

THE
“Plebs” Magazine

Vol. II.

March, 1910.

No. 2

Copyright Entered at Stationer's Hall.

EDITORIAL

HUMAN society takes its departure from the animal world. From that domain it brings with it certain impulses and powers that are common to all animals and without which no organism could engage in the struggle for life. The most primitive of all these impulses is that of self-preservation. Throughout the universe it is the fundamental of the fundamentals. That before one can live well one must first of all *live*, is an incontrovertable fact from which there is no escaping either for fool or philosopher, spiritualist or materialist.

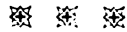
**The
Fundamental
Impulse.**



**Self Movement and
Intelligence.**

BUT in the fight against nature, in the struggle for existence, the impulse to continue existence must be backed by the power to realize that continuity. It is not enough for the bird that it should feel the impulse to feed itself or preserve itself from danger. It must possess the power to move where food can be found or danger avoided. In a word, it must be capable of *self-motion*. This quality, however, implies the presence of another necessary quality in the organism. How can the bird find food or seek shelter unless it has the faculty of recognizing what is food and what is shelter? Of what use are the wings to the bird or the legs to the stag if it fail to recognize the world in which it moves? *Self-movement implies intelligence. Intelligence on the other hand implies self-movement.* The one is the supplement of the

other. Only together do they become a powerful weapon in the struggle for life. Only together do they develop, and in the degree of their mutual permeation so is the result more or less favourable for the being in which both powers reside.



WHEN in the organism self-movement and intelligence has reached a certain degree of development, the forces and capacities acquired as means to secure the existence of the organism may be applied to other purposes. The strong muscles acquired to

**The Pure
and
The Practical.**

aid the individual in maintaining and defending himself may be employed for playing the violin or dancing a hornpipe. It must however be remembered that these powers of movement were not developed by these two latter forms of pleasure, but by the struggle for life. The same holds good on the side of intelligence. The sharpest senses, the highest understanding, the products of this same struggle, acquired for the purpose of adapting the individual to his environment, may when a high enough point of development has been reached be employed to other purposes. To the latter belongs the so called *pure philosophical thought*—pure reason as distinguished from practical reason—which is thought without any real object behind it, thought in which the concrete reality is eliminated, or as Dietzgen would say *thoughtless thought*. But no more than the struggle for existence has developed the powers of self-movement for dancing, has it developed the faculty of cognition, the powers of intelligence to become an instrument for pure thinking—pure knowing. The bird is upon the tree, the food is upon the ground. The bird has the power of moving from the tree to the ground. But it must be able to distinguish what is food from what is not food, it must be able to apprehend the consequences of assimilating the berries on yonder bush, i.e. that the latter have the power of satisfying hunger. Whatever the organism in the animal world, if the capacity to distinguish things in space and in time is not present, then its powers of movement will be futile or worthless. Movement must be regulated by intelligence. For this purpose both are developed. But the knowledge which regulates movement is not derived from pure thinking or pure reasoning, but from the world of movement, the reality in which the organism moves. The intellectual powers, the organ of cognition develops only in its mutual dependence on the powers of self-movement. In that unity only can the faculty of understanding function be complete. Only the knowable can be the object of knowledge. Only the reality can be realized. Only from human practice comes human knowledge. *The limitations of practice are the limitations of knowledge—practical knowledge as distinguished from pure knowledge.*

THE mutual dependence of knowing and doing, of theory and practice upon each other, a dependence which becomes the more manifest the greater the contradictions appear between them, is

**The Divorcement
of Theory
and Practice.**

simply the outcome of the mutual dependence of intelligence and self-movement, and, their development within that relation from the earliest beginnings of the animal world. But how has that relation fared in the human society which has its premises in the animal world, and differs from it in the production of the means of production; the development of this difference, i.e. economic development, has resulted by creating an increasing division of labour in society, in the separation of the natural unity of intelligence and self-movement. The downfall of ancient society based upon natural collectivism, was followed by a society based upon territory and property; and divided into a class of wealth owners, and a class of wealth producers, the great mass of the latter being slaves. To the wealth owners fell the privilege of *knowing* (education), to the wealth producers was awarded the inestimable boon of *doing* (work). In ancient Athens this economic cleavage is faithfully reflected in Athenian philosophy, especially that of Plato who divided mankind into two parts, the angelic and the animal, and who created two worlds, the supernatural or spiritual world, and the natural or material world. This division in philosophy is the product of a society based upon class antagonism. That the philosophy or knowing contradicts the economics or doing is simply due to the fact that the class who monopolize the one function take no part in the other. *Those who know are not those who do. Those who do are not those who know.* Thus the much talked of but little understood contradiction between *theory* and *practice*, which is and must ever be imminent in a society that is founded upon the fundamental economic contradiction, viz. *that the labour of the worker should create a product greater than its cost (wages) for the hirer of it.* And just as the solution of the problem, the elimination of this economic contradiction, is the work of the proletariat movement of to-day, so does the other contradictions that flow from this fundamental one, including the contradiction between theory and practice, knowing and doing, upon which all the metaphysics of the ages rest, disappear in the growing social unity of the two factors (which are the outcome of intelligence and self-movement) in the working class. To the degree that the latter develops this unity, in the same measure is it able to assert its self-sufficiency. *It becomes the contradiction of the contradiction.*



THE effect of the destruction of this natural unity, itself an effect of economic development, was to create among those to whom the

knowing fell, a contempt for those whose function was the *doing*.

This contempt becomes more veiled and concealed just in proportion as the antagonisms in society become more and more clearly recognized. But on the other hand there grows among those employed in the doing, the practice—the working class—a contempt for those who are engaged in the knowing, the theory—that class typified by the Universities and for whom the latter exists. The less concealed the antagonisms, the nearer they appear to the surface; the less concealed the contempt of the working class for those living upon its labour, the more self-assertive and independent does that class become. But on the other hand the hour has struck for the key to be turned in the lock, and the door of certain educational institutions opened. The philosophers of reconciliation appear to reconcile and tone down the existing antagonisms, and to offer to the workers a "truly liberal education." For those Kantian reconcilers "there is no such thing as working-class education," only "education," an "education which merges class with class" to share in each other's woes and join in each other's joys. To this false unity feast the workers are invited to swell the rapturous song "Labour is Capital, Capital is Labour. All are one, one is all! I am the doubter and the doubt, I am the creditor and the debtor, I am the spleen and the spleeny, &c., &c." And to show how this song can be sung with great feeling and fervour, Miss Margaret McMillan steps upon the stage. The number she favours us with is "What is Democratic Education"? And it is being rendered in aid of the "workers" by kind permission of the Workers' Educational Association. Next month we hope to have something to say about this rendering in the light of what we have here elaborated.



THERE is, however, one point made in Miss McMillan's contribution to which we must at this stage refer. The "Plebs" of course looms largely in her mind, and while we are referred to once by name we are

**What is
Democratic
Education?**

often indicated between the lines. We are grateful to Miss McMillan for pointing out our various vices, especially as they make such a beautiful setting for her virtues. The author of "What is Democratic Education" has something to say on the question of independence. As this is the basic principle of the "Plebs" as an educational movement, it is important that we should examine all arguments directed against that principle. We quote from Miss McMillan: "It is well for labour men to keep aloof and independent in their trade union—for that is the meaning of a trade union. Also to keep aloof and clear in their political organization—for that is the meaning of a Labour Party. But the trades-unionist and politicians, as such, are going into action; they are in the field,

already in the battle. The student is not in action, *he is preparing for action*. Peter the Great of Russia learned to build ships in Deptford, William II. and Togo came here, I believe, to think out naval problems." The education of the working class then is not the same as the economic and political activity of the working class! Therefore, what is true of the one activity, need not be true of the other. The educational field is according to our metaphysician *preparation for action*. The other two fields are those of actual battle, of *action*. These two factors are regarded by Miss McMillan as the theologians regard the body and the soul. She is quite as dualistic. And we are inclined to think rather unfortunate in her selection of analogies. Peter the Great, William II., Togo! But even Miss McMillan cannot escape from revealing the *purpose of the action*. Peter the Great "learned to build ships." William II and Togo came "to think out naval problems." And if they some day "come here to wipe out our navy" it will be because "they came to think out naval problems" not because they studied "humane" economics, or engaged like a certain W. E. A. guild in studying "local trees, local rocks, and local birds"! The working class are already in action. What kind of action, and for what purpose, and against whom directed? Miss McMillan does not say, dare not say, because it would leave her whole educational policy high and dry upon the rocks. *The answers to these questions decide the nature of the preparation for action*. Action, and preparation for action, are inseparable. They are mutually dependent upon each other. And for the very reason that the action of the working class industrially and politically partakes of an independent character, so must the preparation for such action have the same independent character. The purpose of action is the overthrow of the enemy. And just as the movement, the practice, the doing, is an affair of the working class only, so also is the intelligence, the theory, the knowing. And that is *our* position as a genuine educational movement of the working class. We are not ashamed of the qualifying adjective, and hence we have no apologies to make for its use. We leave *pure education* to the devotees of *pure thought*. Let them confine their application to that *pure world* whose only illumination is their own intellectual moonshine. Meanwhile we act to prepare, and prepare to act.

W. W. C.

The purchase of experience is not allowed for by the Income Tax. In any case few would care to produce the items.—*V. V.*

Economy is a human eccentricity which will cause a woman to spend half a day and fivepence in bus fares to get a threepenny reel of cotton for twopence three-farthings.—*Ellis Jones*,

Henrik Ibsen, the Iconoclast

(Continued)

HIS early poetic plays, including *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*, point to his overmastering belief in the individual's right and duty to realize himself. But in his later mature work, as Wicksteed points out, we see him constantly raising the question of how "this self-realization and expression shall be attained in combination with the self-abnegation demanded by society. How shall social life be made the support and expression of and not the death of this individual life?" This question seems to be at the very centre of Ibsen's social plays. The individual's relation to society is the problem. We all recognize that our own individual life and development is the result of our social environment and that this individual life of ours only expresses itself when it goes out and loses itself in the larger common life. And yet this common life constantly forces conventions upon us and in a measure seems to prevent our larger self-realization. This is the problem which Ibsen puts to us in his social dramas. How to harmonize self-surrender with self-realization.

Dr. Wicksteed, who is one of his most subtle interpreters, says that Ibsen points that the answer is this,—that "when the ideals of a community are living ideals, the common life will magnify and uplift the life of the individual, and room for self-utterance will be found in self-surrender. But when the ideals of a community are dead, and their places taken by conventions and lies, then the common life will choke and kill him who dares to live."

Most men of Ibsen's day looked at literature and art as an inspirational tonic, teaching that it should set forth only what is pleasant and inspiring, that it should picture the ideal in order that men may desire to emulate it and should never admit the real for fear of—what? The thing that we always fear,—the truth itself, for that invariably spells revolution of some kind.

Ibsen's fundamental optimism is shown in his faith in this revolution, in his confidence that new life arises out of social convulsions and that "only while these convulsions keep men's minds alert are the ideals themselves a living force. The struggle for liberty is a great thing." If you are satisfied, you are hopeless. What more striking example could be asked than our own sluggish moral life in America? Our forefathers had an ideal of liberty, they fought a revolution for it and gained it, and then we sat back on our oars and had it from that time on. And those who think a bit know the hollow mockery of that liberty which is a dead ideal.

Through all this thinking of Ibsen runs the passion of the moralist, the man who puts himself up against society and challenges us to judge whether he or society is right.

If Ibsen felt himself at war with society he felt too that every individual seeking self-realization was at war with organized society and the state. "Now this very contentedness in the possession of a dead liberty is characteristic of the so-called State, and, as I have said, it is not a good characteristic. Now reason does not imperatively demand that the individual should be a citizen. Far from it. The State is the curse of the individual. With what is Prussia's political strength bought? With the absorption of the individual in the political and geographical idea. And on the other hand, take the Jewish people, the aristocracy of the human race—how is it that they have kept their place apart, their poetical halo, amid surroundings of coarse cruelty? By having no State to burden them. Had they remained in Palestine, they would long ago have lost their individuality in the process of their State's construction, like all other nations. Away with the State! I will take that part in the revolution. Undermine the whole conception of a State, declare free choice and spiritual kinship to be the only all-important conditions of any union that is worth while. Changes in form of government are pettifogging affairs—a degree less or a degree more, mere foolishness. The State has its root in time, and will ripe and rot in time." Surely this letter to George Brandes is incriminating evidence. Under our immigration laws Mr. Henrik Ibsen would not be allowed to land in the United States.

Ibsen himself, a symptom of the conditions he analysed, was never at rest, never at peace. There is something grim in his deliberate destruction of his old standards in his fearless struggle to find the new. Always an individualist, claiming the individual's right and necessity to free himself, he saw the tragedy of those mysterious half light border regions where human beings striving to free their souls can achieve only partial freedom from the bondage in which material conditions hold all humanity. His constant faith in the ultimate saving power of the struggle itself is the final test of his optimism.

It is quite impossible to reduce Ibsen's philosophy to a series of "main propositions." It has no such definite form but is a real expression of the man's own grappling with problems. And as he grapples with those problems in his own individual life, so he makes us in our individual lives. He searches our souls more penetratingly than any priest in the confessional, but he grants us no absolution and no peace, no rule of life.

The Pillars of Society marked Ibsen's entrance into the new method of thought and manner of expression. This is the first of

his diagrammatic cross sections of human society. Smug middle-class respectability is the ideal which he attacks in the play, and, in toppling it over, Ibsen takes pains to let us see the basis of Berwick's moral supremacy and respectability in the little town. It comes out quite plainly that the Consul Berwick owns the means of subsistence of that little town, and that consequently every one's first duty is to Berwick & Co. It pleases him to be considered the censor of public morals, the pillar of society, and the town is alive with his improvements. He is adored by the desirable citizens and feared by the undesirable and all goes well. The picture is not strange to us. Consul Berwick and his admiring pastor and his obedient workmen dwell among us. The man is real and in the muddle he has made of his own inner life is as much a victim of social conditions as the sailors whom he would send to sea in a doomed ship.

When Ibsen wished to thresh out the question of the individual's relation to society he chose the most striking modern example of this problem—a woman's position in marriage—and presented the two sides of the question in *A Doll's House* and *Ghosts*.

* * * * *

Ibsen is unanswerable as he propounds this question, and if we can pick out one bit of constructive philosophy from his work it may be in the statement that the revolt of women against economic and idealistic slavery is one of the progressive forces in the modern world.

Ibsen lived the hard-thought life of the modern, and more than any other writer he has seen and sketched the tragedy of this transition period when the old ideals and props are gone from the thinking, and when the new standards are not settled and more than one individual soul is lost in the struggle. *Rosmersholm*, *Hedda Gabler* and the *Master Builder* all seem to be dominated by the idea of the conflict between the old and the new, and the tragedy of the human beings who are stranded between the past and the future.

Rosmersholm is full of modern explosive thought. It is a tragedy of new wine in old bottles. With the white horse of family inheritance galloping through his life, Rosmer can break with the old order and live his life. His older standards finally poison Rebecca's natural love of her life and together they give up the struggle.

Hedda is a more striking example of the tragedy of the transition because it is studied with an almost anatomical analysis of psychological activities.

Hedda is a woman of great gifts and possibilities but no fulfilment. She does not attain individual self-realization nor does she

make a sacrifice to society and its demands. She too has seen the emptiness of the common ideals, but having lost her faith in the past she refused to hope for the future. Hedda will not be a slave to conventions and ideals, but neither will she look truth in the face and follow its hard leading. She is emancipated from the old order with no preparation for freedom, no self-control. Thus her revolt is futile and leads only to indifferentism, ennui and death. There is a good deal of Hedda about all of us moderns—somewhere we have all cast off from the old foundations before we found the new, and have known in some measure the agony of unsafe shifting sand beneath our feet.

In *The Master Builder* Ibsen gave his imaginative gift free rein again and mingled symbolism and poetry with realism and modern social problems in a bewildering way. The play is full of suggestion but seems to centre around the struggle of the old with the new. The old master builder can not bear the thought of being supplanted by the younger generation. He would realize and express his own individuality but cannot, he would live and work for ever but he does not know how. It is Hilda Wangel, the younger generation personified, who comes knocking at his door to show him how to do this. Briefly this seems to be the meaning of this compelling allegory of the common things of life. If a man would save his soul—realize his own self—he must climb as high as he builds. If a man would gain immortality he must do this—achieve this standard—for the sake of the future generation. He may lose his life in saving it, but the younger generation demands that a man should make his contribution to its life and its hopes. Then and then only is his life united with the future, then he belongs to the future and cannot die. Men must risk all to serve the future, it is a necessity to realize the dream.

Ibsen's critics have been numerous and diligent. Their efforts to classify him have been sincere, desperate and hopeless. His frank calling of black "black" has shocked the respectable elements of society, his brutal pointing out of the ugly realities of life has horrified the idealists, and his recognition of the things that are "greater than life" has mystified the ardent materialist. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong to call him a free-thinking mystic. He perceives the existence of soul, a social soul, in the universe, which makes us draw the best in our individual life from the common social life. He is a moralist who is not satisfied with surface morals, but demands a spiritual revolution to accompany and make possible the social revolution.

He is a disturber of our peace and has started many a man and woman on a search for the fundamental causes of the diseases of the social order which is dying. His unrest is the unrest of his time and his questions are ours. He has made us think, and while revolutions

are not made by thinking, they are not made or won without it. When the working classes of the world think up to the material evolution, the revolution for which we wait will soon be accomplished. The difficulty is to make people think, and the Socialist party propaganda exists for that.

Socialists can find much to think about in Ibsen's work. We need to ask sometimes how earnest we are to climb as high as we build, how fearless in risks to serve the future. We must answer these and other questions, and Henrik Ibsen is a master hand at asking them.

FRANCES PERKINS,

From International Socialist Review.

CHEERFUL CHUCKLES

THE DEATH OF THE MARXIAN SYSTEM

(Being a lecture given by Nitus to a body of "diplomatic" students about to enter for a diploma)

(Sh! Sh! Order! Order!)

"Hab, hem"! To day, Gentlemen, I propose to deal with the theories of a German gentleman of the name of Marx—Karl Marx to be precise. Before delving into the heart of the subject may I be allowed to say that I have no personal quarrel with Marx or with his followers? on the contrary I have a profound respect for them all; my only objection to Marx's disciples is their unwashed state, slouch hats, red ties, and abnormal desire for the "Social Revolution." To those of you who are "in a hurry," may I say that it is far better to be patient and to take the cork out of a bottle rather than knock its neck off! I am sure you desire "progressive legislation" and scorn the idea of the instant proclamation of the Socialist Commonwealth, I would therefore ask you to remember that it is better to purchase a grand piano upon the slow, steady, instalment plan, than to pawn your best suit and buy it outright. Look at the significance of those beautiful lines so familiar to the child of the twentieth century:—

"Little Jack Horner sat in the corner
Eating his Christmas pie"

Here we are given a glimpse of the true legislator, one who would be content with the Budget before the Veto. One who, realizing with Prof. Böhm-Bawerk how "complex and manifold are the strands

of life" would seek to use the dog-comb before the hair-brush. He does not rush about wildly waving a red flag and shouting aloud the theory of the Class Struggle, but sits calmly in the corner eating his pie, or, as my colleague Hardnut would say:—"Partaking of the historical dish as philosophically as becomes a sentient thinking entity." If, instead of demanding at once a whole shilling rise for the worker, the Marxist would first agitate for a system of education which would give the worker a thorough knowledge of how to spend that extra shilling, we would be able to welcome him as a true student of political economy, as it is we are compelled to bemoan his lack of consistency,

Karl Marx was undoubtedly one of the finest thinkers the world has ever seen. Nevertheless it will be no great difficulty for me to demonstrate the worthlessness of his arguments.

Marx may be said to have based his system upon three principles, viz. (1) Materialist conception of history; (2) The Class Struggle; (3) Theory of Value. We will take his theory of value first. This theory as laid down in the first volume of *Das Kapital* is, briefly, that the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour embodied in it; that is to say, if I possess a pipe which has taken two hours socially necessary labour time to produce, that is its value. This is the fundamental basis of Marxism, and when we overthrow this, we overthrow the whole system. Let us leave the first volume for a moment and see what Marx has to say on this subject in his third volume. What is the result? What do we find? A superficial glance is sufficient to reveal these significant words:—"It, however, is not"! This it will be seen is a direct contradiction to the whole of the first volume! It is a complete denial of his own arguments! Let us resume our investigation of the first volume: "Value is labour embodied in a commodity." Let us place this against actual facts. Suppose we take the example of a fish factory. After the fish have been cut down and gathered in from the fields, they are taken direct to the market to be sold. Before they are placed in the hands of the purchaser, or as Marx would say, before the last phase of M. C. M., the heads of the fish are cut off and thrown away—they are of no use. Now mark those last words carefully—"of no use," which means in the Marxian sense of no value. The fish is sold. The purchaser retires smiling until he, or she, arrives home and examines it. The seller smiles all the time. Now let us follow very carefully the adventures of the head, for this spells disaster to the Marxian scientist. These heads are picked up by unemployed labourers, tramps, lawyers, &c. who sell them to the farmer as manure. And still the Marxist has told us they possess no value! As a matter of fact the heads possess historical and economic value. Historical because their aroma brings up memories of the past; economic, because it assists the growth of vegetables, and vegetables are one of

the chief foods of the proletariat of Britain. Thus we see that these heads have a *tendency* to possess an *imperial value*. Again, take the typical case of the labourer who picks up a sixpence in the street. He places it in his pocket and takes it to the bank. In doing this he undoubtedly expends a certain amount of labour upon the coin but on taking it to the bank he is coolly informed that no matter how much labour he has expended upon it, the sixpenny piece is of no value—it is a *bad one*. Take again the case of the schoolmaster's cane (this case is, I think, unanswerable!). Can we say that the more he works it the more value it acquires? Or, again, that a certain portion of the scholar's garment becomes more valuable because of the fact that the master has expended labour upon it?

These are questions that require answering by the Marxists before Oxford can accept their theory of value. Personally I think the task is impossible, or, as Milton would say "They 'aven't got a blinkin' Solerman"!

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

GAMBLER.—The game of Politics closely resembles that of "Banker." At times they both play up the "Deuce."

CLUBITE.—I should advise you to get five keyholes in the front door; you will be sure to find one then.

HISTORIAN.—Yes! Nelson was a little narrow minded, he only looked at things from one side.

CALIBAN.—No! King John did not cross the Alps in an aeroplane, you are confusing him with Mary Queen of Scots. Yes, he was a little absent minded. It is said of him, that on returning home late one night he put his umbrella in bed and then went and stood himself in the corner all night.

MARY NUT MEG.—The best way to make a class-conscious meat pie is to get 2 lbs. of flour, mix with a few drops of beer, then take 1lb. of beef, chop up fine and give to the cat. Next take flour and beer, stir vigorously, add few clippings from "Justice," make up and boil for two days.

The Establishment of Sociology*

PROFESSOR LESTER F. WARD

Brown University

I DO not propose on this occasion to enter into any defence of the claims of sociology to be called a science. I wish simply to show that its history, and the steps in its establishment, do not essentially differ from those of other sciences.

* Address of the president of the American Sociological Society at its first annual meeting in Providence, R. I., December 27, 1906.

On a former somewhat similar occasion I took the same position, and as the words then spoken in a foreign tongue have never been reproduced in our own, they seem to form a fitting introduction to this address. This is what I said :

Certainly no member of the International Institute of Sociology doubts that there is a sociological science, but certain persons suppose that there is a difference between this and other sciences. The fact that the foundations of the science are still being discussed, and that sociologists differ with regard to them, while the foundations of other sciences seem to be recognized by all, causes it to be imagined that sociology is a science different from the rest. But one needs only to study the history of other sciences to see that such is not the case. Without entering deeply into this study, it is sufficient to consider the most completely established sciences at a special epoch in their history. Everyone knows that astronomy is the most exact and the most perfectly established science that we have. Let us consider it, for example, in the seventeenth century. Descartes was acquainted with the theories of the ancients. He knew the Ptolemaic theory. That of Copernicus was familiar to him, as well as the modification of that theory proposed by Tycho Brahe. Modern astronomy is chiefly based on the theory of Copernicus, and its exactness depends entirely upon the law formulated by him of the revolutions of the planets. But was astronomical science established at that period? Certainly not. In the possession of all this knowledge the greatest genius of the seventeenth century rejected the true principle and elaborated a new hypothesis which the modern world has almost entirely forgotten. Astronomy in the seventeenth century was, then, in a condition somewhat similar to that of sociology to-day.

It would be easy to show that the same was true of physics before the discovery of the law of gravitation, and also that it was true of chemistry before the discovery of the true nature of combustion. As regards chemistry, it is the glory of France and of the immortal Lavoisier to have made that great discovery which lifted chemistry out of the state of vague theories and false hypotheses, and placed it on the firm and secure basis on which it stands to-day.

But there is a difference between the modern theories of sociology and the theories which prevailed in the other sciences before their final establishment. The theories of Ptolemy and Descartes in astronomy were false, or they contained only a minute germ of truth. The theory of phlogiston in chemistry was almost entirely false. This is not the case with modern theories in sociology. The organicist theory is not false, nor is that of imitation, nor that of the struggle of races, nor that of social control, nor yet that of the consciousness of kind (these last two come from America, and I do not speak of principles laid down by myself). These hypotheses, and almost all others in sociology are true, or contain a considerable part of the grand sociological truth which is the final synthesis of them all.

More recently a South American, Ernesto Quesada, professor of sociology in the University of Buenos Ayres, has uttered very similar words, going, however, much more fully into the subject. He was practically driven to this course by a remark of the retiring dean,

Miguel Cané, of the university, in a public address, reflecting severely upon the study of sociology. He said, among other things, that "sociology, far from being a science, was little more than empty verbiage," and added that

he would see with great satisfaction the abandonment of a word more pretentious than expressive of anything real, and more capricious than scientific. To study the various human groups, the causes that actuate them, and all the other determining elements of their respective activities, is to set forth principles of a general character, which, though accepted only provisionally serve as a basis for further investigations. But from this to the erecting into a science, with fixed, immutable boundaries, of a mixture of hypotheses and empirical assertions, and calling it a science in the same sense as algebra or mechanics, seems to me an enormous stride. A science ought to be that impregnable region where alone reign truths and proved laws. If twenty professors, all working along the lines of the modern sociologists, were charged with the preparation of a programme of the subject, I am certain that they would present twenty different programmes, each conforming to the quality of mind, personal education, and peculiar method of the author; whereas, of twenty professors of geometry there would not be one who would dare to attack the hypotenuse and attribute to it properties which it does not possess.

Professor Quesada replied to all this very fully and with great ability, but he failed to point out the complete irrelevancy of Dean Cané's attack, comparing sociology to mathematics, which is not a science of concrete things at all, but simply the norm by which all science is tested, and even referring to algebra, which is only an instrument, or tool, to be used in the solution of problems of quantity.

But Professor Quesada shows very clearly that no science is absolutely fixed. All are compelled to start with certain postulates—i.e. unproved positions, or assumptions—and build upon these; and he enumerates the chief of them as defined by the masters in science. He shows, moreover, that these postulates are often doubtful, and that several of them—as, for example, that of the atom of chemistry—are undergoing profound modification with the advance of our knowledge. He may be said to have made out a clear case that there is no "impregnable region where alone reign truth and true laws," and that all the sciences are perpetually *in fieri*, in the sense as is sociology. He does much more; for he proceeds to show, not only that sociology is already a science of great importance, but that it may be applied directly to practical affairs; and he promises in his lectures to show the legislators and statesmen of Argentina how they may utilize it in advancing the interests of their own country and people.

All the attacks upon our science might easily be met in a similar way, and I have taken some pains to collect all the objections I could find and to ascertain the fallacy that underlies each one. I had thought of presenting the result of this study; but not only would it require more time than can be devoted to it in this address, but, upon mature consideration, I conclude that it is not worth the

while, as sociology is marching over all these stumbling-blocks, and nothing that its enemies can do will greatly check its sure and steady advance. What I propose to do therefore, is simply to draw your attention to a few of the steps that sociology has taken, and endeavour to point out what has actually been done in the direction of its establishment as one of the great sciences.

Probably the most important result that sociology has accomplished is that of showing what society is; that, if it is not an "organism"—and few now would go that far—it is at least a great organization, bound together by organic ties in all its parts.

LESTER F. WARD.

(*To be continued.*)

Reports

EDUCATIONAL WORK AT ROCHDALE

That which Rochdale sets itself to do it does with all its might! Centre of pioneer movements, it was to be expected that it would take a hand in this scheme for working-class education that has its roots in the Central Labour College, Oxford. And this is how it came to pass.

In the year of grace 1909, one, Harold Kershaw, joiner by trade, student in the W. E. A. Tutorial Class, having shown some ability in his work in the latter, was chosen by that organization to proceed to Ruskin College, Oxford, to further his studies. He went, he saw, and he was impressed by the teaching at that world-famed hostel. Part of the impression was good, and he profited by it; part of the impression was unfavourable and he profited by that also, the latter profit was gained by the application of logic, an advantage gained from the good impression. And this is how it chanced. In the study of Sociology and Evolution, he was taught the *laws* of development in society and nature. These laws discovered, he found the student had in his hands the key to the understanding of the nature of social relations, their origin, development and inter-dependence. The complete understanding of the present could only be obtained by a knowledge of the past. This explained the unfavourable impression erected in his mind by the other subjects. Constitutional History, Local Government, and Economics were not watertight departments then as the lecturers would seem to think. "History was all of a piece." Not the creature of this or that statesman, king, or trader, but the result of laws which, once discovered, would unravel the tangle of orthodox history. What were those laws? Further investigation solved the mystery. Now to take the "good news to a far country"—Rochdale. Henceforth his whole ambition was to show "the way, the truth, and the light" to his fellow-workers at home. Returning to Rochdale in September, he visited the Trade Unions, and pointed out the "narrow way which leadeth" to an understanding of social questions, and invited their members' assistance to start classes to propagate the "good stuff." Twelve Committed Twelve propagated. Twelve classed. Now growing classes (an average

of nineteen in each, at present) are studying Industrial History, Economics, and Logic, at the feet of a young Gamaliel from the workers ranks,—to wit, Mr. W. W. Craik, of Central Labour College, Oxford, who is able to convince them that Economics is not "a dismal science," that Logic is a medicine to cure crooked arguments, and that Industrial History is as enbranching, and more useful, than any romance that was ever penned.

Harold Kershaw ! thanks ! thanks ! thanks ! The seed thou and friend Craik soweth shall be reaped a hundredfold by our fellow-workers in the "days that are to be." Reader my tale is told. Rochdale asks, who will be next ?

ROCHDALE PLEB.

[Our Rochdale friend forgot to mention that Mr. Craik steals out of Rochdale once a week to deliver lectures on Industrial History at Preston, where a promising class of sixty attests to the interest our friend is able to create in this very important study.—EDITOR.]

The average tombstone is erected in haste and forgotten at leisure.

A society in which men will no longer make a living by selling things to one another is not absolutely inconceivable.

Very slowly we are beginning to understand that the ideas of the past are infinitely more interesting than its battlefields, and of infinitely greater consequence to ourselves.—*Algernon Cecil.*

To Our Readers

Will Members and Readers please note that Subscriptions for League Membership and Magazine are now due.

We would also remind Members that we have still a number of *The Burning Question of Education* Pamphlet for sale, price 1d., post free 1½d.

We have also issued a new pamphlet, entitled *Education and Progress* by Lester F. Ward. This pamphlet contains an illustration of Lester F. Ward and Dennis Hird, a photo taken during the August Meet of the "Plebs," and an excellent Front and Back View of the Central Labour College. Price 1d., post free 1½d.

Volume I. of the "Plebs" Magazine is now ready. This is most tastefully bound in half-leather ; and should be on the book-shelf of every Member. It would make an excellent and useful present, price 3/-.

Any of the above can be obtained from The Editor.

Truth and Liberty

LET's talk of noble thoughts and high ideals,
 Of footprints seen upon the sands of time ;
 Some echo trace, which thro' the ages peals
 Within the soul, and bids us upward climb.
 Of stars that shine in history's firmament,
 Like golden candles in the purpling sky ;
 Whose lives outlive the gilded monument,
 Whose songs of worthy praise shall never die.
 Of diamond crest upon the poets brow,
 Which like eternal summer, never fades,
 But lives ;—a theme 'fore which old Time doth bow,
 And stars pay homage from the wandering shades.
 The things that were point to futurity,
 Let's talk of Truth ! Let's talk of Liberty.

E. L.

To the Generation Knocking at the Door

BREAK—break it open ; let the knocker rust :
 Consider no "shalt not," and no man's "must" :
 And, being entered, promptly take the lead,
 Setting aside tradition, custom, creed ;
 Nor watch the balance of the huckster's beam ;
 Declare your hardiest thought, your proudest dream :
 Await no summons ; laugh at all rebuff ;
 High hearts and youth are destiny enough.
 The mystery and the power enshrined in you
 Are old as time and as the moment new :
 And none but you can tell what part you play,
 Nor can you tell until you make assay,
 For this alone, this always will succeed,
 The miracle and magic of the deed.

JOHN DAVIDSON: *The Theatrocrat.*

The Nature and Development of Gentile Society

"The decisive element of history is pre-eminently the production and reproduction of life and its material requirements."—Engels.

THE Materialist conception of history elaborated, it remains for us to apply it in an examination of social institutions, their coming into being and passing away. Such an examination is the purpose of these articles, and the various phases of social development will be treated in the order of time. Of course it is impossible, owing to limitations of space, to do more than give a general sketch of the particular epochs.

THE POINT OF DEPARTURE

Human society takes its departure from the animal world. Its movement, mind and morals have their premises in the animal kingdom. The human differs not from the animal, therefore, (except in degree) in any of these three qualities. The differences that marks off the boundary line between these two Kingdoms consists in this; that *man is a tool-making animal*. This specific economic cause of differentiation, although based upon a superior degree of biological development, gives to human society specific laws of development not to be found in the rest of nature. The animal may make tools of his organs: it cannot make tools *with* its organs. The organs of the animal are hide-bound to the organism and are therefore limited. The tools of man are separate from the organism and are practically unlimited. The division of labour in the animal (social) organism based upon natural organs is a natural division, the key to the understanding of which is to be found in Biology. The division of labour in the human (social) organism is based upon artificial organs, and is therefore an artificial division, an understanding of which must be sought in Political Economy. We need not detail this point more fully here, as it has already been dealt with at some length in the admirable criticism of J. R. Macdonald's *Socialism and Society*, by N. Ablett, in the November issue of this magazine. If only that "political sagacity" which Mr. Ablett so much admires in J.R.M. could be explained by biological analyses!

TECHNICAL PROGRESS AND CO-OPERATION

From this time on, at which the animal becomes human, technical progress constitutes the foundation of social development. The animal organism possesses all the organs necessary for its existence. The human organism depends for its existence upon organs outside of it. The more of these organs there are, and the higher their technique, the less does that organism become the slave of nature, but at the same time the greater becomes the demand for co-operation among the human organisms and the greater the dependence of each upon all and all upon each. In other words, *the greater the power of society over its natural environment, the greater the dependence of the individual upon his social environment.*

SAVAGERY AND BARBARISM

Any account of the life of primitive man, his habits and his institutions, must of course to a large extent be hypothetical. We are enabled to form some ideas, however, of that pre-historic time through the discoveries of primitive remains, and more especially through the investigations made among races that have existed, and those that still exist, living in the higher reaches of savagery and in the lower reaches of barbarism. These races are, so to say, the mirror of our past. Especially are we indebted for such knowledge to the ethnological researches of Lewis H. Morgan, the results of which are published in *Ancient Society*. A classic epitome of this work is to be found in Frederick Engel's *Origin of the Family*.

Morgan divides the time prior to civilization into the two periods of savagery and barbarism and again divides each of those periods into three sub-periods, which he calls, the lower, middle, and higher status. Each period begins or ends with a technical discovery or invention.

SAVAGERY

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Lower Status | Discovery of fire | |
| 2. Middle „ | Invention of Bow and Arrow | Polynesians discovered in this stage |
| 3. Higher „ | Invention of the art of Pottery | Indians of North-West America in this stage |

BARBARISM

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 1. Lower Status | Domestication of Animals (East) | |
| | Cultivation of Maize (West) | Indian tribes East of Missouri in this stage |
| 2. Middle „ | Invention of the smelting iron | Peru, Mexico, Ancient Britons, &c. in this stage |
| 3. Higher „ | Invention of phonetic alphabet and the use of writing | Greek, Italians, Germans, in this stage |

Followed by civilization.

GENTILE SOCIETY

Through all these changes our ancestors passed, and it is only when the higher status of barbarism is reached that history begins. How far back anything approaching social organization dates we have no means of estimating? Some crude form must have existed from the lowest savage state. Among the Australian aborigines, there exists a system of social organization and family relations of such a character, that it must have taken immense periods of time for its development. These Australians have never emerged from savagery. The first definite form of social organization is known as *Gentile* society. It corresponds to a material condition in which definitely settled or village life had not commenced. The unit of this organization was the *gens*. The gens was a congregation of individuals bound together by ties of kinship, tracing their descent from

a common ancestor. *It has its beginning, therefore, in family relations, which we shall deal with later.* Gentile society existed within the historic period both in Greece and in Rome ; although it had begun to give way to another form of organization based upon territory and property. The historians of Greece and Rome had never been able to explain intelligibly these gentile institutions, until Morgan demonstrated the similarity between them and the organization which he found existing among the American Indians.

The gens, as already stated, was based upon personal relationship only, a condition of things in harmony with the degree of economic development attained to at that time. A number of gentes (plural) formed into a phratry (as in Greece) or a euria (as in Rome) : a number of phratries formed a tribe, a number of tribes formed a kind of nation. By the time this latter development takes place, settled territorial life has begun, bringing with it the inevitable downfall of gentile organization. The Athenian nation consisted of four tribes, each tribe had three phratries, and each phratry thirty gentes, so that the whole nation was made up of three hundred and sixty gentes.

The chief characteristic of the gens were these : each member had a name derived from the common ancestor : a common place of worship, a common place of burial, common religious rights, common inheritance common fund for redress of wrongs or avenging injuries, and common participation in the election of chiefs. Gentile society was a pure democracy conditioned by the *common ownership of the instruments for securing food and shelter.* As to the circumstances which led to the downfall of the gens and the institution of political society, the state, we will consider these in relation to the general economic and social development in Greece and Rome.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAMILY

Turning to the growth and development of the family we find that the present form, i.e. the monogamian, is the fifth in succession of a number of forms. Those that precede are as follows :—

1. *The Consanguine Family.*—(Lat) *Con* = with, *sanguis* = blood, i.e. related by blood. This form of the family is extinct. It has no existence even in the lowest races. But there are indications of the one time existence of such a form, to be found in a system of relationship known as the Malayan, in Polynesia. *The system generally out-lives the form.* It is so in the case of the Malayan system, which does not correspond to the existing form but rather to a form such as the Consanguine, out of which the present one has grown. In Polynesia uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces and cousins are unknown. The wives of my brothers, I regard as my wives, the children of my brothers as my children. This bears a striking likeness to the Consanguine form of the family which is based upon the inter-marriage of brothers and sisters in a group. It is probable that previous to this stage there existed a condition of promiscuity, in which every man belonged to every woman and every woman to every man, irrespective of generation.

2. *The Punaluan Family*.—(Haw) *Punalua* = intimate friend or companion. This form of the family has existed in Europe, Asia, and America during the historic period. The transition from the Consanguine to the Punaluan was brought about by the gradual exclusion of own brothers and sisters from the marriage relation, the evils of which were bound to be observed even at that early time. In-breeding does not bring about the best results. An important factor in the excluding of brothers and sisters from the sexual relations was the *gens*. It is highly probable that the *gens* developed out of the Punaluan family. One of its most important usages was just this *prohibition of inter-marriage between members of the same gens*, i.e., between members descended from the same ancestor. This form of the family presents *group marriage* in its classical form. So long as group marriage and the group family prevail, the line of descent is, and obviously *can only be traced*, through the mother. Bachofen is the individual to whom we are indebted for the discovery of the so-called matriarchy or maternal law. The children belonged to the gens of the mother so long as descent was traced in the female line. *The children did not succeed to the property of their father*. The latter could only leave his property to the mother gens, to which he belonged. Property is a most important factor in the development of the family. While the Consanguine family corresponds to the social stage of roving savages, the Punaluan family in its highest form meets the needs of communistic bodies of a more or less settled character, but in which technical progress has, so far, not resulted in the accumulation of much property.

3. *The Syndiasmian Family*.—(Gr.)=to pair. This form of the family is founded upon the pairing of a male with a female under the form of marriage but *without an exclusive co-habitation*. It was the germ of the Monogamic family. Even during group marriage a man had his principal wife among others, and a woman had her principal husband. The village Indians when discovered were in the Syndiasmian stage. Several families were usually found living together in one house, in which the principle of communism in living was practised. Morgan considers this fact to be of itself an admission, that the family was too feeble an organization, as yet, to face alone the hardships of life. The more the impulse to prevent marriage between relatives, the greater would be the tendency toward pairing, because of the more numerous the "brothers" and "sisters" excluded. Says Engels: "The development of the family, then, is founded on the continual contraction of the circle originally comprising the whole tribe, within which marital intercourse between both sexes was general. By the continual exclusion, first of near, then of ever remoter relatives, including finally even those who were simply related legally, all group marriage becomes practically impossible. At least only one couple temporarily and loosely united, remains: that molecule, the dissolution of which absolutely puts an end to marriage."

So long as group marriage prevailed and consequently, the "maternal law," women are *at least* the social equals of men. Wherever household communism is practiced, the supremacy of the women in the house is

implied, and consequently they are held in high esteem and enjoy the same Gentile rights as the men. Women are, of course, in this position of independence because of the fact that they take part in production, i.e. *they are economic factors*. The work was simply divided between the two sexes, and each sex was supreme in its own area of activity.

The Syndiasmian family is the form characteristic for barbarism, just as the two preceding forms are characteristic of savagery, and Monogamy characteristic of civilization. It marks the transitional stage between group marriage and the marriage of one man to one woman exclusively.

TOWARDS MONOGAMY

The discovery in the Western World that animals could be domesticated developed a new source of wealth. Hitherto property had for the most part consisted of houses, weapons, fishing tackle and articles of a crude and simple character. The store of nourishment had to be replenished day by day, from the river or the hunting ground. But now this new discovery, that animals could be tamed and propagated in captivity, created a new economic condition, which led to the creation and accumulation of a new kind of property, and which consequently pushed the old forms of production, such as hunting, into the background. The introduction of cattle-raising gives rise to agriculture and handicraft; and human labour power, rendered more and more productive, turns out a *surplus product*, i.e. more than is required for immediate use.

But who is the producer and owner of this new wealth? Originally held in common by the gens it gets more and more into the hands of chiefs, like Father Abraham, who although not owner in the modern sense, yet holds the flocks, slaves and land by virtue of his leadership. This factor, together with the development of the pairing family, which places a natural father by the side of the natural mother, introduces a dissolving element into the maternal gens. So long as the latter held sway, the children could not inherit the property of their father, which went to the gentile relatives, i.e. to the father's gens. So long as that property consisted of simple and insignificant objects, there would appear no discrepancy in the custom. But in the degree that man monopolized more and more of productive activity, and consequently restricted the economic area of woman in proportion, making her work appear more and more insignificant because unproductive: in the measure in which wealth took the form of cattle and agricultural products, not to speak of slaves, so man's position in society became superior to that of woman. As this development proceeded, the more would the maternal custom appear in sharp contradiction to existing economic conditions. And so the matriarchy or maternal law had to be abolished, and was abolished; how and when we do not know, as it belongs to prehistoric times. But the discoveries of Bachofen and Morgan provide ample evidence in proof of the existence of the mother-right.

"The downfall of maternal law," says Engels, "was the historic defeat of the female sex. The men seized the reins also in the house, the women

were stripped of their dignity, enslaved, tools of men's lust and mere machines for the generation of children."

Descent was now traced through males; and the children inherited directly from their father.

4. *The Patriarchal Family.*—(Gr) *Pater* = a father, *archo* = to rule. This form is found almost exclusively among people in the pastoral state. Our principal knowledge of this family comes from the Bible. It belongs to the upper period of Barbarism, and remained for a time after the dawn of civilization. The established superiority and rule of men is made manifest in the Patriarchal form. It was founded upon the marriage of one man to several wives, although this feature of polygamy is not general in the tribe and applies in the main to the chiefs and principal men. The special characteristic of this family was rather "the organization of a certain number of free and unfree persons into one family under the paternal authority of the head of the family." The Roman family (*paterfamilias*) is the ideal type of a family containing these two elements and shows the transition from the pairing family to monogamy.

5. *The Monogamian Family.*—(Gr) *Monos* = single, *gamos* = marriage. The problem of property was finally solved in the appearance of this form of family relations based upon the marriage of one man to one woman with exclusive cohabitation. Not until civilisation commenced was it permanently established. By this time, of course, Gentile society had disappeared. Private property had vanquished natural collectivism, and now, therefore, economic conditions became the foundation of family relations. Monogamy came into being not through any moral or ethical cause. It is the product of economic necessity. It became the prevailing form, at a time, when *property commenced its career of control over man.* *The control of man over property* will produce a form of the family corresponding to the new economic conditions. What that form will be it is impossible to definitely say. That will be decided by the generations living in that transformed status. To the question, will monogamy disappear when the economic conditions upon which it is based are abolished? Engels answers: "One might reply not without reason: not only will it not disappear, but it will rather be perfectly realized. For with the transformation of the means of production into collective property, wage-labour will disappear, and with it the proletariat and the necessity for a certain statistically ascertainable number of women, to surrender for money. Prostitution disappears, and monogamy, instead of going out of existence, at last becomes a reality—*for men also.*" One would reasonably hope that a form which has for its inevitable accompaniment adultery and prostitution is not the highest form of family relations to which society can attain.

THE DISSOLUTION OF GENTILE SOCIETY

As the tools of production developed, and as a consequence, productivity of labour increased, the demand for more and more labour-power is accelerated. Prisoners of war form the first means of supply: the males

are enslaved to produce wealth for the conquerors, and the females to produce more exploitable labour-power. The introduction of these new elements into Gentile society lead to the formation of internal antagonisms. With every contraction in the circle of family relations, from those founded upon group marriage to those founded upon the marriage of a single pair, there goes a corresponding contraction in the circle of property relations—from group or communal property to the collective property of the family (as distinguished from the gens), and finally to private property owned by the male individual. Sexual ties (the reproduction of life) are in primitive society, where the labour process based upon technical progress is in a low state of development, the dominant determinants of social life. But these ties once formed develop with every contraction of the productive process (the production of the material requirements of life), which ultimately rises above family relations of the Gentile character, subordinates them to property relations, and makes local residence and taxable property the unit of society. Gentilism disappears. The State enters the historic field to protect that which called it into existence—*Private Property*.

TO SUM UP

The earliest human beings had no other organization than the loose groups of their animal ancestors. The acquisition of crude implements—the spear, the bow, and the arrow; the use of fire in the making of vessels and tools; the substitution of cave life for that of the primeval forest, led to social organization. The earliest or most ancient form of social organization was based upon sexual ties or blood relationship. The unit of this society was the gens, the members of which had descended from the same common ancestor. Group marriage prevailing, descent was traced through females. The latter were supreme in the household, and the males were supreme in the hunt. At this stage men and women lived as equals. The discovery that animals could be tamed and propagated in captivity, the development of agriculture and handicraft following thereon, created a revolution in primitive society. Division of labour increased, resulting in the production of a greater variety and a greater quantity of things. More than was required having been produced, exchange arose, and with exchange, *the exchangers*. New methods of production created new social relations between men and women. The economic area of women became more and more restricted, and social wealth found its way more and more into the hands of men. The line of descent had therefore changed from the female to the male, the mother gens to the father gens. The subjection of women and the enslavement of men became the order of the day. Certain families were growing richer and appropriated more and more the once democratic offices of the Gentile organization. The power of the gens was swept out of existence. Kinship failed to retain its hold in the face of economic development. *Property had become thicker than blood.*

WILL. W. CRAIK

Next Month :—General Economic and Social Development in Greece.