

# THE BASIS OF COMMUNISM.

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## THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY.

Labour is becoming Socialistic.

The days when the master stood in the workshop with the single worker, are past. The small enterprises are disappearing, or have done so already, the larger ones, the enterprises on a big, on an enormous scale, have taken their place.

This is the first fact Communism wishes to point out to the workers, and which it demonstrates in the first place by means of arguments, of theory.

Compelled by competition, the capitalists must enlarge their concerns. For they must strive to get into their hands the greater part of the market, indeed, if possible, all the market. If they do not take it, someone else will. Thus they all argue, and they must consequently strive to come out victorious.

The introduction of new machines, which others have not yet got, ensures a sudden enormous extra profit to the capitalist who has them. He produces at a greater rate, in larger quantities, and at less cost. He sells something below the price of his competitors, but as much as possible above his own price of production.

He secures an enormous sale, for all buyers flock to the lowest vendor. In order to meet all the demands, he has to enlarge his business. By running his business on a large scale, his general costs for lighting, etc., will be immeasurably lessened for the same amount of produce. The introduction of new machines comes to the same as an expansion of the business. That is what all are striving for. Consequently, the aggrandisement of the trade, with the abolition of the small enterprises, is as indissolubly bound up with capitalism, as fast running as with the hare. It must needs be so.

According, as the use of machines increases, this is bound to go more and more quickly. For the more machines a concern employs, the more capital has been sunk into it. And the larger capital demands a still greater profit, and a quicker sale. The spur to make high profits, increases with the increase of the business. The danger of ruin through competition, is far more terrible for a large enterprise, than for the smaller ones; so much more being involved. Every great concern, therefore, is bound to be perpetually looking for new ways to expand to an ever greater extent.

Not only mere theory and experience prove this to be true, it is also evidenced by statistics. We will give here some of the main data of the last years.\*

\* In this book, we shall often be compelled to have recourse to statistics. We trust though, that the reader will not be scared away by them. There is no better means of defeating bourgeois antagonists, revisionists and anarchists, nor of convincing indifferent or Christian workers, than by pointing out to them the development of society.

In Germany, between the years 1882 and 1907, we get the following numbers for the minor, the middle, and the big enterprises:—

### German Trade Statistics.

#### I. All branches of Trade (Industry, Commerce, Agriculture.)

| Concerns with         | 1882      | 1907      | Proportion. |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| One person            | 1,877,872 | 1,446,206 | 100 to 77   |
| One to five persons** | 1,002,896 | 1,376,912 | " " 137     |
| Six to ten persons    | 68,763    | 148,112   | " " 215     |
| 11 to 50 persons      | 48,952    | 119,298   | " " 272     |
| 51 to 200 persons     | 8,095     | 26,179    | " " 328     |
| 201 to 1,000 persons  | 1,752     | 5,323     | " " 304     |
| Over 1,000 persons    | 127       | 506       | " " 398     |

\*\* "Concerns with one person" only there where no motor-power is used; with motor-power, one-person concerns are counted to the following group.

#### PERSONS THEREIN.

| One person           | 1,877,872 | 1,446,206 | 100 to 77 |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| One to five persons  | 2,457,950 | 3,919,715 | " " 169   |
| Six to ten persons   | 500,097   | 1,104,590 | " " 221   |
| 11 to 50 persons     | 891,623   | 2,584,248 | " " 290   |
| 51 to 200 persons    | 742,688   | 2,418,150 | " " 326   |
| 201 to 1,000 persons | 657,399   | 1,991,056 | " " 303   |
| Over 1,000 persons   | 22,13,160 | 954,645   | " " 448   |

Of 1,000 persons, there fall in each group

| One person           | 253 | 101 | 100 to 77 |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| One to five persons  | 385 | 272 | " " 169   |
| Six to ten persons   | 68  | 76  | " " 221   |
| 11 to 50 persons     | 122 | 179 | " " 290   |
| 51 to 200 persons    | 101 | 168 | " " 326   |
| 201 to 1,000 persons | 90  | 188 | " " 303   |
| Over 1,000 persons   | 29  | 66  | " " 448   |

1,000 1,000

## NUMBER OF CONCERNS UNITED IN THREE GROUPS:

|                        | 1882      | 1907      | Proportion. |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Small concerns (1-5)   | 2,882,768 | 3,024,118 | 100 to 105  |
| Middle concerns (6-50) | 112,715   | 267,410   | 100 " 237   |
| Big concerns (over 50) | 9,974     | 32,007    | 100 " 321   |

### NUMBER OF PERSONS IN

Of 1,000 persons there fall in each group

|                | 1882      | 1907      | 1882 | 1907 | Proportion |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|------|------|------------|
| Small concerns | 4,335,822 | 5,383,233 | 590  | 373  | 100 to 124 |
| Middle         | 1,391,720 | 3,688,838 | 190  | 255  | 100 to 265 |
| Big            | 1,613,247 | 5,363,851 | 220  | 372  | 100 to 333 |

1,000 1,000

### II. Industry only, Trades.

| Persons                 | 1882      | 1907      | Proportion |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1 to 5 Small concerns   | 2,175,857 | 1,871,785 | 100 to 86  |
| 6 to 50 Middle concerns | 85,001    | 187,449   | 100 to 221 |
| Over 50 Big concerns    | 9,481     | 29,154    | 100 to 308 |

### PERSONS.

|                 | 1882      | 1907      | 100 to |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Small Concerns  | 3,270,404 | 3,203,210 | 98     |
| Middle concerns | 1,109,128 | 2,720,986 | 245    |
| Big concerns    | 1,554,131 | 4,951,552 | 319    |

### III. Motor Power in the Industry, 1907.

| Number of Persons | H.P. plus | Kilowatt  | Total H.P. |           |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| 1 to 5            | 2,179,331 | 609,628   | 101,365    | 747,484   |
| 6 to 10           | 695,941   | 287,483   | 62,140     | 372,245   |
| 11 to 50          | 1,830,195 | 1,177,333 | 148,239    | 1,379,768 |
| 51 to 200         | 2,034,020 | 9,736,441 | 205,058    | 1,915,320 |
| 201 to 1,000      | 1,869,023 | 1,891,978 | 406,354    | 2,444,619 |
| Over 1,000        | 1,277,788 | 2,289,064 | 436,411    | 2,882,583 |

One Kilowatt equals 1.36 H.P.

One Kilowatt equals 1.36 H.P.

The small enterprises in ALL branches of trade, increased by 5 per cent., the middle concerns by 137 per cent., the big concerns by 221 per cent., and the number of persons as well as the machine-power in the big concerns increased at a far greater rate than they did in the smaller ones.

In the industries, the concerns where the boss works alone, diminished rapidly in number, whereas the concerns increased at a quicker rate, in proportion as they were larger. The increase in the very big concerns is immense.

Another foundation of society, a new basis, was evidently laid by the unconscious, involuntary workings of capitalism.

When we discuss the development of the number of MEN employed, we give more at large the figures regarding them; here we only wish to point out, that of every 1,000 persons employed in commerce, industry and agriculture in 1882, about 590 worked in the small concerns, 190 in the middle, and 220 in the big ones. In 1907, these figures were: 378 in the small, 255 in the middle, and 372 in the big concerns.

In this country, therefore, 627 of every 1,000 persons worked in the middle and big concerns.

These figures, however, do not demonstrate the enormous victory of the big and the gigantic concerns clearly enough. The concentration of the means of production in the big concerns is far more advanced than the concentration of the workers. This becomes quite evident if we compare the horse-power used by the big industries, with those employed by the middle and minor concerns.

In 1907, each concern per 1,000 persons, amounted to:—

| Concerns with persons | Horse Power. |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1 to 5                | 34           |
| 6 to 10               | 54           |
| 11 to 50              | 75           |
| 51 to 200             | 98           |
| 201 to 1,000          | 131          |
| Over 1,000            | 226          |

If we compare the persons employed, with the horse-power, we see how immeasurably stronger the big industry is, not only in regard to the men employed, but also in the amount of machine-power that is used.

In 1907, Germany numbered 506 huge concerns (with over 1,000 workers). These, however, represent almost one-third of the entire production already.

The small concerns (with less than 20 persons), carry out only exceedingly small portion of the labour which production requires.

These figures testify clearly at last, the immense ascendancy of the big industries. Of course, in industrially backward countries, like Holland, this is less marked; but in Germany, England and America, in all the countries that

guide and cause the development of industry, the importance of the big industry, since 1907, has increased at an ever greater rate.

Where has gone society of old, the greatest strength of which lay in its small industries? That old society is dead for ever.

The bourgeoisie teaches the Christian workers that God does not want Socialism. But do not those Christian workers see that the individual, the personal, the small labour is being replaced by the work carried out in common on a large scale. They must decide for themselves whether it is a God who brings this about, or the force that is inherent in things and men. Happen it does. Neither they, nor their employers, their priests or clergymen deny it.

Besides the statistics of 1882 and 1907, we yet wish to quote these of 1895, in certain directions, adding thereto a few remarks.

Concerns in industry, commerce and agriculture in Germany with:—

|                  | Increase in per cent. |           |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
|                  | 1882-1895             | 1895-1907 |
| 1 to 5 persons   | 1.8                   | 7.2       |
| 6 to 10    "     | 65.1                  | 81.4      |
| 11 to 50   "     | 67.9                  | 55.6      |
| 51 to 200   "    | 98.0                  | 68.8      |
| 200 to 1,000   " | 75.6                  | 74.0      |
| over 1,000   "   | 100.8                 | 124.8     |
| Total            | 4.6                   | 10.7      |

The huge concerns grew most rapidly, the increase in percentage there was from 100.8 to 124.8.

It will be averred, however, that the small industries all increased by 7.2 per cent., whilst from 1882-1895, the increase was only 1.8 per cent.

This is quite true. We should not forget, though, that it is the big industries themselves, which call into being entirely new small trades—that of the repair-shop for cycles, for instance THESE CONCERNS, HOWEVER, ARE NOT, LIKE THE SMALL CONCERNS OF OLD, INDEPENDENT DETACHED CONCERNS; THEY ARE COMPLETELY DOMINATED BY THE BIG INDUSTRIES.

And, moreover, these figures, as we have given them here, are largely deceptive. They comprise, also, the small concerns of commerce. If we deduct these, the number of small concerns (1-5 persons), from 1895-1907, has decreased from 1,989,572 to 1,910,261, therefore by more than 79,000.

The smaller shops reckon themselves under the retail-trade of commerce! The concerns of one single person, for instance, in the so-called refreshment business, increased from 48,054 to 80,654, and these are all either tiny inns or bars, that are independent concerns only in name, cafés depending altogether upon the breweries, or concerns of such a sort that the owner can barely exist on his proletarian income.

In the period from 1895-1907, the small groceries increased from 82,929 to 108,948. This, our opponents are sure to quote as a refutation of Marxism. On close inspection, however, the real truth appears also from these figures.

In 1895, 61,232 among these 82,929 small groceries, constituted still their owners' main source of income, in the 21,697 remaining cases, they served merely as a by-profit.

In 1907, the small shop was no more than a by-profit in 54,777 cases, and it was the main source of income, in only 49,171.

To quote one more case, the trade statistics for 1907, give the number of 48,348 street-merchants as independent traders, against 81,996 in 1895.

A queer kind of independent trade!

The result of all this conjuring with figures shows that the one-person trades, have diminished absolutely, in commerce, industry and agriculture alike.

In purely one-person trades, these numbered in:

|  | 1882      | 1895      | 1907      |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|  | 1,887,872 | 1,714,851 | 1,446,206 |

For the industries alone, these ciphers were :-

|  | 1882      | 1895      | 1907      |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|  | 1,430,465 | 1,237,349 | , 994,743 |

For the industries alone, these ciphers were:—

| 1882      | 1895      | 1907      |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1,480,465 | 1,287,349 | , 994,748 |

(To be continued.)