

# PROLETARIAN LESSONS



*By*  
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Price

40

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# PROLETARIAN LESSONS

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## What is the Class Struggle?

### PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 1

What is the class struggle? Is it something that simply exists in the minds of certain people, or is it a condition that has been brought about by agitators who have stirred up strife between capital and labor?

These and many other questions may be asked as a result of the current misconceptions and misrepresentations of what the class struggle really is. Of course there are people who maintain that it is simply a myth as classes in society do not exist. Others admit that it may exist in other countries but there is no such thing as a class struggle in "free America."

It is my purpose here to give as brief an outline as possible of the social phenomenon that is universally known as the class struggle. And in subsequent lessons I shall try to explain the different aspects of the struggle and the nature

of the social arrangements and institutions that arise from the struggle of the classes.

First, remember that the class struggle is not a mere theory. It is a social condition. It is something that is going on all around us. It expresses itself in continuous conflict between different social classes. The forms and conditions of the conflict may change from time to time but the conflict itself is continuous.

At times it is more or less recessive, almost peaceful. Again it may be violent in certain districts or in certain industries for a period of time. In its higher stage it takes on the form of civil war. Almost every civil war in history has been a struggle between classes; a struggle for power, for political control of a nation.

The English Civil War, in the days of Cromwell, was just the natural outcome of a great class struggle. It was a struggle between the aristocracy (Cavaliers) and the rising capitalists (Roundheads), with victory for the puritanical capitalists.

The American Civil War was a class conflict also. It was a struggle for political control of the U. S. A.; a struggle between the slaveholders of the South and the industrial capitalists of the North, with victory for the latter and the elimination of the former as a class.

### **What Is the Daily Aspect of the Struggle?**

In its higher form the class struggle manifests itself politically but in its elementary form it is economic. Its simple outline is a daily conflict between employers and employees. The worker struggles involuntarily, although sometimes consciously, to get a higher standard of living and the employers struggle to keep down the worker's standard, not from mere maliciousness, but in order to obtain higher profits.

What is good for the capitalist is bad for the worker and what benefits the latter usually injures the former. It is plain that if the worker gets more wages the immediate effect will be that the capitalist has to get along with less profit. Some "economists" tell us that the more wages the worker gets the more profit does the capitalist make. Certain labor leaders when making a plea to the capitalists use that argument against the incessant efforts of the employers to cut down wages. If the claim were true the capitalists would be raising wages all the time as every increase of pay would bring a corresponding increase of profits.

### **The Individual**

The capitalist is an individualist and acts individually as far as his individual business is con-

cerned. The worker is also an individualist as far as his individual pay envelope is concerned. Generally speaking, neither the one nor the other is governed by altruism. They do not act for the good of mankind nor even for the benefit of other members of their own class.

### **Class Consciousness**

If either capital or labor combines into a class and acts class-consciously it is because they have learned that their individual interests can best be advanced in that manner. Individually they are weak. Collectively they are strong. Both classes, therefore, organize their forces for no other reason than the advancement of their individual interests.

### **What Makes the Conflict a Class Struggle?**

The fact is that a very large number of people having a common need, more pay for instance, combine, and another class of people with needs in common, more profits say, act in the same way. The result of those opposing interests is a struggle between classes. Those two great social classes, each trying to do the opposite, bring about a condition of constant conflict. This is what we mean by the class struggle. It is something born out of existing conditions and is not the result of preconceived designs.



### How to Tell a Class

A class is not a biological development, nor is it a condition of nature. Capitalists, for instance, are not all of one height or weight or race or color. Nor are they alike mentally. Some of them are smart and others are very stupid. Some are spendthrifts and others are misers. Most of them are parasites. Very few of them would be missed. A class is an economic alignment; it is a social thing.

The real way to tell what constitutes a class is to observe how vast numbers obtain their income. The Chinese wall which divides the people of America, and other capitalist nations, is an economic one. All the people on one side get their income through profit, interest, or rent. Those are the capitalists.

On the other side of the wall are those who get their income in the form of wages. They are the proletarians. Just ask yourself the question, "How do I get my income?" If it comes from interest or dividends, or from the profits of a business, or from rent, then you must be a capitalist. But if you are depending upon the contents of a pay envelope you are certainly a proletarian; a modern wage worker.

### Class Struggle a Political Struggle

The struggle of the two great classes, Bourgeoisie and Proletariat (capitalists and wage-workers) is basically an economic conflict. It is a question of bread and butter plus a few cheap luxuries for the one class and a desire to hold and if possible increase these. With the other it is not merely bread and butter but great and expensive luxuries of all kinds, such as limousines, yachts, mansion houses, high grade clothes and other wonderful products of labor too numerous to mention.

To hold and increase these luxuries at the expense of the producers is the chief aim of the owning class. That is the elementary nature of the struggle but it is much more complex in its form and operation.

The class struggle would never get beyond its elementary economic status but for the fact that the rich have at their disposal a highly organized institution for the purpose of maintaining their privileges; for preventing the poor from taking possession of the industries and putting them under the control of society. This powerful institution is the State, more commonly called government.

## What is the State?

### PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 2

There are various opinions as to what the State, or government, is; how it originated and what its purpose.

The old conception of the State was that it was of divine origin, and that it functioned in harmony with the will of God. The King and the aristocratic ruling class held their power direct from the Almighty. But in these days there is only a shadow of that belief left. The divine rights of kings and governments have almost gone.

The present conception of the State (we might say the vulgar conception) is that governments "obtain their power by the consent of the governed." This is the recognized conception of the State. Such a view, of course, is in harmony with the interest of the capitalist class, who control the press, pulpit and educational system. The average worker who is trained to think along those lines believes, because he votes the way he is trained to, that he has something to do with the operation of the State.

The modern working class movement, which is as yet backward, contends that the State always has been the means whereby a ruling

class holds a subject class in check. Karl Marx described it as "the public power of coercion."

### A Class Necessity

Before the advent of civilization, man lived for countless ages in a classless society. Tribes and clans owned the land and primitive means of livelihood in common.

The domestication of animals and their development into flocks and herds resulted in their becoming the property of individuals and furnishing those individuals the means of enslaving their propertyless fellow tribesmen, as well as captives taken in tribal warfare.

Slavery was the first form of exploitation; the first way of making men and women labor for a bare existence and furnishing comforts and luxuries for the class of property owners who enslaved them.

The first States that arose, those of the great civilization of the past, such as Babylonia, Greece, Carthage and Rome, were all based upon slavery.

The State is a necessary institution where property and propertyless classes exist. It is the organized power by which the property owning class rules society and coerces the subject, propertyless, class.

In the Feudal period the State evolved again out of the barbarous tribes of Europe. The Feudal State was not based primarily upon the ownership of human beings (slaves), but upon the ownership of land. The land slaves (serfs) were at the mercy of the land-owning aristocrats.

The Feudal ruling class exploited their serfs in a way peculiar to that land-owning civilization. They did not give them food, shelter, etc., such as the ancient slaves received for their labor, but they let them produce their own food, clothing, etc., in so many days of each week upon a portion of land allotted to them (serf-soil). The serfs had to work the rest of the week on the estates of their masters. For this service they received no payment whatever.

### The State and Industry

Out of the Feudal State emerged the present State, the Capitalist form of government. The modern parliamentary form, with "universal" suffrage, is the highest development that master-class society has produced.

The modern industrial system with "educated" workers has made the parliamentary, democratic, State necessary. The present State is not based upon the ownership of slaves, nor primarily upon the ownership of land, but upon the ownership of industry.

The instruments of production (modern machinery), are owned by a non-producing class. The State, or government, is the institution whereby that class maintains its ownership and enjoys the fruits of the workers' labor.

The Capitalist State is not so clumsy as its predecessors, the Slave and Feudal States. It uses deception much more efficiently than the States of the past. It hides its main weapon (repression) more successfully.

As long as deception works the State appears to be a "government of the people (capitalists and wage-workers), by the people and for the people." This is the cleverest deception of modern times. The school, the press and the pulpit work overtime on this clever lie. The State does not take off its mask unless circumstances compel it to. Its spokesmen, the statesmen, speak of "justice to all," the "rights of the people," the "welfare of the country," etc. But when it becomes necessary for the workers to strike for more pay or shorter hours, or even to resist encroachment upon their hours and wages, then the other weapon, repression, or coercion, is resorted to.

### **The Real Power**

The process is to call out troops and other coercive machinery of the State, and point the

bayonet at the breast of the worker.

Deception as a weapon is not abandoned, it is simply supplemented by the real power of the State, force. If the worker who is hungry, while the capitalist may be overfed, is willing to starve in silence, then it is not necessary for the State to unmask completely. Statesmen still talk of fair and just settlements in the interests of everybody. The capitalists sit tight and watch hunger and suffering defeat the unarmed peaceful workers, while their State forces, armed to the teeth, await the signal for action.

Should the workers resist the starvation process and seek to lay hands upon the overstocked food stores, or seize the factories or otherwise menace the interests of the capitalists, then the State unmasks completely. It throws deception to the wind and makes use of its real weapon. It shoots, if necessary, the workers into submission.

Often when a worker awakens to an understanding of the real nature of the State and sees it as organized force, he renounces all weapons but force. He abandons the use of the ballot and proclaims himself as opposed to sending workers into parliamentary bodies.

Many ingenious arguments are used by the Anarcho-syndicalist and other anti-parliamentary revolutionists.

## **What is Working Class Political Action?**

### **PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 3**

The political action of the working class is determined by the economic needs of that class. And since the economic needs of the proletariat must ultimately lead to a struggle for the conquest of the economic resources; the machinery of production and the products; it follows that proletarian political action must of necessity be revolutionary. While capitalism, like any other social system, rests upon an economic foundation, its ownership is upheld and maintained by political power.

The methods the workers will use to overthrow the capitalists will of course vary according to the different countries and the varying conditions. The revolutionary approach will be different in some countries from that of others. The ruling class throughout the world is in control of many States. The political power functions somewhat differently in the various countries but it is all of the same general character. At different times in the same country it may operate differently as a result of the historic development and the objective conditions for the time being confronting the ruling class.



Political action embraces a wide range of activity. In a revolutionary sense it implies any action that has for its object the overthrow of the political power of the ruling class. It implies even more. In a general way it embraces any action that will weaken the power of the ruling class with the object of its overthrow.

### **Parliamentary Activity a Part of Political Action**

It has suited the purpose of certain organizations to pretend that political action is confined to voting and sending representatives into parliamentary bodies. The anarchists and syndicalists insist upon confining their concepts of political action to its parliamentary aspects. This makes it easier for them to ask their favorite questions in this relation. "If the capitalists deny the workers the right to vote or to seat their elected representatives then political action comes to an end; does it not?" The Marxian political actionist, not holding this narrow conception, answers, "It does not!"

"Why waste time running candidates and electing workers to a capitalist parliament when it is quite clear that the capitalists will not surrender their political power to the workers even if their candidates obtain a majority of the votes and elect a majority in the parliaments?" asks the anarcho-syndicalist.

### Revolutionary Politics

To the above question there is more than one answer. It is premised upon the understanding that "the capitalists will not surrender their political power to the workers." To the revolutionist, "it is quite clear" that they will not submit but it is not so clear to the great mass of workers. Those have to be convinced of the fact by two general methods, explanation and actual experience. The majority can only learn by the latter route. Some children do not get burned when their parents explain to them that fire hurts. Most of them have to burn their fingers. Many of them have to try the experiment several times.

Another good reason for the use of parliamentary action is the opportunity it affords to fight capitalist control at short range and to expose the class nature of legislation. The masses are still imbued with the belief that they are of a "self-governing people," and that laws are made in the interest of all.

To the communist every approach to the wresting of power from the capitalist is a legitimate step. The capitalists have the power to abolish the press and the public forum. Our anarcho-syndicalists know this quite well but they make use of the press while the opportunity to do so is still open to them. They also

hold street and hall meetings, despite the fact that they know that those "rights" can be taken away from them. They have had many such experiences at the hands of the capitalists but still continue to make use of what measure of free speech and free press the capitalist system, in order to function smoothly, is obliged to permit. The same is true in relation to parliament as in relation to the press or propaganda meetings.

The capitalist class did not in the first case simply admit the representatives of the working class into their parliamentary bodies with the idea of fooling them. However, this is not a denial of the fact that working class representatives, both inside and outside of parliamentary bodies, are pulled around by the nose. The extension of the franchise to the proletariat was an inevitable development of capitalism. In its struggle with the aristocracy it had to appeal politically to the workers and drag them into its fight. The aristocrats on the other hand were not slow to use the workers against the capitalists. The working class sometimes profited by this process. The passing of the ten-hour law in Britain is a good example. The aristocrats of course did not concede that political reward to working class support alone. It was mainly as a blow at their political enemy, the capitalist

class. The wiping out of the illiteracy of the masses, so necessary to modern industry, was also an important factor in the extension of suffrage. Capitalism has to give the worker the vote and is obliged to permit his participation in its democracy.

### **Communists in Parliament**

Communists insist upon using parliament in the same way that they use the press or the public forum. It affords an opportunity to expose capitalist exploitation and the class nature of democracy. It gives the working class representatives the opportunity to analyze the nature of the capitalist proposals before the legislature and to expose and obstruct as far as possible the smooth operation of the repressive institution, the State. Incidentally "if" the capitalists of any country were to peacefully submit to the will of the majority and surrender their control of the nation and the machinery of production to the broad masses of the working class it certainly would be stupid to object to the peaceful parliamentary change. However, to tell the workers that the change will come about in that manner is wrong. The capitalist class has given ample demonstrations of its character and to expect it to submit to the recorded will of the

majority is like expecting figs to grow upon thistles.

With this understanding, the cause of working class political action is not premised upon the concept that the capitalists will give up their political control as soon as a majority has voted for the revolutionary change. Neither is it premised upon the utopian notion that an industrial union, with folded arms, will force the capitalists to surrender, or that the workers can take the factories and withhold the products from the capitalists who have the armed forces of the State to enforce their will. All such naive beliefs arise from an inadequate understanding of the State and its methods of operation. And often it results from preconceived notions that some "revolutionists" will sooner die than give up.

We showed in our last lesson just what the State is. So it will simply be necessary here to remind the reader of its armed forces and impress the point that those arms are not merely ornaments, nor are they simply for use in case of foreign invasion or other such troubles with the capitalists of other nations. They will be used against the working class, constitutionally or unconstitutionally, as the occasion may arise and the capitalists see fit. They will not give up their political control, no matter how small a

minority they may be, as long as they can command the armed forces of the State or any substantial portion thereof.

### The Revolutionary Political Party

Working class political action starts with the organizing of the more advanced and resolute workers into a political party. This organization, to represent correctly the modern working class, must participate in all broad mass movements of the working class without deviating from its course or losing sight of its revolutionary goal.

The constant work of the party of the proletariat hinges around the exposure of capitalism in all of its forms of deception and corruption and particularly the laying bare of the nature of the wage-system. The center of attack must always be the State as it is the institution of centralized capitalist power.

The revolutionary party of the proletariat although distinct from the organized labor movement is nevertheless an inseparable part thereof. Its task here is not a mere critical one but one of showing by example and active participation in the daily struggle the line of demarcation between capital and labor. It must at all times struggle to keep the real issue clear and point the revolutionary road of advance. It must not confine itself to an attack upon the "labor-

lieutenants" of capitalism but it must also expose "revolutionary" shams and assail those pseudo-revolutionists who by their blundering and stupidity and their inherent opportunism play into the hands of the labor misleaders and drive the more progressive workers away from the revolutionary cause.

The party of the proletariat must play openly and honestly with the working class. It must never attempt to circumvent or trick the workers into a revolutionary position or otherwise deceive them. It must surrender no principle nor traffic with the enemies of the working class for political preferment or to gain numerical strength or a momentary advantage. It must assail at all times those who defend the capitalist class, whether alleged friends of the workers or avowed enemies. On this important phase of the political activities of the working class, through the party that represents its revolutionary interests, much can be said.

## **Revolutionary Political Action and the Labor Movement**

### **PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 4**

The revolutionary political party of the proletariat is not a separate and exclusive organization standing over and above the working class. It is flesh of its flesh and bone of its bone. It has "no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."

The working class is divided into two great sections: the organized and the unorganized. In America today, owing to certain conditions, the larger portion of the proletariat is outside of the labor unions. Therefore, the revolutionary party, representing the interests of the proletariat as a whole, makes its appeal to the entire working class, organized and unorganized. This appeal it makes in no abstract fashion but in certain concrete ways that the workers can comprehend.

It urges the non-union worker to organize with his kind. It points out to those workers that the difference between an army and a mob is a matter of organization. It incessantly makes this appeal to the unorganized and aims to awaken them to a consciousness of their class position and class interests.



It contends that the unorganized mass of workers can not struggle for emancipation from capitalism if they are not ready for the more elementary aspects of the struggle. It sees also in the numerical expansion of the labor unions a ripening of the proletariat toward the overthrow of capitalist society.

It urges upon the organized workers the necessity for a continuous struggle to raise wages and shorten the hours of labor. It points out that, despite the greatest successes in those aims, the increasing productivity of labor gives to the employers greater gains than labor can possibly obtain under the wage system, and urges upon the labor movement the necessity of abolishing the capitalist ownership of the industries.

Although the chief recruiting ground for revolutionary work is the ranks of organized labor it is not the whole field. A stupid policy has manifested itself in this relation. Some "revolutionists" have turned to the labor unions and given them their exclusive attention and totally neglected the unorganized mass without.

### **The Blundering Herd**

The recent history of alleged revolutionary political actionists in the American labor movement is a record of blunder after blunder which

has resulted in an almost complete elimination of the progressive wing of the labor movement. Crudity often leaves the progressive unionist no other choice than that of going forward entirely to the position of the revolutionist or going back to the camp of the reactionist. This is one of the most serious errors as it is easier for the timid progressive to slip back than to go forward to something he is not ready for. This action has turned the progressive door keeper of the unions, who formerly was prepared to meet the communist speaker with a smile and an extended hand, into a scowling sentinel who co-operates with the reactionary wing for the exclusion of the communist propagandist and his message. It does even more harm than that, since the unionist who is known to be an outspoken champion of independent political action for the working class is suppressed if not actually expelled. It furnishes an unobstructed opportunity for the conservative leaders to line up the membership behind the old capitalist parties.

In highly developed countries, like Britain or America, the organized section of the working class plays a strong social part. The official role of this section of the workers is usually very reactionary and therefore in direct conflict with the best interests of the workers as a class.

Sometimes, where the workers are more politically ripe, it is made use of as a sort of safety-valve for the capitalist system. That is the present role of the British Labor Party and the Social Democrats of Germany. Those parties, partly as a result of conscious effort but more often through sheer stupidity, dissipate the awakening revolt of the workers in parliamentary opportunism.

### **How Do Communists Work in the Labor Unions?**

The communists without losing sight of facts work to build up and strengthen that which the capitalists are so anxious to tear down: the mass of organized workers; the labor unions. The communists see in the unions, despite their shortcomings in structural form and their political shortsightedness, not to mention the plentiful supply of treacherous leaders, the most advanced field for proletarian action in general and for revolutionary political action in particular.

Revolutionary political actionists do not stand at a distance and announce to the working class (organized and unorganized) that it must come to them for guidance. On the other hand they do not follow the stupid policy that pseudo-revolutionists have been so guilty of, namely, thrusting ready-made formulas upon the labor unions from without. With the consistent com-

munist, guided by Marxian understanding, the question does not arise as to whether it is better to "bore from within" or bore from without. He is a union man, an integral part of the ranks, and as such he is no interloper. He is not making himself a "bore" to everybody around him with artificial slogans and far-fetched formulas. But he is watchful and patient and consistently carries on his work of penetrating the ranks with a clearer concept of the class nature of society and the nature of the task that lies before the working class. He has the respect of his fellow unionist, even though the latter may disagree for the time with his political views. He is not looked upon as a nut or a nuisance. He is not regarded as a destructive agency but as one who is trying to build up the organization.

The first thing that a communist must learn is how to apply revolutionary political principles to the daily struggle, to the ever present problems of the workers. This is not accomplished by fiery speeches but by patient work with the rank and file and endeavoring at all times to bring the problem in hand to its class issue. The second thing that the revolutionist must learn is the manner in which the union as a whole and its units operate. In other words he must understand unionism and correctly gauge the degree of development of the rank and file in general

and the specific group that he is called upon by circumstances to work with.

The basic aim of revolutionary political action in the American labor movement, at this time, is the winning of the rank and file to the standard of independent political action for the proletariat as a class. This means that the communist must work from the bottom and not from the top. The winning of offices by intrigue and compromise with orthodox labor leaders, who usually have no confidence in the membership under them but have acquired the knack of fooling them, is just the opposite of what communists should do. On the other hand the shouting of "faker," "crook," etc., at the officials whom the workers still have confidence in is equally stupid. This policy often has the opposite effect to that which it is supposed to aim at. Instead of eliminating the reactionary leader, who may be all and more than the names imply, it often solidifies his grip on the membership.

Communist work in the labor movement of America, unfortunately, is but in its elementary stage. (We are considering now the make-up of the membership of the unions.) The rank and file are patriots. They have racial animosities, religious prejudices and many other shortcomings besides being ignorant of the most elementary principles in relation to wages and

other economic questions, not to mention their ignorance of the history of the American labor movement itself.

Communist pioneer work in the unions must be along the lines of labor education designed to win the worker to a political viewpoint that constitutes a definite break with the capitalist political parties. He must be induced to break forever with the Republicans and the Democrats, even if certain candidates present themselves for his approval wearing overalls and the union label. He must be taught the difference between progressive workers and "progressive" capitalists of the type of the late Robert LaFollette, whom alleged revolutionists openly supported (the Socialist Party) and so-called communists (the Workers "Communist" Party) tried to support.

#### **How to Win the Worker for Independent Political Action**

That the old parties of capitalism are rotten beyond redemption it is not hard to convince the worker. But to confine our attack upon the prevailing corruption of those parties leaves the worker still supporting them. He is used to that condition and it does not worry him. He sees graft and corruption in every walk of life and has come to look upon it as a natural condition which can not be cured but must be endured.

The worker will not break with "the party of Lincoln," or, "the party of Jefferson"; the Tammany ticket or the high tariff ticket, or whatever his pet political prejudice may be, unless he has become convinced that those parties are in the camp of the enemy, and moreover he must have concrete proof that they are working against him. It is only when the class nature of those parties becomes clear to him that he will see the need for an opposition party on class lines. To him, at present, "there are no classes in politics," for he sees that the millionaire on election day, despite his wealth, can only vote once like himself. He is alongside the millionaire in this respect, a "sovereign American citizen." The class nature of the State he never suspects. Until the worker is convinced by propaganda and education, or the State itself demonstrates it to him, independent political action for the working class will make no headway in the unions.

This however is not the only opportunity for revolutionary political action in the labor unions. The goal must not be lost sight of, the abolition of capitalism. That is the communist objective and in winning the worker away from the capitalist political parties the revolutionary political actionist can not tell his fellow unionists that their salvation lies in merely voting for a party

of their own. The building up of faith in parliament is not communist work. We must at all times expose the State and show it in its true colors even while we are engaged in the preliminary work of winning the unionists to the principle of independent political action for the working class.

The complexity of the work makes the task of the communists quite difficult, but nevertheless it must proceed along those lines. To tell the workers that the road to their emancipation runs through parliament or to imply it, or even to withhold the truth, is an abandonment of revolutionary political action.

### Conditions Peculiar to America

The American labor movement is unlike that of other advanced countries. The heterogeneous nature of the working class here makes it difficult to organize and still more difficult to wield the organized forces effectively. And what is true of the ordinary field of labor is doubly true of a revolutionary political party. In view of these facts greater care has to be used in the application of revolutionary principles within the unions.

The approach to the different sections of the American proletariat must be from the standpoint of the conditions of the daily tasks in



which those sections are engaged, together with the historic background of those particular workers and their social status in America.

The natural vanguard of the working class movement in any country is the typical native born proletarian. In countries like the U. S. A., where there is a large number of foreign born workers, it is even more necessary that the American born proletarian take the lead. His plea for equality amongst the workers and the rooting out of racial prejudices has a much stronger appeal. No proletarian movement here on a mass scale can be successful unless the vanguard is typically American.

By vanguard we do not mean a few native born leaders, nor a few foreign born who have learned English well, but that a substantial portion, the majority if possible, must be native born American workers. This is at present a heavy handicap but it is a problem that can not be ignored. It is an immediate task to be assailed and surmounted. The working class party that neglects this important matter ultimately must pay the price of such neglect. The working class movement has no choice in the matter but to face conditions as they actually are. It must assail those conditions and endeavor to bend them to its purpose.

### Frederick Engels' Advice

In relation to the presence in the revolutionary movement of comparatively large numbers of foreign born workers Frederick Engels in his time advised the Socialist Labor Party, then the only one in the field, to surmount its overwhelming foreign make-up. Writing in January, 1887, he called it the "German American Socialist Labor Party" and said: "In so far this party is called upon to play a very important part in the movement. But in order to do so they will have to doff every remnant of their foreign garb. They will have to become out and out American. They can not expect the Americans to come to them; they, the minority and the immigrants, must go to the Americans, who are the vast majority and the natives. And to do that, they must above all things learn English." If Engels were alive today his advice in relation to certain parties here would still be in order.

### Upside-Down Revolutionists

We continually hear of the conservative complex of the American labor movement and its general backwardness. It is often vociferously assailed by the revolutionary impatient. It is a favorite tactic of a certain type when they run

up against the immobility of the organized mass to resort to a campaign of vilification against "labor fakers." The "leaders" are to those immature minds the basic cause of the political backwardness of the rank and file. This stultified view arises from inability to penetrate below surface appearances.

Without denying the reactionary part played by labor leaders we must look for deeper causes than that certain quantity of scum that floats upon the surface of the labor movement. To lump all leaders of labor together and hurl the epithet "faker" is not only shortsighted, it is entirely stupid. It is the wrong way to establish contact of a permanent nature with the progressive section of the labor movement. That is what the communist in the labor movement must aim at, the establishing of effective and lasting contact. But that is not all. When that contact is established what is to be done with it? The answer is apparently easy. Have the workers act, draw them into action against the capitalists. Lead them to the struggle for power. Fine! But the question arises, "Can a few intelligent leaders guide an inexperienced and ignorant proletariat to its revolutionary goal?" We say "No, they can not?"

Then what is to be done? This brings us to our next lesson.

## What is Proletarian Education?

### PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 5

Ideas, opinions, and conceptions of current and historical events are formulated and propounded by the prevailing educational system. The Communist Manifesto states the case plainly: "The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class."

And, since the present educational system is controlled by the State, which in turn is controlled or dominated by the capitalist class, consequently, the substance of that which is taught is in harmony with the interests of that class.

From the above premise it naturally follows that the interests of the workers, which are not in harmony with the interests of the capitalists, have little or no place in the present educational system. The substance of what is taught, although often harmless enough in its outward appearance, is basically opposed to the interests of the working class.

Education is necessarily of a class nature. The capitalists rule America and other modern nations. Therefore, it is their education, capitalist education, which prevails. Almost every phase of thought is permeated by their point of

view. Public opinion becomes nothing but the echo of capitalist class opinion. The school, the university, the press, the pulpit, the radio and the "movies" all propagandize their "truths," their "justice," their "liberty," and "prosperity." These are real enough for the property owners but they are mere shadows for the propertyless workers.

The educational system of today is such that most of its graduates, the so-called educated people, are, on many important subjects, highly misinformed. They are trained to defend, in a most learned manner, historic, social and economic falsehoods.

However, it would be quite a mistake to contend that the entire teaching of the schools and universities is unsound; upon certain subjects the teaching is all that might be desired. But upon such subjects as history, economics and social science in general, the capitalist class cannot afford to let the truth be taught in their educational institutions as it would undermine their foundation of profit, interest and rent.

### **Workers' Educational Institutions**

Against the educational system of the capitalist class there arises, at first quite planless, the educational system of the proletariat. Proletarian education has developed with the growth and

experience of our class. In its general nature it is unguided. In its incipient stages it is the written and spoken spontaneous revolt of a slave class against its exploiters.

To give expression and direction to this general education and to act in accordance with its concepts certain working class organizations have sprung up. The most natural, most spontaneous and most elementary, have been the labor unions.

Following upon the heels of the unions have come into existence political parties of the working class which give expression to the higher aspects and aims of proletarian education. In the main, those parties vary according to the extent to which they have been able to discard capitalist notions and overcome the influence of capitalist education. The extent, clarity and vigor of their propaganda and educational work is based upon their understanding of the nature of the present social order and the nature of the historic task that the class to which they belong, the proletariat, is called upon to perform.

When the modern working class has reached a stage of development where the contest with the ruling class for power begins to take definite form, there, the most advanced organizations of the workers consciously pursue an educational policy. We, of course, do not use the term edu-

cation in the narrow sense in which it is commonly used by the capitalistic mind.

Everyone knows what the capitalist world means when it speaks of "educated" and "uneducated" people. The capitalist use of the term is quite significant. Here class prejudice crops out and often takes the form of snobbishness. Some of the highly "educated" people, products of the university mill, never awaken to a realization that upon the most important and most obvious historic and economic facts they are exceedingly well misinformed.

When we speak of education we have something far different in mind from the concept that is bandied about in the capitalist world. We do not forget class lines. We never forget that the recognized or official education is capitalistic and that the unrecognized or unofficial education which is combating it is in the truest sense Proletarian Education.

Many so-called revolutionists, professing to speak for the proletariat, sneer at the idea of educating the working class. They have the bourgeois conception of education. In fact, for them, there is no such thing as proletarian education. There is just education. They see it in the abstract, as some socialists see democracy. But there is no institution of capitalist society that is not polluted by the prejudices and

opinions of the capitalist class and the most marked in this respect are the educational institutions.

Supplementing the schools, colleges and universities, the press, pulpit, cinema and radio spread capitalist education to the masses. Capitalist education naturally divides itself into two great branches. Education through propaganda and education through specific instruction. The editor, the teacher and the preacher are its paid servants. Propaganda and instruction of course flow into each other. There is no sharp line between them—but together they are the means of carrying out capitalist education.

What is true of capitalist education is also true of proletarian education. Propaganda is the elementary stage. Systematic instruction is the higher stage. Propaganda is aimed to arouse the mass of workers to the consciousness of their class interests. Its purpose is to awaken, if ever so slightly, the dormant mass. The labor unions have done an immense amount of work in this field.

It is true that the unions have been guilty of much miseducation. They have propagandized the idea that capital and labor are brothers, that they have interests in common, and that the true aim of labor is to obtain "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work," and much more that is equally



unsound. But side by side with those mistakes the unions have carried on splendid educational campaigns for organization. They have taught the need for collective action by the workers to obtain better working conditions. They have taught the worker to co-operate with his kind and to fight to win a higher standard, to consolidate his gains and strive for greater conquests.

While capitalism lasts, large numbers of workers will never pass beyond the stage where propaganda is necessary to move them to act. Those will get their class education, partly through propaganda and partly as a result of their daily experiences. However, a large section of the proletariat must pass beyond this stage before their class will be ready to conquer power and dominate society.

### The Use of Slogans

Watchwords and slogans play a tremendous part, especially when a crisis is approaching. They serve the dual function of moving the mass to act and then holding the workers steady in face of counter-propaganda, often skillfully applied by the spokesmen of their enemies.

Notable examples of this sort of work can be taken from recent events in Great Britain. The propaganda of both classes and their slogans

offer us valuable lessons. The stirring slogan, attributed to A. J. Cook of the miners: "Not a penny off the pay—not a second on the day," was probably the most potent ever used in a labor dispute. The simplicity of its words, as well as its jingle, gave it great penetration and effectiveness. It was a sort of "they shall not pass" of the British miners in their war with the class enemy.

The capitalists, on the other hand, are not slow at sloganizing and stampeding the workers. Their public men know well how to take advantage of certain inborn prejudices of the mass mind. The "Zinoviev letter," which was sprung upon the British electorate on the eve of the last general election, was an example of clever propaganda. It attracted large numbers of votes for the Conservative party.

Slogans, of course, can be misapplied. They are ineffective when out of keeping with the immediate and imperative needs of the workers. Here their application not only does not benefit the workers but may greatly injure the working class cause. In class warfare the slogan must be applied with great care in order to prove an effective weapon.

In view of the results obtained, we do not think it an exaggeration to say that the slogans of the Bolsheviki, "Peace, bread and land," and

"All power to the Soviets," were the most effective used by the working class in all history.

### Permanent Principles

The next stage beyond slogans is the development of elementary principles calculated to become a permanent part of the intellectual equipment of the proletariat. This is just as difficult of application as the slogans. Those principles must be in harmony with the worker's experience or else their application will be wasted effort. Any formula that is not in keeping with his daily affairs or is not quite obvious to him when plainly presented is worse than useless.

For illustration, if a speaker were to go to the gate of a factory where the workers were getting better conditions than ever before and where there were enough unemployed hanging around to fill their jobs, an appeal to those workers to go on strike would fall upon deaf ears. Or if a call is made for the formation of a Labor Party where no preparation has been made to win the workers for independent working class political action, and where it is perfectly obvious that labor is indifferent to the project, it is worse than foolish. It not only adds to existing prejudices but brings other evils in its trail. The efforts, too, put forth on such futile work might,

if applied in another field, bring permanent results to the working class cause.

A steady and systematic propaganda to break down faith in certain existing institutions must be carried on and must take hold of the worker's mind before he will respond to an appeal for their abolition and their replacement by other institutions of a different type.

In countries like America this work is difficult because appearances are so deceptive. Take for instance, the class nature of the American government with its purely formal democracy. To bring home the facts in this relation to the worker's mind the class nature of the State must be exposed through the events of American history and not merely through making comparison with foreign governments. To appeal to the American worker to abolish institutions by comparing them with those of other countries is beginning by "rubbing the fur the wrong way."

The chief events in American history must be presented in their true light and the nature of the public institutions explained, clearly, simply and convincingly. This work requires systematic propaganda, not merely to catch the ear of the worker or to move the mass in a crisis but with a view to permanent enlightenment. The facts must be furnished in such a way that

the worker can grasp them and pass them on to his fellow workers.

Apart from the general lessons of current happenings, often incomprehensible to the workers, presented through the illuminating analysis which comprehending Marxians can make, there are a multitude of simple and permanent facts that efforts should be made to instill into the working class mind.

### **Economic Knowledge**

In this field of general working-class education the crying need for economic knowledge is apparent. The economic organizations, the unions, need this knowledge badly. Without it the membership is heavily handicapped in its ordinary deliberations. What wages really are, what different aspects they assume, is not only a mystery to the workers in general but a mystery to the organized workers and those who play the part of leadership.

Systematic effort to get this simple knowledge to the workers is one of the chief phases of proletarian education, especially in America at this time. Not only on the floor of the union must this knowledge be given out but it must be broadcasted to the masses at large by whatever means is available. The worker who grasps the nature of wages, nominal, real and relative, is

furnished with the means of understanding the way in which capitalist profits are extracted out of his labor. In other words, he is let in on the secret of capitalist exploitation of which he is the victim. The source of the great fortunes is stripped of its mystery. The process becomes an open book to him.

The average worker regards the vast fortunes of the capitalists as the result of "superior brains," or the natural result of frugality and personal worth. Some, of course, think it is the result of "plain bone-headed luck" and the religious ones attribute it to "God's peculiar way of working." The semi-religious think that "providence" has brought it about.

The real facts of American history, especially in relation to the Civil War as a struggle between classes, the purpose of the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War and the World War must be brought home to the working class in an unmistakable manner.

The operation of government, local, state and national, must be unmasked. Its repressive character, concealed behind a smoke screen of democracy, must be exposed. For this purpose the labor press is not sufficient, nor is the lecture platform capable of reaching the masses. Propaganda leaflets by the million must carry not

mere tirades against capitalism, but vital information in simple, effective language.

Curses will not fell capitalism to the ground, nor will knowledge alone end its rule. However, it is certain that its fall cannot be brought about without mass knowledge of the nature described by Frederick Engels in the following words:

“Where the question involves the complete transformation of the social organization, there the masses themselves have already grasped what the struggle is all about and what they are to stand for. This is what the history of the last fifty years has taught us. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long and persistent work is needed and it is just this work that we are now doing, and that, too, with a success that drives our opponents to despair.”

This brings us to the second stage of Proletarian Education, the specific knowledge that the “officers of labor’s armies” must have if they are to guide the proletariat to victory.

Our next lesson will deal with the higher aspects of Proletarian Education — “Marxian Knowledge.”

## What is Marxian Knowledge?

### PROLETARIAN LESSON, NUMBER 6

The education of the working class, as we have shown in the preceding lesson, is partly the result of experience and partly the result of conscious effort, the latter dividing into propaganda and systematic instruction.

The highest development of proletarian education, mainly through instruction, is Marxism. But Marxian knowledge is not merely an acquaintance with the writings of Karl Marx. Although the basic principles lie in what was first clearly formulated by him, the term Marxism has a much wider significance.

An understanding of the following three principles is essential to Marxian knowledge. First, there is the principle of the **Class Struggle**; second, the **Materialist Conception of History**, and third, the principle of **Surplus Value**.

Marxian education proceeds along the lines of imparting a knowledge of these three principles, or of obtaining, if the worker studies alone, a working knowledge of them.

In our first lesson we gave an elementary outline of the Class Struggle. Therefore, at this point we would refer the reader back to lesson number one.



### The Materialist Conception of History

As to the Materialist Conception of History, Frederick Engels opens chapter three of "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" with these words:

"The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders, is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in man's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the **philosophy**, but in the **economics** of each particular epoch."

Here Engels furnishes us the groundwork for an understanding of the materialist conception of history. He tells us plainly where to look for final causes and where not to look. Engels was a co-discoverer of the materialist conception of

history with Karl Marx, although he gives his more brilliant associate full credit for the discovery.

Marx in the introduction to his "Critique of Political Economy" tells how Engels "came by a different road to the same conclusions." It is in this same introduction that Marx says:

"The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, continued to serve as the leading thread in my studies, may be briefly summed up as follows:

"In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their

development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression of the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.”

This somewhat lengthy quotation is a replete statement of the economic foundation and the social superstructure that arises from it. It shows that it is the changes in the economic basis that bring about changes in the superstructure. A transformation in the methods of production must result in a transformation of the social system. Revolution abolishes the old social order and ushers in the new.

### A Sharp Intellectual Weapon

The materialist conception of history is not merely a view of history. It is the highest expression of historic materialism, its culmination. It is the intellectual weapon of attack, wielded by the vanguard of the proletariat in its conflict with the ruling classes of today. It furnishes the means whereby the alert proletarians are able to acquire a more accurate and more complete knowledge of the past, to comprehend what took place and why. The Marxian is able to see more clearly than others what is going on in the present and consequently is supplied with a key to the unlocking of future history. He can not, of course, tell exactly when things will happen. He can not give the dates nor the details in advance, but he can tell what must happen and why it must happen. He is the first to detect the signs of the coming events and he, amongst all the workers, knows best what should be done by his class.

Just as a farmer can tell better than a coal miner when it is going to rain, so, too, can the informed Marxian recognize the infallible signs of approaching social storm. Nikolai Lenin, wielding this weapon in 1917, knew better than any other man in Russia what was going on around him and what was most likely to

happen. As a consequence he also knew best what to do and when to do it.

In the fall of 1917 we read in the American press that the Bolshevik party had announced its intention of taking power within a week. More than a week passed before the Bolsheviks led the workers to seize power and we learned in the course of time that it was upon the advice of Lenin that the revolutionary step was taken. Knowledge of the objective conditions brought Lenin to the conclusion that the masses were ripe for action, that it was a case of "now or never" if the Bolsheviks were to lead the proletariat to victory. His Marxian knowledge enabled him to arrive at a clear decision in the matter. Such is the value of the historical analysis that flows from a comprehensive grasp of the materialist conception of history.

### Surplus Value

The utopian socialists during the first half of the nineteenth century cleverly indicted and vigorously condemned capitalism for its exploitation of the working class, but they were quite incapable of explaining its genesis, the historic character of its development and the underlying laws of its economic and social process. Says Engels: "It was necessary to lay bare its essential character, which was still a secret.

This was done by the discovery of **surplus-value**. It was shown that the appropriation of unpaid labor is the basis of the capitalist mode of production and of the exploitation of the worker that occurs under it; that even if the capitalist buys the labor-power of his laborer at its full value as a commodity on the market, he yet extracts more value from it than he paid for; and that in the ultimate analysis this surplus value forms those sums of value from which are heaped up the constantly increasing masses of capital in the hands of the possessing classes. The genesis of capitalist production and the production of capital were both explained."

Engels adds: "These two great discoveries, the materialist conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalistic production through surplus-value, we owe to Marx."

Surplus-value, therefore, is simply what the capitalist holds on to after he has paid for the raw materials, wear and tear on the means of production, and wages. It is the difference between his production costs and the price he received for the finished commodity. In other words, to the value of the raw materials, mechanical power, etc., there is added another value, a surplus-value. It is from the labors of the workers and from that source alone that the surplus-value arises.

Marx, in discovering the secret of capitalist profit through the process of surplus-value, lays bare the fact that it is during the process of production that the worker is exploited. Prior to Marx's time, and in some quarters still, it was believed that profits arise in some mysterious manner through buying cheap and selling dear. Those who used that argument forgot that what they gained as a seller they would lose again as a buyer at the hands of some other seller. Marx poked fun at such a theory of profits by pointing out that if it were true then we could all become rich by taking in each other's washing.

### Marxism and Science

As we have already pointed out, there is much more to what is now termed Marxism than the writings of Karl Marx. The Marxian system is truly in harmony with science in general and is comprehensive enough to embrace all scientific thought. Especially is this true in relation to those sciences which have direct bearing upon social evolution.

In the "Communist Manifesto," drafted in 1847, Marx and Engels had written "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." At that time knowledge in relation to the ancient social order was exceedingly vague.

**Lewis H. Morgan**

It was an American, Lewis H. Morgan, who solved the mystery of the ancient social order. In his work, "Ancient Society," published in 1877, Morgan, unknown to Marx and Engels, shows clearly that he had arrived at a similar understanding of the social process. Engels, writing in 1884, says: "In America, Morgan had, in a manner, discovered anew the materialistic conception of history, originated by Marx forty years ago."

What is mainly appropriated by Marxism from Morgan is an understanding of the fact that during the greater part of all human time man lived in a classless society and that, therefore, the struggles between classes do not make their appearance until the means of production takes the form of private property.

In addition to his explanation of the structure of Savagery and Barbarism, forms of society organized along the lines of blood relationship, subdivided into sex related groups, Morgan also sees that it is in the development of the mode of acquiring the means of subsistence, the weapons, tools, utensils and other material things with which man works, that the propelling force of social development lies. This is where he is in line with Marxism. He recognizes the economic basis as the underlying factor of



savagery and barbarism and traces their development through the development of the tools, and other appliances, just as Marx and Engels had pointed it out as the underlying factor of civilization's development.

### Charles Darwin

In his "Biographical Memoirs of Karl Marx," Wilhelm Liebknecht writes of his relations with Marx and Engels in London, whence he had fled as an exile from Germany, he speaks of Marx's enthusiasm for science and mechanical progress as follows:

"Soon we were on the field of Natural Science, and Marx ridiculed the victorious reaction in Europe that fancied it had smothered the revolution and did not suspect that Natural Science was preparing a new revolution. That King Steam who had revolutionized the world in the last century had ceased to rule, and that into its place a far greater revolutionist would step, the electric spark. And now Marx, all flushed and excited, told me that during the last few days the model of an electric engine drawing a railroad train was on exhibition in Regent street. 'Now the problem is solved—the consequences are indefinable. In the wake of the economic revolution the

political must necessarily follow, for the latter is only the expression of the former'."

Liebknecht adds: "In the way that Marx discussed the progress of science and mechanics, his conception of the world and especially that part later on called the materialist conception of history, became so clearly apparent that certain doubts I had hitherto entertained vanished like snow in the spring."

The discoveries of Charles Darwin fitted in so well with the materialist conception of history that it could, in a sense be called the materialist conception of nature, as distinct from the theological or idealist conception of nature. Marx and his immediate associates hailed Darwin's epoch-making discoveries, although in another field, as an amplification of their own.

Liebknecht speaks of the event and its effect upon them as follows: "When Darwin drew the consequences of his investigations and presented them to the public we spoke for months of nothing else but Darwin and the revolutionizing power of his scientific conquests."

Although Darwinism has found its place in the bourgeois world, with the exception of certain backward parts, such as southern American states, its premises when applied to social questions, if applicable at all, fit in with the intellectual equipment of the workers rather than

that of the capitalists. Bourgeois scholars have drawn analogies from Darwin to show that the struggle for existence has demonstrated the fitness of the capitalists to survive, and that therefore capitalism is in harmony with nature, etc. This, of course, is a perversion, since the law that applies in the animal kingdom, the law of tusk, fang and claw, eliminates the unfit and the worthless, but when applied to man, especially under the present social system, it is quite a different matter. We find that capitalism often protects the unfit and the worthless and nourishes them in the lap of luxury, while it starves, slaughters and maims the useful industrious section of the populace. Instead of the survival of the fittest, poverty often gets in its work and wealth frequently assures the survival of the unfit.

### Joseph Dietzgen

Morgan and Darwin were not communists, they were not conscious workers for a new social order, but they performed a gigantic work which has had a revolutionizing effect upon the minds of the workers and contributed much toward undermining the present social order. However, that was not their aim. They were revolutionists, of course, in their respective fields of endeavor. Morgan revolutionized the conception of the

ancient social order (never yet recognized by the official institutions of learning) and Darwin revolutionized man's conception of nature. Both were in line with the materialist conception of things.

Joseph Dietzgen, a German working man, a tanner, working in the field of philosophy, followed the main philosophical systems to their logical conclusion. In his work, "The Positive Outcome of Philosophy," he follows the historic course of philosophy to its positive outcome. His conclusions were, in brief, that philosophy, as such, has fulfilled its historic function and that the various branches of intellectual endeavor, formerly covered by philosophy, have passed into the realm of the different natural sciences, leaving only the thinking process itself to be explained.

Dietzgen set himself the task of explaining the functioning of the human mind. He succeeded in laying bare the "understanding of understanding" by explaining the nature of human brain work, how the mind works. He in effect carried out on the mental, or philosophical plane the evolutionary process that Engels and Marx carried out on the historic and economic planes. Of course Marx and his associates dealt with the reflex of material things in men's minds, but it was Dietzgen's special work to trace those philosophical reflections of material evolution to

their natural conclusion which was practically reaching the same goal as the others already mentioned, but in the field of mental activity.

Just as through making use of the materialist conception of history to explain the materialist conception of history we can best account for its discovery and explain its function, so does Dietzgen show that an understanding of understanding, a knowledge of the thinking process, can best help the thinker to direct the process itself. This knowledge explains the manner in which man obtains his ideas from the material environment through the medium of sense perceptions. It demonstrates the process of co-ordinating the sense perceptions which result in the ideas, or mental pictures of the phenonoma observed by the senses and shows how the brain sorts out the ideas and stores them away for future use through that mental functioning which we call the memory. With this knowledge, thinking itself becomes a scientific process and the brain more and more directs the brain. The person in possession of the understanding of the thinking process does not closet himself and try to cudgel ideas from the brain. He knows that which is not in can not come out. He first goes to material sources for observation. In other words his brain directs him to take his brain to where it can get sense perceptions, "food for thought."

Joseph Dietzgen, although not very closely associated with Marx, followed the trail which he blazed in the field of social science and corresponded from time to time with him. At the International Congress at The Hague, in 1872, Marx introduced Dietzgen to the assembled delegates as "Our Philosopher."

Without reading the works of any of those famous thinkers with the exception of Marx himself it is possible for one to comprehend Marxism. However, this would be only in a narrow sense. Marx, as we have already shown, took keen delight in the works of Darwin and Morgan, not to mention his prolific general reading, and it is our contention that a knowledge of the works of these other writers is necessary to a comprehensive grasp of that scientific education of the modern working class known as Marxism.

In these lessons we have not attempted to develop the different phases of Proletarian knowledge in detail. We have merely tried to sketch an outline for the worker who is seeking knowledge of the movement which gives expression to his class needs. If as a result a number of workers are started along the line of Marxian thought and are thereby induced to make a further study, then that will be ample reward for the writing of Proletarian Lessons.

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