First published in English in 1921, this work was originally written by renowned Marxist historian Max Beer to commemorate the centenary of Marx’s birth. It is a definitive biography, full of interesting personal details and a clear and comprehensive account of Marx’s economic and historical doctrines. A special feature of this unique work is the new light thrown on Marx’s attitude to the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and Bolshevist methods generally.
The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx

Max Beer

Translated by
T. C. Partington
&
H. J. Stenning
and revised by the author
THE
LIFE AND TEACHING
OF
KARL MARX

BY
M. BEER
Author of "A History of British Socialism"

TRANSLATED BY T. C. PARTINGTON
AND H. J. STENNING, AND REVISED
BY THE AUTHOR

NATIONAL LABOUR PRESS, LIMITED,
LONDON: 8/9, JOHNSON'S COURT, E.C. 4
MANCHESTER: 30, BLACKFRIARS STREET
First Published in 1921

[All rights reserved.]
CONTENTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MARX</td>
<td>ix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE WORK OF HEGEL</td>
<td>xiii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. PARENTS AND FRIENDS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. MARX'S APPRENTICESHIP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. STUDENT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. BEGINNINGS OF PUBLIC LIFE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. THE FORMATIVE PERIOD OF MARXISM:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE FRANCO-GERMAN YEAR BOOKS</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. FRIENDSHIP WITH FRIEDRICH ENGELS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CONTROVERSIES WITH BAUER AND RUGE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CONTROVERSY WITH PROUDHON</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. YEARS OF AGITATION AND VARYING FORTUNES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF THE FORTIES</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE COMMunist MANIFESTO</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE REVOLUTION OF 1848</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DAYS OF CLOUD AND SUNSHINE IN LONDON</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE INTERNATIONAL</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE PARIS COMMUNE</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. THE EVENING OF LIFE</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. THE MARXIAN SYSTEM:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CLASSES, CLASS STRUGGLES AND CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE ROLE OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. OUTLINES OF THE ECONOMIC DOCTRINES</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION.

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MARX.

KARL MARX belongs to the ranks of those philosophical and sociological thinkers who throw potent thought-ferment into the world, and set in motion the masses of mankind. They awaken slumbering doubts and contradictions. They proclaim new modes of thought, new social forms. Their systems may sooner or later become obsolete, and the ruthless march of time may finally overthrow their intellectual edifice; meanwhile, however, they stimulate into activity the minds of countless men, inflame countless human hearts, imprinting on them characteristics which are transmitted to coming generations. This is the grandest and finest work to which any human being can be called. Because these thinkers have lived and worked, their contemporaries and successors think more clearly, feel more intensely, and are richer in knowledge and self-consciousness.

The history of philosophy and of social science is comprised in such systems and generalisations. They are the index to the annals of mankind. None of these systems is complete, none comprehends all human motives and capacities, none exhausts all the forces and currents of human society. They all express only fragmentary truths, which, however, become effective and achieve success because they are shining lights amidst the intellectual confusion of the generation which gives them birth, bringing it to a consciousness.
of the questions of the time, rendering its further development less difficult, and enabling its strongest spirits to stand erect, with fixity of purpose, in critical periods.

Hegel expresses himself in a similar sense where he remarks: "When the refutation of a philosophy is spoken of, this is usually meant in an abstract negative (completely destructive) sense, so that the confuted philosophy has no longer any validity whatever, and is set aside and done with. If this be so, the study of the history of philosophy must be regarded as a thoroughly depressing business, seeing that this study teaches that every system of philosophy which has arisen in the course of time has found its refutation. But if it is as good as granted that every philosophy has been refuted, yet at the same time it must be also asserted that no philosophy has been refuted, nor ever can be refuted . . . for every philosophical system is to be considered as the presentation of a particular moment or a particular stage in the evolutionary process of the idea. The history of philosophy . . . is not, in its totality, a gallery of the aberrations of the human intellect, but is rather to be compared to a pantheon of deities."

—("Hegel, Encyclopædia," vol. 1, section 86, note 2.)

What Hegel says here about philosophy is true also of systems of social science, and styles and forms in art. The displacement of one system by another reflects the historical sequence of the various stages of social evolution. The characteristic which is common to all these systems is their vitality.

In spite of their defects and difficulties there surges through them a living spirit from the influence of which
contemporaries cannot escape. Opponents may put themselves to endless trouble to contradict such systems, and show up their shortcomings and inconsistencies, and yet, with all their pains, they do not succeed in attaining their object; their logical sapping and mining, their passionate attacks break against the vital spirit which the creative genius has breathed into his work. The deep impression made on us by this vitality is one of the main factors in the formation of our judgments upon scientific and artistic achievements. Mere formal perfection and beauty through which the life of the times does not throb can never create this impression.

Walter Scott, who was often reproached with defects and inconsistencies in the construction of his novels, once made answer with the following anecdote: A French sculptor, who had taken up his abode in Rome, was fond of taking to the Capitol his artistically inclined countrymen who were travelling in Italy, to show them the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, on which occasions he was at pains to demonstrate that the horse was defectively modelled, and did not meet the requirements of anatomy. After one of these criticisms a visitor urged him to prove his case in a concrete form by constructing a horse on correct artistic principles. The critic set to work, and when, after the lapse of a year, his friends were again visiting Rome, exhibited to them his horse. It was anatomically perfect. Proudly he had it brought to the Capitol, in order to compare both productions and so celebrate his triumph. Quite absorbed in his critical comparison, the French sculptor after a while gave way to a burst of genuine artistic feeling, which caused him pathetically to exclaim, "Et pourtant
cette bête-là est vivante, et la mienne est morte!"
(And yet that animal is alive, while mine is dead.)

Quite a number of Marxian critics find themselves in the same position as the hypercritical French sculptor. Their formal and logically complete economic doctrines and systems of historical philosophy, provided with pedantically correct details and definitions, remain dead and ineffective. They do not put us into contact with the relations of the time, whereas Marx has bequeathed both to the educated and the uneducated, to his readers and to non-readers, a multitude of ideas and expressions relating to social science, which have become current throughout the whole world.

In Petrograd and in Tokio, in Berlin and in London, in Paris and in Pittsburg, people speak of capital and of the capitalist system, of means of production and of the class struggle; of Reform and Revolution; of the Proletariat and of Socialism. The extent of Marx’s influence is shown by the economic explanation of the world-war, which is even accepted by the most decided opponents of the materialist conception of history. A generation after Marx’s death, the sovereignty of Capital shrinks visibly, works’ committees and shops’ stewards interfere with the productive processes, Socialists and Labour men fill the Parliaments, working men and their representatives rise to or take by storm the highest position of political power in States and Empires. Many of their triumphs would scarcely have received Marx’s approval. His theory, white-hot with indomitable passion, demanded that the new tables of the Law should be given to men amidst thunder and lightning. But still the essential thing is that the proletariat is loosening its bonds, even
if it does not burst them noisily asunder. We find ourselves in the first stages of the evolution of Socialist society. Through whatever forms this evolutionary process may pass in its logical development, this much is certain, that only by active thought on the part of Socialists and by the loyal co-operation of the workers can it be brought to its perfection.

We are already using Hegelian expressions, and must therefore pause here to note briefly Hegel's contribution to the subject. Without a knowledge of this, no one can be in a position to appreciate the important factors in the life and influence of Marx, or even to understand his first intellectual achievements during his student years.

II. The Work of Hegel.

Until towards the end of the eighteenth century, learned and unlearned, philosophers and philistines, had some such general notions as the following. The world has either been created, or it has existed from eternity. It is either governed by a personal, supernatural god or universal spirit, or it is kept going by nature, like some delicate machine. It exists in accordance with eternal laws, and is perfect, ordained to fulfil some design, and constant. The things and beings which are found in it are divided into kinds, species and classes. All is fixed, constant and eternal. Things and beings are contiguous in space, and succeed one another in time, as they have done ever since time was. It is the same with the incidents and events of the world and of mankind. Such common
proverbs as "There is nothing new under the sun" and "History repeats itself" are but the popular expression of this view.

Correlative to this philosophy was Logic, or the science of the laws of thinking (Greek logos—reason, word). It taught how men should use their reason, how they should express themselves reasonably, how concepts arise (in what manner, for example, the human understanding arrived at the concepts stone, tree, animal, man, virtue, vice, etc.); further, how such concepts are combined into judgments (propositions), and finally, how conclusions are drawn from these judgments. This logic exhibited the intellectual processes of the human mind. It was founded by the Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384 to 322 B.C.), and remained essentially unaltered until the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the same way as our whole conception of the universe remained unchanged. This science of human intellectual processes was based on three original laws of thought, which best characterise it. Just as an examining magistrate looks a prisoner in the face, and identifies him, so that uncertainty and contradiction may be avoided, so this logic began by establishing the identity of the conceptions with which it was to operate. Consequently, it established as the first law of thought the Principle of Identity, which runs as follows: A=A, i.e., each thing, each being, is like itself; it possesses an individuality of its own, peculiar to itself. To put it more clearly, this principle affirms that the earth is the earth, a state is a state, Capital is Capital, Socialism is Socialism.

From this proceeds the second law of thought, the Principle of Contradiction. A cannot be A and not—A. Or following our example given above, the
earth cannot be the earth and a ball of fire; a State cannot be a State and an Anarchy; Capital cannot be Capital and Poverty; Socialism cannot be Socialism and Individualism. Therefore there must be no contradictions, for a thing which contradicts itself is nonsense; where, however, this occurs either in actuality or in thought, it is only an accidental exception to the rule, as it were, or a passing and irregular phenomenon.

From this law of thought follows directly the third, viz., the Principle of the Excluded Middle. A thing is either A or non-A; there is no middle term. Or, according to our example, the earth is either a solid body, or, if it is not solid, it is no earth; there is no middle term. The State is either monarchical, or, if it is not monarchical, it is no State. Capitalism is either oppressive, or altogether not Capitalism. Socialism is either revolutionary, or not Socialism at all; there is no middle term. (Socialism is either reformist, or not Socialism at all; there is no middle term.)

With these three intellectual laws of identity, of contradiction, and of the excluded middle, formal logic begins.

It is at once apparent that this logic operates with rigid, constant, unchanging, dogmatic conceptions, something like geometry, which deals with definitely bounded spatial forms. Such was the rationale of the old world-philosophy.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century a new conception of the world had begun to make its way. The world, as we see it, or get to know it from books, was neither created, nor has it existed from time immemorial, but has developed in the course of uncounted thousands of years, and is still in process
of development. It has traversed a whole series of changes, transformations, and catastrophes. The earth was a gaseous mass, then a ball of fire; the species and classes of things and beings which exist on the earth have partly arisen by gradual transition from one sort into another, and partly made their appearance as a result of sudden changes. And in human history it is the same as in nature; the form and significance of the family, of the State, of production, of religion, of law, etc., are subjected to a process of development. All things are in flux, in a state of becoming, of arising and disappearing. There is nothing rigid, constant, unchanging in the Cosmos.

In view of the new conception, the old formal logic could no longer satisfy the intellect; it could not adequately deal with things in a state of evolution. In ever-increasing measure it became impossible for the thinker to work with hard and fast conceptions. From the beginning of the nineteenth century a new logic was sought, and it was G. W. F. Hegel (1770—1831) who made a comprehensive and thoroughly painstaking endeavour to formulate a new logic in accordance with the universal process of evolution. This task appeared to him to be the more urgent, as his whole philosophy aimed at bringing thought and being, reason and the universe, into the closest connection and agreement, dealing with them as inseparable from each other, regarding them as identical, and representing the universe as the gradual embodiment of Reason. "What is reasonable is real; what is real is reasonable." The task of philosophy is to comprehend what is. Every individual is the child of his time. Even philosophy is its time grasped in thought. No individual can overleap his time.
INTRODUCTION

(Pref. to Phil. of Law.) It is evident that, in his way, Hegel was no abstract thinker, divorced from actuality, and speculating at large. Rather he set himself to give material content to the abstract and purely ideal, to make it concrete, in fact. The idea without reality, or reality without the idea, seemed to him unthinkable. Accordingly his logic could not deal merely with the laws of thought, but must at the same time take account of the laws of cosmic evolution. Merely to play with the forms of thought, and to fence with ideas, as the old logicians, especially in the Middle Ages, were wont to do, seemed to him a useless, abstract, unreal operation. He, therefore, created a science of thinking, which formulated not only the laws of thought, but also the laws of evolution, albeit, unfortunately, in a language which offered immense difficulties to his readers.

The essence of his logic is the dialectic.

By dialectic the old Greeks understood the art of discourse and rejoinder, the refutation of an opponent by the destruction of his assertions and proofs, the bringing into relief of the contradictions and antitheses. When examined closely, this art of discussion, in spite of its contradictory and apparently negative (destructive) intellectual work, is seen to be very useful, because, out of the clash of opposing opinions, it brings forth the truth and stimulates to deeper thought. Hegel seized hold of this expression, and named his logical method after it. This is the dialectical method, or the manner of conceiving the things and beings of the universe as in the process of becoming, through the struggle of contradictory elements and their resolution. With its aid, he brings to judgment the three original laws of thought which
have already been alluded to. The principle of identity is an abstract, incomplete truth, for it separates a thing from the variety of other things, and its relations to them. Everybody will see this to be true. Let us take the proposition: the earth is the earth. Whoever hears the first three words of this proposition naturally expects that what is predicated of the earth should tell him something which distinguishes the earth from other things. Instead of this, he is offered an empty, hard and fast identity, the dead husk of an idea. If the principle of identity is at best only an incomplete truth, the principles of contradiction and of the excluded middle are complete untruths. Far from making a thought nonsense, contradiction is the very thing which unfolds and develops the thought, and hence, too, the object which it expresses. It is precisely opposition, or antithesis, which sets things in motion, which is the mainspring of evolution, which calls forth and develops the latent forces and powers of being. Had the earth as a fiery, gaseous mass remained in that state, without the contradiction, that is, the cooling and condensation, taking place, then no life would have appeared on it. Had the State remained autocratic, and the contradictory principle, middle-class freedom, been absent, then the life of the State would have become rigid, and the bloom of culture rendered impossible. Had Capitalism remained without its proletarian contradiction, then it would have reverted to an industrial feudalism. It is the contradiction, or the antithesis, which brings into being the whole kingdom of the potentialities and gifts of nature and of humanity. Only when the contradictory begins to reveal itself does evolution to a higher plane of thought and
existence begin. It is obvious that we are not concerned here with logical contradictions, which usually arise from unclear thinking or from confusion in the presentation of facts; Hegel, and after him Marx, dealt rather with real contradictions, with antitheses and conflicts, as they arise of themselves in the process of evolution of things and conditions.

The thing or the being, against which the contradiction operates, was called by Hegel the Positive, and the contradiction, the antagonistic element, or the antithesis, he called the Negation. As may be seen from our example, this negation is not mere annihilation, not a resolution into nothing, but a clearing away and a building up at the same time; a disappearance and a coming into existence; a movement to a higher stage. Hegel says in this connection: "It has been hitherto one of the rooted prejudices of logic and a commonly accepted belief that the contradiction is not so essential or so inherent a characteristic (in thought and existence) as the identity. Yet in comparison with it the identity is, in truth, but the characteristic of what is simply and directly perceived, of lifeless existence. The contradiction, however, is the source of all movement and life; only in so far as it contains a contradiction can anything have movement, power, and effect."

The part played by the contradiction, the antithesis, or the negation very easily escapes a superficial observer. He sees, indeed, that the world is filled with a variety of things, and that where anything is there is also its opposite; e.g., existence—non-existence, cold—heat, light—darkness, mildness—harshness, pleasure—pain, joy—sorrow, riches—poverty, Capital—Labour, life—death, virtue—vice, Idealism—
Materialism, Romanticism—Classicism, etc., but superficial thought does not realise that it is faced with a world of contradictions and antitheses; it only knows that the world is full of varied and manifold things. "Only active reason," says Hegel, "reduced the mere multiplicity and diversity of phenomena to antithesis. And only when pushed to this point do the manifold phenomena become active and mutually stimulating, producing the state of negation, which is the very heart-beat of progress and life." Only through their differentiation and unfolding as opposing forces and factors is further progress beyond the antithesis to a higher positive stage made possible. "Where, however," continues Hegel, "the power to develop the contradiction and bring it to a head is lacking, the thing or the being is shattered on the contradiction."—(Hegel, "Science of Logic," Pt. 1, Sec. 2, pp. 66, 69, 70.)

This thought of Hegel's is of extraordinary importance for the understanding of Marxism. It is the soul of the Marxian doctrine of the class-struggle, nay, of the whole Marxian system. One may say that Marx is always on the look-out for contradictions within the social development, for wherever the contradiction (antithesis—class struggle) shows itself, there begins, according to Marx-Hegel, the progress to a higher plane.*

We have now become familiar with two expressions of the dialectical method, the positive and the negation. We have seen the first two stages of the process of growth in thought and in reality. The process is not yet complete. It still requires a third stage.

*In one of the later chapters the reader will find the series of contradictions discovered by Marx in the evolution of capitalism. Sec. IV., "Outlines of the Economic Doctrine." Chapter 8, "Economic Contradictions."
This third step Hegel called the Negation of the Negation. With the continued operation of the negation, a new thing or being comes into existence.

To revert to our examples: the complete cooling and condensation of the earth’s crust: the rise of the middle-class State: the victory of the Proletariat: these things represent the suspension or the setting aside of the Negation; the contradiction is thus resolved, and a new stage in the process of evolution is reached. The expressions Positive (or affirmation), Negation, and Negation of the Negation, are also known as thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

In order to understand this more distinctly, and to visualise it, let us consider an egg. It is something positive, but it contains a germ, which, awakening to life, gradually consumes (i.e., negatives) the contents of the egg. This negation is, however, no mere destruction and annihilation; on the contrary, it results in the germ developing into a living thing. The negation being complete, the chick breaks through the egg shell. This represents the negation of the negation, whereby there has arisen something organically higher than an egg.

This mode of procedure in human thinking and in the operations of nature and history Hegel called the dialectical method, or the dialectical process. It is evident that the dialectic is at the same time a method of investigation and a philosophy. Hegel outlines his dialectic in the following words:

"The only thing which is required for scientific progress, an elementary principle for the understanding of which one should really strive, is the recognition of the logical principle that the negative is just as much a positive, or that the contradictory does not
resolve into nothing, into an abstract nothingness, but actually only into the negation of a special content. . . . In so far as the resultant, the negation, is a definite negation, it has a content. It is a new conception, but a higher and richer conception than the preceding one; for it has been enriched by the negation or antithesis of this; it therefore contains it and more than contains it, being indeed the synthetic unity of itself and its contrary. In this way the system of concepts has to be formed—and is to be perfected by a continual and purely intellectual process which is independent of outside influences.”—(Hegel, “Science of Logic” (German), Bk. I., Introduction.)

The dialectical process completes itself not only by gradual transitions, but also by leaps. Hegel remarks:

“It has been said that there are no sudden leaps in nature, and it is a common notion that things have their origin through gradual increase or decrease. But there is also such a thing as sudden transformation from quantity into quality. For example, water does not become gradually hard on cooling, becoming first pulpy and ultimately attaining the rigidity of ice, but turns hard at once. If the temperature be lowered to a certain degree, the water is suddenly changed into ice, i.e., the quantity—the number of degrees of temperature—is transformed into quality—a change in the nature of the thing.”—("Logic" (German), Pt. 1, Sec. 1, p. 464, Ed. 1841.)

Marx handled this method with unsurpassed mastery; with its aid he formulated the laws of the evolution of Socialism. In his earliest works, “The Holy Family” (1844) and the “Poverty of
INTRODUCTION

Philosophy” (1847), written when he was formulating his materialist conception of history, as also in his “Capital,” it is with the dialectic of Hegel that he investigates these laws.

“Proletariat and Riches (later Marx would have said Capital) are antitheses. As such they constitute a whole; both are manifestations of the world of private property. The question to be considered is the specific position which both occupy in the antithesis. To describe them as two sides of a whole is not a sufficient explanation. Private property as private property, as riches, is compelled to preserve its own existence, and along with it that of its antithesis, the Proletariat. Private property satisfied in itself is the positive side of the antithesis. The Proletariat, on the other hand, is obliged, as Proletariat, to abolish itself, and along with it private property, its conditioned antithesis, which makes it the Proletariat. It is a negative side of the antithesis, the internal source of unrest, the disintegrated and disintegrating Proletariat. . . . Within the antithesis, therefore, the owner of private property is the conservative, and the proletarian is the destructive party. From the former proceeds the action of maintaining the antithesis, from the latter the action of destroying it. From the point of view of its national, economic movement, private property is, of course, continually being driven towards its own dissolution, but only by an unconscious development which is independent of it, and which exists against its will, and is limited by the nature of things; only, that is, by creating the Proletariat as proletariat, poverty conscious of its own physical and spiritual poverty, and demoralised humanity conscious of its own
demoralisation and consequently striving against it.

"The Proletariat fulfils the judgment which private property by the creation of the Proletariat suspends over itself, just as it fulfils the judgment which wage-labour suspends over itself in creating alien riches and its own condemnation. If the Proletariat triumphs, it does not thereby become the absolute side of society, for it triumphs only by abolishing itself and its opposite. In this way both the Proletariat and its conditioned opposite, private property, are done away with."*

The dialectical method is again described in a few sentences on pages 420—421 of the third volume of "Capital" (German), where we read: "In so far as the labour process operates merely between man and nature, its simple elements are common to every form of its social development. But any given historical form of this process further develops its material foundations and its social forms. When it has attained a certain degree of maturity the given historical form is cast off and makes room for a higher one. That the moment of such a crisis has arrived is shown as soon as there is a deepening and widening of the contradiction and antithesis between the conditions of distribution, and consequently also the existing historical form of the conditions of production corresponding to them, on the one hand, and the forces of production, productive capacity, and the state of evolution of its agents, on the other. There then arises a conflict between the material development of production and its corresponding social form."**

But the Hegelian dialectic appears most strikingly in the famous twenty-fourth chapter (sec. 7) of the first volume of "Capital" (German), where the evolution of capitalism from small middle-class ownership through all phases up to the Socialist revolution is comprehensively outlined in bold strokes: "The capitalist method of appropriation, which springs from the capitalist method of production, and therefore capitalist private property, is the first negation of individual private property based on one's own labour. But capitalist production begets with the inevitability of a natural process its own negation. It is the negation of the negation." Here we have the three stages: the thesis—private property; the antithesis—capitalism; the synthesis—common ownership.

Of critical social writers outside Germany it was Proudhon, in particular, who, in his works "What is Property?" and "Economic Contradictions, or the Philosophy of Poverty" (1840, 1846), attempted to use the Hegelian dialectic. The fact that he gave his chief book the title "Economic Contradictions" shows that Proudhon was largely preoccupied with Hegel. Nevertheless, he did not get below the surface; he used the Hegelian formulae quite mechanically, and lacked the conception of an immanent process of development (the forward-impelling force within the social organism).

If we look at the dialectical method as here presented, Hegel might be taken for a materialist thinker. Such a notion would be erroneous. For Hegel is an idealist: the origin and essence of the process of growth is to be sought, according to him, not in material forces, but in the logical idea, reason, the universal spirit, the absolute, or—in its religious
expression—God. Before He created the world He is to be regarded as an Idea, containing within itself all forms of being, which it develops dialectically. The idea creates for itself a material embodiment; it first expresses itself in the objects of inorganic nature; then in plants, organisms wherein life awakens; then in animals, in which the Idea attains to the twilight of reason; finally, in men, where reason rises into mind and achieves self-consciousness and freedom. As self-conscious mind it expresses itself in the history of peoples, in religion, art and philosophy, in human institutions, in the family and in law, until it realises itself in the State as its latest and highest object.

According to Hegel, then, the universal Idea develops into Godhead in proportion as the material world rises from the inorganic to the organic, and, finally, to man. In the mental part of man, the Idea arrives at self-consciousness and freedom and becomes God. In his cosmology, Hegel is a direct descendant of the German mystics, Sebastion Franck and Jacob Boehme. He was in a much higher degree German than any of the German philosophers since Leibnitz.

The strangest thing, however, is that Germanism, Protestantism, and the Prussian State appeared to Hegel as the highest expression of the universal mind. Particularly the Prussian State as it existed before March, 1848, with its repudiation of all middle-class reforms and liberalism (of any kind), and its basis of strong governmental force.

There is little purpose in trying to acquire a logical conception of Hegelian cosmology. It is not only idealist, but, as we said, mystical; it is as inconceivable to human reason as the biblical; it is irrational, and lies beyond the sphere of
reason. Making the universe arise out of pure reason, out of the logical idea, developing through the dialectical process with a consciousness of freedom, it yet concludes in unreason and an obstinate determinism. In Liberalism Hegel saw only a simple negation, a purely destructive factor, which disintegrates the State and resolves it into individuals, thus depriving it of all cohesion and organising strength. He blamed Parliamentarism for demanding “that everything should take place through their (the individuals) expressed power and consent. The will of the many over-turns the Ministry, and what was the Opposition now takes control, but, so far as it is the Government, the latter finds the many against it. Thus agitation and unrest continue. This collision, this knot, this problem, is what confronts history, a problem which it must resolve at some future time.” One would have thought that it was precisely Parliamentarism, with its unrest and agitation, its antitheses and antagonisms, which would have had a special attraction for Hegel, but nevertheless he turned aside from it. How is this to be explained?

Hegel’s relation to the Prussian State is to be accounted for by his strong patriotic sentiments. His disposition inclined him strongly to nationalism in politics. In his early manhood he witnessed the complete dissolution of the German Empire, and deeply bewailed the wretchedness of German conditions. He wrote: “Germany is no longer a State; even the wars which Germany waged have not ended in a particularly honourable manner for her. Burgundy, Alsace, Lorraine have been torn away. The Peace of Westphalia has often been alluded to as Germany’s Palladium, although by it the complete
dismemberment of Germany has only been established more thoroughly than before. The Germans have been grateful to Richelieu, who destroyed their power." On the other hand, the achievements of Prussia in the Seven Years' War, and in the War of Liberation against the French, awoke in him the hope that it was this State which could save Germany. To this thought he gave eloquent and enthusiastic expression in his address at the opening of his Berlin lectures in October, 1818, and also in his lecture on Frederick the Great. Hegel therefore rejected everything which seemed to him to spell a weakening of the Prussia State power. The dialectician was overcome by national feelings.

However, Hegel's place in the history of thought rests, not on his explanations of the creation of the world, nor on his German nationalist politics, but upon the dialectical method. In exploring, by means of this method, the wide expanse of human knowledge, he scattered an astonishing abundance of materialistic and strictly scientific observations and suggestions, and inspired his pupils and readers with a living conception of history, of the development of mankind to self-consciousness and freedom, thus rendering them capable of pushing their studies further, and emancipating themselves from all mysticism. As an example of the materialist tendency of his philosophy, the following references will serve. His "Philosophy of History" contains a whole chapter upon the geographical foundations of universal history. In this chapter he expresses himself—quite contrary to his deification of the State—as follows: "A real State and a real central government only arise when the distinction of classes is already given, when Riches and Poverty have become very great, and such con-
ditions have arisen that a great multitude can no longer satisfy their needs in the way to which they have been accustomed.” Or take his explanation of the founding of colonies by the Greeks.

“This projecting of colonies, particularly in the period after the Trojan War until Cyrus, is here a peculiar phenomenon, which may thus be explained: in the individual towns the people had the governing power in their hands, in that they decided the affairs of State in the last resort. In consequence of the long peace, population and development greatly increased, and quickly brought about the accumulation of great riches, which is always accompanied by the phenomenon of great distress and poverty. Industry, in our sense, did not exist at that time, and the land was speedily monopolised. Nevertheless, a section of the poorer classes would not allow themselves to be depressed to the poverty line, for each man felt himself to be a free citizen. The sole resource, therefore, was colonisation.”

Or even the following passage, which conceives the philosophical system merely as the result and reflection of the accomplished facts of existence, and therefore rejects all painting of Utopias: “Besides, philosophy comes always too late to say a word as to how the world ought to be. As an idea of the universe, it only arises in the period after reality has completed its formative process and attained its final shape. What this conception teaches is necessarily demonstrated by history, namely, that the ideal appears over against the real only after the consummation of reality, that the ideal reconstructs the same world, comprehended in the substance of reality, in the form of an intellectual realm. A form of life has become old when philosophy paints its grey on grey,
and with grey on grey it cannot be rejuvenated but only recognised. The owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the falling twilight."—Preface to the "Philosophy of Law."

No materialist could have said this better: the owl—the symbol of wisdom—only begins her flight in the evening, after the busy activities of the world are over. Thus we have first the universe, and then thought; first existence, and then consciousness.

Hegel himself was therefore an example of his own teaching that contradictory elements are to be found side by side. His mind contained both idealism and realism, but he did not bring them by a process of reasoning to the point of acute contradiction in order to reach a higher plane of thought. And as he regarded it as the task of philosophy to recognise the principle of things, and to follow it out systematically and logically throughout the whole vast domain of reality, and as further, owing to his mystical bent, he asserted the idea to be the ultimate reality, he remained a consistent Idealist.

The Conservatism of Hegel, who was the philosophical representative of the Prussian State, was, however, sadly incompatible with the awakening consciousness of the German middle class, which, in spite of its economic weakness, aspired to a freer State constitution, and greater liberty of action. These aspirations were already somewhat more strongly developed in the larger towns and industrial centres of Prussia and the other German States. The Young Hegelians* championed this middle-class awakening in

* After the death of Hegel differences of opinion arose among his disciples, chiefly with respect to his doctrines of the Deity, Immortality and the personality of Christ. One section, the so-called "Right Wing," inclined to orthodoxy on these questions. In opposition to them stood the "Young Hegelians," the progressive "Left Wing." To this section belonged Arnold Ruge, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, and Strauss, author of the "Life of Jesus."
the philosophical sphere, just as "Young Germany" (Heine, Boerne, etc.) did in the province of literature.

Just at the time when Marx was still at the university the Young Hegelians took up the fight against the conservative section of Hegel's disciples and the Christian Romanticism of Prussia. The antagonism between the old and the new school made itself felt both in religious philosophy and political literature, but both tendencies were seldom combined in the same persons. David Strauss subjected the Gospels to a candid criticism; Feuerbach investigated the nature of Christianity and of religion generally, and in this department inverted Hegel's Idealism to Materialism; Bruno Bauer trained his heavy historical and philosophical artillery on the traditional dogmas concerning the rise of Christianity. Politically, however, they remained at the stage of the freedom of the individual: that is, they were merely moderate Liberals. Nevertheless, there were also less prominent Young Hegelians who were at that time in the Liberal left wing as regards their political opinions, such as Arnold Ruge.

None of the Young Hegelians had, however, used the dialectical method to develop still further the teaching of the Master. Karl Marx, the youngest of the Hegelians, first brought it to a higher stage in social science. He was no longer known to Hegel, who might otherwise have died with a more contented or perhaps even still more perturbed mind. Heinrich Heine, who belonged to the Hegelians in the thirties and forties, relates the following anecdote, which if not true yet excellently illustrates the extraordinary difficulties of the Master's doctrines:—

As Hegel lay dying, his disciples, who had gathered
round him, seeing the furrows deepen on the Master's care-worn countenance, inquired the cause of his grief, and tried to comfort him by reminding him of the large number of admiring disciples and followers he would leave behind. Breathing with difficulty, he replied: "None of my disciples has understood me; only Michelet has understood me, and," he added with a sigh, "even he has misunderstood me."
The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx

I.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS.

I. Marx's Apprenticeship.

Karl Heinrich Marx first saw the light of day in Treves on May 5, 1818. His father, an enlightened, fine feeling, and philanthropic Jew, was a Jurist who had slowly risen from the humble circumstances of a German Rabbi family and acquired a respectable practice, but who never learnt the art of making money. His mother was a Dutchwoman, and came of a Rabbi family called Pressburg, which, as the name indicates, had emigrated from Pressburg, in Hungary, to Holland, in the seventeenth century. She spoke German very imperfectly. Marx has handed on to us one of her sayings, "If Karl made a lot of Capital, instead of writing a lot about Capital, it would have been much better." The Marxes had several children, of whom Karl alone showed special mental gifts.

In the year 1824 the family embraced Christianity. The baptism of Jews was at that time no longer a rarity. The enlightenment of the last half of the eighteenth century had undermined the dogmatic
beliefs of many cultured Jews, and the succeeding period of German Christian Romanticism brought a strengthening and idealising of Christianity and of national feeling, from which, for practical just as much as for spiritual reasons, the Jews who had renounced their own religion could not escape. They were completely assimilated, felt and thought like the rest of their Christian and German fellow-citizens. Marx’s father felt himself to be a good Prussian, and once recommended his son to compose an ode, in the grand style, on Napoleon’s downfall and Prussia’s victory. Karl did not, in truth, follow his father’s advice, but from that time of Christian enthusiasm and German patriotic sentiment until his life’s end, there remained with him an anti-Jewish prejudice; the Jew was generally to him either a usurer or a cadger.

Karl was sent to the grammar school in his native town, leaving with a highly creditable record. The school was, however, not the only place where he developed his mind. During his school years he used to frequent the house of the Government Privy Councillor, L. von Westphalen, a highly cultured Prussian official, whose favourite poets were Homer and Shakespeare, and who followed attentively the intellectual tendencies of his time. Although he had already reached advanced age, he liked to converse with the precocious youth, and to influence his mental growth. Marx honoured him as a fatherly friend “who welcomes every progressive movement with the enthusiasm and sober judgment of a lover of truth, and who is a living proof that Idealism is no imagination, but the truth.”—(Dedication of Marx’s doctor thesis.)
After quitting the public school, Marx went to the University of Bonn, in order to study jurisprudence, according to his father’s wishes. After a year of the merry life of a student, he removed in the autumn of 1836 to Berlin University, the centre of culture and truth, as Hegel had called it in his Inaugural Lecture (1818). Before his departure for Berlin, he had become secretly engaged to Jenny Von Westphalen, the daughter of his fatherly friend, a woman distinguished alike for beauty, culture, and strength of character.

II. Student.

In Berlin, Marx threw himself into the study of Philosophy, Jurisprudence, History, Geography, Literature, the History of Art, etc. He had a Faust-like thirst for truth, and his appetite for work was insatiable; in these matters only superlatives can be used to describe Marx. In one of his poems dating from this period, he says of himself:

“Ne’er can I perform in calmness
What has seized my soul with might,
But must strive and struggle onward
In a ceaseless, restless flight.

All divine, enhancing graces
Would I make of life a part;
Penetrate the realms of science,
Grasp the joys of Song and Art.”
Giving up all social intercourse, he worked night and day, making abstracts of what he read, translating from Greek and Latin, working at philosophical systems, setting down a considerable number of his own thoughts, and drafting outlines of philosophy or jurisprudence, as well as writing three volumes of poems. The year 1837 marks one of the critical periods of Marx's intellectual development; it was a time of vacillation and ferment and of internal struggle, at the end of which he found refuge in the Hegelian dialectics. In so doing he turned his back on the abstract idealism of Kant and Fichte, and made the first step towards reality; and indeed at that time Marx firmly believed that Hegel actually stood for reality. In a somewhat lengthy letter dated November 10, 1837, a truly human document, Marx gives his father an account of his intense activity during that remarkable period, comprising his first two terms at the University of Berlin, when he was still so very young:

"Dear Father,

"There are times which are landmarks in our lives; and they not only mark off a phase that has passed, but, at the same time, point out clearly our new direction. At such turning points we feel impelled to make a critical survey of the past and the present, so as to attain to a clear knowledge of our actual position. Nay, mankind itself, as all history shows, loves to indulge in this retrospection and contemplation, and thereby often appears to be going backward or standing still, when after all it has only thrown itself back in its armchair, the better to apprehend itself, to grasp its own doings, and to penetrate into the workings of the spirit."
“The individual, however, becomes lyrical at such times; for every metamorphosis is in part an elegy on the past and in part the prologue of a great new poem that is striving for permanent expression in a chaos of resplendent but fleeting colours. Be that as it may, we would fain set up a monument to our past experiences that they may regain in memory the significance which they have lost in the active affairs of life: and what more fitting way can we find of doing that than by bringing them and laying them before the hearts of our parents!

“And so now, when I take stock of the year which I have just spent here, and in so doing answer your very welcome letter from Ems, let me consider my position, in the same way as I look on life altogether, as the embodiment of a spiritual force that seeks expression in every direction: in science, in art, and in one’s own personality. . . . On my arrival in Berlin I broke off all my former connections, paid visits rarely and unwillingly, and sought to bury myself in science and art. . . . In accordance with my ideas at the time, poetry must of necessity be my first concern, or at least the most agreeable of my pursuits, and the one for which I most cared; but, as might be expected from my disposition and the whole trend of my development, it was purely idealistic. Next I had to study jurisprudence, and above all I felt a strong impulse to grapple with philosophy. Both studies, however, were so interwoven that on the one hand I worked through the Jurist’s Heineccius and Thibaut and the Sources docilely and quite uncritically, translating, for instance, the first two books of the Pandects of Justinian, while on the other hand I
attempted to evolve a philosophy of law in the sphere of jurisprudence. By way of introduction I laid down a few metaphysical principles, and carried this unfortunate work as far as Public Rights, in all about 800 sheets.

"In this, however, more than in anything else, the conflict between what is and what ought to be, which is peculiar to Idealism, made itself disagreeably prominent. In the first place there was what I had so graciously christened the Metaphysics of Law, i.e., first principles, reflections, definitions, standing aloof from all established jurisprudence and from every actual form of legal practice. Then the unscientific form of mathematical dogmatism in which there is so much beating about the bush, so much diffuse argumentation without any fruitful development or vital creation, hindered me from the outset from arriving at the Truth. A triangle may be constructed and reasoned about by the mathematician; it is a mere spatial concept and does not of itself undergo any further evolution; it must be brought in conjunction with something else, when it requires other properties, and thus by placing the same thing in various relationships we are enabled to deduce new relationships and new truths. Whereas in the concrete expression of the mental life as we have it in Law, in the State, in Nature, and in the whole of philosophy, the object of our study must be considered in its development. . . . The individual's reason must proceed with its self-contradiction until it discovers its own unity."

In this we perceive the first trace of the Hegelian dialectic in Marx. We see rigid geometrical forms
contrasted with the continually evolving organism, with social forms and human institutions. Marx had put up a stout resistance against the influence of the Hegelian philosophy; nay, he had even hated it and had made mighty efforts to cling faithfully to his idealism, but in the end he, too, must fall under the spell of the idea of evolution, in the form which it then assumed in Hegelian speculation in Germany.

Marx then goes on to speak of his legal studies as well as of his poems, and thus continues:

"As a result of these various activities I passed many sleepless nights during my first term, engaged in many battles, and had to endure much mental and physical excitement; and at the end of it all I found myself not very much better off, having in the meanwhile neglected nature, art and society, and spurned pleasure: such, indeed, was the comment which my body seemed to make. My doctor advised me to try the country, and so, having for the first time passed through the whole length of the city, I found myself before the gate on the Stralau Road. . . . From the idealism which I had cherished so long I fell to seeking the ideal in reality itself. Whereas before the gods had dwelt above the earth, they had now become its very centre.

"I had read fragments of Hegel's philosophy, the strange, rugged melody of which had not pleased me. Once again I wished to dive into the depths of the sea, this time with the resolute intention of finding a spiritual nature just as essential, concrete, and perfect as the physical, and instead of indulging in intellectual gymnastics, bringing up pure pearls into the sunlight."
I wrote about 24 sheets of a dialogue entitled Cleantes or on the Source and Inevitable Development of Philosophy. In this, art and science, which had hitherto been kept asunder, were to some extent blended, and bold adventurer that I was, I even set about the task of evolving a philosophical, dialectical exposition of the nature of the Deity as it is manifested in a pure concept, in religion, in nature, and in history. My last thesis was the beginning of the Hegelian system; and this work, in course of which I had to make some acquaintance with science, Schelling and history, and which had occasioned me an infinite amount of hard thinking, delivers me like a faithless siren into the hands of the enemy.

Upset by Jenny's illness and by the fruitlessness and utter failure of my intellectual labours, and torn with vexation at having to make into my idol a view which I had hated, I fell ill, as I have already told you in a previous letter. On my recovery I burnt all my poems and material for projected short stories in the vain belief that I could give all that up; and, to be sure, so far I have not given cause to gainsay it.

During my illness I had made acquaintance with Hegel from beginning to end, as also with most of his disciples. Through frequent meetings with friends in Stralau I got an introduction into a Graduates' Club, in which were a number of professors and Dr. Rutenberg, the closest of my Berlin friends. In the discussions that took place many conflicting views were put forward, and more and more securely did I get involved in the meshes of the new philosophy which I had sought to escape; but everything articulate in me was put to silence,
a veritable ironical rage fell upon me, as well it might after so much negation."—("Neue Zeit," 16th year, Vol. I., No. 1.)

His father was anything but pleased with this letter. He reproached Karl with the aimless and discursive way in which he worked. He had expected that these Berlin studies would lead to something more than breeding monstrosities and destroying them again. He believed that Karl would, before everything else, have considered his future career, that he would have devoted all his attention to the lectures in his course, that he would have cultivated the acquaintance of people in authority, that he would have been economical, and that he would have avoided all philosophical extravagances. He refers him to the example of his fellow students who attend their lectures regularly and have an eye to their future:

"Indeed these young men sleep quite peacefully except when they now and then devote the whole or part of a night to pleasure, whereas my clever and gifted son Karl passes wretched sleepless nights, wearying body and mind with cheerless study, forbearing all pleasures with the sole object of applying himself to abstruse studies: but what he builds to-day he destroys again to-morrow, and in the end he finds that he has destroyed what he already had, without having gained anything from other people. At last the body begins to ail and the mind gets confused, whilst these ordinary folks steal along in easy marches, and attain their goal if not better at least more comfortably than those who contemn youthful pleasures and undermine their health in order to snatch at the ghost of erudi-
tion, which they could probably have exorcised more successfully in an hour spent in the society of competent men—with social enjoyment into the bargain!"

In spite of his unbounded love for his father, Marx could not deviate from the path which he had chosen. Those deeper natures who, after having lost their religious beliefs, have the good fortune to attain to a philosophical or scientific conception of the universe, do not easily shrink from a conflict between filial affection and loyalty to new convictions. Nor was Marx allured by the prospects of a distinguished official career. Indeed his fighting temperament would never have admitted of that. He wrote the lines:

Therefore let us, all things daring,
Never from our task recede;
Never sink in sullen silence,
Paralysed in will and deed.

Let us not in base subjection
Brood away our fearful life,
When with deed and aspiration
We might enter in the strife.

His stay in Stralau had the most beneficial effects on his health. He worked strenuously at his newly-acquired philosophical convictions, and for this his relations with the members of the Graduates' Club stood him in good stead, more especially his acquaintance with Bruno Bauer, a lecturer in theology, and Friedrich Köppen, a master in a grammar school, who in spite of difference of age and position treated him as an equal. Marx gave up all thought of an official career, and looked forward to obtaining a lectureship
in some university or other. His father reconciled himself to the new studies and strivings of his son; he was, however, not destined to rejoice at Karl's subsequent achievements. After a short illness he died in May, 1838, at the age of fifty-six.

Marx then gave up altogether the study of jurisprudence, and worked all the more assiduously at the perfecting of his philosophical knowledge, preparing himself for his degree examination in order—at the instigation of Bruno Bauer—to get himself admitted as quickly as possible as lecturer in philosophy at the University of Bonn. Bauer himself expected to be made Professor of Theology in Bonn after having served as lecturer in Berlin from 1834 to 1889 and in Bonn during the year 1840. Marx wrote a thesis on the Natural Philosophies of Democritus and Epicurus, and in 1841 the degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred on him at Jena. He then went over to his friend Bauer in Bonn, where he thought to begin his career as lecturer. Meanwhile his hopes had disappeared. Prussian universities were at that time no places for free inquirers. It was not even possible for Bauer to obtain a professorship; still less could Marx, who was much more violent in the expression of his opinions, reckon on an academic career. His only way out of this blind alley was free-lance journalism, and for this an opportunity soon presented itself.

III. BEGINNINGS OF PUBLIC LIFE.

Marx made his entry into public life with a thorough philosophical training and with an irrestrainable im-
pulse to enter into the struggle for the spiritual freedom of Germany. By spiritual freedom he understood first and foremost freedom in religion and liberalism in politics. He was, too, perfectly clear as to the instrument to be used: it was criticism. The positive and rigid having become ineffectual and unreasonable, is to fall before the weapon of criticism and so make room for a living stream of thought and being, or as Marx himself expressed it in 1844, "to make the petrified conditions dance by singing to them their own tune." Their own tune is, of course, the dialectic. Criticism, generally speaking, was the weapon of the Young Hegelians. Criticism is negation, sweeping away existing conditions and prevailing dogmas to make a clear path for life. Not the setting up of new principles or new dogmas, but the clearing away of the old dogmas is the task of the Young Hegelians. For if dialectic be rightly understood, criticism or negation is the best positive work. Criticism finds expression, above all, in polemics, in the literal meaning of waging war—ruthless war—against the unreal for the purpose of shaking up one's contemporaries.

After Marx had given up all hope of an academic career, the only field of labour that remained open to him was, as we have already said, that of journalism. His material circumstances compelled him, moreover, to consider the question of an independent livelihood. Just about this time the Liberals in the Rhine provinces took up a scheme for the foundation of a newspaper, the object of which was to prepare the way for conditions of greater freedom. The necessary money was soon procured. Significantly enough, Young Hegelians were kept in view for editors and
BEGINNINGS OF PUBLIC LIFE

contributors. On the first of January, 1842, the first number of the Rheinische Zeitung was published at Cologne. The editor was Dr. Rutenberg, who had formed an intimate friendship with Marx at the time the latter was attending the University of Berlin; and so Marx, then in Bonn, was also invited to contribute. He accepted the invitation, and his essays brought him to the notice of Arnold Ruge, who likewise invited him to take part in his literary undertakings in conjunction with Feuerbach, Bauer, Moses Hess, and others. Marx's essays were greatly appreciated, too, by the readers of the Rheinische Zeitung, so that in October, 1842, on the retirement of Rutenberg, he was called to the editorial chair of that journal. In his new position he had to deal with a series of economic and political questions which, no doubt, with a less conscientious editor would have occasioned little hard thinking, but which for Marx showed the need of a thorough study of political economy and Socialism. In October, 1842, a congress of French and German intellectuals was held in Strasburg, and amongst other things French Socialist theories were discussed. Likewise in the Rhine provinces arose questions concerning landed property and taxes, which had to be dealt with from the editorial chair, questions which were not to be answered by a purely philosophical knowledge. Besides, the censorship made the way hard for a paper conducted with such critical acumen, and did not allow the editor to fulfil his real mission. In the preface to "The Critique of Political Economy" (1859) Marx gives a short sketch of his editorial life:

"As editor of the Rheinische Zeitung, in 1842 and 1848 I came up, for the first time, against the difficulty of having to take part in the controversy over so-called
material interests. The proceedings of the Diet of the Rhine provinces with regard to wood stealing and parcelling out of landed property, and their action towards the farmers of the Moselle districts, and lastly debates on Free Trade and Protection, gave the first stimulus to my investigation of economic questions. On the other hand, an echo of French Socialism and Communism, feebly philosophical in tone, had at that time made itself heard in the columns of the Rheinische Zeitung. I declared myself against superficiality, confessing, however, at the same time that the studies I had made so far did not allow me to venture any judgment of my own on the significance of the French tendencies. I readily took advantage of the illusion cherished by the directors of the Rheinische Zeitung, who believed they could reverse the death sentence passed on that journal as a result of weak management, in order to withdraw from the public platform into my study."

And so the intellectual need which he felt of studying economics and Socialism, as well as his thirst for free, unfettered activity, resulted in Marx's retirement from his post as editor, although he was about to enter upon married life and had to make provision for his own household. But he was from the beginning determined to subordinate his material existence to his spiritual aspirations.