

her; her sufferings from the indescribable humiliations, tortures, and terrors, which were connected with their position, must be much greater than his, especially since she has not the possibility of seeking refuge in the realm of science, which often serves him as an asylum. It was very hard for both parents to see their children deprived of the innocent joys of youth.

Sad as this lot of a great spirit may seem, it rises to truly tragic eminence by reason of the fact that Marx voluntarily assumed these decade-long torturing burdens, and rejected every temptation to seek refuge in the haven of some bourgeois calling, which he might have sought with every justification. All that was to be said on this matter, he said simply and plainly, without any high-sounding words: "I must pursue my purpose through thick and thin, and dare not permit bourgeois society to transform me into a money-making machine." This Prometheus was not fettered to the rock by the bolts of Hephæstos, but by his own iron will, which was directed toward the highest goals of humanity with the certainty of a magnetic needle. His whole character is that of tempered steel. There is nothing more marvelous than to find him, in the same letter in which he seems depressed by the most sordid wretchedness, suddenly rebounding with magnificent elasticity and turning with the detached calm of a sage to a discussion of the most difficult problems, with not a furrow on his brow.

But we must not forget that Marx felt the blows inflicted on him by bourgeois society. It would be a stupid stoicism to declare: What are such tortures as Marx suffered, to a genius who must wait for the approval of posterity? Silly as is the vanity of the literateur who is not happy unless he finds his name in the papers at least once a day, it is nevertheless a necessity to a man of really creative force to find a field large enough for the unfolding of his energy, and to draw new strength for further labors, from the echo that responds to his efforts. Marx was no mewling and puking ascetic, such as may be found in cheap plays and novels, but a lover of the world, like Lessing, and he was quite familiar with the mood

expressed by the dying Lessing when he wrote to the oldest friend of his youth: "I do not believe you have the impression that I am a man in any way hungry for praise. But the coldness which the world shows to certain people, in order to teach them that nothing they do is acceptable to it, is at least numbing, if not destructive." Just before he reached the age of fifty, Marx wrote, with the same bitterness: "Half a century on my back, and still a pauper!" Once he wished himself to lie a hundred fathoms under the ground rather than continue to vegetate in this manner. Once, a desperate cry bursts from his heart: he would not desire his worst enemy to wade through the swamp in which he has been stuck for eight months, infuriated by watching his intellect being neutralized and his power for work undermined by all sorts of bagatelles.

Marx did not, to be sure, become "a cursed dog of sadness" through all this, as he occasionally remarks, with irony, and Engels speaks the truth when he says that his friend never gave up the ship. But, although Marx loved to call himself a hard man, there is no doubt that in the furnace of misfortune he was hammered harder and harder. The clear sky that was spread over the labors of his youth became overcast with heavy thunderclouds as time went on, and from these his ideas sprang forth like lightning, his verdicts on his enemies, frequently also on his friends, assumed an incisive sharpness, which injured even those whose spirits were not weak.

Those who would therefore call him a cold and icy demagogue are no less—but we must admit, no more—mistaken than those nice subaltern spirits who behold in this mighty champion only the shining puppet of the parade-ground.