

## PRACTICAL SOCIALISM IN GERMANY.

## I.

GERMANY, which is now considered the first power of Europe, so far as military and political forces are concerned, was, within the memory of men that have not yet reached the noonday of their life, hardly more than a geographical term, or an aggregation of states, constitutions, laws, customs, and tendencies which no mortal could hope to understand, a chaos which no common reason could hope to change into any thing like cosmos or respectable organization. It is well known that the popular revolution of 1848 attempted this task, and failed so completely that even excellent men, prominently connected with the movement, are now in the habit of smiling whenever they recount their early struggles for German unity and political progress in their native country. It is known at the same time that "blood and iron," as Prince Bismarck once called it by way of accidental allusion, accomplished in 1864, in 1866, and in 1870, at a geometric ratio, what was considered, before his advent, a mere ideal and an idealistic dream; although all Germany had dreamed it ever since Barbarossa disappeared from the sight of man, sleeping, as a beautiful legend expresses it, in the Kyffhäuser, while Germany is powerless, but ready to return when his empire shall revive and attain to its righteous destiny.

The prophecy has been realized. On the first day of 1871, all Germany, with the single exception of the German provinces under Austrian and Swiss sovereignty, to which might be added the Germans along the Russian Baltic up to St. Petersburg, and the millions of Germans scattered among foreign and distant nations, was officially and constitutionally united into the German Empire; and eighteen days later the King of Prussia

assumed, at the request of all German governments,—the latter led by the King of Bavaria,—the title, office, rank, and prerogatives of an hereditary emperor. Thus the sentiment, which always longs to behold leadership personified, which believes in European leadership, and up to that time had venerated the third Napoleon, transferred its feelings of mighty and magnificent empire to the victor of Sedan, never doubting that the peace of Europe was henceforth depending upon the interests and intentions of Berlin. It is not useless to say that such a feeling, however general it may be, is not justified either in reason or in political facts; and that Germany viewed from without is one thing, and viewed from within is another. Hence her greatest soldier, Count Moltke, significantly told the German Parliament that the new Empire, although a great fact and a greater factor in the public polity of Europe, was not much liked abroad, was still less loved, and would for years to come meet nothing but unfriendly and hostile considerations in foreign countries. This confession was made during a discussion of the military budget, and yet tells but half the truth, in so far as it refers only to the international, and not to the internal and domestic, state of Germany. It is a singular fact, yet true beyond all doubt, that Germany is not a popular country, and that other nations admire it far less, and oppose it far more, than they did France and even Italy or Spain, while these were the leaders of Europe. England, on the other hand, is perhaps not much less disliked among the people of the earth.

It would be worthy of special investigation to ascertain the causes of this fact; all the more because it has great influence upon the policy and particular progress of these Germanic empires. England might be supposed to be everywhere a messenger of peace and prosperity, chiefly through her commerce; and it might be expected that Germany would receive a fair amount of heartfelt homage and true devotion, since the rising minds of all nations are flocking to her universities to learn truth, and to her literature to learn wisdom. Yet such is not the fact; the foreign student, the studious traveller, and the travelling resident remains, in the very heart of Germany and German culture, a cool and critical observer; he thinks his francs, dollars, and guineas

there spent a full equivalent of what he carries home; he remains a stranger to German life, and the domestic polity of Germany remains to him a profound secret.—a mystery or something worse. This is to a certain extent due, perhaps, to the difficulty which almost all foreigners experience in merely learning the language of Germany. For such help as they receive from the general grammar and dictionary is utterly inadequate, and superior only to the little histories and handbooks that pretend to explain the growth and culture of contemporary Germany. With what amazement do Germans read the scores of outlandish books which undertake to explain the social state of their country; and how bewildered they are whenever they see that their own attempts at enlightening foreigners are neither appreciated nor even understood, or rather not relished, because they are not comprehensible!

Who knows the statistics of Germany? Who knows the Constitution of Germany? Who knows the social organism of Germany? What foreigner is not amazed, if he is told authoritatively that Germany is an industrial rather than an agricultural country; and what American is not surprised, when he compares the growth of German towns with that of cities in the United States? What foreigner doubts that the military establishment of Germany is her greatest calamity, and that her only salvation lies in the use of the plough and the steam-engine, in the glories of jury trial and free speech, in the government of the people by the people themselves, in the speedy separation of Church and State, in local and provincial self-government, in the limitation of the imperial prerogative, in the blessings of parliamentary power; and in a general return from the sword to the quill, and from the quill that writes metaphysical systems to the more modern steel pen that writes good newspapers and practical wisdom, or to the golden pen that writes up cash books and commercial ledgers in elephant folio? No wonder that almost every revelation of domestic Germany (as represented in the non-German press) should look like a symptom of social disorganization, and that the majority of foreigners should lack faith in the destinies of the youthful Empire, if a minority at home professes faith only in that which means deep, radical, and permanent change.

Such a revelation was the late parliamentary election. It is here proposed to discuss briefly a domestic movement which is plainly hostile to the Empire and to German society, and to recount the counter-movement of the national government. The movement of general society it is not necessary to describe in detail as long as it is firmly united with that of the government in all its departments, while the general conclusion may be safely left to the thoughtful reader.

## II.

While the Germans call it social-democracy, or democratic socialism, the movement here referred to may be described in one word as socialism, perhaps as German socialism, although it is very difficult to see much substantial or any essential difference between the socialist on the right bank of the Rhine and his progenitor and prototype who lives not very far from the left side of the German river. This movement is partly theoretical, partly practical; the latter only being of general interest and, to Germany, of some importance. For there is no doubt that the Imperial Government will have to fight what Prince Bismarck calls the red internationalists, now that the struggle with the black internationalists—the Jesuits, Papists, and Romanists—is apparently coming to an end satisfactory in the opinion of German authorities. While it was necessary in the memorable battle against Rome to distinguish carefully between legitimate theology and illegal political action on the part of the Roman bishops, between religion and civil life, between Catholic Christians and un-Christian, revolutionary acts, there is no doubt that the socialists will have to be met *in toto* and as a unit, although they are divided into a great many factions, schools, and parties, all of which fight each other about as much as they oppose the established government. There is no doubt that the general association of German workmen (*der allgemeine deutsche Arbeiterverein*) does not wish to be mistaken for the party of social-democratic workmen (*die sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*); and it may be readily admitted that most of the forty or fifty newspapers conducted in the interest of German socialism utter different

complaints, and propose different remedies, if they do not preach a different kind of new gospel. Nevertheless, it is safe to consider them as substantially united, both theoretically and practically; practically, because they agree in their hostility to the Empire as now organized; theoretically, because they found their destructive and constructive plans upon the same kind of political and social philosophy. This philosophy, on the other hand, is nothing else than a mild and somewhat softened reproduction of French thought; of Cabet and Babeuf, of St. Simon and Fourier, of Louis Blanc, and, above all, of P. J. Proudhon. It is not proposed to realize all that these thinkers have dreamed of, and still less to use all the methods which they have proposed; but without them, it is entirely safe to say, there would be no such socialism in Germany as there is now: and he who has mastered Proudhon and is able to meet him, has mastered and may safely face the socialism of contemporary Germany. The full evidence for so sweeping a statement as this,—an assertion that will be assailed by most of the German socialists,—must be reserved for another occasion. A just amazement, however, may be here expressed at the slender contributions of German literature to social philosophy and political economy, in so far as these sciences are not metaphysical, but historical and practical. For in this respect the German mind has not been equal in fertility to either France or England, and the few names that are truly eminent can be easily counted on the fingers. In fact, such men as Roscher, now the leading name among political economists in Germany; Stein, the principal adversary of socialism; Schulze-Delitzsch, the father of cooperative associations in Germany; Lassalle, the chief agitator of the socialists; and Marx, the principal guide in the warfare of "labor against capital,"—are solitary names, significant in their loneliness, and vivid reminders of what might have been, if Germany had given to the interests of the body half as much attention as she has given to the mind and to more distant affairs.

Nevertheless, it must be said that the German socialists, if they have mentally and theoretically fallen short of their French models, have practically been much more circumspect, prudent, and temperate. And this is greatly due to a large class of cultivated university teachers, who are giving their attention to

social and economic science, so-called *Kathedersozialisten*,—many of them men who unite philosophic insight with the most vivid feeling for the poor and struggling classes. These modest men, most of them poor and struggling themselves, are usually quite trustworthy in whatever they present; they are maintaining at the same time the historic glories of all the great universities of the European continent, in being the watchmen of truth and the champions of popular rights. For in Germany, perhaps more than in any other country, liberal learning, so aristocratic in itself, has at all times been in deep sympathy with the common people.

The eventful years in the history of practical socialism in Germany are 1848, 1863, 1871, and 1877,—the revolution, Lassalle, the foundation of the Empire, and the election to the third German Parliament. In more senses than one all these periods are barely preliminary, and the first great crisis can be expected to occur only when Prince Bismarck, assisted by Count Eulenburg, shall undertake a struggle similar to that which he has just carried on with the help of Falk, the Prussian minister of churches and schools, against the Roman establishment.

The central figure of German socialism before 1848 is Wilhelm Weitling, born in 1803 at Magdeburg, by profession a tailor; who became acquainted with the new faith at Paris, and thence turned to Switzerland, in order to promulgate and expand his doctrines among the German mechanics of the republic. While his "Gospel for Poor Sinners"<sup>1</sup> was going through the press, he was arrested at Zurich in November, 1843, and exiled in 1845. Later, he came to this country, and died in comparative obscurity. He excited great attention in Germany, particularly by his works entitled, "Guarantees of Harmony and Liberty,"<sup>2</sup> and "Humanity as it is, and as it should be."<sup>3</sup>

Precisely as Weitling received his impulses at Paris, so did the German revolution of 1848 originate in the French capital,—a city without which modern Germany would lack some

<sup>1</sup> "Das Evangelium des armen Sünder," Berne.

<sup>2</sup> "Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit," Vizev, 1842.

<sup>3</sup> "Die Menschheit, wie sie ist und wie sie sein sollte," second edition, Berne, 1845.

of its most valuable possessions. This statement will be distasteful to many German conservatives and to the vast number of "*Franzosenfresser*" that have flourished in Germany ever since the time of the first Napoleon, and culminated in the late Wolfgang Menzel. Nevertheless, it is true that Germany has received more genuine good from France than she has given, and that no German history is complete without frequent recurrence to French influences. This applies emphatically to the revolution of 1848,—a forerunner of 1866 and 1871,—although it proved to be, for the time, a complete and ruinous failure. Nevertheless, modern Germany cannot be understood without it, and it is a matter of regret that no adequate history of it has as yet been written. The "fundamental rights of the German people," as then proclaimed by the representatives of the popular delegates, are of historical interest, those referring to the social status being as follows: 1, recognition of the full, free, and sacred rights in physical and mental property, including the right to sell and divide estates, and the abolition of forced labor as connected with real property; 2, the rights of free labor, and the full utilization of all kinds of work, including the freedom of settlement throughout the country, the freedom of emigration, and the freedom of peaceful coalition; 3, absolute freedom of the common schools; 4, municipal self-government, with public discussions and regular budgets.<sup>1</sup> The progress of socialism proper was very slight and insignificant; but the agitation by means of clubs, societies, and associations, most of them specially devoted to economic discussion, made immense progress and prepared the soil for the extraordinary activity of Ferdinand Lassalle. This remarkable man devoted himself to the problems of socialism for little more than two years only; yet so eminent are his talents, so prominent his services, and so important the results of his life, that a more careful notice of him is unavoidable.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Haym, "*Die deutsche Nationalversammlung*," (3 vols., Berlin and Frankfurt, 1848-50), and Jürgens, "*Geschichte des deutschen Verfassungswerks*," (2 vols., Brunswick, 1850-56).

<sup>2</sup> On Lassalle's life see B. Becker, "*Enthüllungen über das tragische Leben des Ferdinand Lassalle*," and an exceedingly spirited essay on the same subject by George Brandes, the latter just published.

## III.

Ferdinand Lassalle was born April 11, 1825, at Breslau, of wealthy parents (Jews), and first intended to succeed his father as a merchant. He attended a classical school in his native city; in 1840 he went to Leipsic to visit the commercial school there, but, after a year or two, decided to devote himself to law and philosophy. After due preparation under private tutors he was admitted to the university of Breslau in 1842, and two years later he joined the university of the Prussian capital, chiefly attracted by the philosophy of Hegel, which was there cultivated by a number of spirited men, most of whom had been sitting under the great master himself. Hinrichs and Hotho lectured upon art and æsthetics, Michelet discoursed ethics, Gans taught philosophical jurisprudence, and all of them followed strictly the methods of Hegel's fundamental work,—his logic. From Berlin Lassalle went to Paris, where he became very intimate with Heine, who recommended him to Varnhagen von Ense in the following terms:—

"My friend Lassalle, who will hand you this note, is a young man of the most excellent talents. With the most thorough learning, with vast and comprehensive information on all subjects, with extraordinary penetration, with an unusual wealth of language, he unites an energy of will and a readiness of action that are simply astonishing," etc. (See Heine's letter to Varnhagen, January 3, 1846.)

Lassalle was then twenty years old. A German poet, who saw him but once at a concert, says of him,—

"He looked all defiance; but on his brow there rested such energies as would justify the expectation that he might conquer a throne."

Even at this time, chiefly devoted to classical and transcendental pursuits, Lassalle dressed like a dandy, lived in sumptuous apartments, and gave little dinner parties of the most exquisite character. His leisure was devoted to a work in two volumes, "*Die Philosophie Herakleitos des Dunkeln von Ephesos*;" but it was printed only in 1858, because its author got deeply entangled in one of the *causes célèbres* of the day. He had met in 1845 the Countess Hatzfeldt, by birth a princess, then in litigation with her husband on account of some property. The latter was suspected of an arrangement by which

his second son was to lose the benefit of an estate to the baroness Meyendorff. Lassalle, already intimate with the princess, and deeply interested in her petition for a divorce, tried to prevent the design of the Count, and, with two gentlemen, waited upon the baroness at a hotel in Cologne to read the document in question. His friends managed to make away with a casket containing the deed and other valuables; and one of them, a young lawyer, was punished for the crime, while Oppenheim and Lassalle were fully acquitted. On the 11th of August, 1848, Lassalle defended himself before the court at Cologne in an oration, the like of which a German jury is not in the habit of hearing. Suddenly interrupting his defence, he said:—

"The family was silent; but it is written that the stones shall speak, if man be silent. Where all the rights of man are offended, where the voice of consanguinity is hushed, and a helpless being is deserted by all natural protectors, there rises of justice the first and last friend of man—man. My eye, gentlemen, has always dwelt on questions of general interest, and I might have paused before I used all my talents for the relief of an individual misfortune,—before I interrupted my career for many years to come,—although it is heartrending to a gentleman who has a heart himself, to see a fellow-being that he believes to be true and noble perish without help by mere brute force in the midst of our civilization. But I saw general principles involved in this particular affair. I knew that the princess was sacrificed by her own rank; I knew that only the overweening immorality of a peer and millionaire could risk such misdeeds, such outrages upon moral society." (See Lassalle's *Verteidigungsrede* of August 11, 1848.)

Shortly after Lassalle had learned of the privations endured by the princess, he challenged the Count, and when the latter ridiculed "the Jewish imp," Lassalle vowed revenge. Before thirty-six courts he appeared as the lady's defender; nine years he prosecuted and persecuted the Count, until at last a compromise was forced upon him in April, 1854, by which the lady received full possession of her princely fortune, while Lassalle, having used up his income mainly in this suit, received an annual stipend that enabled him to consult only his tastes and not his necessities. He published his work on Heraclitus, and immediately afterwards commenced his second and greatest literary work, "*Das System der erworbenen Rechts*" (2 volumes, Leipsic, 1861).

But he was frequently interrupted in these theoretical studies by more practical duties, usually those of defending himself before some court in cases of political prosecution. In 1848 he was arrested at Düsseldorf as one of the republican leaders in the revolution; the jury, however, acquitted him, although he opened his defence with the confession that he was a revolutionist on principle; yet, as a matter of practical expediency, he would condescend to step down to the level of the attorney-general, so as to be able to show him his inconsistency and the impertinence of his prosecution. And, as if to make mockery complete, he interprets his dictum, "a revolutionist on principle," by adding that a man does not make his way through Greek philosophy and Roman law, through all departments of history and political economy, to put the burning torch into the hands of the mob; that he draws the foundations of law and equity from reason, while his opponents find it nowhere but in the throat of the cannon. They have hundreds of guns and thousands of soldiers,—those are their reasons, and impressive ones such as everybody understands! The fight against these Lassalle could not undertake single-handed. Hence he turned, reluctantly it is safe to say, to the lower and uncongenial strata of society for help. For

*"Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo."*

Lassalle died August 31, 1864; his connection with the socialist movement commenced April 12, 1862, when he delivered in Berlin, before a society of mechanics, an address entitled, "The special connection between the present age and the idea of the workingman's estate."<sup>1</sup> He stated that during the middle age real property was the exclusive basis of all rights; since the French revolution of 1789, capital had taken its place; the revolution of 1848 wanted to make labor the sole basis of political and social rights, because labor is the only producer of values. The laboring class is not a mere estate, but represents the whole people, and therefore is entirely free from clannish sentiments. Hence, the commonwealth must cease to be a mere

<sup>1</sup> "Ueber den besondern Zusammenhang der gegenwärtigen Geschichtperiode mit der Idee des Arbeiterstaats." (Zurich, 1863).

contrivance for the protection of life and property, and become an organism which shall enable its individual members to attain to a degree of culture, power, and freedom which they could never reach if left to themselves. This little pamphlet brought another suit upon him, but enabled him at the same time to expand his doctrines before the court and in print; it caused universal attention among the laboring classes, and became the first gospel of orthodox socialism in Germany. On May 24, 1863, the "General Association of German Workingmen"<sup>1</sup> was founded; Lassalle was chosen its president for five years, and henceforth socialism was one of the active factors in the domestic polity of Germany. Up to that time Schulze-Delitzsch, a man of extraordinary merits, had been the hero of the workingman, and of general value chiefly by the foundation of many hundreds of coöperative shops, in which the poor could learn the important and useful lesson of legitimate self-help. Induced by other congresses of all kinds, such as had been the fashion in Germany since 1848, it was proposed in the autumn of 1862 to have a general "congress of workmen." While the preparations for this were going on, chiefly at Leipsic, where a central committee was in session, and while Schulze-Delitzsch counselled moderation and caution, Lassalle delivered the oration already mentioned; the court brought his name to the attention of the Leipsic committee, and Lassalle was at once requested to express his views upon their purpose, and to assist them in any way that he might deem best. He published an answer in 1863, and commenced at once a remarkable series of agitations in Leipsic, Frankfort-on-the-Main, and other places; he produced an immediate rupture among the followers of Schulze-Delitzsch, published a number of his speeches and essays, and was on the point of consolidating a vast army of socialists, when his life came to a sudden end. In the summer of 1864, while at Rigi-Kaltbad, he met a young lady, Helene von Dönniges, the daughter of a Bavarian diplomatist whom he had known in Berlin. The young lady was engaged to be married to Baron Rakowitz, but soon consented to prefer Lassalle. Her parents objected; Lassalle was dismissed, and in

<sup>1</sup> "Der allgemeine deutsche Arbeiterverein."

consequence challenged the baron, who wounded him at the first shot. The great agitator died three days later; the princess Hatzfeldt took his body to Germany, and he was buried by the side of his father in the Jewish cemetery of Breslau. But his work lasted and has increased to the present day.

#### IV.

Like all socialists, Lassalle is great and generally correct in his merciless critique of actual society and the economic theories popularly accepted as infallibly true. And if he does not say any thing new, or superior to what Proudhon, Blanc, Marx, and Owen, have said before him, it is yet worth while to read his terse descriptions, and to learn from him how miserable is the life of a great many human beings to whom we are indebted for many of our comforts. His graphic accounts of society, however, are as one-sided as his economic theories. The latter he states thus:—

"The iron law of economy which, under the present system of demand and supply, determines the amount of wages, is this: all wages, on the average, are limited by the amount required for mere existence and for propagation. The amount required for existence is different in different localities. If labor gets a little more, the people are prosperous; they are poor, if it gets a little less. The fact that labor is paid to-day better than it was a hundred years ago does not prove that it is now paid sufficiently. In fact, it is underpaid as a result of the despotism exercised by capital. Hence the laborer himself must own or control capital, if he wants to rise from his slough of despair, or if he wants to get the full benefit of his work. The best way to make him a capitalist and independent is not to be found in the trades-union or in the cooperative store, but in productive associations, whose credit and capital is to be guaranteed by government. In order to control government, nothing is required but manhood suffrage, by means of which the laboring class will forthwith obtain the majority in the legislature."

That these doctrines, particularly as presented by Lassalle, an unusually forcible and elegant speaker, should prove attractive to those whom he intended to benefit, is not very wonderful. Did he not tell the workingmen in his very first address (April 12, 1862): "You are the granite rock on which must be reared the church of the present day"? Nevertheless, he was not satisfied with his practical success. In 1864 he wrote to his plenipotentiary:—

"I am tired to death; I am overworked, overburdened in the most terrible degree. The deep and painful disappointment, the gnawing, hidden chagrin, which the carelessness and apathy of the working class, taken as a whole, causes me, is too much even for me. Nevertheless, I shall not drop the standard as long as there is a gleam of hope left on the political horizon. Our association now counts three thousand members; that tells every thing. Who would have thought of such faintness and coldness? All this will not change until certain political events shall happen that will stir up the masses. And they may happen before long. Till then we must keep up as well as may be."

These events did happen, and but a few months after Lassalle had written the preceding lines. He was one of the very few men in Germany who understood the full bearing of the Danish war; who knew that the success of Prussia in Sleswick was unquestionable; that Austria then would be forced out of the German Confederation; that Prussia in consequence would be the leader of Germany, and that Germany itself would soon be firmly united. That the progress of these events would bring the much-coveted right of general suffrage was a matter of course, and Lassalle firmly believed that that was equal to a general control of government by the workingman. His friends and followers agreed with him; and mathematical computation came to their full support. But the trouble is that a vote is not merely a mathematical abstraction, and that voters have other qualities than those appreciated in arithmetic. Hence all socialists were grievously disappointed when the constitution of the North-German Confederation, proclaimed April 17, 1867, without any hesitation established universal suffrage, and yet found itself justified in the expectation that even in this way a loyal and law-abiding majority could be obtained for the parliament. This grief came to a public demonstration when the general committee of the "*sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*," then at Brunswick, issued a manifesto on September 5, 1870, immediately after the battle of Sedan, by which a continuation of the war was to be prevented. This manifesto, which proposed a general rise of the working classes, was a direct answer to the republican declaration made the day before in Paris. The signers of the manifesto were promptly interned at Lötzen, and serious inconvenience was prevented, although it is well known that most socialists in Germany agree with the French ultras

much better than with their own government and with the majority of their countrymen. Their hostility against Moltke, Bismarck, and the Emperor,—against the Empire itself,—is as evident as it is nefarious and treacherous.

The election for the third parliament,—each parliament lasting for three years,—took place January 10, 1877. The opposition during the first and second parliaments came in the main from the Catholic party, technically known as the "centre," and caused the enactment of a number of laws by which the national legislature can very well afford to be judged. The socialists had a few representatives from the beginning, and have now elected thirteen or fourteen, fifteen members being required for the proposal of a new bill. The parliament itself consists of about four hundred members. That a handful of socialists cannot do much among such a number is quite evident; the evidence becomes absolute if the quality of the members is taken into consideration, or if the debates are read in which the socialists take part. Their party, however, cannot be left entirely unconsidered, even if the German parliament and its constituency should do what it is entirely unwilling to do,—let things go as they please.

For the late election the Empire was divided into three hundred and ninety-seven electoral districts, in which there were 8,523,446 registered voters. Of these, however, only about sixty per cent. went to the polls, the opposition appearing in unusual strength, while the socialists appeared in full force. The opposition polled the following votes:—

The Centre (Catholics),	1,368,820
The Party of Progress,	447,599
The Socialists,	351,952
The Poles,	198,412
The Particularists,	137,757
The opposition in full,	2,504,540

This, however, is not an opposition in the English or American sense; *i. e.* a conservative opposition which means to support the constitution, and is merely opposed to the actual administration. It is ultimately a revolutionary party, which detests the existing laws and institutions and would willingly

substitute any other government. The Catholics sympathize with Rome, the Progressists with democracy, the Socialists with the revolution, the Poles and Particularists with the irrevocable past. The leader of the centre is Windthorst; of the Progressists, Virchow, besides Duncker and Schulze-Delitzsch. Among the Socialists are Hasenclever, who sits for Berlin, although he is a resident of Leipsic, where he publishes a socialist newspaper; Fritsche, a cigar-maker, sits also for Berlin; but their real leader, as far as they admit of leadership, is Ferdinand August Bebel. He was born at Cologne in 1840, is a turner by trade, resides at Leipsic, the principal seat of German socialism, and has been a member of every German parliament. He grows more radical as he grows older, a fact not common among German socialists, and was at one time quite intimate with Karl Marx, the president of the Internationalists. He has been frequently imprisoned, once on account of high treason, together with his friend Liebknecht; but he always gets reelected, this time by the capital of Saxony, although the popular party opposed him most bitterly. While the Catholics usually control Bavaria, the Socialists are particularly strong in the great cities, including Berlin, which thus far was considered the exclusive property of the Progressists. Out of one hundred votes cast in Dresden—

The Conservatives had	23
The Liberals,	24
The Progressists,	14
The Socialists,	39

Hamburg barely escaped electing any but Socialists. The latter, therefore, are in great glee, and their nearest friends and allies, the Progressists, are correspondingly depressed, as they have generally lost what the admirers of Lassalle have gained. There is now a movement on foot to consolidate the whole opposition, and the world may hear, before long, of a union between the Catholics and the Socialists. They are already voted together in two or three districts, and, should they form an alliance, the Particularists would at once join them, the Progressists could not stay away from them, and the rest of the anti-Bismarck men, as they call themselves sometimes, would



naturally gravitate into the great party. While this would be the greatest calamity to the Empire, it is reasonable to suppose, either that the union will not be formed, or that it will become a less revolutionary opposition, or that it will be crushed by a loyal majority. The latter can be expected with great confidence. The supporters of the Empire polled the following vote on the tenth of January last:—

The National Liberals,	1,742,501
The Imperialists,	375,523
The Conservatives,	359,950
The Government in full,	2,477,974

These figures seem to give a majority to the opposition; the majority of the members, however, is loyal in its support not only of the Empire, but also of the actual administration, the most important members of which, in this connection, are Prince Bismarck, Falk, and Count Eulenburg. It must be remembered also that nearly forty voters out of every hundred,—in all over three million and five hundred thousand,—have stayed away from the polls, and that most of these are liberals or conservatives, both of them supporting the government. Even in the great cities a change for the better may be expected, as soon as the voters will do their duty. In Berlin there voted only eighty thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine out of one hundred and fifty-three thousand three hundred and ninety-nine registered, or less than forty-seven per cent. Many members of the opposition will also be driven into more loyal affiliations, if the organization of the Empire or of German society should be endangered. The Emperor, therefore, used the following language in his address from the throne, when he opened the third parliament on February 22:—

"You will agree with me in not sharing the apprehension that a revival of trade might be prevented by a lack of confidence in the future security of our lawful institutions. The organization of the Empire and the sound sense of the German people form a strong protection against the dangers that might issue from the attempts of anarchy against the security and systematic development of our lawful institutions."

## V.

If the socialism of contemporary Germany may be defined theoretically as communism and solidarity in production, while all consumption is to take place mainly in families, and practically as an attempt to promote the good of the laboring classes at the expense of the *bourgeoisie* and at the risk of social and political organization as now existing, the Empire defines its own object as "the protection of the whole Empire, of all its domestic laws, and the promotion of civil welfare among the German people" (see the introduction of the German Constitution). Hence the central government differs from that of the United States by having all the power and sovereignty which is not specially given to the individual States or to the people at large; while in this country the people of the coördinate and semi-sovereign States are supposed to retain whatever they have not specially delegated and transferred to the federal authorities. Or, in other words, the organs of the political estate in this country are: first the people, secondly the national government and the coördinate States; while in Germany the imperial government is the principal seat of power, law, and order, and the people at large are of subordinate importance, in philosophic theory. The question—which theory be the better—of course admits of no solution. But it is very plain that in Germany the law and its administration is of vastly greater importance than in the United States, because vastly more is depending upon it and much more material included in its domain. In America, moreover, the lawmaker merely expresses the average sentiment of the people, while in Germany the whole organism of civil society is, more or less, the result and effect of statute law. Hence it is possible in America, though by no means probable, that socialism and communism will come to be a great power without coming to any conflict with the laws of the land; while in Germany there must be a struggle between the two as soon as socialism becomes enough of a reality to indicate that it has not been provided for by the legislature. Consequently the lawmakers can but choose one of two things: either to make *a priori* laws, and to compel the people into obedience until they turn rebellious and revolutionary; or to make *a posteriori* laws

that shall fit the people as they actually are. A very limited acquaintance with the acts of the German parliaments sufficiently shows that they have elected the latter method, and that they have been so successful as to make a revolution on the part of socialists a practical impossibility. In fact, after the victory of German laws over Roman impertinencies, a possible conflict between the German Empire and the followers of Lassalle would be absolutely ruinous to the latter. Whatever they need is usually given them before they ask for it, and the imaginary blows which they strike at the Empire usually turn out to be a strike in the air, misspent force, or a blow at themselves. Lassalle asked for universal suffrage; it was introduced a few years later, long before the great mass of laborers knew what it meant. He asked for free labor; labor was soon so free that almost all the small shops disappeared, because they could not compete with the larger ones. He demanded that the State should specially help the workingman; the State has provided for him so well that he has hardly any thing to do but to sell his labor as dearly as possible. The only thing left undone by the State, and yet demanded by Lassalle, is the supply of capital to the workingman; and that will have to be done by parliament, not, however, out of the coffers of government, for they are either empty or already engaged, but out of the pockets of the *bourgeois* into those of the laborer. The question, then, might ultimately become one of votes; and in that case a very slender acquaintance with the distribution of property in Germany will show that the greater part of the aggregate wealth in Germany is held, not by a minority, but by a majority of the voters under the present system of universal suffrage. Hence even a general revolution of the socialists would be disastrous to nobody but themselves, and nothing is really left them but to make the most of society as now constituted. It is not difficult to show this both from the laws and the tax-books of Germany.

It is a singular fact how generally the poor overrate the wealth of those whom they think rich, and how frequently this mistake is made by Germans particularly by German socialists. The largest tax-payer in Prussia is Krupp of Essen, and he paid last year only eighty-four thousand six hundred marks, or, roughly speaking, twenty thousand dollars; next to him comes a tax-

payer in the government of Oppeln with seventy thousand two hundred marks; the third lives in the government of Wiesbaden and pays sixty-eight thousand eight hundred marks. The greatest tax-payer in Berlin pays forty-five thousand marks. But all these, down to the men who pay a thousand per annum, are solitary and exceptional instances, while the real budget is made up of contributions less than a hundred dollars each, and 6,369,856 out of 24,832,784 persons paid nothing at all: 2,177,806 of these were unmarried people, while the others lived in families. Besides this, all branches of the government and administration are conducted with such rigorous economy, are so full of culture, talent, and honesty, as to preclude any competition between private business and public service; and for years to come the people at large will receive more than they give,—will be benefited by the government much more than they could benefit themselves, as Lassalle expresses it. Hence there is very much less difference between Bismarck, the statesman, Lassalle, the agitator, and Hegel, the thinker, than the partisan of any or all of them is ready to allow. It is interesting to notice this in those laws that are of special interest to the socialist.

The third article of the German Constitution defines and confers citizenship in so liberal a way as to make the same laws of America look rather ungenerous: every German citizen has in every German State the same privileges as a native, which is not equally true in the United States. The act of November 1, 1867, permits the people to live and settle anywhere within the boundaries of the Empire, to acquire and hold real property, and to engage in any trade whatever. It is well-known that in this country a man always loses certain political privileges for a time, if he merely moves from one ward of a city to another. The act of May 13, 1870, prevents double taxation by regulating the law of domicile in such a way as to domicile any servant of the State where he happens to reside officially, and people without a home at the place where they happen to be present. It is interesting to compare this with the frequent journeys of gentlemen officially in Washington, in cases of national elections. The act of June 1, 1870, compels every State to confer full citizenship, including the right of active and passive election, under conditions the most

liberal, and the same act makes State-citizenship identical with citizenship of the Empire. Hence the mechanics of Germany, and all other classes liable to move from one place to another, retain more political power than they do in the United States. The act of June 7, 1871, makes the owners of railways, factories, and mines responsible for a great many injuries to their employees and customers for which they are not responsible in the United States. The act of November 14, 1867, protects all mortgages to a liberal extent against foreclosure,—an act of incalculable benefit to the large class among the poor who wish to acquire real property. The act of June 21, 1869, protects all wages against attachment, unless actually earned and not called for at the regular day of payment. The act of May 4, 1868, permits any kind of marriage, except between very near relatives. The act of June 21, 1869, in fine, regulates all mechanical trades and professions, always with particular kindness to the poor, the ignorant, and the struggling. This important law, while under discussion, revealed in a striking manner the sentiments of the government, the liberal party, the progressists, and the socialists. The party of progress demanded absolute liberty after the heart of Adam Smith and Ricardo, but was easily shown that a policy of *laissez faire* would surrender all the weak to the pleasure of the strong, and therefore was incompatible with the policy of the Empire, which intended to help all classes alike. The socialists announced a formal war of labor against capital, but were promptly told that their distinction between labor and capital was simply ignorance and self-deception. They complained that modern machinery had enslaved the laborer, but were easily shown that machinery makes labor literally free by performing an enormous amount of work which previously had to be done by force of muscle. They wanted to have a normal working day, but were informed that day-labor had been supplanted by piece-labor, and that their request, consequently, was a return to the irrevocable past. One speaker explained to the socialists the legitimate consequences of their crude theories and the inevitable results of their practical demands. The accumulation of capital and rent was shown to be a moral act, and this moral agency was proved to underlie all trades as much as land is the basis

of farming. Hence war against either labor or capital is a war against moral civilization. Therefore, should a war come such as the socialists wish, the rich will become poor, if their enemies be victorious, and the poor will not become rich, if they are the victors themselves.

The narrow limits of the present article forbid a detailed account of the later acts. It will do itself justice, if it merely points out the various factors which combine, on one side, to make the socialism of Germany a hopeful and important enterprise, and, on the other side, to make its partisan movements all vain and futile.

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