

"I can promise to be candid, but not impartial"

GOETHE

THE

"Plebs" Magazine

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March, 1913

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The "Plebs" League

Object

To further the interests of the Central Labour College, for working men and women, at London, and to assist in the formation of similar institutions elsewhere, all of these institutions to be controlled by the organized Labour bodies.

Methods

The holding of an Annual Meet: the issuing of a monthly Magazine, the pages of which shall be open to any proposed application of reason to human problems: and the formation of Local Branches to promote the object of the League, and for the study of Social Questions, History, and Economics—from the working-class standpoint.

Membership

All Students (R. C. and C. L. C.), past and present (Resident and Corresponding) and Sympathizers are eligible for membership


Each Member shall pay 1/- a year towards the Central Fund for general expenses in connexion with the Annual Meet, &c.

Management

An Executive of five members elected annually, and the Editor of Magazine, who shall be responsible as to publication and meets, &c.

The Magazine shall be 2d. per copy, 2½d. post free.

Subscriptions payable in advance: Quarterly 7½d., Half Yearly 1/3, Yearly 2/6

 **The Fifth Annual Meet will be held in London (Bank Holiday), August, 1913**

G. SIMS, Secretary-Treasurer

To whom all P.O.'s should be made payable

13 Penywern Road, Earls Court,
London, S.W.

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EDITORIAL

THE history of the Labour Movement is the history of the modern proletariat. So far this struggle has been carried on more or less instinctively. It is only in quite recent years that we see the rise of consciousness.

**From
Instinctive to
Conscious Action**

While it is true that experience is the premise of consciousness, the latter does not arise directly or spontaneously. The existence of a Trade Union, for example, does not at once carry into the minds of its founders or members, its leaders or its rank and file, an awareness of the source of its existence. Certainly, if the rank and file were conscious, the leaders would be conscious, or rather, the leaders would cease to lead in the popularly understood sense of that quality. Leaders are no more an eternal necessity than are ruling classes. Both leadership and rulership imply that the social forces are still uncontrolled and their nature unapprehended,



WHAT the wage-labourers, above all, require is a consciousness that they are a class, that, as a class, they have to face a common or general problem, and that, as a class, they alone can furnish the general solution.

**The Development
of the General**

Generalisation is the nature of consciousness, and to be conscious that this is the nature of understanding is to replace the blind struggle by a conscious systematic struggle.

So far error has had an historical justification. The general experience had to develop ere man could learn how to consciously generalise experience. In the childhood of the race, as in the childhood of the individual, man is nearer to the unconscious than to the conscious. Consciousness develops out of contact with the outside world, and grows in the degree that the contact widens. The more general the experience the greater the possibilities of generalisation theoretically. So is it, also, with the Labour Movement.

WHILE the Labour Movement arises as an inevitable necessity out of the divorce of the producers from the means of production, from the conversion of the producers into wage-labourers, and the means of production into capital, *consciousness of this fact is not*

As Things Have Been *immediately engendered.* The proof of this is to be found in the early history of Trade Unionism. In the 18th century we find the main endeavour of those combinations to be a re-instatement of the status of the past. In this century capitalism had developed to a point when it no longer required the paternal form of the State. Its own immanent laws began to clash with the enactments on the Statute Book, e.g., the fixing of the period of apprenticeship, the length of the working day, and the rate of wages. The reduction of the handicraftsman to the level of a machine, and, finally, his substitution by a machine, made these laws superfluous, and the continuance of their operation a fetter. Capitalism wanted to go forward, and for that reason had to break through the old juridical order. On the other hand, the partisan character of this progress, the fact that the progress of capitalist production is the progress of exploitation, evoked among the exploited the spirit of resistance to these changes, and called forth attempts to retain the old order of society. The chief planks in the programme of these earliest Trades Unions were :—

1. The enforcement of the Statute of Apprentices.
2. The fixing of the rate of wages by the State.
3. The prohibition of machinery.

Failure to realize these aims was the inevitable result. The proof of the lack of consciousness of these earliest forms of proletarian organization is at once evidenced by *the backward direction in which they sought to move.*



THE passing of the Combination Laws of 1799 and 1800 mark practically the close of the first phase of the struggle of the modern proletariat: machinery had come to stay, and neither pious wishes

As Things Are for the good old times, nor the fight against the instrument of labour itself, could alter the course of capitalist evolution. The attitude of Trade Unionism

in the 19th century became, as the century advanced and as the transition effects disappeared, more and more one of seeking to accommodate itself to capitalist production. It ceased to have aspirations in the direction of the past. And it nursed no ideals about the future. It's horizon was bounded by bourgeois society. It took everything as it found it, bourgeois politics, bourgeois morals, bourgeois education, and tried to use these for the realisation of its modest motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work." During the time of England's industrial monopoly, the working class shared in varying degrees, and for varying lengths of time, in the benefits, and this, no doubt, accounts for its greater

absorption of the ideology of capitalism. But no mode of production is as revolutionary as capitalist production. It must go on. And as it goes on it develops the forces which engender its dissolution. The herald of the approaching dissolution is *disillusionment*. Capitalism cannot develop without undermining its own pretensions and exposing its irrational character. It is in the proletarian head that there is awakened this increasing insight into the impossibility of the existing order and the necessity of its removal.



CAPITALIST production does not at its outset assume the character of a general method of production. Earlier methods survive, for a time, side by side with the new method. There is a heterogeneity prevailing at the close of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th which is not present at the close of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. This development "from the heterogeneous to the homogeneous" (from difference to likeness) is manifested upon the political field as well. This growing generalisation of capitalist production may be seen also in the generalisation of the market as well as in the methods of the nations producing for this general market. Still another aspect of this generalising tendency is exhibited in the growth of trusts and syndicates which take the place of the individually owned concerns.



If we turn to the pole of wage-labour we find the same developments taking place. Not only is production to-day carried on overwhelmingly by wage-labour, but the heterogeneity which was exhibited in the ranks of the producers in the earlier phases of capitalism gives place to a growing homogeneity, or likeness of kind. The difference between the various grades of skilled labour, and between skilled and unskilled, fade away as machine production becomes more general. Thus does capitalism provide in the concrete, that general experience which makes possible the conscious generalization of experience by the working class.



TO-DAY we are entering the third phase in the struggle of the working class, that phase which is characterized by the awakened consciousness that neither behind us nor in the *status quo* can the conditions of emancipation be found. And this awakening consciousness is already translating itself into practice. The chief features exhibited in the new practice are:—

**As things
Must be**

1. The generalising and centralising of the forces of labour.
2. The creation of special machinery under independent proletarian control.

Although, perhaps, this first feature is as yet mainly confined to the industrial field, there can be no doubt that the degree of unification attained there will result in an appropriate degree of generalisation in the other spheres and phases of the Labour Movement's necessary activity. On every hand we see manifestations of the turning away o Labour from

the idols it has loved so long,
And done its credit in Men's eye much wrong,
And Drowned its Glory in a Shallow Cup,
And sold its Reputation for a Song.

The master's voice is ceasing to charm, the master's political recipes are being found to lack the ingredients required for the building up of Labour's well-being, and the master's moral precepts are seen more and more to be but the maxims of the mart. The growth of consciousness of the social reality brings with it a new criterion by which to judge what is "right," "just," and "good" for the working class. Not only, however, does a developed capitalism provide the conditions from which this consciousness can arise, it promotes, also, the origin and growth of agencies for the *intensifying* of this consciousness. Such an agency is the Central Labour College. It aims, not at thinking for the working class, but at showing how the working class may and must do its own thinking. It proclaims the battle of ideas as the mental companion of the battle of classes. It urges theoretical systematisation as an indispensable pre-requisite to the conscious domination of the forces of society. As an agency for the promotion of the general, it will be effective in the degree that its necessity is more generally seen and more generally supported.

W. W. C.

Central Labour College

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Paper : a Poem

Some wit of old—such wits of old there were—
 Whose hints show'd meaning, whose allusions care
 By one brave stroke to make all human kind,
 Call'd clear blank paper ev'ry infant mind ;
 When still, as opening sense her dictates wrote,
 Fair virtue put a seal, or vice a blot.

The thought was happy, pertinent and true,
 Methinks a genius might the plan pursue.
 I (can you pardon my presumption), I—
 No wit, no genius, yet for once will try.

Various the papers various wants produce
 The wants of fashion, elegance, and use.
 Men are as various : and, if right I scan,
 Each sort of *paper* represents some *man*.

Pray note the fop—half powder and half lace—
 Nice as a bandbox were his dwelling-place :
 He's the *gilt paper*, which apart you store,
 And lock from vulgar hands in the 'scrutoire.

Mechanics, servants, farmers, and so forth,
 Are *copy-paper*, of inferior worth ;
 Less priz'd, more useful, for your desk decreed,
 Free to all pens, and prompt at ev'ry need.

The wretch, whom av'rice bids to pinch and spare,
 Starve, cheat, and pilfer to enrich an heir,
 Is coarse *brown paper* ; such as pedlars choose
 To wrap up wares, which better men will use.

Take next the miser's contrast, who destroys
 Health, fame, and fortune, in a round of joys.
 Will any paper match him ? Yes, throughout,
 He's a true *sinking paper*, past all doubt.

The retail politician's anxious thought
 Deems *this* side always right, and *that* stark nought,
 He foams with censure : with applause he raves—
 A dupe to rumours, and a tool of knaves ;
 He'll want no type his weakness to proclaim,
 While such a thing as *foolscap* has a name.

The hasty gentleman, whose blood runs high,
 Who picks a quarrel, if you step awry,
 Who can't a jest, or hint, or look endure :
 What's he ? What ? *Touch-paper*, to be sure.

What are your poets, take them as they fall,
 Good, bad, rich, poor, much read, not read at all ?
 Them and their works in the same class you'll find :
 They are the mere *waste paper* of mankind.

Observe the maiden, innocently sweet,
 She's fair *white paper*, an unsullied sheet :
 On which the happy man, whom fate ordains,
 May write his *name*, and take her for his pains.

One instance more, and only one I'll bring—
 'Tis the *great man* who scorns a little thing,
 Whose thoughts, whose deeds, whose maxims are his own,
 Form'd on the feelings of his heart alone :
 True genuine *royal paper* is his breast,—
 Of all the kinds most precious, purest, best.

DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

You may read any quantity of books, and you may be almost as ignorant as you were at starting, if you don't have at the back of your minds the change for words in definite images which can only be acquired through the operation of your observing faculties on the phenomena of nature.—HUXLEY.

The Coming of Oxford: The Passing of Ruskin

University Men and Business Appointments

Mr. N. Waterfield, secretary of the Oxford University Appointments Committee, in his evidence before the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, which was published on Friday, said there is a growing demand to make use of University men for business appointments, but there are at present many more men wanting such posts than he could get offers of posts for.

Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P. : Does not that lead rather to the conclusion that the demand for University men for business posts is not very great?—I say it is increasing.

Have you ever tried to estimate the number of vacancies?—No. There would be probably thousands.

Do you still maintain that the fact that you have in three years placed thirty candidates, indicates any real demand for Oxford men in business?—The difficulty is that we are so little known. We do not advertise.

Of 827 candidates who registered with you in 1911 you placed 92, and only fourteen of those in business appointments?—Yes.

Could you say what these fourteen business posts in 1911 were?—Yes, there were four in banking, three in financial and mercantile businesses, three with India and China merchants, three in publishing firms, and one a miscellaneous appointment.

Not one in any great manufacturing concern?—Yes, two. These would be included in mercantile businesses.—*Oxford Times, February 1st, 1913.*

Convocation and Ruskin College

Convocation approved on Tuesday of Ruskin College as an institution for higher study. Professor Geldart, in moving the statute, which was not opposed, said Ruskin College existed mainly for the promotion of higher education amongst members of the working classes. In 1910, after the re-organization of the college, there were thirty students. Two entered for the Diploma in Economics, and both obtained distinction. In 1911 there were twelve candidates, of whom eight obtained distinction, and the other four passed. Last year there were fourteen entries, six obtained distinction six passed, and two failed.—*Oxford Times, February 15th, 1913.*

Ruskin College

SIR.—In your issue of the 15th, I read that Convocation has approved of Ruskin College as an institution for higher study. Professor Geldart, in moving the statute, which was not opposed, said Ruskin College existed mainly for the promotion of higher education amongst members of the

working class. It would be interesting, from a working-class view-point, to know exactly what this means. Does it mean that the students of Ruskin will be brought, as we understand it (I mean the working class), more into touch with the methods and modes of the University? If so, good-bye Ruskin. It is regrettable to see individuals pass over to the enemy, but when institutions pass over, how much more regrettable. Perhaps one of the Messrs. Bowerman, Tillett, Sexton, or Saxton will enlighten us upon this when they are here on the 22nd. I might say I think Ben Tillett and H. Quelch are making great mistakes in allowing their names to be associated with the College at the present moment.

Yours faithfully,

4, Walton Street, Feb. 17th.

W. SHEPHERD.

Oxford Times, February 22nd, 1913.

Utilitarian Economics

(Continued)

DURING all the early portion of this period, however long it may have been, there was nothing to interrupt the steady and persistent action of this psychic force working in complete harmony with cosmic law toward the primary end of organic evolution. But as the cerebral hemispheres grew and the thinking powers increased, and especially after society, art, and industry had become fixed institutions, and after priesthoods had been established, forming a sedentary class, philosophy took root and the thought of man turned to the study and analysis of his condition. Then began, by little and little, that slow transformation which has ultimately brought about the pessimism of the East and the asceticism of the West, to which reference has been made. It has never been sufficiently pronounced to resist the powerful tide of optimism, but it has created a manifest ripple on the surface and here and there an eddy in the stream itself.

While orientalism would seem to be more favourable than asceticism to the growth of this anti-optimistic tendency, the indications are that it is in the West that we must look for its greatest development. This is not because Christianity is more favourable to it, but because it is here that a true knowledge of nature is being acquired through the revelations of science and the unavoidable philosophy that is growing out of them. The most enlightened western races are letting in the day-light of investigation and reason upon every domain of nature and are fearlessly formulating the resultant logic, leaving consequences to take care of themselves. Latterly these researches have been more and more directed to the higher social conditions, and they have not only confirmed the widespread belief in malism, but have penetrated to its causes and conditions and somewhat stripped it of the sanctity that has hitherto

surrounded it. In the present state of the world there may be danger that these influences will antagonize the normal laws of development and tend to bring the hitherto rapid growth of population to a standstill.

I long ago pointed out that reason often works at cross purposes with natural law, and may have brought about the extinction of races. This, however, related to the effect of error, which only a rational being can commit, and the remedy lies in the discovery of truth and the diffusion of knowledge. This stage is probably past by the leading races of the world. But there is another way in which reason may conflict with law, and this is the case before us. There is a great dualism in the organic world. There are two wholly independent forces at work which may co-operate, or may follow parallel lines without affecting each other, or may conflict in any and all degrees. The only check upon this last is the fact that direct conflict, if sufficiently prolonged, leads to extinction, and only such races have survived as have avoided such conflict, at least to the extent of maintaining their existence.

These two forces are the ones which I have on numerous occasions described as those, on the one hand, which secure the performance of *function*, and those, on the other, that proceed from *feeling*. The first are *normal*, and constitute the primary law of evolution as it operates in the organic world. The second are *supra-normal*, and constitute an entirely new departure from that primary law. They are, so to speak, wholly incidental and unintended, not having been, as it were, contemplated by nature when the psychic element was introduced. That element was developed for a totally different purpose, viz, as already stated, in order to enable a certain class of evolutionary products to exist which could not have existed without it, to wit: plastic organisms. These must possess some means of escaping destructive tendencies and of replenishing organic waste through metabolism of their substance. The only such means we can conceive of is feeling, i.e., sensitiveness to pain and capacity for pleasure.

In order to secure the end these subjective states must constitute the motives to all the so-called spontaneous activity of this class of beings. As a matter of fact, they do constitute such motives. Their *normal* operation secures the ends of nature in a most admirable manner, adaptation of means to ends is one of the most striking and wonderful in the whole range of nature's operations. So long as the psychic element remained at this lowest stage of pure feeling, it was a perfectly safe ally of the other cosmic forces. The struggle might go on, and no matter how great the havoc among the animated and sensitive molecules and cells, they would all prove true to their original purpose and survive or perish as fate might decide. But the same agencies that created the primary psychic element worked for its development. The more intense it was, the more certain

were its effects in securing the preservation and multiplication of life. A stage was at length reached at which a second element, derivative, indeed, but distinct in its mode of action, made its appearance and was slowly developed. This was the *reason*, dimly apparent in some very slowly creatures, and plainly manifest in the highest animal races. I have attempted fully to trace the origin and development of this new psychic element and need not now repeat this history. Born of the cosmic law and created to be the servant of the primary element, it may be described in one phrase as a device for securing indirectly those ends which could not be secured directly. It is easy to see that, so far at least as the ends of the creature were concerned, this step represented a great gain.

The profound bio-psychic dualism under consideration demands still further elucidation. As I have pointed out on a former occasion, function is essentially static, while feeling alone is dynamic. The former rests on the law of heredity, the latter underlies the phenomena of variation. But throughout the animal series these two factors co-operate with sufficient exactness to be in the main safe. They are self-regulating, and natural selection may be trusted to correct any dangerous tendency toward an undue deviation from the type. Near the end of that series there have occurred, it is true, enormous aberrations, in certain respects almost completely reversing the normal condition of things, but none of these have seriously interfered with the law of heredity, and in some the power of structural advancement has been manifestly increased. These aberrations have all been due to the growth of an inchoate rational faculty which, in exact proportion to its strength, has made feeling more and more an end. The necessary effect of the reason is to increase the tendency to vary, and a stage was at length reached at which this tendency began to threaten the safety of the type.

Early in the human period this stage was reached, and but for certain countervailing agencies the race must have been prematurely extinguished. The law of self-preservation would not alone have sufficed to save it, and if there is any distinction between that law and the remedial optimism that supervened, this is what we are now seeking. Viewed from this standpoint, optimism may be characterized as the law of *social* self-preservation. We find everywhere in savage, barbaric, semi-civilized, and even civilized races a certain class of ideas in common which make for race preservation, in more or less direct conflict with individual interest. These are embodied in customs, institutions, religious observances, and moral precepts. They are sometimes referred to as the "collective wisdom" of mankind, a wisdom far greater than that of any individual, since they seem to involve fore-sight and to constitute a sort of social clairvoyance. They form the various codes of action, legal, moral, conventional, and social, of all races, and are rigidly enforced against the recognized anti-social propensities of individuals. Most of them

are aimed directly at race preservation, but there are some, as, for example, the severe penalties imposed for the violation of the law of exogamy, which look to the preservation of the vigour of the race. They rest on a universal consensus respecting those things which, however pleasing to the individual, are injurious to the race and in any way threaten to reduce its numbers or weaken its strength. In one sense they are not rational, and in many respects they strikingly resemble the instincts of animals. Indeed, they may be regarded as the true homologues of these instincts. If they do not rest on reason, they at least embody the highest wisdom. They almost always have the powerful sanction of religion, and for this reason some have confounded them with religion itself. Others believe them to be of Divine origin and not explainable on natural principles. In fact, they are difficult to explain, as, for example, how the lowest savages find out that close inter-breeding deteriorates the stock. I am myself disposed to call in the law of natural selection and to assume that existing races represent the survivors in a prolonged struggle in which those not possessing these saving qualities have succumbed. This places them squarely in line with animal instincts, and the current of modern opinion runs in the direction of basing *all* instincts primarily upon some germ of reason.

Feeling may be said to have been developed as a means to the ends of nature, which are preservation and multiplication. But to the creature, which knew nothing of these ends, the means must be itself an end, and throughout the sentient world the subjective states described have always been, and must always continue to be, the ends of the feeling creature. But reason is a form of knowing, and step by step the knowing powers increased. The only purpose they could have for their possessors was that of better and better realizing the subjective states. It thus becomes easy to see how the pursuit of the creatures ends might often be quite a different thing from that of the ends of nature, and this, in fact, has been the case to a marked extent, which explains the dualism. It is this truth that lies at the bottom of the problem before us; indeed, it lies at the bottom of the whole philosophy of man and society.

In man reason has become a powerful element, and he has always used it, and will always continue to use it, for its primary purpose of better securing his only end, the satisfaction of the demands of his nature. As the eminent ethnologist, M. Paul Topinard, has recently said: "His sensorium is the focus in which all is gathered. He is perforce subjective. He is by sensibility and by logic egocentric. *I* first, *others* afterwards. . . . The thinkers that exercise their ingenuity in adapting him to the conditions of existence, in creating for him a world of his own, in laying down the rules for his conduct, and in seeking foundations for it least open to attack, must not forget that his only cherished aim is his own happiness."

The happiness man has always sought and is still seeking is, however, more or less relative. I have shown what is the condition of the animal in the wild state and how far short it falls of a state of ideal happiness. While man through his reason has undoubtedly improved upon the state, has reduced the enormous death rate, and has lessened his pains and increased his pleasures, he has, to offset these gains, the evils of an intensified memory, the new powers of imagination and of anticipation, and a swarm of delicate mental capacities for feeling unknown to humbler creatures. And what has been his real condition from this point of view? A single glance into the lower strata of society even to-day is sufficient to show that it represents a pain economy. The leading motive still is fear, and the chief effort is not to enjoy, but to simply live. With all due allowance made for the superior "contentment" of the lower classes and of their incapacity to enjoy the things that the more favoured chiefly value, it must still be admitted that the great mass even in civilized countries lead a negative rather than a positive existence. While it may not be possible to draw any line, it is evident that there exists somewhere a line that separates the negative from the positive state of existence—the pain from the pleasure economy. If we call all pains *minus* and all pleasures *plus*, that line will fall at the point where the algebraic sum of pains and pleasures is equal to zero. Any society below that line represents a pain economy, and only those societies that lie above that line represent a pleasure economy. There are certain tests which may be applied in trying to decide on which side of the zero line a given society should be placed. One is the economic test. The old economics doubtless reflected a large amount of truth and was more or less adapted to the time in which it was formulated. That science was almost exclusively based on the consideration of man as an animal, or, at best, as a "covetous animal," *i.e.*, an animal with some idea of the value of property. The fact that the Malthusian law has proved to hold throughout animal life shows that the man, at least, about whom Malthus was talking, was only an advanced kind of animal. And it seems probable that the modern revolt against the old political economy is due as much to the fact that there has been a change in man himself as to any discovery by recent writers that the older writers were wrong. Certainly the old economics was wholly adapted to a pain economy, or a general state of society in which fear was the principal motive, and life, not happiness, the principal aim. We may, therefore, infer that such was the state of society in Europe down to the close of the eighteenth century. *A fortiori*, all antecedent history must belong to a pain economy.

Another test is the ethical code. Almost the only ethics we have is what may properly be called negative. It is based on restraint and condemns nearly all activities that have happiness, and especially pleasure, for their object. It is safe to infer that there is good reason for this. In a pain economy the ethical code must necessarily

be negative. It must lay chief emphasis upon those things which must not be done. All but two of the Ten Commandments are negative in form in both Exodus and Deuteronomy, showing that it was then regarded as dangerous to pursue pleasure for its own sake. For where every energy is taxed to its utmost to maintain existence, any relaxation is unsafe. All must be perpetually on guard, and there must be no sleeping at one's post. Pursuit of pleasure means neglect of duty, and the terms pleasure and duty are the later homologues of the primary equivalents, feeling and function. It is the antithesis between the creature and the cosmos, between the individual and the race, or, expressed in the language of theology, between man and God. In a pain economy a state of happiness at all prolonged is incompatible with safety. This is the true explanation of the austere ethical code under which we live, which, like every other structure, whether anatomical or social, tends to persist long after the causes that brought it forth have ceased to act.

The preservation, perpetuation, and increase of the human family, as well as the general development and perfectionment of our race and of all organic forms, which constitute what I have called the ends of nature, form, it is true, an inspiring theme, and an object well worthy of the tremendous sacrifices that have been made to secure it, yet, properly viewed, it has nothing whatever to do with economics. That science is based exclusively on the idea of utility in the narrower sense of good to the individual, and however paradoxical it may sound, these grand objects are, in and of themselves, absolutely of no use. That is to say, utility relates solely and exclusively to what I have called the ends of the sentient creature, or, in the human sphere, the ends of man, and this notwithstanding that, as I have shown, the pursuit of such ends is purely incidental and unintended, and forms no part of the general scheme of nature.

But inasmuch as we have this dualism as one of the most remarkable facts of existence, it is part of wisdom to recognize it and try to understand its significance. Instead of a mere temporary episode in the history of the world, it is a permanent condition. It has come to stay, and already its effects in every department upon which it has exerted influence have been most sweeping. It has completely revolutionized some of these departments, even below the human plane, and its power over human and social affairs is stronger than anywhere else. This assertion of the claims of feeling, this *Bejahung des Willens zum Leben* [assertion of the will to live], this soul of nature, is what I have elsewhere characterized as the "transforming agency," and I have indicated some of the fields in which its activity has been greatest, and enumerated certain of its achievements. These facts are sufficient to show that this new cosmic and social agency is a growing power. I am now endeavouring to trace its history, and I propose to characterize the movement in its later social aspects as the subjective trend of modern philosophy. There

has been going along a number of more or less independent lines a continuous, though somewhat rhythmic, movement in the direction of the fuller realization of the ends of man as distinguished from those of nature, a subordination of the latter to the former, or an ignoring of the latter when they conflict with the former. This movement is nothing more nor less than a gradual transition from a pain economy to, or at least toward, a pleasure economy. It represents in the fullest sense of the phrase, the progress of utilitarianism. It has been wholly due and strictly proportional to the growth of the rational faculty, the increase of knowledge, and the march of science. Without these it could only lead to disaster. The great danger has been that of running counter to the law of natural evolution and of bringing about racial degeneration and extinction. Reason has acted as a pilot to keep the ship of life off these bars and to guide it safely on in the current of natural law. This movement embodies all that is meant by the progress of the world, and underlies every problem of history, government, and society. Many have been alarmed at its encroachments, and the moral and religious teachers of every age have antagonized it and stigmatized it as hedonism and sensuality. Those who early scented it and voiced it—the Cumberlands, Shaftesburys, Hutchesons, Priestleys, Beccarias, and Bentham—have been attacked, denounced, and discredited as Utopian dreamers. But its greatest strides have been taken since their day, due far less to their influence than to the agencies which they sagaciously presaged. The opposition still continues, but grows weak and half-hearted. The latest warning voice has been that of Mr. Benjamin Kidd, who, while sympathizing with the movement, which he profoundly misunderstands, bases his plea upon the doctrine that acquired characteristics are not transmissible, a doctrine which Weismann had himself virtually abandoned, confounds optimism with religion, and makes the increase of population constitute the whole of "social evolution."

It is too late now to stem this tide. The claims of a feeling world have come before the bar of rational judgment and been admitted. Those of a cold, unconscious cosmos must give way except in so far as they may prove helpful in adjusting the others. A pain economy may be tolerated by non-rational beings. The savage and barbaric tribes of men may remain below the zero line. The lowest strata of so-called civilized society will doubtless long continue to vegetate with no hope beyond the preservation of existence under the operation of the ancestral optimism. Pessimism and asceticism will continue to attest the condemnation of reason for the condition of the world. In spite of all this, under science which makes for *meliorism*, the levelling process will go on, greater and greater numbers will rise above the economic *Nullpunkt*, and the field of pain economy will shrink as that pleasure economy expands.

LESTER F. WARD.

A Book for the Very Young

ONE of the most interesting "side-shows" in the Children's Welfare Exhibition held at Olympia in the early part of this year was a display of old children's books. For the most part these were of the morally edifying order designed for the instruction of the young in the late Georgian and early Victorian periods. An illustrated catalogue of the twenty-seven deadly sins, for example, each accompanied by a fragment of the kind of doggerel warranted to stick fast in the juvenile memory, was apparently regarded by our sterner forefathers as a suitable gift-book for the trembling offspring. An engaging picture of a young gentleman happily occupied in drawing portraits of his elders where passers-by would be sure to see and enjoy them, was labelled—

I must not ugly faces scrawl
With charcoal on a whitewashed wall.

The possibility of such a work suggesting interesting amusements for idle hours, to previously innocent young hearts does not seem to have been taken into account.

A short time ago I had the good fortune to pick up, from the sixpenny box outside a second-hand bookseller's, a little book obviously designed for the intellectual improvement of the very young. This work was not included in the collection shown at Olympia, although its quaint and simple way of presenting Great Truths in a form suited to the comprehension of even little children make it well deserving of a place in any exhibition. The little volume is entitled *Political Economy*, and is the work of W. Stanley Jevons, LL.D., M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Political Economy in University College, London, and Examiner in Logic and Moral Philosophy in the same haunt of learning. It is one apparently of a series of similar little books, described as "Science Primers," edited by Professors Huxley, Roscoe, and Balfour Stewart. (Such a galaxy of stars on the title page is nicely calculated to impress the youthful reader with the obviously inspired character of the truths thereafter enunciated.) It was published so far back in the Dark Ages as the year of our Lord, 1878, and the title page further bears the stern warning—"The right of translation and reproduction is reserved." As I have said, I was mulcted in the sum of sixpence, and became the possessor of this curious little work. It was cheap at the price.

I can only deeply regret that my limited acquaintance with the works of Karl Marx and other "aliens" (as Mr. Victor Fisher would call them) prevents me from doing full justice to the infinite charm of my sixpennyworth of *Wisdom for the Young*. As a mere jayman I must do my best, by quoting a few brief extracts, to prove

my contention that it is deserving of a place in any self-respecting collection of children's books. I shall confine myself to a single chapter, that headed "Trades Unions."

The author begins by telling his little readers what a trades union is. It is "a society of men belonging to any one kind of trade, who agree to act together as they are directed by their elected council, and who subscribe money to pay the expenses." Trades unions, moreover, act as "benefit or friendly societies." The workman subscriber receives pay from the union in times of sickness or unemployment, "and when he dies he is buried at the expense of the union." "All these arrangements are very good," the author proceeds. "So far as trades unions occupy themselves in this way [the burial of the workmen?] it is impossible not to approve of them very warmly."

Further, "trades unions are able to take care of their members by insisting that employers shall make their factories wholesome and safe. . . . If all the workmen complain at once, *the employer will think about the matter seriously,*" and will in all probability do anything "reasonable" (I should have mentioned that this little ray of light on the manners and habits of employers previously made it plain that individual complainants would "be told to go about their business.")

But when it comes to questions of wages or hours, "working-men should proceed cautiously"; especially taking note of "what the public opinion is, because it is the opinion of many who have nothing to lose or gain in the matter." (Evidently many of our present-day leader-writers beguiled their boyhood days with our little book.) "Somebody must settle whether the factory is to work for 12, or 10, or 9, or 8 hours a day. . . . The employer would generally prefer long hours, as he need not be on the spot all the time himself" (!). Yet in spite of this downright revelation of the black-hearted cunning of employers, working men are rebuked for "seeming to believe that, if they do not take care, their employers will carry off the main part of the produce and pay very low wages"; and for thinking that "capitalists have it all their own way unless they are constantly watched." Picture the childish indignation at such base, suspicious natures!

Workmen, moreover, should consult other people's convenience when arranging a strike. "Engine drivers in America [wicked land!] sometimes strike when a train is half-way on its journey, and leave the passengers to get to the next town as best they can [!!!] *This is little better than manslaughter.*" And strikers "have no right to prevent other workmen from coming and taking their places." "It is a question of supply and demand; the employer is right in getting work done at the lowest possible cost; and, if there is a supply of labour forthcoming at lower rates of wages, it would

not be *wise* of him to pay higher rates." Instead of which, workmen on strike "endeavour to persuade or *even frighten* men from coming to take their places." How sad a state of affairs! In fact, one's only doubt is whether it is wise to so soon disillusion the young by making plain to them the general depravity of the world they have been born into.

But I have filled my space. It is hard to cease quoting from such a gold mine. I hope I have, however, done some small justice to the simplicity, lucidity, even naïveté, of this little treatise. And if the promoters of any future Children's Exhibitions would like to have it on view, I will very gladly loan them my copy—subject, of course, to its being sufficiently insured against damage by rampant working men.

J. F. HORRABIN.

A Soldier's Life in India

(Continued)

HAVING dealt with the main features of the life in the hills, we will now turn to the life on the "plains." When the troops leave for the hills the sun is just beginning to make itself felt, and by the second week in April the heat becomes almost unbearable. The only work that is possible is an early morning parade, and that has to be held about 5 a.m. For the remainder of the day the men have to lie about in the barrack room and read or listen to the creaking of the "punkah." The latter is a large fan-like arrangement, worked by a native from outside the bungalow.

When the monsoon season commences the "plain station" becomes worse than ever. Although not enveloped in a cloud bank like the hill station, the ground is so hot and parched that the steam rises like a mist, bringing with it all the impurities from the ground. Hence the fever which is prevalent in India.

Towards the end of the monsoon season the ground bears a striking resemblance to the proverbial "mudpond," so heavy have the rains been.

The cavalry regiments have a much easier time than those at home. All they have to do is an early morning exercise, except when the troops are down from the hills, when they have to take part in the various trainings. "Sices" or native grooms are employed to do all the heavy stable work, so that all the cavalryman has to do is to see that his horse and the stall are properly looked after.

The same applies to the artillery, except that the gunners have to attend to their guns.

The mountain batteries of Garrison Artillery have a much harder life altogether. All their marches are done on foot, and the heavy mountain pieces have to be looked after, packed on the mules, and unpacked again at the end of the march. On one occasion last year, some batteries of Garrison Artillery marched from Quetta, in Baluchistan, to Delhi. Their life is, without doubt, the hardest in India.

There is yet another phase of life among the troops in India, and that is the frontier life. This is the most dangerous and trying of all. A regiment up on the frontier is shut up in a fort from the time it goes up till the time it returns. They are in constant fear of an attack from the frontier tribes, and rifle thieves abound. It is not safe to go outside the fort unless one is armed and has at least four companions. With the exception of the men of the regiment, there is not a white man to be seen. It is then that a man requires to exercise his strength of will to refrain from ruining his body and soul by excessive drinking.

The weather on the frontier is, at times, almost Arctic in its severity; and all the scenery one has to look at is the black, forbidding ridges and peaks of the Suliman Mountains.

Sometimes a caravan will pass the fort en route for Afghanistan, and so relieve the awful dulness of the soldiers' existence, but apart from that their neighbours consist solely of Afridis and Pathans.

One thing, perhaps, strikes the civilian as being unnecessary. That is the extraordinary large native establishment of the British regiments. This consists of sweepers, tailors, shoemakers, tea, cake, and fruit vendors, chiropodists, "dhobies" (laundrymen), barbers, and cooks. "Why are all these people employed, when the soldier could easily do without them?" That is the question which the civilian asks. For this reason: it is the policy of the Indian Government to find as much employment as possible for the natives; so that they are compulsory. The soldier, no doubt, would welcome their abolition. He spends most of his meagre pay on the wares of the tea, cake, and fruit "wallahs"; and he would be very pleased indeed to get rid of the native "dhobie," as this personage takes a fiendish delight in knocking poor "Tommy's" clothes about. As a rule they use no soap, but simply get the garments and bang them on a stone slab, over which water is running, for all they are worth, shouting at every clout a word which "Tommy" declares is "Soap." That is an open question, however.

The barber usually has a lively time of it when there is an early morning parade. Everyone wants to be shaved simultaneously, and if he happens to cut one of the men, he is almost sure to get a boot thrown at him, together with a volley of not the choicest adjectives.

Although the soldier is not particular as to what he says to the natives, he has to be careful as to his actions, as it is a serious crime now to strike a native.

We will now turn to the positions obtainable for a soldier. A well-educated man might try for the India Office of Works, and if successful may obtain a salary of £300 and perhaps £400 per annum. Positions are also to be obtained on the railways; in the Post Office as telegraphists; on the Supply and Transport Service, and also on the Government Dairy Farms. These positions are, of course, only suitable for a man who intends staying in the country.

With regard to the soldiers' food in India, all of it passes through the hands of natives, although, of course, always under the surveillance of a British Commissioned or Warrant Officer. If that were not the case, we should find half the troops in India dying from poisoning.

Concerning the quarters, these are mostly in the form of detached bungalows, there being one of these for each company. Some of them are very comfortable, whereas others are quite the reverse. In the larger "plain stations" electric light is being installed; but in all the "hill stations" the rooms are lighted by lamps, and these are not of the best.

A very amusing scene may be witnessed in any of the bazaars. A soldier seated in one of the shops arguing with the merchant over the price of an article in English, with a few words of bad Hindustani here and there, while the merchant protests and pleads in very bad English. The usual outcome of the argument is that each becomes disgusted, and anathematizes the other in his own language, and neither gets what he wants for the time being. The soldier leaves to try the force of argument elsewhere, but the merchant climbs down when he sees he is going to lose a customer and accepts the offered price. "Tommy" having got the article walks away elated by the knowledge that he has "dusted another bloomin' nigger," although that is doubtful. I remember once a fellow succeeded in "knocking a merchant down" from seven rupees to three rupees, eight annas. When he got home however, the "kansamah" (native cook) told him that the article was only worth one rupee, four annas. It is usually recognized that it is folly to give a native tradesman more than half what he asks, as they always ask an exorbitant price.

I think I have now explained my opening words, and hope that this article will prove interesting to the reader, and, perhaps—edifying.

C.L.C. Classes Reports

ROCHDALE

Students' Meeting, February 8th. Chairman : Mr. Frank Bundoch, (Bury)

It was unanimously agreed to ask the College to provide a lecturer for next winter to lecture in this district on a Course introductory to the study of Industrial History, comprising lectures on Philosophic Logic, Organic Evolution, and the Rise of the State in the Ancient World. The object of such a Course, the students pointed out, was to get acquainted with the right method of analysis, and to arrange succeeding Courses so that their studies may extend systematically over a period of years. A discussion took place on methods of getting students. It was generally agreed that advertising in the Press was an expensive and useless method of getting students; that circularising Trade Union and Socialist Branches was a fair method. Besides getting students, Societies became affiliated to the local committees of control, provided funds, and assisted generally in the promotion of the organization. Over £6 was received annually in affiliation fees. The chief and most important method was for the present students to get more students. The numerical success of a class depends on the success of the prospective students securing more students, to fill the class by individual effort. About ten of the women students will represent this district at the opening of the Women's College.

A debate is to take place between representatives of the C.L.C. and the W.E.A. on Saturday, April 5th. The question is: "Which institution provides the best education for the workpeople, the C.L.C. or the W.E.A'?" Herbert Piper will open on behalf of the C.L.C., and E. J. Hookway will defend the W.E.A. position. James Bell, president of the Rochdale Trades' Council, will officiate as chairman.

BLAENGARW.

A C.L.C. Class has just been opened at Blaengarw for the study of Industrial History. Mr. Frank Hodges, the Miners' Agent for the Garw Valley, at the head of which Blaengarw is situated, has very kindly consented to take over the work of lecturing there for the present session. For the past four months Mr. Hodges has been acting as lecturer for the Class at Tondu. I had the pleasure of addressing this latter Class on a recent Sunday morning, and I can testify to the keen interest and enthusiasm of the Tondu students in the work of the Class. Sixty stalwarts were present on this particular Sunday morning, and I understand that this was no abnormal attendance, but the usual number present. There are to be stirring times in the Garw Valley shortly; indeed, the enterprising Secretary of the Tondu Class assured me that the stirring had actually begun. Mr. Leyshon Williams has organized this Class on quite scientific lines, and his services in this direction are by no means monopolized by the

Class at Tondy. He is already preparing the ground for a Garw Valley District of Classes for next winter, when it is hoped that the Central Labour College will place a resident lecturer at the disposal of the district.

This valley has been dormant for some time so far as militant Labour activity is concerned. But that is passing now. And I am convinced that with such material as is now developing in the Garw Valley that district will soon be among the foremost files in the army of Labour.

W.W.C.

NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE AREA.

The work in connexion with the above area is going on quite satisfactory, and good progress is being made. I pointed out in my last report that we in this area intended to approach the various Trade Union branches for support.

In the Burnley area about ten Union branches requested a speaker to attend and put the position of the C.L.C. before them. This we did, and up to now nothing further has been done.

Have had no reports from Accrington, Padiham, Nelson, and Colne.

Re the resolution calling upon the Weavers' Union to transfer their support from Ruskin to the C.L.C., nothing definite yet has been accomplished.

The Burnley "Notice of Motion" comes up next Wednesday, Nelson on Tuesday, Colne a week later, and the Padiham people have been successful in getting it passed and sent on to the Northern Counties Amalgamation. The Nelson class have also been successful in getting a grant of £5 from the Nelson Weavers' Association for the Nelson class.

At the present time we are considering the question of making arrangements for carrying on the C.L.C. work during the summer months; either by means of rambles or inter-meets, and also arranging for speakers from the various classes to do propaganda work in this district for the Trades' Councils, Labour Representation Committee, and Socialist organizations.

W. H. BARTON, Gen. Sec.

We have a few sets left of the plaster-cast busts, 6½ inches high, of Dennis Hird, Darwin, Huxley, Spencer and Ruskin—to clear stock we will supply them at 1/2 each, or 5/- the set, carriage paid. Address:—

Editor, 13 Penywern Road,
Earls Court, London, S.W.

Social(s) and Personal

THE conversazione arranged by the Women's League of the Central Labour College, and held at the College on January 30th, in honour of the visit to town of the delegates to the Labour Party Conference, was undoubtedly one of the "events" of the social season. Penywern Road was littered with four-wheelers (the taxi-men being on strike), roller-skates, and goloshes; and within the hospitable portals of No. 13 a brilliant and distinguished company kept high revel until throwing-out time. A very delightful musical programme had been arranged by Miss Mabel Hope, and the number of bouquets and expensive boxes of chocolate hurled at the artistes established a record even for C.L.C. functions. The Warden, in a brief speech, emphasized the high tone and social exclusiveness of the College—especially as compared with the distressingly low-class atmosphere of less up-to-date universities—and tea and coffee were immediately served. The evening concluded with a short programme of dances, the Sub-Warden proving a particularly energetic M.C.; while Councillor MacKay, ever a notable figure on such occasions, especially distinguished himself in the schottische. The floral decorations were on the usual lavish scale, and fortunately no one knocked them over. The guests were received by the Warden (in black and grey) and the Secretary (in snuff-coloured homespun and carpet slippers). It was unanimously agreed that if the Women's League were disbanded then and there they would not have lived in vain. * * * * *

The reception held at the College on February 10th, and attended by a large number of delegates to the Unity Conference of the Railwaymen's Unions in London, was, if possible, an even more brilliant success. In the regretted absence of the Warden (through illness) the guests were welcomed by the sub-Warden, whose suave and polished phrases were followed by a few pertinent remarks from the genial Secretary. The thanks of the delegates, and their good wishes for the College, were expressed by Brother Holmes (organizing Secretary A.S.R.S.), of Doncaster, in a breezy speech, which was heartily applauded by his colleagues. Songs, recitations, and refreshments were all provided, and the whole company took part in a diabolically ingenious name-guessing competition (for handsome prizes)—a form of dissipation guaranteed to take out the starch from the most select assembly. The evening again concluded with dancing, Mr. Councillor MacKay winning golden opinions by his daring impetuosity and incredible activity as M.C. * * * * *

On February 14th, at the College, Miss Rosalind Travers gave an interesting lecture on the Balkans, to students and friends, Chief-Electrician Pendry officiating at the lantern. Miss Travers interspersed among her lively comments on the manners and customs of the dwellers in the Balkan Peninsula, some shrewd remarks con-

cerning "work and wages" in that particular corner of Europe. Not the least interesting feature of the evening was the display of peasant women's and girls' dresses, donned for the occasion by members of the Women's League and friends, and voted by all present (the dresses, of course) to be distinctly charming. The chair was taken by the Sub-Warden.—BY OUR SOCIETY REPORTER.

Ibsen—"Coloured"

IT is now nearly two years ago since Mr. Frederick Harrison (the theatrical manager, not the High Priest of Positivism) first announced his intention of producing Ibsen's historical drama, "The Pretenders," at the Haymarket Theatre, and was congratulated by all the literary people on his courage and artistic enterprise. Congratulations of this kind are, of course, an inexpensive way of proving one's superior culture; and "artistic enterprise" had in this instance, as in so many others, to give place to economic considerations. A Scottish comedy was put on to fill the bill until "The Pretenders" was ready for presentation. The Scottish comedy was "Bunty," and it filled the bill, and the theatre, for more than a year. Then came the Stanley Houghton "boom"—every London manager being anxious to secure another "Hindle Wakes." And Mr. Harrison, having "The Younger Generation" on his desk, once more postponed "The Pretenders."

But Providence was watching over Ibsen. Mr. Frohman presented a triple bill at the Duke of York's Theatre, two of the items in which—those by Shaw and Pinero—proved dead failures. So was it made possible to transfer "The Younger Generation" to the Duke of York's, and Mr. Harrison's "artistic enterprise" at last had the chance of showing itself; "The Pretenders" was produced at the Haymarket on Thursday, February 13th.

The critics have unanimously acclaimed the production as a dramatic event of the first importance. So, indeed, it undoubtedly is; although one might wish, for the sake at least of the artistic reputation of the English theatre, that its actual realization had not been so often deferred. For the same reason, also, one would have been glad if the production had been possible without (as it is persistently whispered) the financial backing of a young nobleman possessing literary tastes and extensive estates in the metropolitan area.

The last regret, however, is to some extent modified by the fact that there appears to be every probability of the production proving a popular success—even in the ordinary commercial sense of that term. It is a sufficiently ironic comment on managerial enterprise in London to find, instead of the rows of empty benches which appears to have been anticipated by superior persons, crowded audiences—composed by no means of the lean, be-spectacled Fabian females who form so large a proportion of the audience at most "advanced" theatres, but

of ordinary despised playgoers. "House Full" notices, outside a theatre where Ibsen is being played, are a refreshing sight in London. (I make a free gift of this suggestion to any editor of an illustrated journal desirous of publishing an interesting full-page photograph.)

Why is it that "ordinary" playgoers are crowding to see "The Pretenders?" The superior person referred to above would doubtless reply, with a certain air of disdain, that it was because the play admitted of "spectacular" treatment; and—except in his disdain—he would be perfectly right. In his demand for crowds, for colour, for movement—for "spectacular" effects, in short—the ordinary playgoer, consciously or unconsciously; gives expression to a sound and much-needed criticism of too much of the so-called "modern movement" in drama. That "modern movement"—from Ibsen's social dramas onwards—appeals too exclusively to the ear alone; it relies, that is to say, on dialogue, almost entirely ignoring both action and setting. Now, the average playgoer, when he makes plain—usually by staying away from the theatre—his lack of interest in people who inhabit apartments of that painful ugliness usually associated with an Ibsen production, is, after all, insisting that drama is an art which should appeal to the eye as well as to the ear; and the fact that he goes in crowds to see "Œdipus Rex" at Covent Garden (or "The Pretenders" at the Haymarket), while "Rosmersholm" or "The Master Builder" are performed to a handful of enthusiasts at the Court Theatre, is quite probably as much an indication that something is lacking in the latter plays—or in the method of their presentation—as that something is lacking in the average playgoer.

A good many cheap sneers have been uttered at the expense of the "Fabian" school of dramatists. In so far as that school has thought to revolutionize the drama "from the outside," by creating a new and superior kind of drama appealing in the main to superior persons, and by ignoring or despising the "popular" taste, those sneers have been deserved. The marked improvement in wit and point of musical comedies during the past two or three years; their tendency to approach nearer and nearer to the "revue" or to genuine comic opera, both vehicles of satire, and to become less and less mere variety entertainments, more than ordinarily vapid and futile; the big stride forward made by the music halls themselves of late—all these things are probably of more real significance for the future of the English drama than the foundation of many "repertory" theatres.

The great mass of playgoers quite rightly prefers "two-penny coloured" drama to the "penny plain" variety. That is why Granville Barker's production of "Twelfth Night" has proved perhaps, the outstanding success of the present theatrical season in London. And that, also, is why "The Pretenders"—which is Ibsen, for once, "coloured"—will, in all probability, draw crowds to the Haymarket Theatre for some time to come.—J. F. HORRABIN.

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