

Luxemburg were chief among the supporters of this more radical trend in the movement, and every party conference, every great party movement found them at their post, staunchly braving the ridicule and the misunderstanding of the party leaders. Among them all, none was braver and more courageous, none more ready to carry out her ideas to the last bitter consequence, none more far-seeing and theoretically sound in her opinions than Rosa Luxemburg.

Rosa Luxemburg was born fifty-four years ago in Warsaw, Russian Poland. As a very young girl she came to Germany as a student, and immediately became so active in the revolutionary movement that she was forced to flee to Switzerland in order to escape deportation into the land of the Czar. She continued her studies in Switzerland, but remained in constant communication with her German comrades. In order to be able to return to Germany she entered upon one of those political marriages that were very common in those days among young Russian women who had been driven from Russia and desired to acquire German citizenship. She married a young German student, thus, as his legal wife, acquiring German citizenship, and returned to Germany where she immediately became one of the most promising agitators and writers the movement had at that time.

Her personal appearance was exceedingly unprepossessing; she was slightly humpbacked and her features unattractive. But nature had compensated her with a personality and a mental brilliancy that led even her most apathetic listeners to forget her outward appearance after the first five minutes. She was one of the most profound students of Marxian philosophy in a movement that was rich of theoreticians. She possessed a remarkable memory for facts, and her speeches were full of references, quotations and examples from the most diversified sources. In repartee she was unexcelled, she gave no quarter, and her attacks were feared by her opponents as much for their merciless clearness, as for the logical brilliancy with which they were presented. An accomplished linguist, she was equally at home in Russian or

German, in Polish as in French, and was well known in most countries of Europe as a fascinating and thoroughly learned speaker.

In Poland she became a member of the Polish Social-Democratic Party, the strictly Socialist, anti-national wing of the Polish Socialist movement, and led the fight against the nationalistic P. P. S. (Polish Party Socialista). Although always at variance with the majority of the German party, she was unalterably opposed to all separatist tendencies, opposed to all outside organizations and propaganda to such a degree that she refused steadfastly to countenance any kind of separate organization or agitation even for propaganda among women.

The Fight in the Party for Revolutionary Methods

During the last two decades, every Party Congress, every important discussion of party tactics found Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht together in the radical minority. Political conditions in Germany, the unparalleled success of the party on the political field, the enormous membership, the power and strength of the trade union and co-operative movements, the extraordinary development of its educational institutions,—all of these factors encouraged the growth of a distinctly conservative spirit in its membership, but especially in its leaders. Strikes and labor struggles in Germany had become the exception rather than the rule, because the labor organizations, backed up by the Social-Democracy, were too formidable an opponent to be lightly alienated, even by a powerful capitalist class. Success on the political field had made it possible for the Socialist movement to achieve the passage of important reforms and social legislation, achievements that were naturally stressed and pushed into the foreground in the propaganda work of the party, thus acquiring undue importance and influence upon the tactical program of the party. In consequence the party bureaucracy met every suggestion in favor of more radical measures with active resentment, because they honestly feared that such measures