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CAPITAL

A CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

BY
KARL MARX

VOL. III
THE PROCESS OF CAPITALIST PRODUCTION
AS A WHOLE

EDITED BY
FREDERICK ENGELS

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PREFACE

At last I have the pleasure of making public this third volume of the main work of Marx, the closing part of his economic theories. When I published the second volume, in 1885, I thought that the third would probably offer only technical difficulties with the exception of a few very important sections. This turned out to be so. But that these exceptional sections, which represent the most valuable parts of the entire work, would give me as much trouble as they did, I could not foresee at that time any more than I anticipated the other obstacles, which retarded the completion of the work to such an extent.

In the first place it was a weakness of my eyes which restricted my time of writing to a minimum for years, and which permits me even now only exceptionally to do any writing by artificial light. There were furthermore other labors which I could not refuse, such as new editions and translations of earlier works of Marx and myself, revisions, prefaces, supplements, which frequently required special study, etc. There was above all the English edition of the first volume of this work, for whose text I am ultimately responsible and which absorbed much of my time. Whoever has followed the colossal growth of international socialist literature during the last ten years, especially the great number of translations of earlier works of Marx and myself, will agree with me in congratulating myself that there is but a limited number of languages in which I am able to assist a translator and which compel me to accede to the request for a revision. This growth of literature, however, was but an evidence of a corresponding growth of the international working class movement itself. And this imposed new obligations on me. From the very first days of our public activity, a good deal of the work of negotiation between the national movements of socialists and working people in the various countries had fallen on the shoulders of Marx and myself. This work increased to the extent that the movement as a whole gained in strength. Up to the time of his death, Marx had borne the brunt of this burden. But after that the ever swelling amount of work had to be done by myself alone. Meanwhile the direct intercourse between the various national labor parties has become the rule, and fortunately it is becoming more and more so. Nevertheless my assistance is still in demand a good deal more than is agreeable to me in view of my theoretical studies. But if a man has been active in the movement for more than fifty years, as I have, he regards the work connected with it as a duty, which must not be shirked, but immediately fulfilled. In our stirring times, as in the 16th century, mere theorizers on public affairs are found only on the side of the reactionaries, and for this reason these gentlemen are not even theoretical scientists, but simply apologists of reaction.

The fact that I live in London implies that my intercourse with the party is limited in winter to correspondence, while in summer time it largely takes place by personal interviews. This fact, and the necessity

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