

The Buried Talent and the Tactics of the Social-Democracy.

By EDUARD BERNSTEIN, Berlin, Germany.

In Germany—to pass now to conditions at home—we have thus far been spared the crucial test of such decisions as the Social-Democrats of parliamentary ruled countries have to meet.

With us the cabinet minister is merely the officer of the monarch—in the empire, the officer of the federation of monarchs—while the member of parliament is the attorney of the people against the cabinet ministers who are not appointed by the people through their representatives, but by the monarch ruling by the grace of God.

We do this as a matter of course, although it sometimes appears very strange to us that our vote on these matters knows no discrimination.

And so long as a minister with us is not, as in parliamentarily governed countries, the executive officer of the monarch, it is quite out of the question that a Social-Democrat could accept a cabinet position without putting a sudden end to his party membership.

This is so clear in principle, that we need waste no words about it. It is only introduced to show that our "purity" in the ministerial question we get dirt cheap.

use of the talent which we have to employ. It is no small talent. It now has the weight of 3,000,000 votes in the German Empire, but on the question of ministerial appointments its weight is only a cipher, and whether we place before it a minus or a plus mark, it is all the same in political arithmetic.

But while we can do so little with our talent in the ministerial question, still in other matters, it is much too important for us to evade the question whether actually we always have made the best use of it, whether we utilize it today as much as it may be utilized.

Every quantitative growth is connected with a qualitative change. Such important increase in its adherents as the German Social-Democracy has experienced in late years, must also make itself felt in a change of its influence upon the social and political life of the country, and thus influence its political tactics.

In the "Mouvement Socialiste," Comrade Robert Michels brings a grave accusation against the German Social-Democracy. Without any personalities, it must be admitted, but with so much the more asperity as to the matter itself, he upbraids the German trades union leaders and the leaders of the political party. He charges that for petty economic considerations and out of political niggardiness they neglect their higher tasks or ignore them entirely.

stag contained some good passages, but really only claimed for the proletariat the right to choose workers that suited their tastes. "If he (Bebel) crit' d the diplomacy in the Morocco question, he did not mean that the working class was absolutely opposed to the bourgeois notion of the so-called "Fatherland," but only because the rights of the German working men in their Fatherland are insufficient. That with which Bebel reproaches the ruling classes, reduces itself simply to this: The German bourgeoisie so long have not been obliged to reckon on the help of the proletariat in case of war that it does not give them—the universal franchise (which they do not have in the Prussian Diet, for instance) Only when they have the universal franchise in their pockets, in all the German states, will the working classes easily make up their minds to obey."

The Tenets of Social-Democracy

The Principles of International Collectivism as set forth in the National Platform, adopted at Chicago, May 8, 1904.

I. We the Socialist party, in convention assembled, make our appeal to the American people as the defender and preserver of the idea of liberty and self-government, in which the nation was born; as the only political movement standing for the program and principles by which the liberty of the individual may become a fact; as the only political organization that is democratic, and that has for its purpose the democratization of the whole society.

To this idea of liberty the Republican and Democratic parties are alike false. They alike struggle for power to maintain and profit by an industrial system which can be preserved only by the complete overthrow of such liberties as we already have, and by the still further enslavement and degradation of labor.

Our American institutions came into the world in the name of freedom. They have been seized upon by the capitalist class as the means of rooting out the idea of freedom from among the people. Our state and national legislatures have become the mere agents of great proprietary interests. These interests control the appointments and decisions of the judges and our courts. They have come into what is practically a private ownership of all the functions and forces of government. They are using these to betray and conquer foreign and weaker people, in order to establish new markets for the surplus goods which the people make, but are too poor to buy.

By controlling all the sources of social revenue, the possessing class is able to silence what might be the voice of protest against the passing of liberty and the coming of tyranny. It completely controls the university, and public school, the pulpit and the press, the arts and literatures. By making these economically dependent upon itself, it has brought all the forms of public teaching into servile submission to its own interests.

Our political institutions are also being used as the destroyers of that individual property upon which all liberty and opportunity depend. The promise of economic independence to each man was one of the faiths in which our institutions were founded. But under the guise of defending private property capitalism is using our political institutions to make it impossible for the vast majority of human beings to ever become possessors of private property in the means of life.

Capitalism is the enemy and destroyer of essential private property. Its development is through the legalized confiscation of all that the labor of the working class produces above its subsistence wage. The private ownership of the means of employer: grounds society in an economic slavery which renders intellectual and political tyranny inevitable.

and which accounts for his sharp and partisan interpretation of Bebel's speech, his article gives expression to a feeling which is quite wide-spread among those foreign Social-Democrats who do not share the views of Michels and the leading members of the French trades union Federation about the idea of the "Fatherland." "Throughout the entire Socialist world, there is a feeling of disappointment over the disproportion between the numerical strength of the German Social-Democracy and its influence on German politics. Jaures gave expression to this feeling in a friendly, conciliatory manner at the International Congress at Amsterdam in 1904, when in an impressive speech against making the Dresden resolution an international rule, he pointed out what a great danger to peace and to the peaceful development of Europe is contained in the weakness of the German Social-Democracy.

And why should we conceal from ourselves the fact that there was a great deal of truth in these words? Did it not strike every non-German how cool and unconcerned was the greatest Socialist party in the world when the Morocco affair brought Germany within a hair's-breadth of the possibility of a war with France? Indeed in the ranks of our comrades there is no real understanding of the excitement which at that moment ran through all non-Socialist France. What those who understood France and the French knew of a surety, was considered incredible. A firm conviction prevailed in Germany that there would be no war with Morocco. But although this conviction was sustained by the final result,

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As an American, Social-Democratic party, we pledge our fidelity to the principles of the International Social-Democracy as embodied in the united thought and action of the Social-Democrats of all nations. In the industrial development already accomplished, the interests of the world workers are separated by no national boundaries. The condition of the most exploited and oppressed workers, in the most remote places of the earth, inevitably tends to drag down all the workers of the world to the same level. The tendency of the competitive wage system is to make labor's lowest condition the measure or rule of its universal condition. Industry and finance are no longer national but international, both in organization and results. The chief significance of national boundaries and of the so-called patriotism which the ruling class of each nation is seeking to revive, is the power which these give to capitalists to keep the workers of the world from uniting, and to throw them against each other in the struggle of contending capitalists for the control of the yet unexploited markets of the world, or the remaining sources of profit.

The Social-Democratic movement therefore is a world movement. It knows of no conflicts of interest between the workers of one nation and the workers of another. It stands for the freedom of the workers of all nations; and, in so standing, it makes for the full freedom of all humanity.

The Social-Democratic movement owes its birth and growth to that economic development of world-process which is rapidly separating a working or producing class from a possessing or capitalist class. The class that produces nothing possesses labor's fruits, and the opportunities and enjoyment these fruits afford, while the class that does the world's real work has increasing economic uncertainty, and physical and intellectual misery, as its portion.

The fact that these two classes have not yet become fully conscious of their distinction from each other, the fact that the lines of division and interest may not yet be clearly drawn, does not change the fact of the class conflict.

This class struggle is due to the private ownership of the means of employment, or the tools of production. Wherever and whenever man owned his own land and tools, and by them produced only the things which he used, economic independence was possible. But production or the making of goods,

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pledges itself to watch and work in both the economic and political struggle for each successive immediate interest of the working class, for shortened days of labor and increases of wages; for the insurance of the workers against accident, sickness and lack of employment; for pensions for aged and exhausted workers; for the public ownership of the means of transportation, communication and exchange; for the graduated taxation of income, inheritance, and of franchise and land values. The proceeds to be applied to the public employment and bettering the conditions of the worker's children and their freedom from the workshop; for the equal suffrage of men and women; for the prevention of the use of the military against labor in the settlement of strikes; for the free administration of justice; for the public government, including initiative, referendum, proportional representation, and the recall of officers by their constituents; and for every gain or advantage for the workers that may be wrested from the capitalist system, and that may relieve the suffering and strengthen the hands of labor. We lay upon every man elected to any executive or legislative office the first duty of striving to procure whatever is for the workers' most immediate interest, and for whatever will lessen the economic and political powers of the workers.

But, in so doing, we are using these remedial measures as means to the one great end of the co-operative commonwealth. Such measures of relief as we may be able to force from capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of industry, and thus come into their rightful inheritance.

To this end we pledge ourselves, as the party of the working class, to use all political power, as fast as it shall be entrusted to us by our fellow-workers, both for their ultimate and complete emancipation. To this end we appeal to all the workers of America and to all who will lend their lives to the service of the workers in their struggle to gain their own, and to all who will nobly and disinterestedly give their days and energies unto the workers' cause, to cast their lot and faith with the Social-Democratic party. Our appeal for the trust and suffrages of our fellow workers is at once an appeal for the common good and freedom, and for the freedom and blossoming of our common humanity. In pledging ourselves and those which we present to be faithful to the appeal which we make, we believe that we are but preparing the soil of the economic freedom of the whole man.

Between these two classes there can be no possible compromise or identity of interest, any more than there can be peace in the midst of war, or light in the midst of darkness. A society based upon this class division carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Such a society is founded on fundamental injustice. There can be no possible basis for social peace, for individual freedom, for mental harmony, except in the conscious and complete triumph of the working class as the only class that has the right or power to be.

IV. The Social-Democratic program is not a theory imposed upon society for its acceptance or rejection. It is but the interpretation of what is, sooner or later, inevitable. Capitalism is already struggling to its destruction. It is no longer competent to organize or administer the work of the world or even to preserve itself. The captains of industry are appalled at their own inability to control or direct the rapidly socializing forces of industry. The so-called trust is but a sign and form of this developing socialization of the world's work. The universal increase of the uncertainty of employment, the universal capitalist determination to break down the unity of labor in the trades unions, the widespread apprehensions of impending change, reveal that the constitutions of capitalist society are passing under the power of inhering forces that will soon destroy them.

Into the midst of this strain and crises of civilization, the Social-Democratic movement comes as the only saving or conservative force. If the world is to be saved from chaos, from universal disorder and misery, it must be by the union of the workers of all nations in the Social-Democratic movement. The Social-Democratic party comes with the only proposition or program for intelligently and deliberately organizing the nation for the common good of all its citizens. It is the first time that the mind of man has ever been directed toward the conscious organization of society.

Social-Democracy means that all those things upon which the people in common depend shall by the people in common be owned and administered. It means that the tools of employment shall belong to their creators and users; that all production shall be for the direct use of the producers; that the making of goods for profit shall come to an end; that we shall all be workers together, and that opportunities shall be open and equal to all men.

To that end that the workers may seize every possible advantage that may strengthen them to gain complete control of the powers of government and thereby the sooner establish the co-operative commonwealth, the Social-Democratic party

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Gems for the Socialist Scrap-Book.

XXXVIII. THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM. - Robert Southey. There's many hereabout, And often when I go to plough, The ploughshare turns them out; For many thousand men, said he, Were slain in the great victory.

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FOR OUR NEW READERS:

THIS COUNTRY is made up of working people, both industrial and agricultural, but is ruled by the capitalist class, which is numerically small. Being in control of the government, it runs that government in the interests of its class and against the interests of the working class, which is the people.

Half Hours in the Herald Sanctum.

Correspondents are urged to write as briefly as possible, and on one side of the paper only. The Condemned Meat Industry. To the Editor: I have sent the following to the newspaper editors of the country.

Armour not sued for libel?

All that I ask of Mr. Armour is a chance to prove my charges in court. Is he afraid to give me the chance? If he is afraid, it must be because the charges are true. And if they are true, what have the newspapers of the country to say to it?

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC VOTE IN THE UNITED STATES. 1888 2,000 1892 21,000 1896 30,000 1900 122,000 1902 230,000 1904 441,000

EDITORIAL ETCHINGS.

The case of Comrade Wladinski, who was arrested on May 1 for carrying a red banner in the May Day parade, was called last Wednesday morning. After Comrade T. J. Morgan showed the court the permit to hold the parade the judge dismissed the case and ordered the banner returned to Comrade Wladinski.

GLEANINGS FROM BUSY FIELDS.

IN YANKEE LAND. The state secretary of Michigan reports all debts paid and a balance in the treasury. It is claimed that not a single enrolled Socialist was lost in the San Francisco disaster.

DRINK Schlitz

The Beer that Made Milwaukee Famous. The main difference between good beer and bad beer is in the after-effect. You notice that pure beer, Schlitz beer, does not make you bilious.

THE SOCIALIST ASYLUM.

The Socialist asylum, endowed by the late Mrs. Rand, is now taking tangible form. A location has been rented where the money is to be burned up, and the "leading scholars" of the movement will be given berths therein.

THE TEST OF PRACTICABILITY.

The Crisis Salt Lake City: The test of a philosophy is its reasonableness and its agreement with facts. But the only test of a political party is what it does.

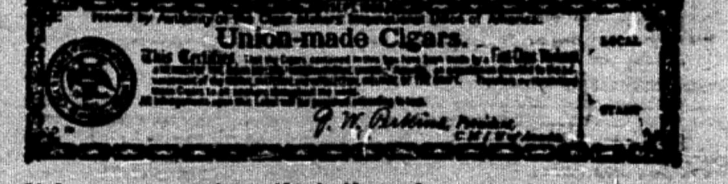
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