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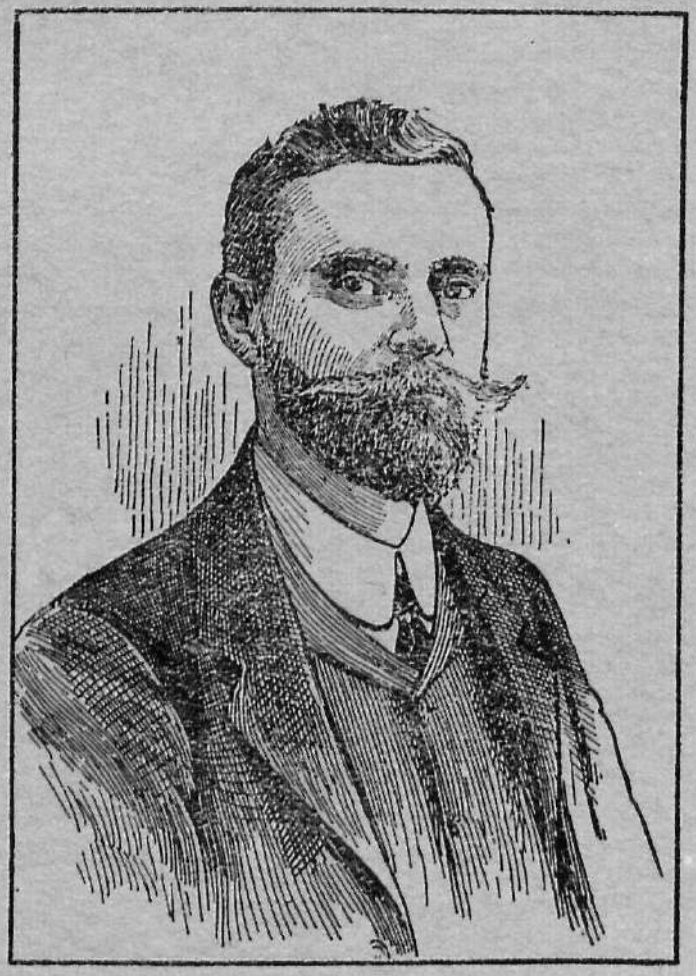
Is the State the Enemy?

AN EXAMINATION OF AN OLD HERESY REVIVED

By JAMES LEATHAM



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Is the State the Enemy of the People?

AN EXAMINATION OF AN OLD HERESY REVIVED.

By THE EDITOR.

History, gentlemen, is a struggle with nature; the misery, the ignorance, the poverty, the weakness, and consequent slavery in which we were involved when the human race came upon the scene in the beginning of history. The progressive *victory* over this weakness—this is the development of freedom which history displays to us.

It is the State whose function it is to carry on THIS DEVELOPMENT OF FREEDOM, this development of the human race until its freedom is attained.

The State is this unity of individuals into a moral whole, a unity which increases a millionfold the strength of all the individuals who are comprehended in it, and multiplies a million times the power which would be at the disposal of them as individuals.—FERDINAND LASSALLE: *The Working Man's Programme.*

Till all, recanting, own the State
Means nothing but the People.
MACAULAY.

SINCE the time of Plato at least wise men have looked to the State and to the principle of Nationalization as affording the means of social redress. For seventy years the Socialist demand has been for the setting up of a Social-Democratic State, with national ownership of land and machinery. This did not mean that purely local industries were to be managed by a Government bureau at Whitehall, but merely that the communal authorities in localities possessing valuable natural resources such as coal or granite, or acquired skill in metallurgy or textiles, should own allegiance to a central authority that would prevent the setting up of local monopolies claiming monopoly prices.

This ideal of mutually interdependent and co-ordinated communities of weavers and fishermen, of graziers and grain-raisers, is evidently too large for some modern minds; and we have had first the Syndicalist demand for the politically independent trade union, and now we have, apparently, a demand from some who regard themselves as Socialists for the political independence of the commune. This last conception is as old at least as the

time of the Communards of 1871, who in several populous centres of France rose in armed revolt against the newly-formed Republic, and declared for "a free federation of independent communes."

Frederick Engels.

The idea is even older than that. Frederick Engels, among his other extraordinary views, denounced the State as being of necessity an organ of the classes, but with that pessimistic paralysis which incapacitated him from believing in anything or doing anything except look after his own considerable fortune, he gave no indication of what form he would have the regulation of society to take. Disbelieving in the possibility of any amelioration of the lot of the working mass, or any gradual, progressive extension of collective control such as has taken place, he declared in the forties that even the Ten Hours Bill would ruin the textile industry, the continuance of which, he thought, depended on the long hours worked and the low wages paid by himself and his brother manufacturers of that cruel time. In 1844 he professed to believe that the revolt of the proletariat was close at hand, and when in 1892 he republished his book "The Condition of the Working Classes in England," he allowed all the falsified predictions to stand without explanation or apology. In the interim he, a German, had lived comfortably in England while his fellow-countrymen August Bebel and William Liebknecht were fighting Bismarck and building up the Social-Democratic Party in the Fatherland without any tangible aid from the cynical cotton-lord. When Hyndman and Morris were trying to found a Social-Democracy in England, Engels sat in his chair and vilified the one and sneered at the other of these pioneers. The Anti-Statists are very welcome to the support of this discredited Socialist of the Chair.

The Communards' Idea.

As to the Communards' idea of "a free federation of independent communes," France and Britain are free federations of communes already; and as to the "independence," London and Leeds no more need or want to be independent of each other than the nose needs or wants to be independent of the eyes or ears.

This idea of the State as an evil has re-emerged recently in the writings of certain publicists who do not like State Insurance or the State Medical Service advocated by many doctors. These writers are, very properly, not enamoured of the functions of the State being indefinitely increased, and the business of the nation being made to flow through the Post Office to a still greater extent than it is now doing; though be it said the Post Office has added Old Age Pensions and State Insurance business to its numerous other departments with the maximum of ease, efficiency, and economy. Still, the dislike of bureaucracy is wholesome enough. But the suspicion with respect to excessive centralization becomes itself an excess when the suspecters go on to roundly declare, as they do, that the State is in any case an evil.

Social Evils not State-Created.

We are NOT at war with the State. The evils of life have not been State-created. It was not the State that called slavery into existence; but it did

something to protect the slave from his master. The slave was the captive of his owner, who had originally either taken him prisoner in war or captured him in a slave-raid. But while the State did not introduce slavery, and there was slavery before there was a State, it was the State that abolished it, finding twenty millions sterling for the compensation of the dispossessed owners.

Serfdom was a remnant of slavery. The basis was the strong hand and will-power of the dominant class. Where it was abolished the State either abolished it openly, as in Russia, or connived at its abolition by declaring, as England did in the fourteenth century, that a year's residence in a corporate town freed the serf.

Landlordism.

In its inception landlordism is not State-created. The strong men who came to Britain with Hengist and Horsa found the land cultivated by free and half-free *colonii*, who had been left behind as a relic of the Roman occupation. The masterless man, living in a wild country, made haste to find himself a strong man for master. He was willing to abandon the wild places, the No-Man's Land, and till another man's land because of the protection that lay in numbers and the fighting capabilities of his chief. Up till the reign of Alfred, the Saxon tribesmen were freeholders, owing fealty to no overlord. They had got their land from the invading chiefs in freehold, on the ground of their strength, courage, and skill in battle, and it was because of the lack of public spirit on the part of these tribesmen that Alfred the Great and Archbishop Dunstan (the wisest and most public-spirited men of their time) called into existence the feudal system, which made the tribesmen only *holders* of the land of which they previously had been *owners*. They would not come out to fight the Danish pirates. They were individualists who would fight an invader if he appeared within their own hundred or shire, but they would not follow him up and drive him out of the country. The thought of the goodwife, the children, and the farmstead drew them off the pursuit. And so the feudal system had to come as the punishment for the Saxon's lack of public spirit.

The State thus created the feudal system, but it left millions of acres of folk land and common land for the poor freemen and the serfs, and time and again it protected the commons from illegal landlordial encroachment. Even Charles the First, tyrant, torturer, and pledge-breaker as he was, did his best to preserve the commons. He learned that Rockingham Forest had dwindled from sixty miles in width to six miles, and in 1633 he appointed a Commission to inquire into these appropriations. The noble depredators, one of whom was the Earl of Essex, were forced to disgorge and were stiffly fined. Rockingham Forest, as public land, was protected by the State for the people.

Capitalism.

Nor was capitalism created by the State. It was created by individual cunning and the simple willingness and even anxiety of working men to attach themselves to a master, even if they must labour for his profit. Even to-day one sees many a man who is possessed of both the money to start in

business and the skill to carry it on, continue to work for a master owing to sheer lack of initiative and self-confidence. Such men have been the creators and perpetuators of capitalism, small blame to them. The primitive craftsman employing a journeyman and an apprentice or two, who boarded with him, was the natural enough precursor of the limited company of to-day, with its shareholders drawing their dividends thousands of miles away. The public had to be served somehow. Certainly the State is not to blame for having allowed capitalism to grow. It had no mandate to prevent it or to organise production itself, which would alone have prevented capitalism from growing bloated.

It was not the State that caused long hours in factories; but it was the State that curtailed them. It was not the State that sent coffin ships to sea and pocketed the insurance money when they went down with all hands in mid-ocean, as it was intended they should do; but it was the State that introduced the load line, the Merchant Shipping Act, the Survey, and the Board of Trade Regulations. It was not the State that sent the climbing boys up the chimneys; but the State forbade it. It was not the State that caused the recent railway and coal strikes; but the State intervened to stop them. The State did not cause parents to bring up their children in ignorance; it passed the Education Acts. It did not make fiery mines or ordain that machinery should be used in factories; but it insisted on the safety lamp, and ventilation, and pumping; and it ordered dangerous machinery to be fenced and sent inspectors to see that it was done.

The Strong shall bear Rule.

The State is the organ of whichever class has the courage, the ability, and the numbers to capture and run it. The upper class once controlled it; the middle class since 1832 has taken a larger hold of it; the workers now have the power to capture it and wield it to their purposes, and if they use that power it will be THEIR State—the State will be the people incorporated.

The State is not merely a repressive Policeman or Tax-Gatherer. It is the servant of the community as well. The hundreds of thousands of postal employees were recently joined by 18,000 telephone workers. The Municipality is not a mere Night-Watchman. It sends you gas men, sanitary men, electricians. It will send you others if you will have it so.

Where lies the feud? The enemy is not the responsible Public Servant. The enemy is the irresponsible private adventurer. It is not the elected persons who are "audacious." Their tenure of office depends on their giving satisfaction. The audacious person is the non-elected capitalist or landlord, strong in the mere fact of possession and in the ignorance and subserviency of the public.

Socialism is the bringing of the processes and services of life under the Reign of Law. It is the substitution of communal order for commercial chaos. The only alternatives to the State of to-day would be a congeries of warring communities, polluting each other's drinking water, wrangling about each other's sewage, refusing to join for common purposes as they often refuse at

present, each taking its own way as to education, the protection of foreshores, the maintenance of roads, the running of through traffic. It is possible to have too much home rule.

The Natural State.

The people of Great Britain speak, write, read the same language. Their habits, local institutions, business methods, food, dress, traditions, music, domestic arrangements, literature, drama, ideas, tastes are similar—sadly similar. Why should they not be a State, a united Nation? Why should Bradford seek to be independent of Manchester because they are in different counties? Why should they want to be independent? Race, language, the mountain chain, the broad river, the sounding sea constitute the natural divisions of nations. To say that these should count for nothing is to fly in the face of nature. But Socialism is not a divider, but a uniter. They who pretend that Socialism is at war with the State are not Socialists, but Anarchists, who wish to set up a monopoly of the craftsmen for the monopoly of the capitalists. Socialism sets up the community as above both.

Obviously there can be no nationalization without a State, and without a State one can readily imagine the complications and bickerings that would arise between the not too wise men of the various Gothams, over postal facilities, sewering, rivers, railways, defence, education, and other matters as to which the State has the final word to-day. The strife of the Brugeois and the Ghentois, of the Italian states, of the early Saxon kings of counties might well be repeated in pitched battles between the men of Manchester and the men of Liverpool. Leeds and Bradford and Sheffield, no longer content with football victories, would march against each other with more than Ulsterian venom and with more deadly weapons than dummy muskets and wooden cannon. The hordes of Glasgow would overrun Scotia's ancient capital inflamed with the animus of a jealousy nursed for generations, and Cardiff and Bristol would carry on a war of tariffs that would end in reciprocal bombardments.

As it is, the Government keeps the scattered townships knit together under the law. It lends them money at the lowest possible rate of interest, and it must have power to enforce the payments of the loans. It gives imperial taxation to be used for local purposes—as education and the like—and it insists upon a certain standard of efficiency in the teachers, a certain standard of suitability in the school buildings and equipment. It can enforce its demands by refusing to pay grants to the local bodies who want to conduct education on the cheap.

The State a Blessing.

The Individualist or Anarchist critics attack the State as if it were and must remain a pure evil to be fought. It is, as a matter of fact, a blessing. It behaves better to the workers than they would behave to themselves. It educates them in spite of themselves. It has given them old-age pensions which they would never have devised for themselves. It inspects their food, their workplaces, and the ladders and scaffoldings upon which private enterprise compels them to risk their necks. It condemns rotten fruit, tuberculous

beef, milk which is below the standard. It insists on dangerous machines being fenced, upon a certain amount of cubic air space being provided in factories and in the forecastles of ships. It stipulates for a certain food standard on board ship. It forbids excessive deck-loading. It insists on a load line. It makes regulations as to pumping, air fans, shot-firing, and props in the mines, and if accidents occur it is because of the cupidity of the owners or the carelessness of the men, which more inspectors might correct but could never abolish. Of course Socialism would substitute public ownership of factories, ships, and mines; and a good deal of the inspection and regulation and registration would be quite unnecessary under Socialism; but the point is that the State in all these matters behaves, not as the enemy, but as the friend of the workers. It cannot do more than they have given it the power to do.

Even as it is, the State insists on many things for the good of the workers that the workers themselves often do their best to defeat or render nugatory. What is the good of pretending that anybody or anything is to blame except the stupidity and apathy of the workers themselves, who vote against the people who would confer benefits upon them? To look back upon all the silly causes for which the people have shed their blood is pitiful. To think of all the good causes they have neglected or deserted is tragic. The London apprentices turned out for Essex, as the Scotsmen did for the Old and the Young Pretenders later in the day. The farm labourers of Somersetshire turned out scythe in hand to fight for Monmouth, unworthy son of a king's strumpet, and for this base cause they died in thousands on the rhine banks of Sedgmoor. But they deserted Wat Tyler and John Ball and John Cade at the first promise of redress from the authorities or the first sign of failure on the part of these honest and capable working-men leaders, as later in the day they melted away from Robert Owen, and Ernest Jones, and Joseph Arch in the early Socialist, the Chartist, and the trade union movements.

Who is to Blame.

How can Socialists pretend that the State is to blame? As clearly as anything can be, it is the workers who are to blame, possessed of political power as they are to make the State whatever they want it to be. They elect the slum-owner in preference to the slum-abolisher. They prefer the landlord to the land nationaliser. They elect the capitalist, and put the worker at the bottom of the poll. When they get a good servant who gives all his waking hours for little reward and no thanks they cast about for accusations to urge against him. The stern man who hates rhodomontade and talks plain good sense is assailed with abuse and watched with suspicion, while the adventurer who is at best only an indifferent "variety turn," and will lecture on anything for fees—this man is taken to the heart of the gullible ones, and the more fierily impossible or the more jocularly useless he is the better they will like him. The stabs of the enemy, the boycott of the capitalist, the contumely of the rich and proud, are as nothing by comparison with the folly, the suspicion, the rudeness, the ungrateful desertion, and the political malingering of the workers.

The only practical questions for to-day is : "Should the working class make use of its political power?" Must the State CONTINUE to be the organ of the possessing classes? Of course I say No. I say the workers can capture the political machine and use it for their own purposes, and I want to see them do it. But when I say the State I do not mean merely or chiefly the Central Government. I am not specially enamoured of the legislative adjustments of the Wage System which are what we are chiefly getting at present from Parliament. I attach (as I say with necessary iteration) nore importance to capturing the machinery of local government. I hold that it would be absurd to nationalise local services like the milk or the coal supply or the running of the textile industries. All these must be municipalised. Yet without Socialist possession of the Central Government as well we should not be allowed to develop Socialism locally. More than that, a hostile Central Government could conceivably take away our local governing powers. So that I am all for getting Socialists elected to the local bodies first ; though of course we could not do that without having enough power to enable us to return Socialist members of Parliament as well.

Buckle's View.

In a passage which the Anarchists and other Individualist Statophobists are fond of quoting, the historian Buckle says :

> Every great reform which has been effected has consisted, not in doing something new, but in undoing something old. The most valuable additions made to legislation have been enactments destructive of preceding legislation ; and the best laws which have been passed have been those by which some former laws were repealed.

This untenable view is based on such measures as the Catholic Emancipation Act, the Act removing the Disabilities of the Jews, with, above all, the Acts repealing the Corn Laws. It would be nearer the truth to say that the best legislation has been that which created rights and privileges to the whole common people as against classes and individuals holding power and enjoying possession, not so much by the help of the law as by means of superior force and cunning exercised often in defiance of the law. Magna Charta, "the foundation-stone of English liberty," gave rights which no previous law or charter either DENIED OR AFFIRMED. So did the Bill of Rights. So did the Factory Acts. The Reform Bills of '32 and '67 and '85 did not so much abolish previous legislation as create new and additional civic rights and powers for the whole body of householders. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, the Merchant Shipping Acts, Mines Regulation Acts, Truck Act, Education and Free Libraries Acts did not abolish previous legislation, but called into existence new legal rights to remove old social wrongs. The evils from which civilised nations suffer to-day are not evils which have been created by law. They are evils which have arisen because there was no law and no practice to prevent them from arising. In the hour of need we call for the police, and as our servant the policeman comes at the call of the humblest. If the police were not the servants of the community, the rich could hire both their own police and their own soldiers, as they did in days gone by.

The True State.

The true Socialist view of the State is thus enunciated by Laurence Gronlund:

> It is Society, organised society, the State, that gives us all the rights we have. To the State we owe our freedom. To it we owe our living and property, for outside of organised society man's needs far surpass his means. The humble beggar owes much to the State, but the haughty millionaire far more; for outside of it they both would be worse off than the beggar now is. To it we owe all that we are and all that we have. To it we owe our civilization. It is by its help that we have reached such a condition as man individually never would have been able to attain. Progress is the struggle with Nature for mastery, is war with misery and inabilities of our "natural" condition. The State is the organic union of us all to wage that war, to subdue Nature, to redress natural defects and inequalities. The State, therefore, so far from being a burden to the "good," a "necessary evil," is man's greatest good.

That is simply a striking paraphrase and extension of the passage from Ferdinand Lassalle which we have prefixed as an epigraph to these pages.

Practical Implications.

So much by way of abstract principles; but what are the practical implications of this theory of the function of the State as head of the grouped communes of a nation? What has Socialism to say of the present?

The great cleavage between Socialists and all Individualist politicians (including the most advanced Liberals) is that in spite of the manifest failure of Individualism on every hand, all so-called practical politicians continue to believe in it, and, in spite of the universal success of Socialism, continue to treat Socialism as utopian and unpractical.

Although State and Municipal service is everywhere better and cheaper than capitalistic service, although State and Municipal employees are better treated than the employees of private enterprise, although the most important jobs are everywhere done by the State and the Municipalities, and the State and the Municipalities are constantly having to come to the rescue of Private Enterprise, the amazing fact remains that this triumphant thing Socialism is still a nickname.

Daniel O'Connell enraged the Irish virago by calling her a Logarithm, and when a Tory wishes to be specially exasperating he calls a piece of legislation Socialistic, with the never-failing result that Liberal ministers rise and indignantly repudiate the opprobrious epithet, without having even the Irishwoman's excuse, for she was angry because she did not know what a Logarithm was.

No other principle save public control and public responsibility and public efficiency is now or ever was any good. All that has been of any service in legislation from the beginning of time has been where corporate control was extended over the means of life, where the State stepped in to preserve the peace, to protect life and property, to educate the ignorant, to provide legal aid to accused persons, to run the mails, to inspect mines, ships, ladders, scaffoldings, weights and measures, to develop telegraphs and railways, to help with great distance-saving canals, to encourage agriculture, fishing, and handicrafts.

Is a great estuary of the sea to be reclaimed from Father Neptune and made into good arable land? The Dutch Government does it once and

again—first with the Polders and then with the Zuyder Zee. One third of the area of the country has been "made" by the State in this way. Has a railway to be built through a desert inhabited by hostile tribesmen? Again the undertaking is so large that only the State can do it. When the Manchester Ship Canal Company had spent all its money, Manchester City had to come to the rescue and finish the canal. The very largest jobs always have to be done by the State or the Municipality. In resources, in command of credit, in command of the best talent, the State and the Municipality are easily first. This is so obvious that it would not be worth stating if it were not habitually forgotten in practice and theory alike.

The Twentieth Century Puzzle.

That the principle underlying all this beneficent work should be systematically repudiated and scorned, and that an association should have been formed to combat and resist its further application, is, indeed, the record political anomally of the twentieth century.

Rivers of blood have flowed in the name of religion. Applied science, the practical arts, social changes, even impalpable thought itself have all been repressed and thwarted in the name of religion. But no life has been taken by persecuting Socialists. Unlike the Protestant Church, we have the blood of no mild Servetus on our hands. Unlike the Catholic Church, we have martyred no Bruno, threatened no Galileo, we have on our conscience no Vanini with his tongue torn out, in the name of God, before his body was reduced to ashes. No inventor or discoverer has been overawed with the stake or the hangman's cord by Socialists. Socialism has had no Alva, no Torquemada, no Bartholomew nights, no pogroms. To the very limited extent that it has been adopted, Collectivism has been as manifest a blessing as organised Christianity and Mohammedanism have been curses. And it is only one of the world's sorry jests to ignore, contemn, or anathematise this blessed recreating principle, which alone can keep the world sweet.

Socialism is not employers' liability. It is the abolition of employers and the socialising of industry. It is not the taxation of fleecings, but the stoppage of theft at the fountain head. It is not heavy death duties upon successful, law-abiding exploiters, but "Catch 'em alive O." It is not an elaborate system of insurance premiums paid by State, employer, and worker, but automatic provision for contingencies by the State or the Municipality as the sole employer. Socialism is not After-Care Commitees or the feeding of necessitous children; it is paying the parent and guardian the full value of his labour and breeding a race of men and women with whom parental feeling and care will be as natural and spontaneous as they are with birds, beasts, and insects. Socialism is not the propping of an inverted social pyramid with laws and regulations and commitees and bureaux and inspectors; it is the up-ending of the pyramid so that it shall stand, not upon an apex of rank, idleness, luxury, and robbery, with a King of the Robbers at the end of all, but upon the broad base of labour and service; a base composed of useful, industrious, free, self-respecting manhood and womanhood.

As Guiding Principle.

It is the glory of Socialism that its great central principal of public control of the means of life serves as a guiding star by which the Socialist can steer amid the rocks and shoals and maelstroms of current politics. We are with the Forwards every time.

Is a cowardly and useless war forced upon two little Republics in South Africa? The Socialist Party everywhere protests, and all who recognise the necessity for fair-dealing between nations as between individuals, all who put justice above false patriotism, know that wherever the Socialists are gathered together there they will have sympathisers and temporary allies.

The Health Reformer knows that the Socialists are everywhere with him. And with the Socialist health reform is not merely an affair of open windows, Condy's fluid, and efficient sewer traps, but better houses, the abatement of the smoke nuisance, more and better food, more intelligent cooking, shorter hours of work, dental attention, more and longer holidays, and the wherewithal to travel and enjoy these.

The Educational Reformer knows that whoever may palter with the question of expense, the Socialist puts educational efficiency first, regardless of rates and vested interests.

The Housing Reformer knows that he has no more thorough-paced supporters than the Socialists, who are so anxious to secure the best homes that they will not trust landlordism to provide them, but would put the responsibility on the county councils and municipalities, whose primary concern would be, not how much rent could be drawn for the minimum of accommodation, but how much accommodation can be provided at the lowest rents consistent with solvent finance.

The Irish Home Ruler knows that Socialism stands for Home Rule All Round, and that we advocated Home Rule while Gladstone was still a passionate Coercionist.

The Radical who is jealous of the power of the House of Lords knows that the Socialist Party stands alone for the abolition of all second chambers.

The Co-operator knows that we believe in the Co-operation, not only of the Store, but of the State.

The Humanitarian knows that we are opposed to the cruel treatment of the lower animals and that we alone among politicians recognise that the overworking of the noblest of animals, the horse, will continue so long as the overworking of the horse's driver continues.

The Democrat knows that there are no more complete and consistent Democrats than the Social Democrats.

The well-informed Vegetarian knows that so long as men work beyond their strength, breath impure air, and work dismally long hours, the devitalised worker will have recourse to stimulants in his food and drink.

The Temperance Reformer knows that the best corrective of drinking habits is that raising of the standard of comfort, and that brightening of the whole outlook upon life, for which Socialism stands more than any other political system.

The advocates of national and municipal theatres who look and long for a vast improvement of this potentially great medium of popular culture, like

all other reformers who are very much in earnest, turn to the Socialists as being inevitably and by virtue of their principles sound upon this also.

When a Liberal member of Parliament is enraged at the gross and shameless sale of "honours," it is in Socialist quarters alone that he expects to have a sympathetic hearing.

No Fashions in Socialist Politics.

The true Socialist is not a man of fashion in politics. He is not a Republican or a Home Ruler to-day, and a mere Minimum-Wage or Prevention-of-Destitution Man to-morrow. He is ready for every chance that comes along of affirming and, if possible, advancing his principles.

Socialism is, of course, republican. It is true, the direct pecuniary results of the abolition of the monarchy would mean a saving of only sixpence a-head of the population per annum. But the indirect benefits must needs be incalculably great. The monarchy keeps all the abuses of caste in countenance. We cannot consistently object to factory inspectors being taken from Oxford so long as the Head of the State is selected merely because he is his father's son. We cannot consistently object to the minor lords so long as we adulate and crown a "lord" who has not even the prestige attaching to ability and services rendered as Proconsul or as Minister of State. We cannot consistently object to hardened and experienced soldiers being led by lisping lieutenants just from school so long as the affairs of the nation are in any way subject to the caprice of an ex-lieutenant of the navy of no particular brains and of no particular service. "Set the feet above the brain," says Tennyson, "and swear the brain is in the feet." That is what we do when we put George Wettin over John Morley and Augustine Birrell and David Lloyd George.

Just imagine the effect of a nation's manhood being called upon to model itself on the Royal Stamp Collector! We know that in bygone days a whole generation regarded that heartless scoundrel George the Fourth as "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," and students of history know the result. Sir Walter Scott was no small man; but the poison of loyalism so worked in him that on one occasion he pocketted the glass out of which George had drunk. The incident had an appropriate ending in respect that Sir Walter sat down upon the glass and broke it; but just imagine the mental attitude expressed in such an act!

To the good Socialist there are no fashions in politics. Every proposal holds the field till it is carried, and every passing incident which may seem to offer an opportunity will be used by him in order to impress his view upon the thoughts and the actions of his fellows. In such ways only can his great and many-sided social philosophy find currency and furtherance.

One More Instance.

With respect to the latest scheme for keeping the people on the land, the Socialist method would *not* be to entrust a Government bureau or commissioners with the duty of seeing that farmers all over the country paid not less than a fixed minimum wage, but to have agriculture, like all other industries, gradually organised under the local governing bodies, who would have no interest in sweating the labourer.

As to the land, the Socialist method would *not* be to hand it over to peasant cultivators as has been done in Ireland, where a hundred small landlords, who are serfs of the soil have, been created in place of one large landlord. The Socialist does not believe in individual ownership of land, nor in peasant proprietorship, nor even in capitalist farming on the small scale. For the so-called "magic of ownership" he would substitute communal ownership and communal farming under expert management, with the best implements, seeds, fertilisers, and marketing. By all means let the agricultural workers have fixity of tenure in their houses, and liberal gardens attached to those houses; but the communal fields worked by gangs of cheery workers, ploughing, sowing, mowing, reaping sociably—that is the true line of evolution so far as rural work is concerned.

The most benevolent measures forced upon local communities by the central government represent, not democracy, but bureaucracy, whereas Socialism is not bureaucratic but democratic, and Socialists recognise that social-democracy can exist and flourish only with the hearty co-operation of a majority of the citizens in a given locality. The object of the Socialist party is not to shower upon localities a succession of compulsory benefits for which they have not asked, but to carry the evangel of communal control of the means of life to every corner of the country, so that the people may gradually and eagerly take charge of their own means of life, ousting the landlord and the capitalist steadily from the field. The limits of even benevolent compulsion are soon reached; but the possibilities of intelligent, active citizenship are as boundless as they are attractive. Democracy in practice is only at its most primitive beginnings as yet.

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