

## SOCIALISM FROM THE ROOT UP.

### CHAPTER XVII.

#### SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM—CONVERSION OF CAPITAL INTO MONEY.

SAYS Marx: "The circulation of commodities is the starting point of capital: the production of commodities, their circulation, and that more developed form of their circulation called commerce, these form the historical groundwork from which it rises. The modern history of capital dates from the creation in the 16th century of a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market."

The great representative of this circulation is *money*, which is the first form in which capital appears. In history, *money* presents itself to us as opposed to *land*: the merchant is opposed to the landowner; an antithesis which struck people so much at one period that they expressed it by means of a double proverb—"No land without a lord," and "Money has no master." This is, in fact, another way of stating the antithesis between the Mediæval basis of property, viz., *status*, a recognised position in the great feudal hierarchy, and *contract*, the commercial basis, on which is built the position of the modern exploiter.

We must now see how capital is born, and the manner in which it works after it has been born.

It is born out of the operation expressed by the formula M - C - M, which we had to take note of in our last chapter. The M in this operation, as we stated before, implies always quantity and not quality; the second M not representing merely the money the operation was begun with, but an increased sum, otherwise the operation would be meaningless. It remains to be seen how this increase has taken place.

It cannot have happened by the mere process of exchange; because that would mean that the whole capitalistic class was living by getting the better of the whole capitalistic class, which is impossible. The increase of money in the capitalistic process must come out of the labouring or productive class.

The *modus operandi* of this capital-making must now be noted. The labouring class is necessary to the production of capital, and the labouring class in a peculiar condition: the labourer, to be fitted for the purpose of the capitalist, must be submitted to the operation of the free competition of the capitalist in the market; that is, his labour-power must be; for with the *man* himself of course the capitalist has nothing whatever to do; neither will his own position as capitalist allow him to consider himself as a man; according to the well-known proverb "Business is business." This position of the labourer is what is understood by the phrase of a "free labourer": his labour-power must be bought and sold in the market on the same terms as any other commodity; there must be no interference with his selling it at the price which it will fetch, a high price when the competition among the capitalists is brisk, a low price when it is slack; and as he has no other commodity to sell except his labour-power, he is *compelled* so to sell it—to be a "free labourer."

It is clear that this relation between the capitalist and the labourer is a conventional and not a natural one; nature does not produce men who from the first are possessors of money which it is their business to turn into capital, nor on the other hand does she produce men who are possessors of labour-power which they are compelled to sell in the free and open market to other men. As a consequence this relation is not common to all historical periods; but has developed from many economical revolutions, which have successively extinguished prior forms of social production.

It will be seen, then, that in the fully developed commercial period the capitalist, the reason for whose existence is the turning of money into capital, and who is the owner and the organiser of the whole of production, cannot carry on his business without having ready to his hand a class who are an adjunct of the machinery necessary to his business, and who, on their side, have no other reason for existence, so long as they are duly obedient to the system under which they live, save acting as such portion of this machinery.

We have now come to the subject of surplus-value, from which is derived profit, rent, and interest. This will form the subject of our next chapter.

E. BELFORT BAX AND WILLIAM MORRIS.

I am convinced if anything is to be done for the great mass of the people—if you are to secure any reform of magnitude—it is to be done by the people resolving to secure it, and totally disregarding the convenience or the existence of political parties in the House of Commons.—Richard Cobden.

## A MIDNIGHT WALK.

(By G. HERWEGH. Translated by J. L. JOYNES.)

I wander, when the world is all asleep,  
At midnight through the quiet streets at will.  
How loudly did these sleepers laugh or weep  
A few short hours ago! Now all is still.  
Their joy is like a poor plucked flower foredone;  
Their fullest cups have ceased at last to foam;  
Their troubles have departed with the sun;  
The world is weary, let it dream of home.

How all my fretful anger fades away,  
Now the loud tempest of the day is o'er;  
The moon sheds softly her forgiving ray  
On roses ruined by fierce suns before.  
Swift as a sound, and silent as a star,  
Lit by the pale moon's visionary gleam,  
My spirit, conscious of no earthly bar,  
Can see through sleep's most inly secret dream.

My shadow creeps behind me like a spy;  
I pause before a dismal dungeon den;  
In chains a patriot is doomed to lie;  
Alas! he loved too well his fellow men.  
He sleeps—and does he dream of happier things?  
Of oak leaves waving o'er a woodland stream?  
Dreams he that Victory folds him in her wings?  
O God of Freedom, let him always dream!

Gigantic looms the palace of a lord;  
My spirit sees behind its purple curtain,  
How one in sleep is clutching at a sword  
With look of guilty fear and grasp uncertain.  
Pale is that face with fright and helpless wonder;  
He harnesses for flight his swiftest team;  
He falls to earth; the earth is burst asunder—  
O God of Vengeance, let him always dream!

That cottage by the brook—small is its space;  
Virtue and Hunger share the peasant's bed;  
But God has granted to the poor man grace  
To quench in dreams the cares that crowd his head.  
He sees the fields through eyelids slumber-furled  
Grow ripe and rich with harvest's golden gleam;  
His narrow cottage widens to a world—  
O God of Pity, let the poor man dream!

At this last house, upon the bench of stone,  
One moment I must rest in earnest prayer;  
I love thee true, my child—nor I alone—  
My love with Freedom's shalt thou ever share.  
A dove-drawn cradle bears thee to the skies;  
For me wild coursers champ and foam and steam;  
I dream of eagles, thou of butterflies—  
O God of lovers, let my darling dream!

Thou star, that shinest through the cloudy haze,  
Thou night in pall of deepest purple furled,  
Too soon O let me not awake to gaze  
On that sad face of the dawn-wakened world.  
For fancy's dream to daylight's deed must yield;  
On tear-drops sparkles the sun's earliest beam;  
Freedom to Tyranny resigns the field—  
O God of dreamers, let us always dream!

### FRANCE.

CARCASSONE.—At the recent municipal election the Socialist list has been much more successful than the Opportunist one, nine Socialists having been elected.

PARIS.—Last week an "Extra-parliamentary Commission" was busy over the proposed national monument in commemoration of the Revolution. It is proposed to erect it on the grounds of the former palace of the Tuilleries; all latitude is left to the artists and architects, who may decide upon one single edifice or several, the principal monument may be either purely symbolic, or may consist in halls in which would be placed statues and bas-reliefs illustrative of the men and scenes of the Revolution. The Commission will ask for a grant of twelve millions for the execution of the plan. We confess to a cold shudder in reading of the "symbolic monument," from bitter knowledge, foreseeing what crime modern sculptural art can perpetrate when it strays from what it is fit for—i.e., executing a faithful and skilful likeness of a "social benefactor" or city alderman, frock-coat, trousers, and all, when it strays from this, the realm of everyday life, to that of false sentiment and humbug. Let us hope that the Government will refuse the grant, and waste the national money some other way, and that we may be spared the pain of a "symbolic monument" raised by hypocrisy and cant.

At the Chateau d'Eau Theatre in Paris a performance of Felix Pyat's "Chiffonnier de Paris" was organised last week by the *Cri du Peuple*, in aid of the families of those who suffered in the St. Etienne explosion. The theatre was crammed, and the performance successful. Several revolutionary songs were sung, and finally, amid great excitement, and the general uprising of the audience, the orchestra played the "Marseillaise." We English folk cannot quite realise without seeing it what an effect this song has on a large French crowd. For the "Marseillaise" sung in England, where we don't know the French words, and find it impossible to shove in all the translated ones in place and time, is a very different thing from the "Marseillaise" sung by a French choir, or played as orchestrated by H. Berlioz and listened to by an emotional crowd who join in with the refrain with a fervour and a precision which is indispensable to the dramatic effect of this fine tune. We should owe a good deal to an English Rouget de Lisle who would come forward with the discovery or invention of a tune as fine, and words more befitting the present period. He would be doing no inconsiderable service to the English revolutionary parties, for no one can deny the utility of appropriate music to any large congregation of folk.—M. M.