

# Christmas Cogitations

**A**TTER his recent return from Europe, Judge Gary, of the U. S. Steel Corporation, stated that what the world needs most is full reliance on the Bible; and others in similar life stations have also made like remarks. Inasmuch as the Judge's own workers are still waging a class war against him, for the 8 instead of the 12-hour day, and that the undersigned had the privilege of subscribing to their Canadian appeal for fighting funds, we feel justified in retorting Christ's words against this transatlantic Holy Willie: "Physician, heal thyself!"

Yes, Judge, the Bible does carry messages of peace and hope, but not those you and your kind had in view. They are messages, too, that require deciphering, because they lie below the surface of the printed word. In short, what a German 19th century philosopher discovered and put into scientific form, was, as the Bible shows, intuitively known from the time of Genesis up to Christ and beyond that again.

The philosopher was Hegel, and his discovery was the law of the Negation of the Negation. It sounds like a nonsensical, childish jingle, but that's not surprising seeing that the law presents a paradox—a word meaning something which is apparently absurd, yet, on deeper scrutiny, is found to be entirely true. It is paradoxical to say that if something takes the place of another thing, not only is the first thing not thereby destroyed, but it is actually increased and developed. One example must suffice—a wheat seed, if sowed, becomes (or is "negated" by) the plant; the latter again becomes negated by, not one, but many seeds, several of which may be of superior quality as compared with the original seed they sprang from—which is how the various improved kinds of wheat were made possible. The progression, it will be noted, is not in a circle; because as the common saying has it, going around "in a (vicious) circle" (or cycle) gets us nowhere. So the better description is that the law works out in spiral form, because that means a circular development which ends, however, at a higher and different point from what it began.

Now we find, but in the crude circular conception, a hint of Hegel's law in Genesis 3:19, for there it states that man was made of dust and will therefore again become dust. So much, meantime, for Genesis; and now for Jesus. Although April, May, March, October and January were each at one time claimed as Christ's natal month, and celebrations were also held in June for centuries past, Christmas has been held in December. And so, while the Christian world rejoices over their Savior's birthday, it seems not inappropriate that we Socialists should reveal him as having been a thoroughgoing Hegelian thinker or dialectician.

As Engels remarks, nature herself proves and provides us with the evolutionary or dialectical method of reasoning. Hence, mankind's highly observant and thoughtful geniuses were bound, in an intuitive way, to have hit upon what is now part of scientific Socialist doctrine and principles. Therefore, Christ's paradoxically striking remark—Matthew 21:12—that whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. Doubtless he had often noticed, as we do to-day, that when a person gets too chesty, he is simply preparing himself for a rude awakening—"Pride goeth before a fall." Put into the three-phase Hegelian "negation" form, in which the second phase negates the first, and the third phase negates, or is the negation of the negation, of that starting point; Christ's remark may be thus stated: 1st, normal behavior; 2nd, humble behavior; 3rd, promotion to superior sphere of activity. The opposite conduct to the foregoing, he says, ends in degradation and contempt, because the individual in his progression increases (instead of counteracting) his first attitude.

Take another still more remarkable saying of Christ's: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it;

but whosoever shall lose his life . . . the same shall save it"—Mark 8:35. In Hegelian three-phase form we have this: 1st, if normal self-regard is (2nd) cancelled by below normal self-regard; then 3rd, there results an enormous gain in individual (or social) advantages.

Although containing a certain amount of truth it cannot be sweepingly asserted, as Nietzsche does, that such doctrines are only suitable for the cowardly, the weak-willed and for slaves; because they are exactly the principles revolutionary Russia is now practising. As Trotsky recently said in his interview with the American Senator King (Clarion, Nov. 16), "The New Economic Policy is an absolute necessity for the 90,000,000 of our peasants. If we had in mind to break our own heads, then we should indeed abandon this policy. It is, therefore, quite unnecessary for us to issue formal assurance and manifestoes in order to prove the stability of the New Economic Policy. The very conditions of our internal life assure the absolute stability of the New Economic Policy." This means Russia temporarily and deliberately "lost" full-fledged Communism, because she knew that was the means, and the only means, of later on gaining far more than she is now losing.

As further proof of the truth of Christ's dialectical reasoning, take DeLeon's comparison between the Revolutionist and the Reformer, in which he points out that the revolutionist knows that discipline is essential for success, and that the word "obedience" is not found in the language of any people in the savage stage of development. He shows that the revolutionist doesn't practice anarchistic individualism because he realizes he must sink or "lose" his personality in order to "gain" results. "Hence," argues De Leon, "the cry of 'Bossism!' is as absent from the revolutionist's lips as it is a feature on those of the reformer."

When we turn to Christ's irrepressible, indomitable and executive "business man," Paul, we see that he was likewise an early Hegelian follower; for he distinctly tells us—I. Corinthian, 15:36,37—that what is sown only becomes alive after it has first become dead; and that what we sow is not the completed form, but "bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain." Stated in three-phase "negation of negation" language, Paul's ideas progress thus: Seed-life; seed-death; root-life. His object, of course, is to lead up to and prove the soundness of his dialectical progression in the 43rd verse and following, viz., that the corruptible body is first sown in dishonor and weakness, it then dies, and is finally again raised in power: incorruptible immortal spirit and glory. The writer neither feels compelled nor competent to contradict Paul's conclusions as to afterlife conditions; but would enter a protest against the idea that dishonor and weakness necessarily accompany the act of procreation.

It should be remembered, however, that Paul, in I. Cor. 7:1, 7 and 8, reveals himself as being a chronic bachelor; and his personal opinions were largely responsible for the later beliefs that women, as well as certain natural functions, are unclean. This led to the religious celibate life with all its attendant evils.

But, as a good counterblast to Paul's attitude, one should turn to Act I of Shakespeare's play, "All's Well that Ends Well," especially as it provides a magnificent example of the Hegelian dialectic, although the language reminds us that, in Elizabethan days, even fine ladies and gentlemen were permitted a freedom of expression that is not now tolerated; for Helen, the heroine, and a man called Parolles, are "joshing" one another on the subject of virginity. "Loss of virginity," says Parolles, "is rational increase; and there was never virgin got till virginity was first lost. That you were made of, is metal to make virgins. Virginity, by being once lost, may be ten times found; by being ever kept, it is ever lost: 'tis too cold a companion; away with't! . . . Keep it not; you cannot choose but lose by't: out

with't! within ten years it will make itself ten, which is a goodly increase; and the principal itself not much worse: away with't!"

As two more examples of the unscientific "circle" conception of the dialectic, first we have that stoic philosopher who lived in the first century A.D.—Epictetus—asking, "What is death? A bugbear. Turn it 'round; examine it: see, it does not bite. Now or later that which is body must be parted from that which is spirit, as formerly it was parted. Why, then, hast thou indignation if it be now? for if it be not now, it will be later. And wherefore? That the cycle of the world may be fulfilled; for it hath need of a present and of a future and of a past."

Then there is the German poet-philosopher, Goethe, who says that "By eternal laws of iron ruled, must all fulfil the cycle of their destiny."

That, as many maintain, Christ was a Socialist, is, from the standpoint of Socialist theory and industrial development, an absurdity. But he certainly gave both physical and mental proofs of his class-war attitude towards the rich. That he was an instinctive Hegelian reasoner, we have tried to show, and the value of that point consists in another Biblical application of the "negation of negation" dialectic to both society and government; for which it is necessary to return to Genesis.

The Hebrew myth of the Garden of Eden and of the man who was placed therein "to dress and to keep it" really refers to a stage of human development called Primitive Communism, which existed before later economic conditions had torn society into master and slave classes with all their accompanying horrors and strife, during which mankind must longingly have cast back their glances to the ideal peacefulness of the garden paradise. Because, like the herding horses, flocking birds, etc., mankind, imbued with ordinary horse commonsense, realized at the very start of their career that if they did not socially hang together they would certainly hang separately. Hence, both their society and government were run upon a communist basis.

Now, by virtue of the Hegelian dialectic, we know that we are destined to return (but on a higher scale) to the point of economic development we started from. That means that we are headed and are meant to head for, Modern Communism!

For that reason we venture to prophesy that men with Christ's and Paul's mental fairness and keenness, and qualities of heart, if living to-day, would be among the first to arrive at a logical conclusion by becoming Marxian Socialists.

High over all, like a colossus above us pigmy humans, wrapping, permeating and directing the mass movements of mankind, the Negation of Negation principle dominates everything as a natural law to which we are as much compelled to submit as was the powerful Capitalist civilization of Japan to the recent earthquake visitation. The only way we can use and become the master of it or of any other natural law, is by learning its character and obeying it.

This much at least may be said, that what, with greater or less clearness, was perceived by the writer in Genesis, by Christ, Paul, Epictetus, Shakespeare, Goethe and numbers of other gifted and noble thinkers, is well worthy of the attention of those for whom these others lived, thought, wrote and died. And the spirit of each one's labors points unerringly towards—COMMUNISM!

A word, then, to all Christians and Christmas celebrators. Start the coming New Year right by studying, in detail, the Hegelian dialectic for themselves. For that purpose procure, as advertised on the back page of this journal, "Engels' works, 'The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science,' and his 'Landmarks of Scientific Socialism.'" And so we conclude with sincerest wishes for Happiness and the Compliments of the Season to all "Clarion" readers!

—PROGRESS.