

dealt with in the same manner. It does mean this, however,—that whatever the possibilities of a situation may be objectively the choice of action is limited to those of the possibilities which a society is in a position to grasp according to its mental capacity and development, and that what it does not perceive is as good as non-existent for the time being. That is the real significance of historic inevitability as distinct from fatalism which pre-determines a single unalterable course of action irrespective of all subjective possibilities; the fatalist point of view is hopelessly inadequate, in consequence, to explain why the same conditions do not always lead to the same results.

ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

All that has been stated under the heading of historic inevitability is just as true of economic determinism, but with this addition: the latter not only accepts and regards the mental development and understanding as an essential cause contributing to social results and conditions but goes still further by explaining that the mental stage is itself the result of previous material conditions of which it was the outgrowth. Thus we conceive of each mental stage not only as the cause of what follows, but as the result of what preceded. For each one is born in an environment, not of his own choosing, to which he must react and in which he must reach a certain maturity; he may then as the product of one environment, influence another. In short, economic determinism treats not alone of causes, but of the causes for causes in a continuous chain, which then constitutes a connected interpretation covering the entire sphere of history.

In this sense, therefore, the class struggle is a necessary result and a necessary cause; not as an eternal condition, however, but *only so long as society saw no other path of progress than by class struggles*, in other words, only just so long as our mental development did not enable us to diagnose the presence and nature of classes and class-antagonisms, and by finding their causes, remove them.

This diagnosis was made possible not alone by the mate-

rial of history, but also by the discovery of mental methods and processes in the field of philosophy and science. Class struggles have made up the entire period of known history, yet it was only in the nineteenth century that the class diagnosis was made. History presented the symptoms and indications, and continued to do so with ever greater emphasis and incisiveness, until the "pressure and more pressure penetrated to the consciousness" just as the continued presence and recurrence of disease in the human body led to medical science and its cures.

This development of the human understanding to the point where it could grasp the nature of social factors and entities, so as to be able ultimately to control them, is the accumulated result of many centuries and many minds. First it was necessary to make human reason a perfect instrument of observation; this made possible the accumulation of natural and historical material of perfect accuracy and universal reliability, i. e., scientific material. This took up to the time of the French Revolution and reached a practical result in the exact and natural sciences.

"But this method has left us as a legacy the habit of observing objects and processes . . . in repose not in motion, as constants not as essentially variables, in their death not in their life." The addition of the dialectic method of reasoning discovered by Hegel, and perfected and applied by Marx made possible not only the perfect observation of things in repose, but of things in motion, of forces and their underlying principles, and consequently of social evolution. This mental development was accomplished simultaneously with the rise in human society of a permanent industrial proletariat, and resulted in a diagnosis of permanent causes and permanent remedies of social classes and class struggles.

Ever since the time of the Communist Manifesto the mental impediments to the abolition of the class system has tended to disappear, in proportion as the working mass learnt the message of final social liberation. When to the power of the worker is added the knowledge or consciousness of his