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REPORT

NOTES ON THE STUTTGART CONGRESS.

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VII.

Congress Miscellanies.

THERE is no further particular matter connected with the Stuttgart Congress and entitled to extensive treatment. Only a few incidents there remain worthy of note. They may be disposed of rapidly under the head of miscellanies.

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Mrs. Anna Walling (Anna Strunsky) approached me with the remark: "In Russia people are wondering 'how can a Socialist propose such a motion as Hillquit's to restrict immigration?'" My answer was: "The trouble with our friends in Russia who 'wonder' is that they reason upside down. They proceed from the premises that the proposer of the motion is a Socialist. From such premises only 'wonder' can flow at the proposed anti-immigration resolution. The correct process of reasoning is: A non-Socialist resolution can not proceed from a Socialist; the resolution is anti-Socialist; consequently the resoluter is no Socialist." When thorns are seen to grow on a tree, which was taken for a Bartlett pear tree, it is proof the tree is not what it was taken for.

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On the day when the contested cases came up before the full Congress, the hair stood on end of those posted on the British movement. Mr. Quelch objected to the admission of the delegation of the Labor Representation Committee—the craft-union Labor Party of Great Britain. Mr. Quelch's objection was that the said body ignored the class struggle in principle and in practice, and was naught but a weak political manifestation of the Liberal Party. In proof of his charge he stated that the

said Labor party “toadied for votes in Irish districts by catering after Irish anti-Socialist superstitions and prejudices”; that the said Labor party “stood for child labor”; that the said Labor Party “had helped to lower the age for compulsory education”; etc., etc. Here was a double matter to make one’s hair stand on end—first, the sight and sound of a weak-kneed Quelch holding aggressive Socialist language that could not choose but “antagonize unions”; secondly, the knowledge that the identical Quelch had solicited a nomination at the hands of the very body that he was now proving to be unspeakable.

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Monday, the second day of the Congress, was virtually an off-day for the Congress itself. It was intended to give time for two collateral congresses to meet—the Interparliamentary Congress, and the Congress on Woman’s Rights. I attended the former. What happened there could be understood only by those who caught the note of the rising tide of Unionism, as it is gathering in the distance, preparatorily to eventually swamping the International Congresses, and placing the Socialist movement on solid ground. There was a whining, apologetic note struck by all the members of that special Congress—Socialist members of some Parliament or other. Once in a while a boastful note was struck. It sounded hollow. The note of distress struck by Troelstra of Holland, in a memorial which he presented and which opened the discussion, was the key-note to the debate. It was an acknowledgment of impotence. Adler may be said to have “covered the retreat” with the utterance: “It is not what we have done in parliament, but what we have prevented the bourgeoisie from doing that should be taken as the measure of our effectiveness,”—a measure that affords unlimited scope to the imagination. It is upon the identical principle that bungling physicians rear their title—“many died under our treatment, but just think how many more would have died, but for us.”

Adler’s retirade is the dying gasp of a policy the counterpart of which has been Anarchy. The pure and simple parliamentary Socialists and the pure and simple physical forcists are obverse and reverse of the same medal. The one imagines he can legislate, the other imagines he can shoot or dynamite the Revolution into existence. Each being possessed of a partial truth, their arguments against each other are unanswerable. The broken bone of the partial truth of each—political

action as a necessary agitational method, physical force as a necessary backer—that broken bone can be set only by the economic movement industrially organized. It recognizes the necessity of the civilized method of propaganda for the overthrow of political institutions, and it recognizes the necessity of the backing of physical force, and furnishes the same in the industrial form of organization. No wonder that, almost at the same time that the Anarchist Convention, held at Amsterdam, was breaking up in utter disorder and violence, the Interparliamentary Congress at Stuttgart was apologizing for its existence. No wonder that the Question of Unionism is forcing itself forward, and by furnishing the historic ground for the Social Revolution, furnish the mutual meeting ground for the unity of all that is rational in political action, and all that is rational in physical force.

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In the *Flashlights from the Amsterdam Congress* I had occasion to refer to the woeful state of misinformation in which our European comrades are on things and men American. The instance I there adduced was that of an Austrian Socialist Editor who approached the table of the American delegation with the query whether “Comrade Mitchell was among us”!!! Three years have since elapsed and an even more amazing illustration can be adduced. Comrade Gollerstepper, of the S.L.P. delegation, informed me one day in Stuttgart that a member of the British delegation, whom he pointed out to me, had approached him with the question: “Are there any prominent American Socialists in the American delegation—Mr. Gompers, for instance?”!!!!!!

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At the last Congress, at Amsterdam, the American S.L.P. delegation consisted virtually of myself alone. Of the three others, who were to be there, two could not attend, the third, Comrade Poehland of Brooklyn, arrived only towards the end of the Congress. This year the S.L.P. delegation appeared in full force from the start. We were nine. Besides Comrade Bohn and myself, elected at large, there were Comrades Frederick W. Ball of Paterson, N.J.; Dr. Julius Hammer of New York; C. Lambe of Rochester, N.Y.; L. Gollerstepper of New York; Boris Reinstein, Dr. Kavonoki and Mrs. Kavanoki of Buffalo, N.Y. Besides these, and fraternizing with the S.L.P. delegation, there were Mrs. Gollerstepper of the Socialist Women of

Greater New York, and Fred. Heslewood and Mrs. Heslewood of the I.W.W.

(The End.)

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