

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

THE discussion that has received so much attention in the columns of the Clarion relative to an article eulogizing the Labor government by Taylor, has somewhat found another admirer in "C," who quotes Marx and Engels in true Kautskian style, to substantiate the Labor government's Bourgeois policy. "C's" article on the "Theoretical Aspects of Social Reform" is only an evasion of the three criticisms, and he assumes a position and starts his whole argument on a basis upon which none of the three criticisms presented, which is a trick only becoming to the reptile journalists. But since the gauntlet has been thrown down to us "Three Musketeers," I must, as one of them, take issue with "C" as he is as much in that hopeless rut on revolutions as our friend Taylor is on History.

"C" tells us that he "was moved to reflection on these lines on reading three criticisms of G. R. Stirling Taylor's article on the 'Importance of History.'" "To me," "C" continues, "it was as plain as a pike staff that Taylor was looking to the future of social change in Great Britain. He was simply declaring for constitutional procedures as against the violence of civil war for bringing on revolutionary social changes, and to that end he was urging a study of history so that those who are fighting the battles of labor might do so more efficiently." In other words, "C's" statement resolves itself into this, that if the workers acquired a comprehensive knowledge of history, Socialism could be accomplished by the rapid evolution of Capitalism, instead of by Revolution. Now this peculiar philistine, petty Bourgeois conception is today identified with all the leading social patriots and lackeys, of the Bourgeoisie and is very consoling for the proletariat. "But," says Feuerbach, "whoever consoles a slave instead of inciting him to revolt against slavery, renders services to the slave holder." If our comrade "C" wants to study history with our friend Taylor and H. G. Wells, who after perusing through volumes on history, comes to the conclusion that they want to trim Marx's beard, why all I can say to "C" is, that so much the pity for him, it is not Marx's beard they want to trim but his punch, and like all the rest of the philistines, they sap all the revolutionary strength from history and console the Proletariat with reconciliation of classes, and transform history into a pious doctrine of peace. Our comrade "C" unfortunately falls into the same line of reasoning only in a much more hypocritical manner. He tries to justify Taylor's Tory-Democratic illusions with quotations from Marx. It is pure unadulterated eclecticism and is contrary to the dialectical reasoning of Marx, Engels, and Dietzgen.

"C's" quotation from Engels' preface to Marx's Capital, wherein Engels says that at least in Europe, England is the only country where the inevitable social revolution might be effected entirely by peaceful and legal means. But "C's" cobwebs forbid him to add that it is just as feasible and logical that a social revolution might not come through peaceful channels. What then, "C"? Shall we continue to study history for a peaceful solution?

In order to approach this question from a Marxian or a Dialectical viewpoint, we must state that under certain conditions a peaceful solution can be possible, and again under different conditions it is not possible for a peaceful solution. "C" must state those conditions if he wants to give us a correct analogy for the capture of political power. If we should follow this particular question to its logical conclusion, we could say that if England is the country where a peaceful solution might be effected, then it necessarily follows that in any other European countries it must be a violent one. If one seriously attempted to give a socialist viewpoint of this question, he must first ask if the English government will in the future, as it has not in the past, allow its subjected and colonial peoples free and unhampered access to all the avenues of election and propaganda in peaceful as well as in revolutionary

situations, and will sit by with its army and navy and the rest of its governmental institutions and allow the English proletariat to seize power and introduce socialist economic measures such as socialization and distribution of the means of wealth production without resistance, why then, "C", it is quite possible. But if, on the contrary, "C," the English capitalists take recourse to those same despotic methods on the English workers as they have in the past with the Irish and its oppressed colonial peoples for emancipation from British Imperialism, then it is quite safe to say the English proletariat will be compelled to fight a violent civil war for a seizure of power. Whoever fails to take cognizance of these facts in his analysis of this remote, but inevitable situation, is hopelessly lost.

The whole trouble with "C" is, he condemns the application of violence in all forms as a political measure for a seizure of state power because he takes isolated and individual cases where freaks and coup d'etat artists, who see the revolution around the corner when the objective and subjective conditions for such methods are politically immature and would only result in a heroic defeat. It is like condemning Marxism for its Bernsteins, Kautskys, Spargos, and Hillquits, et al., who have written books galore in an endeavor to reconcile his teachings with their opportunism.

In conclusion I must again quote from "C's" article, wherein he, with rose colored phraseology justifies reformism; "Now as to the present labor of Great Britain or of anywhere else, what would have been Marx's attitude towards it? Anything like that of our three Musketeers who are after its destruction? I am sure not! In my opinion, Marx's efforts in the practical affairs of the working class movement of his time were devoted to the immediate end of getting the working class into a field of political strife as a unit, even though they were not 'Marxists.'" Sure that that strife and positions gained were an important and indispensable phase of their education and development. Marx knew that a new social class with its growing consciousness would begin the creation of its institutions, for furthering its desires; and that institutions are flexible, expanding with the developing consciousness and ambitions of the class. He would not seek to destroy them or sabotage them, but rather seek to assist the class in its development, realizing that its institutions would in turn reflect it's progress. Marx, as a 'Darwinian,' knew that the days of miracles are gone and that procreation, nurture, birth and growth to maturity are inescapable phases of life in this world."

Now this line of reasoning is quite correct on the surface of things, but to one who has not assimilated the teachings of Marx, it presents an omission which takes away the essential core of a revolutionary socialist position on immediate demands and social reform. It is a fact common to anyone who has taken Marx's economic teachings seriously, that he always demanded that the workers fight for a raise in wages, or to resist the encroachments on the part of the capitalists to reduce wages, by the workers clubbing together in trade unions, but he never failed to point out that these trade unions were only fighting effects, and not causes, and consequently were not curing the malady, or as he more brilliantly put it, as palliatives.

This is the basis upon which I criticized the reformism of the Labor Government of Great Britain. It is not my intention, as "C" says, "to destroy the Labor Government," but to assist with all my power in transforming this historical event of the advent of the Labor Government to office, into revolutionary channels. Not to stand by and eulogize the Labor Government like our friend Taylor, nor to concoct quotations from Marx, justifying the hypocritical Bourgeois policies of the Labor Government, but to educate the working class whose minds are not independent from the economic and political circumstances of the Bourgeois environment. The proletariat is tied up with this environment by a

thousand and one threads, which in the course of generations have concocted and spun veritable cobwebs of Bourgeois illusions and prejudices in their heads and as a result, hinder the manifestations of their class interests which will not be removed until the whole superstructure of the capitalist system will collapse and shatter these old cobwebs in its fall. These illusions on private property, the family, state, law, democracy, free trade, religion and the nation and colonial peoples are still dominating the minds of the workers, in England and the rest of the world, but I am deeply convinced that the workers of England as well as of the world will overcome all these illusions and will fulfil their historic mission. So in summing up, we can come to the conclusion that if Marx were alive today and were to express his opinion on the Labor Governments with his powerful pen, he would again say "I sowed dragon's teeth and reaped fleas."

Comment: Is your contributor "C" a Tory Democrat or a Marxian Socialist?

M. J. INGLIS.

Editor's Note: Re the "Comment" which is not a comment, our contributor has already styled "C" a hypocrite—in which case he is bound to be both. What's the use!

CONCERNING PARTY OUTLOOK

(Continued on page 2)

on any working class organisation. We must perhaps turn aside at times to advise, or direct, and this might produce a quarrel, bitter and prolonged. But the seeking of such a quarrel should be no part of our policy, as it undoubtedly was previous to 1924.

And if to entertain a little enthusiasm and considerable hope from the situation in Britain, and to give the Labor Party there credit for sincerity is a change of policy, I can again admit the charge without reserve. And when the United States can show even one million out of their hundred and ten staggering blindly in the direction of a specific labor project, then we further rejoice and be glad, even if we did not climb on the band wagon.

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