

decision, virtually though not nominally the repeal of an Act of Parliament that had been passed in their favor. No wonder they have been driven into the arms of the Socialists; no wonder that many of their members have become Socialists in reality, and many more, blinded by the dust, have become Socialists in name.

SO-CALLED MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM AS AT GLASGOW.

The confusion has been made worse, the mystification of the working classes on the one side and of the rich ratepayers on the other side has been made complete by the current use of the term 'Municipal Socialism.' No doubt in recent years in Great Britain we can trace a vast increase of the economic functions of town councils, and a great many services have been undertaken having the public benefit as their aim, where these services, if left in private hands, would necessarily either result in great waste or in a great monopoly, or where, from the difficulties of exacting payment, private enterprise would have left them unsupplied. Such, for example, as the service of water, or gas, electricity, tramways, markets, docks, public baths, public gardens, public libraries, lodging-houses, and workmen's dwellings. This increase of function is partly due to the fact that British municipalities in mid-nineteenth century had lost much of their ancient powers, and left much either undone or done by private individuals that was habitually done by the municipalities on the European continent. The change was also partly due to the fact that the growth of towns and population rendered common action more and more needful for public health and convenience. But to call this movement Socialism is to play with words. It has been carried out not by any Socialist majority, sometimes not with any Socialist help, in no place as a step towards Collectivism; but simply because it seemed in each particular case for the general good. (1)

In fact, the question of public control and ownership is eminently a practical question varying with times and circumstances, sometimes more, sometimes less—less, for example, where, as in the United States, there is a lack of well trained and incorruptible officials; more, for example, in Prussia, where such officials can be found and people are accustomed to the obedience of military and bureaucratic discipline.

Or to come nearer home, the city of Glasgow is an example of a locality where there was a wide field for the action of the civic authorities, and where the field had been occupied with wonderful energy and success; so that when in 1901 the British Association held its meeting at Glasgow, strangers to the city could enjoy the best water supply in the kingdom, the cheap municipal gas and municipal trams, the parks, public halls and art gallery; could examine the famous model lodging-houses, public baths, municipal laundries and markets; could read of the immense improvement in the sanitary conditions of the city, with a great diminution of the death-rate, the diminution being the happy result of the new water supply, the better drainage, the clearance of slum areas, and the provision of healthy dwellings.

So great an extension of municipal activity caused Glasgow to be styled in the South the Mecca of Municipal Socialism; (2) though I must remark, by way of protest against this term, that the difference is hardly greater between the climate of the city on the Clyde and the climate of Mecca, than the difference between the municipal activity of Glasgow and real Socialism.

EXAMPLES FROM MEDIAEVAL SIENA, MODERN VIENNA, AND MEDIAEVAL ENGLAND.

And lest you should think there is anything either new or revolutionary, or, again, anti-Catholic in this kind of public ownership and control, which is misnamed Municipal Socialism, listen to three examples. One is from Italy in the 13th century, in what was then the great industrial town of Siena. The statutes of the town administration can be read to-day; elaborate rules on street cleanliness, market cleanliness, drainage and paving, for the problem of the water supply, for the planting of waste places around the town with trees, for forestry on the communal property; care for the supply of the city with flour and grain, and provisions in general, and building materials, lest the supply be disturbed by any extortionate middlemen. There was power to make street improvements, and assessment was based on the principle of betterment (that, you see, is no new discovery). Finally, besides care for the roads and bridges, this Sienese republic took in hand the medicinal baths in its territory and fixed a tariff not merely for the baths, but for the lodging of those who frequented them. (3).

Take another Catholic city, this time contemporary, the city of Vienna; under its admirable burgomaster, Dr. Lueger. The city and its suburbs lay under the yoke of a ring of monopolists (chiefly Jews); the peasant cultivators around had to sell the produce of their farms, gardens, and vineyards to these monopolists at a very low price and the consumers had to buy them from these monopolists at a very high price. Dr. Lueger worked a transformation. He undertook a communal restaurant in the vast basement of the town hall, where wholesome and cheap provisions and light wine were sold to immense crowds of all classes, to the great gain both of consumer and producer, by getting rid of the monopolist middlemen, and bringing besides some £16,000 a year into the municipal treasury. Moreover, water has been municipalized and supplied at very low prices, I believe below cost price; an excellent tram service is supplied just at cost price, while gas and electricity have also been made municipal, and though supplied very cheaply yield an annual revenue to the city of about £80,000 sterling. These are great results, and no wonder the great man who has brought them about has been assailed with vituperation. As a Catholic and the friend of Leo XIII. and Pius X., Dr. Lueger is called ultramontane, fanatical, and retrograde. We are accustomed to such epithets and take off the discount from such charges; where I want you to deduct the discount is when you hear him called an Anti-Semite or Jew-hater, because it happened that the monopolists he overthrew were mostly Jews, and when you hear him called a Socialist because he established municipal industry in a field where it was fit. (1)

As a third example let us come back to our own country and hear what was the condition of the tenants of the great monastery of Durham in the 15th century, a condition that if seen in working order to-day might be misnamed 'Village Socialism.' The villagers, though nominally tenants, were practically small property owners paying a rent-charge to the monastery. In the village, to quote the words of Abbot Gasquet, 'Many of the things that in these days advanced politicians would desire to see introduced into the village community of modern England, to relieve the deadly dullness of country life, were seen in Durham and Cumberland in full working order in pre-Reformation days. Local provisions for public health and general convenience are evinced by the watchful vigilance of the village officials over the water supplies, the care taken to prevent the fouling of useful streams, and stringent by-laws as to the common place for washing clothes and the times for emptying and cleansing ponds and mill-dams. Labor was lightened and the burdens of life eased by co-operation on an extensive scale. A common mill ground the corn, and the flour was baked into bread at a common oven. A common smith worked at a common forge, and common shepherds and herdsmen watched the sheep and cattle of various tenants, when pastured on the fields common to the whole village community.' (2)

IMPRATICABILITY OF SOCIALISM.

If I have given these details at such length it is to emphasize my contention that reform is not Socialism, and that to mix them up is to confuse, confound, bewilder, and blind with dust or fog, and justifies me in applying to Socialism the epithet insidious, because masquerading under false colors as if it were the sole remedy for social ills, when out of many proposed remedies it is merely one.

And now I have as a second point, to say that it is a very bad remedy, and thus that it is not merely insidious but impracticable.

The collective ownership and collective management of all the means of production implies that every factory and workshop in a whole country, every warehouse, every retail shop, every office, and every house of business, all ships from a liner to a fishing smack, every mine and quarry belong to the Government, and must be managed by those who are working not on their own account, but as Government servants.

Again and again the difficulties (seemingly insuperable) have been pointed out, and some explanation or answer demanded from the Socialists how they could be overcome. Already on other occasions I have pointed out that these difficulties, for the purpose of remembering them better, can be reduced to five: first, the difficulty of organizing work; secondly, the difficulty of supplying different wants; thirdly, the difficulty of assigning different employments; fourthly, the difficulty of assigning remuneration; and lastly, the difficulty of supplying a stimulating motive to work.

1 P. Verhaegen, *Socialistes Anglais*, ch. xi.

2 *The Times*, August 23, 1901.

3 See E. Armstrong, *English Historical Review*, vol. xv, 1900

1 See *Rivista Internazionale*, November, 1903, pp. 490, 491.

2 Preface to his edition of Cobbett's *History of the Reformation*, p. xiv., 1896.