

system. This merely proved conclusively that the preservation of ownership of social property by the individual is incompatible with a one class system, no matter how plausible the scheme might appear on the surface.

Instead of being a solution, the middle class ideal proved to be a transition from one system based on two classes to another system based on two classes. Materially this ideal was not in accordance with the facts, and their inherent tendencies, but it derived its vitality from psychological delusion; society thought a thing to be possible through inability to see that it was impossible, or through inability to see exactly where the impossibility entered.

PROPERTY AND PROLETARIAN

The freedom of the French Revolution ended as was inevitable in decomposition: the dualism which is disguised in embryo resulted in a class formation based on the earning and owning functions, the big capitalist class and the proletariat.

This final outcome, this ultima ratio of earning and owning can be understood only in the light of the long historical development of which the final stage has been reached.

There are indications that at an early stage society consisted of one class, that the change to the dual system was then brought about by the introduction of chattel slavery. What this means and has meant ever since, is that the ownership of the slave or exploitation of the wage earner is considered preferable to the performance of production. As such a principle was initiated by involuntary servitude, it could derive its origin only from force and conquest, but it owed its continued existence to the submission of the producer, or to his inability to combine the power and knowledge necessary to change his status.

Before the founding of Rome—in the very early Roman days, there was a one-class system in Italy, a body of free and independent farmers. This rugged body proved far too

powerful for the armies of the slave-owning Greeks and gave rise to the supremacy of Rome.

But from the free and independent farmers there developed a creditor and debtor class, and the impoverished portion was driven into slavery, or took refuge in Rome to constitute the first proletariat,—the Roman Proletariat.

The Roman Proletariat was, however, a transient phenomenon; chattel slavery was introduced on a large scale to take care of production, and any separatist interests or aspirations of the proletarian portion were disposed of by its incorporation in the ruling class. The Roman Proletariat participated with the propertied classes in the exploitation of the slaves, who performed the bulk of production.

There were powerful slave uprisings later, but they never accomplished permanent results. The abolition of chattel slave production took place in the form of Feudal Christianity or Christian Feudalism. The right to own human beings was done away with, and ownership was limited to the inanimate or to animals. But without the human factor no production was insured, and therefore the producer was bound to the property as a serf, but in return he was given a location to work and live, and the means to support himself as well as his lord. While the feudal system was just as enslaving as any other, it constituted a step forward by limitation of ownership.

It was inevitable that the next social upheaval would be directed against the attachment of the producer to the property, which was merely an indirect slavery. This was accomplished in the course of many long struggles covering the period from the Reformation to the French Revolution, and led, as we have already seen, to the abolition of serfdom and privilege, so that the producer was no longer a chattel slave nor an adjunct to the property, but belonged henceforward to himself. Thus capitalism was another step forward by limitation of ownership.

But the fact that man is free by not being a chattel slave and not being attached to the property of another proved to