

## SOCIALISM FROM THE ROOT UP.

### CHAPTER XXII (continued)—SOCIALISM MILITANT.

(Continued from p 77.)

THE movement was begun in Germany by Lassalle<sup>1</sup> about 1863 as a national movement; it grew in that form after his death for some years. Meantime "the International" had been founded, and had gradually come under the guidance of Karl Marx and Frederic Engels, who won for themselves two energetic and able coadjutors in Liebknecht and Bebel, men untiring in gaining converts to the ideas of the International from the followers of Lassalle and of Schulze-Delitsch, the bourgeois co-operationist, to which latter party indeed Bebel himself once belonged.

The scope of this article prevents us from going into details as to the fortunes of the German party; it must be enough to say that the Marx party grew rapidly, and at the congress of Gotha in 1875 the Lassalle party amalgamated with them, formally renouncing the special tenets of Lassalle, notably the nationalist aims which formed a part of them. The party went on growing, and had a large newspaper press and some representation in the Reichstag. Then in 1878 came the "attempts" on the Emperor by Hödel and Nobeling, followed by the repressive laws against the Socialists, which destroyed their press at one swoop, and extinguished all open agitation in Germany. Nevertheless the growth of the party was not perceptibly checked by these arbitrary measures; the headquarters of its direction were transferred to Zurich, where they yet remain. At the Congress held last October at St. Gallen the revolutionary character of the party was sustained, in the teeth of some attempts at opportunism which came from a section of the representatives in the Reichstag. The temptation to this opportunism was the desire of some of the deputies to make the party felt in the Reichstag by forming alliances with other groups, whereas at present as a Socialist party they are quite powerless there. It may be added that there is a possibility in Germany, as in France, of a wave of "patriotism," founded on fear of the danger of actual invasion, checking for a time the rapidity of the advance of Socialism; though in the party itself the feeling for internationalism is overwhelming and past all question.

France has for the present rather fallen back from her position of leader in the revolutionary movement. The party itself is somewhat split up into sections, though the differences between rank and file are not serious and mainly have to do with matters of tactics. Socialist ideas have permeated the whole mass of the town workmen, who are more separated from the peasantry than in any other European country. The fact is, therefore, that the movement in France, though unorganised, still expands, especially as it is spreading to all manufacturing centres. In France Socialism is not definitely attacked by the government as it is in Germany, but only suffers, as it does in this country, from the ordinary repressive police system.

In Holland the movement, which has now reached extraordinary dimensions, was begun in the year 1882. The propaganda has been mainly the work of Domela Nieuwenhuis, formerly a popular preacher in Amsterdam, released recently from a term of imprisonment. The police in Holland have gone so far in attacking the Socialists as to stir up mob violence against them, even to the extent of breaking into their meeting places and threatening the lives of their leaders.

In Belgium the movement is progressing vigorously, in the teeth of the two opposed parties, and the feeling of the workmen generally is very revolutionary, stimulated especially by the miserable condition of the mining population, who in 1886 broke out into riots that almost attained to the proportions of a revolt. The party supports a daily paper in Brussels.

In Denmark the movement is so far advanced as to support two daily papers of large circulation, in spite of the smallness of the population. No doubt it is much helped there by the curious constitutional situation in which the Liberal majority and the Court party are holding each other at deadlock. This Danish movement has even penetrated to Sweden, and a Socialist party is growing up there.

In Russia, bureaucratic absolutism is blended with survivals of the mere barbaric absolutism, and as a consequence of the monstrous government which results from this, the movement seems now to be aiming at bringing about a constitutional revolution as a forerunner of the Social Revolution; and on the other hand this condition of things has so worked on the aspirations of the intelligent part of the people, that the movement there has been surrounded by a halo of personal heroism which has attracted universal admiration and respect even from its enemies.

In Austria, the faith of the masses generally is Socialism, but owing partly to the composite character of the Empire, which embraces such varied and rival races, and partly to the severity of the police measures of its Absolutist Government, there is no definite organisation.

In Italy, the movement is progressing, although hampered by the tail of the democratic, and especially the Mazzinian, ideas, which can see nothing beyond the abolition of priest and king.

In Spain, the followers of Bakounine's Anarchism have had much influence, and the movement consequently is mostly Anarchist in colouring. The party supports several small weekly papers.

In America, the movement till recently has been entirely in the hands of the German immigrants; but of late years there has been a remarkable development of the class-struggle there. The result of numerous and most violent disputes between the capitalists and wage-

earners has been the formation of an indigenous labour party, vague in aim and somewhat chaotic in action, but tending steadily towards a complete recognition of the solidarity of labour. The publication of Henry George's work, 'Progress and Poverty,' which created such sensation in this country, unsatisfactory as it was, has no doubt had its effect upon this movement, though its author in his quest for power and position has now practically recanted whatever opinions were of any value in it. One incident in the American movement is the formation of the gigantic trades' union called the Knights of Labour, which has more definite tendencies towards Socialism than those in this country; though Powderly's coquetting with the Catholic hierarchy has led to a split in the body, which leads to a hope that true Socialism may soon be generally accepted amongst the American working-classes. This will certainly be encouraged by the last act of the American capitalists, who in their dastardly fear of the possible combination of their wage-slaves, have murdered the Anarchist leaders at Chicago under the pretence of their being concerned in the throwing of a bomb-shell in the heat of a desperate labour-conflict in that city.

To get back again to this country, the movement is spreading much beyond the limits of the definite Socialist organisations, which are for the most part headquarters for knots of lecturers and speakers, and the publication of journals and pamphlets. In fact, it may be said that the strength of the movement here is on the intellectual side, and that organisation for action of any kind is very defective. Nevertheless, Socialist opinion is making itself felt widely as well as deeply; this is very marked in the effect it is having on the Radicals, since it is detaching a constantly increasing number of them from their old position as the left wing of the Liberals, which whom and under whose orders they have hitherto acted since the time when Gladstone became the leader of the party. The Irish movement being at bottom a rebellion, and illustrating very strongly one side of the economical disabilities of the working-classes, has done much to widen the breach between the Democratic Radicals and the Liberal Radicals, and has made them much more ready to listen to Socialist doctrines. The Trades' Unions also, which have acted as a safety valve for the discontent born of the economical situation, have been much shaken by the attention which so many of their members have given to Socialism, and show signs of a growing inclination to change their position from being a mere appendage to capitalism to being organisations for a definite attack upon it. The dead weight of their leaders, who look upon this feeling with the utmost disfavour, and have done their best to smother it, hampers the possible development of the Trades' Unions in this direction; but it ever breaks through these and other obvious obstacles. They will become most formidable allies of Socialism in this country. It must be remembered in estimating the force of the movement in the British Islands, that all this is taking place in a country which, whatever its economical position may be, is politically, ethically, and intellectually generally the headquarters of reaction.

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## REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING MARCH 24, 1888.

18	Sun.	1848. "Guns go off of themselves" at Berlin. 1871. Commune of Paris proclaimed. 1876. Ferdinand Freiligrath died.
19	Mon.	1848. Insurrection at Berlin.
20	Tues.	1875. John Mitchel died. 1871. Commune proclaimed at Marseilles.
21	Wed.	1763. W. J. McNevin born. 1832. Goethe died.
22	Thur.	1871. "Men of Order" demonstrate in Paris. 1873. Strike ended of 60,000 colliers in South Wales.
23	Fri.	1820. Sir F. Burdett tried for seditious libel. 1871. Commune proclaimed at Lyons.
24	Sat.	1794. Hébert guillotined.

"The Guns went off of themselves!"—The revolutionary waves of the year 1848 soon reached Berlin, and the news of the popular movement that was going on in the Rhenish provinces and smaller States of Germany stimulated the people of the capital to demand fresh concessions. At the great open-air meeting held on the 13th, a collision took place between people and soldiers. During the ensuing week Berlin was in an open state of revolution, and the people would no longer be satisfied with ambiguous and never-fulfilled promises. King Frederick became somewhat afraid, and on the 18th he issued a proclamation whereby he pledged himself to give to his beloved people all kinds of liberties and some other ones besides. On that very day the people assembled in the square before the royal palace, when a troop of dragoons came up and at once advanced against them. The soldiers were at first repulsed, but a sanguinary conflict began immediately afterwards. The battle lasted long, and was long doubtful. During the night of the 18th and 19th, King Frederick William wrote that immortal piece of hypocrisy and cowardice, which it will be well to preserve in these columns. It runs as follows: "To my beloved Berliners! By my patent of convocation this day, you have received the pledge of the faithful sentiments of your king towards you and towards the whole of the German nation. The shout of joy which greeted me from unnumbered faithful hearts still resounded in my ears, when a crowd of peace-breakers mingled with the loyal throng, making seditious and bold demands, and augmenting in numbers as the well-disposed withdrew. As their impetuous intrusion extended to the very portals of the palace with apprehended sinister views, and insults were offered to my valiant and faithful soldiers, the court-yard was cleared by the cavalry at a walking pace and with their weapons sheathed (!), and two guns of the infantry went off of themselves (!), without, thanks be to God, causing any injury. A band of wicked men, chiefly consisting of foreigners, who, although searched for, have succeeded in concealing themselves for more than a week (!), have converted this circumstance into a palpable untruth, and have filled the excited minds of my faithful and beloved Berliners with thoughts of vengeance for supposed (!) bloodshed; and thus have they become the criminal authors of bloodshed themselves. My troops, your brothers and fellow-countrymen, did not make use of their weapons till forced to do so by several shots fired at them

<sup>1</sup> Lassalle was killed in a duel in 1865.