THE SOURCES OF COMMUNISM.

The reports of the social and political disturbance wrought by the Nihilist agitations in Russia are curious reading to those who remember the scene inculcated with which Russian writers and politicians watched the perplexities of other countries over the labor problem in the eventful years between 1848 and 1868. At that time it was their theory that owing to the peculiar land system of Russia, and particularly owing to the institution known as the mir, or village community, which prevented the growth of a proletariat, she would never be troubled by the Red Spectre which was frightening France out of her wits, and was, they believed, destined before long to shake the British Empire to its centre. North Germany was, a very few years ago, supposed to be in the enjoyment of similar immunity, owing to her schools, her military system, and the sober and phlegmatic temperament of the people; but she is now nearly as much alarmed by the spectre as France used to be, and France has reached a repose which may be, after all, only temporary, by wading through torrents of French blood. There is not a statesman in the Western World, in fact, who is not at this moment puzzled and even alarmed by the discontent of that vast body of persons who live by the daily labor of their hands. It has been all but demonstrated that no traditions, or training, or peculiarities of position or government are sufficient to keep the Socialistic devil out. All the "modern improvements" seem to help him. He passes the sea and the mountains with the telegraph and the steam, and makes as much use of the printing-press as either Church or King. He has his newspapers, his tracts and missionaries everywhere, and his vicious roar may be heard all over the Western World from the Urals to the Rocky Mountains. The worst of it is that no means of coming to terms with him has as yet been discovered. He cannot, apparently, be bought off, because after giving him what he wants Society would have nothing left. When the old Sinner, in the 'Lives of the Saints,' sold himself to the old Devil, he always got something for his soul—that is, he was allowed a certain period of enjoyment of certain pleasures before he surrendered himself. But the Red Spectre offers nothing and asks for all. The rich man is called on to strip himself of his riches; the frugal man of his savings; the able man to treat his ability as an incumbrance; and the whole community, as a community, to give up all it loves and glorifies in. Smoking is to be allowed at funerals, and men and women are to mix in the streets. Children are to go to the foundling hospital. Whatever power there is anywhere is to be lodged in the hands of the most stupid and incapecable. The lazy are to lie on their backs and the industrious to get nothing for their industry.

The cause of this extraordinary and widespread outburst of insurrection—so it must be considered—will probably be more thoroughly studied than it has ever been before, now that it is perceived to be an epidemic from which no country or social system is safe, instead of being, as was long thought, a vagary peculiar to France, and it is only from a study of the causes that a remedy will come, if remedy there be. When one makes even a slight examination of the seeds of Socialist doctrine, one is surprised to find how many of them lie in the political and democratic doctrines which have been preached ever since the French Revolution, by progressive people of all classes, mostly with but little thought of where they would lead us. In the first place, the assumption that the numerical majority is all-knowing and ought to be all-powerful, on which all modern democracy rests, makes it difficult or impossible to set a limit on the experiments which the numerical majority may try. It has a right to make mistakes if it pleases, and where outside of it is the standing place to be found for arguments against the expediency of its edicts? Who are you, that you are so much wiser than the rest of the community? Is it a question which the philosopher who argues about "justice," when he has once committed himself to the democratic theory, finds it difficult to answer. In the next place, contentment, which occupied a very high place among the virtues, and was taught in the churches as a Christian virtue for seventeen hundred years, and particularly contentment with one’s station in life and worldly surroundings, has been tacitly repudiated even by social and religious conservsatives. Discontent is now taught in all the schools as a virtue of a very high order. You are not to be satisfied with the station in which you were born or with the work you are doing, unless you are at the head of some large organization, a church, an army, a state, a warehouse, an insurance company, or a railroad.

You are to strive continually for fame and wealth; or, in the language of plain people, for the position of "boss" of some "job." Every boy in Europe and America has now been inducted into the care of his fifth year upwardly. As the demand for "bosses" is, however, very limited, the immense majority are very much disappointed before they reach middle life, and try to find explanations of their failure which will not wound their self-love. The realist one is the rottenness of society, and the richness of the field it offers to trickery and greed.

Thirdly, the modern system of industry brings large bodies of poor laborers in contact with great masses of wealth, and by employing them indoors stimulates the passion for speculation on the causes and incidents of their condition, and on the springs of society in general, which used to be mainly confined to shoemakers. More attractive materials for a demagogue, or a better field for the spread of crude social themes, than the population of a great manufacturing town have never existed. Agriculture, or any muscular employment in the open air, keeps down mental activity and strengthens the love of routine, for much the same reason that it makes a man sleepy in the evening; but working in doors, at trades that call for dexterity rather than strength, seems to give the brain a morbid energy which finds relief in imaginary rearrangements of society.

It must not be forgotten, too, though it perhaps cannot be put down among the direct causes of socialism, that "the achievements of science," in increasing our powers of material production, coupled with the incessant boasting of scientific and philanthropists about what science may yet accomplish in the future, have filled the working-class mind with fantastic dreams as to the possibility of machinery displacing manual labor, and enabling the race to multiply ad libitum without inconvenience. Consequently, when population follows close on the increase of production, as it has done, on the whole, even during the past fifty years, and the poor still continue poor and anxious, they begin to suspect some trick or fraud on the part of the capitalist. They are undoubtedly better off than their grandfathers, but they have still to toil and deny themselves, and see the rich enjoying their wealth in greater numbers than ever. This same agency also conceals from them that great fact of sociology—perhaps the greatest of all—that the earth, however we will with it, will probably never afford much more than a subsistence to the great mass of mankind—that is, plain food and plain clothing. The race, by ceaseless toil and endeavor, throws some of its members up above want or anxiety about daily bread, and gives a few leisure to keep its records and add to the stores of its knowledge, but they are only a handful after all. The notion that by some little device the world can be peopled with what are called "ladies and gentlemen," which is at the bottom of all socialism, springs from an immense delusion about the beneficence of Nature. This notion, too, is stimulated by much of the teaching of the pulpit and press about the perfection of man, which when it becomes current in workshs and mines undergoes curious distortion, and begets a strange impatience. The preacher usually means that one thousand or ten thousand years hence man will be refined, polished, cultivated, at ease in his circumstances, and noble in his high aims, and able to converse with the coarse or police side of government. This dream, which seems so attractive to the student’s library, parades on a very different shape among the real sons of toil. The laborer does not care much whether posterity is "perfect" or not; he wants to have a taste of perfection himself, and is irritated by all attempts to postpone the great consummation. One cannot say, of course, with any certainty how these difficulties will be met, but it may be affirmed with confidence that during the next fifty years the character of instruction and preaching on all social questions will change...
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greatly, though perhaps very gradually, and that considerably less responsibility will be imposed on governments and more on the individual man than during the last fifty years, and that when a human being begins to conduct himself like a wild animal the plea of unhappiness will not be so readily accepted in his defence.

The Senatorial View of the Republican Policy.

During the past two years or more, attention has been frequently called to the failure of the Republican leaders to provide any definite platform or plan of action for their party. They have admitted in numerous speeches and “interviews” that the party’s future was clouded, and that it was desirable that it should “rally” and “unite”; but that it was going to rally against or unite on was not explained. Some of the most prominent Republicans are agreed that the President’s policy is not a success; that it has broken up the party for the time being; that civil-service reform will never do; and that “conciliation” means a base surrender to the Solid South. They are agreed, too, that the Democrats are just as bad as ever, and that no third party has any chance in the present state of politics. They have, moreover, announced on many occasions that they have plans of their own for reuniting the party and leading it on to victory; but hitherto they have refrained from communicating the exact nature of these to the public, taking apparently, that in politics confidence is not a plant of slow growth, and that they have only to let their new platform be known to have the party at their backs in full force again. From recent indications, however, it seems that they have at length determined to throw aside all reserve and unfold their designs. The last number of the North American Review contains two articles by leading Republican Senators, giving a sketch of the present position and future policy of the party. These articles are all the more valuable because they have been drawn out by an attack of Mr. Julian’s, in a preceding number of the Review, in which he described the party as being engaged in a “death-struggle.” Mr. Julian’s attitude towards the party is needless to say, is critical and despondent.

The reply to this article, the author of which belongs to the class variously known as “idealists,” “doctrinaires,” or “dyspeptics,” as their discontent is believed by the political class to spring from the head, the heart, or the stomach, naturally divides itself into two parts—the first a refutation of the charge that the Republican party is in “its death-struggle,” a task undertaken by Senator Howe; the second a description of the new platform now in process of construction by its leaders, this being the work of Senator Angus Cameron. Mr. Howe, as those know who have read his late speeches on Mr. Schurz, is a master of irony and satire, and nothing can be better than the ingenious turn by which he produces at the outset, on his reader’s mind, the impression that it is not the Republican party but himself and Mr. Julian who are engaged in a death-struggle. Mr. Howe goes into an examination of the history of the Republican party and brings it down to the adoption of the new Constitutional Amendments. Down to this point he considers Mr. Julian’s course consistent and patriotic; but after the adoption of the Amendments he shows that Mr. Julian deserted the party and is now a traitor. He is a traitor because the work of the party is not yet done. He says it is; but Mr. Howe points out that it is not; because, though the Amendments have been adopted, the Democrats are not in sympathy with them, and will not protect the negro if they come into power. We have examined this part of his argument with a good deal of care, because it is here that the dispute seems to hang, and we have looked to see what the Senator thinks the Republican party can now do for the negro. It must not be supposed that he has not examined this subject carefully. He has found something in the way of protection for which the Republican party is needed. The Constitution provides that State and United States officers “shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support” the Constitution, and it may be inferred that if they do not take the oath, they will not carry out its provisions for the protection of the negro. But what, he says, if the Democrats come in, and the oath is not taken? Who is to see that it is taken properly? Who is to administer it?

But Mr. Howe’s main business is with Mr. Julian’s treason. To the statesman treason is always a fascinating subject. If the political speeches of the last twelve years could be examined for the purpose the public would be surprised at the number and variety of traitors this country now contains. But Mr. Julian goes beyond them all. Language fails for a description of them, and Mr. Howe is obliged to invent an epithet and set him down as “politically a unique,” and what sort of a person a “unique” is may be guessed from Mr. Julian’s reckless behavior about the New York Custom-House. We have often observed that this institution is a sort of political touchstone. When a man, after hearing for years of the abuses that go on within its walls, walks up to it, looks calmly over, and, after an examination of its manner of working and some of its staple products, turns round and enquires quietly what there is to complain of, he may be set down as a true man; but if he gets excited over it and denounces it, it is safe to assume that he is meditating some sort of treason. Now, Mr. Julian allowed himself to indulge in language concerning the New York Custom-House which we should not think of repeating, but which was, to say the least, strong, and he suggested that investigation into its operations was “good for whitewash.” Now, says Mr. Howe, Buckingham, of Connecticut, was the head of the investigating committee, and if Mr. Julian accuses him of having concealed official guilt, “he has nothing to fear for this world, for Mr. Buckingham is no longer living; and hereafter he will be tolerably safe too, for after such slander there will be little chance of any meeting between the two in the next world—an insinuation which leads us to infer that Mr. Howe takes the same view of Mr. Julian’s prospects hereafter as that taken by the clergyman in the story, who, on being asked where so-and-so was, replied, “If he were dead I could tell you.” There are things in recent politics which Mr. Howe confesses an inability to deal with. The Cincinnati movement of 1872 is one of these. “We are,” he says, “too near that event. We cannot outline it. We do not appreciate it. We are dazzed by the din and glamour of the great pretense.” “But,” he thoughtfully adds, “History will laugh.”

Like Mr. Howe, Mr. Angus Cameron begins his article with one or two propositions calculated to carry the reader with him. It is in politics, he says, as it is in nature—“there is action and reaction” there is cobb and flow. Not even a Democrat can deny this, and yet it is pregnant with meaning. Mr. Cameron having established this as the basis of his argument, gives an instance of “cobb and flow” in the alternations of the light of noon-day with the darkness of the eclipse. Mr. Cameron is fond of metaphor. He declares that he is not alarmed at the discussions in the Republican party; that these are “the more flotsam and jetsam thrown up by the soft-moving Gulf-Stream of Republican Destiny”; the people, he goes on, are ruled here; “leaders are no longer necessary.” “Men die,” he continues, “or fall out of line, or desert to the enemy”; but it is all one with the people; “no ambition sways them, no reverses discourage them;” the only man fit to be the “ruler” of a republic is he who has “no policy of his own.” Charles I. tried having a policy, but his attempt is only noteworthy as a “startling illustration of the tragic element that lies hidden behind the mask of the ludicrous.” Calhoun, it seems, tried it too.

No one can doubt, Mr. Cameron continues, that the Republican party has been the party of progress. It has freed the slaves—and with what result? Only this: a Solid South—a war-charriot armed with disciplined and exultant soldiers, without which the party would be a feeble faction, a moral night-scarcener’s cart, laden with the ostracisms of Tipperary civilization. He does not say that the South should not rule solely because its leaders were traitors. That he considers a sufficient reason, for “magnanimity becomes imbecility; manly forgiveness becomes cununical sentimentality; Shaksper becomes a Tupper, when it is contended that condonation of treason involves the rule of the traitor.”

Having disposed of this branch of his subject, Mr. Cameron ap-
proaches his second division, and asks, "Can the leopard change his spots?" To this he replies with considerable force that "the negative of this question would seem to be supported by the greater weight of human testimony"; and if the leopard cannot, can the Democrat or Southerner? He then proceeds to "call up in review one or two only out of scores of important issues still undecided," to see whether the correct decision is more likely to be reached by Democrats or Republicans. The first of these is civil-service reform. This, he shows, was invented by some "literary men," though he does not specify whom. He makes short work of their hollow pretenses by a novel argument. "Every inventor," he says, even of a mouse-trap, can secure protection for his mechanical skill in almost every civilized country. Yet Longfellow and Emerson "cannot protect their productions one mile beyond the limits of the country." Are men of this sort fit to deal with practical questions of administration? "Do the literary class marvel that national legislators do not pay a swift homage to their political suggestions?"

Having thus disposed of civil-service reform, he shows that the question of the national debt can only be dealt with by the Republican party, because the Democrats do not mean to pay it; that, if not repudiated directly, the South means to repudiate by bankrupting the Treasury by means of Southern claims, and so on. But this part of the article is not new; it was to be met with in most of the campaign speeches summer before last. We have turned over with interest the pages of Mr. Cameron's article to see what he has to propose for the future. He certainly does provide a new platform, and it is this: The Republican party, he says, "will endure just as long as it worthily represents the principles of Progress." What are these principles? The reader may be inclined to ask. Do they involve States rights or Federal centralization, free-trade or protection, direct or indirect taxation, anti-sectarian or sectarian education? On these matters Mr. Cameron maintains a strict silence. "The Principle of Progress," he says, "or, to use the newer word, Evolution," is what we want. So long as we stick to that, and so long as we are "confronted by an organization hostile to every phase of human development, whether in the individual or the state or the nation; an organization whose ideal leader is a political Columbus with his eyes in the back of his head—selling American waters under the American flag, but ever seeking with a longing unappeasable for a southwest passage to the lost but loved Laurentian seas of our antediluvian world," we are safe. Henry Wilson "could see no reason why the Republican party should not endure a thousand years," and Mr. Cameron says that he thinks "the Vice-President was right." We have endeavored not to exaggerate or misrepresent Mr. Howe or Mr. Cameron. "Progress and Evolution" may strike "dyspeptics" as a rather vague party cry; it is less definite even than the bloody shirt; but it has the advantage of being comprehensive, and the man who can say he is opposed to both Progress and Evolution in the coming campaign can be only fit to be led by a political Columbus with his eyes in the back part of his head.

PROFESSOR JOSEPH HENRY.

If Mr. Galton's researches on hereditary genius were supplemented by equally careful ones on cases of genius which appeared to be entirely sporadic, we might find an exhibit yet more striking than that which he presented us. It is certainly worthy of note that the man who, during the present generation, has exerted the most enduring and widespread influence upon the progress of American science, is not known to have had a blood relation of intellectual prominence. His ancestry is unknown, and his parentage offers no features of interest. Even the year of his birth is in doubt—some authorities placing it in 1797, and others in 1799 or even later. His father died when the son was still very young, and his mother before he grew up. A parish library supplied him with boyish reading, and his earlier tastes were in the direction of romance and the dramas. He was nearly grown when the accidental possession of a copy of Robinson's 'Mechanical Philosophy' turned his thoughts towards natural philosophy and led him to seek a scientific education at the Albany Academy. Here he made himself so good a name as to be taken into the family of the Patrons in the capacity of private tutor. Failing physical health led to his spending a year as a civil engineer in the western part of the State. He returned home with a robust constitution, which never failed him throughout his long life. He declined further lucrative employment in the same capacity to accept the more congenial position of a professorship at the Albany Academy.

It was while a professor at Albany that he commenced the brilliant series of researches in electricity on which his purely scientific reputation principally rests, and which culminated in the discovery of the principles of the Morse telegraph. If we compare the poverty of his apparatus and the poverty of his means for research and publication with the importance of the results which he reached, we may acknowledge science by the name of Faidley as an experimentalist. He became the sole discoverer of one of the most singular forms of electrical induction, and was among the first, perhaps the very first, to see clearly the laws which connected the transmission of electricity with the power of the battery employed. One of the problems to which he devoted himself was that of producing mechanical effects at a great distance by the aid of an electro-magnet and a conducting wire. The horse-shoe electro-magnet, formed by winding copper wire around a bar of iron bent into the form of a U, had been known before his time, and it was also known that by increasing the number of coils of wire greater force could be given to the magnet if the latter were near the battery. But when it was removed to a distance the current was cut off, and it was only a short time before he showed that the idea of using the electro-magnet for telegraphic purposes seemed hopeless. Henry's experiments were directed toward determining the laws of electro-motive force from which this diminution of power resulted, and led to the discovery of a relation between the number of coils of wire round the electro-magnet and the construction of the battery to work it. He showed that the very same amount of acid and zinc arranged in one way would produce entirely different effects when arranged in another, and that by increasing the number of cells in the battery there was no limit to the distance at which its effects might be felt. It only remained for some one to invent an instrument by which these effects should be made to register in an intelligible manner, to complete the electro-magnetic telegraph, and this was done by Morse. Henry himself considered the work of an inventor as wholly distinct from that of a scientific investigator, and would not protect the application of his discoveries, nor even engage in the work of maturing such applications. He never sought to detract from Morse's merits as the inventor of the magneto-electric telegraph, but did on one occasion, under legal process, give a history of the subject which was not favorable to Morse's claim to the exclusive use of the electro-magnet for telegraphic purposes. Some feeling was thus excited; but Henry took no other part in the controversy than to ask an investigation of some charges against himself contained in an article of Morse's.

In 1852 Professor Henry was tendered the chair of Natural Philosophy in Princeton College, a promotion which he accepted with great dilation. The change was accompanied with a great increase in the means of conducting his researches in this country, a large and appreciative circle of listeners, large additions to his supply of apparatus, and a scientific society glad to publish his researches. Heretofore his publications were mostly confined to papers in Silliman's Journal. The Transactions of the American Philosophical Society now afforded him room for much more extended memoirs, and enabled him very soon to acquire a European reputation.

In 1857 he visited Europe and made the acquaintance of Faraday, Wheatstone, Bailey, and other eminent physicists, discussing with Wheatstone their projects for an electric telegraph. He returned to his lectures with the zest and vigor acquired by this exchange of views with men of like pursuits with himself, and held his place as the foremost of American scientific teachers until 1864, when he was called to an entirely different sphere of activity.

Ten years before, Congress had accepted by a solemn act the curious bequest of James Smithson, made to the United States in trust. "to found at Washington an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." The will gave no indications whatever as to the details of the proposed establishment, and long consideration was therefore necessary before the Government could decide upon its organization. It was not until 1846 that a definite plan of organization was established by law. When this was done, Professor Henry was at once looked upon as pre-eminentely the man to be the principal executive officer of the Institution. He accepted the position with "reluctance, fear, and trembling," upon the urgent solicitation of Professor Bache. To describe what he did during the thirty years of his connection with it would be to write the history of the Institution. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to some
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