

LEWIS HENRY MORGAN, AUTHOR
OF "ANCIENT SOCIETY"

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to the social conditions of existence among primitive men.

Morgan was among the first to scientifically penetrate into the social status of man in the stages preceding the patriarchal system which, in conformity with Hebrew tradition, most earlier writers, even the learned Sir Henry Maine ("Ancient Law," Chap. 5.) had considered to be the dawn of society.

In 1877, Morgan gave to the world the result of forty years study in his chief literary work, "Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization." The book is divided into four parts. In the first Morgan shows that the basis of all human progress lies in the discovery or invention of artificial aids to existence in the form of implements and technical processes, and that these processes lead to new methods of living, generating new needs and producing a gradual increase in man's knowledge of and control over natural forces.

The author divides the evolution of mankind into seven stages, each marked off by outstanding discoveries. Thus the lowest or first stage in the period of savagery commences with man, hardly differentiated from the rest of the anthropoid stock, existing as a tropical tree-dweller and consuming raw roots, fruits, and small animals. During this period the first simple form of language was developed and rude tools of stone, shell, bone and similar materials began to be used.

Then came the making of fires, which made cooking possible and raised man to the second stage of Savagery. Fishing was now adopted and by encouraging migrations along river banks and coasts assisted in the dispersal of the race over the continents. The invention of the bow and arrow ushers in the third stage, in which the savage was equipped for the hunting of large game.

With the art of making pottery the period of Barbarism begins. In its first stage crude picture-writing and probably weaving were evolved. Primitive agriculture commenced towards the close of this period. Then with the domestication of cattle, sheep, and other hoofed animals in the Eastern Hemisphere and the improvement of agriculture in Central and South America, the middle stage of Barbarism would be reached. This period, in its use of the softer metals, corresponds with the Bronze Age of the archaeologists.

The upper status of Barbarism was reached only in the Eastern Hemisphere when iron smelting was achieved. This great discovery, which placed in man's hands the means of procuring tools of great hardness and durability, gave an unprecedented impetus to agriculture and other forms of production. The invention of alphabetic writing closed the epoch of Barbarism and ushered in the era of written history—of Civilization.

Morgan's orderly classification of the cultural history of mankind was a marked advance upon all previous attempts. It is still, over fifty years after its formulation, recognized as the most adequate and useful of the

Capitalism and Counter-Revolution

A Series of Six Articles.

This series of articles by Walton Newbould are taken from a pamphlet published by the Workers' Socialist Federation, 400 Old Ford Road, London, E3. Price 3d. (Editor, "The Indicator.")

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD.

This pamphlet is largely a reprint of four articles which appeared in the "Workers' Dreadnought" in the Autumn of 1918, and which were written about six weeks prior to the German Revolution and the signing of the Armistice. Hence, a number of the references may appear to be out of date; others may make clearer the reasons for the failure of the Spartacus movement to bring off their counterpart of the November Revolution in Russia. The purpose of the compilation of the four articles, together with a lengthy addendum, as a pamphlet is to give permanence and further publicity to a Marxist examination of certain important issues of immediate and practical significance that have been given all too little attention by the revolutionary elements in this country.

London, June, 1919. J. T. W. N.

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IN the last article I pointed out how the Socialist Movement of this country and of America could be shown to have grown up as a consequence of certain material factors in the development of the capitalist system. The periods of its growth were three. The first was that of the "eighties," the second lasted from 1903 to 1909-10, and the third synchronized with the war. On all three occasions, and in both countries, its expansion was the result of the discontent of those who most severely felt the pressure of dilution, and who did not at the same time feel any confidence in imperialism or improvement within the existing economic and political order. The Socialist Movement is essentially middle class in its leadership and outlook, because—oh, irony of ironies!—the idealists who so largely compose it are impelled by the hard material facts of their social environment. The working class, as a class, seems to be benefiting very greatly from the activities of syndicated capitalism and of imperialism. It is being kept continuously employed and fed with its own tail, as well as with the surplus and a considerable part of the capital, or accumulated past surpluses, of the middle class. This, of course, is most distressing to the members of the middle class, and some of them are virtuously and indignantly convinced that it is a most immoral procedure thus to relieve them of stolen property. Perhaps it is, but it is not the kind of felony that should cause Socialists to cry "Stop thief!"

The working class—the proletariat—has been created by means of a continuous process of wearing away the past property of its present members. It is the product of developing and developed Capitalism—as

many schemes which have been evolved (see article "Civilization," Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition.)

To Socialists, Morgan's classification is especially of interest inasmuch as it is based upon the principle that "the great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence" ("Ancient Society," p 19,) a thesis fundamentally identical with the Materialist Conception of History of Marx and Engels. R. W. HOUSLEY.

well, of course, as of "Primitive Accumulation." Whenever the wearing process takes place on a considerable scale "unrest" becomes visible. Sometimes it is seen as Radicalism, as Chartism, as "Rebecca," even as Fabianism. It is the workers and others, who are dispossessed and degraded from their former rights and customs, whose blind eyes are opened to behold visions and who dream dreams. They nurse their old wrongs. They are slow to develop new sympathies. So, the Irish may make good rebels against the oppressors of Ireland, but they have seldom been a source of strength to the Labor Movement into which they have been injected. Many agricultural workers indeed have done so much better—or so it seemed to them—in industry than on the land that they have been bulwarks of reaction from the first. It was the diluting elements in industry whose demand for cheap corn ruined Chartism almost from the first. A great blow to the status of some section of the workers may produce a state of unrest such as the late D. A. Thomas engendered in the Rhondda. But a speedy recovery of wages owing to expanding trade has blotted out all apparent—though not all actual—memory of the crisis, as was bound to be the case where the workers had had a long continued experience of a poor standard of life and freedom. As often as the capitalist system can absorb the elements which it unsettles and degrades and can give to these an apparent freedom and status equal to that which they have immediately lost, it will not be threatened by the ever-increasing army of the working class. Hitherto it has been in a position to do this—if not at once, then before any great length of time has elapsed.

For three-quarters of a century, British Capitalism has required to find an ever-widening outlet for its surplus of products, and it has only been able to keep its workers in remunerative employment when it could unload advantageously on the world market what these workers could not buy back for themselves. This it accomplished successfully until about a generation ago, when the products of short or long date British loans began to come home in too great abundance. This disturbance could be represented as the work of the wicked foreigner. The mystery was hidden, or deliberately concealed, from the workers' wondering gaze. The State, amazing metamorphosis of the corporate propertied class, came forward and "made" work—building battleships. It could not tax the workers—unless it dressed them better so as the better to "pluck" them—so it had to "skin" the rest of the middle class. So—to mix the metaphors—the bourgeois dogs have been eating dog for the last generation.

Apart from the killing and maiming process, the war has been, like the years preceding it, a most favorable time for the working class. If one industry shut down another was ready to absorb the workers in ever-increasing hordes. Capitalism, has discovered the magic wand enabling it to sell commodities faster than they were produced, and to keep on doing it. The means of payment have been ideal, for everything has been abundant—except necessities and lux-

uries—including "the rare and refreshing fruit." Capitalism has had to borrow in order to lend to the workers—who could not eat shells. But the workers fondly imagine that they have been paid for services rendered. The situation is going to be delightful when these loans come to be honored.

But let us turn from this interesting prospect of the future, before we go too far, to examine another factor which is all too often overlooked and which has had much to do with causing the workers to remain content with this, the best of all (capitalist) worlds.

During the stormy years of social and political upheaval that followed the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, the workers found that they had been used and then abandoned by their allies. The governing class and the would-be governing class of this country—i.e., those who controlled the State, and those who, as yet, only controlled Parliament—also discovered that it was a great mistake to trust to the truncheon to keep the people quiet. Like Peel, when he reformed the Penal Code, they had learned the lesson of Liberalism, and they resolved to be kind only to be cruel. From several standpoints they began to chant "Education," taking care that the people did not hear too often the remainder of the sentence: "is the best form of police." For thirty years the two parties in "society," the one in and the other entering the State, quarrelled over the kind of education to be given to the workers. After the Second Reform Bill the matter became urgent, and 1870 saw the advance of the capitalist Liberals, bearing the workers the grateful gift of the three Rs. When the workers became Socialistically inclined, they were rewarded with a system made both compulsory and free. When their C3 physique showed them unfit for defending an AI Empire, the idealists were allowed to feed and medically inspect the children who would be wage workers.

Only those who have been through or have carefully studied the "dope" factory of the elementary education system can realize that a 6d. share in it is worth even more than £14 10s. to the capitalist class.

The workers of Britain have been educated, unlike the hapless workers of Russia, to think with the thoughts of their masters. They have been taught enough to "write to John Bull about it" and to read Beaverbrook's Daily Express, and to work out the arithmetical calculations of the racing newspapers.

Their literature, their music, their geography, their history, their religious instruction, as taught in the schools, are soaked in capitalist ideology. Out of school new agencies await to educate them. Grown to manhood they meet the "impartial" educationists of Owen's College, Firth College, Armstrong College, Lady Margaret's College, etc., coming to guide them in the ways where they will learn to be "good citizens" of the State, which is fast becoming as much an engine of social, moral, and intellectual despotism as the Holy Catholic Church was at the close of the Feudal Age.

(To Be Continued.)