he worked hard at French history in order to combat the theories of the aristocracy and to prove the illegitimacy of their reactionary claims. He published his work in the collection Ten Years of Historical Study (1834). In 1821 he published his Letters on the History of France and in 1825 his History of the Conquest of England by the Normans. He became blind in 1826 and from that time onwards withdrew from public activity. But he did not give up his work. Towards the end of his life he published three volumes of his Collection of Unpublished Documents on the History of the Third Estate. The book to which Marx refers in his letter was a sort of introduction to this collection. (See also page 56.)

26. MARX TO ENGELS

London, 14 December, 1855.

...You would never guess who came to see me the day before yesterday, in the evening—Edgar Bauer, whom I had not seen for about a year, and with him—Bruno [Bauer]. Bruno has already been here a fortnight and wants to stay about six months, "in order to put his assertion to the test"—a test which certainly cannot fail, considering the way he is setting about it. The man has visibly aged; his forehead has developed and he now more or less gives the impression of a pedantic old professor. For the moment he is lodging with Edgar—in a shack somewhere about the end of Highgate—and there he sits in the midst of the deepest petty-bourgeois misery, seeing and hearing nothing, too. This he believes to be London, imagining that except for thirty thousand privileged persons all Englishmen live like Edgar Bauer. His hatred and "contempt" for the country are therefore enormous. He feels as if he were living "in Treuenbrietzen."* London is a regular "prison" when you come from "Berlin." It also came out incidentally that his present ideal is the "East Friesian," "Altenburgian" and partly the "Westphalian" peasant—those true aristocrats. He is also convinced that no amount of subtle argument will do away with these louts—they are the

* Treuenbrietzen, a suburb of Potsdam.

1161: "Every union of the citizens of Treves which is also called sworn confederacy and which we have abolished in the city... but which as we have heard was nevertheless later established, shall be dissolved and declared null and void."

This policy of the German emperors was utilised by the French kings, who gave secret support to the "sworn confederacies" and "communes" in Lorraine, Alsace, Dauphiné, Franche-Comté, Lyonnais, etc., in order to detach them from the German Empire: "According to the information which has reached our Highness, the king of France... is seeking to corrupt the sincerity of your loyalty." (Rudolph I, letter to the citizens of Besançon.*) Just the same policy which these fellows adopted to make the Italian cities Guelph.

It is often funny how the word "communio" [commune, community] is heaped with abuse just as Communism is to-day. The parson Guilbert of Rayon, writes, for instance: "Communio is a new and extremely bad name."†

There is frequently something quite pathetic about the way in which the burghers in the twelfth century invite the peasants to escape to the cities, to the sworn communes. So for instance in the Charter of St. Quentin:

"They" (the citizens of St. Quentin) "have sworn together each to give common aid to his confederate, to have common counsel, common responsibility and common defence. In common we have determined that whoever shall enter our commune and give us his aid whether by reason of flight either from the power of his enemies or for other offence... shall be allowed to enter the commune, for the door is open to all,‡ and if his lord has unjustly detained his goods and will not hold them rightfully we will execute justice on that account.".§


* Quoted in Latin.
† "Communio nomen ac passimum nonum."*
‡ Underlined by Marx.
§ Quoted in French.
rocks on which the modern levelling nonsense bemoaned by the “dissolutionist” will come to grief. It is very curious to hear the “Critique” (“Criticism”) confess that ultimately its real basis is Berthold Auerbach. In his opinion, with the exception of a few “purely commercial cities,” the towns are decaying in Germany, but the “country” is flourishing magnificently. He did not know a thing about the growth of industry but quietly lamented all the same that they were doing nothing now in Germany but make “improvements.”

The “English language” is “miserable,” completely Latinised. Hereupon I proceeded to point out to him as a consolation that the Dutch and the Danes say the same about the German language and that the only genuine fellows who have not been corrupted by foreign tongues are the Icelanders. The old boy has occupied himself a great deal with languages. He speaks Polish and therefore declares that the Polish language is the “most beautiful of all.” His language studies seem to have been very uncritical. Considers Dobrovski much “more important” than Grimm, for instance, and calls him the father of comparative philology. He has also allowed the Poles in Berlin to stuff him up with a tale that old Lelewel, in one of his latest works, has demolished Grimm’s History of the German Language.

During his student period in Berlin (1836-41) Marx was associated with the circle of Left Hegelians and was a member of the Young Hegelians’ Club. Of the members of this club, Bruno Bauer and Karl Friedrich Koppens had a great influence on the young Marx.

**Bauer, Bruno** (1809-82). Was one of the leaders of the Young Hegelians in Berlin; owing to his criticism of religion he was removed from his position as a lecturer at Bonn University. He was the author of numerous critical works on religion. Later on, he lived in very bad circumstances and at times had to support himself by small farming. Marx and Engels criticised Bauer, who did not move beyond the idealistic Hegelian philosophy. Bauer fought fiercely against the materialist philosophy of Feuerbach, and especially against Marx and Engels when by their materialistic “turning upside down” of the Hegelian dialectic they had developed the narrow, undialectic materialism of Feuerbach into dialectical historical materialism and on the basis of this theoretical realisation had taken a practical part in revolutionary struggle, while the Young Hegelians with Bauer at their head contented themselves with phrases. Marx and Engels made a criticism of Bauer, who with idealistic presumption called himself “the critic,” “the criticism,” above all in their polemical work The Holy Family, or a Criticism of the Critical Criticism (1845) and also in the German Ideology. (Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe, I, 3, and 5.) Marx’s letters give a lifelike portrait of the ageing professor who had spent all his life in the backward, limited, petty-bourgeois conditions of Germany and had not passed beyond the confines of bourgeois thought.

**Bauer, Edgar.** Bruno Bauer’s brother, who also belonged to the Young Hegelians and wrote several works of religious and political criticism of a bourgeois-liberal character.

**Auerbach, Berthold** (1812-82). German writer. Author of romantic and idealised stories of peasant life. [Ed. Eng. ed.]

**Grimm, Jacob** (1785-1863). Famous German philologist and Germanic scholar. From 1830 Professor of German Language and Literature in Gottingen. Dismissed in 1837 for his protest against the abrogation of the Hanoverian Constitution. Elected member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences in 1840. Author of the German Grammar, History of the German Language, of the great German Dictionary and of many other works on the history of language; also published collections of historical, legal and literary documents from original sources.

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**27. Marx to Engels**

London, 18 January, 1856.

... Have seen Bruno again several times. Romanticism reveals itself more and more as the “presupposition” of the critical criticism. In political economy he rhapsodises over the physiocrats, whom he misunderstands, and believes in the beneficent effects of landed property. Added to this he has a great opinion of the economic fantasies of Adam Müller, the German romantic. In military science his highest authority
is the "genius" Bülow. I told him that these latest disclosures of his enabled me fully to appreciate the arduous labour of his thought. As to Russia, he declares that the old order of things in the West must be done away with: this can only happen from the East because only the Oriental possesses real hatred, namely, against the Western peoples, and Russia is the only compact power in the East, besides being the only country in Europe where "coherence" still exists. As for our illusions about internal class struggles: (1) the workers have no "hate"; (2) have never accomplished anything with such hate as they do possess; (3) are a "mob" (without interest for synoptikers) which can only be tamed and led by force and cunning; (4) give them a penny rise and "everything" is settled. No one, moreover, who does not belong to the "descendants of the conquerors" can play any part in world history—except in the theoretical field. And here something actually has been done in the last sixteen years, but only in Germany, and indeed only by Bruno. He has brought things to such a point that "scientific" theology has ceased to exist in Germany; the only place where it did exist, and that "Tholuck does not write any more." What an immense result! Otherwise a pleasant old gentleman. Thinks of stopping a year in England. I believe he is speculating on introducing the "scientific theology" which has ceased to exist in Germany, into England. Humboldt he calls a complete ass, because he fraudulently appropriated the renown abroad which should belong to Bruno...
case came to an end in this way: Count Hatzfeld's estate agent, Stockum, who, as you know, was later sentenced to five years' hard labour at the Assises, had fallen out with the Count. He let Lassalle know that he had documents in his possession which would land the Count in chains for perjury, forgery, etc. Lassalle promised him 10,000 talers and then persuaded the Chief Prosecutor, Kösteritz (who has been forced to resign owing to this affair) to let the Count know that a charge lay against him. Hatzfeld is already dashing to Paris when Lassalle hands him the compromising documents and withdraws the charge on condition he signs the agreement with the Countess. (Kösteritz of course merely acted as his tool.) Thus it was not his legal acumen but a regular low intrigue which brought about the sudden end of the case. He did not pay Stockum the 10,000 talers and the workers say quite rightly that such a breach of faith could only be forgiven if he had handed over the money to the party instead of embezzling it for the Countess. They tell of a mass of dirty personal dealings which I cannot repeat because I forget them one after the other. Among others: Lassalle speculated in foreign government bonds with a Düsseldorf man, Scheuer, who advanced him the money for this. They lost. In the meantime Scheuer went bankrupt. Lassalle wins the case. Scheuer demands the money he advanced Lassalle. Lassalle mockingly refers him to a Paragraph 6 of the Code,* which forbids speculation on foreign exchanges. The workers say they allowed everything Lassalle did to pass on the excuse that he was involved in the case as a matter of honour. Now, when he has won, instead of letting the Countess pay him for his work and making himself independent, he lives shamefully under her yoke as a kept man, without any pretext whatever. He always boasted about what he was going to do as soon as the case was won. Now in a deliberately provocative way he flings the workers aside as superfluous tools. He attended one more (private) meeting, on New Year's Day, because a French colonel was present. To the general amazement he spoke before sixty workers of nothing but the "struggle of civilisation against barbarism," of the western powers against Russia. They say his plan was to go to Berlin, play the great gentleman there and open a "salon." On his return from there he promised the Countess in Levy's presence to create a "court of literary men" for her. He constantly, also in Levy's presence, expressed his "longing for dictatorship," etc., etc. (He seems to have quite a different idea of himself from what we have of him, he regards himself as a world-compeller because he was reckless in a personal intrigue, as if a man of real importance would sacrifice ten years to such a trifle). To show how dangerous he is, moreover: in order to smuggle a man from the workers' party into the police as a sham spy he gave the man one of my letters and told him to establish his credentials by saying he had stolen it from Lassalle. The workers say further that with his diplomatic ways he would never have come out so sharply against them if he did not directly intend to go over to the bourgeois party. At the same time he credits himself with enough influence to be able to talk them over at the moment of an insurrection, if he gets up on a table and harangues the masses, etc. The hate against him is so great, Levy says, that whatever we might decide, the workers would massacre him if he was in Düsseldorf when a movement took place. They are convinced, moreover, that he will choose the right moment to betake himself elsewhere if anything suspicious comes to his ears.

All these are only separate details of what I listened to and in patches retained. The whole has made a definite impression on Freiligrath and me, though I was much prejudiced in favour of Lassalle and greatly though I mistrust workers' gossip. I have told Levy that of course it is impossible to come to a decision on a report from one side only; in any case suspicion was useful; they should continue to watch the man but for the time being avoid any open break; we should perhaps find an opportunity of forcing Lassalle to take up a clear position, etc., etc.

What do you think of it? I should also like to know Lupus's* opinion.

* Lupus—Wilhelm Wolff, to whom Vol. I of Capital was dedicated. [Ed. Eng. ed.]
2. The second object of Levy's mission was to give me information about the position of the workers in the Rhine province. The Düsseldorf workers are still in contact with the workers of Cologne, where there are no longer any "gentlemen." But the chief propaganda is now among the factory workers in Solingen, Iserlohn and district, Elberfeld, and the mining district of Westphalia.

In the iron districts the chaps want to take to force and are only to be restrained by the prospect of a French revolution and because "the Londoners do not think the time has come yet." If the thing drags on much longer Levy thinks it will be difficult to prevent a rising. But in any case an insurrection in Paris would be the signal. These people seem to be firmly convinced that we and our friends will hasten to them from the very first moment. Naturally they feel the need of political and military leaders. Nobody can blame them for that. But I am afraid that with their highly naturalistic plans they would have been smashed up four times over before we had perhaps even been able to leave England. In any case it is due to them that one should explain from the military point of view exactly what can and what cannot be done. I have told them, of course, that if circumstances permitted we would come and join the Rhenish workers; that any rising on their own, without initiative in Paris, Vienna or Berlin, would be senseless; that if Paris does give the signal, it would be well to risk everything in any case, for then even a momentary defeat could only have bad consequences for the moment; that I would seriously consult my friends on the question of what can be directly done by the working-class population of the Rhine Province itself, and that after a while they should send someone to London again, but that they should do nothing without previous agreement.

F. L. A. LASSALLE, FERDINAND (1825-64). Lawyer. Founder of reformism in the German labour movement.

In 1857 he published his philosophical work, The Philosophy of Heraclitus the Dark of Ephesus, with which Marx deals in Letter 37. His pamphlet, The Italian War and Prussia's Task, which Marx mentions in Letter 46, appeared in 1859 and his System of Acquired Rights in 1861 (Letters 51, 52). On May 23, 1863 was founded the Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein (General Association of German Workers) in which Lassalle played the leading part. In the Open Letter to the Workers' Committee of the Leipzig Workers' Association, which Lassalle had already written in February 1864, he laid down the two main demands of the Association: universal suffrage and state credits for producers' co-operatives. (Letter 63.) Lassalle led the Association along the path of compromise with the Prussian Junker state and in secret negotiations with Bismarck promised him the support of the workers. (See Letters 73, 80, 81.)

In July 1864 Lassalle went for a holiday to Switzerland and there became engaged to Helene von Dönniges. When she was obliged by her parents to give him up he became involved in a duel with her fiancé which led to his death. (See Letters 69, 70.)

Lassalle's historical service was that he "converted the working class from an appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie into an independent political party." (Lenin, Collected Works, Russian edition, Vol. II, p. 480.) But "Lassalle and the Lassalleans, in view of the weak chances of the proletarian and democratic way [of the bourgeois revolution in Germany] pursued a vacillating policy and adapted themselves to the hegemony of the Junker Bismarck. Their mistakes amounted to a deviation of the workers' party on to the Bonapartist-state-socialist path." (Lenin, Collected Works, Russian edition, Vol. XVI, p. 547.) A detailed characterisation of Lassalle as a politician will be found in Letter 81.

LEVEY, GUSTAV. Düsseldorf merchant, one of the most active agitators in the Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein.

HATZFELD, SOPHIE VON, COUNTESS (1805-89). Had much to suffer from her husband, Count Hatzfeld; Lassalle conducted the proceedings for her divorce for ten years and finally won the case. [See Letter 81 etc. for her later rôle.]

30. ENGELS TO MARX

Manchester, 14 April, 1856

Now the last phase of the swindle is beginning: Russia is importing capital and speculation, and with such distances and
railways hundreds of miles long the swindle will no doubt develop so well that in a short time it will break its neck. When first we hear of the Grand Irkutsk Trunk Line, with branches to Pekin, etc., then it will be time to pack up our traps. This time the crash will beat anything known before: all the factors are there: intensity, universal extension, entanglement of all possessing and ruling social elements. The most amusing thing about it is the English gentlemen who are nourishing themselves on the belief that with the “healthy” trade that exists here nothing of this kind can occur. It is clear enough that no big swindle can be carried out in industrial production, where it is well known that by a small capital investment in direct production all the markets can be glutted within a year, and especially while such a colossal demand exists for capital to be invested in means of communication. But industrial production too is being increased considerably beyond its normal proportions by the communications swindle, only more slowly than in 1833-36 and 1842-45, for instance. This year cotton prices are soaring rapidly in view of an unprecedented harvest of 3,500,000 bales, which seems no bigger this year, than, for instance, 2,500,000 bales would have seemed to be in 1850. Added to this the Continent is taking nearly three times as much in comparison with England this year as it did five years ago, as the following table of exports from America, September 1 to April 1 of each year, shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exports for 7 months</th>
<th>1856</th>
<th>1855</th>
<th>1854</th>
<th>1853</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To England</td>
<td>1,131,000</td>
<td>963,000</td>
<td>840,000</td>
<td>1,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To France</td>
<td>305,000</td>
<td>249,000</td>
<td>299,000</td>
<td>255,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To other European</td>
<td>346,000</td>
<td>167,000</td>
<td>179,000</td>
<td>204,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the Continent, which in 1853 imported an amount equal to \(\frac{1}{10}\) or one-third of the English imports, in 1856 took \(\frac{1}{15}\) or five-eigths. To this must also be added the exports to the Continent from England. You can see that Continental industry has increased quite out of all comparison with English industry, and Messrs. the Britons, being rather on the decline, have every reason not to over-trade in their cotton industry. The best comparison, however, is between 1833 and 1856, because in both these years the harvest was very big—3,500,000 and 3,500,000 bales. The large export to France is only apparent, for part of it goes from Havre to Switzerland, Baden, Frankfort, and Antwerp. But it is in this enormous growth of Continental industry that the most vital germ of the English revolution is to be found...

Marx and Engels attached great importance to crises because they regarded them as the crudest expression of the conflict between the powerfully developed productive forces and the narrow productive relations in capitalist society. Hence they carefully studied the signs of the approach of crises and their course. In a letter to Bernstein, 25 January, 1882, Engels wrote:

"That crises are one of the most powerful levers of revolutionary upheaval was already stated in The Communist Manifesto and was treated in detail up to 1848 inclusive in the review in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, where, however, it was shown too that returning prosperity also breaks revolutions and lays the basis for the victory of reaction."

In 1856-57 signs of the approach of a crisis called forth hopes of a revolution. Marx writes to Engels on September 1856: "This time, moreover, the thing is on a European scale never reached before and I do not think we shall be able to sit here as spectators much longer. Even the fact that I have at last got to the point of furnishing a house again and sending for my books proves to me that the ‘mobilisation’ of our persons is at hand."

In a letter to Marx on 15 November, 1857, Engels in analysing the course of the crisis, writes: "It would be desirable for this ‘improvement’ to have merged into the chronic crisis before a second and decisive blow falls. Chronic pressure is necessary for a while in order to warm up the populations. The proletariat will then strike better, with better consciousness of its cause and more unity, just as a cavalry attack succeeds much better if the horses have first to trot 500 paces in order to come within charging distance of..."
the enemy. I would not like anything to happen too soon, before all Europe is completely involved—the struggle afterwards would be harder, more tedious and more fluctuating. May or June would still be almost too early. The masses must have got damned lethargic after such long prosperity."

In the same letter Engels writes of the joy with which he awaits the revolution:

"From the time the swindle crashed in New York I had no more peace in Jersey* and feel in magnificent form amidst this general downbreak. The bourgeois filth of the last seven years had stuck to me to a certain extent after all, if it is washable away now I shall feel another fellow again. The crisis will do me as much good physically as a sea-bathing, I can see that already. In 1848 we said: Now our time is coming—and in a certain sense it came, but now it is coming altogether, now it will be a fight for life. This makes my military studies more practical at once. I am instantly throwing myself into the existing organisation and elementary tactics of the Prussian, Austrian, Bavarian and French armies, and beyond that into nothing but riding, that is, fox hunting, which is the real school." These statements show how Marx and Engels studied crises, not from the point of view of abstract theoretical research, but as revolutionaries.

31. MARX TO ENGELS

London, 16 April, 1856

The day before yesterday there was a little banquet to celebrate the anniversary of the People's Paper. On this occasion I accepted the invitation, as the times seemed to demand it of me, and all the more since I alone (as announced in the paper) of all the refugees had been invited and the first toast also fell to me, and I was to speak for the sovereignty of the proletariat in all countries. So I made a little English speech which I shall not allow to be printed.† The aim which I had in mind was achieved. Herr Talandier, who had to buy his ticket for 2s. 6d., and the rest of the French and other refugees, have convinced themselves that we are the only "intimate allies" of the Chartists and that though we refrain from public demonstrations and leave open flirtation with Chartism to the Frenchmen, we have it in our power to reoccupy at any time the position already historically due to us. This had become all the more necessary because at the meeting I mentioned on 25 February, under Pyat's chairmanship, the German Knote* Scherzer (old boy) came forward and in truly awful Straubinger style,† denounced the German "men of learning," the "intellectual workers" who had left them (the Knoten) in the lurch and forced them to discredit themselves among the other nations. You know this Scherzer from Paris days. I have had some more meetings with friend Schapper and have found him a very repentant sinner. The retirement in which he has lived for the last two years seems rather to have sharpened his mental powers. You will understand that in any eventuality it may always be good to have the man at hand, and still more out of Willich's hands. Schapper is now furious with the Knoten at the Windmill...‡

I fully agree with you about the Rhine province. The fatal thing for us is that I see something looming in the future which will smack of "treachery to the fatherland." It will depend very much on the turn of things in Berlin whether we are not forced into a position similar to that of the Mainz Clubbists in the old revolution. That will be hard. We who are so enlightened about our worthy brothers on the other side of the Rhine! The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of covering the rear of the proletarian revolution by a second edition of the Peasants' War. Then the affair will be splendid.

* Knote. Handicraftsman, journeyman. Marx and Engels had their own frequent uses for this word between themselves, and no one English word conveys all they meant by it. The Knote not only has the narrow and backward mentality of the German handicraftsman in a period of rising capitalism (cf. Straubinger), but is in general essentially a non-proletarian, petty-bourgeois, philistine dichard.

† Straubinger. See Letter 1, Note.

‡ Great Windmill Street, London, where the house was in which the meetings of the German Workers' Educational Society took place.
Chartism was the first independent political movement of the working class. “Great Britain, of all other countries, has seen developed on the greatest scale the despotism of capital and the slavery of labour. In no other country have the intermediate stations between the millionaire commanding whole industrial armies and the wage slave living only from hand to mouth so, gradually, been swept away from the soil. There exist here no longer as in continental countries, large classes of peasants and artisans almost equally dependent on their own property and labour. A complete divorce of property from labour has been effected in Great Britain. In no other country, therefore, the war between the two classes that constitute modern society has assumed so colossal dimensions and features so distinct and palpable.” (From Marx’s Letter of 9 March, 1854, to the “Labour Parliament” in Manchester—published in the People’s Paper, 18 March, 1854.)

After years of struggle against the capitalists, the working class of England arrived at a consciousness of their position as a class and strengthened their organisation. With the development of large-scale industry the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy also became increasingly acute, especially as the tariffs on corn imposed in the interests of the big landowners added enormously to the workers’ cost of living. In order to prosecute their struggle against these Corn Laws, which had necessitated some rise in the workers’ wages, the bourgeoisie had to break the parliamentary monopoly held by the great landowners. In their struggle they made use of the indignation and discontent of the workers and in 1832 (First Reform Act) attained their aim—the great landowners were forced to alter the franchise system. Needless to say the workers were betrayed. Not only did they not get the vote, but by the compromise come to between the bourgeoisie and the big landowners the Corn Laws remained in force for the time being. From that moment onwards began the independent working-class movement, and this received a still stronger impulse from the Poor Law of 1834, which robbed the poor of support and drove them into prison-like workhouses. During the trade crisis of 1836-37 the slogan of a struggle for influence in Parliament in order to improve their position spread among the workers and found its first expression in the “Charter” of the London Workingmen’s Association, the six points of which comprised a demand for universal male suffrage, secret ballot, annual Parliament, equal electoral districts and payment of members. Enormous masses of the working class quickly joined in the agitation.

“In Chartism it is the whole working class which arises against the bourgeoisie and attacks, first of all the political power, the legislative rampart with which the bourgeoisie has surrounded itself. . . . These six points . . . harmless as they seem, are sufficient to overthrow the whole English Constitution, Queen and Lords included. The so-called monarchical and aristocratic elements of the Constitution can maintain themselves only because the bourgeoisie has an interest in the continuance of their sham existence; and more than a sham existence neither possesses to-day.” (Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844.)*

Chartism was only in form a purely political movement, in reality it was the class movement of the workers against capitalist exploitation. “Chartism is of an essentially social nature, a class movement. The ‘Six Points’ which for the Radical bourgeoisie are the beginning and end of the matter, which are meant, at the utmost, to call forth certain further reforms of the Constitution, are for the proletarian a mere means to further ends. . . . The ‘knife and fork question’ of the preacher Stephens was a truth for a part of the Chartists only, in 1838; it is a truth for all of them in 1845.” (Engels, ibid.) The more strongly this social character came to expression in the movement, the more widely did Socialism spread among the Chartists. After 1848 the decay of the movement began (see Letters 8, 35, 36, 41), especially owing to the rapid growth of industry, in the course of which unemployment decreased and, thanks to England’s monopoly in the world market, the upper stratum of the English working class received higher wages. The era of reformism, the development of the co-operative movement, and the co-operation of working-class leaders with the bourgeoisie now began. (See Letters 8, 63, 71, 74, etc.) From the beginning of their acquaintance with the English working class Marx and Engels were always in close contact with the Chartists, especially with Julian Harney and Ernest Jones. (See Letter 18 and Notes.)

flying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science, on the one hand, and modern misery and dissolution, on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive forces and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted. Some may walk over it; others may wish to get rid of modern arts, in order to get rid of modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that so signal a progress in industry wants to be completed by as signal a repress in politics. For our part, we do not mistake the shape of the shrewd spirit that continues to mark all these contradictions. We know that if the newfangled forces of society are to work satisfactorily, they need only be mastered by newfangled men—and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself. In the signs that bewilder the middle class, the aristocracy, and the poor prophets of regression, we recognise our old friend Robin Goodfellow, the old mole that can work in the earth so fast, that worthy pioneer—the revolution. The English working men are the firstborn sons of modern industry. Certainly, then, they will not be the last to aid the social revolution produced by that industry—a revolution which means the emancipation of their class all over the world, which is as universal as capital-rule and wage slavery. I know the heroic struggles the English working class has gone through since the middle of the last century; struggles not the less glorious because they are shrouded in obscurity and burked by middle-class historians. To take vengeance for the misdeeds of the ruling class there existed in the Middle Ages in Germany a secret tribunal called the Vehmgericht. If a red cross was seen marked on a house, people knew that its owner was doomed by the Vehm. All the houses of Europe are now marked by the mysterious red cross. History is the judge; its executioner, the proletarian.”

Schapper, Karl (1813-70). German revolutionary. Member of the Communist League. In his preface to Marx’s pamphlet, Revolutions Concerning the Communist Trial in Cologne (1853), Engels gives the following characterisation of him:

“A giant in size, resolute and energetic, always ready to stake bourgeois life and existence, he was the model of the professional revolutionary who played a part in the thirties.”

*Barbes and Blanqui—French revolutionaries, who took part in all the French struggles and conspiracies of their time. Raspail: a doctor and bourgeois democrat.
Schapper was one of the leaders of the “Left” fraction in the Communist League.

The study of this fractional struggle is still of great importance today: in the minutes of the London Central Committee of the Communist League, 15 September, 1850, Marx’s own words are thus recorded: 

“The minority substitutes dogmatism for the standpoint of criticism, and idealism for materialism. It treats pure will as the motive power of revolution instead of actual conditions. While we say to the workers: ‘You have got to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and national wars not merely in order to change your conditions but in order to change yourselves and become qualified for political power,’ you on the contrary tell them, ‘We must achieve power immediately, otherwise we may as well lie down and go to sleep.’ While we specially point out the undeveloped nature of the German proletariat to the German workers, you flatter the national feelings and craft prejudices of the German handicraftsmen in the crudest way, which is of course more popular. Just as the democrats turned the word ‘people’ into a sacred being, so you have done with the word ‘proletariat.’ Like the Democrats you substitute revolutionary phrases for revolutionary development, etc.”

The importance which Marx attributed to the fight against the “Left” fraction is shown by the following observation which he made in his concluding note to the Communist Trial (London, January 8, 1875): “In moments of crisis, to lose one’s head becomes a crime against the Party which demands public expiation.”

MAINZ CLUBBISTS: Members of the Jacobin Club in Mainz (Germany) in 1792 who stood for the declaration of a Rhineland Republic and for its union with the revolutionary French Republic.

32. ENGELS TO MARX

Manchester, 23 May, 1856.

In our tour in Ireland we came from Dublin to Galway on the west coast, then twenty miles north inland, then to Lime-

* Quoted by Marx in his pamphlet Revelations Concerning the Communist Trial in Cologne.
† Schapper-Willich “Left” fraction.
of Galway, it is rather better, here there are at least some cattle, and the hills toward Limerick are excellently cultivated, mostly by Scottish farmers, the ruins have been cleared away and the country has a bourgeois appearance. In the southwest there are a lot of mountains and bogs but also wonderfully rich forest growth, beyond that again fine pastures, especially in Tipperary, and towards Dublin land which is, one can see, gradually coming into the hands of big farmers.

The country has been completely ruined by the English wars of conquest from 1100 to 1850 (for in reality both the wars and the state of siege lasted as long as that). It is a fact that most of the ruins were produced by destruction during the wars. The people itself has got its peculiar character from this, and despite all their Irish nationalist fanaticism the fellows feel that they are no longer at home in their own country. Ireland for the Saxon! That is now being realised. The Irishman knows he cannot compete with the Englishman, who comes with means in every respect superior; emigration will go on until the predominantly, indeed almost exclusively, Celtic character of the population is all to hell. How often have the Irish started to try and achieve something, and every time they have been crushed, politically and industrially! By consistent oppression they have been artificially converted into an utterly demoralised nation and now fulfil the notorious function of supplying England, America, Australia, etc., with prostitutes, casual labourers, pimps, thieves, swindlers, beggars and other rabble. This demoralised character persists in the aristocracy too. The landowners, who everywhere else have taken on bourgeois qualities, are here completely demoralised. Their country seats are surrounded by enormous, wonderfully beautiful parks, but all around is waste land, and where the money is supposed to come from it is impossible to see. These fellows ought to be shot. Of mixed blood, mostly tall, strong, handsome chaps, they all wear enormous moustaches under colossal Roman noses, give themselves the sham military airs of retired colonels, travel around the country after all sorts of pleasures, and if one makes an inquiry, they haven’t a penny, are laden with debts, and live in dread of the Encumbered Estates Court.

The history of English colonial rule is an unbroken chain of bloody wars and brutal exploitation. The use of military force and oppression was a necessary condition of England’s world monopoly in the nineteenth century. It insured the exploitation of millions of workers and peasants and made it possible for the bourgeoisie to split the working-class. A particularly crass example of this is afforded by English rule and policy in Ireland.

Marx and Engels regarded the Irish question as of decisive importance for the revolutionary struggle of the English proletariat for freedom. (See Letters 101, 102, 128, 130, 133-36, 141.)

Besides the letters contained in this volume the reader is referred to the Circular of the General Council of the International (January 1, 1870) to the Comité Fédéral Romand in Geneva (given in Marx’s letter to Kugelmann of March 28, 1870)* and to Lenin’s pamphlet On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination.

33. MARX TO ENGELS

London, 2 December, 1856

What has decided me definitely for Poland, on the basis of my latest studies of Polish history, is the historical fact that the intensity and vitality of all revolutions since 1789 can be gauged pretty accurately by their relation to Poland. Poland is their “external” thermometer. This can be demonstrated in detail from French history. It is obvious in our short German revolutionary epoch, and equally so in the Hungarian.

Of all the revolutionary governments, including that of Napoleon I, “the Committee of Public Safety” forms an exception only because it refused intervention not from weakness but from “mistrust.” In 1794 they summoned the agent of the Polish insurgents before them and put the following questions to this “citizen”:

“How is it that your Kosziusko is a popular dictator and yet suffers a king alongside of him, who, moreover, as Kosziusko must be aware, has been put on the throne by Russia?

* The Letters of Marx to Kugelmann. Martin Lawrence 1934.
Why does your dictator not dare to carry out the mass mobilisation of the peasants, for fear of the aristocrats who do not want ‘hands’ to be withdrawn from labour? How is it that his proclamations lose their revolutionary tone in proportion to the distance which his line of march removes him from Cracow? Why did he immediately punish the people’s insurrection in Warsaw with the gallows, while the aristocratic ‘traitors to their country’ wander freely about or are sheltered behind the lengthy formalities of a trial. Answer! To which the Polish ‘citizen’ could only remain silent.

What do you say to Neufchâtel and Valangin? This case has led me to supplement my highly defective knowledge of Prussian history. Indeed and indeed the history of the world has never produced anything more sordid. The long history of how the nominal kings of France became real kings is also full of petty struggles, treachery, and intrigues. But it is the history of the origin of a nation. Austrian history, which shows how a vassal of the German Empire establishes the power of his own house, becomes interesting from the circumstance that, thanks to the entanglements with the East, Bohemia, Italy, Hungary, etc., the vassal imposes himself as Kaiser; and ultimately because the power of this house assumes such dimensions that Europe fears it will become a universal monarchy. Nothing of this sort in Prussia. Prussia never subjugated a single powerful Slav nation and in five hundred years was never even able to succeed in getting hold of Pomerania until she finally got it by exchange.” In fact, the Margraviate of Brandenburg—as it was in the hands of the Hohenzollerns—never made any real conquests except Silesia. As this is its only conquest, Frederick II is doubtless the “Unique”! Petty thieving, bribery, direct purchase, underhand dealings with inheritances, etc.—all this shabby business is what the history of Prussia amounts to. And what is usually interesting in feudal history—the struggle between overlord and vassals, trickery with the towns, etc.—is here all caricatured to a dwarfish scale because the towns are petty and boring, the feudal lords are insignificant louts, and the sovereign himself is a nonentity. In the Reformation, as in the French Revolution,

In 1856 a clique of Neufchâtel noblemen carried through a monarchist Putsch in order to restore their vanishing privileges. These nobles proclaimed the restoration of the right of the Prussian kings to be princes of Neufchâtel (a right destroyed by the revolution of 1848). The Swiss authorities quickly suppressed the revolt and arrested all the participants (about sixty men). From this arose a conflict which threatened to lead to war. Mobilisation was on the point of taking place in Prussia.

Marx published an article in the Chartist People’s Paper of December 13, 1856, The Right Divine of the Hohenzollerns, in which he showed how the Hohenzollerns had really attained their “divine rights” over various possessions—Brandenburg, Prussia, the rank of Kurfürst and finally the rank of king, “by the divine right of bribery, open purchase, petty larceny, legacy hunting, and treacherous partition treaties.”

A characterisation of German history by Engels is to be found in his letter to Mehring of July 13, 1893: “In studying German history, which is simply one long continuous misery, I have always found that one only gets the right proportion by comparing it with the corresponding French periods, because what happens there is the exact opposite of what happens with us. There the construction of a national state from the scattered members of the feudal state, at the very moment where with us the chief decay sets in. There a rare objective logic in the whole course of the process, with us an arid and ever increasingly arid confusion. There foreign intervention is represented by the intervention of the English conquerors in
the Middle Ages on the side of the Provençal nationality as against the northern French. The English wars represent the Thirty Years' War, so to speak, which ends, however, with the driving out of the foreign invaders and the subjection of the south to the north. Next comes the struggle between the central power and its Burgundian vassal, the latter supporting itself on foreign possessions and playing the part of Brandenburg-Prussia; here again the central power is victorious and finally establishes the national state. And it is exactly at the same moment that with us the national state breaks down completely (so far as the 'German Kingdom' within the Holy Roman Empire can be called a national state) and the plundering of German territory begins on a large scale. It is a comparison of the most intensely humiliating order for the Germans, but all the more instructive for that very reason, and since our workers have brought Germany into the front rank of the historical movement we can swallow the disgrace of the past rather more easily. Very specially characteristic of the German development is the fact that the two component states, which ultimately divided up the whole of Germany between them, were neither of them purely German, but both colonies on conquered Slav territory—Austria a Bavarian and Prussia a Saxon colony—and that they only acquired power in Germany by supporting themselves on foreign, non-German possessions—Austria on Hungary (to say nothing of Bohemia) and Brandenburg on Prussia. This sort of thing did not take place on the western frontier, the most threatened frontier; on the northern frontier the Danes were left to protect Germany from the Danes, and in the south there was so little to protect that the guardians of the frontier, the Swiss, were able to tear themselves free even from Germany."

34. MARX TO ENGELS

[London], 25 September, 1857.

... The history of the army brings out more clearly than anything else the correctness of our conception of the connection between the productive forces and social relations. In general, the army is important for economic development. For instance, it was in the army that the ancients first developed a complete wages system. Similarly among the Romans the peculium castrense* was the first legal form in which the right of others than fathers of families to movable property was recognised. So also the guild system among the corporation of fabri [smiths]. Here too the first use of machinery on a large scale. Even the special value of metals and their use as money appears to have been originally based—as soon as Grimm's stone age was passed—on their military significance. The division of labour within one branch was also first carried out in the armies. The whole history of the forms of bourgeois society is very strikingly epitomised here. When you can find time you must work the thing out from this point of view.

In my opinion, the only points which have been overlooked in your account are: (1) The first complete appearance of mercenary troops on a large scale and at once among the Carthaginians. (For our private use I will look up a book on the Carthaginian army written by a Berlin man, which I only came to know later.) (2) The development of the army in Italy in the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. Tactical tricks, at any rate, were developed here. Extremely humorous too is Machiavelli's description (which I will copy out for you) in his History of Florence of the way the Condottieri fought one another. (No, when I come to you at Brighton (when?) I would rather bring the volume of Machiavelli with me. The History of Florence is a masterpiece.) And finally, (3) Asiatic military organisation as it first appeared among the Persians and then, though modified in a great variety of ways, among the Mongols, Turks, etc.

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*Marx is referring to Engels' article Army, written by him for the New American Cyclopaedia, edited by George Ripley and A. Dana, New York (1860-62). Other articles on military questions, which Engels wrote for Marx, were also published there. The articles had to be written at great speed by the given date demanded by the publisher. In his letter Marx

* The separate property (as distinguished from family property) which the Roman soldier acquired in camp.
praises the article but says how much it troubles him that Engels should have to work so hard. "Especially if I had known that you would be working into the night I would rather have let the whole thing go to hell."

Marx and Engels always regarded questions relating to war as of great importance; hence they often occupied themselves with military questions. Evidence of this is also afforded by the following passage from Engels' letter to Marx of January 7, 1859, where he says:

"Among other things I am now reading Clausewitz on war. A strange way of philosophising but very good on his subject. To the question whether war should be called an art or a science, the answer given is that war is most like trade. Fighting is to war what cash payment is to trade, for however rarely it may be necessary for it actually to occur, everything is directed towards it and eventually it must take place all the same and be decisive."

Lenin also studied Clausewitz on war. V. Sorin, in No. 111 of Pravda (1923) reported the following remark of Lenin's about Clausewitz: "Political tactics and military tactics are what is called in German Grenzgebiet [borderland] and Party workers might profitably study the works of Clausewitz, the great German military theoretician. (Leninsky Sbornik, Vol. XII, p. 390.)"

35. MARX TO ENGELS

[London], 24 November, 1857.

...Jones is behaving very stupidly.* You know that long before the crisis—with no definite aim except to find some pretext for agitation in this lukewarm time—he had arranged for a Chartist conference, to which bourgeois radicals (not only Bright† but even fellows like Cunningham) were also to be invited. In general, a compromise was to be come to with the bourgeoisie by which they were to get the ballot‡ if they would concede manhood suffrage to the workers. This proposal gave rise to divisions in the Chartist party which in their turn involved Jones more deeply in his scheme.

Now instead of using the crisis to replace a badly selected pretext for agitation by real agitation, he clings firmly to his nonsense and shocks the workers by preaching co-operation with the bourgeoisie, while he is far from inspiring the latter with the slightest confidence. Some of the radical papers are cajoling him in order to ruin him completely. In his own paper that old ass, Frost, whom he himself had boosted as a hero and whom he had nominated president of his conference, has come out against him with a most brutal letter in which he says among other things: If Jones considers the co-operation of the middle class necessary—and nothing can be done without it—he should come out for it bona fide [in a genuine way]. Who gave him the right to draw up the programme of the conference without their allies? Who gave him the right to nominate Frost President and to play the dictator himself, etc.?

So now he is in a hole, and for the first time is playing not merely a stupid but an ambiguous part. I have not seen him for a long time, but will now visit him. I consider him honest, and as in England no public character can become impossible because he does stupid things, etc., it is only a question of his extricating himself as quickly as possible from his own snare. The ass should first form a party, for which he must go to the factory districts. Then the radical bourgeoisie will come and ask him for compromises.

* Jones. See Letter 18, Note.
† John Bright. See Letter 69.
‡ The secrecy of the ballot was not established in England until 1872. [Ed. Eng. ed.]
36. Marx to Engels


... I am getting some nice developments. For instance, I have thrown over the whole doctrine of profit as it has existed up to now. In the method of treatment the fact that by mere accident I have again glanced through Hegel's Logic has been of great service to me—Freiligrath found some volumes of Hegel which originally belonged to Bakunin and sent them to me as a present. If there should ever be time for such work again, I should greatly like to make accessible to the ordinary human intelligence, in two or three printer's sheets,* what is rational in the method which Hegel discovered but at the same time enveloped in mysticism. ...

What do you say to friend Jones? That the fellow has sold himself I am not yet willing to believe. His experience in 1848 may lie heavy on his stomach. With his great belief in himself he may think himself capable of exploiting the middle class or may imagine that if only Ernest Jones were got into Parliament, one way or another, the history of the world would be bound to take a new turn. The best of it is that Reynolds has now come out in his paper as a furious opponent of the middle class and of all compromise—of course out of spite against Jones. Mr. B. O'Brien, likewise, has now become an irresisible Chartist at any price. The only excuse for Jones is the inertia which at present pervades the working class in England. However this may be, he is at present on the way to becoming a dupe of the middle class or a renegade. The fact that he, who used anxiously to consult me about every bit of rubbish, is now equally anxious to avoid me, shows anything but a good conscience. ...

*Hegel, G. F. W. (1770-1831). The most important representative of classical German philosophy; he represented an objective idealism; a brilliant investigator of the laws of dialectic, which he was the first consciously to apply. In the Hegelian system the whole world of nature, of history and of

Drückbogen: one sheet = 16 printed pages [Ed. Eng. ed.]
his home whenever he likes, to put together this sort of exhibition of quotations. One can see what a wonderful swell the fellow seems to himself in this philological tinsel, moving with all the grace of a chap who for the first time in his life is wearing fashionable dress. As most philologists have not the speculative conception which predominates in Heraclitus, every Hegelian has the indisputable advantage of understanding what the philologist does not understand. (It would, by the way, 'be strange if just because a fellow had learnt Greek he became a philosopher in Greek when he was not one in German.) But instead of simply taking all this for granted Mr. Lassalle treats us in a sort of Lessing manner. In long-winded legal phraseology the Hegelian interpretation is justified against the misconstructions made by the philologists owing to their lack of special knowledge. So that we have the double pleasure, first of seeing dialectical things which we had almost forgotten, reconstructed for us in full amplitude, and secondly of having this “speculative heritage” vindicated against the unspeculative philologists as the particular philological and juridical smartness and learnedness of Mr. Lassalle. Moreover, despite the fellow’s boast that Heraclitus has up to now been a book with seven seals, he has added absolutely nothing new, where the main point is concerned, to what Hegel says in his History of Philosophy. He only brings it out in detail, which could of course have been done quite amply enough in a couple of printer’s sheets.* Still less does it occur to the fellow to betray any critical reflections on the dialectic itself. If all the fragments of Heraclitus were printed together they would hardly fill half a printer’s sheet. Only a fellow who prints books at the expense of the awful “husy” [Countess Hatzfeld] would think of giving two volumes of sixty sheets to the world on such a pretext.

There is a saying of “Heraclitus the Dark” where, in order to explain the transformation of all things into their opposites, he says: “So gold transforms itself into all things and all things transform themselves into gold.” Gold, says Lassalle, is here money (which is correct) and money is value. It is therefore the Ideal, the Universal, the One (value) and things

* Drühkopen. See p. 102.

are the Real, the Particular, the Many. He utilises this startling piece of penetration in order to give us, in a long note, an earnest of his discoveries in the science of political economy. Every word is a blunder, but decried with remarkable pretentiousness. I can see from this one note that the fellow is proposing to present political economy in the Hegelian manner in his second great work. He will learn to his cost that to bring a science by criticism to the point where it can be dialectically presented is an altogether different thing from applying an abstract ready-made system of logic to mere inklings of such a system.

But as I wrote to you immediately after his first self-intoxicated letter, the old Hegelians and philologists must really have been pleased to find such an old-fashioned mind in a young man who passes for a great revolutionary.

38. Marx to Engels

[London], 2 April, 1858.

Following is a short outline of the first part. The whole Scheisse [shit] is to be divided into six books: I. Capital; II. Landed property; III. Wage labour; IV. State; V. International trade; VI. World market.

I. Capital contains four sections: A. Capital in general (this is the material of the first part); B. Competition, or the action of the many capitals upon one another; C. Credit, where capital appears as the general element in comparison with particular capitals; D. Share capital as the most complete form (passing over into Communism) together with all its contradictions.

The transition of capital to landed property is also historical, as the modern form of property in land is a product of the effect of capital upon feudal, etc., landed property. Similarly the transition of landed property to wage labour is not only dialectical but historical, since the final product of modern landownership is the general institution of wage labour, which in turn appears as the basis of the whole shit. Well (it is difficult for me to write to-day), we now come to the corpus delicti [evidence for the crime].
(2) Money. Something about the precious metals as the medium of money relations.

(a) Money as measure. Some notes on the ideal measure of Stewart, Attwood, Urquhart; put forward in a more comprehensible form by the advocates of labour-money (Gray, Bray, etc. Some hits on occasion at the Proudhonists). The value of the commodity translated into money is its price, which for the time being still only appears in this purely formal differentiation from value. According to the general law of value, a particular quantity of money merely expresses a particular quantity of embodied labour. So long as money is measure, the variability of its own value makes no difference.

(b) Money as a means of exchange, or simple circulation. Here only the simple form of this circulation itself is to be considered. All the circumstances which further determine it lie outside of it and are therefore only considered later. (They presuppose more developed conditions.) If we call the commodity C and money M, simple circulation does, it is true, exhibit the two circular movements or circuits: C—M—M—C and M—C—C—M (the latter constitutes the transition to Section c), but the point of departure and the point of return in no way coincide, or, if so, only accidentally. Most of the so-called laws laid down by the economists treat money circulation, not within its own limits, but as included under and determined by higher movements. All this to be done away with. (Comes partly under the theory of credit; but part must also be dealt with at points where money comes up again, but more fully defined.) Here then money as a means of circulation (coin). But at the same time as the realisation (not merely disappearing) of price. From the simple determination that the commodity, fixed as a price, is already ideally exchanged for money, before it is actually exchanged, arises of itself the important economic law that the amount of the circulating medium is determined by the price and not vice versa. (Here something historical on the controversy relating to this point.) It follows further that velocity can replace mass, but that a definite mass is necessary for the simultaneous acts of exchange, in so far as these are not related to one another as + and −; this equalisation
and the consideration of it are however only to be touched on at this point in anticipation. I will not now go into further details of the further development of this section but will only remark that the falling apart of C—M and M—C is the most abstract and superficial form in which the possibility of crises is expressed. The development of the law that price determines the mass of circulation shows that presuppositions are here involved which by no means apply to all stages of society; it is absurd, therefore, to take, for instance, the influx of money from Asia to Rome and its influence on Roman prices, and simply to put it beside modern commercial conditions. The most abstract determinations, when more carefully examined, always point to a further definite concrete historical basis. (Of course—since they have been abstracted from it into these determinations.)

(c) Money as money. This is the development of the form M—C—C—M. Money as the independent existence of value, apart from circulation; the material existence of abstract wealth. Shows this in circulation, in so far as money does not merely appear as a means of circulation but as the realisation of price. In its capacity as (c), where (a) and (b) appear only as functions, money is the general commodity of contracts (here the variability of its value, due to the determination of value by labour time, is important) and an object of hoarding. (This function is still important in Asia and was important in the ancient world and Middle Ages generally. Exists now only as a subordinate part of the banking system. In crises money in this form is again important. A consideration of money in this form and of the delusions it has produced in the course of world history. Destructive properties, etc.) Money as the realisation of all the higher forms in which value will appear; definite forms in which all value relations are externally limited. Money fixed in this form, however, ceases to be an economic relation the form is lost in its material medium, gold and silver. On the other hand in so far as money comes into circulation and is again exchanged for C, the final process, the consumption of the commodity, again falls outside the economic relation. Simple money circulation does not contain the principle of self-reproduction within itself and therefore points beyond itself. Money, as the development of its determinations shows, contains within itself the demand for value which will enter into circulation, maintain itself during circulation and at the same time establish circulation—that is, for capital. This transition historical also. The antediluvian form of capital is trade capital, which always develops money. At the same time, real capital arises from that money or merchants’ capital which gains control of production.

(d) This simple circulation, considered in itself—and here we have the surface of bourgeois society, obliterating the deeper operations from which it arises—reveals no difference between the objects of exchange, except formal and temporary ones. This is the realm of freedom and equality and of property based on “labour.” Accumulation, which here appears in the form of hoarding, is therefore only greater thriftiness, etc. Next, on the one hand the absurdity of the economic harmonists and modern free traders (Bastiat, Carey, etc.) who assert this most superficial and abstract aspect as their truth applying to the more developed productive relations and their antagonisms. On the other hand the absurdity of the Proudhonists and similar socialists who try to apply ideas of equality corresponding to this exchange of equivalents (or to what is assumed as such) to the inequalities, etc., from which the exchange arises and to which it returns. As the law of appropriation in this sphere there appears appropriation by labour, an exchange of equivalents, so that the exchange merely returns the same value in a different material form. In short everything is “lovely,” but will very soon come to a horrible end, and indeed owing to the law of equivalence.

We now come, namely, to

(3) Capital. This is really the most important part of the first section, about which I must need your opinion. But I cannot go on writing to-day. This filthy jaundice makes it difficult for me to hold my pen and bending my head over the paper makes me giddy. So—for next time.
On the first part of the *Critique of Political Economy* which Marx sent Engels to read through, the latter wrote on April 9, 1858: "The study of your abstract of the first half part* has kept me very busy. It is a very abstract abstract indeed,† which could not be avoided in the short form, and I often have trouble in searching for the dialectical transitions, as all abstract reasoning has become very foreign to me. This arrangement of the whole in the six books could not possibly be better and pleases me exceptionally, although I do not yet clearly see the dialectical transition from landed property to wage labour. The development of the account of money is also very fine; Here again there are particulars which I am not yet clear about, as I often have first to hunt up the historical basis for myself. However, I think that as soon as I have the conclusion of the chapter in general I shall see the line better, and I will then write to you in greater detail about it. The abstract dialectical tone of this epitome will of course disappear in the working out."

In the above letter Marx gives the first plan of his economic work. *Capital* was not fixed in its form from the beginning. In the course of the years 1858 to 1867, as Marx kept penetrating more deeply into his material, he was always giving it a new shape, until he found the form of presentation which most clearly reflected the dialectical content of this, the chief work of Marxism. (See also paragraph 3 of the Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy*: "The Method of Political Economy.")

39. MARX TO LASALLE

London, 10 June, 1858.

You would have received a full answer to your letter, but I thought it good—not in order to formulate my own opinion but because three make a collegium—to send the case to Manchester for Engels and Lupus [Wilhelm Wolff] to report their judgment upon. As their views coincide in every point with my own you can regard the following as our common opinion.

* The *Critique of Political Economy* was published in parts. See Letter 42. [Ed. Eng. ed.]
† Engels' English.

(1) On the question of the duel. It is as clear as daylight that both the gentlemen—the Intendanturat and Assessor [Commisariat Councillor and Assistant]—have put themselves completely on the cudgelling level by their low street attack, and that the only duel in which one could possibly engage with lads of this sort has already taken place in the scuffle. If two fellows lie in wait for a third and both attack him we do not believe that any code of duelling in the world would permit one still to fight a duel with such a gang. If Herr Fabriz wished by his demonstration with the riding whip to provoke a duel by force, then Herr B. should either have been present as a purely passive witness or else was altogether superfluous. But where two men fall both together upon a third, and one even operates behind the person assaulted—in the rear—one has to do with scum who have shown that it is impossible to have a proper duel with them, an honourable fight between two persons.

(2) The principle of the duel. We are not of the opinion, speaking generally, that such a relative affair as a duel can be classified in the category of good or bad. There is no doubt that the duel in itself is irrational and the relic of a past stage of culture. At the same time the result of the one-sidedness of bourgeois society is that certain individualistic feudal forms assert their rights in opposition to it. The most striking proof of this is to be found in the civil right of duelling in the United States of America. Individuals can get into such unbearable collisions with one another that the duel seems to them to be the only solution. But such deadly tension is really not possible in relation to an indifferent subject like an Intendanturat or Assessor or a lieutenant. An important personal relation must be involved, otherwise the duel is a pure farce. It is always a farce when it takes place out of consideration for so-called "public opinion."

(3) Thus in our view the duel depends entirely on circumstances and as an exceptional emergency resort may be adopted in exceptional circumstances. But in the present case all the circumstances are decisively against it; even if the street attack had not put it altogether out of the question.

(4) The first decisive circumstance is that you are not only
opposed to all duelling on principle but have also declared this principle, and in the presence of Fabriz. You would therefore discredit yourself if, despite this, you fought a duel from fear of "public opinion."

5. In the present case the duel could have no possible point except as the fulfilment of a conventional form recognised by certain privileged orders. Our party must set its face resolutely against these ceremonials of rank and reject with the utmost cynical contempt the presumptuous demand that it should submit to them. The times are far too serious now to allow one to become involved in such childishness; and it would be pure childishness to fight a duel with Herr Fabriz, because he is an Intendanturat and belongs to the clique entitled to fight duels, when if, say, a tailor or a cobbler attacked you in the street you would simply hand him over to the law courts without any injury to your "honour." In the present case you would not be fighting a duel with Herr Fabriz, who as an individual is indifferent to you, but with the Intendanturat—which would be an absurd manoeuvre. In general the demand of these fellows that any collision with them must be settled by duelling, as a privilege which is their due—and this applies to all fashionable duels—must be treated with utter derision. To recognise it would be directly counter-revolutionary.

Fabriz had met Lassalle at the house of the publisher and liberal bourgeois politician Franz Duncker. From dislike and envy of Lassalle, Fabriz challenged him to a duel for no reason, taking offence at some smile of Lassalle's. After his challenge Fabriz armed himself with a riding whip, and, together with his friend Borman, fell upon Lassalle in the street with the intention of thrashing him. Lassalle naturally, defended himself, and indeed used his stick with considerable success.

... Do send me Hegel's Philosophy of Nature as you promised. I am now doing some physiology and shall combine it with comparative anatomy. There are some highly speculative things here, all of which have only recently been discovered, however; I am very eager to see if the old man did not scent something of them. This much is certain; if he had a philosophy of nature to write to-day the facts would fly into his hands from every side. Moreover, one has absolutely no conception of the progress made by the natural sciences in the last thirty years. For physiology the decisive factors have been, first, the tremendous development of organic chemistry, and secondly, the microscope, which has only been properly used for the last twenty years. The microscope has led to even more important results than chemistry: the main thing which has revolutionised the whole of physiology and for the first time made comparative physiology possible is the discovery of the cell—in plants by Schleiden and in animals by Schwann (about 1836). Everything is a cell. The cell is Hegel's "Being-in-itself" and its development exactly follows the Hegelian process, resulting finally in the "idea," i.e., each completed organism.

Another result which would have pleased old Hegel is in physics the correlation of forces: the law that under given conditions mechanical motion, that is, mechanical force (produced, e.g., by friction), is changed into heat, heat into light, light into chemical affinity, chemical affinity (e.g., in the Voltaic pile) into electricity, electricity into magnetism. These transitions can also take place differently, backwards or forwards. It has now been proved by an Englishman, whose name I cannot at the moment remember, that the transformation of these forces into one another takes place under quite definite quantitative conditions, so that, for instance, a certain quantity of one, say electricity, corresponds to a certain quantity of each of the others—e.g., magnetism, light, heat, chemical affinity (positive or negative, of combination or dissociation) and motion. The idiotic theory of latent heat is thus superseded.
But is this not a splendid material proof of the way in which the Reflexionsbestimmungen [the determinations of thought] are resolved into one another?

So much is certain; comparative physiology gives one a withering contempt for the idealistic exaltation of man over the other animals. At every step one bumps up against the most complete uniformity of structure with the rest of the mammals, and in its main features this uniformity extends to all vertebrates and even—less clearly—to insects, crustaceans, earthworms, etc. The Hegelian business of the qualitative leap in the quantitative series is also very fine here. Finally, among the lowest infusoria one reaches the primitive form, the simple, independently existing cell, which in turn, however, is not to be distinguished in any perceptible way from the lowest plants (fungi consisting of single cells—the fungi of the potato and the vine diseases, etc.) or from the germs of the higher stages of development up to the human ovum and spermatozoon inclusive, and which also looks just like the independent cells of the living body (blood corpuscles, the cells of the epidermis and mucous membrane, the secretion cells of the glands, kidneys, etc.).

‘Marx, and especially Engels, always showed that dialectic is the universal law of movement in nature and society. While they definitely combated the narrow, unhistorical materialism derived from natural science alone, they constantly studied with equal thoroughness the results of research in the natural sciences, which provided them with the richest material for the confirmation of their conception of the world. “For in nature nothing happens alone. Everything has an effect on something else and vice versa, and it is mostly forgetfulness of this general movement and interaction which prevents our investigators of nature from seeing the simplest things clearly.”’ (Engels, “Work as a Factor in the Development of Apes into Human Beings.”)

Engels has left us extensive studies on natural science and its results (Anti-Dühring and the great manuscript on The Dialectics of Nature). The struggle for the demonstration “that the laws of dialectic are real laws of natural development and therefore apply also to the theoretical study of natural science” (Engels) was continued by Lenin, who attacked above all the idealistic falsification of dialectical materialism in natural science. In his book, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, he writes:

“In a word, the ‘physical’ idealism of to-day, just like the ‘physiological’ idealism of yesterday, merely signifies that one school of natural scientists in one branch of science has succumbed to reactionary philosophy, without being able to rise directly and immediately above metaphysical materialism and to arrive at dialectical materialism. Modern physics has made and will continue to make this step, but it reaches the only true method and the only true philosophy of natural science, not directly but through zigzag progress, not consciously but instinctively, not clearly aware of its ‘final goal’ but continually drawing nearer to it, through groping, vacillating, even retrogressive motion. Modern physics is in a state of confinement; it is giving birth to dialectical materialism.” (Lenin, Collected Works, Eng. ed., Vol. XIII (1927), p. 268.)

The enormous growth of technique and of the natural sciences in the Soviet Union, the decay of technique and of the natural sciences in capitalist countries, have revealed the conditions in which a full and consistent application of dialectical materialism to research in the natural sciences is possible and can be carried out on the widest scale.

41. Engels to Marx
Manchester, 7 October, 1858.

The business with Jones is very disgusting. He has held a meeting here and spoken entirely along the lines of the new alliance. After this affair one is really almost driven to believe that the English proletarian movement in its old traditional Chartist form must perish completely before it can develop itself in a new form, capable of life. And yet one cannot foresee what this new form will look like. For the rest, it seems to me that Jones’s new move, taken in conjunction with the former more or less successful attempts at such an alliance, is really bound up with the fact that the English proletariat is becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all
nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat as well as a bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable. The only thing that would help here would be a few thoroughly bad years, and since the gold discoveries these no longer seem so easy to come by. I must say all the same, however, that the way the mass of overproduction which brought about the crisis has been absorbed is by no means clear to me; such a rapid ebb after such a violent flood tide has never occurred before.

At the end of the Chartist movement Jones went over more and more to the bourgeoisie. Marx therefore finally broke off relations with him. He wrote to Weydemeyer on February 1, 1859:

"I have broken with Ernest Jones. Despite my repeated warnings, and although I had predicted to him exactly what has happened—namely that he would ruin himself and disorganise the Chartist Party—he involved himself in attempts to come to an agreement with the bourgeois radicals. He is now a ruined man, but the harm he has done the English proletariat is enormous. Of course the damage will be repaired, but a very favourable moment for action has been lost. Imagine an army whose general goes over to the enemy on the day of battle!"

On the death of Jones, Engels wrote to Marx (January 29, 1869):

"To-morrow, with an enormous procession, Jones is to be buried in the same churchyard where Lupus* lies. The fellow is really a loss. His bourgeois phrases were only hypocrisy after all, and here in Manchester there is no one who can take his place with the workers. They will become completely disintegrated again and fall right into the net of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, he was the only educated Englishman among the politicians who was, at bottom, entirely on our side." (See Letters 18, 35: 36.)

* Wilhelm Wolff.

42. Marx to Engels

London, [8 October], 1858.

With the favourable turn of world trade at this moment (although the enormous accumulation of money in the banks of London, Paris and New York shows that things must still be very far from all right) it is at least consoling that in Russia the revolution has begun, for I regard the convocation of the "notables" to Petersburg as such a beginning. In Prussia likewise things are worse than in 1847 and the absurd delusions as to the middle-class propensities of the Prince of Prussia will be dissolved in fury. It will do the French no harm if they see that the world can move without them.* At the same time there are exceptionally big movements among the Slavs, especially in Bohemia, movements which are indeed counter-revolutionary but still add to the ferment.

The Russian war of 1854-55, wretched though it was and little as its results harmed the Russians (Turkey, rather, was the only one harmed), has nevertheless obviously hastened the present turn of things in Russia. The one circumstance which made the Germans in their revolutionary movement such complete satellites of France was the attitude of Russia. With an internal movement in Muscovy this bad joke will come to an end. As soon as the business there develops rather more perceptibly we shall be able to prove how far the worthy State Councillor Haxthausen† allowed himself to be taken in by the "authorities" and by the peasants drilled by the authorities.

We cannot deny that bourgeois society has experienced its sixteenth century a second time—a sixteenth century which will, I hope, sound the death-knell of bourgeois society just as the first one thrust it into existence. The particular task of bourgeois society is the establishment of the world market, at least in outline, and of production based upon the world market. As the world is round, this seems to have been com-

* * *

* Die Welt auch ohne sie "move" (pennsylvaniaisch). Marx here uses the English verb "move" in a German construction, adding "Pennsylvania" as a joking explanation. [Ed. Eng. ed.]

† August von Haxthausen (1798-1867) a Prussian State Councillor, who wrote several books about Russia and Transcaucasia, based on his travels.
Letter 42. 8 October, 1858

... completed by the colonisation of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan. The difficult question for us is this: on the Continent the revolution is imminent and will also immediately assume a socialist character. Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner, considering that in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still on the ascendent?

As to what specially concerns China, I have assured myself by an exact analysis of the movement of trade since 1846, first, that the increase of English and American exports (1844-46) proved in 1847 to be a pure fraud, and that also in the following ten years the average remained nearly stationary, while the imports into England and America from China grew enormously; secondly, that the opening up of the five ports and the seizure of Hong Kong only resulted in the trade passing from Canton to Shanghai. The other "emporiums" do not count. The chief reason for the failure of this market appears to be the opium trade, to which in fact any increase in the export trade to China is continually limited; but added to this is the internal economic organisation of the country, its minute-scale agriculture, etc., which will take an enormous time to break down. England's present treaty with China, which in my opinion was worked out by Palmerston in conjunction with the Petersburg cabinet and given to Lord Elgin on his journey, is a mockery from beginning to end.

This letter shows how Marx and Engels studied the development of the capitalist method of production and all its new manifestations as practical revolutionaries. About China Engels wrote to Sorge (in New York) on November 10, 1894:

"The Chinese war [with Japan] has given the death-blow to the old China. Isolation has become impossible, the introduction of railroads, steam engines, electricity, large-scale industry has already become a necessity for purposes of military defence. But with this the old economic system of small peasant cultivation, where the family also makes its industrial products for itself, falls to pieces too, and with it the whole of the old social system, under which a relatively dense population was possible. Millions will be turned out of their homes and forced to emigrate; and these millions will find their way as far as Europe and that in masses. But Chinese competition, once it is on a mass scale, will rapidly bring things to a head both for you [in the U.S.A.] and for us, and so the conquest of China by capitalism will at the same time give an impetus to the overthrow of capitalism in Europe and America."

Letter 43. 1 February, 1859

43. Marx to Weydemeyer

London, 1 February, 1859.

My Critique of Political Economy will be published in parts (the first part in eight or ten days from now) by Franz Duncker (Besser's publishing house) in Berlin. It is only thanks to Lasalle's extraordinary zeal and powers of persuasion that Duncker has been persuaded to take this step. Even then he has provided himself with a way of escape—the definite contract is to depend on the sale of the first parts. I divide the whole political economy into six books:

Capital; Landed Property; Wage Labour; State; Foreign Trade; World Market.

Book I on capital is divided into four sections. Section I: Capital in general, is divided into three chapters: (1) The Commodity; (2) Money or Simple Circulation; (3) Capital. (1) and (2), about ten sheets, form the contents of the parts which are appearing first. You understand the political reasons which have moved me to hold back the third chapter, on "Capital," until I have got a footing again. . . .

In these two chapters the foundation is also destroyed of the Proudhonist socialism now fashionable in France, which wants to leave private property in existence but to organise the exchange of private products; which wants commodities but not money. Above all things Communism must rid itself of this "false brother." But, apart from any polemical aim, you know that the analysis of the simple money-forms is the hardest, because it is the most abstract part of political economy.
44. Marx to Engels

[London], 25 February, 1859.

Po and Rhine is an excellent idea, which must immediately be put into operation. You must get down to it at once, as time is everything here. I have written to Lassalle to-day already and am sure Jüdel Braun* will put it through.

The pamphlet (how many sheets?—on this point reply by return) must first appear anonymously, so that the public thinks the author is a great general. In the second edition, which you will undoubtedly see if the thing appears at the right moment, you will reveal yourself in a six-line preface. This will then be a triumph for our party. I have done you some honour in my Preface† and so it will be all the better if you yourself appear upon the stage immediately afterwards.

The dogs of democrats and the liberal scoundrels will see that we are the only fellows who have not been stupefied by this appalling period of peace.

Engels proposed to write a pamphlet, entitled Po and Rhine, on the forthcoming Austro-Italian war.

The Austro-Italian war was prepared with the participation of the Russian government. In July 1858 Bonaparte had a meeting with Cavour [the minister of King Victor Emmanuel of Piedmont and Sardinia] and between them they concluded an agreement, which included a war against Austria and the following division of spoils: to France—Savoy and Nice; to Piedmont—Lombardy, Venice, Modena, Parma, Tuscany and part of the Papal territory.

The war began in April 1859 and was ended at the river Mincio in June of the same year. On July 11, 1859, peace was concluded at Villafranca. Sardinia (Piedmont) received additional territories and France got Savoy and Nice, that is, the boundaries of 1807 were again restored. Thus Italy remained ununified.† (See Letter 14.)

Marx and Engels stood for the revolutionary way of unifica-

* Nickname for Lassalle.
† Preface to the Critique of Political Economy (1859).

Letter 45. 25 February, 1859

England, which was directed against both France and Russia. The view that Germany required the line of the Mincio as a protection against France, supported by the theory of "natural" frontiers, only served reactionary ends and represented "that theory of a Central European Great Power which would like to turn Austria, Prussia and the rest of Germany into a federal state under the predominant influence of Austria, to Germanise Hungary and the Slav-Rumanian Danube countries by colonisation, schools and quiet force, to transfer by this means the centre of gravity of this complex of countries more and more towards the South-East, towards Vienna, and incidentally also to reconquer Alsace and Lorraine. The 'Central European Great Power' is to be a sort of rebirth of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation and appears among other things to aim at incorporating into itself the former Austrian Netherlands as well as Holland, as vassal states... In this way German moral earnestness combined with the youthful Central European Great Power cannot fail shortly to seize for the latter world domination by sea and land, and to inaugurate a new historic era in which Germany will at length, after so long, again play first fiddle while the other nations dance to her tune." (Engels, Po and Rhine.) Engels proved that this chauvinistic theory would not hold water from a military point of view, and with the greatest emphasis advocated the revolutionary unification of Germany. (See also Letters 45, 46, 89, 90, 144, 145 of this volume.)

45. Marx to Lassalle


Engels is intending to publish, at first anonymously, a small pamphlet entitled Po and Rhine.

Main contents: proof according to military science that all the reasons which are adduced to show that the Austrians must have the line of the Mincio in order to protect Germany, can be exactly applied to show that France must have the Rhine frontier in order to protect herself; further that while Austria certainly has a great interest in the Mincio line, Germany as a united power has none whatever, and that Italy, from the
46. Marx to Engels

[London], 18 May, 1859.

Lassalle's pamphlet is an enormous blunder. The appearance of your "anonymous" pamphlet* kept him awake at nights. The position of the revolutionary party in Germany is certainly difficult at the moment, but, with some critical analysis of the circumstances, clear nevertheless. As to the "governments," it is obvious from every point of view, if only for the sake of Germany's existence, that the demand must be put to them not to remain neutral, but, as you rightly say, to be patriotic. But the revolutionary point is to be given to the affair simply by emphasising the antagonism to Russia more strongly than the antagonism against Boulanger.† This is what Lassalle should have done in answer to the anti-French screams of the Neue Preussische Zeitung. This is also the point which, as the war goes on, will in practice land the German governments in a betrayal of the Empire and where they will be got by the throat. For the rest, if Lassalle takes upon himself to speak in the name of the Party, he must in future either make up his mind to be publicly disowned by us, for the situation is too important for personal considerations, or else, instead of pursuing his mixed inspirations of passion and logic, must previously come to an understanding with the views held by other people besides himself. We must absolutely insist on party discipline now or everything will go to the dogs....

Messrs. the Knoten‡ have... had a very nice lesson. That old-Weitlinger ass Scherzer thought he could nominate Party

* Po and Rhine (Letter 44).
† Napoleon III.
‡ Knoten. See Note on page 87. The allusion in this paragraph is to some petty groups of political refugees in London who gave themselves such names as "Communist Association," etc. [Ed. Eng. ed.]

represents. When I met a deputation of the Knoten (I have refused to join any association, but Liebknecht [was nominated] chairman of one and the Lapp [Anders] of the other) I told them straight out: We had received our appointment as representatives of the proletarian party from nobody but ourselves. It was, however, endorsed by the exclusive and universal hatred consecrated to us by all the parties and factions of the old world. You can imagine how staggered the blockheads were...
now broken out in Russia between the ruling classes of the rural population and the ruled is already undermining the whole system of Russian foreign policy. The system was only possible so long as Russia had no internal political development. But that time is past. The industrial and agricultural development which the government and the aristocracy have promoted in every possible way has thriven to such a degree that it can no longer be reconciled with the existing social conditions. Their abolition is a necessity on the one hand and an impossibility —unless they are changed by force—on the other. Together with the Russia which existed from Peter the Great to Nicholas, there falls also the foreign policy of that Russia. It looks as if it had been reserved for Germany to make this fact clear to Russia not only with the pen but with the sword."

47. **Marx to Engels**
London, 13 December, 1859.

In Russia the movement is advancing faster than in all the rest of Europe. The struggle for a constitution for one thing—of the nobles against the tsar and of the peasants against the nobles. Alexander has also at last discovered that the Poles will have nothing to do with assimilation into a Slav-Russian nationality and has made a lot of fuss. All this more than counterbalances the extraordinary successes of Russian diplomacy during the last fifteen years and especially since 1849. When the next revolution comes Russia will be so kind as to revolutionise as well.

48. **Marx to Engels**
[London], 11 January, 1860.

In my opinion, the biggest things that are happening in the world to-day are on the one hand the movement of the slaves in America, started by the death of John Brown, and on the other the movement of the serfs in Russia. You will have seen that the Russian aristocracy have thrown themselves directly into agitation for a constitution and that two or three people from the chief families have already found their way to Siberia. At the same time Alexander has spoilt things with the peasants by the latest Manifesto, which declares in so many words that the "communistic principle" must cease with emancipation. Thus the "social" movement has started in the West and in the East. This added to the prospective downbreak in Central Europe will be grandioso. . . .

|Brown, John (1800-59). American revolutionary, opponent of slavery. Leader of partisan troops in the partisan war against the slave owners in Kansas, 1854-58. He tried to form an army of runaway slaves. On October 16, 1859, he took the arsenal at Harper's Ferry by a daring attack and wanted to arm the slaves in the neighbourhood but did not gain any support. On October 18, 1859, government troops recaptured the arsenal from him. He was executed on December 2, 1859.

49. **Marx to Lassalle**

Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a basis in natural science for the class struggle in history. One has to put up with the crude English method of development, of course. Despite all deficiencies, not only is the death-blow dealt here for the first time to "teleology" in the natural sciences but their rational meaning is empirically explained.

50. MARX TO ENGELS

[London,] 27 February, 1861.

The Cologne people have made a nice mess of my library. The whole Fourier is stolen, ditto Goethe, ditto Herder, ditto Voltaire and, what is the most awful to me, the *Économistes du 18me Siècle* (quite new, cost me about 500 francs) as well as many volumes of the Greek classics, many single volumes of other works. If I come to Cologne I shall have a word to say about this with Mr. National Union Bürgers.† Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Logic* ditto.

As a relaxation in the evenings I have been reading Appian on the Roman Civil Wars, in the original Greek text. A very valuable book. The chap is an Egyptian by birth. Schlosser says he has "no soul," probably because he goes to the roots of the material basis for these civil wars. Spartacus is revealed as the most splendid fellow in the whole of ancient history. Great general (no Garibaldi), noble character, real representative of the ancient proletariat.

Pompeius, reinher Scheisskerl [an utter rotter]; got his undeserved fame by snatching the credit, first for the successes of Lucullus (against Mithridates), then for the successes of Sertorius (Spain), etc., and as Sulla's "young man," etc. As a general he was the Roman Odilon Barrot. As soon as he had to show what he was made of—against Caesar—a lousy good-for-nothing. Caesar made the greatest possible military mistakes—deliberately mad—in order to bewilder the Philistine who

°Marx had touched on the same question in his letter of March 8, 1855: "A little time ago I went through Roman history (ancient) again up to the Augustan era. The internal history simply resolves itself into the struggle of small versus large landed property, *specifically modified*, of course, by slave conditions. The debt relations, which play such a great part from the very beginning of Roman history, figure merely as the inevitable consequence of small landownership."

51. MARX TO ENGELS

[London,] 7 May, 1861.

Lassalle, dazzled by the reputation he has made in certain learned circles by his Heraclitus and in a certain circle of spongers by his good wine and cookery, is naturally unaware that he is discredited among the public at large. Then there is his insistence on being always in the right, his fixed attachment to the "speculative conception" (the lad is even dreaming of writing a new Hegelian philosophy raised to the second power), his infection with old French liberalism, his bombastic writing, his self-assertiveness, tactlessness, etc. Lassalle could be of service as one of the editors, under strict discipline. Otherwise would only bring discredit. But you see the great friendship he showed me it very embarrassing for me to come out with this in so many words. I therefore remained altogether indefinite, saying that I could decide nothing without previous discussion with you and Lupus [Wilhelm Wolff].

* He had been nursing his wife through a severe illness.
† Bürgers (See Letter 11, Note). For the "National Verein" (National Union), see page 216, Note on Bennigsen. Bürgers had become a National Liberal. [Ed. Eng. ed.]
Letter 53. 9 December, 1861

[Lassalle had proposed to Marx, who had been staying with him in Berlin, that they should start a paper to be edited by himself, Marx and Engels; Lassalle’s vote on one side was to be counted as equivalent to the combined vote of Marx and Engels on the other. (See also Letter 55.)

52. Engels to Marx

[Manchester, 2 December, 1861].

These last days I have at length been reading Lassalle.* The stuff about retrospective action is very plausible but won’t work; witness, for instance, the divorce laws where one might also say, as many a Berlin philistine has in fact said: If I had known they would make divorce so difficult for me I would never have married. Moreover, it is really deeply superstitious of the fellow that he should still believe in the “idea of justice,” absolute justice. His objections to Hegel’s philosophy of law are for the most part perfectly correct, but all the same he himself has still not got well under way with his new philosophy of mind. Even from the philosophical point of view he ought at least to have got far enough to conceive the process only, and not its mere temporary result, as the absolute, and in that case the only idea of justice which could have resulted would have been just the historical process itself. The style is nice, too. The “hand-wringing despair of the contradictions,” etc. And then the preface. Smart Ephraim† all over. I am not likely to get much further with it unless I find I can use it as a course of Roman law, in which case I shall read it through.

53. Marx to Engels

[London,] 9 December, 1861.

I agree with your strictures on Itzig‡ (who has written to me from Florence that he had “a very interesting meeting” with

† Ephraim Groshein—nickname for Lassalle.
‡ Itzig (“They”), a nickname for Lassalle.

Letter 54. 2 August, 1862

Garibaldi, etc.). The second volume is more interesting, because of the Latin quotations for one thing. The ideologising pervades everything and the dialectical method is falsely applied. Hegel never called dialectics the subsumption of a mass of “cases” under a general principle.

54. Marx to Engels

[London,] 2 August, 1862.

It is a real marvel that I have still been able to carry on as I have done with the theoretical work.* I now intend after all to bring the theory of rent already into this volume as a supplementary chapter, i.e., as an “illustration” of a principle laid down earlier. I will tell you in a few words what is a lengthy and complicated story when worked out, in order that you may give me your opinion.

You know that I distinguish two parts of capital: constant capital (raw material, materiales instrumentales [auxiliary materials], machinery, etc.) whose value merely reappears in the value of the product, and, second, variable capital, i.e., the capital laid out in wages, which contains less embodied labour than the worker gives in return for it. E.g., if the daily wage = 10 hours and if the worker works 12, he replaces the variable capital + ⅓ (2 hours). This latter surplus I call surplus value.

Assume a given rate of surplus value (namely the length of the working day and the surplus of the labour above that necessary for the reproduction of the worker’s pay) and say it equals 50 per cent. In this case, with a working day of, e.g., 12 hours, the worker would work 8 hours for himself and 4 hours (⅓) for the employer. And assume this for all trades, so that any differences in the average working time are simply compensation for the greater or less difficulty of the work, etc.

In these circumstances, with equal exploitation of the worker in different trades, different capitals of the same size will yield very different amounts of surplus value in different spheres of production and therefore very different rates of profit, since profit is nothing but the proportion of the surplus value to the total profit.

* In a time of desperate financial difficulty.
capital advanced. This will depend on the organic composition of the capital, i.e., on its division into constant and variable capital.

Assume, as above, that the surplus labour = 50 per cent. Then if, e.g., £1 = 1 working day (it makes no difference if you think of the length of the day as a week), the working day = 12 hours and the necessary labour (for reproduction of the pay) = 8 hours, the wages of 30 workers (or working days) would therefore = £20 and the value of their work = £30; the variable capital for one worker (daily or weekly) = \( \frac{3}{4} \) £ and the value he produces = £1. The amount of surplus value produced in different trades by a capital of £100 will be very different according to the proportions of constant and variable capital into which this capital is divided. Call the constant capital \( c \), the variable \( v \). If in the cotton industry, for instance, the composition were \( c = 80, v = 20 \), the value of the product would = 110 (given 50 per cent. surplus value or surplus labour). The amount of surplus value = 10 and the rate of profit = 10 per cent., since the profit = the relation of 10 (the surplus value) : 100 (the total value of the capital expended). Assume that in wholesale tailoring the composition is \( c = 50, v = 50 \), then the product = 125, surplus value (at a rate of 50 per cent. as above) = 25 and rate of profit = 25 per cent. Take another industry, where the proportion is \( c = 70, v = 30 \), then the product = 115, and the rate of profit = 15 per cent. And finally an industry where the composition = \( c = 90, v = 10 \), then the product = 105 and the rate of profit = 5 per cent.

We have here, with equal exploitation of labour, very different amounts of surplus value for equal sums of capital invested in different trades, and hence very different rates of profit.

But if we take the above four capitals together we get:

<p>| Value of the | Rate of profit = 10% | Rate of surplus value in all cases = 50 per cent. |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Product Per cent.</th>
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<td>(1) ( c = 80, v = 20 )</td>
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<td>(2) ( c = 50, v = 50 )</td>
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<td>(3) ( c = 70, v = 30 )</td>
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<td>(4) ( c = 90, v = 10 )</td>
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Capital 400 Profit = 55

On 100 this gives a rate of profit of 13\( \frac{1}{2} \) per cent.

Regarded as the total capital of the class ( divide the total amount by 100) the rate of profit would = 13\( \frac{1}{2} \) per cent. And capitalists are brothers. Competition (transfer of capital or withdrawal of capital from one trade to another) brings it about that equal sums of capital in different trades, despite their different organic composition, yield the same average rate of profit. In other words: the average profit which a capital of £100, for instance, makes in a certain trade is not made as the application of this particular capital, nor related, therefore, to the particular aim with which the surplus value is produced, but is made as an aliquot part of the total capital of the capitalist class. It is a share on which, in proportion to its size, dividends are paid from the total sum of surplus value (or unpaid labour) which the total variable capital (paid out in wages) of the class produces.

Now in order that 1, 2, 3, 4, in the above illustration shall make the same average profit, each one of them must sell his commodities at £113\( \frac{1}{2} \). 1 and 4 sell them above their value, 2 and 3 below their value. Price regulated in this way = the expenses of capital + the average profit; for instance, 10 per cent. is what Smith calls the natural price, cost price, etc. It is to this average price that competition between the different trades reduces the prices in different branches (by transfer or withdrawal of capital). Competition does not therefore reduce commodities to their value, but to their cost price, which is above, below or equal to their value, according to the organic composition of the respective capitals.

Ricardo confuses value with cost price. He therefore believes that if absolute rent existed (i.e., a rent independent of the different productivity of different kinds of land) agricultural produce, etc., would always be sold above its value, because it would be sold above its cost price (the capital advanced + the average profit). This would overthrow his fundamental law. So he denies the existence of absolute rent and only assumes differential rent.

But his identification of the value of commodities with their cost price is fundamentally false and traditionally accepted from A. Smith.
The fact is this:

Assume that the average composition of all not agricultural capital is $e 80, v 20$, so that the product (at 50 per cent. rate of surplus value) = 110 and the rate of profit = 10 per cent.

Assume further that the average composition of agricultural capital is $e 60, v 40$. (This figure is statistically fairly correct for England; the pasture rents, etc., make no difference to this question because they are determined by the corn rents and not by themselves.) The product, with equal exploitation of labour as above, then = 120 and the rate of profit = 20 per cent. If therefore the farmer sells his produce at its value, he sells it for 120, and not at 110, its cost price. But landed property prevents the farmer, the equivalent of the brother capitalists, from adjusting the value of the product to its cost price. Competition between the capitals cannot enforce this. The landowner intervenes and extracts the difference between value and cost price. In general a low proportion of constant to variable capital is the expression of a low (or relatively low) development of the productive forces of labour in a particular sphere of production. Therefore if the average composition of agricultural capital, for instance, is $e 60, v 40$, while that of non-agricultural capital is $e 80, v 20$, this proves that agriculture has not yet reached the same stage of development as industry. (Which is very easy to explain, for, apart from everything else, the presupposition of industry is the older science of mechanics, the presupposition of agriculture the entirely new sciences of chemistry, geology and physiology.) If the proportion in agriculture equals $e 80, v 20$ (as assumed above) absolute rent disappears. There only remains differential rent, which, however, I develop in such a way that Ricardo's assumption of the continual deterioration of agriculture is revealed as most ridiculous and arbitrary.

In the above determination of cost price as distinct from value it must also be noted that in addition to the distinction between constant and variable capital, which arises from the immediate process of production in which the capital is involved, there is also a distinction between fixed and circulating capital, which arises from the process of the circulation of capital. But the formula would become too complicated if I tried to insert this in the above as well.

Here you have—roughly, for the thing is rather complicated—the criticism of Ricardo's theory. This much you will admit, that attention to the organic composition of capital does away with a mass of what have seemed hitherto to be contradictions and problems.

This letter, in which Marx gives a brilliant sketch of what he later presented in detail in Vol. III of Capital, is important because bourgeois economists, in order to hide their failure to understand the nature of the Marxian method, industriously attempt to manufacture a contradiction between the first and third volumes of Capital. This letter is a documentary proof that Marx already had the skeleton of his whole theory complete long before Vol. I of Capital was published. Here too in his theory of rent, he has already got the theory of absolute rent worked out, which in 1851 (see Letter 6) he had not as yet developed. (See also Letters 56 and 85.)

The manuscripts belonging to the year 1862 remain preserved to us; there are actually long and detailed passages on rent which Marx in the final arrangement of Capital relegated to Volume III.

SMITH, ADAM (1723-90). Economist and philosopher. He gave to classical economy its developed form. Marx calls him the economist of the manufacturing period. His theories of the division of labour, of productive labour and of surplus value were of great importance. According to his doctrine the true wealth of nations does not consist in money, as the mercantilists maintained, but in useful labour productive of exchange values. According to Adam Smith surplus value was produced not only by agricultural labour, as maintained by the physiocrats, but also by industrial labour. "The important thing about A. Smith's contradictions is that they contain problems which he does not indeed solve but which he gives expression to by contradicting himself" (Marx). The main fault in his theory of reproduction, exposed by Marx, is his failure to take constant capital into account, his resolution of the value of commodities into wages and surplus value. (Cf. Letter 67.)
ITZIG [LASSALLE] also told me that he may perhaps start a paper if he goes back in September. I told him that for **good pay** I would be its English correspondent, without in any way taking on any other responsibility or political partnership, since politically we agree in nothing except in some far-distant ultimate ends.

I do not entirely share your views on the American Civil War. I do not think that all is up. The Northerners have been dominated from the first by the representatives of the border slave states, who also pushed McClellan, that old partisan of Breckinridge, to the top. The Southerners, on the other hand, acted as one man from the beginning. The North itself has turned the slaves into a military force on the side of the Southerners, instead of against them. The South leaves productive labour to the slaves and could therefore put its whole fighting strength into the field without disturbance. The South had unified military leadership, the North had not. That no strategic plan existed was already obvious from all the manœuvres of the Kentucky army after the conquest of Tennessee. In my opinion all this will take another turn. In the end the North will make war seriously, adopt revolutionary methods and throw over the domination of the border slaves statesmen. A single nigger regiment [*ein einziges niggerregiment*] would have a remarkable effect on Southern nerves.

The difficulty of getting the 300,000 men seems to me purely political. The North-West and New England wish to and will force the government to give up the diplomatic method of conducting war which it has used hitherto, and they are now making terms on which the 300,000 men shall come forth. If Lincoln does not give way (which he will do, however) there will be a revolution.

As to the lack of military talent, the method which has prevailed up till now of selecting generals purely from considerations of diplomacy and party intrigue is scarcely designed to bring talent to the front. General Pope seems to me to be a man of energy, however.

With regard to the financial measures, they are clumsy, as they were bound to be in a country where up to now no taxes for the whole state have in fact existed; but they are not nearly so idiotic as the measures taken by Pitt and Co. The present depreciation of money is due, I think, not to economic but to purely political reasons—distrust. It will therefore change with a different policy.

The long and short of the business seems to me to be that a war of this kind must be conducted on revolutionary lines, while the Yankees have so far been trying to conduct it constitutionally.

*After the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency of the United States in 1860, when the chief political power passed to the industrial capitalists of the North, the Southern slave-owners, who were in no position to compete with industry based on wage labour, decided to organise their own state, which would guarantee the chief political power to the slave-owning class.*

At the beginning of 1861, the slave-owning South announced its secession from the Union and established its own Confederation (hence the troops of the Southern States were known as the Confederates, the troops of the Northern States as the Federalists). Jefferson Davis was elected President of the Southern Confederation. The Civil War which now arose between the slave-owning South and the industrial North lasted about five years, 1861 to 1865.

The Southern States had prepared themselves for war beforehand and already possessed a number of generals, soldiers by profession: Beauregard, Bragg, Johnston, Jackson, Lee, etc. The Federal government of the North, on the other hand, was not prepared for war, and attempted to settle the conflict peacefully along constitutional lines. Added to this there were among the Northerners elements from the border states who sympathised with the Southerners, which naturally impeded the activity of the Federal government. The first engagements did not end favourably for the North (the storming of Fort Sumter and the battle of Bull Run).
The North could only give its army a hurried and extremely inadequate training and was obliged several times to change its Commander-in-Chief—McDowell, McClellan, Burnside. But it was able to organise constant new reinforcements, the army gained experience in battle and in the end the industrial North was victorious. Towards the end of the war the North had excellent generals like Grant and Sherman. Many German emigrants who had taken part in the revolution of 1848 and had had military experience fought on the side of the North. Both fractions of the Communist League—Willich, Weydemeyer, Steffen, etc.—also took part in the war on the side of the North.

Marx was sure the whole time that the North would win. On September 10, 1862, he wrote to Engels:

"As for the Yankees, I am as certain as ever in my opinion that the North will win in the end... The way the North is conducting war is only what might have been expected from a bourgeois republic, where fraud has been enthroned king so long. The South, an oligarchy, is better adapted to it, especially an oligarchy where the whole productive work falls on the niggers,* and the four millions of "white trash" are professional filibusters. All the same I would bet my head that these fellows will get the worst of it, in spite of 'Stonewall Jackson.' It is possible, of course, that before this things may come to a sort of revolution in the North itself."

In the Preface to the first edition of Capital (1867), Marx wrote:

"As in the eighteenth century the American War of Independence sounded the tocsin for the European middle class, so in the nineteenth century the American Civil War sounded it for the European working class." (See also Letters 57, 58.)

Pope (1822–92). Was placed at the head of the army of the North on June 27, 1862. Resigned after the defeats in August, 1862.


* Marx’s letters on the American Civil War are crowded with English words and phrases reproduced from the newspapers he was so intensively studying; the ironic force of these reproductions—e.g., ‘nigger’ for Negro—tends to be weakened in a purely English version. See page v (Publisher’s Note). [Ed. Eng. ed.]

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PITT, William (the younger) (1759–1806). One of the most reactionary English statesmen, Prime Minister at the time of the French Revolution. He organised the war of intervention against the revolution and the wars against Napoleon I. He suppressed the Irish rebellion of 1798 and carried out a series of reactionary measures against the workers’ movement.


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56. MARX TO ENGELS

[London], 9 August, 1862.

With regard to the *theory of rent*, I must first, of course, wait for your letter.* But in order to simplify the "debate," as Heinrich Bürgers would say, I send the following:

(I) The only thing I have got to prove *theoretically* is the *possibility* of absolute rent, without violating the law of value. This is the point around which the *theoretical* conflict has turned from the days of the physiocrats up till now. Ricardo denies this possibility, I maintain it. I also maintain that his denial is based upon a theoretically false dogma taken over from Adam Smith—the pre-supposed identity between the *cost price* and the *value of commodities*. Further, that where Ricardo illustrates the point by *examples* he always presupposes conditions in which there is either no capitalist production or no *landed property* (actually or legally). But the whole point is to investigate the law when these things exist.

(II) As to the *existence* of absolute ground rent, that is a question which would have to be solved *statistically* in each country. But the importance of the purely theoretical solution is due to the fact that all the statisticians and practical men in general have been maintaining the existence of absolute rent for the last 35 years, while the (Ricardian) theoreticians have been trying to demonstrate it out of existence by very arbitrary and theoretically feeble abstractions. Up to now in all such quarrels I have always found the theoreticians in the wrong.

* Engels had written on August 8: "The existence of 'absolute' rent is by no means clear to me, for after all you have still got to prove it." [Ed. Eng. ed.]
(III) I show that, even assuming the existence of absolute ground rent, it by no means follows that under all circumstances the worst cultivated land or the worst mine pays a rent, but that very possibly they have to sell their products at market value, though below their individual value. In order to prove the opposite Ricardo always assumes—what is theoretically false—that under all conditions of the market the commodity produced under the most unfavourable conditions determines the market value. You already gave the right reply to this in the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher.

57. Marx to Engels

[London] 29 October, 1862.

As for America, I believe that the Maryland campaign was decisive in so far as it showed that even in this section of the border states most sympathetic to the South support for the Confederates is weak. But the whole struggle turns on the border states. Whoever gets them dominates the Union. At the same time the fact that Lincoln issued the forthcoming Emancipation Act at a moment when the Confederates were pushing forward in Kentucky, shows that all consideration for the loyal slave-owners in the border states has ceased. The emigration of the slave-owners from Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee to the South, with their black chattels, is already enormous, and if the war is prolonged for a while, as it is certain to be, the Southerners will have lost all hold there. The South began the war for these territories. The war itself was the means of destroying its power in the border states, where, apart from this, the ties with the South were becoming weaker every day because a market can no longer be found for the breeding of slaves and the internal slave trade. In my opinion, therefore, for the South it will only be a matter now of the defensive. But their sole possibility of success lay in an offensive. If the report is confirmed that Hooker is getting the active command of the Potomac army, that McClellan is being "retired" to the "theoretical" post of Commander-in-chief and that Halleck is taking over the chief command in the West, then the conduct of the war in Virginia may also take on a more energetic character. Moreover the most favourable time of year for the Confederates is now past.

There is no doubt at all that morally the collapse of the Maryland campaign was of the most tremendous importance.

As to finance, the United States know from the time of the War of Independence, and we know from observation of Austria, how far one can go with depreciated paper money. It is a fact that the Yankees never exported more corn to England than they have this year, that the present harvest is again far above the average and that the trade balance was never more favourable for them than it has been for the last two years. As soon as the new system of taxation (a very ridiculous one, it is true, exactly in Pitt's style) comes into operation, the paper money which up to now has only been continually emitted will also at last begin to flow back again. An extension of the paper issue on the present scale will therefore become superfluous and further depreciation will thus be checked. What had made even the present depreciation less dangerous than it was in France, and even in England, in similar circumstances, has been the fact that the Yankees never prohibited two prices, a gold price and a paper price. The actual mischief done resolves itself into a state debt for which the proper equivalent has never been received and a premium on jobbing and speculation.

When the English boast that their depreciation was never more than 11½ per cent. (other people's belief is that it was more than double this during some time), they conveniently forget that they not only continued to pay their old taxes but every year paid new ones as well, so that the return flow of the banknotes was assured from the beginning, while the Yankees have actually carried on the war for a year and a half without taxes (except the greatly diminished import duties), simply by repeating the issue of paper. In a process of this kind, of which the turning point has now been reached, the actual depreciation is still comparatively small.

The fury with which the Southerners have received Lincoln's Acts proves their importance. All Lincoln's Acts appear like
the mean pettifogging conditions which one lawyer puts to his opposing lawyer. But this does not alter their historic content, and indeed it amuses me when I compare them with the drapery in which the Frenchman envelops even the most unimportant point.

Of course, like other people, I see the repulsive side of the form the movement takes among the Yankees; but I find the explanation of it in the nature of "bourgeois" democracy. The events over there are a world upheaval, nevertheless, and there is nothing more disgusting in the whole business than the English attitude towards them.

58. ENGELS TO MARX

Manchester, 5 November, 1862.

As regards America I also think, of course, that the Confederates in Maryland have received an unexpected moral blow of great significance. I am also convinced that the definite possession of the border states will decide the result of the war. But I am by no means certain that the affair is going to proceed along such classic lines as you appear to believe. Despite all the screams of the Yankees, there is still no sign whatever available that the people regard this petty business as a real question of national existence. On the contrary, these election victories of the Democrats go to prove rather that the party which has had enough of the war is growing. If there were only some proof or some indication that the masses in the North were beginning to rise as they did in France in 1792 and 1793, then it would all be very fine. But the only revolution to be expected seems rather to be a democratic counter-revolution and a rotten peace, including the partition of the border states. That this would not be the end of the affair by a long way—granted. But for the moment it would be the end. I must say I cannot work up any enthusiasm for a people which on such a colossal issue allows itself to be continually beaten by a fourth of its own population, and which after eighteen months of war has achieved nothing more than the discovery that all its generals are asses and all its officials rascals and traitors. After all the thing must happen differently, even in a bourgeois republic, if it is not to end in utter failure. I entirely agree with what you say about the meaness of the English way of looking at the business. . . .

59. MARX TO ENGELS


I am adding something to the section on machinery.* There are some curious questions here which I ignored in my first treatment. In order to get clear about it I have read through all my notebooks (extracts) on technology again and am also attending a practical course (experimental only) for workers, by Professor Willis (at the Geological Institute in Jermyn Street, where Huxley also used to give his lectures). It is the same for me with mechanics as it is with languages. I understand the mathematical laws, but the simplest technical reality demanding perception is harder to me than to the biggest blockheads.

You may or may not know, for in itself the question does not matter, that there is a great dispute as to what distinguishes a machine from a tool. The English (mathematical) mechanists, in their crude way, call a tool a simple machine and a machine a complicated tool. The English technologists, however, who pay rather more attention to economics (and who are followed by many, by most, of the English economists) base the distinction between the two on the fact that in one case the motive power is derived from human beings, in the other from a natural force. The German asses, who are great at these small things, have therefore concluded that, for instance, a plough is a machine, while the most complicated spinning-jenny, etc., in so far as it is worked by hand, is not. But now if we look round at the elementary forms of the machine there is no question at all that the industrial revolution starts, not from the motive power but from that section of machinery which the English call

* See Capital, Vol. I, Chap. XV, Section 1, "The Development of Machinery."
the working machine. Thus, for instance, the revolution was not due to the substitution of water or steam for the action of the foot in turning the spinning-wheel, but to the transformation of the immediate process of spinning itself and to the displacement of that portion of human labour which was not merely the "exertion of power" (as in working the treadle of the wheel) but was directly applied to the working up of the raw material. On the other hand, it is equally certain that when it is a question, not of the historical development of machinery but of machinery on the basis of the present method of production, the working machine (for instance, the sewing-machine) is the only determining factor; for as soon as this process has been mechanised everyone nowadays knows that the thing can be moved by hand, water-power or a steam-engine according to its size.

To pure mathematicians these questions are indifferent, but they become very important when it is a case of proving the connection between the social relations of human beings and the development of these material methods of production.

The re-reading of my technical-historical extracts has led me to the opinion that, apart from the discoveries of gunpowder, the compass and printing—those necessary pre-requisites of bourgeois development—the two material bases on which the preparations for machine industry were organised within manufacture during the period from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century (the period in which manufacture was developing from handicraft into actual large-scale industry) were the clock and the mill (at first the corn mill, that is, a water-mill). Both were inherited from the ancients. (The water-mill was introduced into Rome from Asia Minor at the time of Julius Cesar.) The clock is the first automatic machine applied to practical purposes; the whole theory of the production of regular motion was developed through it. Its nature is such that it is based on a combination of half-artistic handicraft and direct theory. Cardanus, for instance, wrote about (and gave practical formulae for) the construction of clocks. German authors of the sixteenth century called clockmaking "learned handicraft" (i.e., not of the guilds) and

it would be possible to show from the development of the clock how entirely different the relation between theoretical learning and practice was on the basis of the handicraft from what it is, for instance, in large-scale industry. There is also no doubt that in the eighteenth century the idea of applying automatic devices (moved by springs) to production was first suggested by the clock. It can be proved historically that Vaucanson's experiments on these lines had a tremendous influence on the imagination of the English inventors.

The mill, on the other hand, from the very beginning, as soon as the water-mill was produced, supplies the essential distinctions in the organism of a machine: the mechanical driving power—prime motor—on which it depends; the transmitting mechanism; and, finally, the working machine, which deals with the material—each with an existence independent of the others. The theory of friction, and with it the investigations into the mathematical forms of wheel-work, cogs, etc., were all developed at the mill; here first ditto the theory of measurement of the degree of motive power, of the best way of employing it, etc. Almost all the great mathematicians after the middle of the seventeenth century, so far as they occupied themselves with practical mechanics and its theoretical side, started from the simple corn-grinding water-mill. And indeed this was why the name mill came to be applied during the manufacturing period to all mechanical forms of motive power adapted to practical purposes.

But with the mill, as with the press, the forge, the plough, etc., the actual work of beating, crushing, grinding, pulverisation, etc., was performed from the very first without human labour, even though the moving force was human or animal. This kind of machinery is therefore very ancient, at least in its origins, and actual mechanical propulsion was formerly applied to it. Hence it is also practically the only machinery found in the manufacturing period. The industrial revolution begins as soon as mechanism is employed where from ancient times onwards the final result has always required human labour; not, that is to say, where, as with the tools just mentioned, the actual material to be dealt with has never, from the beginning,
been dealt with by the human hand, but where, from the nature of the thing, man has not from the very first merely acted as power. If one is to follow the German asses in calling the use of animal power (which is just as much voluntary movement as human power) machinery, then the use of this kind of locomotive is at any rate much older than the simplest handicraft tool.

Cardan (1501-76). Famous Italian man of science and doctor. Made researches in mathematics, physics and medicine.

Vaucanson, Jacques de (1709-82). Mastered the mechanism of the clock as a child and made himself a wooden clock. The automatic machines he constructed made him famous (among others a flute player, first shown in Paris in 1738, and a hissing snake which threw itself on the breast of Cleopatra). He was made Royal Inspector of Silk Manufactures by Cardinal Fleury. Vaucanson perfected many machines for this industry.

60. Marx to Engels

(London), 13 February, 1863.

What do you say to the Polish business? This much is certain—the era of revolution has now fairly opened again in Europe. And the general position of things is good. But the comfortable delusions and the almost childish enthusiasm with which we hailed the era of revolution before February 1848 have all gone to hell. Old comrades like Weerth, etc., are gone, others have dropped out or become demoralised and new blood is not visible, at any rate as yet. Added to which we now know what a part stupidity plays in revolutions, and how they are exploited by scoundrels. For the rest, the “Prussian” enthusiasts for nationality, for “Italy” and “Hungary,” are already getting into a fix. The “Prussians” will not renounce their Russianism. Let us hope that this time the lava will flow from east to west and not the other way round, so that we may be spared the “honour” of French initiative.

Letter 62. 24 March, 1863

In January 1863 a rising took place in Poland. The insurrection spread over the whole country and led to the formation of a national government. This revolt, however, was under the leadership of the lesser nobility, who were not capable of drawing the masses into the movement, and it was suppressed when the power passed to the big landowners; these latter, hoping for diplomatic intervention on the part of France and England, came to an “honourable” agreement with the tsar, who naturally broke the agreement as no intervention took place.

Marx and Engels regarded Poland as the barrier separating Germany from the barbaric despotism of Russia—a barrier which they held to be necessary for the free development of capitalism in Germany. (See also Letters 62, 65.)

Weerth, Georg (1822-56). Member of the Communist League, one of the editorial staff of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, a revolutionary poet. He died in Havana.

61. Marx to Engels

(London), 21 February, 1863.

What I am most afraid of in the Polish affair is that the swine Bonaparte will find an excuse for coming to the Rhine and once more wrangling himself out of his horrid position.

Send me (as you have more material to hand about it) a few notes (exact) on the behaviour of Frederick William the Just in the year 1813 after Napoleon came to grief in Russia. This time it is a case of really coming to grips with the barren House of Hohenzollern.

62. Marx to Engels

(London), 24 March, 1863.

The political standpoint I have reached is the following: that Bismarck and Vincke do in fact truly represent the principle of the Prussian State; that the “State” of Prussia (a very different creature from Germany) can exist neither without the present Russia nor with an independent Poland.
The whole of Prussian history leads to this conclusion, at which the Herren Hohenzollern (including Frederick II) arrived long ago. This instinct of the paternal ruler is far superior to the limited vassal’s mind of the Prussian Liberals. As therefore the existence of Poland is necessary to Germany but impossible alongside of Prussia, this State of Prussia must be demolished. In other words, the Polish question is only a fresh occasion for proving that it is impossible to further German interests so long as the Hohenzollern dynastic state exists.

†Vincke, Georg Ernst (1811-75). Leader of the Prussian Liberals at the turn of the ‘fifties. Marx gave the following picture of Vincke in a letter to Engels on May 10, 1861: “I have even idealised the fellow. . . . In a bad farce of Freytag’s, called The Journalists, which I saw in Berlin, there was a fat Hamburg philistine and wine merchant, called Piepenbrink. Vincke is the very image of this Piepenbrink. Repulsive Hamburg-Westphalian dialect, rapidly mumbled words, no sentence properly constructed or quite finished.”

63. Marx to Engels

[London], 9 April, 1863.

Itzig [Lassalle] has already published two pamphlets about his case again, which, fortunately, he has not sent me. On the other hand he sent me the day before yesterday his open letter in answer to the Workers’ Central Committee for the Leipziger workers’ (read Kronen) Congress.* His attitude—very important, flinging about phrases borrowed from us—is quite that of the future workers’ dictator. He resolves the question between wage-labour and capital “as easily as in play” (verbatim). The workers, that is to say, are to agitate for universal suffrage and then send people armed, like himself, with the “shining sword of science” to the Chamber of Representatives. Then

* Kronen. Note on page 87. For Lassalle’s open letter, etc., see Letter 29, Note. [Ed. Eng. ed.]

they will establish workers’ factories, for which the State will advance the capital, and by and by these institutions will embrace the whole country. This is at any rate surprisingly new! . . .

. . . I attended the meeting held by Bright at the head of the trade unions. He looked quite like an Independent and every time he said, “In the United States no kings, no bishops,” there was a burst of applause. The workers themselves spoke excellently, with a complete absence of bourgeois rhetoric and without in the least concealing their opposition to the capitalists (whom Father Bright, by the way, also attacked).

How soon the English workers will free themselves from their apparent bourgeois infection one must wait to see.* For the rest, where the main points in your book† are concerned, they have been confirmed down to the smallest detail by the later development since 1844. I have myself compared the book again with my notes on the later period. Only the little German Spießgesellen [petty-bourgeois], who measure world history by the yard and the latest “interesting news in the paper,” could imagine that in developments of such magnitude twenty years are more than a day—though later on days may come again in which twenty years are embodied.

Re-reading your book has made me regretfully aware of our increasing age. How freshly and passionately, with what bold anticipations and no learned and scientific doubts, the thing is still dealt with here! And the very illusion that the result itself will leap into the daylight of history to-morrow or the day after gives the whole thing a warm and jovial humour—comparable to which the later “gray in gray” makes a damned unpleasant contrast.

†Bright, John (1811-89). [Manufacturer and liberal bourgeois politician, who with Richard Cobden led the fight of the

* Engels had written to Marx the day before (April 8, 1863): “All revolutionary energy has faded practically entirely away from the English proletariat and the English proletariat is declaring his complete agreement with the rule of the bourgeoisie.” [Ed. Eng. ed.]

† The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844.
letter 64. 21 April, 1863

rising industrial capitalists in England against the feudal landowners. See Letter 8, Notes, and Letters 71, 74. Bright was now in the midst of his nine years' campaign (1858—1867) for the extension of the franchise, a campaign in which the workers were also enlisted. See Letters 71, 88, 90, 91. Ed. Eng. ed.]

Bright in his speeches also attacked the capitalists. While of course this may have been partly pure demagogy it may also have sometimes had a real background. "The bourgeoisie never rules as a whole," wrote Engels in his Campaign for the German Constitution; "apart from the feudal castes, who have still retained some part of their political power, even the big bourgeoisie, as soon as it has defeated feudalism, splits into a ruling and an opposition party—which are usually represented by the bank on the one side and the manufacturers on the other. The oppositional, progressive fraction of the big and middle bourgeoisie then has common interests with the petty bourgeoisie against the ruling faction, and unites with it in a common struggle."

64. Engels to Marx

Manchester, 21 April, 1863.

What is to be done with Lassalle it is hard to say; after all, I should assume that it would be beneath the dignity of the great Itzig [Lassalle] to bring out the heavy artillery of a formal denial against such petty gossip as that of Meyen. Let the fellow get out of his own dirty mess himself; if he can do anything he will not need any testimonial from you, and why should you compromise yourself after once having told him that he cannot go with us all the same, or we with him. What stupidity, to start with, to mix himself up in the Schulze-Delitzsch Knoten* business and to attempt to form a party there, of all places, on the basis of our former work. We can only welcome the fact that Schulze-Delitzsch and other rabble are trying during this bourgeois period to raise the Knoten to the heights of the bourgeois point of view, for otherwise we should have had this business to wade through during the revolution, and in Germany, where everything is so much complicated by

* See footnote, page 87.

the mentality of the petty state, this small beer might have been held up to us as something new and practical. That is finished with now; we have got our opponents in the right position and the Knoten has become conscious and so transferred himself to the ranks of the petty-bourgeois democracy. But to regard these chaps as representatives of the proletariat! It takes Itzig to do that.

65. Engels to Marx

Manchester, 11 June, 1863.

The business in Poland no longer seems to be going so well of late. The movement in Lithuania and Little Russia is obviously weak, and the insurgents in Poland do not seem to be advancing either. All the leaders fall in the fighting or else are taken prisoner and shot, which seems to show that they must have to expose themselves greatly in order to get their people to advance. The quality of the insurgents is no longer what it was in March and April, the best fellows have been used up. These Polacks are quite incalculable, however, and the...
business may still turn out well all the same, although the prospects are less. If they hold out they may yet be involved in a general European movement which will save them; on the other hand if things go badly Poland will be finished for ten years—an insurrection of this kind exhausts the fighting strength of the population for many years.

A European movement seems to me very probable, because the bourgeoisie has now once more lost all his fear of the Communists and if necessary will again attack with them. The French elections prove this, and so do the events in Prussia since the last elections. I hardly think a movement of this kind will start in France. The election results in Paris were really too bourgeois, the workers, where they put up special candidates, were defeated, and had not even the strength to force the bourgeoisie at least to elect radicals. Added to which Bonaparte knows the way to keep big cities in check.*

In Prussia they would still be chattering if the worthy Bismarck had not turned the lock on them. However the business there may turn out, peaceful constitutional development is at an end and the philistine must prepare himself for a row. This means a lot already. Much as I despise the valour of our old friends the Democrats, it seems to me that the largest amount of inflammable matter is concentrated here, and, as it is scarcely possible that the Hohenzollerns will not entangle themselves in the greatest stupidities in their foreign policy, it might well come about that the troops, divided half on the Polish frontier and half on the Rhine, left Berlin free, and that a coup followed. Bad enough for Germany and Europe if Berlin arrived at the head of the movement.

What surprises me most is that no peasant movement breaks out in Great Russia. The Polish rising seems actually to have an unfavourable effect there.


Letter 65. 11 June, 1863

Letter 66. 12 June, 1863

66. Marx to Engels

British Museum, 12 June, 1863.

Itzig [Lassalle] has sent me (and perhaps you too) his speech in court on indirect taxation. There are some good points in it but, in the first place, the whole thing is written, in an unbearably self-assertive and loquacious way, with the most ludicrous, learned and pompous airs. Moreover, it is after all essentially the compilation of a "pupil" who is in a desperate hurry to boost himself as a "thoroughly learned man" carrying on independent research. Hence it swarms with historical and theoretical blunders. One example will suffice (in case you have not read the stuff yourself). In order to impress the court and the public he wishes to give a sort of retrospective history of the polemic against indirect taxation, and so he goes back and takes quotations from all over the place—beyond Boisguillebert and Vauban to Bodinus, etc. And here the typical pupil reveals himself. He omits the physiocrats, being obviously unaware that everything that Adam Smith, etc., said on the subject was copied from them and that in general they were the heroes of this "question." Equally after the fashion of the pupil he treats "indirect taxes" as "bourgeois taxes," which they were "in the Middle Ages" but are not to-day (at least not where the bourgeoisie is developed) as he could learn further from Messrs. R. Gladstone and Co. in Liverpool. The ass does not seem to know that the polemic against "indirect" taxation is one of the slogans of the English and American friends of Schulze-Delitzsch and Co. and therefore cannot be a slogan against them, I mean the free-traders. Just like a schoolboy too is the way he applies a statement of Ricardo's to the Prussian Land Tax. (Absolutely wrong, that is to say.) How touching when he communicates to the court the discoveries "he" has derived from "deepest science and truth" and terrible "eight hours," namely,

that in the Middle Ages landed property dominated,

in modern times, capital, and now

the "principle of the estate of labour," "labour" or "the moral principle of labour"; and on the very day he commun

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cated this discovery to the Knoten.* Oberregierungsrat [Chief Government Councillor] Engel (without knowing about him) disclosed it to a more refined public in the Singakademie. He and Engel mutually congratulated each other "by letter" upon their "simultaneous" scientific results.

The "estate of labour" and the "moral principle" certainly are achievements on the part of Itzig [Lassalle] and the Chief Government Councillor.

I have not been able to bring myself to write to the fellow since the beginning of this year. For me to criticise his stuff would be waste of time, besides he appropriates every word to himself as a "discovery." To bring him up against his plagiarism would be absurd, for I will not deprive him of our things in the form into which he has messed them up. To recognise his boasting and tactlessness would not do either. The chap would make use of that at once.

So there is nothing for it but to wait until at last his wrath breaks forth. I shall then have a very good excuse in the fact that he (like Chief Government Councillor Engel) always remarks: this is not "Communism." I shall answer him, therefore, that these repeated asseverations of his would have forced me, if I was to take any notice of him at all, to show the public (1) where and how he had copied from us; (2) where and how we dissociate ourselves from his nonsense. In order, therefore, not to prejudice "Communism" or to damage him I had completely ignored him.

*Engels had written to Marx on June 11, 1863, saying that Lassalle was "now working purely in the service of Bismarck and it may happen one day, if Monsieur Bismarck is tired of him, that he will be flung into prison and will make acquaintance with the Prussian Land Law, which he always seems to confuse with the Code [Code Napoleon—the French bourgeois Statute book]". For the rest it is nice that after his appearance in the Vogt affair he should now be under the aegis not only of the Augsburger [newspaper] but also of the Kreuzzeitung."
(2) Under means of subsistence* is to be included everything which goes annually into the consumption fund (or which could go into the consumption fund without accumulation, this being excluded from the table).

In Class I (means of subsistence) the whole product (700) consists of means of subsistence which by their nature do not enter into constant capital (raw material and machinery, buildings, etc.). Similarly in Class II the whole product consists of commodities which constitute constant capital, i.e., which enter into the process of reproduction again as raw material and machinery.

(3) Ascending lines are dotted, descending lines are plain.

(4) Constant capital is that part of capital which consists of raw material and machinery. Variable capital that part which is exchanged for labour.

(5) In agriculture, for instance, one part of the same product (e.g., wheat) constitutes means of subsistence, another part (e.g., wheat) enters in its natural form (e.g., as seed) into reproduction again as raw material. But this makes no difference. For such branches of production figure in the one quality in Class II and in the other in Class I.

(6) The point of the whole business is therefore this:

**Category I. Means of Subsistence.**

Working materials and machinery equal, say, £400 (i.e., that portion of these which is included in the yearly product as depreciation; the part of the machinery, etc., which is not used up does not appear in the table at all). The variable capital exchanged for labour = 100 and is reproduced as 300, of which 100 replaces the wages in the product and 200 represents the surplus value (unpaid surplus labour). The product = 700, of which 400 represents the value of the constant capital, the whole of which has, however, entered into the product and must therefore be replaced.

In this relation between variable capital and surplus value it is assumed that the worker works one-third of the working day for himself and two-thirds for his natural superiors.

* Marx uses here throughout the word "Lohnmittel" (means of subsistence) instead of the word "Konsumationsmittel" (means of consumption) used when he developed the above account in Capital, II, Chap. XX, "Simple Reproduction." [Ed. Eng. ed.]
100 (variable capital) is therefore paid out in money as wages, as indicated by the dotted line; with this 100 (indicated by the descending line) the worker buys the *product* of this class, *i.e.*, means of subsistence for 100. Thus the money flows back again to the capitalist Class I.

The surplus value of 200 in its general form = profit, which is split up, however, into *industrial* (including *commercial*) profit, into *interest*, which the capitalist pays in money, and into rent, which he also pays in money. The money thus paid out for industrial profit, interest and rent flows back again (indicated by the descending lines) because it is spent on the product of Class I. Thus the whole of the money laid out by the industrial capitalist within Class I flows back to him again, while 300 of the product 700 is consumed by the workers, employers, monied men and landlords. There remains in Class I a *surplus*, 400, of the product (in means of subsistence) and a deficit of 400 in the constant capital.

**Category II. Machinery and Raw Materials.**

As the *total product of this category* (not only that part of the product which replaces the constant capital but also that which represents the equivalent of the wages and surplus value) consists of *raw materials* and *machinery*, the revenue of this category cannot be realised in its own product, but only in the product of Category I. But setting aside accumulation, as we do here, Category I can only buy from Category II the amount required to replace its constant capital, while Category II can only expend the part of its product which represents wages and surplus value (*revenue*) on the product of Category I. The workers of Category II therefore spent their money = 133\(\frac{1}{3}\) on the product of Category I. The same takes place with the surplus value of Category II, which, like that of I, is split up into industrial profit, interest and rent. Thus 400 in money flows back from Category II to the industrial capitalists of Category I, who in return dispose of the remainder of their product = 400 to the former.

With this 400 money Class I buys the necessary 400 replacement of its constant capital from Category II, to whom the money spent in wages and consumption (by the industrial
capitalists themselves, the monied men and the landlords) thus flows back again. There remains therefore to Category II, 533⅓ of its total product, with which it replaces its own used-up constant capital.

The movement, partly within Category I, partly between Categories I and II, shows at the same time how the money with which they pay new wages, interest and ground rent flows back to the respective industrial capitalists of both categories.

Category III represents the whole process of reproduction. The total product of Category II here appears as the constant capital of the whole of society, and the total product of Category I as that part of the product which replaces the variable capital (the wage fund) and the revenues of the classes who share out the surplus value.

*QuEsnaY, François (1694-1774). French doctor and economist, founder of the physiocratic theory, which "transferred the investigation into the origin of surplus value from the sphere of circulation to the sphere of immediate production itself, and by so doing laid the foundations for the analysis of capitalist production." (Marx.) According to the physiocrats, ground rent was the only form of surplus value and agricultural labour was therefore the only productive labour. But this "apparent glorification of landed property turns into its economic negation and into the confirmation of capitalist production" (Marx), since the physiocrats wanted to throw the whole weight of taxation on to ground rent, demanded that industry should be freed from state tutelage and preached free competition. We have specially to thank the physiocratic doctrine for the famous Economic Table (Tableau Économique) of Quesnay, in which he represented the process of reproduction of social capital as a whole. This table, "in the first third of the eighteenth century, when political economy was in its infancy ... was incontestably the most brilliant idea of which political economy had hitherto been guilty." (Marx. See Theorien über den Mehrwert, Bd. I.)

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68. Marx to Engels

London, 15 August, 1863.

My work (the manuscript for the printer) is getting on well in one respect. In the final working out the things are taking on, as it seems to me, a bearably popular form, except for some unavoidable M—C and C—M.* On the other hand, although I write the whole day, the thing does not get on in the way my own impatience, after this long trial of patience, desires. Anyhow it will be 100 per cent. easier to understand than No. 1.† For the rest, when I look at this compilation now and see how I have had to turn everything round and how I had to make even the historical part out of material of which some was quite unknown, then Itzig [Lassalle] really does seem funny to me, with "his" economy already in the making, though all the stuff he has hawked out so far reveals him as a sixth-form schoolboy who with the most revolting and bombastic old wives’ chatter trumpets abroad—as his latest discovery—principles which—ten times better—we were already distributing as small change among our partisans twenty years ago. The same Itzig otherwise also collects in his manure factory the party excrements we dropped twenty years ago, with which world history is to be fertilised.

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69. Engels to Marx

Manchester, 4 September, 1864.

You can imagine how the news surprised me.‡ Whatever Lassalle may have been personally, or from the literary and scientific point of view, politically he was undoubtedly one of the most important fellows in Germany. For us he was at the moment a very uncertain friend, and in the future would have been a fairly certain enemy, but all the same it hits one hard to see how Germany breaks everyone in the extreme party

* M=money, C=commodity. For this formula see Capital, Vol. I, Chap. III Section 2.
† The Critique of Political Economy (1859).
‡ The news of Lassalle’s death. (See Letter 29, note.)
with any degree of capacity. What rejoicing will reign among the factory owners and the Progressive swine—Lassalle was after all the only chap they were afraid of in Germany itself.

But what an extraordinary way to lose one's life! To fall seriously in love with the daughter of a Bavarian ambassador—this would-be Don Juan—to want to marry her, to come into collision with a rejected rival, who is in addition a Wallichian swindler, and to get oneself shot dead by him. This could only have happened to Lassalle, whose strange mixture of frivolity and sentimentality, of Judaism and would-be chivalry, was peculiar to himself alone. How could a politician like himself engage in a duel with a Wallachian adventurer?

70. MARX TO ENGELS

[London], 7 September, 1864.

Lassalle's misfortune has been damnably in my head these days. After all he was still one of the old guard and the enemy of our enemies. And then the thing came as such a surprise that it is hard to believe such a noisy, stirring, pushing person is now as dead as a mouse and has got to keep his mouth shut altogether. You are quite right about the pretext for his death. It was one of the many tactless acts which he committed in his life. But for all that I am sorry that in the last years our relations were clouded, though he was to blame for this. On the other hand I am very glad that I resisted the provocations from various sides and made no attack on him during his "jubilee year."

The devil knows, the squad is always getting smaller, nothing new is added to it. For the rest I am convinced that if Lassalle had not been in Switzerland, in the company of the military adventurers and revolutionaries in yellow gloves, this catastrophe would never have come about. But this Coblenz of the European revolution had exercised a fatal attraction upon him again and again.

The "daughter of a Bavarian ambassador" is none other than the daughter of the Berliner, Döniges, a fellow-demagogue of Rutenberg and Co. at the university, originally one of little dwarf Ranke's young gents, or rather, as they were no gentlemen, young people, who used to publish awful old annals of the German emperors under his direction. What the bumbling little root-grubber Ranke regarded as the spirit of history—facile anecdote-mongering and the attribution of all great events to petty and mean causes—was strictly forbidden to these young men from the country. They were to confine themselves to "objectivity" and leave the spirit to their master. Our friend Döniges was regarded in some respects as a rebel because he disputed Ranke's monopoly of the spirit, in practice at least, and demonstrated in various ways that he was as much a born "valet" to "history" as Ranke.

71. MARX TO ENGELS

[London], 4 November, 1864.

... (2) THE WORKINGMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Some time ago London workers had sent an address about Poland to Paris workers and summoned them to common action in this matter.

The Parisians on their part sent over a deputation headed by a worker called Tolain, the real workers' candidate at the last election in Paris, a very nice fellow. (His companions too were quite nice lads.) A public meeting in St. Martin's Hall was summoned for September 28, 1864, by Odger (shoemaker, President of the Council here of All London Trades Unions* and also especially of the Trade Unions Suffrage Agitation Society, which is connected with Bright) and Cremer, mason and

* The London Trades Council.
Secretary of the Masons’ Union. (These two organised the big meeting of the Trade Unions in St. James’s Hall for North America, under Bright, ditto the Garibaldi demonstrations.) A certain Le Lubez was sent to ask me if I would take part on behalf of the German workers, and especially if I would supply a German worker to speak at the meeting, etc. I provided them with Eccarius, who came off splendidly, and ditto was present myself as a mute figure in the platform. I knew that this time real “powers” were involved both on the London and Paris sides and therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule to decline any such invitations.

(Le Lubez is a young Frenchman, i.e., in the thirties, who has however grown up in Jersey and London, speaks English excellently and is a very good intermediary between the French and English workers.) (Music teacher and French lessons.)

At the meeting, which was packed to suffocation (for there is now evidently a revival of the working classes taking place),* Major Wolff (Thurn-Taxis, Garibaldi’s adjutant) represented the London Workingmen’s Society. It was decided to found a “Workingmen’s International Association,” of which the General Council should be in London and should act as an “intermediary” between the workers’ societies in Germany, Italy, France and England. Ditto that a General Workingmen’s Congress should be summoned in Belgium in 1865. A Provisional Committee was appointed at the meeting; Odger, Cremer and many others, some of them old Chartists, old Owenites, etc., for England; Major Wolff, Fontana and other Italians for Italy; Le Lubez, etc., for France; Eccarius and I for Germany. The committee was empowered to co-opt as many members as it chose.

So far so good. I attended the first meeting of the Committee. A sub-committee (including myself) was appointed to draft a declaration of principles and provisional statutes. Being unwell I was prevented from attending the meeting of the sub-committee and the meeting of the whole committee which followed.

In these two meetings which I had missed—that of the sub-committee and the subsequent one of the whole committee—the following had taken place:

Major Wolff had handed in the règlement [statutes] of the Italian Workers’ Societies (which possess a central organisation but, as later transpired, are really associated benefit societies) to be used for the new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was evidently a compilation of Mazzini’s, so you already know the spirit and phraseology in which the real question, the workers’ question, was dealt with. Also how nationalities were shoved in.

In addition an old Owenite, Weston*—now a manufacturer himself, a very amiable and worthy man—had drawn up a programme of indescribable breadth and full of the most extreme confusion.

The subsequent general committee meeting instructed the sub-committee to remodel Weston’s programme, ditto Wolff’s regulations. Wolff himself left in order to attend the Congress of Italian Workingmen’s Associations in Naples and get them to decide on joining the London Central Association.

Another meeting of the sub-committee—which I again failed to attend, because I was informed of the rendezvous too late. At this a “declaration of principles” and a new version of Wolff’s statutes were put forward by Le Lubez and accepted by the committee for submission to the general committee. The general committee met on October 18. As Eccarius had written me that delay would be dangerous I appeared, and was really frightened when I heard the worthy Le Lubez read out an appallingly wordy, badly written and utterly undigested preamble, pretending to be a declaration of principles, in which Mazzini could be detected everywhere, the whole being crusted over with the vaguest tags of French socialism. Added to this the Italian statutes were taken over in the main, and these apart from all their other faults, aim at something which is in fact utterly impossible, a sort of central government of the European working classes (with Mazzini in the background, of course). I put up a mild opposition and after a lot of talking backwards and forwards Eccarius proposed that the sub-committee should submit the thing to further “editing.” On

* Weston. See Letter 83.
there is a weekly paper called the *Beehive*, edited by Potter, the Trade Unionist, a sort of *Monteux.* I myself am to translate the stuff into German.

It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form acceptable from the present standpoint of the workers’ movement. In a few weeks the same people will be holding meetings for the franchise with Bright and Cobden. It will take time before the reawakened movement allows the old boldness of speech. It will be necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo* [bold in matter, mild in manner]. As soon as the stuff is printed you will get it.

(3) Bakunin sends you greetings. He has left to-day for Italy, where he lives (Florence). Yesterday I saw him again for the first time for sixteen years. I must say I liked him very much and better than formerly. About the Polish movement he says that the Russian government has used the movement to keep Russia itself quiet, but never reckoned on an eighteen months’ struggle. It provoked the business in Poland for that purpose. Poland came to grief for two reasons: the influence of Bonaparte and secondly the hesitation of the Polish aristocracy in proclaiming *peasant socialism* openly and unambiguously from the very beginning. In future, after this failure of the Polish business, Bakunin is only going to take part in the socialist movement.

On the whole he is one of the few people whom after sixteen years I find to have developed further instead of backwards. I also talked over the Urquhart denunciations with him. (By the way, the International Association will no doubt cause a breach between these friends and me!) He asked much after you and Lupus. When I told him of the latter’s death he said at once that the movement had lost an irreplaceable man.

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*Marx is here reporting the foundation of the International Workingmen’s Association (First International) and the origin of its programme, the famous *Inaugural Address*. The foundation and leadership of the First International are a model of Marx’s revolutionary activity. From the varied mixture of most widely*
different tendencies expressed in the workers’ movement in the different countries Marx and Engels succeeded in creating a united international party with a clear proletarian-revolutionary line, and in working out tactics which were to serve as a model to the whole later working-class movement. During the existence of the First International the following congresses took place:

LONDON CONFERENCE (September 25-29, 1865). On the agenda were the questions of the trade union movement, the role of Russian tsarism in Europe, the restoration of Poland, standing armies. The speeches showed that, except in England, the workers’ movement was everywhere only in its first stage of development.

GENEVA CONFERENCE (September 3-8, 1866). The statutes and fundamental principles of the programme were ratified. At this Congress conflicts arose with the Proudhonists. (See Letter 91, Marx to Kugelmann, 9 October, 1866.)

LAUSANNE CONFERENCE (September 2-8, 1867). At this Congress, the question of the state, the political tasks of the proletariat, the question of war and the question of the international policy of the proletariat were dealt with.

BRUSSELS CONFERENCE (September 6-15, 1868): was a turning point in the development of the First International. The Proudhonists suffered a defeat. At this Congress the representatives of the big workers’ organisations and especially of the German workers were present for the first time.

BASEL CONFERENCE (September 6-12, 1869). Bakuninism [anarchism] made its first appearance (see Note below).

LONDON CONFERENCE (September 12-23, 1871): the main question was the division in the International; the split finally took place at the

HAGUE CONFERENCE (September 2, 1872), when Bakunin and Guillaume were expelled from the International. (See Letter 157.) A resolution was also adopted on the basis of which the General Council was transferred to New York. On the reasons for this decision, Marx wrote to Sorge on September 27, 1873:

"According to my view of conditions in Europe, it will be thoroughly useful to let the formal organisation of the International withdraw into the background for a time, only, if possible, keeping some control over the centre in New York in order to prevent idiots like Perret or adventurers like Cluseret getting hold of the leadership and compromising the cause. Events themselves and the inevitable development and complexity of things will ensure the resurrection of the International in an improved form. Meanwhile it will be enough if we do not allow the connection with the most active workers in the different countries to slip entirely out of our hands; for the rest, however, we shall not care a straw for the local decisions of Geneva—simply ignore them. This course of action will be facilitated by the one good decision come to there, to postpone the Congress for two years. Moreover, it will upset the calculations of the governments on the Continent that at the very moment when their crusade of reaction is about to begin the specre of the International should refuse its services for the time being, and that indeed the bourgeoisie everywhere should believe the ghost to have been successfully laid."

The Hague Congress concluded with a public meeting at which Marx, in the course of his speech, said:

"One day the working class must hold political power in its hands in order to establish a new organisation of labour; it must overthrow the old political system which maintains the old institutions in being, unless it wishes, like the early Christians, who despised and neglected such action, to renounce 'the kingdom of this world.'"

As the fundamental principle of the International Marx put the solidarity of the proletariat in all countries, saying: "The revolution must be made with solidarity; we learn this from the Paris Commune, which only fell because just this solidarity was lacking among the workers of the other countries." (Volkstaat, October 2, 1872.) [For the history of the International see Letters 156, 157, 159, 160 and Index].

Bakunin, M. (1814-70). Russian revolutionary. One of the founders of anarchism. In the thirties a follower of Hegel's philosophy. In 1848 he took part in the German revolution (the rising in Dresden). He was arrested (1849), handed over to the Russian government and sentenced to life imprisonment. After the death of the Tsar Nicholas I, Bakunin was exiled to Siberia (1857). In 1861 he escaped and came to London.

Bakunin did not at once join the International. He was at first a member of the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom. At the Bernese Congress of this League (1868) he and his supporters (E. Réclus, Aristide Rey, Jaclard, Fanelli, N. Joukovsky,
V. Mratchkovsky and others) being left in a minority, seceded from the League and established their own International Alliance of Socialist Democracy. In 1869 this Alliance was affiliated to the International. (See Letter 121.) In the International Bakunin was an opponent of Marx. For his anarchist theories see Letters 156, 157, 186.

In Ludwig Feuerbach and the Exit of Classical German Philosophy Engels says that Bakunin combined Stirner with Proudhon and christened this amalgam "anarchism." Plekhanov showed the unclarity and the eclectic character of Bakunin's theory in Our Differences. There Plekhanov says: "Bakuninism is not a system. It is a mixture of the socialist theories of the 'Latin countries' with Russian 'peasant ideals,' of Proudhon's People's Bank with communal property in land, of Fourier with Stenka Razin." (Plekhanov, Works, Vol. II, p. 320.)

ODGER, GEORGE (1820-77). Shoemaker (one of the leaders of a small union of skilled shoemakers, the Ladies' Shoemakers' Society) and for ten years (1862-72) secretary of the London Trades Council (founded 1860). Actively supported the great building trades' strikes, 1859-60. Member of the committee which sent the address to the Paris workers mentioned at the beginning of Marx's letter. Odger had a great reputation as the most radical of democratic republicans and, consequently, great influence with the London workers. Like Cremer (see below) and Applegarth (Letter 193, Note) he was identified with the "new model" trade unionism of the 'fifties and 'sixties; with Applegarth he was a leading member of the so-called "Junta." After the extension of the franchise gained in 1867, Odger and his friends had no longer the same interest in supporting the International, they looked to Parliament to change the laws hampering the activities of the trade unions and they were jealous of the revolutionary influence of Marx (Letter 190). Odger's attitude is clearly revealed in connection with the Irish debate (Letter 193, Note). He was one of the first working-class candidates nominated at the elections held after the (franchise) Reform Act of 1867, but withdrew on three occasions in favour of the Liberals. He was President of the General Council of the International in 1866 (Marx having refused to be nominated) and was so much offended when, on Marx's proposal, this office was abolished in 1867 that he gave the Council "the cold shoulder" for a year, later asking its support for his candidature in Chelsea. (Marx to Engels, January 11, October 10, 1868.) He violently attacked the Address of the General Council on the Paris Commune written by Marx (The Civil War in France) and declared his resignation from the Council (June 1871) on this account. See also Letter 160, note on the Beehive below and notes to Letter 133.

CREMER, W. R. (1838-1908). Joiner. First secretary of the General Council of the International. Cremer was an active member of the strike committee in the first great London building trades' strike, July 1859 to February 1860. (For Marx's reference to this strike see Capital, Vol. I, "The Working Day," and for his reference to the London building industry, Vol. II, chap. XII.) Original member of first London Trades Council (1860) and a founder of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners (1860), the second great trade union founded on the "new model." At the first Congress of the International (Geneva, September 1866), which voted for the abolition of standing armies and the general arming of the people, he took a pacifist line. After the Congress he failed, to his great surprise and disgust, to secure re-election as secretary (Marx to Engels, September 26, 1866); he resigned from the Council and was not re-elected at the 1867 Congress. Identified himself with various pacifist organisations (secretary of the "Workmen's Peace Association"). Liberal M.P. for Haggerston, 1885-95 and 1906-08. (See Engels' Letter, 197.) He was knighted—Sir Randall Cremer—and in 1903 received the Nobel Peace Prize. [Ed. Eng. ed.]

EGCARIUS. A tailor by trade. German member of the Communist League (1848-52). He came as a refugee to London, settled there and took part in the British workers' movement. Member of the London Trades Council. Secretary of the General Council of the International. In 1871 he resigned his secretaryship and broke with Marx. Engels wrote of him (to Liebknecht, May 24-28, 1872) that he had been utterly demoralised by his intercourse with "English agitators and trading politicians and trades unions paid secretaries, who are all bought by the middle class here now or else begging to be bought by them." [Ed. Eng. ed.]

The "BEEHIVE" (1862-76). Was founded after the second building workers' strike (1861) by a group of trade unionists,