

KARL MARX:
MAN AND FIGHTER

by

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and

OTTO MAENCHEN-HELFEN

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FOREWORD

STRIFE has raged about Karl Marx for decades, and never has it been so embittered as at the present day. He has impressed his image on the time as no other man has done. To some he is a fiend, the arch-enemy of human civilisation, and the prince of chaos, while to others he is a far-seeing and beloved leader, guiding the human race towards a brighter future. In Russia his teachings are the official doctrines of the state, while Fascist countries wish them exterminated. In the areas under the sway of the Chinese Soviets Marx's portrait appears upon the bank-notes, while in Germany they have burned his books. Practically all the parties of the Socialist Workers' International, and the Communist parties in all countries, acknowledge Marxism, the eradication of which is the sole purpose of innumerable political leagues, associations and coalitions.

The French Proudhonists of the sixties, the followers of Lassalle in Germany of the seventies, the Fabians in England before the War produced their own brand of Socialism which they opposed to that of Marx. The anti-Marxism of to-day has nothing in common with those movements. He who opposes Marxism to-day does not do so because, for instance, he denies the validity of Marx's theory of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Similarly there are millions to-day who acknowledge Marx as their leader, but not because he solved the riddle of capitalist society. Perhaps one Socialist in a thousand has ever read any of Marx's economic writings, and of a thousand anti-Marxists not even one. The strife no longer rages round the truth or falsehood of the doctrine of historical materialism or the validity of the labour theory of value or the theory of marginal utility. These things are discussed and also not discussed. The arena in which Marx is fought about to-day is in the factories, in the parliaments and at the barricades. In both camps, the bourgeois and the Socialist, Marx is first of all, if not exclusively, the revolutionary,

the leader of the proletariat in its struggle to overthrow Capitalism.

This book is intended to describe the life of Marx the fighter. We make no attempt to disguise the difficulties of such an undertaking. Marxism—to use the word in its proper sense, embracing the whole of Marx's work—is a whole. To divide theory from practice was completely alien to Marx's nature. How, then, can his life be understood except as a unity of thought and action?

'The man of science was not even half the man,' Engels said in his speech at the grave-side of his dead friend. 'For Marx science was an historically moving, revolutionary force. Marx was above all a revolutionary. To co-operate in one way or another in the work of bringing about the downfall of capitalist society and the state institutions which were its creations, to co-operate in the liberation of the modern proletariat, to make it conscious of its situation and its needs, and conscious of the conditions for its own emancipation—that was his real life-work.'

Marx was a Socialist before he reached real and complete understanding of the laws of development underlying bourgeois society. When he wrote the Communist Manifesto at the age of thirty he did not yet appreciate the many different forms which surplus value could assume, but the Communist Manifesto contained the whole doctrine of the class-war and showed the proletariat the historical task that it had to fulfil. We have written the biography of Marx as the strategist of the class-struggle. The discoveries made by Marx in the course of his explorations of the anatomy of bourgeois society will only be mentioned in so far as they directly concern our subject. But the word 'directly' need not be taken too literally. A complete picture of Marx's economic doctrines would not be consistent with our theme, which was dictated to us by the time in which we live.

To some periods of Marx's life we have given far more space than others. In writing his biography our standard was not mere length of time but the importance of events in Marx's life. Once, when Marx was asked what his idea of happiness was, his answer was 'to fight.' The years of revolution in 1848-50 and those of the First International are two or three

times as important as the rest. We do not believe we have left out anything of importance. To the important things we have given the space that they deserve.

Many new documents have been discovered since the end of the Great War. They put many things in a new light and reveal links and connections the very existence of which was not suspected before. To mention all the sources we have used would take up too much space. Suffice it to say that apart from printed material—incidentally we discovered a great deal of hitherto unsuspected material from old newspapers and periodicals—we have succeeded in extracting a great deal of new matter from archives. In particular the archives of the German Social Democratic Party, which contain the manuscripts of Marx and Engels left at their death, as well as those of many of their contemporaries and fellow-fighters, and a vast number of documents relating to the history of the First International were put at our disposal. They remained at our disposal even in the present difficult circumstances, when they have been taken abroad, and for this we have to thank the Party leaders (at present in Prague). We found a great deal of material in the secret state archives at Berlin-Dahlem and in the Saxon state archives at Dresden.

We were also enabled to use some documents from the archives of the British Foreign Office, preserved in the Record Office, more particularly documents regarding the attempt made by the Prussian Government to secure Marx's expulsion from England in 1850. We wish to express our thanks to Mr. E. H. Carr, who drew our attention to these documents and sent us copies.

We have intentionally quoted a great deal. We obviously could not recoin phrases coined by Marx which have long become familiar in our everyday speech. We have quoted Marx himself wherever the subject demanded it, and often let him speak for himself, because the particular turn he gave his thoughts, the way he fitted his sentences together, the adjectives he chose, reveal the nature of the man more clearly than any analysis. For the same reasons we have quoted his contemporaries whenever possible. Half the contents of a police agent's report is the way he writes it. To quote a letter

of Bakunin's without using his own words in the important passages would be to misrepresent him. The fact that we give the source of our quotations will be welcome to many readers.

June 1936

B. NICOLAIEVSKY
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FRONTISPIECE

KARL MARX. *A drawing from life*
(*Photograph supplied by Exclusive News Agency*)

**KARL MARX:
MAN AND FIGHTER**

CHAPTER I
ORIGINS AND CHILDHOOD

TRIER deservedly enjoys the reputation of being the oldest town in Germany. Its origins are lost in the mists of antiquity. A metropolis under the Roman Empire, it was brought to ruin in the stormy times of the migration of the peoples, but rose and flourished again in the Middle Ages under the mild sway of its bishops, whose diocese extended to Metz, Toul and Verdun. Its position at the extreme edge of German-speaking territory made of it an intermediary between German culture and French. It changed its overlords more than once. It belonged to the German Holy Roman Empire, then to the Kingdom of France, then it became German once again. After the outbreak of the French Revolution a stream of French *émigrés* poured into Trier as into other frontier towns, and for some years it was the outpost of the Coblenz Reaction. The White detachments were formed in Trier, where conspiracies were hatched and emissaries forgathered going into or coming out of France.

In the autumn of 1793, just a quarter of a century before the birth of Marx, when the Allies were retreating to the Rhine before the armies of the Revolution, Goethe came to Trier with the Duke of Weimar's troops. 'The town has one striking characteristic,' he wrote in his *French Campaign*. 'It claims that it possesses more religious buildings than any other place of the same size. Its reputation in this respect could scarcely be denied. For within its walls it is burdened, nay oppressed, with churches and chapels and cloisters and colleges and buildings dedicated to chivalrous and religious orders, to say nothing of the abbacies, Carthusian convents and institutions which invest, nay blockade, it.'

The waves of the Reformation never reached Trier, and the political and economic power of the Church remained unbroken. For all that its clerical Electors did a good deal for culture and for art. The last, Clement Wenceslaus, who was forced to flee before the victorious troops of the Convention

in 1794, was a liberal-minded man and his prebendary, Dalberg, a vigorous patron of public instruction, belonged to the order of the Illuminati.

Nevertheless the inhabitants of Trier received the French with enthusiasm. The Revolution released the peasants from the trammels of feudalism, gave the bourgeoisie the administrative and legal apparatus they required for their advancement, freed the intelligentsia from the tutelage of the priests. The men of Trier danced round their 'tree of freedom' just like the inhabitants of Mainz. They had their own Jacobin club. Many a respected citizen in the thirties still looked back with pride to his Jacobin past.

Trier remained French for two decades. But as the novelty wore off the things wrought by the Revolution—the dividing-up of Church property in particular—and as the burdens that came in its train increased, the first revolutionary ardour faded, and indifference grew. In the last years of the Napoleonic Empire indifference was replaced by open hostility. Every year the taxes grew more oppressive. The sons of the artisans of Trier and the peasants of the Moselle bled to death on the battlefields of Spain, Germany and Russia. In January, 1815, Trier greeted the Allies as deliverers from an intolerable yoke.

The Congress of Vienna awarded Trier to Prussia. The Prussian Government appreciated the necessity of handling its new-won territory with care. It zealously avoided coming into conflict with the Catholic Church and kept on its guard against injuring the religious susceptibilities of its newly acquired subjects. But it refrained from laying hands on the possessions of those who had grown rich by the acquisition of Church property during the Revolution. In all its essentials the *Code Napoléon*, the French statute-book, remained in force as far as the Rhineland was concerned. Public and oral court proceedings were retained. The pick of Prussian officialdom was sent to the Rhineland provinces, charged with the duty of scrupulously respecting local idiosyncrasies. For a number of years the Rhineland was sheltered from the full ultra-reactionary blast which set in everywhere else in Prussia immediately after the conclusion of peace.

• The Government, tolerant to the Catholic masses, took pains

to win over the intelligentsia too. It did a great deal, among other things, for archaeological research. The inhabitants of Trier were proud of the wealth of Roman remains in their town. Scarcely a doctor, lawyer or schoolmaster but was also an historian and archaeologist. The Government provided ample sums of money to subsidise their researches. Instead of agitating against Prussian absolutism, ex-Jacobins burrowed for Mithraic altars and gravestones. In those years the Trier of antiquity, *Augusta Treverorum*, rose once more from its ruins.

The culture of the vine, mainspring then as now of the agricultural economy of the Moselle, flourished mightily, thanks to the tariff which came into force in 1818. High, almost prohibitive duties closed the Prussian market to foreign wines and provided the peasants of the Moselle with a vast and assured outlet for their produce.

Among those who received the Prussians with the greatest enthusiasm were the Rhineland Jews. In 1815 the economic position of the Jews was incomparably more favourable in the kingdom of Prussia than in most of the departments of France. The Prussian Decree of March 11, 1812, gave them rights that they had enjoyed for only a few years under Napoleon; for practically everything that the Revolution had given them was taken away by the '*décret infâme*' of March 17, 1808. Extensive restrictions were placed upon their liberty of movement, and their freedom to trade or earn a living as they wished was as good as abolished. The Jews, at any rate economically, were cast back into the ghetto which they had been preparing to leave. And now the yoke they groaned under was heavier than before. Hitherto the Rhineland Jews had been money-lenders, insisting rigorously upon their bond. But Napoleon compelled them to usury that was secret and obscure. The decree was to last in the first instance for ten years, until 1818. But in 1815 Napoleon fell, and the Jews expected that with him his decree would fall too.

They were disappointed. Article Sixteen of the statutes of the new German Federation of Princes specified that legal rights everywhere should remain as they had been before. Prussia, glad at being able to drop the Liberal mask she had been forced to adopt in the War of Liberation, entered unabashed upon Napoleon's inheritance in so far as it was

sufficiently reactionary for her. There was no need whatever to have any consideration for the Jews. So she piled Pelion upon Ossa and superimposed her Old Prussian special Jewish regulations upon those of Napoleon. Under the French Empire it had been possible in exceptional cases for Jews to enter the service of the State; in Prussia, even after the so-called emancipation, it was impossible under any circumstances. So the Rhineland Jews who had entered the State service under Napoleon were compelled to leave it as soon as Frederick William III became their overlord.

The number of those affected was only three, and one of them was a Trier lawyer, Hirschel Marx, the father of Karl. The chairman of the commission which carried out the transfer from French to Prussian authority described him as a 'learned, very industrious and thoroughly conscientious man' and warmly recommended him to be taken over into the Prussian service, but this helped him not at all. In June, 1815, he wrote a memorial in which he expressed his confidence in Prussian justice in moving terms, but he did not receive so much as a reply. Confronted with the choice of changing his faith or his occupation, he had himself baptised and adopted the name of Heinrich.

To abandon the Jewish faith was no great wrench. He did object to the coercion. He was incensed by the narrow intolerance that forced him to this step. No ties bound him to the synagogue, or, for that matter to the church either. True, his ancestors, on his father's and his mother's side alike, had been rabbis as far back as his family-tree can be traced. Hirschel's father, Marx Levy, later known as Marx only, who died in 1798, was a Trier rabbi. The family-tree of Hirschel's mother, Eva Moses Lvov (1753-1823) included a number of celebrated rabbis, including Meir Katzenellenbogen, head of the Talmud School at Padua, who died in 1565, Joseph Ben Gerson ha-Cohen, who died in 1591, and the honoured teacher, Josua Heschel Lvov (1693-1771). The family lived in Hussia, later emigrated to Poland (Lvov is the Polish name for Lemberg) and had been settled in Trier since the seventeenth century. The eldest of Levy's three sons, Samuel, became a rabbi like his fathers before him. He died in Trier in 1827 in his fiftieth year.

Hirschel Marx was born at Saarlouis in 1782. The scanty indications available point to his having early cut himself adrift from his hereditary environment. In a letter to his son he once wrote that but for his existence itself he had received nothing from his family, 'except, to be fair, my mother's love.' His writings contain no word to indicate even the faintest spiritual link with the Jewish faith. Edgar von Westphalen, who spent many hours of his boyhood in the Marxes' house, remembered Heinrich Marx in his old age as a 'Protestant à la Lessing.' A 'real eighteenth-century Frenchman, who knew his Voltaire and Rousseau inside out,' a Kantian like most of the educated people of his town, professing 'a pure belief in God, like Newton, Locke and Leibnitz,' he had nothing whatever in common with the world of rabbinic Jewry. Alienated from his family from his youth up, he had a stony path to tread. In later years he confessed that his 'strong principles' had been his 'only possession.'

His baptism, which took place between the summer of 1816 and the spring of 1817, cut the last loose tie that bound him to his family. If he had hoped before to bring light into the the darkness of the ghetto, in spite of being misunderstood, suspected and practically alone, henceforward the task was an impossibility. It was an impossibility not because of his baptism alone. For had the emancipation of the Jews not proved illusory? Was not the dream of their becoming equals among equals over? Now that the door that led from the ghetto to the outer world was once more shut and bolted, the Jews of the ghetto retired into themselves more fanatically than ever. They rejected everything that they had longed for not so long before. They became hyper-orthodox; everything that was traditionally Jewish was sacrosanct, good and bad alike.

We do not know how Marx's father came to terms with it all. But there is an echo in the unwilling words: 'The Hebrew faith is repellent to me,' that Marx wrote at the age of twenty-five. What Marx thought in his young years of the Jewry of his time and country we know from what he wrote in 1844 in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. 'Let us not search for the secret of the Jews in their religion, but for the secret of their religion in the living Jews,' he wrote. 'What is the

worldly foundation of Jewry? Self-interest and the satisfying of practical wants. What is the worldly worship of the Jews? Huckstering. What is their worldly god? Money. Very well. The emancipation from huckstering and money, that is, from real, practical Jewry, would be the real self-emancipation of our time.'

On August 24, 1824, Heinrich Marx's children—Sophie, Karl, Hermann, Henriette, Louise, Emilie and Karoline—were received into the national evangelical church. Their mother, Henriette, waited till her parents were dead before being baptised on November 20, 1825. Her maiden name was Pressburg and she came of a family of Hungarian origin which had been settled in Holland for generations.

In the pages that follow there will be little to say about Marx's mother and his brothers and sisters. His mother was a devoted housewife, lovingly concerned for the minor things of life, engrossed in the health, feeding and clothing of her children, narrow-minded if not actually stupid, without any understanding for the daemon of her son. She never forgave him for not becoming a lawyer like his father. She regarded his activities as suspicious from an early age. Measured by her dreams about his future, he was a failure, a genius maybe, but a scapegrace, incompetent, the black sheep of the family, entirely lacking in sense for the only things that she thought sensible, that is to say, a quiet, comfortable life in a narrow circle, respected by the respectable, the well-to-do and the well-bred. When Marx looked back upon his life at the age of fifty he still remembered her saying, in the execrable German that she spoke all her life:

'If Karl had only *made* capital instead of . . .'

Not very much is known about Marx's brothers and sisters. The first-born, Moriz David, died soon after birth. The next child was Sophie, born on November 13, 1816. She was, as far as we know, the only one of Karl's brothers and sisters who was at all close to him in his youth. In later years, however, he scarcely even kept in touch with this sister, who married a lawyer named Schmalhausen and lived at Maastricht. Karl was born at half-past one on the morning of May 5, 1818. Of Karl's two younger brothers, Hermann died at the age of twenty-three and Eduard at the age of eleven. Both

succumbed to tuberculosis, the hereditary family disease, as did two other sisters, Henriette and Karoline. Louise, born in 1821, married Jan Karl Juta, a Dutchman, and settled in Cape Town with him. She and her husband twice visited Marx in London, and in 1853 Marx wrote some articles for the *Zuid-Afrikaan*, which his brother-in-law edited. Emilie, born in 1822, married an engineer named Conradi and lived in Trier until her death in 1888.

In 1815, when the Moselle country became Prussian, Heinrich Marx was a lawyer attached to the Trier court. In 1820 he was attached to the newly founded Trier provincial court. Later he acquired the title of *Justizrat* and was for many years *bâtonnier du barreau*. He occupied a respected position in the social life of the town. The family lived in a beautiful old house in the Rhineland baroque style in the Brückenstrasse, one of the best parts of the town. Trier was a small place. In 1818, the year of Marx's birth, it numbered 11,400 inhabitants, of whom the overwhelming majority were Catholic. The Protestant community, to which the Marxes now adhered, consisted of barely three hundred souls, mainly officials transferred to the Moselle from other provinces. In these circumstances the origins of the rabbi's son did not matter. 'Here everyone who conducts himself well is respected,' Ernst von Schiller, the son of Friedrich Schiller, at that time *Landgerichtsrat* at Trier, wrote at the end of 1820.

At the beginning of 1830 Heinrich Marx was the leader of the moderate constitutional party in Trier. He did not share the francophilia which was still fairly widespread in the Rhineland and became accentuated as the Old Prussian reaction established itself more and more firmly in the new territories.

'Only the hybrid Liberals of to-day could idolise a Napoleon,' he wrote to his son in 1837. 'I assure you that under him no one dared even to think aloud the kind of thing that is daily written in Germany to-day, without hindrance or impediment, in Prussia in particular. He who has studied Napoleon's history and his crazy system of ideas may rejoice with a good conscience at his fall and the victory of Prussia.' He advised the composition of an ode which should extol the victory of the *Belle Alliance*. The motif he suggested is interesting. 'It

failure would have laid humanity, and the intellect especially, in everlasting chains.' Heinrich Marx preferred enlightened monarchy to military dictatorship, but he was no defender of absolutism.

As the bureaucratic absolutist Prussian régime increasingly demonstrated its incompetence, his antipathy to it grew. Towards the end of the twenties the condition of the peasants of the Moselle took a turn for the worse. In 1828 Prussia formed a Customs Union with Hessa, and in 1834 the German Zollverein was formed. The competition of non-Prussian wine-growing peasants deprived the Moselle of the hitherto certain outlet for its produce, and prices rapidly fell, to the accompaniment of rising taxes. The pauperisation of the peasants of the Moselle proceeded at such a rate that within a few years contemporaries compared their state with the distress of the weavers of Silesia. Trade slumped, the position of the artisans went from bad to worse. The Revolution of July, 1830, in Paris, the setting up of the Bourgeois Kingdom, the September rising in Brussels and the Belgian Declaration of Independence made a profound impression in the Rhineland. In Germany there was unrest in Brunswick, Saxony and Kurhessen. Vintagers from the Moselle area actually took part in the famous Hambacher Fest held by the Liberals on May 27, 1832.

In the Rhineland the old francophile tendencies underwent a mighty revival. New, fantastic, shocking and unprecedented ideas came winging their way across the frontier from France. Saint-Simonism gained so many adherents on the Moselle that the archbishop was compelled to issue an emphatic warning against the new heresy. In 1835 a pamphlet of Ludwig Gall, who has been called the first German Socialist, appeared in Trier. In it he declared that labour was the source of all wealth and that millions owned nothing but their power to work. The pamphlet also contained the following phrases: 'The privileged, moneyed class and the labouring classes, sharply divided as they are by diametrically opposing interests, are in sharp conflict. As the position of the former improves, so does that of the latter worsen, become more wretched and distressed.' The police were aware of Gall's 'very suspicious way of thinking' and perceived that he 'required a specially sharp watch to be kept on him.'

At first the local State officials scarcely altered their policy. Better acquainted than the central authorities in Berlin with conditions in the newly acquired territories, they kept them in ignorance of oppositional utterances for fear of intensifying the situation. This went on until events compelled them to intervene, and in these events Heinrich Marx occupied a prominent place.

The 'Literarische Kasino-Gesellschaft,' a club that dated back to the time of French suzerainty, was the hub of the social life of Trier. Differences of social status were of no account in it. 'Any upright and educated man, without regard to rank or occupation,' was eligible for membership. The club premises consisted of a big, two-storey house, containing a library, a reading-room, in which the principal French and German newspapers were kept, a number of social rooms and a hall in which concerts, theatrical performances and balls were given. 'The Society for Practical Research' (*Gesellschaft für nützliche Forschung*), which retained strong traditions dating from the time of its foundation in 1802, met at the club. One of its joint founders and most active members was Hugo Wytttenbach, headmaster of Karl Marx's school.

On January 12, 1834, a banquet was held at the club in honour of the deputies to the Rhineland Diet, thus associating the men of Trier with the campaign of banquets which swept South Germany in the winter of 1833-4 under the battle-cry of a constitution. In the opinion of the Prussian authorities this ceremony was quite superfluous; but they did not really become alarmed about it until they discovered that it was not intended to honour all the deputies to the Diet but only the liberal-minded and 'little commendable' Valdenaire, Kaiser and Mohr, while Handel, representative of the Trier nobility, was omitted.

Heinrich Marx was one of the organisers of the banquet and he proposed the toast of the deputies. He paid a glowing tribute to the king 'to whose magnanimity we are indebted for the first institutions of popular representation. In the fullness of his omnipotence he arranged that Diets should assemble so that truth might arrive at the steps of the throne.' He concluded with the words: 'So let us look confidently forward to a serene future, for it rests in the hands of a worthy

father, an upright king, whose noble heart will always remain open and well-disposed to the just and reasonable wishes of his people.'

A very loyal speech, to be sure, yet the voice of the opposition was plainly to be discerned in it. The party of ultra-reaction in Berlin wanted to have the Rhenish Diet abolished, or at least have its privileges circumscribed as far as possible. Therefore praising the king for having sanctioned the Diet was equivalent to protesting against the royal plan to suppress it. The president of the administrative district was forced to abandon his previous practice and report the matter to Berlin. There could be no good purpose behind the banquet, which was a small-scale imitation of similar affairs in the Southern German States. But it was the only one of its kind in Prussia. The Trier Press was not allowed to report it, but the newspapers of Cologne and Coblenz carried detailed descriptive reports of it, and even the Paris *Constitutionnel*, the organ of the Left, announced that the inhabitants of Trier had held a 'brilliant banquet' at which 'speeches of the most Liberal purport' were delivered. Kamptz, the Minister of Justice, rightly interpreted the pious words. 'They imagine themselves not just deputies to the Diet but representatives of the people, and accordingly receive the civic crown.'

Soon afterwards, to crown the intense disapproval with which the Government regarded the banquet and the speeches made at it, a new sensation arose. On January 20 the club anniversary celebrations were held and became exuberant. The company drank, sang and made merry. They grew overbold and started singing not just German songs but French—the *Marseillaise* and the *Parisienne*. An officer reported the matter. Heinrich Marx was among those who sang and made depreciatory references to the Prussians. At this the whole official apparatus was set in motion. The ministry in Berlin intervened, the Crown Prince, Frederick William, wrote an indignant letter to the burgomaster, describing the songs that were sung as 'heinous, the apotheosis of ancient and modern perfidy,' and a detailed report of the matter was made to the king himself. Officers and State officials who had been members of the club resigned and the premises were placed under police supervision. From that day on Heinrich Marx

was regarded by the Government as thoroughly unreliable politically. Young Karl, then aged sixteen, cannot have failed to follow these events, in which his father was so closely concerned, with great attention.

Karl Marx was devoted to his father. His daughter Eleanor recalled that he never tired of talking about him. 'He always carried with him a photograph of his father which was taken from an old daguerreotype. But he was never willing to show it to strangers, because, he said, it bore so little resemblance to the original. To me the face appeared very fine. The eyes and forehead resembled those of his son, but the part of the face round the mouth and the chin were gentler. His features as a whole were of a definitely Jewish, but fine Jewish type. When Karl Marx started the long, sorrowful journey in search of health after his wife's death, this photograph, an old photograph of my mother on glass and a photograph of my sister, Jenny, went with him. We found them in his breast-pocket after his death. Engels laid them in his coffin.'

More detailed knowledge of Marx's boyhood would be welcome, but all that has come down to us is a few meagre, disconnected reminiscences by his sisters. They show him as an unruly companion at play. He seems to have been a fearful tyrant. He drove the girls at full gallop down the Marxberg and insisted on their eating the cakes he made with his dirty hands out of still dirtier dough. But they put up with it all without a protest because he told them such marvellous stories in return. His schoolmates loved him and feared him at the same time—loved him because he was always up to tricks and feared him because of the ease with which he wrote satirical verses and lampoons upon his enemies. He retained this ability during the whole of his life.

Karl Marx was sent to the high grammar school in 1830. He was a moderate pupil. The best pupils were singled out at the end of each school year. Marx once received an 'honourable mention' for ancient and modern languages, but he was only tenth on the list. Another time he was singled out for his good performances at German composition. This was not much for five years at school. He passed his examinations without distinction. There is some evidence to indicate that he had the reputation, among schoolfellows and masters

alike, of being a poet. After Karl's departure to Bonn University, when his father gave Wyttenbach, his old headmaster, his son's greetings and told him that Karl intended to write a poem in his honour, 'it made the old man happy.'

Whether the poem was ever written is unknown. The intention alone points to a definite political outlook. Wyttenbach was the life and soul of a group of Kantians which had been formed in Trier in the first years of the new century. Marx's father belonged to it himself. Wyttenbach, scholar, historian, archaeologist and humanist, educated his pupils in a free, cosmopolitan spirit, entirely dissimilar to that prevailing in the royal Prussian high schools. He had a high conception of his calling, as is demonstrated by the speeches he made each year at the ceremonial departure to the university of the pupils who were leaving. These were always fully reported in the Trier newspapers. 'A teacher cannot alter a child's individuality,' he said. 'But he can thwart or help it, cripple or develop it.' The wearisome phrases about throne and altar, prevalent, nay, actually prescribed at the time, were never used by him.

The police did not concern themselves with the high school until 1830. The Prussian authorities, in conformity with the duty incumbent upon them of winning over their new subjects, shut their eyes and let Wyttenbach do as he liked. After 1830 this state of affairs altered. The persecution of the 'demagogues' began. A commission 'for the suppression of politically dangerous groups' had been established in Berlin. It directed its attention to Trier. Schnabel, the administrative head of the district of Saarbrücken, with whom denouncing was a passion, had all and sundry spied upon by his agent, a degenerate individual named Nohl.

Nohl sent his denunciations to Berlin by way of Schnabel week by week. No one was safe, neither doctor nor artisan nor innkeeper nor official, nor even the wife of the president of the administrative district. All were demagogues and Jacobins. The Coblenz school committee tried to defend their traduced colleagues, but it helped them little. The local officials, intimidated, dismayed, unsure what course to steer, admitted that there were some partially 'ill-disposed' members of the high school staff. Many of them were said to exercise

a 'bad influence' upon the boys. One master, Steininger, who taught Marx natural science and mathematics, had 'an innate propensity to opposition' and Wyttenbach was too weak and, moreover, protected his colleagues when anything against them was ventured upon. A deplorable lack of discipline was to be observed among the pupils. Boys of the top forms were sometimes to be seen sitting about in the taverns until after midnight and, what was far worse, forbidden literature circulated among them. A copy of the speeches made at the Hambacher Fest in 1833 was found in a boy's possession. In 1834 it was discovered that the boys actually wrote poems with political implications. One was arrested and was in the remand prison for months.

Henceforth the Coblenz school committee and the Trier officials kept the school under zealous observation. Between 1833 and 1835 it was the subject of dozens of official reports.

These were Marx's last years at school. There can be no doubt of the interest with which he must have followed these events, which so closely concerned his masters, his schoolfellows and himself. True, his name does not occur in the official correspondence, but the official correspondence contains the names of no schoolboys at all. He is certain to have made rich use of his gift of writing lampoons upon his enemies.

The essays he wrote at his final examination cast a light upon his mentality at the time. The influence of the French liberal intelligence, particularly that of Rousseau, imparted by his father and Wyttenbach, is plain enough. Of greater significance are these phrases from an essay called 'Observations of a young man before choosing a career.'

'If we choose the career in which we can do humanity the most good, burdens cannot overwhelm us, since they are nothing but sacrifices for the benefit of all. . . . Experience rates him as the happiest who has made the greatest number happy, and religion itself teaches us the ideal for which all strive, to sacrifice oneself for humanity.'

The only upholders of these ideals at that time were the Left, the members of the 'Burschenschaft,' and the revolutionaries who hungered in exile. In their appeals to youth the words: be ready to sacrifice yourself, renounce your well-being for humanity's sake, constantly recur. They remained the

fundamental maxim of Marx's life. Paul Lafargue records that 'to work for humanity' was his favourite motto.

The spy's reports about the masters at his school turned out to be grossly exaggerated. Investigation showed that 'no good spirit was prevalent' among the boys, but that there was nothing tangible against the staff. Wyttenbach was not dismissed, as the more extreme among his enemies demanded. But he was given a joint headmaster, Loers, the Latin master, a 'well-disposed man,' whose duty it was to preside over the school discipline.

Loers's appointment became known just as Karl left school. It gave him a welcome opportunity of making a demonstration—an innocuous demonstration, it is true, but the Prussian Government allowed no others. The Government were not blind to the state of mind expressed in such demonstrations, nor were they intended to be.

It was usual for young men just going to the university to call on their old masters to say good-bye. Marx visited every one of them but Loers. 'Herr Loers took it very much amiss that you did not go and see him,' Heinrich Marx wrote to his son at Bonn. 'You and Clemens were the only ones.' He told a white lie and said that Karl had gone with him to call on Loers, but unfortunately he had been out.

In the middle of October, 1835, Karl Marx went to Bonn.

CHAPTER II

A HAPPY YEAR AT BONN

IT had long ago been decided by the Marx family council that Karl should go to the university. His father's circumstances were quite comfortable, but he was not rich enough to allow all his sons to study. Hermann, Karl's moderately gifted younger brother, was indentured to a Brussels business house. But, however difficult it might occasionally be, means must be found for Karl, the favourite child, the son in whom his father lived again, the son who should achieve what his father had been denied.

The university he should go to had been chosen too. Most students from Trier went to Bonn as the nearest university town. In 1835 and 1836 the association of Trier students at Bonn numbered more than thirty members. Later Karl was intended to spend a few terms at another university—at Berlin, if it could possibly be managed.

What he should study had also been decided for him. He was to study law; not because at the age of sixteen he was particularly attracted to the subject; he was equally interested in literature, philosophy and science, especially physics and chemistry. As he had no particular preference for any one branch of knowledge, because he wanted to embrace them all, he accepted his father's advice without question. Practical motives were undoubtedly Heinrich Marx's chief consideration in making the choice for his son. New courts were being established in the Trier area, and intending lawyers had excellent prospects of finding good and well-paid posts. Of the seven students from Trier who matriculated at Bonn University in 1834, four studied law.

Parents, brothers, sisters and friends accompanied Karl to the 'express yacht' which left Trier at four o'clock in the morning. Halley's comet was in the sky. The covered boat so grandiosely styled took him down the Moselle—the river was almost the only link with the east of Germany—as far as the Rhine, and then one of the recently introduced Rhine

steamers took him upstream to Bonn, where he arrived on Saturday, October 17, and entered his name at the University on the same day.

Bonn, a town of nearly forty thousand inhabitants, was distinctly bigger than Trier. Although it did not number many more than seven hundred students, the University dominated the life of the town. In the twenties and the thirties the University of Bonn could rightly boast of the great freedom it enjoyed. Students' associations had no need for concealment. This did not apply only to associations of students from the same town or district; it applied equally to the definitely Liberal 'Burschschafter,' who drank and duelled and sang, regarded with esteem by the citizens and benevolence by the authorities. 'They act so freely and openly,' an examining magistrate later wrote, 'that the existence of the societies is a secret to no one'—least of all to the university authorities, who were not in the least perturbed by them. On the contrary, they practically sanctioned them. As the State officials did not wish to disturb the university, they respected its independence and let things take their course.

A stop, and a very thorough stop, was put to this state of affairs shortly before Marx came to Bonn. In April, 1835, a small group of foolhardy young men had attempted to break up the Federal Diet at Frankfurt and set up a provisional government in its place. The rising was undertaken with totally inadequate means and put down without any difficulty whatever. But the governments of Germany were thoroughly alarmed. Though some of them had hitherto had Liberal impulses, they now started furiously building at 'the saving dam' which the decisions of the Vienna Conference of spring, 1834—drafted by Metternich—imposed upon them the duty of erecting against the 'rising flood.' The drive descended with especial fury upon the students' associations. Bonn's turn came a little later. When Marx came to Bonn in the autumn of 1835, informers were daily sending 'suspects' to prison. University authorities, police and spies denounced, arrested and expelled dozens of 'Burschschafter.'

Not a single association that was connected in any way with any general purpose, even the most discreet, survived the stress of these severe measures. The only one to remain was

the 'Korps,' who, as a contemporary protested, regarded 'brawling and carousing as the highest aim of a student's life.' The authorities were glad enough to close their eyes to the activities of the 'Korps.' There were also small 'tavern clubs,' consisting of groups of students from the same towns, from Cologne, Aachen, etc. These were not distinguished for their rich intellectual life either. After most of the boldest, most advanced and liberal-minded students had been eliminated those who remained were too bewildered or too indifferent not scrupulously to avoid all discussion of politics.

Lectures had not yet begun when Marx arrived at Bonn. He had plenty of time to settle down. He took a room quite close to the University, and immediately fell upon the lecture list. The natural sciences were so badly represented at Bonn that Marx resolved to postpone his study of physics and chemistry until going to Berlin, where he would be able to study under the real authorities on those subjects. Sufficient remained for him to do nevertheless. He decided to attend courses of lectures in no fewer than nine subjects. His father, to whom he wrote of his plans, hesitated between pleasure at so much zeal and fear that Karl might overwork. 'Nine courses of lectures seem rather a lot to me,' he wrote, 'and I don't want you to undertake more than mind and body can stand. But if you can manage it, very well. The field of knowledge is immense and time is short.'

In the end Marx only attended six courses. According to his professors he was 'industrious' or 'very industrious' at them all. Professor Welcker, under whom Marx studied Greek and Roman mythology, stated that he was 'exceptionally industrious and attentive.' In the summer term Marx attended four courses. This was still a great deal, particularly when compared with his later studies in Berlin, when he only attended fourteen courses of lectures in nine terms. The year at Bonn was the only one in which he took his university studies seriously. Somewhat to his own surprise, Marx discovered a taste for law, his future profession. All the same he seems to have preferred listening to the great Schlegel on Homer or the Elegies of Propertius and D'Alton on the history of art.

However industriously he applied himself to them, his studies failed to engross him completely. As he demonstrated at

school, he was no bookworm or spoilsport. He joined the Trier 'tavern club' and was one of its five presidents in the summer term of 1836. Marx, a true son of the Rhineland, appreciated a good 'drop' all his life. In June he was condemned to one day's detention by the proctor for being drunk and disorderly. The prison in which he served his sentence was a very jolly one. A contemporary who studied at Bonn a year later than Marx reports that the prisoners were allowed visitors, who practically never failed to turn up with wine, beer and cards. Sometimes the merry-making was such that the entertainment expenses made a serious inroad into the prisoners' monthly allowance. It was not because of the one day's confinement alone that Karl got into debt, in spite of the ample allowance sent him by his generous father.

Marx joined another club as well. It was called the 'Poets' Club.' If the police records are to be believed, this club of enthusiastic young men was not so entirely innocuous as it seemed. Its founders were Fenner von Fenneberg, who took a very active part in the revolution of 1848 and 1849, first in Vienna and later in Baden, and a Trier student named Biermann, who had come under suspicion while still at school as the author of 'seditious poetry.' He escaped to Paris to avoid arrest, and it was proved that he had been in contact with a Major Stieldorf, whom the police accused of agitating for the annexation by Belgium of the western Trier territory.

Marx appears to have been very active in the 'Poets' Club.' Moritz Carrière, a philosopher and aesthete of some merit, who at the time was the leader of a similar group at Göttingen, with whom the Bonn club was on friendly terms, remembered Marx as one of the three most important members. The other two were Emanuel Geibel, who later made a reputation as a lyric poet, and Karl Grün, an adherent of the 'true' Socialism which Marx was soon so pitilessly to combat and deride.

His father approved of Karl's joining the 'Poets' Club.' He knew his son's stormy nature and was never without anxiety that it might run away with him. He did not like the 'tavern club,' for he feared Karl might become involved in a duel. He was relieved when he learned that Karl had joined the 'Poets' Club' and wrote: 'I like your little group far better than the tavern. Young people who take pleasure in such

gatherings are necessarily civilised human beings, and set greater store on their value as future good citizens than those who set most store by rowdiness.'

However, it soon appeared that even this little group was not without its dangers. The police, suspecting treasonable activities everywhere, started taking an interest in the 'Poets' Club.' The club rules and the minutes of their meetings in the winter of 1834-5 fell into the hands of the police-spy, Nohl, who had now been sent to Bonn, but to their disappointment the police were forced to admit that both the rules and the minutes were politically completely innocuous. According to the rules the members, 'moved by a similar love of *belles lettres*,' had decided to unite 'for the reciprocal exercise of their would-be poetical talents.' In spite of this the police remained full of misgivings, and although their inquiries had resulted in nothing tangible, the matter was handed over to the University authorities, whose disciplinary court should institute proceedings.

Marx's name was not mentioned. His father, well informed about events in Bonn, once more had cause for anxiety about him, and not on account of the 'Poets' Club' alone. In the spring of 1836 a wild conflict broke out among the students, and the association of Trier students was in the midst of the fray. Conflict between the 'Korps' associations and the tavern clubs had begun during the winter. The 'Korps' demanded that the tavern clubs should merge with them. This the tavern clubs refused to do, and the refusal resulted in hostile encounters with members of the Borussia Korps, who were 'true Prussians and aristocrats,' and, under the leadership of Counts von der Goltz, von der Schulenberg and von Heyden, provoked, derided and challenged the 'plebeians' whenever they met them. Their especial hatred was directed to the Trier students. In the conflict of the feudal Borussians with the sons of the bourgeois citizens of Trier there was, in a sense, an element of class-war.

In 1858 Lassalle, after some unpleasant fellow had sent him a challenge, wrote to Marx and asked him his opinion of duels. Marx replied that it was obviously absurd to try and decide whether duelling as such was consistent with *the* principle; but within the biased limitations of bourgeois society,

it might sometimes be necessary to justify one's individuality in this feudal manner. As an eighteen-year-old student at Bonn Marx evidently thought the same. An entry in the records of the university disciplinary court states that Marx was once seen bearing a weapon such as was usually used for duels.

His father in Trier heard of this incident and wrote to his son: 'Since when is duelling so interwoven with philosophy? Men fight duels out of respect, nay, rather out of fear of public opinion. And what public opinion? Not always the best—far from it! So little consistency is there among mankind! Do not let this taste—if it is not a taste, this disease—take root. You might, after all, end by robbing yourself and your parents of their finest hopes for you. I do not believe that a reasonable man can so easily disregard these things.'

There was foundation for his father's fears. The duels the students fought in the suburbs of Ippendorf and Kessenich were anything but harmless. The young Count von Arnim was killed in a duel in 1834, and soon afterwards a student named Daniels, from Aachen, was killed too. Karl did not heed his father's warnings. He fought a duel, in all probability with a Borussian, in August, 1836. He received a thrust over the left eye.

How his father took the news is not known. Before the end of the summer term he had given the Bonn university authorities his consent to his son's transfer to Berlin. He did not 'merely give his consent' but heavily underlined the statement that it was 'his wish.' A longer stay in Bonn would have profited Karl nothing and only threatened duels on the one hand and police persecution on the other.

CHAPTER III

JENNY VON WESTPHALEN

MARX spent the summer and autumn of 1836 in Trier, where he became secretly engaged to Jenny von Westphalen, his future wife.

Her antecedents were entirely different from his own. She came from a different world. Her grandfather, Philipp Westphalen (1724-1792) was adviser and confidential secretary to Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick. A man of middle-class origin, he owed his rise to his abilities alone. His contemporaries spoke of him as a competent administrator and a far-seeing and prudent politician. He never became a soldier but remained a civil official throughout his career, but the victories of Krefeld, Bellinghausen, Warburg, Wilhelmsthal and Minden were his handiwork. Philipp Westphalen was the duke's real chief of staff during the Seven Years' War. Delbrück, the military historian, describes him as the Gneisenau of the Seven Years' War, and Bernhardi calls him the leading spirit of Ferdinand's staff. He was a gifted writer, and his notes are among the most important historical sources for the period.

The King of England esteemed the German so highly that he appointed him adjutant-general of his army. Westphalen, with the national pride that distinguished him and later frequently brought him into conflict with the fawning courtiers of the Guelf court, declined the honour. In the end he only accepted ennoblement at the hands of the house of Brunswick in order to be able to marry the woman of his choice.

He met her when she was on a visit to her uncle, General Beckwith, commander of the English-Hanoverian army, which helped Duke Ferdinand in the struggle against the French. Jeanie Wishart of Pitarrow came of the family of the Earls of Argyll who played such a big rôle in the history of Scotland, particularly during the Reformation and the Great Rebellion. One of her forefathers, George Wishart, was burned at the stake as a Protestant in 1547 and a little later another, Earl

Archibald Argyll, mounted the scaffold in Edinburgh as a rebel against King James II.

The younger branch of the family, to which Jeanie Wishart of Pitarrow belonged—she was the fifth child of George Wishart, an Edinburgh minister—also produced a number of prominent men. William Wishart, Jenny's great-grandfather, accompanied the Prince of Orange to England, and his brother was the celebrated Admiral James Wishart. Jenny's grandmother, Anne Campbell of Orchard, wife of the minister, belonged to the old Scottish aristocracy too.

Ludwig von Westphalen, the youngest son of this German-Scottish marriage, was born on July 11, 1770. He was his mother's favourite child. She survived her husband by twenty years and lived with her son until her death. He was an exceptionally learned man. He spoke English, his second native tongue, as well as German, and could read Latin, Greek, Italian, French and Spanish. Marx used to remember with pleasure how old Westphalen would recite whole hymns of Homer by heart. It was from her father that Jenny and Karl learned to love Shakespeare, a love they preserved all their lifetime and handed on to their children.

Marx was sincerely attached to Jenny's father, his 'paternal friend.' The words with which he dedicated the thesis for his doctor's degree proceeded from a thankful heart. 'May all who are in doubt,' he wrote, 'have the good fortune that I have had and be able to look up with admiration to an old man who retains his youthful vigour and welcomes every advance of the times with enthusiasm and passion for truth and an idealism which, bright as sunshine and proceeding from deep conviction, recognises only the word of truth before which all the spirits of the world appear, and never shrinks back from the retrograde ghosts which obscure the gloomy sky, but, full of godlike energy and with manly, confident glance, penetrates all the chrysalis changes of the world and sees the empyrean within. You, my paternal friend, provided me always with a living *argumentum ad oculos* that idealism is not a figment of the imagination but a truth.'

For a man with an outlook of that kind there was not much scope in the German States of his time. Little bound him to the hereditary Brunswick Guelf dynasty. He had no

hesitation in entering the service of the Napoleonic kingdom of Westphalia. His son and biographer, Ferdinand von Westphalen, tried to attribute this step to his concern for the well-being of his family, but this cannot be accepted as a satisfactory explanation. His family always had been prosperous and was still prosperous at the time, and, besides, Ludwig von Westphalen proved sufficiently a few years later that he was willing to make greater sacrifices for his convictions than that involved in declining an official position. The Kingdom of Westphalia was such a notable advance on the feudal state, and so full of beneficial reforms in every respect, that a man as sensitive to the demands of the time as Ludwig von Westphalen could not hesitate a moment in choosing whether to serve a fossilized petty princeling or the brother of the emperor of the world.

In the realm of King Jerome, just as in the Rhineland, the popularity of the new régime, at first widespread among middle-classes and peasants alike, dwindled away, to be replaced by aversion and ultimately bitter hostility. With every increase in the taxes necessary to finance the never-ending war, with every new calling-up of recruits, hostility grew. In 1813 Westphalen, then sub-prefect of the *arrondissement* of Salzwedel in the department of the Elbe, was arrested by order of Marshal Davoust because of his hostility to the French régime and confined in the fortress of Gifhorn. He was only freed by the troops of the Allies.

He was confirmed in the office of administrative head of the district by the Prussians and remained in Salzwedel for another three years. In 1816 he was promoted and transferred to Trier, which became his and his family's second home.

Westphalen's first wife, Elisabeth von Veltheim, was descended from the Old Prussian aristocracy and died young, in 1807, leaving four children. Two daughters were brought up by her relatives. They grew up far from their father and he only went to see them occasionally. Ferdinand, the elder of the two sons, stayed in Salzwedel until he left school and then went to live with his sisters. His father had practically no influence upon his upbringing. He grew up in a thoroughly reactionary environment to be a thorough reactionary himself —arrogant, narrow-minded and bigoted. He actually became

Prussian Minister of the Interior, and in the most reactionary cabinet that Prussia ever had he was the most reactionary of them all. Frederick William IV, the 'romantic on the throne,' was later very friendly with him.

Ludwig von Westphalen's second wife was Karoline Heubel, daughter of a minor Prussian official from the Rhineland. She was a clever and courageous woman. A picture of her in her old age, with her large, gleaming eyes, enables one to see how beautiful she was in her youth. There were three children of this marriage. Jenny, the eldest, was born at Salzwedel on February 12, 1814. The next child was a daughter, of whom no more is known, and the third was a son, Edgar, born in 1819.

Jenny, who later had to endure poverty in its shabbiest form—for in London there was no money to buy a coffin for her dead child—had a happy and carefree childhood. Her parents were rich.

Ludwig von Westphalen's salary in the early eighteenth-twenties was one thousand six hundred thalers a year, which was a great deal at that time and place, and in addition there was the yield of a respectable estate. At that time two good furnished rooms could be rented at Trier for from six to seven thalers a month, and the price of a four-course dinner every day for a whole month was from six to seven thalers. The Westphalens occupied a sumptuous house with a big garden in one of the best streets of Trier.

Heinrich Marx and his family lived next door. In a small town like Trier everybody knows practically everybody else. Children living in neighbouring houses know each other best of all. Jenny's favourite playmate was Karl's elder sister, Sophie. Edgar, who was scarcely a year younger than Karl, sat next to him on the same school bench. Westphalen, himself half-German and half-Scotch, had no national or racial prejudices. Lessing was one of his favourite authors. That Heinrich Marx had only recently become a Christian worried him not at all. The children made friends and the fathers followed suit. The Marx children played in the Westphalens' garden, and in his old age Edgar von Westphalen still remembered with pleasure the friendly greeting that old Marx always had for him and his sisters.

A close friendship sprang up between old Westphalen and Karl Marx. The old man—he was in his seventies—used to enjoy wandering ‘over our wonderfully picturesque hills and woods’ with the young schoolboy. Of the talks that they had on these occasions Marx was fondest of recalling those in which Westphalen awakened in him his first interest in the character and teachings of Saint-Simon. Marx’s father was a Kantian. The pedigree of scientific socialism according to Friedrich Engels is well known: ‘We German Socialists are proud of being descended, not only from Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen but from Kant, Fichte and Hegel as well.’

Laura Lafargue burned the whole of the correspondence between her parents. We do not know when the love-affair between the two young people first began, and we believe it to be a waste of time to try and find out from the rare and obliterated traces that are left. At the time of Marx’s death an old inhabitant of Trier could still remember ‘lovely Jenny’ and Marx, the young student, whom he recollected as ‘practically the ugliest human being whom the sun could ever have shone on.’ An older friend of his, he said, still used to speak ardently of the charming, bewitching creature, and neither he nor anybody else could understand how her choice had possibly managed to fall upon Marx. True, he admitted that Marx’s early demonstrated talent and force of character and his prepossessing ways with women made up for his ugly exterior. One seems to hear the voice of a spurned suitor in all this.

Karl’s father was at first the only person to know of the secret engagement. He knew his son too well not to know that it was useless to forbid him something which Karl would certainly not have allowed himself to be forbidden. He expressed what reassured him in his letters to his son. He admonished him in this affair, as in all others, to be as candid with his father as with a friend, to test himself rigorously and, above all, to be mindful of man’s sacred duty to the weaker sex. Karl, if he persisted in his decision, must become a man at once. Six weeks later he wrote again: ‘I have spoken to Jenny, and I should have liked to have been able to reassure her completely. I did my uttermost, but I could not talk everything away. I do not know how her parents will take

it. The judgment of relatives and of the world is after all no trifle. . . . She is making a priceless sacrifice for you. She is manifesting a self-denial which cold reason alone can fully appreciate. Woe betide you if ever in your life you forget it! You must look into your heart alone. The sure, certain knowledge that in spite of your youth you are a man, deserving the world's respect, nay, fighting and earning it, giving assurance of your steadfastness and future earnest striving, and imposing silence on evil tongues for past mistakes, must proceed from you alone.'

At the time of his engagement Karl Marx was an eighteen-year-old student with numerous inclinations and a highly uncertain future. As the second son of a numerous family, with no considerable financial prospects to look forward to, he would have to fight for his own place in the world, and he would need a number of years for the purpose. Jenny, four years older than he, was the daughter of a rich and noble State official, the 'prettiest girl in Trier,' the 'queen of the ball.' When Marx visited Trier in 1863 he found Jenny still survived in old people's memories as the 'fairy princess.' The engagement conflicted with all the prejudices of the bourgeois and noble world.

Karl 'had to become a man at once.' In the middle of October he went to Berlin and plunged head over heels into his books. In order to marry it was necessary to complete his studies as quickly as possible, pass his examinations and find a job. In the meantime all Jenny could do was wait. She was twenty-two years old. Many of her friends were married, and the rest were engaged. She rejected all her suitors—officers, landed proprietors and government officials. People in Trier started to talk.

As long as Karl had been in Trier what people said did not worry Jenny. When she grew afraid he had been there to support her, full of courage and plans for the future. She believed in him, in his future and hers. But when he went she was alone. Nobody must notice anything, she must laugh gaily, pay visits, go to dances, as behoved a girl of marriageable age belonging to the best society. Karl's father and his sister Sophie were her only confidants. With them she could talk openly of her love and of her anxieties.

The two persons dearest to Marx, Jenny and his father, were often filled with anxiety for the future. His father wrote to him at the beginning of March, 1837, and said that though from time to time his heart delighted in thoughts of him and of the future, he could not shake off anxious and gloomy forebodings when the thought struck him: Was Karl's heart in conformity with his head, his capacity? Was there room for the earthly but tender feelings so consolatory to the man of feeling in this vale of tears? Karl's heart was clearly possessed by a daemon it was not granted everybody to be possessed by, but was the nature of this daemon divine or Faustian? Would Karl—and this doubt was not the least painful of those that afflicted his father's heart—ever be susceptible of a true, human, domestic happiness? Would Karl—and this doubt, since he had recently begun to love a certain person not less than his own child, was no less tormenting—ever be in a position to bring happiness into his most immediate surroundings? He felt sorry for Jenny. Jenny, who with her pure, childish disposition was so utterly devoted to Karl, was from time to time a victim, against her will, of a kind of fear, heavy with foreboding, that he could not explain.

In another letter six months later he wrote: 'You can be certain, and I myself am certain, that no prince could estrange her from you. She cleaves to you body and soul, and she is making a sacrifice for you of which most girls are certainly not capable. That is something you must never forget.'

Jenny waited impatiently for Karl's letters. They came rarely. Marx was never a very good correspondent. To make up for it, at Christmas, 1836, Jenny received a volume of poems, *The Book of Love*, dedicated to his 'dear, ever-beloved Jenny von Westphalen.' Sophie wrote to her brother that when Jenny came to see Marx's parents on the day after Christmas 'she wept tears of joy and pain when she was given the poems.'

The three volumes of *The Book of Love* have long since vanished. What survives of Marx's poetical attempts—two poems published in a periodical, the *Athenäum*, a volume of poems dedicated to his father, scenes from *Oulanem*, a tragedy, and some chapters from *Scorpion and Felix*, a novel in the manner of Sterne—justify the harsh judgment that Marx himself passed on them. He described them as sentiment wildly and formlessly

expressed, completely lacking in naturalness and entirely woven out of moonshine, with rhetorical reflections taking the place of poetical feeling. All the same he granted them a certain warmth and straining after vital rhythm.

Jenny's position became more and more intolerable. She hesitated when his father suggested that Karl should reveal the secret and ask her parents for her hand. She seems to have been worried by the difference in age between herself and Karl. Eventually she agreed to Karl's father's suggestion and Karl wrote to Trier. How the demand for her hand was received we do not know. There seem to have been difficulties and some opposition, the leader of which is sure to have been Ferdinand, the subsequent Prussian Minister of the Interior, who had just been transferred to an official position in Trier, where he was soon noted for his 'great zeal and moderate intelligence.'

Eventually Jenny's parents gave their consent. At the end of 1837, Karl Heinrich Marx, a student nineteen years of age, became officially engaged to Jenny von Westphalen.

CHAPTER IV

STUDENT YEARS IN BERLIN

THERE were seven hundred students at Bonn, but several thousand in Berlin. Bonn, in spite of spies and informers, was a pleasant, patriarchal provincial town, in which it was not easy to get away from the usual students' round, with its taverns and duels. The University of Berlin, compared to the other universities in Germany, was a 'workhouse' compared to a 'tavern,' to quote Ludwig Feuerbach.

At that period Berlin still retained many relics of the times of the Brandenburg Electors. The walls still surrounded the Old Town, and the old towers, only the names of which remain to-day, were still standing. Gardens, meadows and fields still made deep inroads into the maze of narrow, crooked alleys. Schöneberg was still the wooded *beautiful mountain*, and the unpretentious houses of the Nollendorfs still stood on the Nollendorfsplatz, which teems with traffic to-day. It lagged behind the young industrial towns of the Rhineland in economic and social development, but with its three hundred thousand inhabitants it was second only to Vienna, the biggest town on German-speaking territory, and was the first big town that Marx became acquainted with.

He matriculated in the faculty of law on October 22, 1837, took a modest room in the Mittelstrasse, not far from the university, and reluctantly proceeded to pay calls upon a few influential friends of his father's to whom he had been given introductions, and then cut himself off from all social intercourse. He saw no one and spoke to no one.

Bonn had taught him that an attractive title to a course of lectures is not always a reliable guide to its contents. In his first term he attended only three courses of lectures—by Steffens, the philosopher, on anthropology, Savigny on jurisprudence and Gans on criminal law.

Gans and Savigny, the two stars of the university, were bitter opponents. Friedrich Karl Savigny was the founder and principal theorist of the school of historical jurisprudence

which rejected the conception of natural right as an empty abstraction and regarded law as something concrete arising out of the spirit and historical development of a nation. This boiled down in practice to a simple sanctification of everything handed down from the past. (The ideologist of the Christian-German state had discerned the revolutionary implications of the philosophy of Hegel at a time when the ruling powers still regarded it as absolutism's strongest possible support.)

His most important adversary was Eduard Gans. Hegel had summoned the young scholar, who possessed a gift of eloquence not granted to other lecturers, to the faculty of jurisprudence. Gans was not a thinker of special originality. All his life he remained faithful to his great teacher's system, but he went his own way in the conclusions he drew from Hegel's fundamental principles. In opposition to the school of historical law that looked towards the past, he set up Saint-Simonistic ideas looking towards the future. He had a glowing enthusiasm for the complete freeing of the human personality, an enthusiasm for all plans which had as their goal the complete reconstruction of society. His controversy with Savigny was more than merely a legal one. It assumed a philosophical, actually a political character.

After the death of Hegel in 1831 Gans lectured on history as well as law, the history of the French Revolution and its salutary effects on the rest of Europe in particular. The big lecture hall was filled to overflowing by his audience. His lectures were attended not only by students but by officials, officers, men of letters, 'the whole of Berlin,' in fact everyone who was still concerned for political and social questions in those fusty times. They came to listen to the free speech of a free man.

The fact that the university was freedom's only sanctuary was one of the principal factors in its importance. Gans once took a French scholar round Berlin. In Unter den Linden he showed him the building next to the university. 'Look!' he said. 'The university next to the arsenal. That is the symbol of Prussia.' Prussia was an enormous barracks. A narrow and spiteful censorship waged a pitiless war on intellectual freedom. It was a time when a censor (he was the one with whom Marx was destined to tussle when editor of

the *Rheinische Zeitung*) suppressed an advertisement of a translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* by 'Philalethes,' the later King John of Saxony, with the comment that 'no comedy should be made of divine things.' A police régime of the pettiest kind hampered the citizen's activities in every direction and made his life increasingly intolerable. Only at the university was there a modicum of freedom of speech. Gans was one of the few who made real use of his academic freedom. He expressed opinions and praised the French Revolution in his lectures in a way he could not possibly have done in books.

Savigny and Steffens testified to the zeal with which Marx listened to them, and Gans's report on him was that he was 'exceptionally industrious.'

Marx, obliged to study law, felt, to use his own expression, 'above all an urge to wrestle with philosophy.' He made up his mind to combine philosophy and law. He worked through the sources and the commentaries and translated the first two books of the Pandects—'absolutely uncritically and just like a schoolboy,' as he wrote to his father in retrospect. He worked at a three-hundred-page philosophy of law, covering the whole territory of law, only to see at the end that 'without philosophy nothing could be accomplished.' In addition he made excerpts from works on the history of art, translated Latin classics, started studying English and Italian in order at the end of term 'once more to search for the dance of the Muses and the music of the satyrs.' These poems, he wrote to his father, were the only ones in which he 'caught a glimpse, as if by the touch of a magic wand, of the realm of true poetry as a distant fairy palace,' and 'all his creations fell away to nothing.'

'What with all these activities, in my first term I stayed up many nights, fought many battles, experienced much internal and external excitement. In the end I emerged not very much enriched, having neglected nature and art, and rejected friendships.' His health had been seriously affected in the process, but he did not spare himself but cast himself once more into the arms of philosophy. Once more he wanted 'to plunge into the ocean, but with the firm intention of finding mental nature to be necessarily just as concretely and firmly grounded as physical nature . . . my aim was to search for the idea in real

things themselves.' Marx had read fragments of the Hegelian philosophy, whose 'grotesque, craggy melody' he had not found to his taste. He wrote a dialogue entitled *Cleanthes, or the point of departure and necessary progress of philosophy*, a philosophical-dialectical treatment of divinity as manifested as an idea-in-itself, as religion and as history, only to find at the end that his dearest child had been 'nursed in moonshine, and that it was as if a false siren had carried it in her arms and handed it over to the enemy.' His last sentence was the beginning of the Hegelian system. Mortification at finding himself forced to bend the knee to a philosophical system that he hated made him ill. During his indisposition he read Hegel from beginning to end, and most of Hegel's pupils as well, and 'chained himself firmly and more firmly still to the present philosophy of the world from which he had thought to escape.' By the late summer of 1837 he had become an Hegelian.

He was living at the time at Stralau, a country place near Berlin, where the doctor had sent him. Fresh air, plenty of walks and a healthier life enabled him to 'ripen from a pale-faced weakling to robust bodily vigour.' Moreover, it was at Stralau that he met the men who introduced him to the 'Doktorklub' and played a great part in the next stage of his development.

The 'Doktorklub' had been founded a few years previously. There were no tavern clubs or local students' associations in Berlin. Students who were in sympathy with one another met on fixed days at inns and coffee-houses, which in Berlin were also reading-rooms. In one of these inns in the Französische-strasse there met regularly a number of students and young graduates united by a similar interest in literary and philosophical questions. In the course of time these meetings took on the character of an informal club and they were transferred to private premises where there would be no undesired guests and more open speech was possible. 'In this circle of ambitious young men,' a member of the 'Doktorklub' wrote in his reminiscences, 'there reigned that spirit of idealism, that enthusiastic urge for knowledge, that liberal spirit that still so thoroughly animated the youth of that time. Poems and other work done by us used to be read aloud and criticised

at our meetings, but our special interest was the philosophy of Hegel, which was still in its prime and held sway more or less over the whole educated world, though individual voices had already been raised against the system and a split between the Rights and the Lefts had already become perceptible in the ranks of the Hegelians themselves.'

Marx became a frequent visitor to the club, and through it he made numerous acquaintances in Berlin literary and scientific circles including Bettina von Arnim, the last Romantic, in whose *salon* in Unter den Linden the most varied society met—young writers and old generals, Liberals and Conservatives, ministers and Jewish journalists, believers and atheists. Marx does not seem to have been a frequent guest of Bettina's, and in his poems he wrote a pointed epigram about the 'new-fangled Romantic.' Bettina remembered the young student well. When she came to Trier in 1838 (or 1839) he had to accompany her on all her excursions. Marx only had a week to spend in his native town, and was left with practically no time to talk to Jenny at all.

The university became unimportant for Marx. True, he had to attend the prescribed lectures, the lectures essential for a law student if he were to pass his examinations, but more than that he did not do. In the eight terms he spent in Berlin after the summer of 1837 he only attended seven courses of lectures, and for three whole terms he attended no lectures at all. His interests were now confined to philosophy. Some of his notebooks of this period have been preserved. They are full of excerpts from Aristotle, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Bacon, and other philosophical classics.

The political under-currents of the time masqueraded, were forced to masquerade, as philosophical schools of thought. Division appeared in the Hegelian camp. The 'Old' Hegelians remained loyal to the system and conservative ideals of the older Hegel, while the 'Young' Hegelians laid even greater stress on the revolutionary elements in the Hegelian method, on the Hegelian dialectic, which regards nothing as permanent but everything as flowing or becoming, recognises the contradiction in everything and is thus the 'algebra of the revolution.' The breach between the two schools of thought became wider and wider and the 'Doktorclub' was in the very midst of the

rising battle. The challenging 'Young' Hegelian group began to crystallise out of it. Its most important representatives were Adolph Rutenberg, Karl Friedrich Köppen and Bruno Bauer.

Marx met Rutenberg first, and it was probably Rutenberg who introduced him to the 'Doktorclub.' In November, 1837, he was calling him his most intimate friend. Rutenberg was a former 'Burschenschafter,' and had served long sentences in Prussian prisons. He became a lecturer in geography and history at the Cadet School but was soon dismissed because of the unfavourable influence he was said to exercise on his pupils and because of the Liberal newspaper correspondence he wrote. He became a professional writer. He was somewhat superficial, not overweighted with learning, and an easy and quick writer, and soon came to occupy a foremost position among the publicists of Berlin. Political journalism, properly so-called, did not exist in Germany of the thirties. The draconic censorship alone was sufficient to nip it in the bud. An inadequate substitute was provided by the general correspondence with which the journalists of Berlin kept the provincial Press supplied. There was very little in this correspondence. It contained few facts and still fewer ideas, but that left all the more scope for Liberal expressions and veiled hints about the remarkable things the writer would be able to disclose were the sword of Damocles, i.e. the censorship, not dangling over his head. During the period in question these letters from the capital fulfilled a definite need. They expressed the elementary interests of society and strengthened the elementary protest against the ruling powers. Rutenberg was one of the most prominent representatives of this type of journalism, and as such he had a certain importance in Marx's life. At the beginning of 1842 he was appointed editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. In this position, when he had to prove himself as a genuine publicist for the first time, he was a complete failure. He was not fit for more than writing Berlin letters full of veiled hints. Rutenberg sank lower and lower and ended up in doubtful hole-and-corner journalism.

Karl Friedrich Köppen was a man of entirely different stamp. He, like Rutenberg, was a history master by profession, but was a man of real learning and scholarship, with a solid

and extensive knowledge in many fields. At the same time he was of a modest and retiring disposition, with no aptitude whatever for placing himself in the limelight, unlike Rutenberg, who was very skilled at it indeed. Köppen's chief work, an account of Lamaism, has in many respects not been superseded to this day. He was the first German historian to put forward an unprejudiced view of the Terror in the French Revolution. Even some of his letters on transitory themes have preserved their value. Those he wrote about Berlin University are still prized by scholars and specialists. It is only as a politician and a pioneer of the Socialist movement that Köppen is still not appreciated according to his deserts. He took an active part in the formation of the first workers' organisations in Berlin in 1848 and 1849. When the Reaction set in he was one of the few intellectuals who continued working in the workers' clubs in spite of the severe penalties he had to suffer. Köppen remained true to his ideals, and his friendship with Marx survived all the vicissitudes of life. When Marx visited him in Berlin in 1861 he found him 'the old Köppen still.' He wrote to Engels that the two occasions he 'pub-crawled' with him really did him good.

The most important member of the group was Bruno Bauer, a lecturer in theology. A contemporary describes him thus: 'Somewhat small in build and of medium height, his demeanour is calm and he confronts you with a confident, serene smile; his frame is compact, and you observe with great interest the fine but definite features of his face, the boldly protruding, angular and finely pointed nose, the high-arched brow, the fine-cut mouth, the almost napoleonic figure.' Generally distracted and absent-minded, with his gaze directed into space—Rutenberg's children always used to say that Uncle Bauer was looking into Africa—he used to liven up in argument. His wide erudition, his gift of precise definition, his irony and the boldness of his thought made Bauer the chosen leader of the Young Hegelian movement. It was not till later, when the time came to proceed from analysis to synthesis and establish positive, practical aims that he failed. He remained the critic; and criticism for criticism's sake, 'absolute criticism' became for him an end in itself. But at the end of the thirties and the beginning of the forties, when the times demanded

criticism of the old and the shattering of ancient idols, Bruno Bauer was in the very forefront of the battle.

In 1837, when Marx joined the group, Young Hegelianism was just coming into existence. David Friedrich Strauss had published his *Life of Jesus* two years before. It was the first Hegelian onslaught on the foundations of official religion. It is somewhat difficult to-day to realise its full significance. Society of that day was divided into strata. It was a rigid framework, resting solely on the sanction of religion, and reason had to adapt itself to it in all modesty and humility as to something willed by God. As long as the foundation on which it rested, namely the principle of divine revelation, stood intact, all criticism of any detail of the social structure was impotent. But any thrust at that principle that went home shook the whole structure to its depths.

Before Strauss Hegelian philosophy had peacefully and harmoniously cohabited with religion. Certainly it was only a marriage of prudence, but from the point of view of the old world it was a highly useful and convenient one. Strauss was the first to disturb this harmonious bliss. Everybody immediately realised that it forestalled a general attack on the whole position. Marx wrote a few years later:

'Criticism of religion is the hypothesis of all criticism. The foundation of irreligious criticism is that man makes religion and religion does not make man. But man is no abstract being lurking somewhere outside and apart from the world. Man means the world of men, the state, society. Religion, which is a distorted outlook on the world because the world is itself distorted, is the product of the state and of society. Religion is a fantastic materialisation of the human entity, because the human entity has no true reality. Hence the fight against religion is a direct fight against a world the spiritual aroma of which it is.'

—Strauss found anything but support among the Hegelians of Berlin. The essays published by Bruno Bauer in 1835 and 1836 were among the most trenchant of the attacks that were made on him. Bauer flatly denied the right of philosophy to criticise Christian dogma, and he did so with such dogmatism and violence that Strauss confidentially predicted that he would end up in the camp of the extreme bigots. Bauer took a

different path, however, and it was the bigots who forced him down it. Apart from the fact that their attack was directed at the philosophy of Hegel, which a Hegelian like Bauer was necessarily obliged to defend, the God whom they so martially proclaimed was not the mild Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount but the gloomy, vindictive Jehovah of the Old Testament. Their Holy Book was the Old Testament far more than the New, and it was this that set Bauer on his critical tack.

He made his *début* in this direction in 1837 and 1838; at a time, that is to say, when Marx had become a member of the 'Doktorklub.' Marx took part in the development of Young Hegelianism which originated in the club; moreover, he was, as far as we can tell—unfortunately there is no period of Marx's life about which we are so badly informed—one of the most active and progressive spirits in its development. He took his place at the most extreme wing from the start. Ruthless consistency was a characteristic of the very beginning of his independent intellectual life. At the end of 1836 he expressed his views about law in a letter to his father, who replied: 'Your views about law are not without truth, but systematised they would be very calculated to cause storms.' The ageing Trier lawyer had lived through the storms of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, and yearned for peace and quiet. His son liked storms and looked out for them, though for the time being in the realm of intellectual conflict only.

Most of the members of the 'Doktorklub' were older than Marx, and many of them were much older. That did not prevent them from accepting him as an equal practically from the first. As early as 1837, when he was a student of nineteen and was nursing the idea of founding a literary paper, his friends Rutenberg and Bauer were able to assure him that 'all the aesthetic celebrities of the Hegelian school' were willing to collaborate. The club used to meet often, either in private houses or in small inns in the neighbourhood of the university. For a short time it met every day. The books and essays to which it gave birth demonstrate its breadth of interests and the rapid development through which it passed.

At first the chief subject of discussion was religion. To begin with the battle raged round the question of the distortion of true Christianity by mythology and the assimilation of

from Berlin to Bonn in 1838. In 1840 and 1841 the Berlin group moved faster and faster towards the Left. In the summer of 1840 an observer characterised it as 'thoroughly devoted to the idea of constitutional monarchy.' Köppen wrote his book on *Frederick the Great and his Opponents* and dedicated it to 'his friend Karl Heinrich Marx of Trier.' Köppen honoured Frederick, 'in whose spirit we swore to live and die,' as the enemy of Christian-German reaction. His basic idea was that the state was embodied in its purest form in a monarchy ruled over by a monarch like Frederick, a philosopher, a free servant of the world spirit. Renewal could only come from the top.

The phase of Liberal constitutional monarchism soon ran its course. By the winter of 1840-1 the club were calling themselves 'friends of the people,' and their theoretical position was therefore at the extreme left wing of revolutionary republicanism. Rutenberg in his Berlin letters compared the so-called reading rooms of Berlin with the Paris coffee-houses on the eve of the Revolution and Köppen wrote his essays on the Terror. The club had begun 'direct' participation in contemporary life.

During this period Marx published nothing, and no manuscripts dating from these years have been preserved. His share in the intellectual life of the club, and it was an important one, was only expressed indirectly in the writings of others. It appears from a letter Köppen wrote to Marx on June 3, 1841, that many of the ideas expressed by Bruno Bauer in his essay on 'The Christian State and Our Times,' one of the first in which political deductions were drawn from religious criticism, were Marx's. Köppen remarked that as long as Marx was in Berlin he had no 'personal, so to speak, self-thought thoughts of his own'; which was obviously a very, friendly and highly exaggerated piece of self-depreciation, but at the same time gives a clue to how much Marx was able to give his friends. They treasured him as 'a warehouse of thoughts, a workshop of ideas.' Marx lived in their memories as the 'young lion,' combative, turbulent, quick-witted, as bold in posing problems as in solving them. In the *Christliches Heldengedicht*, written in 1842, after Marx had left Berlin, Marx appeared as the club remembered him:

Who's this approaching who thus rants and raves?
 'Tis the wild fury, black-maned Marx of Treves;
 See him advance, nay spring upon the foe
 As though to seize and never let him go.
 See him extend his threatening arms on high
 To seize the heavenly canopy from the sky;
 See his clenched fists, and see his desperate air,
 As though ten thousand devils had him by the hair.¹

It must not be supposed that the 'Doktorklub' confined itself to bringing together a collection of academic intellectuals for the purpose of philosophical discussion only. Most of its members were young, exuberant and always ready for mischief. Protest against the crass philistinism that surrounded them and the absurd, petty regimentation of personal life by the police occasionally broke out in unruly forms. Bruno Bauer appears in the police records as a 'heavy drinker' and Rutenberg was reported to have taken part in street fights. Edgar Bauer, a younger brother of Bruno, was punished for ostentatiously smoking in the street, which was forbidden by the police. Liebknecht describes in his memoirs how Marx celebrated a reunion with Edgar Bauer in London in the fifties. They engaged in a 'pub-crawl' and not a single tavern on their route was allowed to remain unvisited. When they could drink no longer they started throwing stones at the street lamps under cover of darkness and went on until the police came and they had to run. Marx developed a turn of speed no one had thought him capable of. He was nearly forty at the time, father of a numerous family, author of works of far-reaching importance. One can imagine what he must have been capable of in his twenties in Berlin.

Marx, once accepted into the ranks of the Young Hegelians, paid practically no more attention to the university. It had been 'purged.' Eduard Gans, Hegel's most important pupil and the only Hegelian in the faculty of law, died young, in 1839. Bauer had to leave the university soon afterwards. He

¹ Wer jaget hinterdrein mit wildem Ungestüm?
 Ein schwarzer Kerl aus Trier, ein markhaft Ungetum.
 Er gehet, hupfet nicht, er springet auf den Hacken
 Und raset voller Wut und gleich als wollt' er packen
 Das weite Himmelszelt und zu der Erde ziehn
 Streckt er die Arme sein weit in die Lüfte hin.
 Geballt die böse Faust, so tobt er sonder Rasten,
 Als wenn ihn bei den Schopf zehntausend Teufel fassten.

was unspeakably obnoxious to the pietists, and all Altenstein, Minister of Public Worship and Education, who was favourably inclined towards the Hegelians, was able to do for him was to have him transferred to Bonn. Reactionaries were installed in the Hegelians' places. Gans's chair was filled by Julius Stahl, theorist of Prussian absolutism, who in the fifties became a practitioner of it as well. The extreme bigots, the people whom Hegel had described a few years previously as the 'rabble' with whom he had to 'tussle,' set the tone in the university.

With the accession of King Frederick William IV the Christian-Romantic reaction set in in full force. He who did not bow and hold his peace was visited with exemplary punishment. Of academic freedom no trace was left. The university became an annexe of the barracks.

In his first student years Marx had had hopes of becoming a university lecturer at Berlin. This was impossible now. He could not even expect to take his doctor's degree at the university. His thesis would have to be submitted to Stahl, against whom the students—with Marx certainly among them—had noisily demonstrated when he was appointed to Gans's place. As Varnhagen noted in his diary, this was the first outward opposition to the new government.

Marx's father died in May, 1838. During the last year the family's material position had been worsening. In Trier Jenny was waiting. And on the other side Bruno Bauer was urging his friend to hurry. It was time to put a stop to his 'shilly-shallying' and end his 'wearisome vacillation about the sheer, nonsensical farce of his examinations.' Marx, he said, should come to Bonn, where he would find things easy. At Bonn he would be able to get a lectureship. The professors at Bonn knew they were no philosophers and that the students wanted to hear philosophy. 'Come here and the new battle will begin.' Marx doubted whether everything would turn out to be so easy at Bonn as Bauer hoped. He was far more engrossed with a project for founding a philosophical journal, about which he had been conducting an earnest correspondence with Bauer, than with the prospect of a lectureship at Bonn. But he was not yet willing to give up hope of overcoming the obstacles and being able to teach at Bonn by his friend's side.

On March 30, 1841, he received his leaving-certificate from Berlin University. On April 6 he sent to Jena a dissertation on 'The difference between the natural philosophies of Democritus and the Epicureans.' Certain negotiations appear to have preceded this step. The University of Jena was celebrated at the time for the readiness with which it granted doctor's degrees. It lived up to its reputation. A week later the dean of Jena University presented the candidate Karl Heinrich Marx to the faculty of philosophy. The diploma was dated April 15. Marx's official student years were at an end.

CHAPTER V
PHILOSOPHY UNDER CENSORSHIP

THE whole of the politics of an absolute state are embodied in the person of the reigning monarch. The more flagrantly his policy contradicts the interests of the classes excluded from government, the more conscious they are of their impotence to break their ruler's power, the more longingly they direct their gaze towards the heir to the throne. Upon him they rely for the fulfilment of all their hopes. With him, or so they whisper to themselves, the great new era will begin. The greater their expectations, the more bitter their disappointment when the new régime turns out to be nothing but a bare sequel of the old.

As Crown Prince Frederick Wilhelm IV had been the hope of many. They had taken seriously the high-sounding phrases concerning liberty and national unity that had flowed so easily from his lips, however vague and indefinite the phrases had been. They had expected that when once he was king the era of long-demanded reforms would open. When he ascended the throne new political life awakened on every side, and everyone sent him petitions and demands, expecting them to be fulfilled overnight. 'An Augustan age was to begin for Prussia. Everywhere new, fresh forces seemed to be arising; there was germinating and sprouting, and everywhere long-closed buds seemed to be opening in the warm light of the newly arisen sun. A breath of spring went out from Berlin and seemed to spread throughout the Fatherland.'

The romantic, pious, waywardly intellectual king fulfilled none of the many expectations that were centred upon him. He had proclaimed that there must be freedom of speech, but the new instructions issued to the censor's office provided for no alleviation of his severity. Things remained as they had been before. It was a time when freeing the individual from his traditional ties was the vogue. People's minds were much occupied with the problem of divorce, but the Government settled the matter in its own inimitable way and decided for the *status quo*.

The Left Hegelians had had but little faith in the Crown Prince, but even they had not been entirely without hope, as Köppen's writings show. When he became king they were quickly disillusioned. The first blow struck by the new régime fell upon their shoulders. Frederick William IV was a personal friend of Savigny, and Savigny strengthened him in his resolve once and for all to exterminate the godless forces of Hegelianism. He summoned the philosopher Schelling from Munich to Berlin to enable him at last to bring out into the light of day his long-prepared philosophical system, which was but a metaphysical justification of the police state. When the Hegelians tried to combat him the censor suppressed their literary opposition just as ruthlessly as he had done in the past; and thus the men who still to an extent believed that the battle could be fought out on the peaceful plain of theory were driven a stage farther into 'practice,' and 'direct participation in life.'

To the Hegelians the dismissal of Bruno Bauer was a still severer blow. To Marx the blow was a personal one. All the plans he had made in his last years at Berlin had been closely bound up with Bruno Bauer. They had wanted to teach together at Bonn, they had wanted to be joint editors of *The Archives of Atheism*, they had intended to do battle together against the enemies of Hegelianism. It was for this reason that Bauer had urged his friend to join him at Bonn at the earliest possible moment. The end of Marx's studies made the proposition a practical one for the first time, but circumstances intervened to make it impossible.

The University of Bonn had two theological schools, Protestant and Catholic, and they had always been bitterly opposed. Each was always ready to go to the assistance of the enemy of the other. The Catholics always supported the not completely orthodox Protestants and the Protestants always rallied behind the Liberal Catholics. Bruno Bauer counted on this. Between the pair of hostile brothers he hoped to find space for his critical annihilation of Christianity. He was disappointed. Catholics and Protestants forgot their ancient feud and united against their common foe. Pious students, incited by their teachers, declined as future ministers of religion to go on listening to the heresies of the 'atheist' lecturer. A Catholic-Protestant United Front, created specially for the purpose,

started making hostile demonstrations against him, free fights broke out at lectures, and the university authorities strove to get rid of the disturber of their peace, whom the Ministry of Public Worship and Education had foisted upon them because it wanted him out of Berlin.

In the meantime Bauer's standing with the Ministry had also been seriously impaired. The department had been purged of its last pro-Hegelians. In April, 1841, when Bauer's *Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels* appeared, Eichhorn, the Minister, had inquired in Bonn whether it would not be possible to withdraw his right to lecture. But as long as Bauer refrained from political allusions in the lecture-room it was difficult to take any active steps against him without tearing the last shreds from the pretence of academic freedom.

The Government found their long-awaited opportunity in the autumn of 1841. Bauer tied the rope round his own neck by taking part in the demonstrations that took place in Berlin in honour of Welcker, who was a professor at Karlsruhe and leader of the opposition in the Parliament of Baden. Welcker's journey through Prussia was the signal for an extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm. The Government well knew that the banquets and 'srenades' of which he was the occasion were not in honour of him personally, but in honour of the cause he represented; i.e. constitutional government and the struggle against autocracy. The Berlin celebrations were organised by Bauer's friends, and Bauer was in Berlin at the time. In his speech at a banquet held on September 28 he drew a contrast between the Hegelian conception of the reasonable state, consciously understanding its tasks, and the vague spirit of South-German Liberalism.

The sensation caused by the demonstrations in Welcker's honour, and more particularly by Bauer's speech, was extraordinary. It was talked about for days. The police busied themselves with the 'scandalous' affair and the king ordered a detailed report to be made to him. On October 14, after reading the report, he wrote a letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, insisting that the organisers of the affair be sought out and removed from Berlin, or at least placed under rigorous police supervision. On no account must Bauer be allowed to continue lecturing at Bonn.

The king's letter did its work. Throughout the winter one report was written after another, the affair was exhaustively discussed in the Press, all the universities in Prussia were consulted, and eventually, on March 22, the verdict the king wanted was delivered. Bruno Bauer left the University of Bonn in May, 1842.

Marx followed Bauer's struggle in Bonn with extreme attention, for his own destiny was at stake beside his friend's. If Bauer had to leave the university, an academic career was closed to him as long as Prussia remained the bigoted, reactionary State that it was.

After leaving Berlin University Marx lived partly at Trier, partly at Cologne, partly at Bonn. Only one of his literary plans was realised. The ever-increasing severity of the censorship made it impossible even to think of founding an atheistic periodical. But Bauer's *Posaune des Jüngsten Gerichts über Hegel den Atheisten und Antichristen* did appear and Marx collaborated in it. It appeared anonymously. The writer gave himself out to be a right-thinking Christian and proceeded to demonstrate that the most dangerous enemy of the Christian State was Hegel, because he demolished it from within; and by Hegel he meant Hegel, and not Hegel as interpreted by his misguided pupils; Hegel who had so long passed as a column of the existing order. The deception was so well carried out that at first even men like Arnold Ruge took it for the real thing. The cat was only let out of the bag by that section of the Press which was friendly to the Hegelians. Every peasant,¹ one paper wrote plainly enough, would understand that the book had not been written by a religious man at all but by an artful rebel. Marx prepared a sequel intended to demonstrate the revolutionary element in Hegel's art teaching. But the censor made it impossible to continue the series of pamphlets which was planned.

The philosophers, whether they wanted it or not, found themselves assailed on every side by the demands of practical, everyday life. Marx went on working at his essay. He wanted to publish it but it never appeared. He stopped, was forced to stop work on it because everything else had become overshadowed by the importance of the plain, practical,

¹ The German for peasant is *Bauer*.

political task of coming to grips with the enemy. Marx's essay, 'Remarks on the New Prussian Censorship,' written in January and February, 1842, the deadliest attack ever made, the sharpest blow ever struck at the brazen profanity of arbitrary despotism, was intended for Ruge's *Deutsche Jahrbücher* but only appeared a year later in the *Anekdoten zur Neuesten Deutschen Philosophie und Publizistik*, which was published in Switzerland.

In April, 1842, Marx went to Bonn, where Bauer's fate had already been decided. 'Irritating the devout,' shocking the philistine, bursting into peals of laughter in the deadly religious silence, gave them a pleasure which there was now less reason than ever to restrain. Bauer wrote mockingly about it to his brother. He described how he and Marx one day infuriated the excellent citizens of Bonn by appearing in a donkey-cart while everybody was going for a walk. 'The citizens of Bonn looked at us in amazement. We were delighted, and the donkeys brayed.'

In Bonn Marx wrote his first article for the *Rheinische Zeitung*, which had been appearing in Cologne since January 1, 1842.

The Rhine Province was economically and politically the most advanced part of Prussia, and its centre was Cologne. In no other part of Germany had industry developed so rapidly or was modern commerce so disseminated. Consciousness of the anachronism of the feudal state developed sooner and more powerfully here than elsewhere among the confident young bourgeoisie. Their economic demands struck everywhere on political impediments, and they recognised comparatively early that these impediments must be removed. If there were no other way, an end must be put to them by force. They required the unity of Germany, which was carved up into six-and-thirty 'Fatherlands'—big, medium, small and pigmy states, each with its own coinage, its own weights and measures, its own Customs. Political freedom, the overthrow of the many petty potentates, the unification of Germany into a single big economic unit was their necessary aim.

The centre of the Rhine Province was Cologne, where most of the modern industrial undertakings had their headquarters. The most energetic and progressive representatives of the new world which repudiated Old Prussia and was hated by it in

turn lived there. Cologne was the headquarters of the young intelligentsia arising with and in the midst of the new economic order.

In the course of 1841 a number of young writers, philosophers, merchants and industrialists had gathered into a small, loosely knit group in Cologne. Camphausen, Mevissen and other future captains of industry belonged to it, besides representatives of the new intelligentsia such as Georg Jung, a member of a rich Dutch family, whose wife was the daughter of a Cologne banker, and Dagobert Oppenheim, brother of the proprietor of the big banking house of Oppenheim and Co.; and writers such as Moses Hess, who was a gifted and versatile man, if too volatile and unstable to make real contributions to the many branches of knowledge he wished to make his own.

Marx made a tremendous impression on the members of this group when he met them for the first time. This was apparently in July, 1841, when he was on his way from Trier to Bonn. Jung spoke of Marx as being 'a quite desperate revolutionary' and having 'one of the acutest minds' he knew. In September, 1841, Moses Hess wrote a letter to Berthold Auerbach which was a positive panegyric of Marx. 'You will be delighted to meet a man who is one of our friends here now, though he lives in Bonn, where he will soon be a lecturer,' he wrote. 'He is a phenomenon who has made a tremendous impression on me, though my interests lie in an entirely different field. In short, you can definitely look forward to meeting the greatest, perhaps the *only real* philosopher now living. Soon, when he makes his *début* (as a writer as well as in an academic chair) he will draw the eyes of all Germany upon himself. Dr. Marx, as my idol is called—he is still a young man (he is at most twenty-four years old)—will give mediaeval religion and philosophy their last push. He combines the most profound philosophical earnestness with the most biting wit. Think of Rousseau, Voltaire, Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel fused into one—I say *fused*, not just lumped together—and you have Dr. Marx.'

About this time the Cologne group conceived the project of having a daily paper of their own. Conditions were favourable. Antagonism between Protestant Prussia and the Catholic Rhineland had scarcely diminished during the bare three

decades of their amalgamation. In the course of the thirties Church and State had come into a whole series of conflicts, which were liable to flare up again at any moment. Since the revolutionary upheaval by which the Catholics of Belgium had secured their independence from Protestant Holland, an example that militant sections of the clerical circles in the Rhineland occasionally felt tempted to imitate, the danger inherent in these conflicts was all the greater. The old and widely circulated *Kölnische Zeitung* propagated the Catholic cause with great skill. The Government tried to counter it with a paper of its own, the *Rheinische Allgemeine Zeitung*, which was started in 1841. It met with little success. It was too feeble in every way to compete with the ably conducted *Kölnische Zeitung*.

The Cologne group decided to take the paper over. The response to the appeal to take up shares in the new undertaking far surpassed expectations. Thirty thousand thalers were subscribed in a short time. In those days that was a very respectable sum of money. Every section of the public having Left sympathies of any kind was represented among the subscribers. As a token of the interest the Government took in an anti-ultramontane organ, even Gerlach, the president of the local administration, was among the shareholders.

The paper did not immediately find its political line. The first editor was intended to have been Friedrich List, whose *National System of Political Economy* had just appeared. In the field of economic theory, List was the first spokesman on behalf of the young bourgeoisie's aspirations for the protection and advancement of industry in an economically independent Germany. But List was ill and recommended Dr. Gustav Höfken, one of his disciples, to fill his place. The first number appeared on January 1, 1842. Höfken's policy was for the expansion of the German Zollverein, the development of German trade and trade policy, and the liberation of the German consciousness from everything that hampered unity. This did not satisfy the paper's new proprietors. They all belonged to the prosperous and educated bourgeoisie. On the board of directors Rudolf Schramm, the manufacturer's son, sat side by side with wealthy lawyers and doctors. The chief shareholders were leading Cologne industrialists, the most important being

Ludolf Camphausen, later Prime Minister of Prussia, one of the pioneers of the railway in Germany. It had long been clear to them that their economic programme could not be realised without a fundamental reorganisation of the state. Jung and Oppenheim, the two managers, were Young Hegelians and helped Hess, who was closely associated with the editorial control from the beginning, in finding Young Hegelians to work for the paper. Variances arose with Höfken and on January 18 he resigned.

Marx already had considerable influence upon the management, especially upon Jung, and it was on his recommendation that his old friend Rutenberg was appointed editor, a position for which he soon proved utterly unsuitable. He could write Young Hegelian articles, but he was simply not equipped for the task of controlling a great political newspaper, which was what the *Rheinische Zeitung* was increasingly becoming every day. From the middle of February onwards the real editor was Moses Hess.

Changes of editorship did not impede the paper's expansion. Its circulation doubled in the first month and went on increasing steadily.

Close as Marx's connection with the paper was from its first day of publication, for the first three months he did not work for it. He wrote nothing for it until after Bauer's dismissal, when all prospect of an academic career had vanished. The first articles he wrote were a series about the debates in the sixth Rhenish Diet on the freedom of the Press, and the first of the series appeared on May 5, 1842. This was the first work of Marx's to be printed, if one excepts the two poems his friends published, possibly against his will, in the *Athenäum*. Georg Jung thought the article 'exceptionally good.' Arnold Ruge called it 'in short, the best that has ever been written about the freedom of the Press.' Ludolf Camphausen inquired of his brother who the writer of the 'admirable' article might be. (Marx did not sign it, but called it 'by a Rhinelander.') Extracts were quoted everywhere, and earned the *Rheinische Zeitung* such credit that Marx was promptly asked to send in as many more articles as he could as quickly as he could write them. Marx wrote three more articles in the course of the summer, one of which was suppressed by the censor and the

other heavily blue-pencilled. In the middle of October Marx was sent for to Cologne. On October 15 he took over the editorship of the *Rheinische Zeitung*.

In spite of all the determination with which Marx fought against feudal absolutism and rejected half-solutions and illusory ones—in a letter to Ruge he described constitutional monarchy as ‘a mongrel riddled with contradiction and paradox’—he was soon forced to part from his Berlin friends. They went on with their ‘absolute criticism,’ completely untroubled as to whether it were possible or justified in the concrete circumstances in which they found themselves. A dispute that arose between him and Edgar Bauer is illuminating. In some essays he sent to Marx Edgar Bauer criticised the principle of compromise in political matters. Not satisfied with that, he made a most violent attack on all who were unwilling in practice to make his uncompromising critical attitude their own. Marx, in a letter to Oppenheim, emphatically repudiated this species of pseudo-radicalism. He described Bauer’s articles as ‘quite general theoretical discussions concerning the constitution of the state, suitable rather for a scientific journal than for a newspaper,’ and drew a picture of ‘liberal-minded, practical men, who have undertaken the troublesome rôle of struggling step-by-step for freedom within constitutional limits.’

Marx’s constant regard for the concrete facts led him to taking an interest in social problems. At the time the German Press was paying particular attention to the Chartist movement in England and the Communist aspirations in France and Switzerland. The *Rheinische Zeitung* took up these questions and printed articles by Hess about the Communists and by Von Mevissen, who had just returned to Cologne from England, about the Chartists. In August, 1842, the management of the *Rheinische Zeitung* and those associated with them formed a study-circle for the discussion of social problems.

Marx took part in it himself. At the beginning of October he defended his paper against a charge of Communism. The article he wrote demonstrates how slight Marx’s knowledge of social problems still was in 1842. He was still under the influence of ideas recently elaborated by Hess. Hess was the first of the Young Hegelian camp to turn his attention to Communism, and Engels says that he was the first of the three

of them to come over to Communism. What Marx intended to write was a 'fundamental critique of Communism' based on 'a long-continued and thorough study.' He read the works of the French Socialists and Communists who were the chief authorities on the subject at the time—Proudhon's *Qu'est ce que la Propriété?*, Dezamy's *Calomnie et Politique de M. Cabet*, Leroux, Considérant, and others.

However important social questions may have been, there were immediate political problems to solve. In all these Marx shared the views of the other Left Hegelians, and his method was theirs. His position was at the extreme Left wing of bourgeois democracy. He was, to repeat the phrase, a 'desperate revolutionary.' A clean sweep must be made of things as they were—but for the time being in the domain of theory only. Victory in the intellectual sphere must precede victory in the world of reality—how, was uncertain, the path to it was not yet visible. Marx, in spite of some vacillation and changes of mind, clung as long as possible to the hope of being able to convince the rulers of the necessity of fundamental changes. Should their efforts prove in vain there was but one alternative and that was revolution, the threat of which appears in his writings at this period from time to time. When the ruling powers called on divine inspiration for their defence, Marx replied that English history had sufficiently demonstrated that the conception of divine inspiration from above called forth the counter-conception of divine inspiration from below. 'Charles I mounted the scaffold because of divine inspiration from below.' The threat was there plainly enough; but it was held in abeyance, only to apply if all efforts to gain the victory in the intellectual sphere should fail. It was their task to persevere tirelessly with these efforts.

The new newspaper was at first not unwelcome to the Government. Upholding the idea of national unity in opposition to the narrow frontiers of provincialism, it stood by implication for Prussian hegemony in Germany, set its face against ultramontanism and state interference in Church matters, all by virtue of its programme of freeing the national consciousness of everything that hampered the sense of unity.

But even before Marx took over control of the paper it had come into ever-growing conflict with the Government. As

early as July Marx wrote to Ruge that the 'greatest obduracy' was required to see a paper like the *Rheinische Zeitung* through. It was censored with 'the most stern and unjust rigour.' The more it criticised the autocracy, the bureaucracy, the censorship, the whole system of the Christian-German Reaction, the harder did the Government bear down upon it. If at first it had been a welcome ally against the *Kölnische Zeitung*, its tone very soon became 'even more doubtful' than that of the *Kölnische Zeitung*. In the last resort it was possible, if not easy, to come to terms with the Catholic Reaction. With the spirit of Liberalism, whose banner was flown more flagrantly in the *Rheinische Zeitung* every day, it was out of the question.

Marx directed its policy far more clearly, more purposefully, more single-mindedly, launched it against the innermost chamber of the Old Prussian State. Under his direction the paper made extraordinarily rapid strides. When he took it over it had about one thousand subscribers. On January 1, 1843, the number had increased to three thousand. Very few German papers could boast as many. It was more widely quoted than all the others, and to write for it was considered a high honour. Letters, articles, poems were sent to it from all parts of Germany. Marx edited it as he had wanted it to be edited when he contributed to it from Bonn. It was essential, he had written to Oppenheim from Bonn, that the *Rheinische Zeitung* should not be directed by its contributors but that the contributors should be directed by it. He was, as friend and foe soon saw, 'the source from which the doctrine flowed.' He concerned himself with every detail. The paper was, as it were, fused all of a piece. Marx himself selected the articles and edited them. Traces of his powerful hand are perceptible in the paper's tone, its style, even in its punctuation.

But this meant that Marx was brought up against the hard facts of reality more sharply than ever. The Prussian State as it actually was could still be measured against the idea of what the true state ought to be. But there was no answer in Hegel to economic questions such as that raised by the debates in the Diet about the wood-theft law or the distress among the wine-growing peasants of the Moselle. Engels wrote later that 'Marx always said that it was his going into the question of the wood-theft law and the position of the Moselle peasants that

turned his attention from pure politics to economic conditions and thus to Socialism.'

The more deeply Marx plunged into reality, the more his Berlin friends lost themselves in abstraction. Their criticism became ever more 'absolute,' and was destined to end up in empty negation. It became 'nihilistic.'

The word 'nihilism,' which dates from those times, was coined for them. The Russian writer, Turgeniev, who is generally supposed to have invented it, learned it during this period in Berlin, when he met members of Bruno Bauer's circle. He transferred it to the Russian revolutionaries twenty years later.

Berlin 'nihilism' took delight in an occasionally absurd ridiculing of philistinism, and the so-called 'Freien,' or 'Free,' demonstrated their emancipation by an anti-philistinism which in practice tied them to that very world which they so radically repudiated, and rendered them incapable of genuinely combating it. Their emancipation ended up in sheer buffoonery.

Marx's unwillingness to place the *Rheinische Zeitung* at the disposal of their antics brought their violent wrath down upon his head. The final breach came on account of Herwegh.

Georgh Herwegh's poems, *Gedichte eines Lebendigen*, had made him the most popular poet in Germany. They expressed incomparably all the vague, sentimental, often naive longing for liberty that was rife in German society at the time. Herwegh had been forced to seek refuge abroad. He was able to return to Germany in 1842, and his return developed into a triumphal progress. Herwegh, who was a quite unpolitical poet at heart, was so fêted and honoured that he ended by completely losing all sense of proportion. At Berlin he was invited to see the king. Frederick William IV liked assuming a popular rôle and courting popularity, and on his side Herwegh felt flattered by the rôle of Marquis Posa which he hoped to play before the king. The interview, however, gave satisfaction to neither party. Each felt the falseness of his position, and when the Press started discussing this curious audience each party behaved as if the other had come off worse. The extreme Left took Herwegh's audience especially amiss, and his meeting with Bruno Bauer's group ended in an abrupt breach. Herwegh wrote a letter to the editor of the *Rheinische*

Zeitung about the 'Freien.' He skated quickly over the occasion of his own quarrel with them and attacked them on quite general grounds. 'They compromise our cause and our Party with their revolutionary romanticism, their longing to be geniuses and their big talk,' he said.

Marx was anything but pleased at receiving Herwegh's letter, but his opinion of the 'Freien' coincided with Herwegh's. He was forced to defend Herwegh against the attacks made upon him from Berlin. They demanded that the *Rheinische Zeitung* print their anti-Herwegh articles, but Marx refused. They sent him an ultimatum, which Marx declined. The Berliners broke off relations with Marx and the *Rheinische Zeitung*. This was Marx's first rupture with the ultra-Lefts.

The paper lost little because of the 'Freien.' Its reputation was growing steadily, its circulation was increasing, and it was on the way to becoming the leading paper in Germany, when the censorship suddenly gave it its death-blow.

As early as the days of Rutenberg's editorship the Government had regretted the good-will they had shown the *Rheinische Zeitung*. In February, 1842, inquiries were made in official circles in the Rhineland as to whether it might not be advisable to withdraw its licence. This danger was at first averted because, though the local officials took exception to a great deal in the paper, they were unwilling to lose an ally against their hereditary clerical foes. But the censorship became more rigorous. It was in the hands of the 'shameless' Dolleschall, the dull-witted official who had forbidden 'making a comedy of divine things.' What he understood he blue-pencilled without rhyme or reason, and he was even more rigorous with what he did not understand, because that he regarded as particularly suspicious. But it was impossible to blue-pencil everything. So much that was subversive remained that the Berlin authorities recognised the insufficiency of their previous instructions. New and even more rigorous instructions were sent the censor. Marx was for a long time fond of quoting one saying of Dolleschall's: 'Now my living's at stake. I'll cross everything out!' It made no difference. Dolleschall was recalled and a new and more severe censor came and ruled in his stead. It was not long before the newcomer was reprimanded for excessive leniency. This hurt his feelings greatly,

and he defended himself. He had suppressed no fewer than a hundred and forty articles, but he received no mercy because of that. The censor was given a super-censor to sit by his side, so that one should blue-pencil what the other left. Even this did not suffice. In December the Berlin authorities sent a special envoy to the Rhineland to inquire how the population would take it if the paper were suppressed or whether suppression would cause too much dissatisfaction. The paper's reputation had grown to such an extent that the Government shrank from taking the final step. But it was only a question of time.

Though the order came from Berlin, it was the Tsar, Nicholas I, who really suppressed the *Rheinische Zeitung*. On January 4 the *Rheinische Zeitung* published a violent anti-Russian article. Russia was the prop of Prussian foreign policy. It was an alliance in which Russia gave the orders and Prussia listened and obeyed. The Tsar saw to it that Prussia did not deviate from the straight and narrow path. When Frederick William IV ascended the throne and there were murmurs here and there in the Prussian Press to the effect that perhaps this Russian hegemony over a German State was not entirely in order, Nicholas I was filled with righteous indignation. He read the submissive young king a lecture and did not shrink from giving his very plain opinion as to how Prussia ought to be ruled.

The Prussian ambassador at the court of St. Petersburg had repeatedly to listen to hard words. On January 10 he reported to Berlin another and if possible a more violent outburst of imperial rage. Nicholas I had engaged Herr von Liebermann in conversation at the ball at the Winter Palace on January 8 and said that he found the Liberal German Press infamous beyond all measure, and he could not sufficiently express his astonishment at the reception the king had given the notorious Herwegh. His Imperial Majesty spoke so violently and with such a flood of words that the ambassador was unable to say anything at all. Moreover, the Tsar had already written Frederick William IV a personal letter. His rebukes became so trenchant and so threatening that Berlin became alarmed.

The anti-Russian article had been read with indignation in Berlin two weeks before the ambassador's report arrived from St. Petersburg. This time there was no more hesitation.

On January 21, 1843, the three Prussian ministers concerned with the censorship decided to suspend the *Rheinische Zeitung*. The Government were in such a hurry that they sent a special mounted messenger to Cologne. According to the edict which he carried the newspaper had been guilty of malicious slander of the State authorities, especially the censorship department; it had held up the administration of the Press police in Prussia to contempt and offended friendly foreign Powers. In order not excessively to damage the shareholders and subscribers, the paper was to be allowed to continue until March 31, but would be subject to special censorship to prevent it from erring during the course of the reprieve.

A clever, cultured cynic, named Wilhelm Saint-Paul, came to Cologne as the last censor. In his reports on Marx he called him the living source and fountain-head of the paper's views. He had made Marx's acquaintance, and he was a man 'who would die for his ideas.' Another time he wrote that certain as it was that the views of Dr. Marx rested upon a profound speculative error, as he had tried to prove to him, Dr. Marx was equally certain of the rightness of his views. 'The contributors to the *Rheinische Zeitung* could be accused of anything rather than lack of principle in that sense. This can only be one more reason,' Saint-Paul concluded with shameless logic, 'for removing him, in the event of the paper being allowed to continue, from a position of direct and controlling influence.'

The fear that the ban would rouse ill-feeling turned out to be well founded. In every town of the province, in Cologne, Aachen, Elberfeld, Düsseldorf, Coblenz and Trier, hundreds of respectable citizens signed petitions to the Government, appealing for the lifting of the ban. The whole of the German Press took up the question of the suspension of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. The authorities in Berlin actually hesitated as to whether it might not be advisable to allow the paper to reappear under definite restrictions.

But in the last resort the Berlin Government regarded the good-will of the Tsar as more important than the temper of the Rhinelanders. On February 7 the ambassador in St. Petersburg wrote another report:

'Depuis l'expédition de mon dernier très-humble rapport, j'ai eu aussi

occasion de rencontrer Mr. le Comte de Nesselrode, dans le salon de son épouse, et de lui parler; mais au lieu de me fournir des renseignements qui auraient pu m'être utiles, ou intéressants, sous le rapport de la politique Mr. le Vice-Chancelier a saisi cette occasion pour me demander: si j'avais lu déjà l'article véritablement infame, que la gazette Rhénane, publiée à Cologne avait lancé dernièrement contre le Cabinet Russe,—en basant ses déclamations furibondes sur le faux prétexte d'une note qui m'aurait été adressée par lui, relativement à la tendance de la presse Allemande. J'ai répondu à Mr. le Comte de Nesselrode, que je ne connaissais pas textuellement cet article, mais que je me rappelais fort bien, que la gazette d'Etat avait publié, il n'y a pas longtemps, une réfutation de quelques articles semblables, en déclarant brièvement, mais assez positivement, que les suppositions sur lesquelles le raisonnement de ces articles avait été basé, manquaient de fondement et de tout motif raisonnable. Cette réfutation n'était point inconnue à Mr. le Vice-Chancelier; mais il m'a avoué, qu'elle ne suffisait pas, pour lui faire comprendre, comment un censeur employé par le gouvernement de Votre Majesté avait pu laisser passer un article d'une nature semblable, qui, selon lui, surpassait encore de beaucoup, en perfidie et en violence, tout ce qui avait été publié jusqu'ici dans les feuilles Prussiennes contre le gouvernement Imperial. Il y a ajouté encore qu'afin que je puisse en juger pour moi-même, en toute connaissance de cause, il m'enverrait la feuille de la gazette Rhénanc, qui renfermait l'article en question, et il l'a fait, en effet, encore le même soir.—Je suis donc véritablement heureux d'avoir trouvé, cette nuit, en revenant du bal patriotique, dans le numéro de la gazette d'Etat du 31. janvier, qui venait d'arriver par la poste, l'ordre émané tout récemment des trois Ministères de Votre Majesté qui président aux affaires de censure, et en vertu duquel la gazette Rhénanc doit cesser de paraître à dater du 1. avril prochain! Aussi me ferai-je un devoir des plus pressés de faire valoir cette mesure énergique auprès de Mr. le Comte de Nesselrode aujourd'hui même à l'occasion d'un dîner auquel il m'a engagé. Je crois, du reste, devoir faire observer encore très-humblement à ce sujet, que lors de la conversation que j'ai eu, avant-hier, avec Mr. le Vice-Chancelier, il m'avait très expressément assuré, que l'Empereur ne connaissait probablement pas encore l'article en question parce que, pour sa part, il avait hésité jusqu'ici à le placer sous les yeux de Sa Majesté Imperiale.¹

¹ Since submitting my last humble report I have had the opportunity of meeting Count de Nesselrode at his wife's salon and of conversing with him. Instead of

The Prussian Government trembled at the thought that the infamous article might yet come to the eyes of the Tsar. It was decided definitely that the ban should remain. A deputation of shareholders was not even received. Marx, in ignorance of the true ground for the suspension of the paper (which as a matter of fact, has remained unknown to historians to this day) made a last desperate move. An article, inspired by him, appeared in the *Mannheimer Abendzeitung* attributing the whole of the blame to him. It was he who had given the paper its distinguishing tone, he was its evil spirit, its controversialist *par excellence*, and it was his audacious insolence and youthful indiscretion that were to blame. But that made no difference either. The issue of March 18 contained the following: 'The undersigned announces that he has retired from the editorship of the *Rheinische Zeitung* because of the present censorship conditions. Dr. Marx.' But still there was no act of clemency.

The last number of the *Rheinische Zeitung* appeared on March 31. It was so sought after that as much as from eight to ten silver groschen were paid for a copy. The *Rheinische Zeitung* took its departure with a poem:

giving me information which might have been useful or interesting to me in connection with the general political situation, the Vice-Chancellor used the occasion to ask me whether I had read the really infamous attack which the *Rheinische Zeitung*, published at Cologne, had recently made on the Russian Cabinet, basing its furious denunciations on the false pretext of a note said to have been addressed to me by him relative to the tendencies of the German Press. I replied that I was not acquainted with the text of the particular article but I recollected well that the *State Gazette* had recently published a refutation of some similar articles, declaring, briefly but quite categorically, that the assumptions on which those articles were based were entirely without foundation or reasonable cause. This refutation was certainly not unknown to the Vice-Chancellor; but he confessed to me that he was unable to understand how a censor employed by Your Majesty's Government could have passed an article of such a nature. In his opinion it far surpassed in perfidy and violence all previous attacks made on the Imperial Government in the Prussian Press. He added that in order that I might judge for myself and be fully acquainted with the facts he would send me a copy of the *Rheinische Zeitung* containing the article in question, which he did the same evening. Consequently I am very gratified to-night, on returning from the Patriotic Ball, to find in the *State Gazette* for January 31, which has just arrived by post, that Your Majesty's three ministers in charge of the censorship have recently issued an order by virtue of which the *Rheinische Zeitung* will cease to appear as from April 1. I shall make it my most immediate duty to draw Count de Nesselrode's attention to this energetic measure to-day on the occasion of a dinner to which he has invited me. I believe it to be my duty very humbly to add that during my conversation with the Vice-Chancellor the day before yesterday he assured me definitely that in all probability the Emperor has not yet seen the article in question, because he on his part had hesitated to lay it before His Imperial Majesty's eyes.

*Wir liessen kuhn der Freiheit Fahne wehen
Und ernst tat jeder Schiffmann seine Pflicht,
War d'rum vergebens auch der Mannschaft Spähen:
Die Fahrt war schön und sie gereut uns nicht.*

*Dass uns der Götter Zorn hat nachgetrachtet
Es schreckt uns nicht, dass unser Mast gefällt.
Denn auch Kolumbus ward zuerst verachtet
Und endlich sah er doch die neue Welt.*

*Ihr Freunde, deren Beifall uns geworden,
Ihr Gegner, die ihr uns mit Kampf geehrt,
Wir seh'n uns wieder einst an neuen Borden,
Wenn Alles bricht, der Mut bleibt unverehrt.¹*

¹ We boldly flew the flag of freedom, and every member of the crew did his duty. In spite of the watch having been kept in vain, the voyage was good and we do not regret it. Though the gods were angry, though our mast fell, we were not intimidated. Columbus himself was despised at first, but he looked upon the New World at last. Friends who applauded us, foes who fought us, we shall meet again on the new shore. If all collapses, courage remains unbroken.

CHAPTER VI

THE GERMANS LEARN FRENCH

THOUGH the final impulse that led to the suppression of the *Rheinische Zeitung* came from the Tsar, even if it had refrained from commenting on foreign politics it would inevitably have been suppressed a few weeks later just the same. The Prussian Government was determined to make an end of the radical Press once and for all. At the end of 1842 it forbade the circulation in Prussia of the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*, which had been a mouthpiece of the Left Hegelians for the past two years under the editorship of Gustav Julius. At the beginning of January, 1843, Frederick Wilhelm IV obtained from the Government of Saxony the suspension in Dresden of Ruge's *Deutsche Jahrbücher*. Soon afterwards Buhl's *Patriot* was banned in Berlin. The police and the censor forced the *Königsberger Zeitung* to sever its connection with the radicals. At the end of January a decree withdrew all the concessions that had been granted two years before.

The Left Hegelians had now lost all the literary positions they had occupied at the beginning of the forties. They had been worsted in the struggle for the transformation of the State, for the remodelling into rational form of a world the irrationality of which they had demonstrated. They had fought with intellectual weapons only and had been defeated. Old Prussia had not been able to answer their arguments. Incapable of victory in the theoretical field, it had nevertheless conquered in fact. Its weapons were the police, the censorship and force. Against force, theory—theory, pure, unaided and alone—had failed.

Journalism had been the only method of political activity available, and now it had been taken away. No prospect of the situation changing was in sight. Certainly there were protests here and there, and in the Rhineland they were stronger than elsewhere, but the overwhelming majority of the population, the masses, looked upon the executioner of liberty with indifference. Nothing was to be hoped for from the inert

multitude. Bruno Bauer and his followers turned into themselves and away from a reality that was so unreasonable. They isolated themselves, spun a new theory out of their very impotence, made a fetish of individual consciousness, which they regarded as the only battlefield on which victories could be fought and won, and ended up in an individual anarchism which reached its zenith in Max Stirner's ultra-radical and ultra-harmless *Einzigem*.

Marx, Ruge, Hess, all who had not grown weary of the fray, drew a different conclusion from defeat. The physical force of the State had emerged victorious only because philosophy had remained alone, had not been able to answer force with force. One duty above all others was now incumbent upon the philosophers—to find their way to the masses. In the spring of 1843 Marx wrote that politics were the only ally with the aid of which contemporary philosophy could become a reality. At the end of that year he expressed the idea with which he, far more than any of his colleagues, was impressed with in the celebrated words: 'The weapon of criticism can certainly never be a substitute for the criticism of the weapon; physical force must be overthrown with physical force; and theory will be a physical force as soon as the masses understand it.'

To speak to the people and make them understand one must talk to them freely. Immediately after the suppression of the *Rheinische Zeitung* Marx decided to go abroad and continue the struggle from there. 'It is unpleasant,' he wrote to Ruge when the suppression was made public, 'to perform menial service even in the cause of freedom and to fight with needles instead of with clubs. I have grown weary of hypocrisy, stupidity, the exercise of brute force and bowing and cringing and back-bending and verbal hair-splitting. The Government has released me. . . . In Germany there is now nothing I can do. In Germany one can only be false to oneself.'

Marx's first intention was to settle in Switzerland and work with Herwegh on the *Deutsche Boten*, which Herwegh edited there. But Ruge invited his collaboration in bringing out the suppressed *Deutsche Jahrbücher* in another form abroad. He held out to Marx the prospect of a fixed income of from five hundred and fifty to six hundred thalers and about two hundred and fifty thalers extra which could be earned by other

writing. Thus, if all went well, he would have an income of eight hundred and fifty thalers. This was more than Marx could have hoped for, and he gladly accepted Ruge's proposal. 'Even if it had been possible to continue the *Jahrbücher*,' he wrote to Ruge in answer—Ruge had for a time been hesitating as to whether it might not perhaps be better to stay on in Dresden after all if the minister made concessions—'it would at best be a feeble imitation of the "dear departed," and that would no longer be good enough. In comparison the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher* would be an enterprise of high principle, a thing of consequence, an undertaking to which one could devote oneself with enthusiasm.' Ruge had considered whether it might not be a good idea to make the proposed review one of more than three hundred and twenty pages. Books of more than three hundred and twenty pages were not subject to censorship in Germany at the time. Marx rejected the idea. Such books were not for the people. The most one dared offer them was a monthly.

A monthly would be suitable for the problem which now had to be solved; i.e. that of making contact with the masses. The name that Marx chose, *The German-French Year-Books*, was an indication of the intended contents. Ludwig Feuerbach had urged that the philosopher who should identify himself with life and mankind should be of Franco-German blood; his heart French and his head German. The head reformed, the heart revolutionised. For the German radicals the head meant German philosophy. 'We Germans are contemporary with the times in philosophy without being contemporary with the times in history.' The French were contemporary with the times in history. Paris was the 'new capital of the new world.' The review was intended to bring Germans and French, the most advanced in theory and the most advanced in practice, together into an 'intellectual alliance.'

Negotiations with Julius Fröbel, the prospective publisher, progressed favourably. Marx went to Dresden to make final arrangements. It was impossible for the paper to appear in Switzerland, which was becoming increasingly subservient to orders from Berlin and had started expelling radicals and banning newspapers and books. Brussels, or better still, Paris, held out brighter prospects for the new venture. By the end

of May all arrangements were complete, and Marx was able to realise his 'private plans' and marry.

'As soon as we have signed the contract I shall go to Kreuznach and get married,' he wrote to Ruge in March. 'I can assure you, without being at all romantic, that I am head-over-heels in love. I have been engaged now for more than seven years, and my fiancée has had to fight the hardest battles for my sake, almost shattering her health in the process, partly with her bigoted, aristocratic relations, whose twin objects of worship are the "Lord in Heaven" and the "Lord in Berlin," and partly with my own family, into the bosom of which some priests and other enemies of mine have insinuated themselves. For years my fiancée and I have had to engage in more unnecessary and exhausting conflicts than many who are three times as old as we and prate continually of their "experience of life" (which is one of the favourite expressions in our home circle).'

Since the death of Karl's father there had been an element of strain in Jenny's relations with his family. The few letters that survive from the years 1839 to 1843 do not cast a very clear light on the reason. Karl's mother complained in the middle of 1840 that her son had become quite a stranger to his family and wrote in her Dutch-German that he had 'renounced everything which had formerly been valuable and dear to him.' The Westphalen family took no notice of her, humiliated her, annoyed her, behaved haughtily and distantly, were eccentric, and 'had no family feeling at all.' There was much talk of a Herr Schlink, who somehow seems to have encouraged these dissensions. What they were more particularly about cannot now be discovered.

Marx had 'fallen out with his family' since 1842. He told Ruge that he had no claim to his father's estate until after his mother's death. After his 'failure' in his career as the editor of a paper—according to all the well-disposed people whose opinion his mother prized so highly the *Rheinische Zeitung* was a 'fiasco'—his family put obstacles in his way and, although they were comfortably off, he was left in most pressing financial straits. His mother never became reconciled to him. She refused to help him even during his years of acute distress in London. When she died in 1863 Jenny wrote to Frau

Liebknecht that it would be hypocrisy for her to say she had been sentimental at the news of her mother-in-law's death.

As long as old Westphalen lived he held a protecting hand over his daughter's engagement to Karl. Hostilities only broke out again after his death. True, no one raised objections to Marx's origin. Many years later, when Charles Longuet, in an obituary on Frau Marx, mentioned racial prejudice as having had to be overcome, Marx described it as 'pure moonshine.' To Jenny's relatives Marx seemed strange and hostile not because of his racial antecedents but because he was a pupil of Hegel, a follower of Feuerbach, a friend of the notorious Bruno Bauer, the atheist. Jenny's half-brother, Ferdinand, was the leader of the religious opposition. Jenny despised him. In her letters she never referred to him as her brother but as the 'Minister of State,' the 'Minister of the Interior' and so on. When her daughter Laura became engaged to Lafargue Jenny Marx observed that their 'agreement about fundamentals, particularly in the religious respect,' was 'a singular piece of good fortune.' She added, thinking of her own youth, 'And so Laura will be protected from all the struggles and the suffering inevitable for a girl with her opinions in the environment in which she is to live.' Jenny Marx preserved a bitter hatred of the 'bigots' for the whole of her life.

Though Jenny needed all her determination to overcome the opposition, an open rupture with her family did not take place. On June 13, 1843, there took place the marriage of 'Herr Carl Marx, doctor of philosophy, resident in Cologne, and of Fräulein Bertha Julia Jenny von Westphalen, no occupation, resident in Kreuznach.'

The young couple spent the next few months at Frau von Westphalen's house at Kreuznach, where they had two visitors. The first was Esser, a *Revisionsrat* and a friend of Karl's father, who had the naïve effrontery to offer him work for the Government which had just suppressed the *Rheinische Zeitung*. The attempt to buy him met with a point-blank rebuff.

At the end of July Ruge passed through Kreuznach, on his way to Brussels to find out what prospects it offered for the publication of his periodical. They did not turn out to be very hopeful. The German colony in Brussels was small, and was

only moderately interested in philosophy and politics. Though the Press enjoyed greater freedom in Belgium than in France, intellectual life in Belgium, in so far as it could be called such, was only a feeble echo of the French. Ruge went on to Paris.

In the words of the young Engels, Paris was the place where 'European civilisation had reached its fullest bloom.' It was the 'nerve-centre of European history, sending out electric shocks at regular intervals which galvanised the whole world.' The Bourgeois Kingdom was tottering. Ruge, accustomed from Germany to detecting the slightest signs of opposition, found the tension in the city very great. Guizot's majority in the Chamber had sunk to three. 'The Bourgeois King's loss of prestige among the people is demonstrated by the many attempts to assassinate that dynastic and autocratic prince. He will not allow himself to be "hampered" in any way with the promised "republican institutions."' One day when he dashed by me in the Champs Elysées, well hidden in his coach, with hussars in front and behind and on both sides, I observed to my astonishment that the outriders had their guns cocked ready to fire in earnest and not just in the usual burlesque style. Thus did he ride by with his bad conscience! France was the home of revolution, and in France the inevitable new revolution must start again. Everywhere that revolutionaries lived, waiting impatiently for their hour to strike, they lived in expectation of the 'crowing of the Gallic cock.'

At the end of October, 1843, Marx and his wife went to Paris. Ruge and the publisher, Fröbel, had already approached the leading radicals and members of the Opposition with a view to enlisting their support. The journal was intended to be bilingual, the Germans writing in German and the Frenchmen in French. Ruge's opinion was that everybody could read French, a view which accorded ill with the paper's proposed popular appeal. However, they were unsuccessful in securing the collaboration of a single Frenchman. Lamennais turned them down. Lamartine considered that his contributing to the journal would constitute an unwarrantable interference in German affairs. Louis Blanc had misgivings on account of the Young Hegelians' defiantly acknowledged atheism. He was anti-clerical, of course, but as an admirer of Robespierre

and an heir of the Jacobins he was a deist. Leroux was for the time being entirely occupied with the invention of a printing machine. Cabet and Considérant also refused to associate themselves with the new journal, and Proudhon was only occasionally in Paris. The new enterprise became *The German-French Year-Books* all the same. It taught the Germans 'to talk French,' i.e. to be revolutionaries.

All the German contributors were *émigrés*. Not a single contributor wrote from Germany. Feuerbach's reason for declining Marx's invitation to contribute was not very plausible. Even Bakunin in Zurich, with whom Ruge and Marx had already corresponded—the letters were published in the *Jahrbücher*—withdrew. The poets Herwegh and Heine were the only contributors, apart from Marx, whose names were known.

The money for the journal was supplied by Fröbel, who put up three thousand francs, and Ruge, who put up six thousand thalers. Ruge and Marx shared the editorship, but Ruge did little. At first he was away from Paris and soon after he came back he was taken ill. All the work devolved upon Marx. The first and only double number appeared at the end of February.

Two essays by Marx appeared in it. One was 'On the Jewish Question,' and was in reply to two essays of Bruno Bauer. Marx had written it at Kreuznach. The other, 'Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law' he had started at Kreuznach and finished at the end of the year in Paris. After the suspension of the *Rheinische Zeitung* Marx 'withdrew from the public stage into the study to solve the doubts that assailed him.' He had to come to terms in his own mind with the Hegelian philosophy of law under the guidance of which he had fought his journalistic battle. In that battle it had been smashed to pieces. According to Hegel the state was the creator and guardian of a rational social and political order. The social organisation proceeded from the state. But in dealing with the distress among the wine-growing peasants of the Moselle Marx had been forced to acknowledge that 'there are circumstances which are decided as much by the actions of private individuals as by individual officials, and are as independent of them as the method of drawing one's breath.' The more

Marx examined the 'circumstances' which the actions of 'individual officials' determined the wider the scope they seemed to include. The 'circumstances' turned out to be the special interests of quite definite social groups, and the 'individual officials' ended by becoming identified with the state itself. Marx found it necessary to inquire whether the relations of state and society were not just the reverse of what Hegel had conceived them to be.

Ludwig Feuerbach's *Introductory Theses to the Reform of Philosophy* appeared in March, 1843. In this work the doubts which assailed Marx in his own special domain of Hegelian philosophy were exposed in their most general form and solved by a complete reversal of the Hegelian system. 'The true relation of thought to being is only this,' wrote Feuerbach. 'Being is subject, thought predicate. Thought arises from being, not being from thought. All speculations about law, about will, freedom, personality, without man, beside him or above him, are speculations without unity, necessity, substance, basis or reality. Man is the existence of personality, the existence of liberty, the existence of law.' Ideas have their origin in reality, they never realise themselves in reality. Applied to the philosophy of law, it follows from this reversal that it is not the idea of the state, the idea realising itself in the state, which creates and directs society, but society which conditions the state. In 1859, Marx summarised the result of his inquiries at this time in the classical sentences: 'Legal conditions, like state forms, are neither to be explained as things in themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human spirit. They have their roots rather in the material conditions of life, the whole of which Hegel, following the example of eighteenth-century Englishmen and Frenchmen, included under the name of "civil society."' "

Feuerbach recognised man to be the creator of ideas which Hegel externalised into independent entities. But even in Hegel man is still an abstraction, a generic being, still 'languishing quite outside the world, having no history.' Marx went farther than Feuerbach; he went into the world of concrete reality. 'Man is the world of men, the state, society.'

Criticism of the state became at the same time criticism of the social order. It reached farther and penetrated to

the foundations of society. Those foundations were private property. Logically Marx took the final step. Only one social class could fulfil the task of shaking off barbarism. That class was the proletariat. 'The revolution requires a material foundation. Theory is only realised in a people in so far as its realisation is a practical necessity. It is not enough that thought presses for realisation, reality itself must press for thought.' The answer to the question as to where the possibility of emancipation in practice lay was as follows: 'It lay in the formation of a class with radical chains, a class in bourgeois society, which is yet not of bourgeois society, a social rank which is the abolition of all social ranks . . . a sphere of society which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other spheres of society and thus emancipating all other spheres of society at the same time, which in a word, is the complete loss of man, and which can only attain itself again by the complete winning of man. This social catalyst is the proletariat.'

Philosophy had emerged into economics. At the end of the road taken by political radicalism in its criticism of the irrational Prussian State lay Communism, the abolition of private property, the proletarian revolution.

The *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* was the last product of the Young Hegelians. It was the last not only in the sense that after it the Young Hegelians were spoken of no more, but also in another sense. There was nothing left for them to say. Young Hegelianism had become Communism. Or rather Young Hegelianism as such shrank back from its consequences, revised its premises and disintegrated; whether into narrow petty bourgeois philistinism or 'absolute' criticism or individual philosophy or any other petty-bourgeois manifestation is in the last resort immaterial.

Ruge was not entirely satisfied with the contents of Marx's first number. He considered some of Marx's 'epigrams' too artificial, others too crude. 'Some unpolished things were also served up which otherwise (that is to say, if I had not been ill) I should have corrected, but as it is they got by in the rush.' Nevertheless he considered that the issue also contained a number of remarkable things which would attract a great deal of attention in Germany.

They did indeed attract a great deal of attention. The few

copies that entered Germany were secretly passed from hand to hand. They caused astonishment, admiration, execration and disgust among Marx's former comrades. Those who were frightened stopped their ears, shut their eyes, dazzled by the new light. All were greatly affected.

The other side of this political and literary success was material failure. The police grasped the fact that the *Jahrbücher* were incomparably more dangerous than anything they had had to concern themselves with before. In April the Prussian Government informed the provincial authorities that the *Jahrbücher* came within the definition of attempted high treason and *lèse-majesté*. The police were directed to place Ruge, Marx, Heine, Bernays and their collaborators under arrest immediately they should set foot on Prussian soil. The head of the Austrian police and censorship department described the *Jahrbücher* as a publication 'whose loathsome and disgusting contents surpass everything previously published by the revolutionary Press.' Metternich was afraid it might be 'smuggled into the Austrian realm.' The whole official apparatus was set in motion, right down to the administrators of the town wards. Booksellers were warned against buying this monster of a book and 'notified of the severe penalties involved.' An exhaustive search was ordered to be made for it at all second-hand book-shops.

A hundred copies fell into the hands of the police on a Rhine steamer and two hundred and thirty were confiscated by the Bavarians at the frontier of France and the Palatinate. Ruge described later how Bernays, who accompanied the parcel on its ill-fated journey, came back very gaily with the information that he had disposed of the whole lot at once. The Customs officials had almost doubled up with laughter over Heine's verses about King Ludwig; a pleasure, Ruge added, that Heine and they could have had much more cheaply.

Fröbel refused to continue with the undertaking. Ruge, who was prosperous—he had only recently increased his fortune by successful speculations—though it was his encouragement that had brought Marx to Paris and though he had guaranteed him a definite income for his work as editor, withdrew likewise. Publication ceased after the first number, and Marx was left in a very difficult situation. He urged Ruge to keep his

promise, but Ruge declined. The most he consented to was paying Marx in kind. He left him the unsold copies of the *Jahrbücher* to dispose of as best he could.

A violent quarrel between Marx and Ruge resulted. It would not, however, have ended in a definite rupture had not other personal differences, especially on fundamental matters of principle, been developing between them for some time.

Emma Herwegh relates that Ruge proposed to Marx and Herwegh that they should go and live with him and found a kind of Fourierist *phalanstère*, a communal household which the women should take it in turn to manage, doing the cooking and sewing and all the other domestic work required. 'Frau Herwegh rejected the idea at once. How could a nice little Saxon woman like Frau Ruge possibly get on with the highly intelligent and even more ambitious Madame Marx, who knew so much more than she? And how could the so recently married Frau Herwegh, who was the youngest of them all, possibly feel attracted to this communal life? Surely enough, Herwegh and his wife declined Ruge's invitation. Ruge and Marx and their wives went to live together in the Rue Vanneau. A fortnight later they parted.'

Marx and Ruge differed far too much in character, temperament and outlook on life for their collaboration to have endured, even if these external conflicts had not arisen. Ruge was a radical petty-bourgeois, a narrow-minded moralist, a tedious censor of morals, a careful, calculating business man, even if he was not altogether averse to sacrificing some fraction of his money for a cause—provided certain definite limits were not overstepped. Marx was a revolutionary. Ruge, as Marx was forced to recognise in Paris, rejoiced in 'a fundamental and universal ignorance.' He could not understand that Marx 'reads so much, works with such extraordinary intensity, sometimes actually does not go to bed for four nights running, and keeps on plunging anew into an ocean of books.'

The final and open rupture came because of Ruge's opinion of Georg Herwegh. There is no record of Marx's side of the case, but what Ruge stated in his own justification is sufficient. Herwegh was married to a rich Berlin banker's daughter and was very fond of luxury. It is not necessarily true that he was absurdly extravagant in clothes, flowers, food, furniture,

carriages and horses, although he certainly overdid some things. Herwegh was very friendly with the Countess d'Agoult, a friendship which gossip turned into a highly immoral and dissolute love-affair. 'One evening,' Ruge wrote to his mother, 'the conversation turned to this topic. . . . I was incensed by Herwegh's way of living and his laziness. Several times I referred to him warmly as a scoundrel, and declared that when a man gets married he ought to know what he is doing. Marx said nothing and took his departure in a perfectly friendly manner. Next morning he wrote to me that Herwegh was a genius with a great future. My calling him a scoundrel filled him with indignation, and my ideas on marriage were philistine and inhuman. Since then we have not seen each other again.'

Marx defended Herwegh on another occasion; this time against Heine. The *Jahrbücher* group had hailed Heine with joy. He was a new man, with new ideas. His arrival was like a blast of fresh air, a burst of stormy movement. He made friends with the *Jahrbücher* group, having quarrelled with practically all the other German *émigrés* and being lonely and in bad health. He soon took a dislike to Ruge, of whom he said that though he had freedom in his mind, he would not let it sink into his limbs; however enthusiastic he might be for Hellenic nudity, he was quite incapable of bringing himself to cast off his barbaric modern trousers, or even the Christian-German pants of convention. Eleanor Marx remembered hearing from her parents that there was a time when Heine came to Marx's house day in and day out, to read his verses to the young couple and obtain their opinion of them. Heine and Marx would go through a little poem of eight lines a countless number of times, continually discussing one word or another and working away at it until everything was perfectly smooth and no trace of the workshop and the file was left. An infinite amount of patience was required for all this, because Heine was morbidly sensitive to criticism. Sometimes he would come to Marx, literally weeping because of an attack by some obscure reviewer. Marx's only way of dealing with the situation was to send him to his wife, whose wit and charm soon brought the desperate poet round to reason. Heine did not always come seeking for help. Sometimes he

brought it. One example of this the Marx family had particular cause to remember.

When little Jenny Marx—she was born on May 1, 1844—was a baby of only a few months, she was seized with violent cramps which seemed to be threatening her life. Marx and his wife stood by the child in despair, not knowing what to do. Heine arrived, looked at the child and said: ‘The baby must be given a bath.’ He prepared the bath himself, put the child in it, and as Marx said, saved Jenny’s life.

It was certainly more than a coincidence that Heine wrote *Germany: A Winter’s Tale* during the year in which he and Marx were friends. He sent parts of it to Marx from Hamburg for serialisation in the Paris *Vorwärts* before publication of the whole. He ended the accompanying letter with the words: ‘Farewell, dear friend, and excuse my terrible scrawl. I cannot read over what I have written—but we need but few tokens to understand each other.’

Heine’s *Weaver’s Song* also appeared for the first time in *Vorwärts*, and Marx wrote about the rising of the Silesian weavers in the same paper. If in 1843, when he recognised as latent in the proletariat the power which should carry his philosophy into practice, he regarded the proletarian revolution as necessary and inevitable though for the time lying in the indefinite future, he now believed he saw Communism actually coming into being before his eyes. However he over-estimated the desperate revolt of the Silesian weavers. They were not, as he then believed, ahead of the English and French workers’ movements in class-consciousness and clarity of purpose. On the contrary, they were a long way behind them. This was no rising of organised industrial workers against the capitalists but wild rioting by desperate, impoverished homeworkers, who smashed machines as they had done in England half a century before. The philosophic foundation of Communism was manifestly insufficient to grapple with the facts. So Marx threw all his energy into the study of political economy. He read and made excerpts from the French economists, J. B. Say, Frédéric Skarbek, Destutt de Tracy, P. le Pesant de Boisguilbert, besides the great English economists, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, J. R. M’Culloch and James Mill, whom he read in French translations. He studied

history, especially that of the French Revolution. For a time he planned to write a history of the Convention. And he sought and found contact with the German artisans, the real proletariat, whom so far he had scarcely seen face to face, and with the French secret societies, who were the real revolutionaries. For the time being he was free from material worries. Former shareholders of the *Rheinische Zeitung* sent him a thousand thalers in March and in July Georg Jung sent him eight hundred francs as compensation for the hundred confiscated copies of the *Jahrbücher*.

CHAPTER VII

THE COMMUNIST ARTISANS OF PARIS

SEVERAL tens of thousands of Germans were living in Paris in the middle of the forties. This large colony was divided into two sections having practically no contact with one another. One consisted of writers and artists and the other of artisans. Some trades were almost exclusively in the hands of Germans. This applied particularly to the cobbler's trade. In fact in Paris 'German' and 'cobbler' had almost become synonymous.

Many German artisans went to Paris to improve themselves in the city which dictated the fashions and the taste of Europe, and after a year returned to Germany. Most of them learned but little French, and in Paris they lived a life of their own. This also applied to the great majority of those who had been driven from their native land by sheer hunger and want. The latter class remained in France. Both classes alike depressed the wages of French workers, and for a number of years French and German workers were bitterly hostile. Fierce encounters often took place in the Faubourg St. Antoine, which was then a working-class district. French workers would attack the Germans and there would be regular street battles.

The tension did not diminish until various revolutionary organisations started their activities among the workers. Quite a number of political *émigrés* had gathered in Paris after the failure of the revolt of the German 'Burschenschafter' in 1833. It appears from the dossiers of the Paris Prefecture of Police that the first secret societies among German *émigrés* were formed in the middle of the thirties. At first they consisted exclusively of intellectuals, but they soon attracted workers too. Dr. Ewerbeck, a physician, one of the first to go among the workers with revolutionary propaganda, describes how he once took Ludwig Börne to a meeting. Börne listened to the speeches, looked at the faces about him, and burst into tears of pleasure as he left. The revolutionary intelligentsia had found its way to the people.

The German conspirators soon made contact with the French secret societies. The most active, alert-minded German workers lived the life of their French class-comrades. Soon there was no French secret society without a German member. The Blanquist groups actually had special German sections. This joint work did more and more to heal the breach between the French and German workers, and thus enhanced the reputation of the revolutionaries among their German fellow-countrymen.

After the Congress of Vienna Europe was full of secret societies. At first they were most widespread in the Latin countries. The Carbonari kept the ideals of the Jacobins alive during the years of reaction, and the Blanquist leagues were their French form. As working-class influence in these organisations increased—for workers tended more and more to form the predominating majority of their members—Socialist ideas gradually crept in. Socialist influence was predominant from the middle of the thirties.

For a long time secret societies in Germany continued to be almost exclusively composed of students and professional men. Out of the 'League of Exiles' there had arisen the 'League of the Just.' The League of Exiles consisted originally of *émigré* intellectuals and it had increased its numbers by admitting workers to its ranks. In this society intellectuals and workers did not hold together as they managed, though not without occasional friction, to do in others. The workers in the League of Exiles cut themselves adrift from the intellectuals and formed a new society of their own—the League of the Just. Hardly any educated men belonged to it. The League of the Just entirely dissociated themselves from the radical literary groups, with whom they wished to have nothing whatever to do. They regarded the 'humanists' with the greatest possible suspicion. Weitling remarked that their humanism did not come from *homo*, a man, but from *Humaine*, which was the name of one of the leading Paris tailors. All humanists had to have a suit from *Humaine*, Weitling maintained. The League of the Just, the members of which belonged almost exclusively to the working classes, very soon started adopting Socialist ideas. After the failure of the rising attempted by the Paris Blanquists in 1839, in which members of the League

of the Just took part, this process was completed. In London, whither they fled, Socialist intellectuals lived like proletarians. Schapper, their leader, a former student of forestry, had worked as a compositor in Paris.

The spiritual leader of the League of the Just was Wilhelm Weitling. Weitling was born in Magdeburg in 1808. He was the illegitimate son of a French officer and a German laundress. Being 'tainted' for that reason, driven from pillar to post, often subjected to humiliation, this young, brooding, talented and gifted tailor's assistant had become a rebel early. He wrote *Humanity as It Is and as It Ought to be* in 1835, and in 1842 there appeared his *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*, an important landmark in the history of criticism of contemporary society. It pointed to a future society to be founded on the law of nature and love. In 1841 he fled from France to Switzerland and issued a periodical called *Der Hülfesruf der Deutschen Jugend* from Geneva. Seven hundred of the thousand copies that were printed went to France, according to the Paris police estimate.

To Marx Weitling was the ideologist of the first, still crude proletarian movement which culminated in the Silesian weavers' rising. In the article in *Vorwärts* already mentioned Marx wrote: 'Where could the bourgeoisie—including the scribes and the philosophers—boast of a work like Weitling's *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom* regarding the emancipation of the bourgeoisie—political emancipation, that is to say? If one compares the jejune, timid mediocrity of German political literature with the unbounded brilliance of the literary *début* of the German worker; if one compares the gigantic footprints of the proletariat, still in its infancy, with the diminutive political traces left by the German bourgeoisie, one can prophecy a truly athletic, powerful form for the German Cinderella.'

Propaganda by the Communist workers was now intensified. The aim was no longer merely that of holding a small group of revolutionaries together. The object now was to win over all similarly minded men. In the process their propaganda came up against revolutionary under-currents with tendencies similar to their own. In many places in Germany, particularly in the Harz Mountains and in Silesia, a number of Christian sects had managed, in spite of all persecution, to keep together

and continue teaching a crude kind of Primitive Christian Communism. Emigrants to America were constantly founding anabaptist groups, which linked up with those who stayed at home. Thoughtful, brooding Silesian and Saxon working men, having no connection with one another, relying entirely upon themselves, independently worked out Communistic Utopias, founded upon the Bible, the only book they knew. Such knowledge of them as occasionally came the way of the educated world caused either irritation, amusement or contempt. The idea of the communalisation of women arose among the anabaptists. 'The whole bourgeois world denounces us for wishing to introduce the communalisation of women,' is a phrase in the Communist Manifesto. Georg Weerth, a friend of Marx's and a colleague of his on the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, wrote this comic poem:

*Auch nach Weibergemeinschaft steht ihr Sinn,
Abschaffen woll'n sie die Ehe,
Dass alles in Zukunft ad libitum
Miteinander zu Bette gehe:
Tartar und Mongole mit Griechenfrau'n,
Cherusker mit gelben Chinesen,
Eisbaren mit schwedischen Nachtigall'n,
Turkinnen und Irokesen.
Tranduftende Samoyedinnen soll'n
Zu Briten und Romern sich betten,
Plattnasige düstre Kaffern zu
Alabasterweissen Grisetten.
Ja, ändern wird sich die ganze Welt
Durch diese moderne Leitung-
Doch die schönsten Weiber bekommen die
Redakteure der Rheinischen Zeitung.¹*

The influence on the secret societies of the Primitive Christian Communism of the various sects also came out in phraseology. In the League of Exiles a unit, following the practice of the Carbonari was called a 'hut' and the members were 'comrades.' In the forties the League of the Just used the terms 'communes'

¹ They are also minded to communalise women; they want to abolish marriage, so everybody in the future may go to bed with one another *ad libitum*; Tartars and Mongols with Greek women; Cheruskans with yellow Chinese; polar bears with Swedish nightingales, Turkish girls and Iroquois; oil-scented Samoyed women shall bed with Britons and Romans, and swarthy flat-nosed Kaffirs with alabaster-white *grisettes*. Yes, we shall alter the whole world under this modern management, but the most beautiful women will be reserved for the editorial staff of the *Rheinische Zeitung*.

and 'brothers.' In Switzerland members met for common love feasts, like the apostles and disciples of Christ. All these under-currents and more were mingled in the Communism of the German artisans. The ideals of primitive Christianity jostled with the ideas of Saint-Simon, Owen and Fourier. The Communism of these men, as can be well imagined from the situation in which they found themselves, was essentially a longing for a return to a transfigured pre-capitalist world rather than the forward-looking will of a new class for a new world of which they were to be the expression. The idea that industry itself creates the conditions for and the possibility of a social revolution, and that the proletariat has a historical task to fulfil was remote from the minds of the German artisan Communists. They could not conceive of the evils under which they suffered as being other than the consequences of the machinations of bad and egoistical men.

This 'utterly crude and unintelligent Communism' was repudiated by Marx. He saw 'its central motive as want.' He rebelled against the 'bestial' idea of the communalisation of women. This kind of Communism 'denied personality' and 'physical possessions were the only aim of its life and being.' The elements in it that Marx valued were its criticism of the existing state of things and its will to overthrow it by force. The French secret societies with whom the German Communist associations were in touch were animated by the same revolutionary ardour. Since the time of the French Revolution, from Gracchus Babeuf through Buonarotti to Blanqui, they had remained faithful, though in the most multifarious forms, to the single idea of a violent popular revolution. They believed that the people could not be freed from their tormentors and exploiters and that ultimately justice could not be obtained for the poor unless they rose and shattered their enemies to pieces.

The identity of the leaders of the secret societies of French workers with whom Marx came into personal contact has not yet been established. He was introduced to the German Communist group by Dr. Ewerbeck. According to reports of Prussian secret agents, with whom Paris swarmed in the summer of 1844, Marx was a frequent guest at workers'

meetings at the Barrière du Trône, Rue de Vincennes. He did not join either the League of the Just or any of the French secret societies. The gulf between him and them was too great. As men and fighters Marx valued them highly. In 1844 he wrote that 'at the Communist workers' meetings brotherhood is no phrase but a reality, and a true spirit of nobility is reflected in the faces of these men hardened by labour.' He admired in them 'their studiousness, their thirst for knowledge, their moral energy, their restless urge for development.'

Marx had no easy task in gaining the ear of the Communist workers. Most of those who had ever made contact with bourgeois revolutionary writers regretted the experience. When Weitling's friends were collecting money to pay for printing his works, Ewerbeck asked Ruge for a contribution, and Ruge angrily refused. He was filled with righteous indignation at the German Communists, 'who wanted to make all men free by making them workers and proposed replacing private property by communal property and the just division of wealth, themselves laying all stress on property and money in particular.' Marx did not meet Weitling personally until the summer of 1845.

Besides the French and German Communists with whom he was in touch, Marx kept in contact with the French Socialists. He did not share their faith in the possibility of transforming bourgeois society by gradual reforms, belief in which separated them from the Communists. He was unable to share their hope of persuading the possessing classes by the force of argument to search into their hearts and turn over a new leaf. But from Socialist criticism of existing society he learned a great deal. The Communists *a priori* rejected this world as an evil world of evil men. The hatred that filled them sharpened their sight for social contradictions and gave their criticism a moral force which made that of the Socialists seem feeble in comparison. But the Socialists did not just see the division of the world into rich and poor. They observed the rich growing richer and the poor growing poorer, they watched a historical process developing before their eyes, the downfall of the middle strata, the growing accumulation of capital. They stood in the midst of their times and sought to understand

them. The Communists who followed Weitling were citizens of the kingdom of Utopia on leave.

In July, 1844, Marx met Proudhon, with whom he kept in contact as long as he remained in Paris. He had long discussions with him, which often lasted all night long, and 'infected' him with Hegelianism. Marx did not meet Louis Blanc till towards the end of his stay in Paris. Marx said in 1853 that they formed 'a kind of friendship, if not a specially close one.'

After the collapse of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* Marx no longer had a mouthpiece through which he could work, although in Paris it was more important to have one than ever. 'C'est surtout à Paris,' a report of the Ministry of the Interior stated, 'que les communistes allemands ont établi le foyer et le point de départ de leurs intrigues; c'est par la France qu'ils espèrent agir; en dehors de ce royaume, si ce n'est en Angleterre, ils n'osent affronter avec une égale audace la sévérité des lois et celle des magistrats.'¹

The possibility of creating a popular paper which should be intelligible to the German Communist workers presented itself in *Vorwärts*. The founder of this weekly was Heinrich Börnstein, who was a translator and an acute business man. The money for founding the paper had been put up by Meyerbeer, the composer. Like the few other German papers that had been established in Paris before it, it met with only meagre success as long as it was more concerned with tittle-tattle and theatrical gossip than with the questions that agitated the minds of all the Germans in Paris who read a newspaper at all. But Börnstein could also write for the Left. On July 1, 1844, he appointed Bernays editor of *Vorwärts*. Bernays was an exceptionally witty and nimble-minded man and had contributed to the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.

All *émigrés* of all political leanings started by making use of the opportunity of writing for *Vorwärts*. They did so less out of enthusiasm for the paper than because they had no choice. Börnstein writes in his reminiscences:

'There soon gathered round *Vorwärts* a group of writers such

¹ The German Communists have made Paris their headquarters and the centre from which all their intrigues radiate. It is through France that they hope to act. Outside the kingdom of France there is no country, except, perhaps, England, where they dare affront the severity of the laws and the magistrates with such audacity.

as no other paper anywhere could boast, particularly in Germany, where the state of the Press at that time, before the lively assault of 1848, was appalling. Besides Bernays and myself, who were the editors, there wrote for the paper Arnold Ruge, Karl Marx, Heinrich Heine, Georg Herwegh, Bakunin, Georg Weerth, G. Weber, Fr. Engels, Dr. Ewerbeck and H. Bürgers. It can well be imagined that these men wrote not only very brilliantly but very radically. *Vorwärts*, as the only uncensored radical paper appearing in the German language anywhere in Europe, soon had a new appeal and increased in circulation. (Börnstein omits to mention that he was the only one to whom it mattered.)

'I still remember with pleasure,' he continued, 'the editorial conferences, which often took place weekly, at which all these men gathered in my office. I had rented the first floor of the corner house of the Rue des Moulins and the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs. . . . From twelve to fourteen men used to gather for these editorial conferences. Some would sit on the bed or on the trunks, others would stand or walk about. They would all smoke terrifically, and argue with great passion and excitement. It was impossible to open the windows, because a crowd would immediately have gathered in the street to find out the cause of the violent uproar, and very soon the room was concealed in such a thick cloud of tobacco-smoke that it was impossible for a newcomer to recognise anybody present. In the end we ourselves could not even recognise each other.'

Marx's first article in *Vorwärts* appeared on August 7, and from the middle of August onwards his influence on the paper steadily increased. *Vorwärts's* attacks on Frederick William IV, as the most exalted and most assailable representative of reaction, became more and more violent. Heine wrote his verses about the 'new Alexander.' The Prussian Government, angry but powerless in the matter, did not decide to intervene in Paris until *Vorwärts* extolled Burgomaster Tsech's attempted assassination of the king. Ernst Dronke describes 'how the dicta of the Press went home in Prussian official circles in spite of their pretended bureaucratic indifference. At a meeting to commemorate the introduction of municipal government in Berlin the Minister, Arnim, could actually not refrain from

mentioning with abhorrence the praises of regicide which are understood here to have appeared in *Vorwärts*, the forbidden Paris paper.' The language of *Vorwärts* had indeed been very strong. An attempt on the life of a German king, it stated, was Germany's only argument against German absolutism. All others had failed. Absolutism lost its divine infallibility as soon as it was shown to be assailable. Its assailability must be shown on the person of a German king, because neither the fate of Charles I nor of Louis XVI nor the many attempts on the life of Louis Philippe had taught Germany its lesson.

The draconic penalties for introducing the 'dregs' of German journalism no longer sufficed. So the king of Prussia appealed to the professional solidarity of kings. The ambassador, von Arnim, made representations to the Prime Minister, Guizot. Guizot was not particularly inclined to do what Arnim asked. True, he had Bernays brought up before a summary court and sentenced to two months' imprisonment and a fine of three hundred francs because *Vorwärts* had not paid the fee for the prescribed licence. A charge based on the anti-Prussian article would, however, have to be tried by a jury. This prospect did not suit the ambassador, and he declined it. Such a trial would in effect become a political demonstration, and the accused, as in so many trials at that time, would have too good an opportunity of giving the widest publicity to their propaganda. The Prussian Government would attach no value whatever to a trial of that kind. So Frederick William IV sent Alexander von Humboldt to Louis Philippe as a special envoy. On January 7, 1845, Humboldt presented His Majesty with 'a beautiful porcelain vase' together with a long letter from his master, Frederick William IV. Louis Philippe was delighted at the cordial greetings of the Prussian king. He assured Humboldt of his firm determination to rid Paris of the German atheists.

The Prussian Government had got what it wanted. Its secret agents had been on Marx's tracks for a whole year. His name appears constantly in their reports. They trailed him even into modest working-class taverns. They denounced him as the leading spirit behind *Vorwärts* and his name headed the list of evil-doers whose expulsion Prussia demanded

On January 11 the Minister of the Interior ordered the

expulsion of Marx, Ruge, Börnstein and Bernays. Their presence in the country, the so-called reasons adduced for the decision stated, was calculated to disturb public order and security. They must leave Paris within twenty-four hours of receiving the order and must leave France within as short a time as possible. Their return was forbidden under threat of penalties.

The expulsion order was not unconditional. Its recipients were discreetly given to understand that they could remain if they gave an undertaking to refrain from agitating against friendly governments in the Press. To be sure, this hint was given them after the Liberal Press had violently protested against this act of French servility to Prussia and after the Government step had been condemned in the Chamber even by many of its own supporters.

Bernays was in prison. Börnstein protested his political innocuousness and was allowed to stay. He gave his promise to suspend *Vorwärts* all the more readily because he found a new occupation. He entered the service of the French political police. Ruge moved heaven and earth, proved that he had nothing whatever to do with the *Vorwärts* people, and that, moreover, he was a subject of Saxony. He remained in Paris too. Marx was the only one to leave.

Heinrich Bürgers, in his *Reminiscences of Ferdinand Freiligrath*, writes:

‘In Lent of the year 1845 two young men might have been seen travelling towards the Belgian frontier in the *Messagerie*, on their way to Brussels. They were alone in the small coach and beguiled the tedious journey through Picardy with lively conversation, and an occasional song which the younger of the two struck up in order to dispel the reflections which the other tried in vain to master. Their journey was not entirely voluntary, although it was made of their own choice. Karl Marx—for he was the elder of the two young German travellers—had been served with an expulsion order by the Paris Prefecture of Police. . . . It conflicted with his pride to place himself voluntarily under police supervision, and he decided rather to transplant himself to Brussels, leaving his wife and child behind. He took me with him as his travelling-companion, as the punishment inflicted on the man who was

my friend and faithful guide in my studies had disgusted me with the prospect of staying any longer in the French capital.'

Marx arrived in Brussels on February 5, 1845. His wife followed him soon afterwards with his daughter, who was barely one year old.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LIFE-LONG FRIEND

IN the fifteen months of Marx's stay in Paris he had met Proudhon and Louis Blanc, Heine and Herwegh, German Communists and members of French secret societies. Some of them crossed his path again, few encouraged him, he remained friendly with none. His meeting with Friedrich Engels was decisive. From October, 1844, until he closed his eyes for the last time, in victory and defeat, in the storm of revolution and the misery of exile, always struggling and always fighting, he trod by Engels's side and Engels trod by his, along the same path towards the same goal.

Friedrich Engels was born in Barmen on November 28, 1820, the eldest son of Friedrich Engels, senior. His father was a merchant. Engels's great grandfather, Johann Caspar Engels, had, on very slender capital, started a lace factory, connected with a bleaching works and a ribbon manufactory, which had developed by the time of his death into one of the biggest undertakings in the Wuppertal and went on expanding under the energetic management of his sons and grandsons. When the brothers parted in 1837, Friedrich Engels senior established the cotton-spinning firm of Engels and Ermen in Manchester. Later it extended to Barmen. The firm survives to this day.

The environment in which Engels grew up was as different as it could possibly have been from that in which Marx passed his boyhood years. In the Wuppertal bigotry reigned in its most repulsive form—a narrow, gloomy, moping 'fundamentalism' which wanted all the world, like it, to go about in sackcloth and ashes, thinking everlastingly of its sins. No songs other than hymns must be sung, no books other than devotional books must be read. Science and art were considered vanities of the Evil One. When a boy at Engels's school asked one of the masters who Goethe was, the peevish and reproachful answer was that he was 'an atheist.' At the

age of eighteen Engels described his native town as the 'Zion of obscurantism.'

Engels's mother had preserved a cheerful disposition from her happy childhood in Berlin, but his father not only adhered to the most rigorous observances of the devout but brought up his children in strict accord with the oppressive spirit of the prevalent bigotry. Engels was fond of his mother but became alienated from his father at an early age and actually hated him.

Trier was a beautiful old town, living on the cultivation of vine, Bonn was a friendly conglomeration of students, landladies and artisans, and even in Berlin Marx saw practically nothing of modern industry. Engels grew up among factories and slums. From his earliest years he was surrounded by poverty and distress, sick children who 'breathed more smoke and dust than oxygen' into their lungs in the squalid rooms in which they lived, men, women and children who worked at the loom for fourteen or sixteen hours a day, half-starved, consumptive, their only friend the brandy-bottle which occasionally allowed them to forget the dreariness of their existence; all the horror of early capitalism, which celebrated its maddest orgies in this part of the Rhineland.

The lively boy rebelled against the grim existence that surrounded him. When his father found the 'otherwise excellent youth' reading chivalrous romances instead of pious books in spite of severe punishments, he reproached him for flippancy and lack of principle. There was a small group of young poets at his school, and young Engels wrote poems entirely in the manner of Ferdinand Freiligrath, who was then a clerk in the counting-house of a Barmen business house, writing his verses 'between the journal and the ledger.' His poems sung of the free life of the sons of the desert, of lion hunts and Moorish kings. Revulsion from Europe and the present was the first feeble, passive sign of revolt against the Europe of the time.

As long as Engels lived in Barmen only faint echoes of the noises of the battle without came to his ears. The bigots of his native town barely knew the names of Börne, Heine, and the poets of Young Germany, and they would have been revolted at the idea of one of their pious community soiling himself by

reading such heathenish and sinful stuff. They ignored the movements abroad among the people, and took no interest in politics, literature or philosophy. Engels may have heard older schoolfellows of his talking when they came back to Barmen for their holidays, and this could not have failed to give wings to his longing to escape from his hateful, cramped surroundings. But he did not escape yet.

Engels left school a year early. He was an excellent pupil. He learned easily and quickly, and was particularly good at languages. His father's reason for abandoning the idea of making his son a lawyer and making a merchant of him instead is unknown. He took him first into his own business, and a year later sent him to Bremen for wider experience. He took care that the youth should be preserved from temptation when away from home. The export house young Engels entered was on excellent terms with Engels and Ermen, and the young man lived in the family of a pastor besides. Bremen was another stronghold of bigotry like his native town.

It was also a trade centre, with relations to the outside world that were far different from those of the Wuppertal. In spite of the patriarchal nature of the state that set its imprint upon it, it allowed its subjects incomparably more freedom than was allowed by the timid bureaucracy of Prussia. The censorship was milder, and allowed many things to pass that in Prussia would have been strictly forbidden. A new world was suddenly unfolded before young Engels's eyes. It attracted and repelled him, he sought it and then fled from it, it shook him to the foundations of his being.

The writings of Börne made him a political radical. The step he thus took over the boundaries imposed upon him seems to have been an easy one. His breach with the past was no great wrench. The latently defiant poetry of his school-days had prepared the way. Literature meant a great deal to him, and his schoolboy poems led him straight to the poets of the time, who gave expression to the vague longings for freedom that possessed him. Through them he was guided a step farther. With Börne he reached the stage of development necessary for open-minded young men of the time.

His struggle with religion was infinitely harder. There is no shred of evidence to show that the young Marx had any struggle with religion whatever. But Engels only rid himself of the faith of his youth and childhood after the most harassing and agonising torments. The doctrine of predestination was the corner-stone of the paternal faith. Whom God had chosen would be saved, whom He had damned was damned for all eternity. Man had no power in himself to do good, his fate was predetermined by God, Whose grace was everything. The inhuman rigour of this doctrine repelled Engels early, but its complement, the forbidding of fatalistic resignation, the necessity of faith in one's own salvation, and of everlastingly struggling anew for assurance of it, steeped his acts and thoughts in piety. Though he rejected as fanatical exaggeration a good deal of what he had been taught to believe was essential, he was still deeply religious when he went to Bremen. The first and decisive blow that undermined his faith was Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. If the Bible contained but one single contradiction—and Strauss laid bare an abundance of contradictions—his faith in it was shattered. The very rigour with which the bigots insisted on the literal verbal inspiration of the Bible threatened the whole structure if but this one column fell. Young Engels fought with all his might against the doubts that assailed him on every side. 'I pray daily,' he wrote to a friend. 'I pray for the truth practically all day long. I began to do so as soon as I began to doubt, and yet I do not return to the faith that you have. . . . Tears come into my eyes as I write. I am moved to the depths of my being, yet I feel that I shall not be lost, that I shall come to God, for Whom I yearn with my whole heart. That, surely, bears witness to the Holy Spirit, by which I live and die, even if the opposite is ten thousand times stated in the Bible.'

He did not return to the fold. Schleiermacher kept his religious feelings alive for some time yet. But, once entered upon the path, he trod it with characteristic firmness and unflinching honesty with himself. From religion he went to philosophy. He became an Hegelian at the age of twenty and did not stop at that. In October, 1841, when he went to Berlin to serve a year as volunteer in the Artillery Guards, he was an Hegelian of the extreme Left Wing. A certain tendency

to occupy himself with religious historical problems survived from his religious youth, besides, apparently, a spirit of intolerance that he preserved to his old age. Marx has often been reproached for obstinacy, but Engels was worse by far. He once told Eduard Bernstein that though everybody talked of Marx's intolerance when Marx presided at the General Council of the International even the most controversial questions seldom led to open conflict; when he was in the chair things were quite different.

Engels soon entered the group of the 'Freien' in Berlin, with whom he took part in the controversy with Schelling, against whom he wrote two able pamphlets. He wrote for the *Rheinische Zeitung* and other radical journals. His articles were not worse and most of them were better, wittier and more lucid than those of the other Berlin Young Hegelians. When he returned to Barmen in the autumn of 1842 he could lay claim to occupying quite a respectable position in the world of letters at an age—twenty-two—at which the young Marx had not yet published a line.

Out of regard for his family he had so far written either anonymously or under the pseudonym of Friedrich Oswald. But the mentality of his 'disappointing' son was not unknown to his father, nor did the former make any attempt to conceal it. In a report on Engels's formative years which dates from 1852 an excellently informed Danish police agent states that 'the family council decided to withdraw him from the enlightening atmosphere of Germany and send him to the factory in Manchester. His father told him that either he must go to England and become a decent business man or he would entirely withdraw all paternal support. After the completion of his military service as a Prussian subject Engels found it more prudent to give in and go to Manchester. This was in the late autumn of 1842.'

Engels chose to travel via Cologne, in order to seize the opportunity of meeting the staff of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. His first meeting with Marx passed off coolly. Marx was just about to break with the Berlin 'Freien' and saw in Engels one of their allies. Engels on his side had been prejudiced against Marx by Bruno Bauer. However, they agreed to the extent that it was arranged that Engels should continue to contribute

to the *Rheinische Zeitung* from England. Engels sent his first dispatch, on the internal crisis in England, on November 30, almost as soon as he arrived in London.

Engels had a special gift for rapidly finding his way about on foreign soil, and in his young years, unlike Marx, he was always quick to form a judgment. But however premature the views that he put forward might seem—a young man in a country for the first time attempting to unravel its innermost structure after two days on its soil—they were less premature than they appeared. Engels had studied English affairs 'on the quiet' in Germany, the outward reason being that he was going to Manchester. But there were other weighty reasons as well.

Engels became a Communist in the autumn of 1842. In this he did not differ from other Left Hegelians, who, proceeding from religious criticism, had come over to Feuerbach and recognised in Communism the only possibility of realising the generic notion of man. Engels had met Moses Hess and been strongly influenced by his conception of world history, according to which the Germans were to carry out the philosophical revolution, the French the political revolution and the English the economic revolution. In a letter Hess wrote Berthold Auerbach in October, 1842, he told him he had been discussing questions of the day with Engels and that Engels had left him a most enthusiastic Communist.

Like Marx, Engels came to Communism by way of contemporary German philosophy. But Engels's Communism was fed from other than philosophical sources. The conclusions of the philosophers could only be put into practice by means of the abolition of private property, and Communism alone could free mankind from barbarism. Marx reached this conclusion as the result of a process of intellectual development. Engels crossed the 't's' and dotted the 'i's' of his theory from the evidence of his senses. Engels knew the state of the proletariat at first hand—'the status which represents the complete loss of humanity.' All he needed for the whole extent of the dehumanisation it involved to become plain to him was to re-tread the way to it, this time by the high road of philosophy. For him the proletariat was not just a philosophical instrument, but meant the proletariat of the Wuppertal, the workers in

his father's factory. He only had to look about him to see dehumanisation in its grossest form. He had known for a long time that the spinners in his father's factory in Manchester lived the same brutalised existence as their class-comrades in suffering in Germany. Their brutalisation was the consequence of an economic system in which he lived and which he knew from the inside. Philosophy led him, like Marx, into the field of economics. He had this advantage over Marx, that he could study economic realities while living in their midst.

Engels passed nearly two years in Manchester, and they bore rich fruit. How well he applied himself to the mastery of economics is demonstrated in the *Umrisse zur Kritik der Nationalökonomie*, his 'brilliant sketches' in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. Engels set out to demonstrate all economic categories as aspects of private property and all contradictions of bourgeois economy as necessary consequences of private property. Expressed in philosophical language and often only by implication, the work contains the foundations of scientific Socialism. The much-extolled system of free competition, it argues, leads to an ever more precipitous breach between capitalists and workers. While political economists were working out their theories about the balancing of supply and demand and the impossibility of over-production, reality answered them with trade crises which returned as regularly as comets and brought more suffering and mischief in their wake than the great plagues of old. While the reign of private enterprise lasted, crises would recur; each one more universal, therefore more severe than the last, impoverishing a greater number of small capitalists and increasing in ever greater proportion the multitude of the class living on bare work alone. Thus private property produced the revolution by itself.

The more deeply Engels penetrated the English social and economic scheme, the clearer it became to him that the English were not to be won over by the categories he had relied on up to now. However persistently he tried to drum into the heads of the 'obdurate Britons' what was taken for granted in Germany, namely that 'so-called material interests never appear in history as self-sufficient motives, but that they nevertheless,

whether consciously or unconsciously, invariably provide the guiding strings of historical progress,' he did not succeed. He was forced reluctantly to resign himself to the conclusion that in England only the conflict of material interests was recognised. In England interests and not principles would begin and carry out the revolution. But this applied to England only. To Germany it did not apply. 'The Germans,' he tried to explain to his English friends—in English—at the end of 1843, 'are a very disinterested nation; if in Germany principle comes into collision with interest, principle will almost always silence the claims of interest. The same love of abstract principle, the same disregard of reality and self-interest which have brought the Germans to a state of political nonentity, these very same qualities guarantee the success of philosophical Communism in that country.'

But now he was in England, a country which ignored general principles, it became his task to base his Communism on a foundation of material interests. Engels found a great workers' movement, that of the Chartists, in progress. Its aims were purely political, but Engels did not doubt for a moment that it was bound to become Socialist, and that within a short time the Chartists would see that private property was the root of all the evils from which the working classes were suffering. After the abortive attempt at a general strike to enforce universal suffrage, they must confine themselves for the time being to propaganda. Engels was a close observer of the first great independent workers' movement to take place in a European country. It was something for which not even the preliminaries were to hand in Germany. He got into touch with the Chartists through James Leach, a Manchester workman, and in Leeds he established a friendship with George Julian Harney, editor of the Chartist paper, *The Northern Star*.

He admired the practice of the Chartists, but, as a Communist and an atheist, he was closer in theoretical outlook to Robert Owen. He heartily approved of Owen's struggle against the marriage tie, religion and private property, which Owen regarded as the three irrational, arch-egoistical institutions from which humanity must be freed in order that a new world founded on reason and solidarity might be built. He

made contact with the Owenites, and in their paper, *The New Moral World*, he described to the English, who had scarcely heard of it, the growth and development of Continental Communism.

Engels lived at the heart of the English cotton industry, the most modern industry in the most modern industrial country of Europe. In spite of the 'tremendous advances' made in recent years, his native Wuppertal could not compare with it. He found that just where industrialism was flourishing most exuberantly the proletariat was plunged into the greatest distress. For month after month Engels roamed through the working-class districts of Manchester, which he soon got to know better than most of its inhabitants. Though he was familiar with the plight of the German spinners and weavers, he was profoundly moved by what he saw. His book on the state of the working-classes in England, based on his observations and extended researches and written in the winter of 1844-5, is the most flaming indictment of early capitalism ever written.

At the end of August, 1844, Engels travelled back to Germany by way of Paris, and met Marx for the second time. In the bare ten days they spent together 'they established their agreement in all theoretical fields, and their joint work dates from that time.'

Engels brought Marx more than he received from him. Both had come independently to Communism, both had recognised in the proletariat the class which, product and negation of private property at the same time, was to abolish private property. But Engels had an incomparably deeper insight into the economics of bourgeois society. Living in economically advanced England, he had anticipated Marx in understanding its dialectic, its inherent tendency to produce contradictions and thus its own downfall. He had come face-to-face with a real workers' movement, met the proletariat in its real form. In Manchester 'he had had his nose rubbed into the fact that economic realities, which in history written hitherto had played either no rôle at all, or at best an insignificant one, were, at any rate in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that economic realities provide the foundation from which present-day class-conflicts arose; that in those countries

where, thanks to big industry, those conflicts had fully developed, for example in England, they were the foundation on which political parties were built and party struggles fought and thus of the whole of political history. Marx had not only come to the same conclusion but in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* had arrived at the generalisation that it was not the state that conditioned and regulated civil society but civil society that conditioned and regulated the state; and that therefore politics and their history were to be explained by economic conditions and their development and not the reverse.'

When Engels wrote these phrases in 1885 he represented his and Marx's insight into historical reality as more mature than it really was at the end of 1844. It was not till after their meeting and the beginning of their co-operation that these ideas were definitely formulated. Engels helped Marx to make concrete his quite abstract ideas concerning the relations of state and society; and Marx helped Engels to understand that the dependence of politics on material interests, class interests, a dependence the validity of which Engels had hitherto only been willing to admit as applying to England, was in reality valid for all countries alike. But he still maintained, when he once more trod the soil of his native land, that Germany could only be won for Communism by the insight of educated people.

Before the two friends parted they decided to cross swords with Bruno Bauer for the last time. Engels wrote his contribution to the planned pamphlet while still in Paris. It filled about twenty pages. Marx harried and pursued 'critical criticism' into its last lurking-place, put such enthusiasm into his attack on the jugglers with ideas that he almost appeared to be doing it for the sheer exhilaration of the thing, and to the surprise of Engels, who failed to see that their opponents' nullity merited such profusion, filled more than three hundred pages. The book appeared in February, 1845, under the title of *The Holy Family* (by which was meant the three brothers, Bruno, Edgar and Egbert Bauer) or *the Critique of Critical Criticism*. It did not attract much attention. Bruno Bauer and his followers had reduced themselves to absurdity and nobody took any more notice of them.

Engels found the Germany he returned to very different from the Germany he had left. Increasing impoverishment of wide masses of artisans and home-workers; the rapid spread of pauperisation, of which hitherto people had only read in sentimental French novels and pamphlets which were not taken very seriously; the rising of the weavers, the first movements among the industrial workers, all entirely new features in the picture that educated society, leading its own life, had formed of Germany, troubled and disturbed the bourgeoisie and forced them to face the problems that had arisen. A wave of strikes passed over Germany in 1844. Workers in the calico factories in Berlin rose in insurrection, railway workers in Westphalia did the same. There were strikes in Saxony, Hamburg and elsewhere. People discovered that there was something rumbling down below, something with a menace. That something was millions of people, of whom at most the police had taken notice of before. What had been discovered was the existence of the proletariat.

Pamphlets appeared giving recipes for overcoming 'the plague of the nineteenth century.' Bettina von Arnim wrote *This Book Belongs to the King*, in which she ruthlessly exposed the distress in the so-called Vogtland, near Berlin. Philanthropical societies were formed, with the support of Frederick William IV, 'societies for the good of the working classes.' In East Prussia they remained what their founders intended them to be, but in the western provinces Socialist-minded intellectuals soon gained an entry to them. At Elberfeld, Barmen, Cologne, Bielefeld, and elsewhere these societies became Socialist propaganda centres, education centres of and for the workers. It became necessary to dissolve the local Berlin society as early as the autumn of 1844.

The first German Socialist papers appeared at the same time—the *Westfälische Dampfboot* at Bielefeld, the *Gesellschaftsspiegel* at Elberfeld, the *Sprecher* at Hamm and others. The word 'Socialist' should not be understood in the sense in which it is understood to-day. Socialism meant sympathy with the suffering masses, indignation at injustice, appeal to man's nobler instincts, and belief in a better world. The descriptions of the lives of the workers which those newspapers contained are still valuable to-day. They shook the conscience of all

whose sensibilities had not grown blunted. A Communist at that time was not much more than a resolute opponent of poverty, hunger and mass-distress.

Former contributors to the *Rheinische Zeitung*, like Moses Hess and D'Ester, were prominent among these Socialists-by-compassion. Engels flung himself enthusiastically into propaganda work. The way to the workers was closed to him. The authorities would not have allowed him to agitate for Communism among the workers. At the best he could only have spoken to very small groups. But for the time being Engels did not believe that kind of work to be so very necessary. He still pinned all his hopes to principles to which the intellectuals must be won over first.

In the winter of 1844-5 the victory of Communism seemed to him to be only a question of a few years, possibly even months. He wrote to Marx that the propaganda being carried out in Cologne was tremendous; there were marvellous fellows at Düsseldorf, there were Communists at Elberfeld and at Barmen even the commissary of police was a Communist. If they could only get to work directly on the people, they would soon be on top. Everyone, from rich to poor, came to the Communist meetings. Nor were their activities without success. Whichever way you turned you stumbled upon a Communist. 'Communism is the sole subject of conversation, and new adherents come to us every day. In the Wuppertal Communism is a reality, almost actually a power in the land.' The whole unreality of the movement is revealed by the phrase: 'The proletariat is busy, we do not know what with, and we can hardly know.'

Engel's position at Barmen gradually became untenable. The police started taking a very definite interest in his activities, and he had to reckon with the prospect of being arrested, possibly by the Communist commissary of police himself. Life with his family was 'a real dog's life.' All his father's religious fanaticism was re-awakened and Engel's emergence as a Communist stirred him to 'a glowing bourgeois fanaticism' besides. 'You have no idea of the maliciousness of the Christian heresy hunt after my soul,' he wrote to Marx in Brussels. 'My father only needs to discover the existence of the *Critical*

Criticism book to turn me out of the house altogether. . . .
It is no longer to be borne.'

Marx's insistence on his friend's joining him in Brussels so that they might continue their common labours became more urgent than ever. At the beginning of April, 1845, Engels went to Brussels.

CHAPTER IX CLARIFICATION

‘AFTER we had passed a night in Brussels, almost the first thing Marx said to me [H. Burgers] in the morning was: “We must go and see Freiligrath to-day. He is here, and I must make good the wrong the *Rheinische Zeitung* did him before he stood ‘on the party battlements.’ His confession of faith has wiped out everything.”’

Ferdinand Freiligrath stood out by a head from the teeming multitude of German poets. His exotic poems, of equal rank to their prototype, Victor Hugo’s *Les Orientales*, glowed with passion, luxuriated in wild visions, and were technically flawless. The young people of Germany received them with enthusiasm. The effect they had on the young Engels has already been noted. About the year 1840 Freiligrath was the most popular poet in Germany. Devoted to the ideal of ‘pure art,’ he held it to be unworthy of the poet to descend into the contemporary arena. His verses:

The poet stands on a high watch-tower
As on the party battlements——¹

were later quoted to satiety. He had no objection to accepting the pension of three hundred thalers which Frederick William IV granted him in 1842 at the suggestion of Alexander von Humboldt. He wrote an open letter attacking Herwegh for wishing to bring poetry down to the level of the handmaiden of politics. His ambition seemed to be to become the court poet of Berlin.

This brought the *Rheinische Zeitung* down on him with a vengeance. It mercilessly derided the ‘pensioned poet.’ In Marx’s opinion Freiligrath was ‘an enemy of Herwegh’s and of freedom.’

A year later Freiligrath was in the revolutionary camp. The cry for freedom that swept across Germany like a wave

¹ *Der Dichter steht auf einer höh’ren Warte
Als auf den Zinnen der Partei.*

awakened the dreamer. In 1844 the censor forbade the publication of his *Patriotic Fantasies*. Freiligrath, without troubling about the censor, published them under another title, *Confession of Faith*, and renounced his much-talked of 'pension' in the preface. The book was banned. Freiligrath escaped arrest by fleeing to Belgium.

He remained in Belgium for a few months only. They sufficed for him to form a friendship with Marx, 'that nice, interesting, unassuming, resolute fellow,' as he called him. Freiligrath's poetic powers reached their zenith in the revolutionary years of 1848 and 1849 and he was one of Marx's closest collaborators on the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. Their friendship defied all the vicissitudes of life and survived a number of temporary estrangements during the hard years of exile in London. Freiligrath was one of the few men whom Marx 'loved as friends in the highest sense of the word.'

Marx met only a few German exiles in Brussels. In this 'disagreeable mongrel country' as Freiligrath called Belgium, the Germans did not feel at home, and in Brussels they were not liked. Three years later, when Marx was expelled by the anti-revolutionary government, his expulsion, to quote Engels, 'helped to mitigate Belgian hatred of the Germans.'

There were not many exiles from other countries either. But small as the colony of exiles was, it was an important one. During those years a political refugee could lead a more secure life in Belgium than in any other European country, not even excluding Switzerland. When Buonarotti, the fellow-conspirator of Babeuf, had to flee from Geneva at the beginning of the Restoration, Belgium was the only country to offer him a refuge. He lived there until the revolution of 1830 and wrote his famous work on the *Conspiracy of the Equals*, the bold attempt of Babeuf and his comrades to plant the banner of Socialism in Paris when the great Revolution ended. The book had an influence far wider than the borders of Belgium and France. It had a strong influence on the 'physical force' Chartists. Exile set its seal upon men of Buonarotti's type. In Belgium were refugees to whom the rest of Europe was shut—French Blanquists, Polish Democrats, German Republicans, *émigrés* of the second and third generation.

Belgium received them all and suffered them to remain

upon her soil, as long as they refrained from direct political activity. The small country had fought for and gained its independence only a few years before; it was not yet firmly in the saddle and it very intelligibly fought shy of diplomatic conflicts with its powerful neighbours. These would have been inevitable if the exiles had been allowed to carry out propaganda from Belgium, and the attempt would have cost the refugees their sanctuary. Thus, although the Press was freer than in France, there was no 'emigrant' paper or organisation. This state of affairs survived until the outbreak of the February revolution, when the atmosphere changed throughout the whole of Europe, and the Liberals came into power in Belgium—and then not for long.

Marx became acquainted with the peculiarities of Belgium during the first days after his arrival. The Prussian Government soon reconciled itself to the withdrawal of the expulsion of Ruge, Börnstein and the others who were to have left France with Marx, but it continued to persecute Marx. Scarcely had he arrived in Brussels when the Prussian ambassador demanded his expulsion. Marx applied for a permit soon after his arrival. He did not obtain it. Only after many inquiries did he find out that such an application did not suffice. He had to give a written undertaking to the *sûreté publique* to print nothing in Belgium about contemporary politics. After that he obtained his permit. Infuriated by the renewed persecution, tired of the struggle with 'his' officials, who wasted time he could have employed profitably, full of contempt for his reactionary Fatherland, 'the backward colony of Russia,' in December, 1845, he renounced his Prussian nationality.

He did not find the renunciation of journalistic activity hard to bear. He had other activities in mind. In the foreword to *The Holy Family*, written in September, 1844, he and Engels had announced that after completing their demolition of Bruno Bauer they would state their own constructive position to the new philosophical and social doctrines in independent works.

Marx planned to write a two-volume *Critique of Politics and Political Economy*, for which he had arranged a contract with Leske, the Darmstadt publisher, before he left Paris. As soon as he had settled down in Brussels he flung all his energy into the task. In January Engels was urging him to complete the

book quickly, even if he should be dissatisfied with it himself. Engels declared that it was essential that the work be finished before April. Men's minds were ripe for it, and they must strike while the iron was hot. This formula was to be frequently repeated during the next twenty years. Again and again Engels was to urge his friend to write 'finis' to the work in hand, stop his everlasting ploughing through books and collecting of material, and actually get down to the work of writing. Engels later confessed that while they were in Brussels together Marx taught him for the first time what hard work really meant. Marx's thoroughness, the vigour with which he grappled with a subject, not letting it go till he had mastered it in all its details, the conscientiousness with which he would read through everything that had ever been written about it, were alien to Engels's temperament. The *Critique of Politics and Political Economy* was meant to appear in the summer of 1845. The first volume, *The Critique of Political Economy*, appeared in the summer of 1859, and the first volume of *Capital* in the autumn of 1867.

Once more Marx plunged into a sea of books. He read and made excerpts from the economists Buret, Sismondi, Senior, A. Blanqui, Ure, Rossi and Pecchio, to name the most important only. In the summer of 1845 he went to Manchester with Engels to study the English economists, Petty, Tooke, Thompson, Cobbett and others, who were not available in Brussels. In addition to all this he planned to collaborate with Engels in publishing a whole series of important Socialist books in German translations—the principal works of Fourier, Owen and others. Marx was to write introductions for the French authors and Engels for the English ones.

But in the summer of 1845 a new task intervened. Marx informed his publisher that he had to break off work on the *Critique of Politics and Political Economy*. It appeared to him to be of vital immediate importance to attack German philosophy and state his positive attitude to the present and past position of German Socialism. This was necessary in order to prepare the public for a system of economics which was diametrically opposed to German preconceptions of the time.

During the lifetime of Marx and Engels this work never appeared. Excerpts from the manuscript were only published

in various places years after their death. When, thanks to the tireless researches of D. B. Riazanov, it finally appeared in its complete form in 1932, it was found that *German Ideology* was Marx's and Engels's first exposition of their interpretation of history—historical materialism—carried out in a detail for which they never found time or opportunity again. When Marx published his *Critique of Political Economy* in 1859, he contented himself with preparing the public for the new viewpoint with a few sentences in the foreword. A decade and a half had passed since he had arrived at it, jointly with Engels, and he had used it as a guiding thread through all his works and could well believe that it was intelligible to all who could read and only required a final and definite formulation. But if one looks back now at the endless controversies that have centred round the correct interpretation of historical materialism, one cannot help deploring that *German Ideology* found no publisher in 1846.

In his reminiscences of the origins of the Communist League Engels states that Marx had developed the main outlines of his materialist interpretation of history by the time he joined him in Brussels in spring, 1845. The two friends decided to elaborate jointly the antithesis between their views and the ideological background of German philosophy. This purpose was to be carried out in the form of a critique of post-Hegelian philosophy. It was impossible to carry it out otherwise at the time, not only because it was the only way in which Marx and Engels could come to terms with their previous philosophic conscience, but because in the intellectual and historical conditions of the forties the quintessence of their case, namely the proposition that it is not man's mind that conditions his being but, on the contrary, his social being that conditions his mind, could be stated most effectively and with the most far-reaching consequences in the field of political action in the form of a controversy with idealism and in that form only.

More than half of the two solid octavo volumes that Marx and Engels wrote between September, 1845, and August, 1846, is taken up with a refutation of Max Stirner, the theorist of individual anarchism. Marx took up the cudgels with Stirner with real delight. He took 'the schoolmaster' sentence by sentence and harried him until nothing was left of the atheistic

'egoist' but a beer-swilling Berlin philistine. He was no less pitiless in his exposure of the 'true' Socialism which had recently become fashionable in Germany and deemed itself superior to 'crude' Communism. He revealed it as an insipid brew of German philosophical phrases blended with half-understood propositions borrowed from French Socialist and Communist systems by philanthropic *littérateurs* who failed to understand the movement of which these systems were the expression. The fight against this kind of idealistic rubbish in all its forms was all the more necessary because in Germany social contradictions were not yet as developed as they were in France and England, and in that phrase-intoxicated land phrases were correspondingly dangerous. The only philosopher who deserved respect was Ludwig Feuerbach.

Marx's pithiest condensation of his theory of history made at that time was in a letter to a Russian friend, Paul Annenkov. His criticism of Proudhon was in reality a criticism of historical idealism. Marx wrote:

'What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of the inter-actions of men. Are men free to choose this or that social form? Not in the least. Take any particular stage in the development of the productive forces of man and you will find a corresponding form of trade and consumption. Take definite stages in the development of production, trade, consumption, and you have a corresponding form of social constitution, a definite organisation of family, rank or classes, in a word a corresponding form of civil society. Take such a civil society and you have a definite political situation, which is only the official expression of civil society.

'It remains to add that men are not free masters of their forces of production—the foundation of their whole history—because these forces are acquired, are the product of previous activity. Thus the forces of production are the result of man's practical energy, but this energy is itself conditioned by the circumstances in which men are placed by the forces of production already acquired by them, by the social forms existing before them, which they themselves have not created but are the product of the previous generation. From the simple fact that each generation finds itself confronted with forces of production acquired by the preceding one, which serves it as

the raw material for new forces of production, it follows that there is a continuity in the history of mankind, and a history of mankind which is all the more his history because his forces of production and consequently his social relationships have grown in the meantime. The necessary consequence is that the social history of men is always only the history of their individual development, alike whether they are conscious of it or not. Their material relationships form the foundation of all their relationships. These material relationships are only the necessary forms in which their material and individual activity is fulfilled. . . . The economic forms under which men produce, consume, exchange, are *transient and historical*. With newly acquired forces of production men alter their methods of production, and with their methods of production they alter their economic conditions, which were purely and simply the necessary conditions of these definite methods of production. . . . Proudhon has understood very well that men make cloth, linen, silk. What Proudhon has not understood is that men produce the *social relationships* in which they produce the cloth and the linen in conformity with their capacity. Still less has Proudhon understood that men, who produce social relationships in conformity with their material productivity, also produce *ideas and categories*, that is to say, the ideal, abstract expressions of these same social relationships. Accordingly categories are just as little eternal as the conditions the expression of which they are. For Proudhon, on the contrary, it is categories and abstractions that are the primary facts. In his opinion it is these and not men who make history. . . . As for him the driving forces are categories, there is no need to alter practical life to alter the categories. On the contrary, if one alters the categories, alterations in real life will follow.'

The last of the *Theses on Feuerbach*, which Marx wrote in his notebook, says:

'The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world differently. The task is now to *change* it.'

At the beginning of May, 1846, Marx and Engels sent the greater part of the manuscript to Germany. They had found some prosperous adherents of 'true' Socialism in Westphalia who had thought of publishing the work. But business difficulties, whether real or alleged can no longer be determined,

intervened. Marx tried in vain to find another publisher. In spite of all his efforts and those of Joseph Weydemeyer, a former Prussian artillery lieutenant who had become a Communist and visited Marx in Brussels in 1846, the book remained unpublished. In retrospect it seemed to Marx that the impossibility of publishing a work to which he had devoted a year of his life had not extraordinarily disturbed him. At the time, however, he bore the blow heavily. But it all lay a long time behind him when he wrote: 'We left the manuscript to the nibbling criticism of mice all the more willingly as we had attained our chief aim—clarification.'

CHAPTER X

FACE TO FACE WITH PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM

NEITHER the old Communist Utopias nor nebulous speculations of the type of Hess's 'theory' of the various rôles of the different countries in the revolution—which, incidentally, Engels himself adopted for a time—could survive in the face of the new interpretation of history. Communism in Germany and France and Chartism in England no longer appeared accidental events which might just as well not have happened at all, or as ideas which could be measured against other ideas, or as systems which could be considered and accepted or rejected from an absolute, timeless, moral or logical standpoint. They now appeared, to use Engels's words, as movements of the oppressed proletarian class, as forms, more developed or less, of their historically necessary struggle against the ruling class, the bourgeoisie. Communism no longer meant imaginatively concocting an if-possible complete social ideal, but an understanding of the nature, conditions and consequent aims of the struggle of the proletariat.

Communism was no longer a doctrine but a movement. It no longer proceeded from principles, from the humanism of the Young Hegelians or of Feuerbach, but from facts. In so far as it was theoretical, it was the theoretical expression of the position of the proletariat in the class-struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie and the theoretical comprehension of the conditions for attaining the freedom of the proletariat.

Marx and Engels had established their views scientifically on the basis of German philosophical theory. It was now equally essential for them to win over the European, and first of all the German, working class to their point of view. 'We set about the task as soon as we had reached clarification,' Engels relates. The overthrowing of primitive Communism was the first and most urgent aim.

Wilhelm Weitling came to London in September, 1844. The sufferings and persecution he had undergone for his Communist ideals had increased his already considerable

renown. He had been arrested by the Swiss authorities in the summer of 1843 and indicted for blasphemy, making attacks on the rights of property and forming a secret society for the spreading of Communism. He was imprisoned for four months on remand, condemned to a further six months in gaol by the Zurich court and, at the conclusion of his sentence, was delivered over the Prussian frontier in chains. His trial and still more the official report on 'The Communists in Switzerland according to the papers found in Weitling's possession' attracted attention far beyond the borders of Switzerland. The wide publicity given to his case caused many people to hear of the Communist movement and of Communism for the first time. Where the distribution of Communist literature was impossible the official report, which everybody could buy, with its copious extracts from Weitling's writings, was not a bad substitute.

This gifted young writer—at once a poet and a philosophising tailor's assistant—received universal sympathy. He wrote his *Gaol Poems* in prison. Even the Prussian Government was aware of the prevailing mood, and although the Swiss authorities delivered him up to them as a fugitive from military service, when he was found unfit they let him go free. But after a few months he had once more made himself so unpopular with the police that he was arrested again and sent off to Hamburg, where Heine saw him. 'My legs have no aptitude to carry iron rings like those Weitling bore,' he wrote. 'He showed me the marks.'

From Hamburg Weitling went on to London, where his German comrades enthusiastically received him. A big celebration was held in his honour on September 22, in co-operation with the Chartists and the refugees from France. But the jubilation and the tumult died away, and before six months had passed the contradictions that had long been forming within the movement led to an open rupture.

During the years in which Weitling wrote his *Mankind as it is and as it ought to be* and was developing the ideas he expressed in his most mature work, *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*, all the leaders of the League of the Just had been living in Paris. After the rising of May 12, 1839, they scattered. Weitling went to Switzerland, Schapper, Heinrich Bauer and Moll found refuge in England. The small Communist groups

in Switzerland lost themselves more and more in sentimental Primitive Christian Communism and romantic plotting. Weitling, separated from his old friends, surrounded by backward artisans in a backward country, soon abandoned himself entirely to primitive Utopianism and highly irrational flights of fancy. It was different with those members of the League who went westwards. They came under the influence of Chartism, at the time the most advanced workers' movement in the world. They established friendly relations with the Chartist leaders, read the Chartist Press, and contributed to it themselves. The longer they lived in England the more they shook themselves free from their primitive equalitarian Communism. In 1843, when Weitling started talking of the communalisation of women and concocted a hare-brained scheme for forming an army of forty thousand thieves and robbers who were to bring the exploiters to their knees by means of a pitiless guerilla warfare, they firmly protested against such folly.

Imprisonment had disordered Weitling's mind more than ever. After the Zurich trial he completely lost all sense of proportion. His outward fame seemed to confirm his own conviction that he had been chosen as the teacher, leader and saviour of mankind, to free it from all its misery and suffering. The 'Londoners' and Weitling had to part.

The dispute flared up over the London German Workers' Union. The Union had been founded in February, 1840, by Schapper and six other members of the League of the Just as a legal organisation to serve as a screen for the League. The League made use of this kind of organisation everywhere. The statutes of the London German Workers' Union, printed as a special pamphlet, became the pattern for all organisations of the same kind founded by members of the League everywhere where German workers lived and legal organisations of this or a similar kind were possible. The chief purpose of these Unions was propaganda, and in addition they provided benefits for sick comrades. It did not take long for the Union to become the centre of the German workers' colony in London. In addition to Germans it had among its members Scandinavians, Dutch, Hungarians, Czechs, southern Slavs and Russians, nationalities which were of admirable service to the

Germans in their contacts with other countries. In 1847 an English Grenadier Guardsman in uniform was a regular visitor. At the time the Union reached its zenith, on the eve of the revolution of 1848, it had between four and five hundred members, a more than respectable total for the time. The life of the Union was described in a letter by Hugo Hildebrand, the political economist, who visited it in April, 1846.

'About half-past eight we went to the Union premises in a spirit of considerable expectancy,' he wrote. 'On the ground-floor there was an ordinary shop, in which porter and other beers were sold. I did not notice any special place reserved for visitors. We went through the shop and upstairs into a hall-like room, capable of seating about two hundred men at the tables and benches distributed about the floor. About twenty men were sitting about in groups, eating a simple supper or smoking one of the pipes of honour (which lay on all the tables) with a beer-mug in front of them. Others were standing about. Every moment the door opened to admit newcomers, so that it was clear that the meeting was only due to begin later. One saw from their faces that most of the men belonged to the working class, although all were thoroughly decently clothed and an easy and unaffected but thoroughly decorous tone prevailed. The language was predominantly German, but French and English were also to be heard. At one end of the hall there was a grand-piano, with music, which in unmusical London was the best proof that we had found the right room. As we knew no one present we sat down at a table near the door. Very little notice was taken of us. We ordered a glass of porter and the usual penny packet of tobacco and awaited our host and acquaintance, Schapper. It was not long before a big, strong, healthy-looking man of about thirty-six, with a black moustache and a commanding manner, came up to Diefenbach (Hildebrand's companion). He was promptly introduced to me as Schapper, the former Frankfurt demagogue, who later took part in campaigns, or rather revolutions, in Switzerland and Spain. He was very serious on the occasion of my meeting him, but friendly, and I could feel that he looked down at my professional status with a certain inner pride.'

What Engels, looking back at the early years of the

movement forty years later, said about Schapper, Heinrich Bauer and Moll, the three men who took such an important part in the birth of the Communist League, may be stated with advantage here. Engels remembered Schapper as a giant in stature, resolute and energetic, always ready to risk his life and bourgeois well-being, an ideal professional revolutionary of the type characteristic of the thirties. In spite of a certain ponderousness of thought, he was by no means inaccessible to better theoretical understanding than his own, to compensate for which he only held on the more grimly to what he had once grasped. Hence his intelligence was sometimes carried away by his revolutionary zeal. But he always saw his mistakes afterwards and candidly admitted them. Heinrich Bauer came from Franconia and was a bootmaker. He was a lively, spritely, witty little man, concealing a great deal of shrewdness and determination in his small frame. Finally Joseph Moll, a Cologne watchmaker, a middle-sized Hercules, was at least the equal of his comrades in energy and determination and was superior to them in intelligence. He was a born diplomat, besides being more accessible to theoretical understanding.

Hildebrand continues:

‘Schapper invited us to sit down with him at one end of the hall and showed me a notice-board on which the Union regulations were displayed. They were under the heading of “German Workers’ Educational Union.” Anyone who earned his living honestly and had nothing dishonourable against him was eligible for membership, but every application for membership had to be proposed and seconded by a member. The Union officials were a president, a secretary, a librarian and a treasurer. Members were divided into two classes: (1) those who constituted a Communist club of their own, conditions for membership of which were as described and (2) other members who took part in the educational activities of the Union only. Only the first category could take part in meetings at which voting took place, elect officers and vote on the admission of new members. The others only took a passive part in the Union activities, took part in none of the Communist meetings proper and only paid contributions, and fines if they missed any of the educational meetings. The basic idea of the Union was that man could only attain liberty and self-knowledge by

the cultivation of his mind. For this reason every evening was devoted to instruction of one kind or another. The first evening was devoted to study of the English language, the second to geography, the third to history, the fourth to drawing and physics, the fifth to singing, the sixth to dancing and the seventh to Communist policy. The subjects of instruction were changed every half-year. . . .

'We took our seats at the indicated place. In the meantime the hall had become crowded, and the president, of whom all I know is that he was described to me as a doctor, opened the meeting. After a solemn silence had been obtained and everyone had taken his pipe out of his mouth, the secretary, a tailor's assistant, whose descriptive powers were really enviable, read out a notice to the effect that *Citizen* Hildebrand and *Citizen* Diefenbach had been introduced as guests by *Citizen* Schapper and asked whether any citizen had any objection. After that attention was turned to current events and *Citizen* Schapper made a report on the events of the week. His report was very eloquent, thorough and informative. It was evident that he and the club conducted a very widespread correspondence; for he reported the contents of a letter from Madrid which contained news of the fall of the military despotism, due to Christina's hierarchist tendencies, at greater length and in far greater detail than had yet appeared in any newspaper. A strong Communist colouring was naturally evident throughout, and the theme of the proletariat ran like a red thread through the entire discourse. I candidly admit that I can stand a good dose of Liberalism, but in some places my hair stood on end. . . .

'The whole speech made a great impression on the audience and was followed by general and continuous applause. Next the minutes of the last Communist meeting, at which the objectionableness of the Christian religion was dealt with, were read by the secretary.

'After this a fresh subject came up for discussion, namely the question of what arrangements were to be made for the education of children in the Communist State. During the course of the discussion I discovered to my amazement that at least half of those present were married men. Unfortunately the debate did not get much beyond the initial stages; consequently

all I found out to satisfy my curiosity was that they repudiated alike the communalisation of wives and the emancipation of women, and considered woman as the mental complement of man and marriage as a moral institution, in which both parties enjoyed equal rights, although the capacities, disposition and sphere of activity of man and woman were completely different. Education must be mental and physical, private and political and must actually begin before birth.

'As it was past midnight by this time, further consideration of these matters was postponed to the following week. Next I had a very serious private discussion with Schapper about his hostility to Liberalism, spoke to a few other members, including a Silesian joiner, inspected the Union library and bought some Communist pamphlets. . . . The meeting dispersed in a very friendly and good-tempered spirit, so that the prevalent use of the second person singular did seem not just to spring from the club rules but to be rooted in the members' hearts.'

These German workers attentively followed political events not only in England where they lived and in Germany which was their home; their view took in the whole of Europe. Weitling's realm was not of this world. The only distinction that he recognised was that between the present, which he utterly rejected, and a glittering future. All else was evil. Schapper and his friends were patiently seeking a way for themselves along the thorny path of conflicting parties and systems. Their guide was reason. Weitling followed his feelings only. He took his stand on the Bible, on Love, the Noble and the Good. In his opinion the people were long since ripe for the new social order, and the only remaining task was to free them from their oppressors, for which all that was required was the determined initiative of a revolutionary organisation, a small band of resolute brothers. The obsolete old world must be crushed at a blow by the dictatorship of a revolutionary minority who would act in the interests of the latently revolutionary masses and shrink at nothing to attain their ends. One almost seems to hear the voice of Bakunin, with whom Marx was forced to repeat the same struggle twenty years later, in the following phrases of Weitling, which date from 1845: 'In my opinion,' Weitling said, 'everybody is ripe for Communism, even the criminals. Criminals are a product of the

present order of society and under Communism they would cease to be criminals. Humanity is of necessity always ripe for revolution, or it never will be. The latter is nothing but the phraseology of our opponents. If we follow them we shall have no choice but to lay our hands on our knees and wait till roasted pigeons fly into our mouths.'

These words of Weitling's were spoken at a meeting at the German Workers' Union at the end of June, 1845. Since the beginning of the year regular weekly meetings had been held at which the fundamental questions of Communism were discussed. The extent of the breach between their old comrades-in-arms and themselves had gradually become clear to the members of the Union. They found it far from easy to break with their own past. Personally attached to their leader as they were, they went on trying to reconcile the incompatible, to find a middle way. They almost apologised for their secession, but the parting could no longer be postponed. Schapper, their spokesman, said in his reply to Weitling that he himself had spoken in just the same way eight, even six years ago. But now, tempered as he was by so much bitter experience, he was compelled to express agreement with the reactionary phrase; the people were not yet ripe; for if they were ripe, such a phrase would no longer be possible. He ended his speech by saying that truth could not be knocked into people's heads with rifle-butts.

The London German workers all honoured Weitling and his candid opinions, but they decided for Schapper by an overwhelming majority. Weitling could not get over his defeat. He was unable to follow Schapper's reasoning even a little way. He left London, angered and embittered, suspecting intrigue and treachery.

Engels had met the leading members of the Union in 1843. In the summer of 1845, when he and Marx were in London, he renewed the acquaintance and introduced Schapper, Bauer and Moll, who had made a 'tremendous impression' on him two years before as the first revolutionary proletarians he had ever met, to Marx. It is impossible from the scanty material that has survived to say whether Marx attended a meeting of the Union or not, but he certainly paid great attention to the progress of the controversy with Weitling. He set the greater

store by it in that it cleared the way from below for his own special task of breaking scientific Socialism adrift from sentimental Communism, philosophising, and 'principles.' His most urgent practical aim was that of setting the movement on the right track and accelerating its development.

The Union had one institution which would be useful for his purpose. This was the active correspondence it kept up with members in other countries. These sent in fairly regular reports concerning political events in the countries to which they had emigrated, in so far as these events concerned the workers. It must be possible, Marx decided, to make a permanent institution of the Union's correspondence with its members, extend it to all groups and representatives of the Communist and Socialist movement and thereby bring it to a higher level. However desirable the sending in of reports might be, the clarifying of views was more important still. This purpose should be served by written contact maintained between individual countries and within the countries themselves.

Marx, with Brussels as his headquarters, set about founding his correspondence committees in the spring of 1846. As a complement to these he planned to start a newspaper in which questions concerning the movement were to be ventilated from every point of view. The tasks that Marx meant the correspondence committees to fulfil—for a long time their object and nature defied the efforts of research—were indicated in a letter of Marx to Proudhon, dated May 5, 1846, which was found a few years ago. Marx wrote: *'Conjointement avec deux de mes amis Frédéric Engels et Philippe Gigot (tous deux à Bruxelles) j'ai organisé avec les communistes et socialistes allemands une correspondance suivie, qui devra s'occuper et de la discussion de questions scientifiques et de la surveillance à exercer sur les écrits populaires et la propagande socialiste, qu'on peut faire en Allemagne par ce moyen. Le but principal de notre correspondance sera pourtant celui, de mettre les socialistes allemands en rapport avec les socialistes français et anglais, de tenir les étrangers au courant des mouvements socialistes qui seront opérés en Allemagne et d'informer les Allemands en Allemagne des progrès du socialisme en France et en Angleterre. De cette manière des différences d'opinion pourront se faire jour; on arrivera à un échange d'idées et à une critique impartiale. C'est là un pas, que le mouvement*

social aura fait dans son expression littéraire afin de se débarrasser des limites de la nationalité. Et au moment de l'action, il est certainement d'un grand intérêt pour chacun, d'être instruit de l'état des affaires à l'étranger aussi bien que chez lui.

*'Outre les communistes en Allemagne notre correspondance comprendra aussi les socialistes allemands à Paris et à Londres. Nos rapports avec l'Angleterre sont déjà établis; quant à la France nous croyons tous que nous ne pouvons y trouver un meilleur correspondant que vous. . . .'*¹

Proudhon, however, declined the invitation. He would very much like to give his aid when things got going, he said, but in the meantime he held it to be superfluous. Of the French Socialists Louis Blanc alone seems to have got into touch with the Brussels committee. In England G. Harney declared himself willing to co-operate, though he does not seem to have been very active. Quite an animated correspondence was carried on with Schapper and his friends, and several members of the Paris section of the League of the Just, particularly Ewerbeck, co-operated. Little is known of the contacts made with Communists in Germany, but there was correspondence with Sillesia, with the Wuppertal, where Köttgen, a painter, was active, with Kiel, where Georg Weber, a doctor, conducted propaganda, and from Cologne. The Communists of Cologne, under the leadership of Roland Daniels, a doctor and a personal friend of Marx's, at first declined the invitation to found a correspondence committee as premature but later sent reports to Brussels all the same. On the whole this very loose organisation of correspondence committees did not achieve

¹ Together with two of my friends, Friedrich Engels and Philippe Gigot (both of whom are in Brussels) I have organised a regular correspondence with the German Communists and Socialists on scientific questions and the supervision of such popular writing and Socialist propaganda as one may be able to carry out in Germany by this means. The main object of our correspondence will, however, be to keep German Socialists in contact with French and English Socialists, and keep foreigners informed about the Socialist movement in Germany and inform the Germans in Germany of the progress of Socialism in France and England in turn. In this way differences of opinion will come to light; ideas will be exchanged and impartial criticism arrived at. This will be a step taken by the Socialist movement on its literary side towards ridding itself of the limitations of nationality. For at the moment of action it is certainly of great interest to everyone to be informed of the state of affairs abroad as well as at home.

Beside the Communists in Germany our correspondence will include German Socialists in Paris and London. Our relations with England are already established; as for France we all believe that it would be impossible to find a better correspondent than you.

very much. It failed to gain a foothold outside German Communist circles, the reports came in irregularly and contributed practically nothing to the theoretical advancement of Communism. But it did bring Marx into closer contact with the London German Workers' Union, which was the most important German Communist organisation, and in that respect achieved its purpose.

The views of Schapper and his friends came ever closer to those of Marx.

Weitling refused to have anything to do with this 'new system of propaganda.' With growing embitterment he watched the dwindling of his prestige from day to day. The free, loose form of this new organisation, which aimed at attaining the co-operation of all Communists upon a basis of scientific Communism, ran counter to all his fundamental preconceptions, which refused to countenance anything but sentimental millenarianism and the tactics of the conspiratorial secret society. His stay in England brought him not only disappointment in the political field, but one personal failure after another. He tried a number of schemes, not one of which succeeded. His grandiose ideas, such as that for revolutionising science by means of 'a general logical study of thought and speech,' and for founding an artificial universal language, roused no interest. Obviously intriguing intellectuals were to blame. They barred his way to the publishers and to their secret 'sources of money.' Weitling had risen to fame in the rôle of an accuser. His first writings had been the mighty cry of resentment of the oppressed class from which he sprang, but half-educated as he was and full of mistrust for the science of 'this world,' as a discoverer of systems he descended into the absurd. He was forced to look on while the London Communists increasingly turned from him to follow Marx. He had had a short meeting with Marx in London in the summer of 1845, and on his way back to the Continent at the beginning of 1846 he stopped in Brussels. The Brussels correspondence committee had just been founded, and in view of the prestige Weitling still enjoyed an invitation to collaborate with the committee could not be avoided. Marx invited him.

Two accounts are extant concerning the confrontation of Marx and Weitling on March 30, 1846. One is a letter

Weitling wrote to Moses Hess and the other a detailed account of the affair by the Russian writer, Annenkov, who was very close to Marx at the time and was introduced by him to the Communists of Brussels. Annenkov gives the only living description of Marx dating from those years, and it reproduces incomparably the atmosphere of the movement at the time. Thirty years later Annenkov could still call up a vivid picture of what young Marx was like on that spring evening in Brussels in 1846.

‘Marx was a type of man formed all of energy, force of will and unshakable conviction, a type highly remarkable in outward appearance as well. In spite of his thick, black mane of hair, his hairy hands, and his coat buttoned up all awry, he had the appearance of a man who has the right and the power to demand respect, although his looks and his manners might appear peculiar sometimes. His movements were angular, but bold and confident, his manners were contrary to all social practice. But they were proud, with a touch of disdain, and his sharp voice, which rang like metal, sounded remarkably in accordance with the radical judgments on men and things which he let fall. He spoke only in the imperative, brooking no contradiction, and this was intensified by the tone, which to me was almost painfully jarring, in which he spoke. This tone expressed the firm conviction of his mission to reign over men’s minds and dictate their laws. Before my eyes stood the personification of a democratic dictator such as might appear before one in moments of fantasy.’

In comparison with him Weitling appeared almost spruce—‘a handsome, fair young man in a somewhat foppishly cut coat, with a foppishly trimmed beard.’ He looked more like a commercial traveller than the gloomy, embittered worker, oppressed by the burden of work and thought, whom Annenkov had imagined.

Those present at the meeting were Engels, the Belgian, Gigot, Edgar von Westphalen, Marx’s brother-in-law, Weydemeyer, Seiler, a German registrar who had fled from Germany, and the journalist, Heilberg. These took their seats at a small green table with Marx at the head of it, ‘pencil in hand, his lion’s head bent over a sheet of paper.’ The question for discussion was what form propaganda should take in Germany. Engels, ‘tall, straight, grave and looking like a distinguished

Englishman,' rose and said how necessary it was to clarify opposing views and settle on a general programme, but before he had finished Marx, impatient and thirsting for battle, cut him short with a direct question to Weitling. 'But tell us, Weitling,' he said, 'what are the arguments with which you defend your social-revolutionary agitation and on what do you intend to base it in the future?' Annenkov stresses his remembrance of the exact form of this blunt question, which opened a heated discussion in the little group round the green table.

Before this unaccustomed audience Weitling lost his usual confidence and command of speech. He spoke indistinctly and confusedly, kept on repeating himself, continually corrected what he said and only made his points with difficulty. His speeches consisted of 'commonplaces of Liberal rhetoric.' He declined to create new economic theories, in his opinion the doctrines of the French were ample and sufficient. The workers must open their eyes, put faith in no promises and rest their hopes upon themselves alone.

He would probably have gone on speaking a long time yet if Marx, with angrily contracted brows, had not interrupted him and started a sarcastic reply, the essence of which was that to stir up the people without giving them firm foundations on which to base their actions was a simple act of treachery. The awakening of fantastic hopes led not to the saving of suffering people but to their downfall. Trying to influence the workers, in Germany especially, without a concrete teaching and strong, scientific ideas was hollow, unscrupulous playing with propaganda, like an enthusiastic apostle addressing a lot of open-mouthed donkeys. "'Here," he added, pointing suddenly to me with a powerful gesture, "here is a Russian among us. In his country, Weitling, perhaps there would be a place for your rôle, in Russia alone, perhaps, can successful unions be arranged between absurd apostles and absurd young men!"' But in a civilised country like Germany, Marx continued, nothing could be achieved without a settled, concrete teaching, and nothing had been achieved so far but noise, harmful excitement and destruction of the very cause that had been undertaken.

In a letter Weitling wrote next day he summed up Marx's speech by saying that unsuitable people must at once be parted from the 'sources of money.' It was his old illusion of an

intellectual coalition that caused him so thoroughly to misunderstand Marx's demand for a 'sifting' of the party. He listened to Marx without understanding him. There could be no talk of the immediate realisation of Communism, Marx had said. The bourgeoisie must come to the helm first. How could Weitling possibly understand that, Weitling who believed that he could destroy the old form of society with forty thousand bandits and build up a new society on the basis of Christian virtue? An unbridgeable abyss separated him from the Marxist interpretation of historical development. Marx said on this occasion for the first time what he had to repeat again and again in the next three years to those impatient souls who believed that only will was needed to leap a whole economic and therefore political epoch. Marx declared that the next revolution in Europe would have to destroy the remnants of feudalism, bring the Liberal and radical bourgeoisie into the saddle and thus for the first time create the political conditions for proletarian action. It was for this reason that Marx demanded the sifting of the party, the struggle against 'philosophical' Communism and the Communism of the artisans. Weitling understood that sentiment must be hooted from the stage. He did not understand that Marx replaced crude sentiment by scientific understanding. When Marx demanded that an end be put to 'secret propaganda,' that meant for Weitling the end of the movement itself. He recognised only one form of propaganda, that of the conspiratorial secret society. Because he believed the masses to be unripe and incapable of becoming ripe, he wanted and could want no mass movement.

Marx's criticism had struck Weitling in his weakest spot. With the mistrust of the self-educated, he felt once more the feared and hated pride of the intellectual. He replied that analysis in the study and criticism carried out far from the suffering world and the afflictions of the people accomplished nothing. 'At these words Marx struck the table angrily with his fist, so powerfully that the lamp shook. He jumped to his feet and exclaimed:

"'Ignorance had never yet helped anybody!'"

'We followed his example and got up too. The conference was over. While Marx was striding up and down the room in

unusually angry excitement I quickly said good-bye to him and the others and went home, greatly surprised by what I had seen and heard.'

The definite breach between Marx and Weitling did not come till May, 1848. Weitling even sent Marx an article for the paper he was going to start at the time, and he had no objection to accepting the help which the 'chief of the intellectuals,' whom he alleged to be 'sitting on the funds' though he was in fact short of them, continued to give him.

But Marx insisted on the sifting of the party and the first blow fell upon Hermann Kriege, a close friend of Weitling's and a man of the same way of thinking as he. Kriege, a young, not ungifted man whom Engels had recommended to Marx only a year before as a 'splendid agitator,' had emigrated to America, where he published a weekly paper, the *People's Tribune*. His never very substantial and 'emotional' Communism degenerated in America into the most turgid sentimentalism. The *People's Tribune* only made Communism ridiculous. On top of it Kriege applied quite indiscriminately for financial support to people who had nothing whatever to do with Communism. The Brussels group felt the time had come to declare openly before the world that this activity had nothing whatever to do with them. Many of them found it hard to repudiate a man who had so recently been their comrade. But, as Marx and Engels stated in the circular letter they drafted, the cause took precedence of everything else, the party must not degenerate into a clique, and the party was more important than the persons who belonged or had belonged to it. There were long discussions, and on May 11 the group decided to make a public protest against Kriege's outpourings. Weitling alone refused to sign. On May 16 the lithographed circular was dispatched to the correspondence committees in Germany, Paris, London and New York. On the same day Weitling demanded the immediate return of his manuscript from Marx. This was the final rupture.

CHAPTER XI

THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

THE German Communists, though they criticised the harsh wording of the circular, took Marx's side. The Brussels committee thereupon demanded that 'philosophical and sentimental' Communism be combated outright. This hurt the feelings of Schapper and his followers, who rebelled at the 'intellectual arrogance' of the Brussels committee. They claimed to be free from sentimental aspirations themselves, but believed a milder attitude towards the 'sentimental' Communists, who after all meant well, to be preferable to the violence with which Marx attacked them. Marx did not and could not give in. If the small Communist *élite* did not have clear, definite views, any attempt to influence the broad, working masses was doomed to failure. Marx used his correspondence with the German Communists in London, to which he attached supreme importance, as he later wrote, 'to subject to merciless criticism in a series of partly printed, partly lithographed pamphlets the medley of English and French Socialism or Communism and German philosophy which then formed the secret teaching of the League, and replace it by the only tenable theoretical foundation, namely scientific insight into the economic structure of bourgeois society; and, finally, to explain in popular form that our task was not that of trying to bring any kind of Utopian system into being but was that of consciously participating in a historical revolutionary process by which society was being transformed before our eyes.'

Where possible written propaganda was supplemented by oral propaganda. Engels was particularly active in Paris, where he settled in the middle of August, 1846.

Unwilling as the members of the League of the Just, both in London and Paris, at first were to face the dilemma with which Marx confronted them, namely, that of choosing between scientific or Utopian Socialism, hard as it was for them to renounce what they had held dear for so many years, they nevertheless overcame their doubts and followed Marx. What

they learned from him substantiated their own insight into affairs, brought sense and coherence into their own experiences, enabled them to understand the historical significance of the English workers' movement, gave them the firm standpoint that they needed. This does not imply that none of them fell back again in later years. But in the two years in question Marx won over the vanguard of the class for scientific Socialism.

The central offices of the League of the Just remained in Paris—mainly out of tradition, for the preponderating majority of its members no longer lived in France—until the autumn of 1846. The real headquarters were in London. Legal organisations of workers of the kind that Schapper and his comrades had created in London were impossible in Paris, and France had no mass movement like that of the Chartists in England, not even in embryo. In Paris the old forms of the conspiratorial secret society were still kept up. They did not correspond to the needs of the rising working-class movement. The first result of the Marxian criticism was the reorganisation of the League of the Just. The officers of the club were re-elected in autumn, 1846. Schapper and Moll and other 'Londoners' became the leaders.

They felt the approach of the revolution which, in the words of one of their circulars 'would probably settle the fate of the world for centuries.' They realised that their immediate task must be to carry out Marx's injunctions of a year before. They must create a Communist Party programme and decide on their tactics. A congress was to be held in London to do these things. The proposal to hold it had been made by the London correspondence committee in the summer of 1846. In November, 1846, a special circular letter was sent out, summoning the representatives of all the branches of the League to a Congress to be held on May 1, 1847.

Joseph Moll was entrusted with the task of getting into touch with Marx and inviting him to join the League. Moll arrived in Brussels at the beginning of February, 1847. He was authorised to give Marx 'an oral report on the state of affairs (in the League of the Just) and receive information from him in return.' After interviewing Marx in Brussels Moll went to Paris and interviewed Engels. He explained in his own name

and that of his comrades that they were convinced of the rightness of Marx's views and agreed that they must shake off the old conspiratorial forms and traditions. Marx and Engels were to be invited to collaborate in the work of reorganisation and theoretical re-orientation.

To Marx the invitation to enter the League was by no means unexpected. If he hesitated to accept it it was because of his appreciation of the power of tradition and his consequently inevitable uncertainty about the genuineness of the League of the Just's determination fundamentally to reorganise itself. Marx had kept away from the secret societies in Paris. Repelled as he had been by their romanticism, which occasionally expressed itself in the most ludicrous forms, standing as he did a whole world apart from the doctrines of the insurrectionists and the Utopians, now that he had recognised the historical mission of the proletariat in all its immensity he had no choice but decisively and once and for all to reject secret society conspiratorialism as the method of organising the class movement. But Moll stated that it was essential that he and Engels should join the League if it were really to shake off all its archaic shackles, and Marx overcame his doubts and joined the League of the Just in February or March, 1847.

The Congress met in London on June 1, 1847 (it had been postponed for a month). Engels was the delegate of the Paris branch and Wilhelm Wolff came from Brussels. Marx stayed in Brussels. His official reason was lack of funds for the journey, and it appears from a letter that he did in fact attempt unsuccessfully to raise the necessary sum. But money cannot have been the decisive factor. If Marx had been really determined to take part in the Congress it would not have been difficult for him to have persuaded the branch to send him instead of the excellent but not outstanding Wolff. No doubt the real explanation is the assumption that before associating himself definitely with the League Marx wanted to await the results of the Congress.

The Congress decided on a complete reorganisation of the League. In place of the old name, to which any man could attach any meaning he liked—this was actually encouraged because there were only a few real initiates and to lead the profane astray could not but be useful—a new name, the

'Communist League,' made its appearance. The statutes of the League were entirely recast. The first sentence was: 'The aim of the League is the downfall of the bourgeoisie and the ascendancy of the proletariat, the abolition of the old society based on class conflicts and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property.' This was the language of Marx. The whole organisation was built up in the Marxian spirit. It was democratic throughout. Before joining the League Marx and Engels had stipulated that 'everything conducive to superstitious authoritarianism be struck out of the rules.' All the officers of the League were appointed by election and could be dismissed at any time by those who had elected them. This alone constituted an effective barrier against machinations and intrigues of the kind conducive to dictatorship, and the League was converted—at any rate for ordinary times of peace—into a straightforward propaganda organisation. The statutes were drafted and sent back to the branches for discussion. They were accepted after further deliberation by the second Congress in December.

Between now and the next Congress a statement of the League's programme, the League's 'profession of faith,' was to be worked out. Before parting the delegates also decided to publish a periodical. The 'trial number' of the *Kommunistische Zeitschrift*, the only one that ever appeared, came out in September, 1847. It was edited by the German Communists in London, no doubt with Engels's collaboration. The old motto of the League of the Just had been 'All men are brothers.' It was changed at Engels's suggestion. Whether his reasons for regarding the change as essential were the same as Marx's is not known. Marx declared that there was a whole mass of men of whom he wished anything rather than to be their brothers. The phrase that Engels proposed and the Congress of the Communist League accepted appeared for the first time on the badly printed little sheet on sale for twopence to German workers at the White Hart Inn in Drury Lane in the autumn of 1847. It was: 'Proletarians of all countries, unite!'

Marx had been trying for a long time to get hold of a legal newspaper in Germany through which he could express his views. He thought out innumerable schemes and conducted lengthy negotiations, all without success. German Socialist

papers competed for contributions from him and his friends, and a few articles also appeared in the *Rheinische Jahrbücher*, the *Deutsches Bürgerbuch*, the *Gesellschaftsspiegel*, the *Westfälische Dampfboot*, and others. But Marx remained only an occasional contributor, if a highly appreciated one. He had no power to dictate the policy of any paper. Next to Engels's articles and his own there appeared others favouring the 'true' socialism which Marx was combating. The sharper the division between the Marxian group and the others became, and the better organised they grew, the more essential was it to have a mouthpiece the policy of which should be determined by them and them alone.

The German censorship made it impossible to start a newspaper in Germany. It must appear abroad, nay, in the town in which Marx lived. Only in those conditions, with the control in Marx's own hands, would there be a guarantee that it would represent his views entirely. But that would require means which were not at the disposal of Marx and his friends.

Impossible as it was to found an organ of his own, the opportunity presented itself in 1847 of so influencing a paper already in existence that it would in effect be as good as his own. Since the beginning of the year the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* had been published weekly in Brussels by Adalbert von Bornstedt, who had contributed in his time to the *Paris Vorwärts*. Bornstedt was very anxious to secure Marx as a contributor. But Bornstedt was a man with a very doubtful past and with very doubtful connections. People stated quite openly, in speech and in writing, that he was in the service of the political police. The only thing they had any doubt about was in whose pay he actually was. He was held by some to be an Austrian spy, by others to be a spy of Prussia. Others again believed that it was 'Russian roubles that seemed to smile towards him.' There is no doubt that Marx knew of these incriminating allegations, which were frequently mentioned in the letters that passed between him and Heine during the time of their friendship. Even Freiligrath, whom in the first months of his Brussels exile Marx saw practically every day, believed that Bornstedt was a spy who had come to Brussels for the special purpose of keeping watch on the 'emigrants' there.

At first Marx had no contact with the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, if for no other reason than that politically it was completely colourless. 'So far it has no significance whatever,' the Prussian ambassador reported to Berlin on January 20, 1847. But with every number the paper became more oppositional, more revolutionary. The King of Prussia was the special subject of its attacks, and on April 3 the ambassador reported that the paper 'attacked His Majesty's Government with revolting scurrility and savagery.' Not content with quoting the paper's 'scurrility,' he made representations to the Belgian police, who should 'curb' it. At the moment, however, they were not inclined to do the Prussian's bidding. The *démarches* of the Prussian ambassador only had the effect of causing the Belgian newspapers to take up the matter and of supplying the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* with new material. It became 'even more scurrilous and violent in its attacks on foreign governments and princes.'

In these circumstances the suspicion that had previously rested on Bornstedt necessarily diminished. Marx started writing for the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* in April, 1847. Bornstedt 'had declared himself ready to do everything possible for us.' Doubtless Marx had come to the conclusion that there was no foundation for the allegations against him. Suspicion was hurled about among the German exiles at that time just as easily as it was among the Poles, among whom every political opponent, because he was an opponent, was thought capable of being a spy.

Now that the dossiers of the secret police are available it is known that there was substance in the denunciations of Bornstedt. He spied for Austria, for Prussia and perhaps for a few of the smaller German states as well. His reports, preserved among the secret state papers in Berlin, contain a wealth of material about the German exiles. But all his reports date from the thirties and the beginning of the forties. There is, of course, no proof that he gave up his nefarious activities with the cessation of his reports, but on the other hand the possibility that he became a genuine revolutionary is not excluded. He was an adventurer. He took part in Herwegh's expedition in 1848, fought against the troops of Baden, was taken prisoner and died mentally deranged.

As soon as Marx started writing for the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* he started trying to persuade others to do the same. He wrote to Herwegh and complained that the Germans were always finding new faults with the paper. Instead of taking advantage of it they were merely 'wasting an opportunity of accomplishing something. Their attitude to my manuscripts is rather like their attitude to the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, and at the same time the asses write to me every other day, asking me why I don't print anything, and they even try persuading me that it is better to write in French than not to write at all. One will have to atone a long time for having been born a Teuton!'

The advice to write in French annoyed Marx, in view of his criticism of Proudhon, which had appeared in July, 1847. In his reply to the invitation to co-operate from Paris in the activities of the correspondence committees Proudhon had promised to write a book giving his own solution of the social problem. He kept his promise and wrote his *Système des Contradictions Economiques, ou la Philosophie de la Misère*. The 'solution' turned out to be nothing but 'petty-bourgeois reformism' wrapped up in misunderstood Hegelian dialectical formulas. In his reply, *Misère de la Philosophie*, written in French in order to be intelligible to Proudhon's readers, Marx mercilessly cracked the 'critical whip' that Proudhon had expected down on Proudhon's 'eternal ideas' and 'eternal laws,' his philosophical confusion, his 'moral' and 'philosophical' explanations of economic conditions. Just as Marx had to fight all his life against pupils of Weitling—most of them did not know who their teacher was—so also had he to struggle against Proudhonism, in France particularly but in Germany as well.

The *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* was a very useful platform for keeping every possible kind of pseudo-Socialist and pseudo-radical in check. It very soon occupied a prominent position in the international democratic movement. The London Chartist assembly of September, 1847, hailed the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, the *Paris Réforme* and the *Northern Star* as 'the three greatest and most democratic organs of Europe.' That in spite of all obstacles it was smuggled into Germany in fairly large numbers appears from numerous complaints in the

police reports. It was read by all the German workers in Brussels.

Marx had already established good relations with them. After the conversion of the Brussels correspondence committee into a branch of the Communist League he and his friends formed the Brussels German Workers' Educational Union. Wherever members of the League of the Just and later of the Communist League went they founded legal organisations of this kind as soon as ever it became possible. The Brussels Union was patterned in every way, in aims, rules and constitution, on the London German Workers' Union.

Regular meetings were held twice a week. On Wednesdays there were lectures and the speaker was usually Marx. All that has survived of his economic lectures is what was later printed in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* under the title of *Wage-Labour and Capital*. Sundays were devoted to entertainment, previous to which Wilhelm Wolff always gave 'a review of the events of the day, which were invariably masterpieces of popular description, humorous and at the same time vivid, duly castigating the individual pettiness and blackguardisms of rulers and ruled in Germany alike.' Afterwards there were recitations—sometimes by Marx's wife—in addition to singing and dancing.

Police spies soon got excitedly to work on the paper and the club. A confidential report to the police authorities at Frankfurt-on-Main states: 'This noxious paper must indisputably exert the most corrupting influence upon the uneducated public at whom it is directed. The alluring theory of the dividing-up of wealth is held out to factory-workers and day-labourers as an innate right, and a profound hatred of the rulers and the rest of the community is inculcated into them. There would be a gloomy outlook for the Fatherland and for civilisation if such activities succeeded in undermining religion and respect for the laws and in any great measure infected the lowest class of the people by means of the Press and these clubs. . . . The circumstance that the number of members (of the Workers' Union) has increased from thirty-seven to seventy within a few days is worthy of note.'

The Brussels branch of the Communist League was closely

allied to the Left wing of the Belgian Democrats, not, of course, officially, but by reason of close personal connections. The editor of the *Atelier Démocratique*, a little paper published in a Brussels suburb, was L. Heilberg, a German refugee who died young. It was therefore quite natural for the Brussels branch of the League to take an active part in the formation of the International Democratic Union in Brussels.

Several attempts had been made in the thirties and forties to realise the idea of linking up all the revolutionary organisations in Europe and setting up a holy alliance of peoples against the Holy Alliance of kings. French, Germans, Greeks and other nationalities gathered round the headquarters of the Carbonari in Switzerland. Mazzini's *Young Europe* had national sections for 'Young' Italians, Germans, Poles, French, etc. Public banquets, which it was difficult for the police to ban, were a favourite method of bringing representatives of revolutionary movements together. Marx took part in a banquet of this kind in Paris in the spring of 1844. Nothing is known about it except that it took place and that French, Germans and Russians used the occasion to discuss democratic propaganda.

More, however, is known about the celebrations in Weitling's honour held in London on September 22, 1844. On this occasion Karl Schapper proposed the formation of a propaganda organisation with a view to uniting the democrats of all countries. There was unanimous enthusiasm for this proposal, but a year passed by before it was possible to take steps to carry it out. On September 22, 1845, more than a thousand Democrats of all nationalities gathered in London to celebrate the anniversary of the French Revolution. The initiator of the gathering was G. J. Harney, next to Ernest Jones the most zealous of the Chartist leaders who had risen above the prevalent insularity. Harney's words: 'We reject the word "foreigner." It must no longer exist in our democratic vocabulary,' became a reality in the society of Fraternal Democrats, formed on March 15, 1846. At first it was quite a loose association, intended to bring foreigners living in England closer to their similarly-minded English friends. In the summer of 1847 it was organised on a more formal basis.

Each nationality was given a general secretariat of its own. Harney was the English representative, the revolutionary Michelet, whose real name was Juin d'Allas, represented the French, and Karl Schapper represented the Germans. Their motto, 'All men are brothers,' was that of the London German Workers' Union.

In 1847 the Fraternal Democrats were extremely active, and there was no important event in international politics to which they did not declare their attitude, either in pamphlets or in the Press. In the autumn of 1847, they published a manifesto to all nations in which they outlined a plan for the formation of a widespread organisation, an 'International organisation eligible to people of all nationalities, with international committees in as many towns as possible.' There was a particularly lively response to the appeal in Belgium. In July, 1846, the Brussels correspondence committee had congratulated Feargus O'Connor, the Chartist, on his victory in the Nottingham election. The *Northern Star* had printed an article sent by the 'German Democratic Communists' and signed by Marx, Engels and Gigot, and the Fraternal Democrats greeted it as 'another proof of the advance of fraternity, and the approaching union of the Democrats of all countries in the great struggle for political and social equality.'

On September 27, 1847, the *Association Démocratique, ayant pour but l'union et la fraternité de tous les peuples*, was founded in Brussels. Singularly enough, it was founded originally as a counter-stroke to the local branch of the Communist League and was intended to resist the growing influence of Marx among the German refugees and the Belgian radicals. Bornstedt, who was consumed by ambition but was prevented by Marx from taking a direct part in political activity himself, wanted in all circumstances to play a political rôle. In Marx's absence from Brussels he took advantage of the opportunity to summon a conference of Democrats of various nations, at which it was decided to form a new organisation.

Marx's friends, and the nimble Engels in particular, had no difficulty in side-tracking Bornstedt, and Engels occupied the position of vice-president himself until Marx should return. In the middle of November Marx was formally elected as the German representative. The veteran General Antoine-

François Mellinet, national hero of 1830, was elected honorary president. The Belgian representative was Lucien-Leopold Jottrand, a lawyer and editor of the Brussels *Débat Social*, the French representative was Jacques Imbert, a Blanquist with a renowned revolutionary past, and the Polish representative was the famous historian, Joachim Lelevel.

In the months that followed Marx worked for the Association Démocratique with the greatest energy. At a public meeting in Brussels he spoke on the question of Free Trade, and the association published his speech as a pamphlet. He travelled to Ghent, where a meeting of more than three thousand people, predominantly workers, decided to form a branch association. There seemed excellent foundation for the hope that the organisation might grow into a strong, well-organised Democratic party.

The Communist League, the Workers' Union, the Association Démocratique, writing for the Brussels newspaper, an extensive correspondence with Germany, England and France, to say nothing of his literary labours, made ample claims on Marx's energy. But nothing would be more mistaken than to imagine the young Marx—at the outbreak of the revolution of 1848 he was barely thirty years old—as a gloomy ascetic and fanatic.

The letters of Marx and Engels between 1844 and 1847 are an excellent biographical source for the life of the latter. But only one letter of Marx's has come down to us from that time. All the same there are a few documents that throw light on Marx's personal life in Brussels.

His brother-in-law, Edgar von Westphalen, stayed in Brussels until the late autumn of 1847. Jenny Marx was very fond of him. 'My one, beloved brother,' she called him in a letter to Frau Liebknecht. 'The ideal of my childhood and youth, my dear and only friend.' He was a Communist, but apparently not a very active one. He was an enemy of philistinism rather than of bourgeois society, a completely unstable and irresolute person, but good-hearted and a cheerful companion. Marx was very fond of him. Weydemeyer wrote to his fiancée in February, 1846:

'If I tell you what kind of life we have been leading here, you will certainly be surprised at the Communists. To crown the folly, Marx, Weitling, Marx's brother-in-law and I sat up the whole night playing. Weitling got tired first. Marx and I slept a few hours on a sofa and idled away the whole of the next day in the company of his wife and his brother-in-law in the most priceless manner. We went to a tavern early in the morning, then we went by train to Villeworde, which is a little place near by, where we had lunch and then returned in the most cheerful mood by the last train.'

Not nearly so many Germans found their way to Brussels as to Paris. But no one who had even the most distant sympathy with Communism failed to visit Marx. Stephan Born visited 'the spiritual centre of Communism' at the end of October. This young printer had become a friend of Engels in Paris, turned Communist and made an able defence of Communism against the Republican Karl Heinzen, the 'caricature of a German Jacobin' who was later known in America as the 'prince-killer.' In 1848 Born was one of the leaders of the Berlin workers' movement, but when he wrote his reminiscences in his old age at Bâle he was a tedious social-reformist university professor. But he always retained a shy veneration for Marx. 'I found him,' he wrote, writing in retrospect of the autumn of 1847, 'in an extremely modest, one might almost say poorly furnished, little house in a suburb of Brussels. He received me in a friendly way, asked about the success of my propaganda journey, and paid me a compliment, with which his wife associated herself, about my pamphlet against Heinzen. She bade me a very friendly welcome. Throughout her life she took the most intense interest in everything that concerned and occupied her husband, and therefore she could not fail to be interested in me, as I was considered one of his hopeful young men. . . . Marx loved his wife and she shared his passion. I have never known such a happy marriage, in which joy and suffering—the latter in the richest measure—and all pain were overcome in such a spirit of mutual devotion. I have seldom known a woman, so harmoniously formed alike in outward appearance and heart and mind, make such a prepossessing impression at the first meeting. Frau Marx was

fair. Her children, who were still small, were dark-haired and dark-eyed like their father."

Marx's second daughter, Laura, was born in September, 1845, and his son Edgar, in December, 1846. The irregular income he earned by writing did not suffice to keep the growing family, and Marx was forced to borrow. In February, 1848, his material position improved, although only for a short time. For the six thousand francs his mother, after long negotiations, at last paid him out of his father's estate, were applied to political ends, to which all personal needs had to take second place.

The second Communist Congress was fixed for the autumn of 1847, and by then the League's 'profession of faith' had to be ready. Schapper attempted a first draft, Moses Hess attempted another, but the Paris branch of the League rejected both. Then Engels applied himself to the task. The form he chose for it was the one that was conventional at the time for declarations of the kind by Communist and other Left wing groups. It was drawn up in the form of questions and answers, like the catechism. Engels's catechism was written in straightforward, easily intelligible language and stated the fundamental ideas of scientific Socialism tersely and with transparent clarity. But Engels was not satisfied with it. In his opinion it was wretchedly written, and he thought it would be better to abandon the form of the catechism altogether, as it was necessary for the 'thing' to contain a certain number of descriptions of events. He suggested to Marx the title of 'Communist Manifesto.'

The Paris branch appointed Engels their delegate to the Congress, and this time the Brussels branch sent Marx. The two friends met at Ostend, discussed the draft and agreed that the first statement of aims of the Communist League to which they now belonged and of which they had become the leaders must not be one of the conventional popular pamphlets, however good it might be of its kind.

Marx, in addition to being the representative of the Brussels Communists, had a mandate to represent the Association Démocratique at the conference of the Fraternal Democrats

on November 29. The Fraternal Democrats had organised some celebrations in memory of the Polish revolt of 1830. The celebrations were typical of those held in those years of demonstrations of international solidarity in all the lands of Western Europe. The Communist Congress was to meet next day in the same hall, that of the London German Workers' Union, and the Communist delegates took part in the celebrations in honour of the Polish revolutionaries. Marx spoke side by side with English, French, German, Belgian and Polish speakers. He spoke of the imminent revolution. 'The old Poland is lost,' he said, 'and we should be the last to wish its restoration. But it is not only old Poland that is lost, but old Germany, old France, old England, the whole of our antiquated society. But the loss of our antiquated society is no loss for those who have nothing to lose in it, and the great majority in all the countries of the present day are in that position. They have far more to win by the downfall of our antiquated society, which will bring in its train the formation of a new society, no longer resting on class-conflicts.' Marx announced that the Association Démocratique proposed to summon an international Democratic congress for the following year. It coincided with a similar proposal by the Fraternal Democrats. It was decided to hold the congress in Brussels on October 25, 1848. It was not held, for events were too fast for it.

Next day the deliberations of the Communists began. They lasted for ten days, a time of strenuous activity for Marx and Engels. True, the Londoners had been won over to Marx, but much human effort and patient instruction and wary indulgence for old sensibilities were required before the last traces of mistrust of the 'intellectuals' were extinguished. The newly organised League—the statutes were definitely fixed—was without a trace of the conspiratorial character which had been such an essential element in the League of the Just. That it must remain a secret society was obvious. Even outside Germany, in free England, the Communists could not well have their organisation registered with the police. But within these limits, which were set by external necessity and were not self-imposed as they were in the case of the League of the Just or the French secret societies, because the Communist League

had no secret teaching for initiates only and did not plot, and because 'Communists scorned to keep their views and intentions secret,' within these limits it was an association for propaganda on a democratic basis.

Whether Engels laid his catechism before the Congress or not is not known. The delegates decided to entrust Marx and Engels with the drafting of their programme. The headquarters of the League remained in London, and Schapper, Heinrich Bauer and Moll remained its leaders. They were unanimous that the theoretical guidance of the League must be left to Marx.

Marx worked on the Communist Manifesto from the middle of December till the end of January. That was too slow for the German Communists in London. On January 24 they admonished him to hasten. They would take disciplinary measures against Citizen Marx, they wrote rather harshly, if the manuscript were not in their hands by February 1. But the ultimatum was superfluous, because Marx sent the manuscript to London before the prescribed day.

The Communist Manifesto was the common work of Marx and Engels. It is impossible to distinguish their respective contributions. But, as Engels frequently repeated, the fundamental ideas, the groundwork, belong to Marx alone. Marx gave it its form too. It is Marx's tremendous power that flows from every word, it is his fire with which the most brilliant pamphlet in world literature illuminates the times, to-day just as on the day on which it was completed.

The Manifesto gave an unerring leader to the proletariat in its struggle; not unerring in the narrow sense a dogmatist might attribute to the word, not unerring in the sense that every word is valid for the present day. It was written a few weeks before the outbreak of the European revolution of 1848. It proposed revolutionary measures which a quarter of a century later Marx and Engels called out-of-date because of the development of economic, social and political conditions. Unerring rather because, surveying the whole course of historical development, it enabled the workers concretely to understand their historical situation. The tremendous revolutionary pathos of the Manifesto does not dazzle but sharpens the view for the direct task ahead. Because it saw into the most

distant future, it saw into the most immediate present. It was the programme for the historical epoch of the struggle for the proletarian revolution and at the same time the programme for the next day's sober, disillusioned fight.

When the last sheets of the Communist Manifesto left the printing press Marx was in the midst of revolutionary Paris.

CHAPTER XII
THE REVOLUTIONARY TEMPEST

THE first sign of revolution came from Switzerland in November, 1847.

Im Hochland fiel der erste Schuss,
Im Hochland wider die Pfaffen.¹

The reactionary cantons which formed the Roman Catholic League rose against the decision of the Federal Council to expel the Jesuits. The governments of Russia, Austria, Prussia and France, always ready to step in on the side of reaction, which was the very principle of their existence, took the part of the Catholic cantons and threatened military intervention. A local Swiss conflict flared up into a question of European importance. Oxenbein, leader of the Swiss radicals, threatened that if Austria dared to intervene he would send an army of twenty thousand men into Lombardy and proclaim an Italian republic. The Austrian troops gathered at the frontier but did not move and three weeks later the Catholic cantons were beaten. The arrival in London of the news of the fall of Lucerne, their capital, coincided with the opening of the Communist Congress.

From the Alps the revolutionary avalanche poured down into the Italian plain. In the face of the Swiss threat Austria beat a pitiful retreat. The prestige of the alien ruler was shaken. There were stormy demonstrations in Lombardy, and in some places the demonstrations developed into open fighting. In January insurrection broke out in the south, in Sicily.

Drauf ging der Tanz in Welschland los
Die Scyllen und Charybden,
Vesuv und Aetna brachen los,
Ausbruch auf Ausbruch, Stoss auf Stoss. . . .²

¹ The first shot was fired in the high country
Against the priests.

² The dance started in the South; Scylla and Charybdis,
Vesuvius and Etna burst forth, outbreak on outbreak,
blow on blow.

The revolutionaries defeated the troops of the Bourbon Ferdinand of Naples in a five-day street-battle. Insurrection broke out in one Italian state after another. Constitutions were declared in Naples, Turin and Florence. King Ferdinand barely escaped trial by a people's court.

The industrial crisis which had made Europe ripe for revolution was particularly severe in Belgium, where economic development was relatively high. In the winter of 1847-8 unemployment in the textile areas rose from week to week, and in the workers' quarters, which were accustomed to privation, famine stalked abroad. Not a single day passed by, writes the historian of the Belgian workers' movement, without a starving worker breaking a shop-window for the sake of appeasing his hunger in prison.

The 1847 elections had brought the Liberals into power. They demonstrated their incapacity to check the crisis, and the agitation of the radical Democrats fell on fertile soil. The Association Démocratique was the leading spirit. Branch associations sprang up one after another in Ghent, Liège, Namur and elsewhere. Members streamed in in masses. They came from the working classes, from the hard-pressed petty-bourgeoisie and from intellectual circles too. Political tension grew as the economic crisis became more acute.

Events abroad were followed in Belgium with the greatest interest. 'The executioner is waiting,' Engels exclaimed with joy when in January, 1848, he summed up the progress of the movement during the past year for the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*. The revolutionary wave swept over all frontiers, no firm-built dam was strong enough to hold it. Engels actually anticipated by a century the collapse of the 'chequered' Austrian Empire, 'botched together of bits stolen here and inherited there.' Poland seemed to be striking a fatal blow at Europe's other gendarme, Nicholas I of Russia. Poland, as has already been observed, was the country to which the revolutionaries of all countries kept their gaze constantly riveted during the three decades of reaction. The rising of Poland must mean the rising of all Europe, the liberation of Poland would be at once a symbol and a signal for all the oppressed. In the winter of 1847-8 three great democratic demonstrations on behalf of Poland took place in Brussels. On

February 14 Belgians, Poles and Germans demonstrated in honour of the heroes of the 1830 revolution and the martyrs of the rising of the Russian Dekabrists. A week later, on February 22, Marx spoke at a meeting in memory of the Cracow rising of 1846. Marx extolled the Polish revolution and lauded the rising at Cracow for the glorious example it set Europe, '*en identifiant la cause de la nationalité à la cause de la démocratie et à l'affranchissement de la classe opprimée.*'¹ The meeting closed with a pathetic scene. Old Lelevel, the veteran of the Polish revolution, embraced Marx and kissed him.

The refugees, forced to restrain themselves for so many years, cast themselves the more passionately into political activity now. There was no meeting in which they did not participate. This applied in particular to the German exiles, who threw themselves enthusiastically into the Belgian movement, without of course, forgetting their more particular German duties. There were innumerable contacts with the adjacent territories of Prussia, particularly with the Rhineland. After Marx and his comrades joined the Communist League they saw to it that every Communist with whom they were in contact founded a branch of the League. Illegal literature published abroad was smuggled into Germany in great quantities, and the more important articles from the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* were reprinted as fly-sheets and fairly widely distributed.

The German Communists in Belgium prepared to hurry to Germany at the first sign. Wilhelm Wolff was arrested by the Brussels police in the middle of February, 1848, and stated openly that he and his friends were directing all their attention to Germany, where they were carrying out intense propaganda. 'Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle,' he is quoted as saying in a police report, 'were the places designated for the risings.'

Hitherto the Belgian police and the Belgian Conservatives had not paid any particular attention to the German Communists. The Prussian ambassador never kept them out of his sight, and from time to time called the attention of the Belgian authorities to their 'criminal activities,' but without result. This state of affairs altered when the situation in the country

¹ In identifying the cause of nationality with that of democracy and the emancipation of the oppressed class.

became acute and the Germans became active. Several newspapers started attacking the German exiles, and the Prussian ambassador probably had a hand in the campaign. On January 20 he was able to inform his Government that the Belgian police now considered it necessary to keep a watch on the agitation being carried out and that they intended to take definite steps against foreigners, and against the Germans in particular. There is no doubt that the ambassador did all he could to encourage police action. Meanwhile tension grew from day to day. But everybody knew that the revolution could only conquer after it had conquered in Paris. Everybody waited for the crowing of the Gallic cock.

Unrest was rife in France. Suffrage reforms were demanded and, in accordance with the custom of the time, a campaign of banquets was organised. But nothing pointed to an immediate revolutionary outbreak. Louis Philippe, an old cynic who had experienced many revolutions, attempted to pacify his ministers. 'The Parisians won't start a revolution in winter,' he said. 'They storm things in hot weather. They stormed the Bastille in July, the Bourbon throne in June. But in January or February, no.' The stout, phlegmatic Louis Philippe forgot that salvoes fired into a crowd can cause a July temperature in February. On February 23 the military fired at a peaceful demonstration. Next morning Paris was filled with barricades. The people's cry was not for electoral reform but a republic. On the evening of the 24th the Palais Royal was in the hands of the insurrectionists. The king fled and a bonfire was made of the throne. The same evening a Provisional Government was formed and a republic proclaimed.

Events in Paris were known in Brussels, but even the greatest optimists had not expected things to develop so rapidly and so successfully. After the outbreak of the insurrection connection between Paris and Brussels was interrupted.

'On the evening of February 24, 1848,' writes Stephan Born, 'half a dozen German youths were standing on the Paris platform at Brussels station. They were practically alone. Since morning there had been no train from the French capital and no news about the unrest which had broken out. The honest inhabitants of the Belgian capital were a somewhat slow-blooded race and had to be warmed up before they got

going. Curiosity about what might have happened in Paris apparently did not trouble them. We few Germans were, as I said, almost alone on the platform, and we were foreigners. But no, there were two other people, a lady and a gentleman, standing silently and anxiously in a corner. They too were waiting for the train, which, even if it did not come all the way from Paris, would at least be coming from the French frontier. Occasionally one or other of them would cast a gloomy look at us as we stood there chattering happily, expressing our conjectures and hopes concerning the news the arrival of which could not be delayed much longer now. They guessed our thoughts and advanced a few paces towards us, but suddenly a protracted whistle announced the approach of the long-awaited train. Another moment and it was in the station. Before it came to a standstill, the guard jumped down and shouted at the top of his voice: "The Red Flag is flying on the tower of Valenciennes and a Republic has been proclaimed."

'"Long live the Republic!" we shouted as with one voice. But the lady and gentleman who had been waiting for news turned pale and beat a hurried retreat. A station official told us that they were the French ambassador, General Rumigny, and his wife.'

The victory of the Paris revolution disconcerted and dismayed the Belgian Government, or at any rate so it appeared on the surface. Rogier, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, opened negotiations with his friend, Considérant, the Fourierist, who recommended a revolution from above. The Government, which was in the hands of the Liberals, should proclaim a republic itself. The king gave the Republicans the hint that he would not oppose the people's will and was ready to abdicate if the Belgians really wanted a Republic. All he wished was that everything should happen in an orderly manner and without bloodshed, and besides he hoped for a respectable pension.

Everything seemed to be developing excellently, but the whole thing was only a manœuvre. In the meantime the Government called up the reserves and the soldiers on furlough and marched the regiments to Brussels. So far from trying to stop the spreading of rumours to the effect that they were

prepared to accede of their own accord to the most extreme demands, they rather encouraged them in order to diminish the tension and pacify the determined few.

The leadership of the movement was provided by the Association Démocratique practically alone. On February 27 it summoned a mass meeting, which decided to meet again on the following day, this time outside the Town Hall, to demand the calling up of workers and artisans to supplement the National Guard and provide the necessary pressure. An appeal to arms was made at the meeting, in order not to be defenceless in case of a police attack. Late that night there were a number of minor demonstrations, which were broken up by the police and gave them the desired opportunity to forbid the meeting on the following day. The Government, now having a sufficiency of military power on which to rely, suddenly adopted an entirely different tone. When the Democratic deputies said in the Chamber that the triumphal march of the Revolution would advance from Paris and conquer the whole world, the Government spokesman replied that it was scarcely necessary for freedom to make a world tour of that kind before it came to Belgium.

The German exiles were in the forefront of the revolutionary movement. Marx helped to draft the address of greeting the Association Démocratique sent the Provisional Government in France. The address spoke of the great tasks that still lay ahead of the revolution. German *émigrés* took part in the demonstration of the night of February 28. Wilhelm Wolff was arrested and a knife was found on him. According to the police Marx gave five thousand of the six thousand francs he had just received to buy weapons for the workers of Brussels. The police had their opportunity of dealing with the exiles at last. They worked in close touch with the Prussian ambassador, who had in his possession on February 29, only a day or two after it was drawn up, a list of those who were to be expelled. Marx's name was at the top of the list.

Marx had no intention of staying in Belgium in any case. The revolutionary centre of Europe was Paris, where his old acquaintance, Flocon, now a member of the Provisional Government, summoned him. He invited the 'dear and brave [*cher et vaillant*]' Marx to return to the land from which tyranny

had banished him. *'La tyrannie vous a banni, la libre France vous ouvre les portes, à vous et à tous ceux qui luttent pour la sainte cause de la fraternité des peuples.'*¹

The letter was sent from Paris on the first of March. Marx received it on the second or the third and its arrival practically coincided with a police order giving him twenty-four hours to leave Brussels. The expulsion order was handed to Marx at five o'clock on March 3. He had a few hours in which to settle a mass of personal and political affairs.

Almost as soon as the news of the successful Paris rising reached London Schapper, Heinrich Bauer and others at the headquarters of the Communist League decided to hurry to Paris. The London branch of the League resolved to transfer the powers vested in it to the Brussels branch. The Brussels branch was Marx, but Marx was expelled from Brussels. On the evening of March 3 the five representatives of the branch gathered in Marx's room in the hotel in which he was living. The meeting dissolved the newly appointed League central office, invested Marx personally with full powers and entrusted him with the task of constituting a new central office in Paris. Before they had time to leave the premises, they were raided by the police. They failed to capture Marx's friends, who managed to slip away in the general confusion. But the League papers and documents fell into their hands, among them the minutes of the meeting which had just taken place. Thus the names of the chief officials of the League fell into their possession. As a sign and token of their new-born friendship, a copy of the minutes and other documents found in Marx's room was sent to the Prussian ambassador.

Marx described the disgraceful behaviour of the police in a letter to the *Réforme*:

'Après avoir reçu, le 3 mars, à cinq heures du soir, l'ordre de quitter le royaume belge dans le délai de vingt-quatre heures, j'étais occupé encore, dans la nuit du même jour, de faire mes préparatifs de voyage, lorsqu'un commissaire de police, accompagné de dix gardes municipaux, pénétra dans mon domicile, fouilla toute la maison, et finit par m'arrêter, sous prétexte que je n'avais pas de papiers. Sans parler des papiers très réguliers que M. Duchâtel m'avait remis en m'expulsant de la France,

¹ Tyranny has banished you; free France flings wide her portals for you, and all who struggle in the sacred cause of the brotherhood of the peoples.

je tenais en mains le passeport d'expulsion que la Belgique m'avait délivré il y avait quelques heures seulement.

'Je ne vous aurais pas parlé, monsieur, de mon arrestation et des brutalités que j'ai souffertes, s'il ne s'y rattachait une circonstance qu'on aura peine à comprendre, même en Autriche.

'Immédiatement après mon arrestation, ma femme se fait conduire chez M. Jottrand, président de l'association démocratique de Belgique, pour l'engager à prendre les mesures nécessaires. En rentrant chez elle, elle trouve à la porte un sergent de ville qui lui dit, avec une politesse exquise, que, si elle voulait parler à M. Marx, elle n'aurait qu'à le suivre. Ma femme accepte l'offre avec empressement. On la conduit au bureau de la police, et le commissaire lui déclare d'abord que M. Marx n'y était pas; puis il lui demande brutalement qui elle était, ce qu'elle allait faire chez M. Jottrand, et si elle avait ses papiers sur elle. Un démocrate belge, M. Gigot, qui avait suivi ma femme au bureau de la police avec la garde municipale, se révoltant des questions à la fois absurdes et insolentes du commissaire, est réduit au silence par des gardes qui s'emparent de lui et le jettent en prison. Sous le prétexte de vagabondage, ma femme est amenée à la prison de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, et enfermée avec des femmes perdues, dans une salle obscure. A onze heures du matin, elle est conduite en plein jour, sous toute une escorte de gendarmerie, au cabinet du juge d'instruction. Pendant deux heures, elle est mise au secret, malgré les plus vives réclamations qui arrivent de toutes parts. Elle reste là exposée à toute la rigueur de la saison et aux propos les plus indignes des gendarmes.

'Elle paraît enfin devant le juge d'instruction, qui est tout étonné que la police, dans sa sollicitude, n'a pas arrêté également les enfants de bas-âge. L'interrogatoire ne pouvait être que factice, et tout le crime de ma femme consiste en ce que, bien qu'appartenant à l'aristocratie prussienne, elle partage les sentiments démocratiques de son mari.

*'Je n'entre pas dans tous les détails de cette révoltante affaire. Je dirai seulement que, lorsque nous étions relâchés, les vingt-quatre heures étaient justement expirées, et qu'il nous fallait partir sans pouvoir seulement emporter les effets les plus indispensables.'*¹

¹ After receiving on March 3 at five o'clock in the afternoon an order to leave Belgium within twenty-four hours, on the evening of the same day, when I was still busy with preparations for my journey, a commissary of police, accompanied by ten municipal guards, entered my apartments, searched the whole house and ended by arresting me on the pretext that I had no papers. Apart from the highly regular papers which M. Duchâtel supplied me with on expelling me from France, I had in my possession the expulsion passport which Belgium had supplied me with but a few hours previously.

I should not have spoken of my arrest and of the brutalities to which I was

The Belgian Liberal Press made a vigorous protest against the ignominy with which their country was covering itself. Engels mobilised the Chartist Press in England. The deputy Bricourt demanded an interpellation in the Belgian Chamber. The commissary of police who had arrested Marx and his wife was dismissed. But by that time Marx was no longer on Belgian soil.

He was taken to the frontier under police escort. It was a journey with many obstacles. The trains and the stations were packed to suffocation with soldiers on their way to the south. The air positively hummed with rumours. It was said that the French and Belgian legions which had been formed on French soil intended to found a Belgian republic at the point of the bayonet. They would be suitably received!

In France the victory of the Republic was still being celebrated. The stations were beflagged, the red flag and the tricolour flew side by side and enthusiasm was still running high. The railway lines had been torn up at Valenciennes and a half-hour omnibus ride was imposed on the travellers before they could resume their train journey. Here, as on the stretch between Pontoise and St. Denis, coachmen and subjected were it not for one circumstance which would be difficult to understand, even in Austria.

Immediately after my arrest my wife called on M. Jottrand, president of the Democratic Association of Belgium, to ask him to take the necessary steps. On her return she found a policeman at the door who told her, with exquisite politeness, that if she wished to talk to M. Marx she had only to follow him. My wife eagerly accepted the offer. She was conducted to the police-station, where the commissary started by telling her that M. Marx was not there; he then rudely asked who she was, what she wanted with M. Jottrand and whether she had her papers with her. M. Gigot, a Belgian Democrat who accompanied my wife and the policeman to the police-station, indignant at the commissary's absurd and insolent questions, was silenced by the guards, who seized him and threw him into prison. My wife was taken to the Hôtel-de-Ville prison on the pretext of vagabondage and locked up in a dark room in the company of a number of prostitutes. At eleven o'clock next morning she was taken by an escort of gendarmes, in broad daylight, to the office of the examining magistrate. She was kept in a cell for two hours, in spite of violent protests which arrived from every quarter, and exposed to all the rigours of the season and to the basest insults by the gendarmes.

Eventually she appeared before the examining magistrate, who was quite astonished at the police in their solicitude not having likewise arrested my young children. Under these circumstances the interrogation amounted to a complete farce, and my wife's only crime consists in sharing her husband's opinions, though she is of Prussian aristocratic origin.

I shall not enter into all the details of this revolting business, but merely add that when we were released the twenty-four hours' grace had just expired and we were compelled to leave the country without even being able to take with us even the most indispensable personal effects.

innkeepers had taken advantage of the first days of confusion to avenge themselves on their new competitor, the railway. They had torn up rails, burned down stations, smashed engines and coaches. In spite of all these hindrances Marx reached Paris on March 4.

Paris still bore fresh marks of the fighting at the barricades. Fanny Lewald, the German writer, who arrived in Paris a few days after Marx, described the scene that confronted the newcomer. The paving stones at the street corners were lying loosely instead of being cemented down. Here and there smashed bread carts and overturned omnibuses indicated the scenes of former barricades. An iron railing outside a church had been completely torn up, except for a few feet which showed where an iron railing had been. At the Palais Royal, or Palais National, as it was now called in big letters, all the windows, many window-frames and much scaffolding were broken; the Château d'Eau, the guard-house opposite the Palais Royal, in which the guards had been burned to death, lay in smoke-black ruins; other guard-houses in the neighbourhood of the Seine had been razed to the ground, and National Guards kept guard, sitting in the nearest taverns which served them as guard-room. The trees on the Boulevards had been cut down and the water-pipes and pillars pulled down. Dirty white curtains fluttered from the paneless windows of the Tuileries.

The town was still at the height of its brief republican enthusiasm. 'The workers,' in the words of Engels, 'ate bread and potatoes in the day-time and spent the evening planting "trees of freedom" on the boulevards, while enthusiasts ran wild and sang the *Marseillaise* and the bourgeoisie hid in their houses all day long, trying to mollify the fury of the people by exhibiting coloured lanterns.' The old song of the Gironde was sung:

*Mourir pour la patrie
C'est le sort le plus beau
Le plus digne d'envie.*¹

The tricolour flew over the Palais Royal and the Tuileries, where Marx's old friend, Imbert, was now installed as governor.

¹ To die for one's country is the most beautiful and enviable fate.

Here and there the red flag of the proletarian revolution was to be seen.

Revolutionary and Socialist clubs sprang up like mushrooms. Newspapers, pamphlets and fly-sheets appeared every day. Paris seethed with political life. Boundless possibilities, intoxicating perspectives suddenly opened up before the exiles' eyes. It never entered their heads for a moment that the revolution might stop at the borders of France. The revolutionary flame that had been kindled in Paris would leap the frontiers and set Germany, Austria, Poland, the whole of Europe alight.

Since the great French Revolution it had appeared self-evident that democracies and autocratic monarchies could not live peacefully side by side. If democracy were victorious it must necessarily come into collision with neighbouring states which were still in the hands of absolutism. The revolutionary war was inevitable if the revolution were not to miscarry again. During the months that followed the events of February the question of the revolutionary war was one of the most important subjects of party controversy. The Blanquists, true to the tradition of the Great Revolution, which with them was only too often an obstinate obsession, kept agitating for a revolutionary war with all the passion which was their best inheritance. They urged it not only on the ground that it was the only thing that could save the new France, but also because they believed that it was only by and through a war that the revolution in France could really be fulfilled.

The Provisional Government, and Lamartine, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, wanted peace. From the very first he assured all the governments of Europe that France was willing to have peaceful relations with all states, whatever their form of government might be.

But the Belgian, Italian and Polish exiles were working for war and feverishly preparing for it. Each group formed its own legion to take its place in the great army which should march against the despots, vanguard of the army of revolutionary France in the last war of all, from which a brotherly alliance of free peoples should arise. The Germans took enthusiastically to this idea.

Before Marx's arrival in Paris a huge meeting of German exiles and artisans resolved to form a German legion. The

resolution had been proposed by Bornstedt, and Herwegh was elected chairman of the committee. Appeals were already plastered on the walls of Paris:

'Appel au Citoyens Français.

'Des Armes!

'Pour les Allemands marchant au secours de leur frères qui combattent en ce moment pour la liberté, qui se font égorger pour leur droits, et qu'on veut tromper de nouveau.

'Les démocrates allemands de Paris se sont formés en légion pour aller proclamer ensemble la République allemande.

'Il leur faut des armes, des munitions, de l'argent, des objets d'habillement. Prêtez-leur votre assistance; vos dons seront reçus avec gratitude. Ils serviront à délivrer l'Allemagne et en même temps la Pologne.

'Démocrates allemands et polonais marcheront ensemble à la conquête de la liberté.

'Vive la France! Vive la Pologne! Vive l'Allemagne unie et républicaine! Vive la fraternité des peuples!'¹

The first detachments of German legionaries had already started drilling on the Champ de Mars. They even had their anthem ready: 'We march to Germany in masses.'

The plan was to invade Germany and raise an insurrection in the Odenwald, where the people were already stirred up and memories of the great German Peasant War still survived. The whole of Germany, starting with the Odenwald, was to be roused to revolt. For some, however, this plan was not nearly ambitious enough. They actually visualised an alliance with the Poles, who planned a rising in Posen and another in Galicia, to be followed by an expedition against Russia.

¹ Appeal to the Citizens of France

Arms!

Arms for the Germans marching to the help of their brethren now fighting for liberty, offering their lives for their rights, whom their enemies are trying to deceive once more!

The German Democrats of Paris have formed a legion to march and proclaim the German Republic.

They need arms, ammunition, money, clothing. Help them. Your gifts will be gratefully received. They will help to deliver Germany, and Poland as well.

German and Polish Democrats will march together to the conquest of liberty. Long live France! Long live Poland! Long live united Republican Germany! Long live the brotherhood of the peoples!

Everything seemed possible. It was sufficient for the first revolutionary trumpets to blow for the walls of the fortress of Peter and Paul, the citadel of European reaction, to fall of themselves. The Polish Democrats, who at that time were everywhere the heroes of the day, had already started squabbling with the Russian Democrats about the frontiers of free and independent Poland. Their revolutionary ardour seemed equal to the most impossible tasks. 'Oh, just for one day, dare it!' was the verse with which Herwegh spurred on the half-hearted. Only one thing was necessary: determination and again determination.

One of the few not carried away by the enthusiasm and the tumult was Marx. That France did not want war was plain enough to anyone who did not take the wish for the reality. A Blanquist Government would make war, but to bring the Blanquists into power would require another revolution. If Lamartine supported and encouraged the legions it was not on revolutionary grounds but for very much more sober and mundane reasons. The Provisional Government wanted to be rid of the foreign workers, who had been a disturbing element from of old. They were actually willing to subsidise their journey to the frontier. The legion, which consisted of at most two thousand men, had no prospects whatever if it fought alone. It could at best hope for an initial military success. To the attacked absolutist powers an inroad by the legion could only be welcome; for it would rouse national and patriotic feeling in the invaded country and willy-nilly strengthen the government.

Marx was from the first bitterly opposed to futile, nay harmful, playing at revolution. He counselled the workers not to rush headlong to destruction with the legion but to await developments in Germany, which were bound to lead to revolution in a very short time. Their place was Paris, not the Odenwald. Sebastian Seiler, then a member of the Communist League and an acquaintance of Marx, later wrote:

'The Socialists and Communists were bitterly opposed to attempting to establish a German republic by armed intervention from without. They held public meetings in the Rue St. Denis, which some of the later insurgents attended. Marx made a long speech at one of these meetings, and said that

the February revolution was only to be regarded as the superficial beginning of the European movement. In a short time open fighting would break out in Paris between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (as it actually did in June). On its result the victory or defeat of revolutionary Europe would depend. He therefore insisted that the German workers remain in Paris and prepare in advance to take part in the armed struggle.'

This was swimming against the stream. The majority of the revolutionary and democratic German exiles were opposed to Marx. They called him coward and traitor and hurled the great, fine-sounding phrases of the French Revolution at his head. In spite of his outstanding authority in the Communist League, he was opposed by some of its members. Marx did not retreat a step. The interests of the revolution and of the working-class were at stake.

At the beginning of March the Fraternal Democrats had sent a workers' deputation to Paris with an address to the Provisional Government. M'Grath represented the Chartist national executive committee, Jones the London section of the Party, Harney the Fraternal Democrats, and Schapper and Moll the London German Workers' Union. They were given a friendly reception by Garnier-Pagès and Ledru-Rollin. The London and Brussels branches of the Communist League, assembled now in Paris, were able to constitute the new central office in all due form. Marx was elected president, Schapper secretary, and the members were Engels, Moll, Bauer, Wilhelm Wolff and Wallau. Marx was now able on the League's behalf to break with the organisations which acknowledged Herwegh and his legion. Bornstedt, who had been elected to the League in Brussels, was expelled. The decision and the reasons for it were published and some newspapers in Germany actually reprinted the news, including the *Trierer Zeitung*, published in Marx's native town. Marx and his adherents withdrew from the democratic organisation and founded an organisation of their own, the German Workers' Union, which met at the Café de la Picarde in the Rue St. Denis. This club consisted almost exclusively of workers, especially tailors and bootmakers, men whom Alphonse Lucas, the reactionary chronicler of the clubs of this period, sneered at for arrogating to themselves the right '*indiquer à la France*

la manière dont elle devait se gouverner,' of showing France how she ought to be governed. Marx, however, was successful. As early as March 20 the ambassador of Baden reported to his Government that Marx's adherents were 'very numerous.' At the beginning of April the Union numbered four hundred members.

Soon after his arrival in Paris Marx revived his contacts with French revolutionary circles that he knew from 1844 and 1845. On the evening of the day on which he left Brussels he spoke at the *club central* of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*, the leader of which was Barbès, a Right Blanquist. Marx's relations with the groups which were represented in the Provisional Government by Ledru-Rollin and Flocon were particularly good. Both these ministers were praised in the letters Engels wrote his brother-in-law, Emil Blank. Engels said the workers would hear of no one but Ledru-Rollin, and they were quite right, because he was more resolute than any of the others. The men round Ledru-Rollin and Flocon were Communists without knowing it. Marx and Engels were on terms of personal friendship with Flocon, whom they frequently visited. Flocon offered them money to start a newspaper in Germany, but they did not accept it. Marx's relations with Ledru-Rollin and Flocon later changed, but to the end he criticised them comparatively mildly.

The European movement advanced with a giant's stride. 'Marvellous' news arrived daily. 'A complete revolution in Nassau; in Munich students, artists and workers in full insurrection; at Cassel revolution is at the gate; in Berlin there is unbounded fear and trepidation; freedom of the Press and a national guard proclaimed throughout the West of Germany. That is enough for a beginning. If only Frederick William IV remains stubborn! If he does, everything is won and in a few months we shall have the German revolution. If only he clings to his feudal ways! But the devil alone knows what that moody, crazy individual will do next.' Thus wrote Engels in Brussels to Marx in Paris on March 8.

On March 19 there was a parade of Herwegh's Democrats at the Butte de Monceau, with sabre-rattling, fixing of bayonets, rifle-practice, marching and counter-marching. At the final rally Herwegh read a German address to the Polish Democrats.

At about four o'clock some thousand men marched back to Paris in military formation. When they reached it they learned the news that had just come to Paris: a revolution in Vienna, Metternich deposed, the Emperor forced to yield to all the demands of the fighters at the barricades. Tens of thousands of Frenchmen exuberantly fraternised with the Germans. Next day there came the news of victory in Berlin. The boldest dreams were more than fulfilled. Rumours spread beyond all bounds. The King of Prussia was said to have been arrested by the insurgents and thrown into prison, Warsaw had risen and the Russians had been put to flight, and the garrison of St. Petersburg had hoisted the flag of insurrection.

The legion was no longer to be restrained. It left Paris on April 1. It was given a magnificent send-off. The son of Marshal Ney, the Prince of Moscow, made an eloquent speech in which he referred to the great revolutionary traditions and spoke of the revolution's struggle against the bulwark of absolutism in the north, and then the adventure which was to end so quickly and so pitifully began. The leaders of the legion had not yet even decided what they wanted; whether to kindle a peasant war or march peacefully through Germany, their weapons in their hands, to attack Russia, or fight a civil war in Germany until the French advance began. When Ledru-Rollin tried to find out what the exact aims of Herwegh's movement were, he is said to have brought a long conversation to a close with the words: 'Ah, now I understand, you want to take a corps of barricade professors to Germany.'

The 'barricade professors' were stopped at Strasbourg. That they carried with them the heartiest good wishes of the Blanquists helped them not at all. Lamartine had very guilefully and diplomatically done everything in his power to give the German Government time to prepare their troops for the legion's reception. The forces the legion met when it crossed the Rhine were so infinitely superior and it was so inadequately armed that it was overwhelmed and beaten at the first encounter.

This outcome had been foreseen by Marx. He had opposed the blind, desperate enthusiasm, the reckless, plunging spirit of the insurgents without heeding the mockery and scorn heaped upon him as a doctrinaire. In his view it was infinitely

more important for the revolutionaries to make themselves acquainted with the programme dictated to them by the precipitous course of events. The outcry against Marx among the hyper-revolutionaries had reached its zenith at a moment when, they believed, all true revolutionaries ought to be teaching the workers the use of arms, while he spent his time lecturing them on political economy, damping down their enthusiasm and turning them into doctrinaires.

The outbreak of revolution in Germany gave the Communists new tasks. Their place was no longer in Paris, but in the country in which they and they only could show the working class the way. That country was Germany. Marx advised the exiles to return to Germany individually and start building up proletarian organisations.

By a coincidence the leaders of the Communist League left Paris on the same day as Herwegh's legion; but without music and without a speech by the Prince of Moscow. A young member of Herwegh's expedition sent a report about it to some German newspapers. 'The German Communists left Paris too,' he wrote. 'Unlike the German Democrats, they did not depart fraternally and sociably, in closed ranks, but each man went to a different point on his own initiative—travellers each carrying the salvation of the world in his own breast.' The writer of those lines soon saw how misguided was the contempt with which he wrote. He was Wilhelm Liebknecht, then aged twenty-two.

The Communists left Paris. Four and a half years before Marx had transplanted himself from the Prussia of Frederick William IV to the Paris of Louis Philippe. Since then there had been the breach with the Left Hegelians, the arrival at clarification, the rejection of semi-demi, muddle-headed, sentimental Socialism, the Communist Manifesto, the Communist League. When Marx left Paris the flag of the Republic was flying from the Palais Royal and Germany was in flames.

CHAPTER XIII

THE 'MAD YEAR' IN COLOGNE

IN Germany the members of the Communist League scattered in all directions. Most of them went to their native town or to the place where they had lived before going into exile. Engels spent April and May in the Wuppertal, Wilhelm Wolff went to Breslau, Schapper to Wiesbaden, Born to Berlin, Wallau to Mainz. In practically every place where workers' unions arose in the months that followed the lead was taken by members of the League or of organisations affiliated to it.

The immediate task was to bring together the workers' organisations that had been founded before the outbreak of the Revolution. The first appeal for unity came from the Mainz Workers' Educational Union. Marx, who stopped for two days at Mainz on the way from Paris to Cologne, helped to draft it.

Marx went to Cologne because he had connections with that city which had never been entirely broken off during his years of exile and because Cologne, the biggest city in the most highly industrialised part of Germany, was the obvious place for the headquarters of the Communist League. He arrived on April 10, accompanied by Engels and Ernst Dronke, a gifted young political writer who had earned himself a good reputation by his books and stories and been made famous by his big trial for *lèse-majesté*, when he was condemned to two years' imprisonment. His daring escape from the fortress of Wesel made him still more famous.

A branch of the Communist League had existed in Cologne since the autumn of 1847. Its leaders were Andreas Gottschalk, a physician, and August von Willich, a former artillery lieutenant. Both these highly distinctive personalities, each in his own way characteristic of the 'mad year' of 1848, will be repeatedly mentioned in the pages that follow, and a few words about their careers will not be out of place.

Gottschalk, son of a Jewish butcher, was born at Düsseldorf in 1815. He studied medicine and philosophy at Bonn—he

was at Bonn at the same time as Marx—and passed his finals with distinction in 1839. In 1840 he started a medical and surgical practice in Cologne. From the first he worked almost exclusively in the working-class quarters of the city, as healer, helper and friend of the poorest workers. ‘It is intelligible,’ states a pamphlet written in his memory in 1849, ‘that the man who had the most abundant opportunity of observing poverty, misery and distress at close quarters and was also a warm sympathiser with the sufferings of the proletariat, who were almost on the brink of utter destitution—it is readily intelligible, I say, that such a man should reflect upon the ways and means of most rapidly and effectively redressing pauperisation and distress.’ Gottschalk made the workers’ cause his own. The Cologne workers idolised their warm-hearted doctor and friend. He was their undisputed leader.

August von Willich was a man of entirely different type. He was descended from an ancient, aristocratic, military Prussian family, attended the military academy at Potsdam, and at the beginning of the forties was a captain in an artillery brigade stationed in Westphalia. The ideas of the time—democracy, Socialism, revolutionary substitution of a new world for the old—found their way even into the stuffy atmosphere of a Prussian barracks. Willich belonged to the not so very small group of officers to whom these ideas appealed. When Lieutenant Fritz Anneke, later Gottschalk’s closest friend and colleague, was deprived of his officer’s status because of his courageous avowal of Socialism, Willich wrote an open letter to the king on his behalf. For this he was placed before a court of honour and deprived of his rank. He went to Cologne and joined the local branch of the Communist League. He earned his living as a carpenter. When the former Prussian army captain made his way across the Cologne parade ground, as he did deliberately every morning on his way to work, walking very slowly past the drilling squads, wearing his leather apron and with his tools on his back, it had a very provocative effect. This was just what Willich intended. He wanted to get himself—and consequently democracy and Socialism—talked about. The Cologne Communist group attached great importance to propaganda in the army.

Its members met twice a week, discussed ‘Communism and

history,' and carried on 'retail propaganda,' to employ an expression Gottschalk used in a letter to Hess. The branch did not yet number twenty members. Its influence on the working-class population of Cologne was effectively demonstrated when things started to happen.

The revolution in Paris made a great impression throughout Germany, but nowhere was its effect so great as in the Rhineland. In every Rhineland town petitions to the Government were drafted, demanding radical reforms in an altogether unprecedented manner. They were promptly covered with thousand and tens of thousands of signatures. The initiative for all this activity came from Cologne, and in Cologne itself the initiative came from the branch of the Communist League. On March 3 it organised a mass-meeting outside the town hall. A deputation led by Gottschalk and Willich appeared in the council chamber and announced their demands to the startled city fathers. The four thousand people outside lent emphasis to what they said. Soldiers were brought to the scene, there were collisions between them and the demonstrators, the soldiers fired, there were dead and wounded and Gottschalk, Willich and Anneke were put under arrest. Three weeks later they were freed by the victory of the revolution in Berlin. The demonstration had attained its purpose of setting the movement on the Rhine under way.

At the end of March, when Gottschalk and his friends were set at liberty, the situation had completely altered. As Marx had foreseen, the news that a republican legion was coming from France to invade Germany had visibly helped the forces of conservatism. A panic fear of the French seized the south and west of Germany. The French were visualised going through the land, looting and burning. The governments of Germany diligently fostered the general alarm. 'You have no idea of how our bourgeoisie fear the word "republic,"' Gottschalk wrote on March 26 to his friend Hess. 'For them it is synonymous with robbery, murder, or a Russian invasion, and your legions would be so execrated as bands of murderous incendiaries that but few proletarians would come to your aid.' Georg Weerth wrote to Marx on March 25 almost in the same terms, also from Cologne. Communism, he added, was a word people shuddered at, and anyone who came out openly

as a Communist would be stoned. And when the legion crossed the frontier and on top of it the rapidly suppressed Republican rising took place in Baden, the word 'republic' took on the most evil connotations, at any rate for the time being, in people's minds. Another thing that added strength to the counter-revolution was that the newspapers printed lies about letters of Marx said to have been found on captured leaders of the legion, so that Republican, Communist and national enemy became synonymous.

A furious hue-and-cry for the ringleaders of the dispersed demonstration started in Cologne, a 'veritable *battue*,' as one newspaper put it, and Willich felt the place had become too hot to hold him. He went to Baden and took part in the insurrection there, and Cologne saw him no more. Gottschalk remained to defy the storm. Finding himself defended by the moderate Democrats either faint-heartedly or not at all, he did not mince matters but turned his face from them and confined the whole of his agitation to the workers. On April 6, four days before Marx's arrival in Cologne, he issued an appeal for the foundation of a 'Democratic Socialist Union.'

Three hundred people were present at the inaugural meeting on April 13. The overwhelming majority were workers. For this reason they promptly adopted the additional title of 'Workers' Union.' The success of the new organisation was astonishing. At the beginning of May the newspapers estimated its membership at between three and four thousand. By the end of June the membership had risen to nearly eight thousand. Every one of its meetings at the Gürzenich-haus was packed to overflowing. The workers in their blouses sat before a platform adorned with the red flag, wearing red sashes across their breasts, some of them with red Jacobin caps on their heads. Many of the audience were women, and many were illiterate workers, porters and boatmen, who were particularly hard hit by the prevailing unemployment.

Popular as Gottschalk was among the workers of Cologne, his name alone would not have sufficed to hold this great mass of people together had he not skilfully and effectively represented their most immediate interests. The Workers' Union was at one and the same time an educational association, a

political club, and also a breeding ground of trade unionism. Gottschalk divided the union into occupational sections, and what with the prevalent trade crisis—for the employers, hampered by no law, lowered wages, lengthened hours, gave their apprentices worse victuals—these sections had enough and more than enough to do. They worked out wage rates, tried to establish standards for the working day, busied themselves with conditions of labour. The workers brought their troubles and needs to the Union as though it were omnipotent.

It was hated by the employers in proportion. Not only the employers but the whole propertied class regarded the Workers' Union as a nefarious assault upon humanity. The most incredible rumours gathered round the Union and its president, Gottschalk, 'the Communist apostle.' One reactionary journal stated that the demagogue was putting the craziest ideas into the workers' heads. The workers no longer worked but spent all their evenings at the political clubs, from which they went home drunk and beat their wives and children, whom they left to starve. Gottschalk was credited with hatching the most infamous plots. It was said at the end of April that Gottschalk nightly had 'terrible troops of workers drilling with the eleven thousand flints that Abd-el-Kadr had sent him.'

However absurd it may sound, all this was taken perfectly seriously by a great many people. The more sinister the Workers' Union came to appear in the eyes of the property-owners, the more willingly did they listen to the voice of reaction. But dislike of the Workers' Union was widespread even among the most democratically-minded artisans of Cologne. The 'Association of Employers and Employed,' the leader of which was Hermann Becker, a Democrat, who became active in the Communist League in 1850 and 1851, though later he underwent a complete change of view and eventually became burgomaster of Cologne, was mainly an association of small master-craftsmen and educated artisans. It took its stand on the basis of class peace.

Such was the situation when Marx arrived in Cologne. At first he naturally enough adhered to the party of Gottschalk. He took part in the first meetings of the Workers' Union. But in a very short time differences of opinion concerning the

policy of the Union arose between Gottschalk and him. A contemporary record has survived of a meeting which took place shortly after Marx's arrival between the leaders of the Communist League on the one side and the members of the Cologne branch on the other. The discussion is said to have become 'very violent' and Dr. Gottschalk was harshly criticised in regard to the organisation of the Workers' Union. Further information is not available, but from the subsequent development of the dispute it is safe to conclude that as soon as he had surveyed the situation in the first few days after his arrival Marx resolutely opposed Gottschalk's policy. The situation in Germany being what it was, Gottschalk's programme could not result in anything but parting the proletariat from the Democratic movement and completely isolating it.

The Revolution had created, for the first time in German history, a Parliament for the whole of Germany, including Austria. The National Assembly was to meet in Frankfurt. In Prussia a Chamber was to be elected by a secret and universal indirect ballot. Gottschalk demanded a boycott of the elections both for the Frankfurt and the Berlin assemblies. He claimed that indirect voting was objectionable in itself, and besides there was not sufficient time for the necessary preliminary campaign. The majority of the workers who supported Gottschalk followed him in this, and other extreme Left groups also proclaimed an election boycott, in which they may have been influenced by the example of the Blanquists in France. There is no doubt that the Blanquist example influenced Gottschalk. Blanqui was not Gottschalk's model in this alone. Gottschalk may well have had some contact with Blanqui as early as 1848. Herwegh bears witness to his having visited Blanqui in prison when in Paris at the beginning of 1849.

Marx condemned the extreme Left boycott of the elections as an idle and futile demonstration, ultra-revolutionary in form, reactionary in content. By it the Lefts cleared the political battlefield for the forces of Reaction and the lukewarm centre. Marx's dispute with Gottschalk became intensified.

Gottschalk's standing out for a boycott was merely the consequence of his general attitude. He utterly rejected all

and every compromise and would not hear of even the most temporary coalition with non-proletarian Democratic groups. The probable effects of his demands and slogans on others than his own followers did not trouble him at all. He conducted his propaganda openly under the Republican banner, and not just the Republican banner, but the Socialist banner too—the banner of the Republic of Labour. Gottschalk simply shut his eyes to the whole political backwardness of Germany.

The Democrats were not themselves agreed as to how the three dozen Fatherlands of Germany were to be united. There were advocates of constitutional monarchy upon the broadest democratic basis, there were advocates of a 'republic with hereditary royal officials,' there were those who wanted the several states to be republics subject to an all-German monarchy, while others again wanted their own state to be a constitutional monarchy subject to a German federal republic. Between the advocates of extreme federalism and extreme centralisation there were advocates of every conceivable form of compromise. Even among the Democrats, to say nothing of the Liberals, there were but few who favoured the 'one and indivisible republic' which was the first of the seventeen demands which the Communist League formulated and distributed in the form of a pamphlet. Marx was convinced of this by letters sent him by friends and sympathisers from all over Germany. Engels wrote from Barmen: 'If a single copy of our seventeen points were distributed here, as far as we were concerned all would be lost.' Marx issued warnings against illusory hopes in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* not long afterwards. 'We do not at the outset make the Utopian demand for a single and indivisible German republic,' he wrote, 'but we demand of the so-called Radical-Democratic Party that it do not confound the point of departure of the struggle and of the revolutionary movement with its final aims. It is not now a matter of realising this or that point of view, this or that political idea, but of insight into the course of development. The National Assembly (in Frankfurt) has only to perform the immediate and practically possible steps.'

In these circumstances Gottschalk's line of action meant parting the advanced workers not only from the Liberal and

Democratic bourgeoisie but also from the great mass of the workers themselves. It meant destroying the coalition of proletariat and revolutionary bourgeoisie in the struggle against absolutism, a coalition that the Communist Manifesto had proclaimed as inevitable but temporary.

Marx's attitude was clearly defined in the very first months of revolution. He was opposed to coming out prematurely and independently with the seventeen points. 'When we founded a great newspaper in Germany,' Engels wrote in 1884, 'the banner for us to take our stand under presented itself. It could only be the banner of democracy, but the banner of a democracy which emphasised its specifically proletarian character in details only, since it was not yet possible to proclaim its proletarian character once and for all. Had we been unwilling to do this . . . we should have had no choice but to content ourselves with teaching the doctrines of Communism in an obscure local paper and founding a small sect instead of a great party of action. The time had passed for us to be preachers in the wilderness. We had studied the Utopians too well not to know that. We had not drafted our programme for that.'

In the middle of April Marx and his friends participated in the formation of the Democratic Union in Cologne. It did not at first stand out in any particular way, but took the line that the form of government of the future united Germany should be left to be decided by the National Assembly at Frankfurt and that the relations between throne and people in Prussia should be left to the Chamber in Berlin. This evasion of a clear answer to the most elementary questions left the members of the Democratic Union more than dissatisfied. Someone at the meeting asked what the members of the Democratic Union wanted themselves. Seven-eighths of them were in favour of a republic, as the discussion showed, but no resolution in favour of a republic was made. The few who had not yet made up their minds should not be antagonised and driven over to the moderates.

The Democratic Union's first definite action was taking part in the elections for Frankfurt and Berlin. Marx's critics maintained that thanks to his tactics not so much as a single Democrat was sent to Parliament, but only a fortuitous Left

of the type of Franz Raveaux, whom Marx himself was very soon forced to criticise in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. But there is no doubt that but for the Democratic Union Cologne would have been represented by Rights and moderates only.

The Communist League was not equal to the situation the Revolution had created. It was inadequate in every way. It very soon demonstrated itself to be incomparably weaker in Germany than the central office had supposed. All the emissaries of the League, who were dispersed in every direction, were unanimous to that effect. In Berlin there was no organisation whatsoever, and the handful of approximately twenty sympathisers had practically no contact with each other. In Breslau the League was entirely unrepresented. In Mainz the organisation was on the point of collapse, and in other centres the story was the same. The League's emissaries were certainly not lacking in energy and enthusiasm, but the branches, in the places where they did manage to found them, very soon demonstrated that they had no real life in them. All the really active members devoted themselves to legal work in the workers' unions, on newspapers and so forth. Marx refused to keep the Communist League alive artificially and go on leading a movement because it had once existed. Besides, there were difficulties Marx had to contend with within the League itself.

In Marx's opinion the appearance of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* did away with the excuse even for the appearance of the Communist League's existence. A secret organisation had become entirely superfluous, and all that Marx had to say, all the general guidance he had to offer, could be made public through the Press. Because of the infinite variety of conditions in Germany, which varied from state to state and from province to province, it was not possible to give more than general guidance. Marx therefore proposed to the central office that the League be dissolved. Schapper and the other members of the London group put up some opposition to this course. Though they agreed with him on general political questions and sided with him in the struggle with Gottschalk, they had lived in the League and with the League and for the League and it had been dear to them too long for them to be able to consent to its dissolution. So Marx, in the words of a

contemporary, 'made use of his discretionary powers and dissolved the League.'

Gottschalk had agreed with Marx with regard to the dissolution of the League. In the Workers' Union he had an incomparably more powerful weapon than the small local branch of the Communist League, so he was able to watch it die with a light heart. Another motive may also have influenced him. He wanted to sever all party connection with Marx in order to be able to attack him with the less restraint. Even before the appearance of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* sharp collisions arose between Marx's and Gottschalk's followers. After the collapse of the republican rising in Baden, Willich fled to France and gathered the fugitives at Besançon. Most of them were workers, and their state was so piteous that Willich appealed to the Democrats in Germany to assist them. Anneke had joined the Democratic Union in spite of his friendship with Gottschalk. At a meeting of the Union he rose, read Willich's letter of appeal and proposed that the Union collect money for the Republican refugees at Besançon. A lively discussion ended in a vote heavily turning down the proposal. Anneke was the only one to vote for it. According to the newspapers the Democrats, in spite of their sympathy for the hungering and exiled worker-refugees, declined to help them because doing so might be interpreted as approval of the policy by which they had been guided. Anneke resigned from the Democratic Union. At his and Gottschalk's suggestion the Workers' Union started a collection which raised quite a respectable sum. That made it perfectly clear, of course, that Marx and his Democrats were cowardly and inhuman, while Gottschalk and the Workers' Union were noble and courageous Republicans.

Marx's name had not yet been mentioned and the second attack was not directed openly at him, either, but at the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the first number of which had recently appeared. The printer did not pay the wages which the Workers' Union was trying to establish as the minimum for the trade. No other printer in Cologne paid the minimum wage either, but Gottschalk had no need to mention that. The editorial staff of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, i.e. Marx, had nothing whatever to do with the printer and the wages he paid his staff.

Gottschalk's newspaper started a violent campaign against the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, which described itself as an organ of democracy but was in the hands of a group of inveterate aristocrats—indeed the most dangerous kind, money-aristocrats. They were 'trampling on the proletariat and betraying the people.'

Marx had just obtained an organ in which he could state his position clearly. His task was by no means confined to defending himself against the agitation carried on against him by the ultra-Lefts in Cologne. The paper was to be a substitute for the Communist League throughout Germany, and over and above that the organ of the 'great party of action' of the German Revolution. A few radicals, in particular Georg Weerth and Heinrich Bürgers, both friends of Marx from earlier years, had busied themselves with the project of founding a newspaper before Marx's arrival in Cologne. Bürgers was no Communist, and the paper was not originally intended to be more than a local Cologne newspaper, and Marx had not been intended to work on it. When he arrived he was advised to go to Berlin. He declined. 'We knew the Berlin of that time only too well from personal observation,' Engels wrote later. 'Berlin with its barely arisen bourgeoisie, its loquacious but timid and obsequious lower middle-class, its completely undeveloped workers, its teeming bureaucracy, its swarms of nobles and courtiers.' The decisive factor, however, was that the *Code Napoléon* was in force in Cologne, involving freedom of the Press, which was not even remotely conceivable in Berlin even after the events of March.

Marx succeeded in gaining control of the paper within a very short time. For this purpose it was necessary to secure the consent of the Cologne Democrats. The newspaper had to be 'edited from the German Democratic viewpoint, which regarded the question of whether Germany should have a monarchy or a republic as an open one, though it gave the advantage to the republican idea both from the practical and the theoretical point of view.' This was how Bürgers formulated the conditions on which the editorship would be given to Marx. Bürgers was himself on the editorial board. Marx naturally accepted these terms.

There was greater difficulty in raising the money for the

paper than its backers had expected. The upper bourgeoisie would have nothing whatever to do with the Democrats, particularly with those suspected of having anything whatever to do with Communism. Marx appealed to Engels to try to place some of the shares in the Wuppertal. His success was meagre. According to his son, old Engels would rather send him a thousand bullets than a thousand thalers. Marx did not fare much better in Cologne. Meanwhile events were pressing. The National Assembly met at Frankfurt and from the first day showed itself so timid, so undecided, so conscience-stricken that the future of this half-revolution seemed to promise the worst. It was essential that the paper should appear as soon as possible. Marx plunged his hand in his own pocket and produced every penny he possessed. All the money available, such as it was, was laid down, and the first number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appeared on June 1, 1848.

With the exception of Bürgers, the editorial board consisted entirely of ex-members of the Communist League: Dronke, Weerth, Ferdinand Wolff, Wilhelm Wolff. Marx was the editor. The organisation of the editorial staff, in the words of Engels, was 'a simple dictatorship by Marx. A great daily which had to be ready by a definite time could not maintain a consistent attitude in any other way. Marx's dictatorship was accepted as a matter of course. It was undisputed and gladly acknowledged by us all. It was above all his clear views and firm principles that made it the most famous newspaper of the revolutionary years.'

Marx's editorship was distinguished by the fact that he did not publish any general theoretical articles of the kind that filled the other Democratic newspapers of the time to a surfeit. Facts were the language of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. While Democratic professors explained the advantages of the republican form of government at interminable length—to which they were particularly prone in the South German Press—lectures of this kind were completely absent from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. The reason for this was not alone because of the agreement with Bürgers. Marx's task was to give his readers an 'insight into the course of development.' The way in which Marx presented his facts, made them demonstrate the inevitability of a republican solution, was the most effective

possible propaganda for republicanism, though the word was never mentioned.

The paper's policy was determined by Marx and Marx alone. Marx edited it as he had edited the *Rheinische Zeitung* five years before. Just as behind every word of the *Rheinische Zeitung* there had been the voice of Marx, so did he now make every word of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* his own. The paper called itself the 'organ of democracy' and in speaking of the battle-front against the forces of feudal absolutism it used the phrase 'we Democrats.' During the first months it avoided anything that might possibly disturb the united front. Not a word was spoken of the antagonism between proletarian and non-proletarian, bourgeois or petty-bourgeois democracy. There was not a word about the special interests of the working classes, of the workers' special tasks in the German Revolution. Neither Engels or Marx wrote a word about the position of the workers until the end of 1848. Engels, writing to Marx from Barmen before the appearance of the paper, expressed himself very strongly on this question of the policy of the united front at any price. 'The workers are beginning to stir a little, still very crudely, but in a mass. That, however, does not suit us,' he wrote. The proletariat must march in the great democratic battle-line, always at the extreme Left wing, always taking care not to lose connection with the rest of the army. It must be at its most impetuous in attack, its fighting spirit must animate the host in the storming of the Bastille. For the Bastille is not yet taken, Marx cried to those who threatened to tire, absolutism is not defeated yet. As long as the Bastille is still standing the Democrats must remain united. The proletariat must not isolate itself; however difficult the task may be, it must reject everything tending to divide it from the rest.

The Communist Manifesto had allotted the Communist Party a twofold task, not only that of taking part in the common struggle of the bourgeoisie against the reactionary classes but of 'instilling into the workers the clearest possible recognition of the antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, so that the German workers may straightway use as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie the social and political conditions which the bourgeoisie must necessarily

introduce with their supremacy, and in order that the fight against the bourgeoisie may immediately begin after the downfall of the reactionary classes.'

First the bourgeoisie must come into power, but really into power. The proletariat must support it in this, urge it forward, pitilessly scourge every weakness, every hesitation, every compromise the bourgeoisie might want to make with the forces of reaction. But so long as the revolutionary advance of the bourgeoisie continued it must maintain a united front with it. After the victory the united front must be destroyed. Once the bourgeoisie had in all essentials got the power, the struggle against it would begin. In Germany it could not, must not begin yet. In France and England it was different.

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* gave more space to events abroad than any other German paper. What had already come to pass in France and England must come to pass in Germany to-morrow. There could be no better way of creating the 'clearest possible awareness of the antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat' than by constantly drawing the workers' attention to events abroad. But in Germany the Bastille must first be stormed. In Germany compromise was inevitable. In Germany 'we Democrats' must fight shoulder to shoulder until victory was gained. In France the time for compromise had passed. Strenuously as Marx avoided anything that might have weakened the joint Democratic forces in Germany, he sided just as resolutely with the insurrectionary Paris workers in those days of June.

Consideration for his allies in the struggles did not mean that he spared their weaknesses. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* treated its contemptible opponents, the monarchy, the military camarilla, the whole of the forces of reaction, with the greatest contempt. That goes without saying. It poured just as much scorn and contempt upon the irresolution and pusillanimity of the Left. The revolution had not yet been accomplished. It was an illusion to suppose that nothing was left now but to gather in its fruits. The Assembly at Frankfurt was only a timid beginning, and if it stood still it must be whipped forward. 'The very first number began with an article which ridiculed the ineffectiveness of the Frankfurt Parliament, the uselessness of its long-winded speeches, the vanity of its timid

resolutions. It cost us half our shareholders.' Engels still remembered that with pleasure nearly forty years later.

War with Russia would drive the revolution forward, cut off every possibility of a bourgeois retreat, destroy half-slain feudalism with a single mighty blow. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* demanded it from the very first day. There was no other way of freeing Poland than by war. Russia was the mainstay of European reaction; it must be overthrown in war. With every month it became clearer that only war with Russia could save the German Revolution. The German Revolution had got stuck in 'a tedious philistine *cul-de-sac*,' as Engels complained in September, 1848. It failed to overcome the old impediment of its division into innumerable petty states. Prussia, though it had sustained some heavy blows, was fundamentally intact, and remained the single serious internal opponent. Austria stood firm in spite of all shocks and threatened to become strong once more. The only possibility of uniting Germany was for Germany to make a united war on Russia. 'If Germany could be brought to war with Russia, it would be all up with Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns, and the Revolution would be victorious all along the line.' Marx scarcely expected the war to revolutionise Russia. The liberation of Poland, though a desired aim, was nevertheless a by-product. The war must be fought for the salvation and completion of the German revolutionary will. The Tsar would be the saviour of the German Revolution, because he would centralise it. That was how Marx regarded the question of war.

But the Tsar hesitated and did not attack the Revolution, and the Revolution in its turn was too feeble, too little centralised, to take the offensive itself.

A perceptible change took place in Cologne after Marx started addressing the workers directly. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* found its way to the workers and to the members of Gottschalk's Union, who obviously started by mistrusting it. The Workers' Union published a pitiful little sheet which contained practically nothing but minutes of Union meetings and short paragraphs about the workers' everyday life. It did not satisfy even the most modest demands. Complaints about it were made at meetings, but Gottschalk, a good speaker and organiser, was a less than mediocre journalist.

Marx's field of activity also extended in another direction. The various Democratic Unions, which were distributed all over Germany, sent their representatives to a Congress which took place in Frankfurt-on-Main on June 14 and 15. The Workers' Union in Cologne also took part in it. If Gottschalk had been consistent he would have boycotted the Democratic Congress just as he had boycotted the two Parliaments. He did not do so. The Workers' Union sent him to Frankfurt as their only delegate, because 'Gottschalk alone was completely competent to represent the Workers' Union of Cologne.' He was to demand an open avowal of a republic and an open disavowal of the Frankfurt and Berlin Parliaments.

Gottschalk played an important rôle at the Democratic Congress. One delegate described him as a man 'born to be a dictator, possessing indefatigable energy and intelligence as sharp as a guillotine, an image of Robespierre.' Of the two resolutions that he proposed the anti-Parliamentary one was rejected and the other accepted with a highly significant alteration. A Democratic republic was declared to be not, as Gottschalk demanded, the 'only possible' system of government but as the 'only tenable' one. He did not leave the Congress on this account but actually gave his vote in favour of the resolutions which determined the constitution of the Union itself. These declared the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* to be one of the three official organs of the Democratic Party, and appealed to all Democratic associations existing at any one place to unite.

Three organisations had sent their representatives to the Congress from Cologne: the Workers' Union, the Democratic Union and the Association of Employers and Employed. These ought now to have united. Gottschalk wanted a complete fusion of the three, which, in view of the great numerical preponderance of the Workers' Union, would have meant the complete submergence of the other two organisations in his. The Democratic Union declined to be submerged and proposed that a bureau of co-operation be created instead. Negotiations were still in progress when events occurred which fundamentally altered the situation of the Cologne Democrats.

The bourgeoisie were not alone in their hatred of Gottschalk. The police had had an eye on him for a long time, and they

stepped in now. According to the police report Gottschalk and Anneke were said to have proposed to the Workers' Union 'the foundation of a republic by violent means.' Gottschalk and Anneke were arrested on July 3. The prison gates closed behind them for six months.

An interregnum in the Workers' Union now began. Not one of Gottschalk's adherents was capable of replacing him. Joseph Moll was elected temporary president. Although he was an opponent of Gottschalk's, his energy, courage and knowledge had earned him general respect. He and Schapper now became the leaders of the Union, and both of them were political partisans of Marx. An attempt to attack Marx from another quarter miscarried. Marx's old opponent, Wilhelm Weitling, came to Cologne in the middle of July. On July 21, at the Democratic Union, he made 'an exciting speech in which he proclaimed the necessity of a complete reorganisation of our political and social institutions,' in the words of a newspaper favourably disposed towards him. This speech was reported in full in the official organ of the Democratic Union. In America Weitling had learned nothing whatever. He still preached government by the 'judicious' because neither in Germany nor in America nor even in the Democratic Union, as he not very politely added, was the mob capable of recognising where its real interests lay. Marx answered him at a meeting on August 4. In their social development, he said, the Germans were now where the French had been in 1789. To set up a dictatorship to realise any one man's ideas would be absurd. The sovereign power, as in the case of the provisional government in Paris, must be formed of the most heterogeneous elements, which then, by the exchange of ideas, must decide on the most effective method of government. The drafting of the report cannot be said to be very clear, but Marx's line of argument can be detected through the muddled statement. He demanded that the German Revolution be completed, the bourgeois revolution, the German 1789, representing the coalition of all the forces of Democracy, all 'the highly heterogeneous elements.'

In the meantime a joint committee of Cologne Democrats had been formed. Marx and Schneider, a lawyer, represented the Democratic Union, Schapper and Moll the Workers'

Union, and two others represented the Association of Employers and Employed. This combination assured the leadership of Marx. The committee displayed tremendous activity. In the middle of August it organised the first Rhineland Democratic Congress, at which forty delegates represented sixteen organisations. Marx was the life and soul of the Congress. Karl Schurz, the German-American statesman, who was a young student at Bonn at the time, described forty years later the impression that Marx made upon him. 'Marx was thirty years old and already the recognised head of a school of Socialism. A thick-set, powerful man, with his high forehead, his pitch-black hair and beard and his dark, flashing eyes, he immediately attracted general attention. He had the reputation of great learning in his subject, and what he said was in fact solid, logical and clear.' People with unclear minds were always repelled by Marx's clarity and logic. Schurz was of the opinion that he had never met a man of such wounding and intolerable arrogance of manner. He never forgot the tone of biting contempt with which he uttered, almost spat the word 'bourgeois.' Albert Brisbane, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, who was staying in Cologne at the time, also saw Marx but saw him through different eyes. 'His features gave one the impression of great energy, and behind his sober-minded reserve one could see the passionate fire of a courageous spirit.'

The more outspoken the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* became, the more energetically it denounced the Lefts for an irresolution bordering on cowardice if not positive treason to the Revolution, the more plainly it hinted that the co-operation of bourgeoisie and proletariat could only be temporary, however necessary it might be in Germany at the moment, the more alarmed the shareholders became. Half of them were lost as soon as the newspaper appeared, and articles about the June fighting cost Marx the other half. The paper was brought sharply up against serious practical difficulties. The printer refused to extend credit any further, and one issue of the paper failed to appear. Fortunately another printer was found, but the position became so threatening that at the end of August Marx had to undertake a journey through Germany and Austria to raise the funds necessary to continue. His travels

took him to Berlin, to Vienna, then to Berlin again. In Vienna Marx addressed the local Democratic Union and he lectured on wage-labour and capital at the First Vienna Workers' Union. In both cities he negotiated with the leaders of Left organisations. Whether he obtained the assistance he required is not known. All that is known is that the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* received very generous support from the Polish Democrats. On September 18 Vladislav Koscielsky sent the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* two thousand thalers in their name.

Marx returned to Cologne just when the events of September, the stormiest period of the 'mad year' in Cologne, were beginning. Their outbreak coincided with the resignation of the Prussian ministry of Auerswald-Hanseemann. Marx had castigated it for the cowardice with which it retreated step by step before the forces of reaction, which were growing bolder every day. Incompetent a government as it had been, it had by no means been reactionary in intent, and all the key positions in it had been occupied by members of the bourgeoisie. Its resignation was an indication of the impending crash. Marx summoned the Democrats to mass action. In the midst of this critical situation a number of clashes which had been brewing for a long time and had no connection, at least no direct connection, with the political change of scene, broke out in Cologne. In Cologne, as everywhere else along the Rhine, feelings between townsmen and soldiery were very strained. The garrisons consisted predominantly of troops from east of the Elbe and were systematically incited against the people by their officers. There had been serious collisions between military and civilians in Mainz and Aachen during the past spring. Cologne's turn came now. Soldiers attacked and beat civilians without any cause whatever. There was general indignation at this, and it was by no means confined to the Democrats. It was widespread among the otherwise entirely 'loyal' population. The editorial staff of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* took the protest in hand. Wilhelm Wolff and Engels summoned an open-air mass-meeting at which the brutality of the soldiery was denounced and a committee of public safety, thirty strong, was elected to prevent a repetition of such attacks. Marx was a member of the committee.

To the excitement caused by these events in Cologne there

was now added indignation at the advance of reaction in Prussia and at the Prussian armistice with Denmark. This indignation swept through the whole of Germany and created a situation which caused many to believe that the outbreak of a second revolution was at hand. To the Democrats and Liberals, even the most moderate of them, the war with Denmark was an affair of the whole of the German people. Schleswig-Holstein was German territory subject to the Danish throne; to liberate it from its Danish overlords was one of the foremost tasks of the United Germany movement. When the war broke out students and workers who had just been fighting at the barricades in Berlin hurried to volunteer for the army. The struggle for Schleswig-Holstein had become a symbol of German unity. And now Prussia signed an armistice with Denmark. That meant its abandonment of the United German front and its return to the old, purely Prussian and purely dynastic policy. The armistice at Malmö was felt as a deliberate challenge, an insolent slap in the nation's face. As for the National Assembly, it vacillated, swung unworthily this way and that, and on September 16 expressed its consent to the armistice.

On September 17, a huge mass-meeting gathered at Worringen, near Cologne. It was attended by delegations from innumerable Rhineland towns and many peasants from the surrounding district. It resolved, on Engels's proposal, that should Prussia and the National Assembly at Frankfurt come into conflict they would stand by Germany 'through thick and thin.' That the National Assembly had capitulated to Prussia in the meantime was not yet known at Cologne. When the news arrived anger knew no bounds. Indignation was widespread throughout Germany. There was serious fighting in Frankfurt on September 18, and two of the most hated reactionary deputies were lynched. The Democratic Union and the Workers' Union at Cologne declared their solidarity with the fighters at the Frankfurt barricades and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* started a subscription fund for the insurrectionaries and their families. Next day the king appointed General Pfiel Prime Minister of Prussia. Pfiel was hated by the Democrats as the oppressor of the Poles. His nomination only served to pour oil on the flames.

The military had made their preparations, the troops in the fortresses were ready for action and guns were directed on the town. The second Rhineland Democratic Congress was intended to meet on September 25. On that day, at seven o'clock in the morning, Hermann Becker and Karl Schapper were arrested. Moll escaped arrest because a crowd quickly gathered and prevented the police from seizing him. The City Militia refused to help the police. The whole city was in an uproar. Marx hurried to the Workers' Union. He and Bürgers, who were informed of the situation in full, 'declared in the name of the Congress that in no circumstances, least of all at the present moment, did they want a rising.' The workers, exasperated at the loss of their leaders, listened 'with gloomy looks.' Other meetings took place, here and there people actually started putting up barricades, but no actual fighting took place. The preponderance of the military was so great that the City Militia, who in any case were not so very determined to carry matters to extremes, held back, and the workers, unarmed or badly armed, could not fight alone. The outbreak must not be confined to Cologne and could not start yet. The crisis must first become even more acute. Marx declined to consent to a local riot. Germany was not ready for a general rising yet.

Not a single shot had been fired in Cologne, but the military wished to savour their triumph to the full. Martial law was proclaimed, all political associations were dissolved, all meetings were forbidden, and the radical papers, starting with the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, were suspended. The reactionary Press could scarcely contain itself with joy at the end of its hated enemies. 'The entire editorial staffs have had to take flight,' it exulted. This was an exaggeration. Warrants were issued for the arrest of Engels, Dronke and the two Wolffs. Marx not having spoken at any public meeting, the police had no excuse for taking proceedings against him. But the position of the newspaper was more than difficult. Besides Marx, only Georg Weerth, who was in charge of the *feuilleton*, remained. All the rest of the staff had been forced to fly.

If the Reaction thought the time had come for rejoicing, they rejoiced a little too soon. Marx had no intention of laying down his arms. In spite of the paper's financial position,

which was now, of course, more desperate than ever, he promptly opened negotiations to continue publication at Düsseldorf should the state of martial law be prolonged.

The negotiations turned out to be superfluous. The unnecessary declaration of martial law roused even the tamest citizens of Cologne against the military command. The city council unanimously demanded its withdrawal. There were debates about it in the Berlin Chamber, and they were very embarrassing to the Government. On October 3 the military authorities withdrew martial law very reluctantly, but under orders from Berlin. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appeared again a week later. Marx prominently announced that the editorial staff remained unchanged, but with the addition of Ferdinand Freiligrath, who had just been acquitted of a charge of high treason. Before the period of martial law the newspaper had had six thousand subscribers, which placed it in the front rank of German newspapers in circulation as well as in influence. In a short time it reached its old position and even surpassed it.

Marx's influence on the Workers' Union had grown stronger and stronger. It was only natural that the Union should now invite him to become its leader. It had lost its president for the second time since Gottschalk's arrest. Moll was a fugitive and Schapper in prison. A delegation approached Marx, but it was only after a good deal of hesitation that he agreed to accept the position. He explained his reasons at a meeting on October 16. His position in Cologne was precarious. He was no longer a Prussian subject, and although the Cologne Council had granted him a permit to stay in the city, the State authorities would not hear of his being renaturalised. Besides, he would shortly have to appear before a jury because of an alleged offence against the Press Laws, to say nothing of his being overwhelmed with work on account of the temporary dispersal of the editorial committee of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. 'Nevertheless,' according to the minutes of the meeting, 'he was prepared temporarily to comply with the wish of the workers until Dr. Gottschalk should be released. Government and bourgeoisie must be convinced that despite all persecution there are always people ready to place themselves at the workers' disposal.'

Marx, who had in effect been president of the Workers' Union ever since the temporary election of Moll to that position, now became its president in name as well. It was the outward sign of his victory in the struggle he had been carrying on for six months in the ranks of the workers' organisations and the Communist League in Cologne.

CHAPTER XIV

DEFEAT WITH HONOUR

THE reactionary Press poured scorn on the workers for their 'cowardice' in retreating when things grew difficult. Marx denied that it was cowardice. It merely meant that they were not reckless. The moment for a general rising would only come when great questions and mighty events urged the united population into battle.

The October rising should have been such a moment. The revolutionaries of Vienna rose once more, in alliance with Kossuth's Hungary, to fight the decisive battle with the rehabilitated forces of Habsburg absolutism. On its outcome depended not the victory or defeat of the Revolution in Austria alone. The fate of the whole German Revolution would be decided in Vienna. If the Habsburgs conquered, so would the Hohenzollerns, and March would have been in vain. For Germany's sake they must not win.

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* issued impassioned appeals to the Democrats of Germany, employed its most powerful arguments, used the glowing verses of Freiligrath, urging them to make Vienna's cause their own:

Wenn wir noch knien könnten, wir lägen auf den Knien,
Wenn wir noch beten könnten, wir beteten für Wien.¹

The Left produced their usual resounding rhetorical phrases in praise of the Viennese. But they failed to understand, would not listen, no longer had the strength to carry out the task of the moment: that of defending Vienna in Berlin, Dresden and Frankfurt. Germany's calamitous division into minor states meant that every general question assumed a variety of local forms—a Prussian form, a Saxon form, a Badenese form, a Bavarian form and so on. As local questions they were incapable of solution. There could be only one German

¹ If we could only kneel we should go down on our knees,
If we could only pray, we should pray for Vienna. ¹

Revolution. The alternative was the German counter-revolution.

The second Democratic Congress met in Berlin at the end of October. There were debates and more debates, and the time was frittered away with eloquent but empty speeches. In its appeal for the Viennese 'pulpit pathos' was substituted for 'revolutionary energy,' in the words of Marx. Germany did not rise, and Vienna was left to its fate. The imperial troops entered the Austrian capital on November 1.

Prussia's turn, quite logically, came next. On November 2 Pfuël's cabinet resigned in Berlin. It was not reactionary enough for the king, who felt himself strong enough now. The new Prime Minister he appointed was Count Brandenburg, an illegitimate son of Frederick William II. Brandenburg ordered the Berlin Parliament out of Berlin. It was unwilling to go, so a regiment of guards quite easily dispersed it. In March the king had said that soldiers were the only thing of any use against Democrats.

The Assembly opposed force not with force but with phrases. It had spent its whole time retreating step by step. Now, when its members should have organised armed resistance, acted like revolutionaries, ready to face every peril, even a sanguinary defeat, which would have been a thousand times better guarantee of a resurrection than a timid capitulation, the Chamber ceremoniously 'took its stand on the law.' The soldiers, of course, took their stand on the more solid ground of Berlin. The Chamber offered passive resistance, which meant in effect no resistance at all. The utmost to which they roused themselves was to issue an appeal to the country not to pay taxes to an unconstitutional government.

That was only the first and most obvious answer to the reactionary onslaught. Marx had proclaimed a tax-boycott in the Rhineland before the Chamber made its decision. Now blow after blow must inevitably follow. Cologne waited for the sign of battle from the capital. News was spread that the Berlin City Militia had refused to hand over their arms. This was the moment that Marx had been waiting for. Now the hour had struck. He appealed to the West of Germany to go to the assistance of Berlin, 'with men and arms.'

But the news was false. The people of Berlin remained quiet.

The City Militia handed over their arms. Junker officers promenaded up and down Unter den Linden as of yore, full of contempt for the civilian rabble. Even the forcible dispersal of the Prussian National Assembly failed to enliven the feeble glow of the German Revolution.

Cologne was swarming with soldiers. The military were thirsting for an opportunity to shoot and stab to right and left to their heart's content. It would have been madness to have stood up to be butchered by them. Marx issued warnings against false heroism. At the same time he did everything possible to extend the movement. To open an attack in Cologne alone would merely have resulted in the riot he had condemned as hopeless in September. Berlin did not stir. But at all costs something must be done. The German Revolution must not be allowed to go down to defeat so ignominiously.

On November 18 Marx, jointly with Schapper and the lawyer, Schneider, issued an appeal for a tax-boycott in the name of the Rhineland district Democratic committee. Passive resistance presupposed active resistance, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* proclaimed, otherwise it would be equivalent to the struggles of a calf in the slaughter-house. Marx therefore appealed for a general levy of the people, of all men of military age, for the distribution of weapons, for the forming of committees of public safety and for the removal of officials who remained faithful to the Government.

The Prussian National Assembly might still, perhaps, have been able to carry the people with it, although the most favourable moment had passed. But it grew afraid of its own courage. It had been banished by the king to the reactionary little country town of Brandenburg.

It spent two weeks raging and fuming and then, with plaintive whines and ineffectual murmurs, went to Brandenburg. Once there it was promptly dissolved.

On December 5, 1848, Prussia was granted a new constitution.

A rising for such a Chamber, a popular revolution for the benefit of a bourgeoisie such as this would have been senseless. Marx explained to a Cologne jury a few weeks later what the struggle was about. 'What confronted us,' he told them, 'was the struggle between ancient feudal bureaucracy and modern

bourgeois society, the fight between the society of landed property and industrial society, between the society of faith and the society of knowledge.' Between these two forms of societies there could only be a struggle to the death. But the bourgeoisie, who should have fought for their own interests, their class interests, cried off, shirked, evaded their task. They wanted the revolution, they could not help wanting it, but they shrank from the cost. They cast fearful glances at the masses whom they had set in motion because they themselves were too weak to face feudalism alone, the masses whom they also feared. For behind their own revolution they could already perceive the second revolution lurking, the revolution that would be against them. Lacking initiative, lacking faith in the people and faith in themselves, they failed to exert the strength to seize the power as they might have seized it. They did not even go half-way. They allowed the whole of the old state apparatus to remain intact, in the ingenuous hope of establishing their supremacy and preserving it with its help. The nobility, the army, the bureaucracy allowed them to hold sway as long as the elementary popular movement threatened to sweep everything away. The bourgeoisie were good enough as a screen to shelter behind, while danger threatened. As soon as they were no longer necessary for this purpose the feudal classes dispensed with their services.

The experiences of the past nine months had made one thing plain beyond all doubt. Vienna and Berlin, the Prussian Chamber and the National Assembly at Frankfurt, the speech-making and still more the behaviour of the parties, all pointed to one thing. The revolution could only be accomplished *against* the bourgeoisie. In a series of articles in which he summed up the progress of events Marx concluded that the alternative before Germany now was the counter-revolution of feudal absolutism or the 'social-republican revolution.'

'Social-republican,' was the term he used, not 'Socialist' or 'proletarian.' The seventeen points of the programme of the Communist League had demanded a republic with socialistic institutions, a Republic with equal suffrage for all, which should free the peasants of all feudal burdens, assure the workers a livelihood by national workshops, the breaking of the power of the aristocracy of finance for the benefit of

industry and the petty-bourgeoisie, a state bank to replace the private banks and control credit. Social-republicanism involved neither the abolition of private ownership of the means of production nor the abolition of class-conflicts. It meant capitalism still, but capitalism in a State in which workers, petty-bourgeoisie and peasants had maximum concessions. The social-republican revolution did not emancipate the proletariat; it merely prepared the ground for the struggle for its emancipation. If the bourgeoisie failed, if they did not manage to attain what was expected of them, i.e. a constitutional monarchy in theory but their own supremacy in fact, the other anti-feudal classes must part from them and workers, petty-bourgeoisie and peasants must advance for the social republic.

From the autumn of 1848 onwards the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* started changing its tone. If previously it had only paid slight attention to specifically working-class questions, wishing to avoid anything tending to disturb harmonious co-operation between bourgeoisie and proletariat against the forces of absolutism, it now set itself to demonstrating the full extent of the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It gave publicity to the work-book that the municipal authorities of Cologne imposed on its workers, a shameless document demonstrating the workers' lack of rights. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* declared that this was evidence of what kind of constitution the German bourgeoisie would give the people if it came into power.

The weakness of the German Revolution was now manifest. Its most deep-seated cause lay in Germany's defective economic development. All the negative factors which had come to light, the splitting up of the revolutionary movement in the separate states, the weakness of the bourgeoisie, the inertia of the petty-bourgeoisie, the uncertainty of the workers, all had their deepest roots in it. After the collapse of Vienna and Berlin, in the face of the growing apathy and paralysis which seemed to be extending its grip from day to day, all hope that the German revolution might once more find sufficient strength within itself seemed to disappear. Towards the end of 1848 Marx rested all his hopes upon a blow from without. The Gallic cock must crow again. The revolution in its course through

Europe had started out from Paris, in Paris the counter-revolution had gained its first victories, in Paris likewise it would suffer its next defeat. Not a country in Europe now lived its own life alone; the same battle-front ran through them all. The Revolution could not conquer in any country unless the counter-revolution were overthrown in France. The article with which the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* greeted the New Year ended with the words: 'Revolutionary rising of the French working class, world war, that is the programme for 1849.'

In the Revolution's period of decline the respective social forces stood out far more plainly than during its period of advance. The strength and weakness of the various classes were now apparent. The ultra-Lefts chose just this moment to lose all sense of proportion. They clung the more fanatically to their wish-picture the farther reality departed from it. At the beginning of 1849 a fresh attack on Marx was hatched in the Workers' Union.

In spite of the unrelenting efforts of the public prosecutor, supported by the partisan president of the court, to secure a conviction of Gottschalk, 'who appealed to the crude masses, the lowest section of society, the most incapable of all of forming an opinion,' the jury had acquitted him. Marx's acceptance of the presidency of the Workers' Union had only been provisional. Now that Gottschalk was free once more, he was able to resume it. But in the meantime a great deal had changed in the Union, and Gottschalk's long imprisonment had not been without its effect on him. The school through which the Union had passed in those stormy days under the leadership of Marx and his friends had not been in vain. It had evolved, its understanding of the course of development had become infinitely clearer, it no longer only differentiated between black and white, between heaven and hell as it had done in the past; it had learned to differentiate both in the camp of the counter-revolution and in its own, it no longer stood for all or nothing.

Gottschalk was bitterly disappointed. 'His' Union, which he regarded so tenderly as his own creation and believed he could sway this way and that as if it were his own property, had been stolen from him. He decided that it needed

reorganisation, and proposed that full powers be vested in the president—that, of course, meant Gottschalk himself—to appoint his own officers, for he alone possessed the necessary knowledge, understanding and authority. The Union declined to submit to a dictatorship of this sort, and Gottschalk was enraged at its ‘ingratitude.’ His vanity was so wounded that at the beginning of January, 1849, he left Cologne without saying anything to anybody and went to Brussels. But before leaving he gained control of the Union newspaper, and the new editor whom he put in charge was his unconditional adherent, as he was destined soon to show by what he wrote about the forthcoming elections.

Gottschalk may have asked the members of the Workers’ Union to put him up as candidate for the Prussian National Assembly and they may have refused. This was later believed to have been the chief reason for his departure from Cologne. Gottschalk denied it, however, and recalled his attitude to the elections of 1848, to participation in which he had been so strongly opposed. But that had been in 1848. In 1849 Gottschalk became a candidate, though not in Cologne. He stood in Bonn and also in a peasant constituency near Bonn, on both occasions without success.

The elections, under the new Constitution granted by the king, were due to take place on February 22, 1849. The Workers’ Union spent weeks discussing whether to participate in them or not. Anneke, who was a friend of Gottschalk, though he did not remain a partisan of his to the end, was in favour of the Workers’ Union putting up their own candidate. Marx opposed this, in the first place for the practical reason that the time till the election was too short to make the necessary preparations. In principle, of course, he was in favour of putting up workers’ candidates, but for the moment it was not a question of ‘doing something on grounds of principle but of creating opposition to the Government, to absolutism and to feudal domination.’ He was far from agreeing on matters of principle with Raveaux, whom he had relentlessly criticised, and with Schneider, both of whom were standing as candidates. But it was not a question of a struggle between ‘red’ and ‘pink’ Democrats now. ‘In view of the impossibility of putting one’s own principles into effect it was necessary to unite with the

other opposition party in order not to leave the victory to absolute monarchism.'

This was another attempt to go part of the way with the radical bourgeoisie. It was an attempt undertaken without much hope of rallying the ranks in a battle that was almost lost. Yet it was the only course open in Germany as long as a blow did not come to clear the stifling atmosphere from without. In this situation, with the forces distributed as they were, anything else would have amounted to so much empty verbiage.

The second Prussian National Assembly was also elected by indirect voting. The primary voters elected the electors who elected the actual deputies. The Left bloc were successful in Cologne. Of the 344 electors two hundred were Democrats and opponents of the Constitution the king had granted. They sent two deputies to Berlin, Kyll and Schneider, the lawyer, with whom Marx had worked for months in the Democratic Union.

The majority of the members of the Workers' Union were followers of Marx. Gottschalk's closest followers, utterly opposed to compromise as of old, clinging to their principles all the more obstinately because they were utterly incapable of practical political thinking, wrong even when an error in their calculations accidentally produced the right result, now threw all discretion to the winds and used their paper to attack Marx more and more violently. Gottschalk still retained his control of the Union paper, and the Union failed to regain it. Consequently it was forced to start a new paper of its own. From February onwards there were two workers' newspapers in Cologne, fighting each other hammer and tongs. Gottschalk's paper declared relentless warfare on 'all parties, from that of the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* (the mouthpiece of the extreme Right) to that of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.' In the issue of February 25, 1849, there appeared an open letter 'to Herr Karl Marx,' which laid plain the substance of the dispute between Gottschalk and him. It was not signed but was written by Gottschalk, who remained behind the scenes but took a very lively part in the sectional squabble as before. Wounded pride was not the smallest of his motives. At the Frankfurt Democrats' Day Schapper had said that Marx was

destined to play a great rôle, and this had hurt him. He consoled himself with the thought that this Goliath must meet his David too.

The 'open letter' seized on an article of Marx's in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of January 21. Gottschalk chose well. Never before and never again in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* did Marx express with such clarity his interpretation of the tasks of the revolution and the rôle played in it by the various classes.

The elections for the second Prussian National Assembly were at hand. The bourgeoisie were prepared to put up with the new constitution. Marx laid bare once more, in words that were crystal-clear and were this time entirely lacking in that scorn which he usually never spared, how inseparably their interests were interwoven with this constitution. It was not a question now of a Republic or even of a red Republic, but simply of the old absolutism with its hierarchy on the one hand and the representative system of the bourgeoisie on the other. Prussia must either attain the political organisation corresponding to the social conditions of the century or retain a political constitution corresponding to the social conditions of the past. The struggle against the bourgeois system of private property could not yet be. It confronted England and was on the order of the day in France. In Germany the struggle was rather against a political system which threatened bourgeois private property because it left the helm of the ship of state to the representatives of feudal private property, to the king by the grace of God, the army, the bureaucracy, the provincial Junkers, and a number of finance barons who were their allies.

Marx then proceeded to demonstrate in detail how Prussian feudalism had injured and was continuing to injure the bourgeoisie, how it was restricting the development of modern big industry, hampering foreign trade, delivering German industry helpless into the hands of English competition. He demonstrated how Prussian fiscal policy and the Prussian bureaucratic machine had cut everything, great and small, to the measure of the feudal classes. The class-interest of the bourgeoisie was to destroy the feudal state themselves. That was their historical task, and this revolution was their revolution.

What of the workers and the petty-bourgeoisie? • 'We say to

the workers and the petty-bourgeoisie: rather suffer in modern bourgeois society, which by the development of industry creates the material means for the foundation of a new society which will free you all, than step backwards into an obsolete form of society, which, under the pretext of saving your class, will plunge the whole nation back into mediaeval barbarism.'

In these words Marx expressed, brutally and without the slightest regard for fondly nourished illusions, the fact that the revolution, on whomsoever's shoulders it might be borne, must be the bourgeois revolution first and could be no other, because it was necessary to free bourgeois conditions of property, i.e. in later language, capitalist economy, from all the fetters that hampered its development. The proletarian revolution would only be possible after capitalist economy had created the conditions that presupposed it.

Gottschalk's reply to Marx was: 'What is the purpose of such a revolution? Why should we, men of the proletariat, spill our blood for this? Must we really plunge voluntarily into the purgatory of a decrepit capitalist domination to avoid a mediæval hell, as you, sir preacher, proclaim to us, in order to attain from there the nebulous heaven of your Communist creed?'

It was the question that Weitling put, it was the question that Willich and his supporters were to put a year later, it was the question that Bakunin's followers put in the seventies. Every time the bourgeois revolution was on the order of the day this question was put to scientific Socialism, expressing the same impatience as that to which the London Communists gave its classic formula in 1850—'We must come into power at once or lay ourselves down to sleep.'

Gottschalk's open letter also contained the reproach that such ideas could only come from an intellectual. 'They are not in earnest about the salvation of the oppressed. The distress of the workers, the hunger of the poor have only a scientific, doctrinaire interest for them. They are not touched by that which stirs the heart of men.' Thus did Gottschalk, himself an intellectual in the guise of a proletarian, make play with the mistrust of intellectuals felt by many workers; as if the threatened relapse into barbarism held terrors for Marx, i.e. for aesthetes and cultivated minds, but not for the workers.

No, said Gottschalk, the party of the revolutionary proletariat knew no fear. He derided Marx for making the outbreak of revolution in Germany dependent on an outbreak in France and an outbreak in France dependent on an outbreak in England. He maintained that the proletariat must carry out its revolution here and now, without hesitations or misgivings. The revolution must be permanent and must continue until the victory of the proletariat. It was obvious that, holding these views as he did, Gottschalk was bound to reject cooperation with the bourgeois Democrats even if they were not (and this was another dig at Marx) such 'weaklings and nobodies' as the Cologne deputies whom Marx had recommended for election.

If Gottschalk expected Marx to continue the controversy he was sadly disappointed. Marx ignored the attack. He had succeeded in keeping his controversy with Weitling behind the scenes and he did not engage in polemics 'towards the Left' this time either. Instead of indulging in a theoretical battle with Gottschalk in a situation which demanded the concentration of all forces against the Right, instead of engaging in a controversy that might easily be misconstrued and was in any case inopportune, he preferred setting forth his own positive point of view. Later, in a situation that was in many respects similar, on the occasion of Lassalle's agitation against the Prussian Progressive Party, Marx adopted the same attitude. But it was impossible for his comrades in the Workers' Union to keep silence. The breach between them and Gottschalk's followers was so great that the Union ended by splitting into two. Gottschalk's adherents resigned and formed their own organisation. It only survived for a few months. A year later the old Union also expired, shattered by the blows of the Reaction.

After Gottschalk's return to Cologne in the summer of 1849, he took practically no more part in political activity. He resumed his medical practice as a faithful and selfless helper of the poor. Cholera broke out in the autumn, and Gottschalk, actuated by the sympathy for the poor which was the whole reason of his being, was the first and for a long time the only doctor to work in the infected slum districts. He caught the disease himself and died, after a day's illness, on September 8,

1849. Many hundreds of workers followed their dead friend to his grave.

In the struggle against the majority of the Workers' Union, a substantial proportion of Gottschalk's adherents had been actuated by personal motives and emotional attachment to their leader. Gottschalk had expressed, in however distorted and mutilated a fashion, an under-current of feeling in the revolutionary movement that grew stronger and stronger as time went on and affected even those who had hitherto followed Marx in his policy of coalition with bourgeois democracy. The same aspiration, to liberate the workers' movement from all burdensome and oppressive ties, called the Communist League into being once more.

Its old leaders, with Schapper and Moll at their head, had never been entirely reconciled to the dissolution of the League, although they had not been able to resist Marx's arguments for its dissolution. The branches of the League abroad had never acknowledged its dissolution. At the second Democratic Congress in Berlin, Ewerbeck, leader of the Paris branch, had conversations with former League members, with whom he arranged to summon a general League Congress in Berlin for December, 1848. The Congress was to appoint new executive officers in place of those previously appointed by Marx. The victory of Reaction in Berlin prevented the Congress from taking place, but the will to revive the League was there. Moll, who settled in London after fleeing from Cologne, was particularly active in the matter. Members of the London branch co-operated with him in drafting new League statutes. Moll, Heinrich Bauer and Georg Eccarius were to be the leaders of the resuscitated League.

At the beginning of 1849 Schapper was informed by Moll of the London decision and invited to found a branch in Cologne. Schapper summoned the old members of the League and a few of the most active members of the Workers' Union and established a branch. Marx, Engels and the rest of the editorial staff of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* seem to have been invited to join it in vain. A short time afterwards Moll appeared surreptitiously in Cologne as the representative of the new central office. He travelled all over Germany establishing contacts on behalf of the organisation. His

chief aim was to persuade Marx and Engels to rejoin the League.

A meeting took place at the editorial offices of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. Marx, Engels and Wilhelm Wolff were present, besides Moll and members of the Cologne branch. 'The discussion centred on whether the League ought to be re-established or not,' one of those present at the meeting later wrote. 'Those who took part in the debate were chiefly Marx, Engels and Wolff on the one side and Schapper and Moll on the other. Marx declared once again that under existing conditions, with freedom of speech and freedom of the Press, the League was superfluous. Schapper and Moll, on the other hand, insisted that the League was absolutely essential. Marx and his colleagues also objected to the statutes that Moll proposed.' Marx's objections were based on the League's proposed programme—its aims, as set forth in the statutes, were not those of the Communists—as well as on its proposed organisation, which 'tended towards the conspiratorial.' Marx was supported by Engels and Wolff, besides a few members of the Cologne branch, and Moll left Cologne without attaining his object.

The freedom of speech and of the Press, which in Marx's opinion made the re-establishment of the League superfluous, still existed, certainly, but they were increasingly menaced every day. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* had to defend itself against more and more violent attacks. The officials whom it so pitilessly criticised had harassed it with complaints ever since the first day of its existence. They felt themselves 'slandered' every other minute. Among those who complained were Drigalski, a high official named Zweifel, a policeman, and Hecker, the attorney-general. Some of their objections were so absurd that they had obviously been inspired from above. For instance, after Marx printed a republican appeal by the notorious Gustav Hecker, Hecker, the attorney-general, protested at his not having pointed out that Gustav Hecker was not the same man. He claimed that this omission might possibly have led the reader to suppose that he, an official of royal Prussia, was making a Republican appeal. Far more serious was an accusation against Marx and his comrades based on his appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes.

At first the officials persecuted Marx with accusations which they knew to be baseless obviously for the sole purpose of temporarily silencing him by a longer or shorter period in prison on remand. The Democrats of Cologne became alarmed at the persecutory zeal of the courts. The workers had already lost two presidents of their Union, and they were not minded to permit a third to be incarcerated. In the middle of November, when Marx was asked to appear before the examining magistrate on account of some trivial libel allegation, a large crowd of workers gathered outside the court and refused to disperse until Marx reappeared. They received him with jubilation and he was forced to make a short speech, the only one he ever made in the streets of Cologne. But there was even greater indignation, to say nothing of very justified anxiety, a week later when Marx and the other members of the committee of the Democratic Union were ordered before the court once more, this time for an alleged 'treasonable' appeal against a Government which was guilty of violating the Constitution. Before the accused appeared before the examining magistrate, a special delegation insisted on a high administrative official assuring them that they would not be arrested.

The civil officials preserved at least the outward appearance of legal forms. The military took more solid measures. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* had by no means soft-pedalled its exposures of the excesses committed by the soldiery at the instigation of their officers, particularly during the period of martial law. The officers, naturally enough, loathed the paper and plied the War Ministry with appeals for the suppression of the 'pernicious rag.' Threatening letters poured in by every post. One day two non-commissioned officers presented themselves at Marx's private address and announced that the newspaper had insulted the rank of non-commissioned officer and made threats of violence against the editorial staff. 'Marx received them in his dressing-gown, with the butt of an unloaded revolver protruding from one of the pockets,' Engels relates. 'This sight was sufficient to cause the gentlemen to refrain from further parleying, and they withdrew meekly, in spite of the fact that they were carrying their side-arms.'

These crude attempts at intimidation had no effect whatever. The civil authorities had no better success. In February,

1849, Marx twice appeared before a jury to answer their accusations. On the first occasion he was accused of insulting officials; on the second occasion the charge arose out of his November tax-boycott appeals. The first charge was easy to rebut, and the jury acquitted him after very short deliberation. Marx took advantage of his second trial to make a brilliant speech showing up the whole hypocrisy of the Reaction, who themselves tore the law to shreds and then, when men denounced them and called for violence against them, they, the law-breakers, accused them of violating the law. 'When the Crown makes a counter-revolution the people rightly reply with a revolution.' They could rid themselves of him as a conquered enemy but they could not condemn him as a criminal. The jury acquitted Marx once more, and, the foreman thanked him, on behalf of his colleagues, for his 'extremely informative speech.'

The courts having failed them, the now completely infuriated officials were compelled to resort to other measures. A favourable opportunity appeared to present itself in March. Though Joseph Moll had failed by a long way in attaining the objective of his journey in Germany, he had succeeded in establishing some connections and he had managed to found a branch in Berlin. The police were very soon on its track, for there appear to have been spies among its members. They did not know a great deal, but they did know some things; the rest they guessed or invented. At the end of March, 1849, the police conducted a number of house-searches, in the course of which some papers fell into their hands, including the statutes drafted by Moll. They also secured a clue which led them to suppose that the headquarters of the secret organisation were in Cologne. The police decided that the leaders must necessarily be Engels, Gottschalk, Moll and Marx, who in turn took their orders from a Paris committee of three, consisting of Herwegh, Heinzen and Ewerbeck. Thus truth and falsehood were inextricably mingled, partly in sheer defiance of common sense, partly as a consequence of sheer ignorance. But a sinister conspiracy had been discovered, the Fatherland was in danger, and it was possible to act at last. A special commissioner travelled from Berlin to Cologne, entrusted with the task of searching the houses of those implicated, confiscating

their papers and issuing warrants for their arrest in accordance with the result of his investigations. In addition the correspondence of the conspirators was to be watched. The police visualised their hated enemies as already in prison. They were bitterly disappointed. The Cologne authorities were anxious 'in all friendliness and willingness' to oblige the police, but, in view of the mood of the city and the complete unreliability of the assize courts, they were unwilling to risk another fiasco. They would not even agree to a house-search being undertaken without specific instructions from the higher authorities in Berlin. So this step misfired as well.

The Rhineland was not Berlin, and the sympathies of the overwhelming majority of the population on the Rhine were to the Left. Steps the Reaction were able to take with impunity elsewhere in Prussia had to be pondered well here. The political situation became more strained every day. The new Prussian National Assembly was far more radical than its predecessor and its Left wing was stronger and more active. The Democratic Party, under the leadership of D'Ester, of Cologne, prepared an armed rising. During the Easter holidays deputies from various parts of Germany discussed common action should that eventuality occur.

A 'live' section of the bourgeoisie, especially the petty-bourgeoisie, had roused themselves once more at the eleventh hour. But it was a section only. The vast majority of the bourgeois Democrats befuddled themselves with talk and nothing but talk. The experiences of the past year had taught Marx that when things grew serious they would cower by their firesides just as timidly as they had done in September and November. The republican question was discussed by the Cologne Democratic Union. There were two long meetings at which the question whether it should continue to call itself 'Democratic' or 'Democratic-Republican' was debated. It remained faithful to the democratic title. But what had been good and right in April, 1848, no longer sufficed in April, 1849. According to the *Neue Kölnische Zeitung*, which was edited by Anneke, the Union was thus determined 'to plunge deeper into the wide waters of Democracy, which nowadays has quite taken the place of Liberalism.' On April 14, Marx, Schapper, Wilhelm Wolf and Anneke resigned from the Rhineland

sectional committee of the Democratic Union. Their reasons were that the 'present organisation of the Democratic Union included too many heterogeneous elements to permit of activity beneficial to the cause.' Three days later the Workers' Union decided to summon a Congress of all the Workers' Unions of the Rhine province and Westphalia and all other organisations which acknowledged Social Democracy at Cologne on May 6.

Thus was the separation between bourgeois and proletarian democracy finally achieved. In August, 1848, Marx had been in favour of a coalition of the 'most heterogeneous' elements. In April, 1849, he parted from the Democrats because they embraced too many heterogeneous elements. In 1848 he had been in favour of a united front of all the anti-feudal classes; now he directed that the alliance be dissolved. A cleavage had become inevitable. The differences in equipment, tempo, *élan*, fighting spirit, between the various columns of the great army which should have marched as a united front and with a single objective against the forces of absolutism and compelled the victory had become too great. A close connection with bourgeois Democracy had been maintained as long as possible, but it no longer worked, and it was necessary to abandon it. That did not exclude the possibility of future coalitions between the workers' unions and Democracy if circumstances should demand it. In February Marx supported the candidature of the Democrats, in April he parted from them, in June he went to Paris as a representative of a Democratic committee.

Marx may have had an additional reason for deciding on a public separation from the Democrats at that particular moment. In the spring of 1849 the resurrected Communist League was to all appearances still very weak. But it existed nevertheless, and it was to be anticipated that it would soon be of greater importance. The closer the counter-revolution approached the greater would be the justification for its existence. The workers had been only reluctant adherents of the necessary but disagreeable alliance with the Democrats, and the pick of them were obviously disposed to join the League and thus sever all connection with the Democratic unions. Marx may well have foreseen the danger that, if he

postponed parting from the Democrats too long, it might result in isolating himself and his colleagues from the impatient workers. When Marx rejoined the Communist League is not known. It may have been at the time when he resigned from the Democratic committee. The journey he started in the middle of April may possibly have been a tour of organisation. The immediate reason for it was, of course, the increasing financial difficulties of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

Its circulation increased from month to month, and it was read all over Germany. But its difficulties were increased by its very success. Printers, compositors, paper-makers, dispatch clerks had to be paid in cash, and subscriptions flowed in irregularly and belatedly. After the desertion of practically all the shareholders no capital was left. The newspaper swallowed up the remnants of Marx's legacy and all his wife's capital. This staved off things for a short time, but in the spring of 1849 the paper was once more on the brink of ruin. Marx tried to raise money in Westphalia and the north-west of Germany, but with little success. When he returned to Cologne on May 9 he brought only three hundred thalers with him.

Cologne was quiet, but in other Rhineland towns fighting had begun. In May, 1849, the German Revolution flared up for the last time. Dresden rose and fierce fighting raged in the streets for four days. The revolutionaries—among whom was the director of the Royal Saxon Orchestra, Richard Wagner—were defeated, for the Prussian forces were overwhelming. The Bavarian Palatinate was in wild insurrection. Baden was in the hands of a revolutionary Democratic government. In Rhenish Prussia the workers rose at Elberfeld, Iserlohn and elsewhere. The Government's military supremacy was so great and the few fighters were so pitifully left in the lurch by the petty-bourgeoisie that the isolated outbreaks in the Rhineland collapsed in a few days. This was also the fate of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

Even now the Government did not dare to ban the paper outright. They still feared an open rising, though Cologne teemed with soldiers. True to their nature, they adopted crafty bureaucratic measures. They took no steps against the paper, they 'only' banished Marx. Marx having become an

'alien' by reason of his loss of Prussian nationality, they had the formal right to do so. He was a disturber of peace and order, so he was desired to leave Prussia at short notice. Marx received the expulsion order on May 16. On May 18 the last number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appeared, printed in red.

A prominent position was given to Freiligrath's powerful valedictory poem:

. . . *Auf der Lippe den Trotz und den zuckenden Hohn,
In der Hand den blitzenden Degen,
Noch im Sterben rufend: Die Rebellion!
So bin ich in Ehren erlegen. . . .
Nun Ade, nun Ade, du kämpfende Welt,
Nun Ade, ihr ringenden Heere!
Nun Ade, du pulvergeschwarztes Feld,
Nun Ade, ihr Schwerter und Speere!
Nun Ade, doch nicht für immer Ade!
Denn sie toten den Geist nicht, ihr Bruder!
Bald richt'ich mich rasselnd in die Hoh.
Bald kehrt ich reisiger wieder!*¹

The last issue of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* warned the workers against any sort of rising. In view of the military situation in Cologne they would have been irretrievably lost. 'The Prussians will be infuriated by your quiet. In taking their farewell the editors of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* thank you for the sympathy shown them. Their last word will always and everywhere be: "The emancipation of the working class!"'

The Reaction were highly gratified at the disappearance of the paper 'with which the *Moniteur* of 1793 paled in comparison.' 'Its surviving friends will be incapable of rivalling their Rhenish master in scurrility and desecration of the holiest in mankind.' The attitude of the people of Cologne to its disappearance is demonstrated by the words of a correspondent who was anything but sympathetic: 'No number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* caused a greater sensation than the last. It was printed in red from beginning to end. The rush at the editorial offices and the demand for this number were really

¹ Defiance and scorn quivering on my lips, the gleaming dagger in my hand, still exclaiming: rebellion! in death, thus am I honourably defeated. Now farewell, farewell, you world of battle, farewell, you struggling hosts; farewell, you powder-blackened fields, farewell, you swords and spears. Farewell, but not for ever; for they cannot kill the spirit. Soon I shall once more be on high; soon I shall return on a steed!

extraordinary. About twenty thousand copies must have been printed, and some of them are already fetching a thaler a piece. Real idolatry was roused by the issue of May 18. One hears again and again of instances of the paper being expensively framed.'

Marx liquidated the affairs of the newspaper with all speed. He devoted the cash in hand, the proceeds of the sale of the printing press (which belonged to him), etc., to pay the paper's debts. His own and his wife's fortune had been swallowed up to the last penny. Frau Marx had to pawn her silver to pay for immediate necessities. The staff distributed themselves among those parts of Germany where risings had, or had not yet, taken place. Marx and Engels went south, to the area of insurrection in the Palatinate of Baden.

Not that they expected a great deal from it. They had got to know the nature of the petty-bourgeoisie, even the best and most upright revolutionaries among them, and of the German lower middle class in particular, too well to be able to have great expectations. But even their most moderate expectations were disappointed. Marx travelled by way of Frankfurt and tried to persuade the Left representatives at the German National Assembly to summon the revolutionary troops from Baden and the Palatinate to Frankfurt by Parliamentary decree. But that might perhaps have been falsely construed, they held. No, no, even the Lefts intended to keep themselves 'within the framework of the law.' It was no better in areas where risings had taken place. Marx represented to the leaders that if anything at all could save them it could only be the most resolute offensive. They must promptly occupy Frankfurt, place the National Assembly under their protection, even if the Assembly did not explicitly ask for it, and so turn the struggle into an all-German one, i.e. one of the National Assembly against the reactionary governments. But the men of Baden and the Palatinate did not look beyond Baden and the Palatinate. They stayed where they were and there they were crushed. The last rising of the German revolution, like all the others, foundered on its local limitations.

In Germany there was no more work that Marx could do. He was no soldier, and his place was not in the army. He went to Paris as the representative of the Palatinate Democratic

committee to get as much help for the insurrection as he could from the French Democrats. Engels was unwilling to miss an opportunity of gaining a little practical experience of war. 'As after all it was necessary *honoris causa* that the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* be represented in the army of Baden and the Palatinate, I girded on a sword to my side and went to Willich.'

Gottschalk's followers warned the workers against taking up arms. Their ultra-radicalism ended in a passivity which was in fact counter-revolutionary. Their paper claimed that the workers should quietly wait until the absolutists and the constitutionalists had exhausted each other. The Communists, faithful to the words of the Manifesto which urged them to support every revolutionary movement aimed at existing social and political conditions, stepped without a moment's hesitation into the ranks of the insurrectionary army.