be, considered by and of itself, the instinctive class consciousness of the socialists prevents them from opposing or ignoring it and contenting themselves with denunciations of capitalism or prophecies of a co-operative commonwealth to come. It is easy enough for the propagandist, free from responsibility,

to arraign the capitalist system, demonstrate the need of replacing it by a saner and juster system, and show the relatively insignificant importance of some minor reform, such as the enactment of an employer's liability law, for example.

In office, confronted by the responsibility of the immediate challenge, the socialist dares not treat such questions lightly. Always an evolutionist in theory, as a mere propagandist, engaged in arousing his apathetic fellow-citizens, he not infrequently forgot his evolutionary theory and talked as if a sudden revolution, changing the whole social organism, were possible. Election to office brings immediate recognition of the fact that no such change is possible; that the theory of evolution is made up of vital facts. He comes to a realization of the meaning Marx intended to convey by a favorite phrase of his, "revolutionary evolution."

Thus, in the crucible of actual experience, the rivalry, hatred, and contempt of the socialist for the social reformer, and of the social reformer for the socialist, are melted. The earnest social reformer soon finds that when he wants child-labor legislation, factory laws, tenement-house reforms, industrial insurance, and other such reforms, the fundamental and instinctive class consciousness of the socialist can always be relied upon. In this way, the socialist party in almost every European country has become the party of social reform.

This, then, is the basis for the prevailing opinion that the modern socialist movement has lost its revolutionary character and become a simple reformatory movement. The validity of that judgment depends altogether upon a certain narrow interpretation of the word "revolution." There can be no serious difference of opinion upon the point once that definition of the word "revolution" is accepted.

To Marx, more than to any other man, belongs the credit of associating the socialist movement with the concept of a social "revolution." The phrase looms large in the celebrated *Communist Manifesto*, and in all the subsequent literature of Marxian socialism. But Marx used the term "social revolution," as he used so many other commonplace terms, in a very different

sense from that which common usage had imparted to it. To understand the significance of the term in the literature of Marxian socialism, therefore, it is necessary to get at the meaning which Marx ascribed to it, and which his most representative and authentic exponents have accepted.

Whereas, to most persons, the term "social revolution" means a method, to Marx it meant simply a result, quite regardless of the method by which the result was attained. To most persons revolution suggests street riotings, barricades, insurrections, intrigues, conspiracies, and *coups d'état*. It means the sudden overturning of things, ousting governments and dynasties. In this narrow sense the French people have been called the most revolutionary people in Europe. Before Marx, the crude socialist thought of the time regarded such "revolutionary" methods as the natural way to attain the realization of its goal. Against that sort of "revolutionary" effort Marx directed his splendid genius for political leadership.

To Marx that sort of revolutionary activity was purely utopian and altogether unscientific. He lost no opportunity to assail it and make it the butt of his superb satire. He pointed out that such "revolutions" are not at all *social* revolutions. After a successful *coup de force*, resulting in the overturning of a dynasty or the changing of the form of government, people continue to maintain the chief fundamental social relations of the old régime. The class struggle persists, and the wage-earner is still exploited by the capitalist as before. What he means by social revolution is a thorough transformation of these social relations, the abolition of class divisions which rest upon the exploitation of the proletariat. This result is the revolution. The transformation of the social forces of production to social property, however accomplished, is the revolution. It is not more or less revolutionary whether attained by peaceful political action or by torch and sword at the barricades, whether the process of its accomplishment takes fifty years or is the result of a sudden, cyclonic movement.

It will be seen, therefore, that, assuming this to be a fair interpretation of Marx's concept of the social revolution, the

change which has come over the socialist movement is not of necessity a departure from the revolutionary path as Marx understood the term, though it is a very great departure from the older revolutionary concept which he assailed, and which still clings to the term in our common usage. It must also be admitted that the followers of Marx did not always conform their speech and their policy to the philosophical distinction he imposed upon the term; that all too often they lapsed back into what their teacher derided as a purely utopian concept of revolution. It may also be admitted with perfect candor that Marx himself occasionally lapsed into that utopianism against which his life and thought were, as a whole, so finely devoted.

So much is granted. It will not avail, therefore, to quote isolated utterances or actions to prove that the thought of a sudden, decisive revolution sometimes possessed the mind of Marx. Against these lapses from the scientific, evolutionary attitude must be set the overwhelming testimony of his thought as a whole, and, more important even than that, of his practice.

IV

Nothing could be more fallacious than the attempt to interpret the opportunistic development of contemporary socialism as a progressive abandonment of the teachings of Marx. The assumption upon which it rests, that opportunism and Marxism are antithetical concepts, is entirely false. Marx was nothing if not an opportunist, using that term in its best, and strictest, sense. He was so far removed from those intransigents of the socialist movement, who scorn the idea that the socialists should participate in the movement for social reform through legislative channels, as the imagination can conceive. He had the profoundest contempt for all who sought to bind the movement to that abortive attitude. I make the claim that the tendency of contemporary socialism to concern itself with a program of immediate social reforms, palliative measures for the amelioration of the victims of the social struggle, within the existing order, represents a return to the most important teachings of Marx, not a departure from them.

In the *Communist Manifesto*, that work which may be said to be the corner-stone of modern scientific socialism, we find him laying emphasis upon the fact that the transformation which he calls the social revolution is not to be a sudden act. He speaks of the "first step in the revolution" being the struggle for political democracy, the attainment of the franchise by the proletariat. That accomplished, the proletariat is to wrest, "by degrees," the control of the social productive forces from the hated *bourgeoisie*. His insistence upon the necessity of a "first step," and of a conquest of the economic resources "by degrees," shows very clearly that, from the first, Marx repudiated the old notion of sudden, catastrophic revolution. His ideal was one of the "revolutionary evolution."

In the same profound and epoch-making pamphlet Marx lays stress upon the fact that the socialists, because they accept the class struggle as their fundamental and guiding philosophy, must not confine themselves to working for the attainment of the ultimate interest of the proletariat, the abolition of wage-labor and its inevitable exploitation and oppression, but must participate in the "immediate struggle"; that they must make their own the "momentary interests" of the workers as well as their ultimate aim. In pursuance of that thought he outlined a program of social reform upon which socialists and progressive social reformers are making common cause today in every country where the socialist parties are represented in the legislatures.

Four years after the *Communist Manifesto* was published, in the aftermath of the revolutionary struggle of 1848, some of the most romantic of his corevolutionists were urging the workers to insurrection. They were obsessed by the notion that the workers could at once seize the reins of power and establish socialist republics in the most advanced countries of Europe. Marx assailed these romanticists with merciless satire and invective. He denounced them because they would "substitute revolutionary phrase for revolutionary evolution," and while the impatient romanticists assured their followers that they could win immediately, Marx told them that it would take perhaps

fifty years, not to accomplish the social revolution indeed, but to make themselves "worthy of political power"!

When Ferdinand Lassalle attempted, in 1862, to enlist the support of Marx for an insurrection in Germany, urging him to assist in raising funds for the purchase of muskets and ammunition, Marx indignantly refused, and the incident led to the termination of the friendship of the two men when they met in London a few months later. Marx understood as Lassalle could never do the great fact of social evolution.

How much of an opportunist Marx was, is best shown by the history of the International Working-Men's Association. Of far greater importance than his contributions to political economy, and inferior only to his sociological discoveries, the practical work of Marx in the development of that great international organization of the proletariat has not yet received just recognition. It is impossible to read the history of the International and avoid the conviction that Marx was endowed with great political sagacity, amounting almost to genius.

The importance of the International to us, in the present discussion, lies in the light its history sheds upon the mind and temper of its great leader. Marx initiated the movement, wrote its address, or platform, formulated its rules, and dictated its policies. He wrote every one of its official pronouncements. Never was there a political "boss" who so completely ruled his organization. For the opportunism which characterized the International Marx must therefore be held directly responsible.

It was Marx who arranged that the trades unions of Great Britain should co-operate with such bitter enemies of ordinary trades-union policies as Bright and Cobden in rousing the public opinion of Great Britain to the support of President Lincoln and the Union cause, and to vigorous opposition to the sympathy of the government and the ruling class in general for the Southern Confederacy, which the government at one time practically decided to recognize as an independent power. It was Marx, too, who, in the same way, brought about the co-operation of all the radical forces in the struggle for franchise reform a few years later.

Here, then, was opportunism with a vengeance! Marx was not unaware that there were elements in the International to whom such a policy was repellent in the extreme. There were many followers of Proudhon, the French anarchist leader, who were very bitter in their opposition to Marx on account of his opportunism. Of these critics Marx wrote, in a letter to his friend Kugelmann: "They brag about science and know nothing. They look with contempt, as revolutionists, on any concerted action of the working-classes, and they treat with contempt any idea of making use of the legislature for anything, as, e.g., for shortening the hours of labor."

In the masterly inaugural address of the International, which Marx wrote, the Ten Hours' Act was hailed as being "not merely a great practical result," but as "the victory of a principle." Even the co-operative societies, at which Marx had been disposed to sneer in 1848, were praised and heralded as a sign that wage-labor was a transitory economic form, destined to be replaced by associated free labor. And the first congress of the International, at Geneva, adopted resolutions, most of them written by Marx, in favor of such reforms as the abolition of child labor; regulation of women's labor by the state; limitation of the hours of labor for adults to ten per day; direct taxation; and so on.

It is clear, then, that, altogether irrespective of the merits of the controversy which divides the opportunists of the socialist movement from their intransigent comrades, it cannot be said that the movement becomes less Marxian by becoming more opportunistic. Marx was himself an opportunist of a very pronounced type. In his mind, the actual union of the workers was the supremely important thing. He wanted movement above all else. He revealed the principle by which his whole life was guided in the letter he wrote to the German socialists in 1875, when the union of the Lassallian and Marxian forces was being negotiated: "Every step of real movement is worth a dozen programs."

Without expressing here any opinion upon the wisdom or otherwise of the socialists entering into such compacts as the one

upon which the British Labor Party is based, it is impossible for me to resist the conclusion that Mr. Hardie with his belief in and alliance with the Labor Party is much more in accord with the teaching and example of Marx than are his intransigent critics, even though the latter so loudly invoke the name and authority of Marx.

V

It would be disingenuous to deny that some of Marx's theories have been openly abandoned by not a few socialists, and that they have been greatly modified by others in response to the searching criticism to which they have been subjected. Marx himself regarded monopoly-price as something exceptional, an abrogation of the law of value. Since he wrote *Das Kapital*, the exceptions to his law of value have become more numerous, as a result of the development of great monopolies and near monopolies. The value of a great many commodities is determined by their marginal utility, quite irrespective of the social labor actually embodied in them or necessary to their reproduction.

Then, too, some of the sweeping generalizations which Marx made, and which his followers long believed to be absolutely true, have not stood well the test of history and close analysis. The recognition of this fact has quite profoundly influenced socialist policy. It is worthy of note, however, that the result has been to develop the movement quite in harmony with that broad spirit of opportunism which Marx himself so well and so bravely exemplified.

Take, for example, his theory of agricultural concentration. Marx firmly believed and confidently predicted that, within a comparatively short time, the small farm would cease to exist. He saw the small farms, and the farms of moderate size, disappear, swallowed up by the bigger ones, and the whole industry of agriculture dominated by immense capital. His followers excelled their master's confidence in the truth of his forecast.

It is now recognized by all thoughtful socialists that this forecast has been completely belied by the actual facts of agricultural evolution. The small farm has more than held its own, the expected concentration of the industry has not taken place;

there has in fact been a well-marked tendency in the opposite direction of decentralization. Irrigation, "dry farming," and the mass of improved methods resulting from the application of science to agriculture have revolutionized the industry, but in quite another way than Marx predicted.

Of course, so long as the farming-class was looked upon as a rapidly disappearing one, a class whose immediate interests must of necessity, and in an increasing degree, be opposed to the interests of the proletariat, the socialist propaganda made small headway in agricultural communities. So long as that mistaken generalization obsessed the minds of the followers of Marx they were little disposed to appeal to the farmers, or to concede that the status of the farmer and a belief in socialism were quite compatible. To treat the farmer as a negligible quantity, as a survival member of a rapidly disappearing class, of no account politically, was the natural outcome of that generalization.

When astute political leaders of the socialist movement like Dr. Adler, of Austria, and acute theoreticians like Herr Bernstein, of Germany, demonstrated the delusive character of Marx's forecast, and proved that the socialists in those countries must either recast their agrarian policy, so as to make a successful appeal to the farming class, or abandon all hopes of attaining political success, modern socialism entered upon a new phase. Of course, there was some strife, a bitter conflict between the old orthodoxy and the new truth, and the complete breaking-up of the international socialist movement was confidently predicted by many of its enemies. But nothing of the sort happened. The leaders of the movement set themselves to the task of studying the whole problem of their position toward the farmer.

They found that the economic interest of the small farmer was not so antagonistic to the interest of the industrial proletariat as they had long believed; they found that the farmer needed socialism almost, if not quite, as badly as the factory worker. So successful has the socialist propaganda among farmers been, without compromising its revolutionary spirit, that many of the greatest strongholds of the movement, both in Europe and America, are in agricultural districts. The kingdom of Saxony

is mainly dependent upon agriculture, but it is known as "Red Saxony" on account of the strength of the socialist movement there. In the United States we find Oklahoma an agrarian state, taking a leading place in the socialist propaganda.

In like manner, the persistence of the petty retail stores, and of petty industries, contrary to another of the sweeping generalizations of Marx, has profoundly influenced the policy of the socialist movement. While its main appeal is and must of necessity be to the actual proletariat, the socialist propaganda does not neglect the small shopkeeper or the professional man. In most countries, but especially in the United States, the actual wage-workers constitute a minority of the population. The socialists recognize this fact. So there has developed a new and broader concept of the movement. Only a very tiny and insignificant minority now ever thinks of demanding that the socialist movement shall be limited to the wage-earning class.

That greatest of socialist political leaders, Liebknecht, in his later years insisted that when the socialists used the term "working-class" they included in its meaning "all who live exclusively *or principally* by means of their own labor, and who do not grow rich through the work of others." Thus, he would include the small farmers and small shopkeepers, as well as a majority of the professional classes. He declared that the German Social Democracy was the party of all the people with the exception of about two hundred thousand. "If it is limited to the wage-earners," he said, "socialism cannot conquer. If it includes all the workers and the moral and intellectual *élite* of the nation, its victory is certain."

VI

To sum up: There may be said to be two kinds of "Marxism," the one consisting of a body of theoretical and philosophical generalizations, the other of certain principles of working-class action, precepts, and examples of tactics for the movement. This "practical Marxism" has been for a long time obscured by the Marxism of theory, and neglected in consequence. Now that critical examination has forced the abandonment of some of his

theories, and the modification of some others, Marx the leader, the tactician, the statesman, is taking the place of Marx the theorist to some extent.

Hence the paradox that the influence of Marx upon the socialist movement of today is increasing just as rapidly and as surely as it is breaking away from dogmatic Marxism.