

**THE NEW
SOCIALISM: AN
IMPARTIAL INQUIRY**

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The new socialism: an impartial inquiry by Jane T. Stoddart

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JANE T. STODDART

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BY
JANE T. STODDART

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PREFACE

THE present book occupies, so far as I am aware, new ground among English books on Socialism. The larger historical books on the subject stop short of recent years, and leave unchronicled much Socialist thought and action of the utmost importance. My aim has been to give as briefly and fairly as possible an account of the Socialist movement over the world during the last ten years. Like everything else, Socialism has undergone a process of change, and must be studied in the works of its latest authorities. Extreme utterances of individuals have been largely disregarded. In such a movement as Socialism much exaggeration was inevitable. But Socialism has its great thinkers and students, men as candid, as thoughtful, and as earnest as any to be found in other camps. These thinkers are constructive as well as destructive. They are not afraid to acknowledge the immense difficulties that have to be conquered ere the goal is reached, and they have taken them up in earnest, admitting in many cases that they are not yet completely solved. That Socialism is a movement full of mighty import to mankind, and that the questions which it raises may at any moment present themselves in their most practical form, is now obvious to all. It is only by understanding what Socialists ask for, and why they ask it, by studying their views and arguments in their best, most considered and most impressive form that any fruitful discussion can be carried on.

It is in this spirit that I have endeavoured to set forth the main points in the recent literature of Socialism. The chief books published on the Continent as well as the English literature of the subject have been thoroughly examined, and every effort has been made to secure a just and accurate account of the main issues. The periodical literature of Socialism has also been investigated to the best of my ability. It is so extensive that an absolutely complete knowledge is unattainable, but I hope that few important omissions will be found.

In the Supplement I have given chapters on Revolutionary Syndicalism ; Recent Developments of American Socialism ; and Notes on Australian Socialism. There are good reasons for separat-

ing these from the main part of the book. The serious Socialists are more and more striving after precision of language, and much that is called Socialistic is not genuine Socialism.

The years 1897-98, the Jubilee period of the Communist Manifesto, form the natural point of departure for a study of the New Socialism. In 1898 Marx had been dead fifteen years, and Liebknecht, in his old age, was living with his memories. The veteran campaigner rejoiced in the overthrow of Bismarck and in the electoral results which made his party numerically the strongest in Germany. He did not survive to see the full effects of the criticism which was brought to bear on the Marxian system, nor could he have anticipated the results of the new Marxian revival under Sorel, which we know as Revolutionary Syndicalism. Students all over Europe have recognized that the years 1897-98 mark a parting of the ways. From that point onwards we can distinguish the three great modern groups—Revisionists, Orthodox Marxians and Revolutionaries. It is hardly needful to insist on the enormous progress of the Socialist movement all over the world during these years. The American Socialist, Robert Hunter, in his new book, *Socialists at Work*, puts the world Socialist vote at 7,434,616. This represents the vote obtained by the various national parties at the latest elections up to 1907. In Great Britain, at the general election of 1906, according to the *Reformers' Year-book*, 274,631 votes were cast for the Socialists, 98,902 for the "Labour Party," and 156,930 for the Trade Unionists. In Germany, in 1907, though the Socialists were apparently defeated, they polled three and a quarter million votes, a quarter of a million more than in 1903, and over a million more than in 1898. Bebel said that the elections had shown that every third man over twenty-five in Germany was a Social Democrat. In Austria the Socialists had an overwhelming success at the general election in May 1907, the first under universal suffrage. They polled 1,041,948 votes, a third of the total vote cast. In Belgium, in 1904, the Socialist vote was 469,094. In France, in 1906, it was about 900,000, as compared with half a million (roughly) in 1893. In Italy, in 1904, the Socialists polled 320,000, but these figures convey no adequate idea of the strength of the party. The suffrage in Italy is restricted by a literary test, and over 4,000,000 working men are excluded from the ballot.

While the utmost care has been taken to ensure accuracy, it is hardly possible to avoid error in a subject so large and complicated, and I shall gratefully receive and acknowledge any corrections.

Quotations have been taken in all cases from original sources.

J. T. S.

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