



SOME SOCIALISTS I HAVE KNOWN

By a Conservative

THE first socialist I ever knew brought our long intimacy to a sudden close by skinning me. Peace to his ashes!

He was a man of elegant tastes, a cultivated mind and luxurious habits, and these characteristics developed in due course of time a craving for liquor and opiates, the indulgence in which stimulated his social and conversational qualities to the very highest degree.

He lived in a simpler, older day, when socialism was practically unknown and professional socialists had not begun to swell their purses and adorn drawing rooms. A deep student of the classics and with a mind well equipped for the digestion of what he read, my friend became a firm believer in the theory that it was not right that some men should be exorbitantly wealthy and others bitterly poor, and that it would be better for the world if its wealth could be redistributed in a more even manner.

In time this idea of the redistribution of property took such a strong hold on his imagination that he undertook to equalize some of life's inequalities by marriage. His wife, a woman of fine character and breeding, easily persuaded her mother, the holder of the family purse strings, to build a beautiful house in their native town and install the socialist as its nominal head. The finest room in this mansion became his library, and here, before a cheerful wood fire, surrounded by books, which he reads less and less as sloth and dying ambition crept over him, I have listened to some of the most delightful and convincing talk that has ever fallen upon my ears.

At this time I was in his employ as the managing editor of a small monthly periodical owned by him and addressed to the "high brows" of his day and generation; and if a man is never a hero to his own valet, what can he be to his managing editor? I am bound to say that so long as the magazine was conducted at a loss our relations were fairly pleasant, but, like many a young and inexperienced manager, I was foolish enough to hand him in a small monthly profit, with the natural result that he began by demanding more and very soon worked himself into the belief that I was holding back from him that which should have been his—

But let it not be forgotten that during all this unhappy period when I was struggling to squeeze out for him a little more money it was my privilege to listen almost nightly to the most beautiful and uplifting conversation imaginable.

His mother in law was bitterly opposed to liquor and opiates, nor do I blame her when I recall the circumstance that induced this prejudice, but there was always an odd bottle concealed in the hollow of a papier mache "History of England" that stood in an inconspicuous place on the book shelf, and oftentimes on winter nights he would take down this precious volume and hide it in a sort of cave of books erected on his writing table and so arranged that at the sound of approaching footsteps our two glasses could be hastily concealed in it and the opening blocked up with "The Descent of Man."

I was young then, and a little liquor went a long way with me, so that generally after a glass or two I would find the tears coming to my eyes as I listened to my friend's discourse on the higher brotherhood of humanity and of how wrong it was to underpay the work people or accept a higher interest than 6 per cent on invested funds. So beautiful were his ideas, so generous his emotions and so fine his language that, even had I known then, as I do now, that his prudent mother in law's fortune was invested in bank stock, I am quite sure that his talk would not have lost one particle of its impressiveness and charm.

Once I woke up, but that was only for a moment. It was when he paused in the midst of a harangue on the duty of giving to others to ask whether Jenkins, our foreman, had drawn a certain \$20 that had been due to him for some time. I replied that he had not even asked for it and it was quite possible that he had forgotten all about it.

"Then don't give it to him!" exclaimed my friend the socialist. "He doesn't deserve it anyway, and, besides, money should go to him who needs it the most. Bring it to me tomorrow. Well, as I was just saying, my dear boy, the day is coming when the capitalist won't make all the money and the man who toils with his hands will receive a fair share for his labor."

It makes but little difference at this late day to what extent he skinned me, but it was quite up to the limit of his opportunity. But I have long since credited him with the fact that he taught me the



I Attended One of These Gatherings

difference between deeds and words, so perhaps the balance is not so far wrong as one might think it.

MY next socialistic friend was a fellow clerk in the horse collar factory where we both toiled 10 hours a day for a pittance of \$12 a week each. During the half hour allowed us for luncheon we used to talk about what we would do when we got wealthy, and I remember that I declared once with much solemnity that the moment I was admitted to membership in the firm I would inaugurate a new system whereby each one of the three partners would come to the office two days in the week, devoting the rest of the time to innocent enjoyment. Later in life I became the partner in a small firm and had to get up at daybreak to see that my associate did not rob me.

It was during one of these talks that my friend first told me that he had been reading some very radical foreign books on economics and that it was quite possible that we would both live to see the day when there would be no such thing as private property—when the state would own everything and the profits of labor would be divided according to a much fairer ratio than had ever been known in Newark up to that time. At first I regarded him as a person dangerous to the peace of a thoroughly discontented community, but when I came to consider that the property of the firm for which we worked would be seized by the state and the incomes of the partners reduced to our own I began to realize that even a social revolution may have its advantages.

In due course of time I left horse collars for literature, and it was not until after a lapse of nearly 40 years that I ran across my old friend again. He was delighted to see me and entertained me at dinner at Delmonico's. Fortune had favored him since his marriage, he said, and although he spoke modestly of his wife's huge fortune and his own earnings I know now that their joint income runs far above the million mark and that the factory which he owns in western Pennsylvania employs fully 1,600 men. He told me with considerable pride that he paid better wages than any of his competitors and that his employees had never gone out on strike.

"And how about the social revolution we used to dream about?" I inquired. "How soon is the state going to own all the property and make everything even?"

"It won't come in our time," he said, as he blew a great smoke wreath from his cigar. "Things have changed since you and I used to work side by side in that horse collar factory. The workmen are better off and they're not so anxious for a change as they used to be. Why, there's scarcely one of them in my employ that hasn't got a piano in his house. I really believed in all that sort of thing when you first knew me, but I'm equally sincere in my disbelief now."

And I respected him for telling the truth. Increase of income destroys a great many revolutionary ideas.

ANOTHER socialist of my acquaintance was a settlement worker in the lower part of the city about 15 years ago and earnestly devoted to the labor of instructing the women of the neighborhood in hygiene and their children in the graces of life. Whenever I called upon her I found myself in the society of the learned men of the neighborhood—poor but scholarly Jews, teachers or physicians of foreign birth practicing in the alien colonies of the town. I never knew until I attended one of these gatherings that there was a really intellectual society to be found south of Market street.

One Sunday evening about half a dozen years ago I called at the Settlement house and was introduced by my friend to a woman whom she described as "very interesting." I remember that she was tall and spectacled, and engaged, as she herself told me with owllike gravity, in "studying the sociological conditions of the congested district," in order to deliver a series of addresses at the different women's colleges of the country.

I observed that the little company, which, by the way, had been augmented by two or three fashionably dressed women, listened open mouthed to the spectacled one's utterances, which were characterized by a profound ignorance of every branch of the subject. Then I looked about the room and saw that there were none of the old time doctors and teachers present, and I had scarcely absorbed these new conditions when my dear friend whispered in my ear:

"I hope you won't be shocked by what you hear tonight, but the fact is we're growing very socialistic. You see, dear Mrs. Jack Smithers—that's her automobile standing outside—is a perfect anarchist in her views, and she's been down here a good deal lately



Listened Open-Mouthed to the Spectacled One's Utterances

and brought some of her society friends with her, and the other night she asked us all up to dinner. Wasn't it just perfectly lovely of her? There were three men waiting at table and four kinds of wine, and I never saw so much plate in all my life. Of course, you know how awfully rich she is and how everybody's talking about her becoming a socialist."

"What is socialism?" I asked.

"The question must have been a disconcerting one, for it was several moments before there reached my ears the halting reply:

"Oh, well, socialism means just what the New Testament tells us and very much what we're doing down here. It means that the rich have got altogether too much money and the poor too little, and we must try to equalize it. By the way, we're going to have a reception next month—you'll get a card for it—and if you could manage to say something about it in the papers it would be real nice. Who's coming? Well, there won't be any more of those frowsy old doctors and teachers we used to have here. Mrs. Jack is coming and ever so many of her society friends. I'm going to be the very finest affair ever given in any settlement house, and that lady I just introduced you to is going to give a lecture on New York's foreign quarters that will be perfectly delightful. Oh, there's Mr. Cadger; he's the man that's making such a sensation by living among the poor. His mother in law

entertains delightfully. You really must meet him."

I HAD seen Mr. Cadger once before. It was in a great grocery where I was waiting to give a modest order for my household supplies. He was ordering his supplies, too, and as I heard the list of costly delicacies rolling so easily from his tongue I began to wonder who was going to eat all those preserves and branded peaches and fruits and cheese and truffled pates, and I confess that I bent an inquisitive ear as he reached the end of his memorandum and added, as he buttoned his fur lined overcoat closely about him, "You may send the goods to Mr. Arthur Cadger, in Slum street, but send the bill to Mrs. Jones, in Pacific avenue."

And as I took my small bag of purchases under my arm—small as they were they had set me back \$1.45—I envied the man who could solve the difficult problem of living on slender means as easily as he could. The very next week I saw Mr. Cadger's name signed to a magazine article entitled "Heavy Burdens That Women Must Bear," a subject on which he could speak with high authority, for he is one of the heaviest of them.

That was why I was glad when Mr. Cadger arose in the settlement parlor to offer a few well timed observations on socialism. I felt that he had mastered at least one phase of the question—and an important one, too—as well as had my old friend described in my opening paragraphs. And now, when he delivered a beautiful address on the need of more bomb throwing and explained why every true socialist owed it to himself to marry well, I realized that I was listening to one who knew whereof he spoke. In fact, his remarks interested me so much that after considering them for several days I determined to call on him and invite further discussion. I found his house readily enough, but the servant told me he had just stepped out and would be back at dinner time. I called again that evening, only to miss him, and several times during the following week I had the same ill fortune. Finally I took a half dollar from my pocket, and, noting the covetous gleam in the maidservant's eye, said: "Tell me, on the level now, when Mr. Cadger is at home."

"Shure, I think he's at home now, sir, wid his mother in law in Pacific avenue. He don't live here; he only gets his letters here and has it for a place to meet them sittlemint folks an' such like."

ANOTHER socialist, of a very different stripe, was my poor old friend Scupper, a well known character in newspaper circles 25 years ago. The first time I ever saw him was when he came into my office one hot summer morning, with his hair sticking through the crevices of his grimy straw hat, his face unshaven and his clothes shabby and tattered. I confess that his appearance was not prepossessing, but when he spoke I was startled by the cultivated quality

of his voice and the old fashioned elegance of his diction. Then I noticed that he had a fine head and a pair of deep, thoughtful eyes, and that his manner of address was at once dignified and modest. His story was quickly told. He had worked his way through some fresh water college and was now trying to make a living by writing for newspapers. At some time in his life he had learned to set type, and so when I told him that our reportorial staff was full he offered to go to work in the composing room, and that very night I saw him busily engaged in "sticking type" and conversing in low, earnest tones with the man beside him.

He did not seem to care much about earning large sums of money, though he was a fairly rapid and skillful typesetter while he worked, but he showed a propensity to engage his fellow compositors in discussions of economic conditions, chiefly the relation between labor and capital. And although the revolutionary spirit fostered by these discussions eventually led to his discharge, I am bound to say that Scupper had been a deep and sincere student of the many branches of study which are now classed under the term socialism, and was, moreover, thoroughly conscientious in practicing what he preached. One night, for example, a tramp met him in the street and asked him for money, and Scupper, believing the man's story to be true, gave him his last dime and walked home.

After leaving our office he obtained employment as a reporter on one of the minor dailies, where he surprised his associates by the high quality of his work. The delicacy of his humor, the keenness of his wit and his ready sympathy for suffering and misfortune soon made him one of the star reporters, yet somehow he never seemed to earn money enough to "break even," as the saying is. I never knew him to be well dressed from head to foot, for if he had a whole overcoat it was certain to hide innumerable tatters, and if I saw him with a new hat I was quite sure that his shoes were going to pieces. From time to time he called on me and with stately courtesy borrowed small sums of money, every penny of which was always scrupulously returned. Meanwhile his reputation was growing, not merely as a picturesque and interesting writer, but as an "anarchist," as his fellow reporters called him, meaning one who talked loud and long about the crimes of the rich and the injustice done to the poor.

Once I met him late in the afternoon proudly parading Market street with a costly cigar—a "two bit straight"—in his mouth and a flush on his cheeks that showed he was taking a day off. He had been discharged, he told me, because late the previous night, when reading the proofs of his account of certain local disturbances, he had come upon the line, "It was rumored that Jay Gould had been assassinated, but fortunately this proved untrue," and had changed it to read "unfortunately." It was for this that he had suffered, and he gloried in his fall. With all his old time politeness he invited me to take a drink, and I improved the occasion by urging him to cease his labors in behalf of the downtrodden and get to work. We were still thrashing out the matter when a jocular fellow scribe—also off for the day—slapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Scupper, old man, I know a good job you can get that will pay you \$25 a week, with board and lodging, and leave you plenty of time to yourself."

"What is it?" he demanded eagerly.

"Footman in a certain mansion," replied the merry one. "All you have to do is to put flour on your hair and wear red pants and white silk stockings, answer the bell and get down on your knees whenever any millionaires come to call."

Scupper's lip curled with scorn at this recital of menial duties, and without a word of reply he left the saloon with haughty tread and was seen no more until his editor, who had a friendly regard for him and his work, sent word to him to come back to his old job.

Poor Scupper lived before his time. Living he preached his creed in composing rooms and saloons. He died before parlor socialism had come into fashion, so he left nothing behind him but a number of friends, who still cherish his memory and respect his honesty.



He Showed a Propensity to Engage His Fellow Compositors in Discussions of Economic Conditions

A NEW STYLE OF POPULAR ART.

A SERVICE like that rendered to music by the invention of the piano has been done to art by Messrs. Willis and Hewlett, whose productions have recently been exhibited in New York. These, which the designers call "mural proofs," are a cross between photographic enlargements and mural paintings, and are intended to cover large wall spaces in buildings such as public schools or libraries. They are made on canvas with artists' colors by the skillful use of stencil screens, or patterns, which may be obtained with the aid of photography or otherwise, and give, at a price not exceeding that of large carbon prints, the effect of mural painting. As the piano has brought the skilled execution of difficult musical masterpieces, or at least something closely resembling it, into the homes of unskilled music lovers, so this new invention promises to bring into buildings whose walls could never be covered with great mural paintings pictorial decorations in color with some dignity and artistic value.



At First I Regarded Him as a Person Dangerous to the Peace of a Thoroughly Discontented Community



He Delivered a Beautiful Address on the Need of More Bomb Throwing