

THE
"Plebs" Magazine

Vol. III.

January, 1912.

No. 12.

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EDITORIAL

THE most general expression of the aim of the Central Labour College is that it seeks to serve the Labour Movement. The standard by which alone can be judged how far that institution is

**The aim of
the Central
Labour College**

capable of realizing this aim, is to be found in those conditions of society that make a Labour Movement necessary. An understanding, therefore, of the Central Labour College, the necessity for its existence, the scope and character of its functions, including the clearly marked line which differentiates it from other educational institutions, an understanding of all this involves an understanding of the origin and development of the Labour Movement. But it is precisely this latter that the Central Labour College seeks to convey. *The development of working-class understanding is its function.* If the working class was conscious of its position in society, then there would be no justification for the existence of the Central Labour College. On the other hand, the existence of the Central Labour College would have been impossible had not this consciousness been awakened, had not the development toward working-class understanding begun. When the need for working-class education appears, there is, and must be already present, the material for satisfying the need. That the Central Labour College came into being in 1909 and not before, is due above all to the wider circle of experience that a highly developed capitalism brings to the wage-labouring class. For consciousness is conditioned on experience, and grows with it.

THE child is not born with a fully developed consciousness. Consciousness grows up gradually out of its opposite, unconsciousness. The movement of the child is a matter of instinct before it is a matter of consciousness. Instinctive

The growth of action is primitive. With the widening of the
Consciousness child's experience its reasoning powers develop.

Santa Claus and Jack the Giant Killer are divested of their objective reality. Similarly is it with the childhood of the race. The savage is a child and the child is a savage. The savage, whose experience does not extend beyond his hunting ground, takes his hunting ground with him into the other world. His consciousness is limited by his limited experience. The Labour Movement too is in a large measure paralleled by these cases. It has its days of infancy, of limited consciousness because of limited experience. *The movement of the working class, like the movement of the child, is at first instinctive.* It feels the pains of oppression and strikes out against it. And like the child that spends its rage and force upon the inanimate object with which it has collided, so has the early working-class movement for want of consciousness of the cause of its sufferings, spent its energy vainly in attacking something other than the actual obstacle, e.g., the destruction of machines, opposition to women-labour, the fighting of one set of workers against another set. The credulity of children is well known and arises from their narrow experience. The child takes for granted what its parents or elders tell it. *The days of childhood are the days of faith.* To faith nothing is impossible. It is only through the life of school and the school of life, that it becomes possible for critical consciousness to triumph over uncritical belief. And in the historical childhood of the working-class movement, *do we not find the workers uncritically accepting their masters' ethics, their masters' politics, and their masters' education?* They are led by faith. They blindly follow those that blindly lead, until with the repeated experience in the ditch, the eyes begin to open. The mills of fact in their sure grinding triumph over the dust of faith. Capitalist practice is seen to be more matter of fact than capitalist promise.



WITH the development of capitalism, there goes hand in hand, an intensification of the old evils and the growth of new ones. Its effects are seen to be more widespread and general. The Capitalist, if he is to remain as such, must secure a

The awakening of profit, and that is secured through the
Consciousness in exploitation of the labourer. Wherever
the Working Class profit-making is the aim of production, there is the organization of the workers called forth, there have the labourers to face the same problems. Strikes are common to workers of all branches and all nations where Capitalism reigns.

On the other hand, the Capitalists in the various branches of the division of labour employ common measures to stem the revolts of the wage-workers. Conciliation and arbitration are methods adopted by capitalists in general. And once this experience becomes general, the failure of these methods are apprehended as general. The widening experience of developed capitalism awakens the consciousness of the wage-labourers to the fact that the interests of all workers are identical and opposed to the interests of all capitalists. With the growing failure of sectional organization and activity, there arises still clearer, the consciousness that the general interests of all the workers demands generalized action, amalgamation, industrial unionism. And the successes experienced as a result of the application of this new principle, quickens still more the development of the consciousness of class-interests. The movement of the working class leaves the days of childhood behind it and begins to "put away all childish things." The "identity of interests" and the craft weapons, the masters' politics and the masters' education become relegated to keep company with the stone axe and the bow and arrow and other relics of a primitive age.



It is a significant fact that it is the most militant industrial organizations that support the Central Labour College: The miners of South Wales and the railwaymen of the A.S.R.S. It is where consciousness has dawned that we find the

Who support? aspiration after a wider consciousness. The awakening manhood of the working-class movement calls forth manhood's needs and among them the need for independent working-class education. In the last instance the Central Labour College has its source in the needs of the Labour Movement. If it came to concrete reality *through* the heads of men it was only because economic development and its inevitable and growing antagonisms had impressed its image in those heads. It comes into being that the working class may look with open eyes upon its true social relations, that it may be conscious of its position and power. *When the workers are conscious of their strength, they will know when and how to use it.*

The Central Labour College represents the theoretical side of the working-class movement. The understanding, the theory, the consciousness, that is what it seeks to develop in the ranks of the wage-labourers. A movement that aims at the development of working-class consciousness must itself be conscious, conscious of its origin, of its limited scope and finite aim.



The movement of working-class education had its days of infancy and childhood too. That was quite inevitable. It will soon be three years

ago since youth threw off the limitations of the Ruskin nursery.

**The Development
of Working-Class
Education**

Some there are who still find it hard to throw aside the old toys and discard the fairy story books. But the world moves, and the child must grow. True, supreme efforts are being made to keep the Labour Movement in childhood, to feed it for ever on rusks. But that will prove a poor "foundation" on which to build the proletarian manhood. *The Central Labour College testifies to the fact that the Labour Movement is now capable of providing its own educational diet, that it is self-sufficient theoretically as well as practically, in its march toward emancipation.* The Central Labour College is conscious of its ancestry, it knows that it was born out of the same womb as the industrial and political organizations of the working class, and that its mission can be none other than to disseminate throughout the working class, *the clear understanding of those antagonisms which have to be overcome and out of which it was born.*



THESE antagonisms originate, in the way in which the worker is compelled to gain his livelihood, in the fact that he has to sell himself by the hour or the day in order to live. It is not for nothing that the so-called working-class education of the W.E.A.

**The Man
as a
Worker**

or Ruskin College concerns itself "with life, not livelihood," with making the worker "a more efficient citizen." These meaningless abstractions are intended to conceal the very thing that is at the root of the problems of the Labour Movement. These problems concern *the man as a worker*, not the worker as a man. It is as a worker that he is exploited and suffers the consequence of exploitation. It is as a worker that he joins a union and goes on strike. It is as a worker that he votes for a Labour representative. *It is as a worker that he requires to know.* And it is on no other recognition than this, that the Central Labour College is based. It has no need to indulge in abstractions of the character that we have just referred to, and for the reason that it has nothing to conceal. *It stands for the working-class alone.* It can lift its head proudly in the sight of the workers of the world and say, "I have no other gods before thee."

W.W.C.

☞ THE MAGAZINE ☞

The Printers, Messrs. Fox, Jones & Co., have generously offered us terms for the repayment of the debt on the Magazine which enables us to continue publication.

Opening of the Central Labour College

13, Penywern Road, London, S.W. (Nov. 14th, 1911)

THE removal of the Central Labour College from Oxford to London, which was accomplished during the closing days in October last, came as a surprise to a good many friends as well as foes. At the Annual Meeting in August, the difficulties experienced in securing permanent premises in Oxford were under consideration. Many suitable buildings were vacant that would have been quite convenient for the accomodation of the College. But on every occasion when application was made to the governing body of St. John's College,—the ground landlords—on which sit one or two prominent supporters of Ruskin College, permission to occupy was refused. Finally, the Provisional Committee of the Central Labour College was faced with no alternative but to turn away from the home of "the widow of sound learning" and seek a habitat elsewhere. The Executive Committee of the College agreed to endeavour to take up residence in London, and after some considerable negotiations, the premises at 11 and 13 Penywern Road, Earl's Court, were taken. With the generous assistance of a few stalwart friends of the College, a loan was raised, and the unexpired lease of sixty one years purchased, at the very low figure of £1,700. Since the occupation of these premises, there have been many callers at the College from the different organizations of the working class, and all have been quite enthusiastic in the appreciation of the very excellent position and condition of the building. The premises are in every way appropriate for the purposes of the College. Electric light is installed throughout. There are 17 excellent bedrooms 3 bathrooms and 6 commodious reception rooms. The public lecture room will seat 150 persons with due comfort. In addition, there are excellent kitchen, hot and cold water arrangements. Penywern Road has undoubtedly been at one time the residential quarter of the very elect, and the coming of the proletarian educational institution into this place, in which the shades of departed greatness must move about restlessly, may typify the coming of the larger movement of labour into its own. So also may the turning away from Oxford of the Central Labour College serve as a sign of the bankruptcy of bourgeois education, and act as an urge to the working class, to look no longer to those "halls of learning," for the theoretical knowledge which it needs for its emancipation.

There can be no turning back from the work of independent working-class education. Every day brings further justification for its existence and the widening conviction of the soundness of its claims

and principles. The Central Labour Colleges faces the New Year flushed with success achieved and with the prospect of its early recognition by the working class in general. Two new organizations have recently decided to establish scholarships at the College. These are the Maesteg District (Mr. Vernon Hartshorn's District), and the Pontypridd and Rhondda District of the South Wales Miners Federation. Other Districts are on the threshold of supporting the College.

There is a comparatively small deficit of £400 incurred through the removal of the College to London, legal expenses, and also in large measure liabilities undertaken in the first two years of the College's existence. With this deficit removed the current income will preponderate over the current expenditure. All this is very gratifying not only to the management, but to all those who have manfully striven to make the College a real live force in the Labour Movement. We commend all members of the League and readers of the Magazine to bring the matter of this deficit before the various Labour organizations in their district so that the College may finally be freed from the fetters of debt.

The formal opening of the new premises took place on Tuesday, 14th November. Over 200 attended the function. The miners were well represented, the South Wales contingent being well to the fore. After two musical items by Miss Berkeley and Mr. J. A. Fallows, Mr. George Barker, of the S.W.M.F and M.F.G.B., in a characteristic speech formally opened the new premises, Mr. Dennis Hird followed with that kind of oratory for which he is renowned and at which he has few equals. Mr. Ernest Edwards (A.S.R.S.), Mr. Geo. Davison, Mrs. Rose Elsdon (Northumberland), Mr. James Winstone and Mr. Vernon Hartshorn (S.W.M.F.), and Mrs. Bridges Adams, in appropriate speeches testified to their appreciation of the work of the College and wished it every success in its mission. Mr. Craik the acting secretary suitably replied on behalf of the College. The meeting was in every way successful, and the spirit of enthusiasm that prevailed augured well for the progressive development of a work that is indispensable for the triumphant realization of that social order in which "the slave shall cease, and the master of slaves shall cease."]

DENNIS HIRD'S SPEECH

"**P**ERHAPS I may be forgiven a personal reference at the opening of this unique meeting. To many of you there appear to be striking characteristics, but as I look at this audience, I am dazed, if I try to note the crowding sensations and memories evoked.

In 1894 the Church of England, through the action of Dr. Temple, then Bishop of London, drove me out of London because I was a Socialist. After 17 years I return to London because I am a Socialist. Those 17 years have witnessed many achievements. Then it was my privilege to be associated with the London Police Court Mission. Now the scope of that Mission has become national under the direction of Government, by the establishing of probation officers at all courts, to save the young from going to jail.

I am glad to see some of my old colleagues at this meeting. No one can imagine how far Socialism will have developed into our national life in the next 17 years.

During the past 17 years one has learnt many lessons and suffered abundant disillusiones.

Domestic sorrows, the treachery of friends, the savagery of religion, and the relentless cruelty of politics, have brought calamities into my life—yet I believe in the People. Their future is the only matter of concern in the politics and industries of the civilized world.

For this reason above all else, we are opening the Central Labour College in its new home.

We are democrats. We are too democratic. We have frightened the Labour Party—witness there is not a single Labour M.P. at this meeting. You can find all sorts of curios of human nature, but you seldom meet a really universal democrat. To be a democrat, all humanity must be your own brother.

Oxford did not want us. Oxford has the common sense, rarely found there, to make no profession of democratic faith. We lived among them two years, but no college don ever asked how we lived, what were our aims, or why we had come into existence. Oxford would welcome the working man, just as the manager of a steam laundry welcomes dirty linen, i.e., to make something out of him.

So, to quote the great Butler, we left "the colleges of unreason and the professors of hypotheticals."

We are here.

We owe our existence to the faked charges of a blundering committee, on which were several Oxford men. After I had raised some thousands of pounds I was removed by men who had not raised a shilling.

We began our new college in 1909. In days of darkness and semi-starvation, I frequently had to remind my colleagues that "the just shall live by faith." We are here by faith, and our faith is no less.

By the aid of a friend, we have raised a loan and purchased the lease of this most suitable building, for 61 years.

Our men come from the mines, the mills and the railways, and they go back to the work they left.

Five Trade Unions pay for eight of our students—£52 a year each student, and three other Unions have not yet elected their students.

Our funds and our teaching are controlled by Trade Unions. We say to democracy, tell us what *you* want and it shall be done. We have no examinations, no creed tests, religious or political. We teach Labour subjects to Labour men from the Labour point of view, by means of lectures, essays, classes and personal talks with individual students.

Our teaching is frank, fearless, and fraternal. We say openly what we know. There is perfect freedom of inquiry and expression on both sides. This is the only cure for infallibility.

Fear no thought, for fear turns the apples of knowledge into the apples of Sodom. It has been said that fear made the first gods, this is not the *whole* truth, but fear makes the greatest dunces, and fear polishes those dunces with a mail-clad brilliance, which no new idea can pierce.

Even in the old, crude fable of the Fall of Man, it is not said that man fell because he boldly plucked the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but because he received his knowledge through a serpent. Whilst man listens to the blandishments of the serpent (usually a professor) about the tree of knowledge, he neglects the tree of life.

This is why we exist.

We are a specialized regiment of the Labour army. We are not industrial or political, but we supply the sinews of war to both.

The Labour Movement needs knowledge. Men of one eye (and that in the mouth) are not able to lead Europe into a prosperous brotherhood. So we educate. Our movement is an organized strike against the greatest capitalist in the world—ignorance.

We are dissatisfied with the politics of this world.

The word statesman really means one who stands—he may stand aside or stand still, and if he is in office, he has usually acquired the art of standing on a moving platform. He may rise, but he is unconscious of it. Then he accuses the proletariat of keeping him down!

A politician measures the people by votes; a government by taxes. Famine is the royal sceptre of most governments, for where there is no tyrant there is no poverty.

We are dissatisfied with the current philosophy, that industrious attempt to extract moonshine from boiled cucumbers. This philosophy is usually an explanation of the improbable by means of the impossible.

Man takes a squint at the Universe and calls his painful sensations a philosophy.

Then he preaches *idealism*. He offers moonlit mountains of error to a buying public, just as Professor Bergson has lately done in London. A Londoner dearly loves to pay for being gulled. Bergson with his neo-vitalism—a something flowing into nothing, and lo! you have everything. It is the gospel of flat contradiction served up in the shape of a fluid idea!

These men are eternal air-pumps striving to create an infinite vacuum—to make room for themselves. Assuming a force action in vacuo, they paint sunset glories on the Nothing. This is the vastest creation of a morbid industry.

It pays.

An Idealist blows bubbles out of his own prejudice, and if he makes one large enough, he sits inside it and says to the *Universe*, 'I am thinking—behold me—pay me.'

He is an amusing gentleman, who tries to distil the fresh air of *truth* from his own sighs, and in Shakespeare's words, "he sighs like a furnace."

There is no sauce which can make this boiled moonshine palatable to us.

We want Idealism, but let it be the interpreter of life's realities. Let it stand on the real, the truth, the fact, and then introduce us, breathing and living, into the splendours of that dawn which shall destroy the cruelties of sham.

We are dissatisfied with the old educational methods.

We do not suppose that the word education comes from *édúcere*, to draw out, but rather from *édúcáre*, to nourish, and as Lester Ward says, the food of the mind is facts.

We wish to know. We tell all we know. We have no prostrating reverence for the Shibboleths of our grandmothers' ducks.

We lift up our eyes to the sacred light of science. Scientific facts produce a true idealism, and lead to universal social meliorism. Indeed it performs that marvellous exploit described by an insane poet—It "plants its footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm"!

It finds the life of man beginning in the sea, and teaches him to deliver his letters by flying on the wind, and some day it will reveal the kingdom of universal welfare, and teach him to use the hurricane of his own emotions for the public good.

We exist then to take part in bringing about a true State, a philosophy of scientific reality, a form of education which shall develop reason in the democracy. All *classes* of men have the same abilities, and, owing to their vast numbers, the proletariat of Europe has a thousand times more brain power than all the other classes together. We propose to utilize this power.

On this we stake our claim to be a beneficent movement for all ranks and all classes.

If there is to be a great world movement to control nature, to create happiness, to utilize that sea of intellectual waste—the mental ability of democracy, then, indeed, has a new era dawned upon the human struggle.

Few people know the democracy. We are so common that the great have not tried to understand us, and we are so poor and steeped in toil that we have had no time to understand ourselves.

It is not yet understood that democracy is the one almighty in human affairs. When it is co-ordinated, developed, arrayed against want, disease, shams and tyrannies, then this riot of madness we call civilization, will be buried beneath the mildew of contempt.

There is no real menace to democracy except the democrats themselves. I scarcely dare to allude to this. He is called King Demos. He is a king and he has all the vices of kings, except wealth, power of office, and parasites.

He has been defined as primitive man in boots, smoking a clay pipe. But he is worse than this.

Contrasted with democracy, in which there is *no oil*, the wild boar of the forest is a cherub fed on the odours of orchids and dreaming of the dawn of the gods.

Try him, in a Trade Union or on a committee, where nine men hold twelve different opinions—each infallible, and all of them ferocious. Look at his blunders, his murderous dissensions, his cowardly contentment, his lamb-like, dumb gentleness to the wolves who raven upon him!

But I forbear.

See him march to conquest. Read the radiance of high resolve on his gaunt features. If he limps, he limps as the wounded hero of the direst fight.

He is the essence of the greatness of nations and the eternal hope of mankind.

This day rears one more milestone in the progress of the coming triumph, when pillaged and terrorized victims shall have become men.

Our aim is truth, justice, liberty.

We mean by truth those ideas which conform to facts, by justice an equal opportunity to every human being to become a citizen, by liberty that unbridled right to develop ourselves, which we allow to all other persons to develop themselves.

We do not talk of absolute truth. The man who believes in absolute truth, would believe an election placard. Justice is a social co-ordination, which has been most carefully kept out of all social systems. A wave of universal justice would be more calamitous to our system than plague, pestilence and famine introduced by an earthquake, or more comic than an epidemic of reason in the House of Lords.

Liberty is yet unknown. It is the last light that will fall on the grave of the savage and on the skeleton of the reformer."

* * * *

Our aim is not new. Our methods are.
 We are the radium of the Labour Movement.
 We seek to develop reason.
 We are monists.
 We are scientific idealists.
 We stand for universal meliorism.

Before you despise us, pause and reflect.

By the side of an aeroplane you realize a new conquest; when told of radium you catch a glimpse of the infinity of force and behold a new light of youth on the face of the sun. Can you not see in the developed reason of the neglected millions that an almighty beneficence is offered to every nation?

Raise yourselves, for a moment, outside of class prejudice and lift up your eyes to behold this vision.

It may be the veiled bride of humanity, standing on the threshold of her new home, where peace and plenty, art and music, love and laughter shall be the household gods of that beneficent dawn."

For what ye have launched, ye must ride;
 Whither it tends ye must fare.
 The choice ye have made ye must bide—
 Ye perish unless ye dare!

CHARLES BUXTON GOING.

The Working Class and Education

THE need of Education. If there is one thing in this question that all sections in the active Working-Class Movement are agreed upon it is the necessity for an increase of education among the workers as a whole. Many of us have listened often to the complaints of our leaders, to say nothing of those made by our masters and pastors, of the ignorance, apathy and indifference that we, as a class, display on the many Social and Trade Union questions that call for a definite and intelligent expression of our opinions. Whether the result of an increasing class-understanding of our interests will benefit any, or all, of them is quite another matter, and one upon which we express no opinion at this stage. And yet, to be quite fair to ourselves, the conflicting opinions among our leaders on the subjects mentioned result, in many cases, in as serious a rebuff to working-class interests as is ever caused by the ignorance of the workers.

Confusion about Education. Most people, and this applies to all classes, seem to imagine that education is of equal value in any or every way—education in itself. Yet the briefest study of the matter ought to show that this is not so. Apart from purely elementary education and literary recreation we study, or should study, with a definite object. To obtain a fairly general knowledge of most sciences is valuable, and why? So that a special study may be correctly understood in its various relations. But one cannot hope to be an expert on every subject, hence the need to specialize in one direction, and that the most useful for the particular object we have in view.

Education for the Worker. What is the particular object we workers have in view, when we talk of the need for education? We are all agreed that it is to improve our material conditions. We want more, and better food, clothes, and shelter. More recreation. More of all those things which will make for a healthier and happier life for our class, or shall we say, for all? The first step in this direction is increased wages, shorter hours. Of course, this is not an original statement of our wants. All our organized efforts have had this object in view. What, then, have we to add to this that is new? A better understanding of the wages system—why we are wage-earners; how wages are determined; in short, the history and present position of our class. All this means education of a particular kind. But first let us consider education in its various forms.

General Education. Under this head we place all forms of knowledge which are the same in their general results and conclusions for all, rich and poor alike. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, are subjects that are acquired in more or less the same way by prince

and pauper. The same can be said of the sciences such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology. And the conclusions and general practice of these sciences differ only in the degree of specialization to which they have obtained among various peoples and countries. It is true that social position has a lot to do with their general diffusion, but the worker who, in exceptional cases, acquires special skill in any of these sciences, arrives at practically the same conclusions as his more fortunately situated co-worker in the same field. Social position does not interfere with the practical conclusions drawn from their researches. For example, the workman-astronomer would not find that the Sun revolved round the Earth, which is a contradiction of all the generally established facts of astronomical science. Yet we shall see later that the conclusions drawn from the study of some subjects differ fundamentally by reason of antagonistic social interests.

Technical Education.—This we need not dwell on at any length: all of us understand this to mean education required for the purpose of following some special occupation or hobby.

Education in Social Science.—Under this heading come particularly Sociology, History, and Economics. These subjects cover the broad definition and are not meant to be exhaustive. It is, however, quite inclusive enough for our purpose. Apart from University professors and teachers, these studies are undertaken for the purpose of equipping one for "public" work, or in the case of the Central Labour College for the purpose of equipping workers for industrial, political, and social work, in the interests of the organized Labour Movement.

Our inquiry now becomes interesting. Sciences which seek to explain group relations, interests and progress, it will at once be seen offer wide scope for differences of opinion, and these differences are not lessened because the material interests of different classes are at stake. It is no new thing for us to be told that the employers find us work, and that without them we should perish. It follows from this, or at least it is so assumed, that the interests of employers and work-people are identical. Whether we believe this or not, it explains at once what interpretation is put on the sciences we are now considering by the ruling class. *Their* explanation of **Sociology** is the "rounding up" and protection of the helpless working masses by the State—government to protect the weak and defenceless: of **History**, the record of the mighty works of their class, individually and collectively, in this work of "protection of the people": of **Economics**, the explanation of their "abstinence" and "directive ability" in producing articles of "utility" for the express purpose of "benefitting" the "public." It will be our object later to show how the knowledge of this disinterested activity of theirs is being feverishly proclaimed on their behalf by equally disinterested people. But another interpretation of the Social sciences is making rapid headway

in the world to-day, and it is claimed to be a scientific interpretation of Social progress and Social misery. According to the latter interpretation, **Sociology** shows us that mankind grouped itself in primitive times for protection against hostile forces: the natural elements, wild beasts, and other destructive agencies. Scarcity of food caused them to prey on, or be preyed upon, by other groups. In the early stages of this tribal warfare the conquerors killed, and generally ate, the conquered. In time they found that it was more economical to enslave their captured enemies and put them to work. From being owned by the tribe the slaves became the property of individuals, and in consequence their product became private property. Private and social interests clashed, and the State arose for the purpose of defining and protecting ownership. From this time onward the interests of people inside the social group were divided by ownership or non-ownership of property: the interests of property owners in all social groups (nations) have become more and more mutual, and during the last hundred years a more intelligent appreciation of the "common good" has sprung up: the other implication from this is now making great headway, nationally and internationally, viz.: the common interests of all who work for wages. The key to the interpretation of Sociology in historical times is, according to this school of thought, class interests. Social progress has been accomplished by the working class in the interests of, and because of the needs of, successive owners of the means of life. **History** is a record of the struggles which have taken place in social groups because of the conflicting interests of the various classes that have from time to time divided society. **Economics** is an investigation of the capitalist system of production and distribution. It shows the source of value and the process of the production of surplus-value. It solves the questions on the wages system previously propounded by us in this inquiry. The measure of the success of this school of thought in social science is the violent antipathy it has aroused among one set of capitalists, and the cunning attempts of another set to prove that they are our friends and that they are out to help us. We shall see how far this is so before our inquiry ends. We refer to the Workers' Educational Association and Ruskin College Movements and their capitalist supporters.

The Three P's.—It will be seen, therefore, that education is roughly to be divided into three classes, i.e., **General**, and under this head we have the necessary elements of knowledge and the exact sciences needed by all and the same to all; **Technical**, personal, to earn a livelihood, or for recreation; **Social Science**, for the purpose of fitting us for the work required by our class interests. And the last is the really interesting section, and the really pressing study for the advancement of our material interests. From the foregoing three questions arise, viz:—

What shall be taught?

Who shall teach?

Who shall control our special education?

Before giving an answer to these questions let us first consider the various forms under which education is offered to the workers at the present time.

University Education. The most ancient, and by far the most powerful, educational institutions in the country at the present time are the Universities—particularly Oxford and Cambridge. Oxford is the one that is being dangled before the eyes of the workers the most—it is so advanced! In evidence of this we are told of her famous sons who have become successful statesmen, Mr. Asquith, head of the present Liberal Government, is one of them, indeed, Oxford has been termed "the breeding-ground of statesmen." Remembering the class from which our statesmen have been drawn, and the present happy (?) condition of the majority of the workers in whose interests they have governed, you may not be very much impressed by this introduction. If not, you are immediately informed that Oxford University has altered very much for the better of late years and it is now very advanced—in fact, "quite socialistic." The value of these statements may be best tested by Mr. Arthur Henderson's experience in 1908, when a meeting he addressed was broken up by those "howling dervishes," called undergraduates, who go to Oxford to be educated for the future positions as our gifted rulers; or Mr. Keir Hardie's experience of a similar character in 1909. Both meetings were at the Oxford Town Hall. Quite apart from this negative evidence we have the positive knowledge afforded us by the speeches and actions of our University-taught rulers and statesmen. Oxford and Cambridge are controlled by, and for, the possessing class, and its education is in line with the views we have seen advanced, earlier in our inquiry, by the master-class, or in the interests of the master-class. The Universities do not teach Sociology. Their **History** is the history of great kings and warriors, statesmen and empire builders, e.g., Rhodes. Their **Economics** squares with their History. Whatever interest they have displayed in the working class is the outcome of the political and industrial activities of that class, and they are anxious that the "future Trade Union Secretary and the Labour M.P. should receive that broadening of outlook that Oxford can give." Thus Oxford is to be brought in touch with Labour, and Labour with Oxford. A few promising workers "very carefully selected," are to be trained as Oxford, and the class interests it represents, dictates. The result will undoubtedly be satisfactory—to our masters.

Workers' Educational Association. The Workers' Educational Association believes in the Oxford way, and Oxford believes in

the W. E. A. way. Mutual interests breed mutual understanding and admiration. Look at the list of the W. E. A. guarantors, and then work out the common bond of fellowship and interests between such a body and the working class! The W. E. A. stands for the teaching of Social Science, as taught at Oxford, and by Oxford teachers. It claims this an impartial teaching. Can education in Social Science be impartial? No! Where interests are in conflict, teaching must be partial to the class interests of those controlling education. The W. E. A. is a class-weapon in the hands of our enemies. It is the Educational Free Labourers' Association.

Ruskin College. All that has been said of the W. E. A. is equally true of Ruskin College. No further evidence of this is needed than the circular sent out by the University professors and tutors, recently, in its favour, and appealing for funds to enable its good work to be continued (see "*Plebs*" Magazine, May, 1911, pp. 91, 92), or the establishment of classes by Ruskin College, so that its working-class students could obtain University Diplomas in Oxford (Capitalist) Economics (see p. 72). How valuable this is for the workers is seen from the general chorus of approval recently bestowed on R. C. by the capitalist Press throughout the country.

Not only is the teaching at Ruskin College dangerous to our interests, but it also has a tendency to check the free development of the student. Supposing, for example, two students of equal capacity went to R. C.—one took the Diploma Course and was successful in the examination, the other preferred to spend his time at the College in independent economic studies, and, for the purposes of illustrating our point, accepted the Marxian principle of determination of the value of commodities. The Marxian would naturally write his essays for the tutor at R. C. in line with his beliefs, but, from the experience of previous students under the present teacher of Economics, his Trade Union would not get the same favourable report of his progress as it would of his fellow-worker who had secured a Diploma. This would probably affect, detrimentally, the position and influence, for a time at least, of a Marxian scholar; and, on the other hand, the Diploma would be likely to secure a more favourable reception and opinion of his fellow-student by the members of their Trade Union. And this would follow merely from a want of knowledge, by the members of the Trade Union, of the relative value of their studies for Trade Union propaganda work. Ruskin College is also dangerous in that Labour control is allied with capitalist teaching. Although even the Labour control is partly of a nominative character, and so far as this obtains, is quite undemocratic, to say nothing of the nature of the alleged "Labour" character of one of the National bodies—the Club and Institute Union. While the qualification for representation on the Council is such that the Free Labourers' Association, or the Trade Unionists' Tariff Reform League could

qualify for representation on Ruskin College Council if they so desired, and the teaching, as has been shown, would present no obstacles to these bodies.

Central Labour College. The educational policy of the Central Labour College supplies the answer to the three questions (P's "points") we asked earlier in our inquiry.

1. *Particularly*: Sociology, History, Economics, and from the working-class point of view.

2. By teachers appointed, paid and controlled by working-class organizations.

3. By working-class organizations, eligible for membership of the Labour Party, who provide scholarships, and one ex-student, one resident student, and the Warden, (in the interests of scholars and staff). The C. L. C.'s policy is therefore a conscious, scientific provision for the educational needs of the organized Labour Movement, and the advancement of the interests of the working class.

The W. E. A. and R. C. Way. The W. E. A. and R. C. stand for capitalist teaching and seek and obtain capitalist support for the carrying on of their work, and they deserve the support of the master-class. The W. E. A. control is in the nature of co-partnership. R. C. control is Labour in name only, not in the sense that Labour is generally understood i.e., basis of the Labour Party. They also have the dangerous advice of University tutors on educational matters. In short, the W. E. A. and R. C. stand for philanthropy and dependence—University dependence—in working-class education.

The Central Labour College Way. The Central Labour College stands for: education paid for and controlled by the definite class-organizations of the workers, and the teaching of Social Science from the working-class standpoint. In short, Independence and Self-reliance—the belief in the power of the working class to work out its own emancipation.

Old and New

LONG have the poets vaunted in their lays
 Old times, old loves, old friendships and old wine,
 Why should the old monopolize all praise?

Then let the new claim mine.

Give me strong new friends when the old prove weak.

And fail me in my darkest hour of need,

Why perish with the ship that springs a leak

Or lean upon a reed!

Give me new love, warm, palpitating, sweet,
 When all the grace and beauty leave the old,
 When like a rose it withers at my feet,
 Or, like a hearth, grows cold.

Give me new times, bright with prosperous cheer
 In place of old tear-blotted, burdened days.
 I hold a sunlit present far more dear
 And worthy of my praise.

When the old creeds are threadbare and worn through
 Or all too narrow for the broadening soul,
 Give me the fine, firm texture of the new,
 Fair, beautiful, and whole.

Industrial Action and Political Reaction

"**S**AVE us from our friends" must have been the first thought that sprang to the mind of any syndicalist who read the article, appearing in the "*Plebs*" November issue, entitled "Political and Industrial Action." The arguments used by the writer of that article are somewhat antiquated, and that is the only excuse of the present writer for using arguments that are almost as ancient, in reply.

Mr. Robertson seems to think that the Syndicalist movement only exists because the Labour Party has been a failure. But the Syndicalist Movement existed before the Labour Party, and is anti-parliamentary—and not simply because, "they find the Labour Party too slow," but because, after a careful study of Political Economy, Industrial History, Modern Science, and everyday experience, they have proved, to their own satisfaction, at least, that the workers cannot achieve their emancipation by parliamentary methods, and that therefore, all Working-Class energy spent in that direction is wasted. They therefore claim that all Political Parties whether Labour or Socialist are reactionary, because either consciously or unconsciously they are attempting to side track the Working-Class Movement. They have learned that as every economic system of society has its political reflex, so parliament is only the political reflex of Economic Capitalism, and therefore cannot legislate for the workers. Or as Marx said "The Working Class cannot seize hold of the Governmental machinery and use it for its own ends." The experience of 1848, and the events that took place in Russia some few years ago, were sufficient to prove that, even if the proletariat succeeds in gaining control of the parliamentary machinery, they do not therefore gain control of the "legal, police, and military machinery." On the contrary they find that the real power of the Master Class lies outside parliament, i.e. in the economic

sphere, and that although the capitalist may find it convenient to express that power through parliament, he is by no means confined to that one method of expressing his power. Syndicalists are not seeking to perpetuate parliament and the State, but to destroy both. The fact that the Labour Party is a nuisance to a portion of the Master Class does not prove it to be a blessing to the workers, as Mr. Robertson apparently thinks. Flies are a source of annoyance to the Master Class, but that does not benefit the workers. The Liberal Party is a nuisance to a section of the Capitalist Class, so is the Tory Party and the Temperance Party. As a matter of fact Labour Parties are a greater source of annoyance to the Working Class than to the Master Class; for example, Australia, where the Labour governments have been proved to be the bitterest enemies of organized labour and are doing their utmost to crush the Trade Unions out of existence. Mr. Robertson pleads that it is not good policy to break a weapon that causes annoyance to the enemy, even though it is inefficient. But if an inefficient weapon stands in the way of a more efficient weapon is not that sufficient to condemn it to the scrap heap? He further states, that the "Working-Class parties of other countries have not proved failures." If that is so how does he explain the fact that in every country where a Working-Class political party exists, the leaders of those parties have always taken the first opportunity of betraying the workers? To mention Burns, Shackleton, Macdonald, Briand, Viviani, Millerand, Vandervelde, Pablo Iglesias, Thiebaut, Anseele, &c., is not to mention exceptions but typical examples. These are only those who have perceived an opportunity of betraying the workers at a profit. The others are waiting for their opportunity. And the explanation is simple. It is not because these men are worse than other men, but, simply because they soon discover on reaching Parliament that they cannot help the Working Class. Therefore they do the next best thing. They help themselves.

Socialist political parties are no longer feared by the Capitalist Class. Familiarity has bred contempt. The late industrial upheaval caused more consternation amongst them than all the political agitation of the last twenty five years. It has also taught the workers more than years of theoretical education. It has at least given them a glimpse of their power. Why are the capitalists using every means in their power to crush this new spirit of solidarity? And why do they not try to crush the Parliamentary parties, instead of encouraging them by giving them a salary of £400 per annum, thereby making their existence easier? Mr. Robertson doubts the probability of the workers combining to lock the exploiters out, and he asks: "Can you imagine it being done by the people you see around you"?

"Yes, Mr. Robertson, we can." In fact we cannot imagine it being done by anyone else. "The emancipation of the workers is the work of the workers themselves."

We cannot imagine the Social Revolution being accomplished on any other lines than that of the General Strike. Because to overthrow any system of society it is necessary to strike at its base, which is production and distribution, and in order to carry on production and distribution under the new system it is necessary to have some form of industrial organization. It would be difficult to imagine a Working-Class revolution taking place while the workers remained at work. In all revolutions there must be a stoppage of work more or less general. Far from leaving the Legal, Police and Military machinery in the hands of the governing class, as Mr. Robertson says, the General Strike will destroy once and for all that machinery. As for leaving the slum areas "to afford an endless recruiting ground for blacklegs," it is more likely that the occupants of the slums will be in the front of the fight, as they have always been in past revolutions. The chance of plunder alone would be sufficient to ensure that.

As regards palliatives, Syndicalists claim that any social reform that can be achieved through Parliamentary action, can be as easily attained by industrial action. In regard to the problem "how to make a revolution on an empty stomach," it would be as well to remind Mr. Robertson, that in all previous revolutions, "empty stomachs" have been the greatest incentive to revolution, and also an incentive to unity amongst the revolutionists. He will find on looking back on history that all revolutions have taken place during an economic crisis. That is, at the time when there were most empty stomachs. I do not know what Mr. Robertson means by a "satisfactory temporary solution" of social problems. All I can say is that revolutionists do not believe in "temporary solutions," but permanent solutions. Mr. Robertson then trots out the old chestnut that, "the capabilities of industrial action are purely destructive." Even if that were so: Is not destruction the first step in reconstruction? Has the idea never struck Mr. Robertson, that the machinery that can be used for destruction can also be used for construction? A hammer can be used for breaking a table or making a table. That is why the Syndicalists claim that in organizing the workers for the General Strike, they are also building up the frame-work of the new society within the shell of the old. The organization that can bring the workers out together, can also bring them in together. In conclusion let me point out that the Syndicalists are not fighting for nationalization, but against it. They are out for the abolition of nations and territorial states. That is where they differ from the political Socialist not only in methods but in aims. The Syndicalists are not fighting for State Socialism, but for world-wide Communism, a form of society wherein in the words of Carlyle "Political Government will give way to Industrial Administration." Then only will class rule be for ever abolished, and social castes and class coercion be replaced by social equality and industrial liberty.

JAMES LYLE.

Ethics and Socialism

BY DR. ANTON PANNEKOEK

(Continued)

The Nature of Ethics according to Dietzgen

WE have now travelled a long distance toward an understanding of Ethics. Marx in laying bare its earthly origin cleared the way toward a scientific explanation thereof. This explanation itself yet remains to be discovered. For a knowledge of its *origin* does not necessarily include a knowledge of its *nature*; when one knows whence it comes there yet remains the question: In what manner does that which is considered socially necessary intrude itself upon our mind in the form of a moral law, a moral conception?

On first sight, one could believe that no more remains to be explained, for now the moral experience is unveiled as an illusion, a mirage, a consequence of lack of scientific knowledge, and is recognized as what it, in reality is, a mystical expression of social or class-interests. If this conception be true, it follows, that instead of seeking to know the real importance of this moral feeling, we must now recognize it not as a moral instinct, but as a rational instinct wherewith to measure advantages and disadvantages from the standpoint of society. But this is obviously not the case. We social democrats are equally as sensitive to the results of human actions, and feel equally as directly, and equally as strongly, as other people, the morality or immorality thereof. The phenomenon of moral experience then is inherent in the nature of man, and can be explained by science without this phenomenon itself being grasped,—thus the mirage, the illusion, is by no means dispelled by science. The moral conceptions may arise from the class requirements, but they are thereby by no means identical, they are on the other hand something totally different, and consequently there yet remains a further investigation. Our direct moral experiences are not Philistine computations of social usefulness; consequently there exists a difference between what is moral and what is useful to the community: this difference has yet to be explained.

An example will make this all the clearer, and we will utilize as such, the already cited strike of the railway workers of Holland. After the victory of the workers the bourgeoisie cried out for an anti-trade union law, which was of course introduced by the government. The railway workers sought to retain their right to strike, by declaring a new strike, and the whole of the working class declared its solidarity with the railway workers. But this new strike miscarried and the workers received a terrible defeat, and with them the whole of the working-class movement suffered tremendous damage, which was only repaired, after several years of incessant propaganda. Thus had

that first glorious strike for solidarity led to a terrible defeat and did the labour movement—at least during the first few years—more harm than good. But was that strike as a consequence immoral? If it is true that all which is beneficial or useful to society, in this case class, is moral, and all which is damaging, is immoral, then this great strike must be considered immoral. Nevertheless each class-conscious worker will refuse to subscribe to such an opinion; he will say; it may have been damaging, but nevertheless it was a wonderful, a glorious, a moral act! Here we have a model example of the question with which we are concerned; an act was termed morally good, which was more damaging than useful to the class affected. The difference which exists between the useful and the moral, must consequently appear through the investigation of this example.

Therefore we will ask: In what manner do you find that deed glorious and moral? The answer would run: Because the solidarity, the self-sacrifice of the individual to the class interest manifested itself therein. But in what manner does the practical proof of solidarity constitute a virtue? Because in general this practical proof of solidarity is useful to the working class. Not always; because we have here an instance where it happened otherwise; but almost always, in general, it is useful, indeed it is absolutely necessary, for without it the victory of the working class is impossible. Thus it becomes considered a virtue, and this is equally true of exceptional cases—the anti-trade union laws—which owing to the peculiar conditions led to beneficial and not harmful results. Here is clearly seen the difference between class interests and morality; not that which is *useful* to the class is moral, but that which is *in general*, which as a rule, leads to the interest of the class, is moral. A moral act is not yet, always a rational act, an act to be recommended; one ought not to, in practice, follow the direct ruling of the heart, but rather one should examine it, coldly and scientifically in relation to the conditions. What is practical and useful in general, fixes itself in our feelings, and determines the moral instinct, but the reasonableness of the act must be determined by its practicability under the given conditions.

In the majority of writings on ethics, morality merely consists of the subservience of the personal interest to the interests of society, therefore the difference between morality and utility is a creation of the antagonism between the individual and society. From what has preceded it follows that this opposition only partly represents the nature of ethics. That this aspect should manifest itself so strikingly at the present time, is due to the particular form of the society which gives rise to it; in capitalist society where the personal and social interests, i.e. class interests, stand in such strong opposition to one another, this bourgeois phenomenon has given to all investigations into the nature of ethics, from Kant to the present, its own peculiar stamp. This opposition ceases to exist in societies which do not rest upon private property; in a communist society, nothing but harmony

and agreement can exist between the individual and social interests. The nature of ethics must consequently be more fully comprehended, and after what has been brought forward here, it can only be completely expressed when one states it as : the *elevating of the general over the particular*. The difference between morality and usefulness is the difference not only between what is useful to all, and what is useful to one, but also between what is useful in general, as a rule, and what is only useful under particular conditions. That which is generally and normally practicable and necessary for the community, that becomes—without conscious deliberation by means of an unconscious process—the norm of the good, the rational and the moral.

In this manner has Dietzgen, the philosopher of the proletariat, unveiled the nature of ethics, deducing it at the same time from the general nature of the human mind. The human mind stands in the midst of an endless number of different and ever changing phenomena which, owing to their limitless diversity, it cannot possibly appraise, consequently it selects from out of all these experiences the most permanent, the most common, the most general, of forms, abstracting at the same time from the differences and the peculiarities, the concept by means of which it mentally presents the world. The infinite diversity and concrete appearances cannot be contained in our head; the abstract conceptions in our heads, express the universality of these appearances. The mind is the organ of the general. In the same manner man stands in the midst of an unlimited number of different requirements, corporal and mental, important and unimportant, momentary and permanent, personal and general, all of which call for satisfying, but all of which cannot be satisfied. Thus it comes to pass, that out of the innumerable requirements, all those whose satisfaction would only affect this or that person, at this or that period, are overshadowed by the greater prominence given to that which is more generally pressing, and whose satisfaction would benefit a greater number &c. ; this becomes unconsciously separated as the general requirement or usefulness, and fixes itself in the mind as the good, the moral. Thus does ethics become grasped from the general nature of the human mind; it originates from the same general power of the human mind to seize upon the general, which also give its definite character to the knowledge of the surrounding world. Applied to the investigation of our senses, it brings to light the power of conception and science, applied to our own requirements, it brings to light ethics.

It now becomes quite clear why there can be no general or absolute ethics. The requirements of men are different, and the means to the satisfaction thereof yet more diverse. If one attempted to-day to derive the general out of all the different possibilities which exist among the different peoples of a different period, one would only succeed in formulating one or two platitudes of no practical utility. But if one takes a definite class of men e.g. the modern proletariat of

the present time, then is their circle of requirements and the means to the satisfaction thereof limited and to separate the essential and the general, from the accidental and particular, would be an important and rational act. The real man lives under definite conditions, and only that passes as moral which under these conditions is generally useful and necessary to him.

We have now arrived at the end of our investigations and we will permit ourselves a short review of the situation. Kant has brought into great prominence the particular character of ethics, viz., that there exists a general rule, which directly determines the moral instinct, this exists quite apart from particular conditions. But having not the least knowledge of its earthly origin, because he was not conscious of the division of men into classes, with its consequent class antagonism, he could only recognize an antagonism between the individual and society, he was forced to believe that there existed only one absolute generally applicable ethics, and as he had not the power to recognize its earthly origin he was forced to believe that it was something supernatural. Marx has discovered the roots of morality in the class interests and has laid open the road to a scientific and natural explanation to this natural phenomenon. The peculiar nature of ethics is finally fully understood, through the deep insight which Dietzgen has given us into the nature of the human mind.

We began with the every-day experience that the will, and consequently the actions of man, were determined by two motives, through his interest, his requirements, through ethics. We knew not at the beginning of our investigations what this latter motive really meant, but it has now at the end become quite clear. The opposition between interest and ethics has now become an opposition between two kinds of interests: the personal, momentary, particular interest in opposition to the general and permanent interest, that this at present is essentially a class interest. We must therefore say: Our will is determined by two kinds of motives, viz., through our own and momentary interest, and the interest of our class. We see especially so to-day, that new moral rulings, new virtues are developing in the working class, which form a powerful but necessary force for the revolutionizing of society, for without it that important world-revolution, Socialism, would be impossible. If we ask whence comes this force, we can answer: It does not fall from heaven, but it has its origin in the earthly matter of fact conditions of every-day life, and that it simply demonstrates that in every individual member of the working class there exists that general-human power, which will enable him to throw away his own narrow, particular and personal interests, and elevate his mind to the general interest of his class, the general interest of the whole of society.

THE END.

Translated for the "*Plebs*" Magazine by NUN NICHOLAS.