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**MONTHLY**

**TWOPENCE**

# The "Plebs" League

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## 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 Sixth Annual Meet will be held in London (Bank Holiday), August, 1914

**G. SIMS, Secretary-Treasurer**

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

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

# The PLEBS MAGAZINE

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*SOCIAL  
SCIENCES*

## EDITORIAL

THE decadence of capitalism exhibits two types of reactionary movement. In practice and theory those two types may be seen. The one, swollen with dropsy. The other, pale and anæmic.

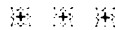
### The TWO TYPES of TACTICS

The one, blaring and flamboyant. The other, bleating and apologetic. Both are symptoms of capitalist degeneracy. The first, paints in violent contrasts. The canvas of the other is marked by feebleness of outline. But the final result is the same in both cases—a negative one. Ironically enough, both types invert the actual result, and imagine that they have accomplished something positive. Both proclaim the work of their hands as a creation of industrial peace and social order, as a promotion of proud progress.



In the practical struggles of the working class on the industrial and political field, both the dropsical and the anæmic forms of capitalism are in evidence. There is the capitalist who frankly proclaims that all interference with the conditions of his business, on the part of the workers' organizations, is an unwarrantable outrage upon his proprietorship. He would reply to the demands of labour in true

Rand fashion, with the logic of a twelve-pounder. And there is his appropriate type of political policy, that would render illegal in the name of "law and order," all agitation, and clap into prison all agitators, attempting to disturb the smooth workings of "the sacred law of supply and demand." There is, too, this flamboyant type's affectionate newspaper, which works itself up into a frenzy over every revolt of Labour, and with flaring headline, announces to the world, "Another Syndicalist conspiracy against the State," the antidote for which, it ironically enough sums up, under the editorial title: "General Botha's Victory."\* On the other hand there is the anæmic type, the capitalist "in whom there is no guile," whose tender eyes see, through tears, "the reasonable demands of labour"; who is ever ready to lend a listening ear to a "respectable body of trade unionists"; who with outstretched hands and appealing voice, says, "Come let us reason together in the Board room." To this attitude in the industrial field there is the corresponding political expression, in which "the native hue" of large promise, is so often "sicklied o'er with the pale cast" of small deeds. The hyper-sensitiveness of this class of politicians for the sufferings, as well as the dignity of labour, is a familiar phenomenon of the political campaign. Increasingly familiar are the workers also becoming with the fact, that so far as the results are concerned, this political hyper-sensitiveness on behalf of Labour, is a negative virtue. If on the outside, there is portrayed the charming spiritual picture of the Rights of Labour and the Rights of Capital walking arm in arm, along the road leading to the Board room and the Room at Westminster; on the other hand the Rights of Labour makes the return journey with less brotherly love in its heart and with a countenance more prosaic than poetic, more in anger than in sorrow. In the sphere of journalism we meet with this same apologetic, "on both sides at once," attitude, with the same negative sequel, characteristic of the other spheres of social activity.



The foregoing brief and broad analysis of those two reactionary tendencies in the more practical aspects of the capitalist attitude towards the working-class movement, leads us, in the next place, to observe the same two tendencies at work in the field of theory, or education. Public education has of course arisen from the necessities of capitalist production and its political consequences. The rise of the Labour movement, and its growth in power and militancy, both upon the industrial and political fields, has, however, evoked a new development in education, extending beyond the earlier limits of elementary education to what is called the "liberal education of the working-people." The best statement of this new development, setting forth its origin--as given by us in the preceding paragraph--and its direction, is to be found in the *Oxford and*

\* *Newcastle Chronicle*, January 17, 1914.

*Working-Class Education Joint Committees' Report.* (Oxford University Press, 1/-), from which we have quoted frequently in these pages. This new educational movement is summed up very largely in the Workers' Educational Association. It aims at "providing the working classes with at least the groundwork of University culture." It is from the University circles, that the directing power of this providential culture for the workers, is drawn. The necessary funds are derived from University resources, the Board of Education, Local Authorities, the donations of capitalist well-wishers, and in a much lesser degree from the affiliation fees of labour bodies, and the small payments made by students. In this educational enterprise the anæmic tendency reaches its highest point. It is capitalism taken to asceticism, to fleshlessness and bloodlessness. It beckons to an abstract world where the concrete struggles and antagonisms of this wicked world are abstractedly eliminated and overcome. But so far as the world of actual practice is concerned, there is the same negative result characteristic of the other spheres in which the pale anæmic figure walks. The abstract cannot be turned into the concrete. Although the W.E.A., in the words of its own handbook, is so lofty in its aspirations as to declare its education to be concerned "with life, not livelihood," it fails to make of its declaration anything more than an empty generalization. On the other hand, there is the blunt and outspoken capitalist view of this educational question, expressed as long ago as the period of the first French Empire, by a senator, named Garnier, in these words: "Ought we to expend a part of the money of the State in the attempt to confound two classes of labour (he means the class of industrial workers and the professionals) which are striving after division and separation." And it is only quite recently that we had the opportunity of hearing the views of Sir Hugh Bell and another of the same bourgeois breed by the name of Dixon, which were to the effect, that a knowledge of the three R's and of their particular occupation was the full complement of education necessary for the workmen in the interests of industrial progress. All attempts to go beyond this limit, they considered, were calculated to make the workers discontented, and to stir up industrial strife.

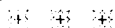


DID space permit, we could go on to show the existence of those two types in economic theory, in political theory, in ethics, in religion, and we suspect, even in art.

### **THE MOST DANGEROUS TYPE**

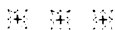
What must now be emphasized is the fact, that of those two types of capitalist tendency, the most dangerous from the point of view of the progress of the Labour movement, is not the type swollen with drosy and openly flaunting its determination to pursue its course heedless of costs and consequences, but that weak anæmic-looking type, with the altruistic platitude on its tongue. It is because it appears to be the most harmless that it is really the most

dangerous. And in no phase is the danger greater than in that of education—the education of the working class in social science. For this is capitalism's last line of defence. It is not the army, and the navy, and the police, that can in the last resort, delay the entry of Labour's triumphant forces into the enemy's capital. It is rather the lack of consciousness, the lack of clear ideas, the holding on to the confused intellectual baggage of capitalist thought, that at the last, holds back the working class from final victory. *The last line of defence is strong only in the degree that our first line of attack is weak.* True it is of course, that the sins of capitalism find it out, that capitalism cannot move without laying bare its innermost secrets. Hence it is, and this is the highest testimony to its decadence, that it has perforce to take up "the Higher Education of the work-people," so as to allay the restlessness of the patient with thoughts that may take away the mind of the patient from a consideration of the disease—from "livelihood" to "life."



SINCE 1909, there has arisen that movement for the promotion of a *bona fide* working-class education, which is expressed in the Central Labour College. As this movement arose out of the developments

**Our Criticism** that we have already referred to, and in opposition to them, it has of necessity followed, that the work of building up a genuine working-class education involved a continual criticism of the educational policy of the Workers' Educational Association, as well as of that of Ruskin College. To this criticism a reply is still owing. By far the larger part of that criticism is extended throughout the five volumes of our Magazine.



LET us briefly sum up the bases of that criticism. The work of theory with which education is concerned, *is useful, only in so far as it gives us a conscious domination over our practical life.* Science

### **The Relation of Theory to Practice**

classifies the objects of the world, arranges them in orderly system, and thus enables us to systematize our experience, in short, to accomplish an end with a reasonable certainty of success.

Practice is the test of theory. *If the theory be false, it will not enable us to accomplish practical success.* To have arrived at such a theory implies that its abstract arrangements of the concrete experience are faulty, and in some particular, contradict the actual experience.

The Labour Movement arises from a given social experience. It finds the conditions of its existence in that experience. It is faced with the necessity of solving a social problem. Before it can solve this problem it *requires a scientific theory of social experience.* Because only by this means can it establish a condition of society in which this problem ceases to be present. It must, in fine, arrive at a science of society—a social science.

This social science has already been opened. It arose out of the existence of the Labour movement. It came into being in order to explain the Labour movement, the appearance and struggle of a new class. It found the origin of this class, in the economic anatomy of capitalist society; and its struggle, in the inevitable antagonism of wage-labour and capital. The direction of this struggle was also discovered in the direction of capitalist development as expressed by the laws of its own being. The struggle found its consummation in the downfall of capitalism and the realization of a new order of society, upon the basis of the social control of social labour. The Labour movement, therefore, is but the organized expression of the struggle of the working class against capitalism, and is the bearer of the new social order. *It must be both a science and an art. It must develop its science in order to perfect its art.* It must extend its theory in order to consciously dominate its practice.

Just as however, from the very nature of the case, its art must be its own independent and self-sufficient work, so also must its science be equally independent in its organization. No more than it can find an ally outside itself in the industrial and political struggles, can it find the means for its theoretical development in the conventional thinking and training of the existing order. If there are two antagonistic conditions of life in society, each of them must of necessity involve antagonistic theories, or systems of ideas. An ideal harmony or an abstract neutrality, is, under the conditions of capitalist society, untenable. If the individual is *for* the Labour movement, he must be uniformly such, in theory, as well as in practice. For as we said at the outset, *a theory is only useful in so far as it can be successfully applied in practice.*

But surely truth is impartial? Quite so! But there are *conditions* necessary for gaining access to it. And in the case of social science, the disinherited have the easiest access to scientific results. Capitalism in the course of its development, disillusioning those who have to bear its burden, removes from their eyes the scales of capitalist tradition and prejudice. The mind of the worker is not dimmed by conventional training, such as is given in the Universities, while on the other hand, it is clarified by the experience of the factory and the workshop. He is not interested in maintaining modern society. He is therefore emancipated from its prejudices. "The party of the disinherited" says our philosopher, "is the party of the disinterested, is the party of impartial truth." And it is just this party of the disinherited that represents a society of no-class interests, but of the general interests and welfare—the common wealth. On the other hand, the ruling class members are least accessible to impartial truth, however much they may proclaim their devotion to it. They are interested in maintaining themselves on the top. The ruling class instinct of self-preservation compels it to defend its predominance. As a class therefore, it is blind to the science of society. *Its own selfish interests obstruct its mental view.* Those mentally trained in conven-

tional institutions are more or less affected by this blindness, and hence in spite of their diplomas and parchment, few there be from this quarter that are competent to scientifically interpret social experience.



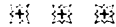
THE foregoing, while it justifies on the grounds of social science, the necessity of working-class education, constitutes at the same moment, a criticism of the "working-class education" of the Workers Educational Association species. And we cannot be accused of having been sparing in applying this criticism to the sayings and doings of the W.E.A. The designation of their education "working class," can mean no more than that the subjects of their teaching are to be drawn from this class. It certainly does not have *for them* the connotation that it has *for us*. It does not recognize the "class" in its concrete economic setting. It indulges in such anæmic language as, "educating the worker as a man," "a humane education," "an education that concerns life, not livelihood," "an education that is to be desired for its own sake and not because it has any direct bearing upon his wage-earning capacity." To those few selections there should be added the latest gem of "pure reason," which appears in a speech given by Mr. Albert Mansbridge, at the School of Mines and Industries in Adelaide, recently, viz.

They must have an educated democracy. Education, however, was not knowledge; it was a cultivation of a taste for knowledge.

Mr. Mansbridge has surely lived too late. Perchance the period of medieval scholasticism would have been more fitting for the consumption of such metaphysical brew. That of course the education he champions is "not knowledge," is a proposition we will not venture to dispute. For that would be to put ourselves in contradiction with the highest authority—and with the facts. Upon such hollow generalizations, such fleshless abstractions as, "education for its own sake" and "workers as men," is founded, "the desire to serve all classes of the community,"—the impartial, non-partizan, non-political character, of the Workers Educational Association,—and in this way it "boasts that it has helped many to the war against the ignorance and evil forces of our time." "Ignorance and evil forces"! How very clear and explicit is this! If one desiring education, were to ask whether "ignorance and evil forces" applied to the strikers at Leeds, or to the Corporation and its University strike-breakers, he would probably be reminded that "education was not knowledge but the cultivation of a taste for knowledge." "As a man," the querist would have to content himself with the taste. We have time and again shown how utterly impossible is this impartial, non-partisan policy, to the Labour movement that must in its very nature take up precisely the opposite attitude. If education for the working class cannot serve as a weapon of combat, then it may be consigned to the



ash-barrel as valueless. The very fact that these educational experts assert the possibility of such an attitude, is perhaps the best evidence of how little they understand the needs and experience of a class they presume to educate. But the impossibilism of their own policy came home to them with a vengeance, during the recent strike against the Leeds Corporation, when some of the fleshless devotees of humanity put on the flesh of capitalist knight-errants, when the pale flower of the W.E.A. intellect suddenly transformed itself into a more sensuous colour.



WITH the details of the strike at Leeds, we will not occupy any space. They are familiar without doubt, to the majority of our readers. It should open the eyes of a good many workers to what they formerly regarded as virtues in management of municipal undertakings. Scratch a City Father and you find a capitalist. The Corporation workmen at Leeds applied for an advance all round, of 2/- per man, per week. This was in August last.

**Those  
Bad Citizens  
of Leeds**

Then followed the usual workings of "sweet reasonableness" in the form of negotiations. As these had not materialized by the middle of October, a strike was threatened. But the elections were in November! The "reason" of the City Fathers was again in motion, and the Corporation was successful in securing an extension of time. "The Corporation gave the assurance," reported the *Yorkshire Post* (a Tory organ), "that the applications will receive prompt attention by all new Committees after the elections," But the elections came and passed without any florins being added to wages of the workmen. On the 11th December, the strike began, and the above quoted Tory oracle at once discovered that "Leeds was the victim of a deliberate Syndicalist experiment." We will not dwell upon the ironical fact that Will Thorne, whom the capitalists press described very touchingly as having administered a trouncing to the Syndicalists at the last Trade Union Congress, was actively engaged in backing up and conducting the dispute on behalf of the Gasworkers' Union. The Corporation had not succeeded in the scheme of "granting" an increase to *some* of its workmen, and thus dividing them. Neither did they succeed in their proposal to take the matter to arbitration. The game of "patience" had been played long enough, so far as the workmen were concerned. And so they "downed tools" and brought down on their head the usual denunciations, e.g. "disloyalty to the public"; "lack of civic spirit"; "injury to vital services," &c. &c. It is pertinent to remark here, that the indictment, "lack of civic spirit" or sense, is quite in accord with the W.E.A. conceptions of society. This body has done much for the manufacture of that queer entity "the citizen."

If we might again refer to the hand book of the W.E.A., entitled *Oxford and Working-Class Education Joint Committees Report*, there will be found on page 83, the following characteristic expression:—

The education which Oxford alone can give, by broadening his knowledge and strengthening his judgment, would make him at once a more efficient servant of his own society and a more potent influence on the side of industrial peace.

and again on page 51, we are told that this education is necessary for the workman, particularly "the Trade Union Secretary and the Labour Member," in order

that he may be a good citizen and play a reasonable part in the affairs of the world.

It is self-evident from the above what rôle the workman is intended to play *as a citizen*. It was the role that the Leeds Corporation desired their employees to fulfil. They agreed with the W.E.A. teaching, and were justified by it, in their demand that the workman should subordinate his workman-grievances to the "higher" duties of citizenship. But the workmen thought differently; and they translated the poetry of citizenship into the prose of docile wage-slavery.



BUT the W.E.A. relation to the civic upheaval at Leeds does not end at the point of its theoretical effects upon the "pillars of civic life" at Leeds. By no means! The University of Leeds was so

**What the University  
can do  
for the Workers!**

animated by the "ideals of citizenship," that it resolved to maintain those ideals by serving as an agency for the provision of blacklegs. Thus did the education, which the W.E.A. tells us, the Universities "alone can give," translate itself in practice; thus did it express "its potent influence on the side of industrial peace" by opposing to the striking workmen of the Leeds Corporation, the forces of professional scabbery. And there is after all no occasion for surprise. If the professors must teach their students that political economy which bolsters up the vested interests of Capital, it is merely an application of such teaching that the student strike-breakers have exhibited at Leeds. And there should be no more wonder evinced over such a connexion between theory and practice, than there would be if the students of the Central Labour College openly *identified themselves with a body of strikers*, in a similar dispute.\* There are really only those two positions that can be logically taken up. If you are *for*

\* BUILDING TRADES DISPUTE.

Resolution passed January 28th, 1914, and forwarded to the *Daily Herald* and *Daily Citizen*, also to the Secretary of the Building Trades Industries Federation. :—

That the students and staff of the Central Labour College vigorously protest against the insulting document submitted to the workers by the Master Builders' Association, to be signed as a condition of employment, and urge all Building Trade workers to oppose it to the utmost of their power.

We further agree to offer all the assistance possible to the Strike Committee in charge of the dispute.

Labour in theory, then you must be *for* Labour in practice. If on the contrary your theories are pro-capitalist, the practice must be similarly expressed. According to the W.E.A. the correct attitude at Leeds so far as the University educationalists were concerned, should have been *the attitude of neutrality*. The departure of Professor Saller from this position has occasioned much searching of heart in W.E.A. circles, both nationally and locally. Sadler is undoubtedly one of the "front row" in the promotion of W.E.A. policy, a fact that hits hard at that same policy. He is an ideal leader of the anæmic type, as the following quotation from his speech at the tenth Annual Meeting of the Workers Educational Association, held at Leeds, in October last, will show. The quotation is taken from the report of the *Yorkshire Post*. His address was entitled, "The Mystery of Language," and the selection given below will fortify the conviction that the English Language can be used for other purposes than intelligible communication, and that even a Professor may talk without necessarily conveying any information. However we are reminded of Mr. Mansbridge's dictum, that it is the business of education not to convey knowledge but rather the "taste" for it, and so we proceed to place the following before our readers for the stimulation of their palates:—

Proceeding, Mr. Sadler said that in the ordinary things of life few were more important to us than an observance of the course of time. We made our journeys by Bradshaw; we went to our offices by the clock; we recorded our engagements in diaries. Time, however impalpable a thing, was one of the stanchions of our life. On the other hand, in all the great moments of our experience, we entered into timelessness. We were brought into the presence of something which had no succession or sequence. In so far as history was an art, it achieved truth by the divination of eternal things lying under the vein of time. Similarly in regard to distance. Our relations to one another in space were of fundamental importance in daily experience. We knew how long it took to come from distant places to a conference at Leeds. We knew what a difference it made to be or not to be at a great meeting in which we desired to take part. And yet, in the deepest experience in life, distance was destroyed. A friend in China felt the presence of the friend in England when sympathy drew them into communion. Augustine and his mother, leaning on the sill of a window, looking into the garden of the house at Ostia, by degrees passed through all things bodily, even the very heaven, and came at last to their own minds, and went beyond them and arrived at length at the region in which things are as they have been and as they shall be for ever. This is the region which was the source of all truth and all learning—the region to which penetrated art, poetry and faith.

All this mystery-mongering is of course not without purpose. In a state of society where there is such urgent necessity for concealing the plain truth about that society from the gaze of the working class, it would never do to speak in plain language. And so that the "higher" class may continue on its "high horse" it is necessary that the lowly have in view some "higher" region where "things are as they

have been and shall be for ever." Happily it is not necessary to attempt to emulate Augustine and his mother in their strange adventures in a house at Ostia, nor to take any liberties with "time" and "space," in order to observe the prosaic actions of Professor Sadler at Leeds, on the occasion of the recent strike. When we consider the President of the Leeds W.E.A., in his capacity of citizen strike-breaker, it may be a little clearer why in his capacity of educationalist, he is so much taken up with regions of timelessness and spacelessness. But the local W.E.A. soon saw that Sadler's action was much more matter of fact than his mystic utterances. The local labour bodies promptly arose and refused to listen to his words of wisdom. Something had to be done speedily if the W.E.A. was to escape dissolution. So it at once repudiated the action of its President, and condemned the strike-breaking attitude of the University. On what grounds? That as an educational institution it should not take sides in the dispute; that Professor Sadler had violated the principle of "neutrality." And what was the smooth-tongued Professor's reply? Very much to the point so far as the W.E.A. was concerned. He answered them in terms which completely laid bare the impossibilism of their Association. He explained to them that his action was not to be interpreted as a violation of the spirit of neutrality, but that *as a citizen* he felt constrained to maintain "vital communal services." What more faithful interpretation of W.E.A. teaching could the local branch, or the National Executive of that body, desire of Citizen Sadler? Were they not concerned merely with the "worker as a man"? Very well, Citizen Sadler was, in the blacklegging episode, concerned with the man as a worker! And did not the W.E.A. proudly proclaim that education was "to be desired for its own sake"? What then had this to do with Citizen Sadler's action on behalf of the citizens, which merely had a "direct bearing on the wage-earning capacity" of the worker? Had not the educational policy been defined as one that concerned "life not livelihood"? True, Citizen Sadler had supplied scabs! But that was related to "livelihood"! Surely such sordid matters as "livelihood" were not the concern of the high-souled W.E.A.? True the strikers sought to secure a better livelihood. But had they not "life"? Citizen Sadler was not interfering with "life"! And "where there is 'life' there is hope"—and the W.E.A.

BUT there were three professors in Leeds University who resolved to be loyal to the W.E.A. spirit of neutrality. They "viewed with misgiving" the action of Citizen Sadler and the responsible heads of the University, and in the manifesto which they issued they ventured to suggest the calling of a conference. If they were innocent of the fact that the University was no neutral institution—and it is difficult

**What the W.E.A.  
cannot do  
for the Workers!**

to believe they were—they were speedily disillusioned. They were told without any circumlocution, that the University must be faithful

to the interests that sustained it, both in theory and in practice, and that therefore as professors of the University they should not be guilty of disloyalty toward its Executive head. Professor D. H. MacGregor replied on the first day of the new year, as follows.

### Professor Macgregor's Intervention

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Yorkshire Post*

SIR,—In reply to Professor Barr's letter in your issue of to-day, allow me to say that I cannot be open to any charge of disloyalty to the University or its Executive head, since I have not published any views on that aspect of the present dispute. I have expressly refrained from doing so while the strike lasts.

My only action has been to ask for conference. I still hope that the dispute may not terminate without some precedent for future conciliation having been established. A middle way, honourable to both sides, might still be found if an arbitrator sat on disputed cases with one or two assessors from each side. There are good precedents for this.

Yours, etc.,

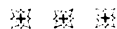
D. H. MACGREGOR.

Academy Villa, Maxwelltown, Dumfries.

*January 1st, 1914*

The "impossibilism" of the Workers' Educational Association is still further brought out by the action of Citizen Macgregor, which action this Association considers to have been the correct conduct. It only emphasizes the valuelessness of this Association to the working-class movement. Why it should be called "Workers' Association" is a mystery, seeing that when the workers most need it, it must shut its mouth and sit on the fence. In a resolution of protest against the action of the Executive Officers of the University of Leeds, it "*records its condemnation of such action and its conviction that a University being an institution which exists for all classes, should in no case intervene in this manner in a trade dispute.*" The italics are ours. What are we to say of such innocence as this? "The University being an institution which exists for all classes"! Such a view as this is only one more testimony to the incompetence of the W.E.A. to understand society as it is constituted to-day, and therefore its incompetence to assist that class, whose historical destiny it is to change that society. As we have before remarked, the Association prides itself upon the fact that it too, like the University, exists for all classes. Then why call its education by the name of "working class"? Why designate by the name of a class what stands for all, and is equally good for all classes? Is this confusion and contradiction entirely due to ignorance? Undoubtedly there is an element of malice aforethought at work within the W.E.A. And the action of Sadler at Leeds shows us his true native element. We are however not so much concerned about the motive as we are

about the results, and Leeds has offered us an excellent demonstration of the fact, that whether the result takes the form of actively opposing the workers *à la* Sadler, or the neutral position occupied by MacGregor, the W.E.A. is a negation so far as the Labour movement is concerned: and that it cannot supply the social science which the Labour movement requires for the conduct of its struggle against capitalism. *For such a science must be able to judge such situations as confront the movement* either industrially or politically, and therefore be able to give the movement guidance. *Were the workers in the right in demanding higher wages at Leeds? Are the workers justified in striking against the capitalists?* These are plain social questions. And it is the duty of a working-class education to answer them plainly, and without hesitation. *But these are just questions which the W.E.A. will not face.* Professor Sadler will express with great eloquence his thoughts upon the eternal truths "lying under the vein of time," thoughts which the English language is quite inadequate to convey. Mr. Mansbridge will with sham solemnity and flat phrases, deliver himself upon the necessity of beautifying "the minds of the common folk," and of stimulating "the lofty ideal of citizenship." But when it comes to a question of the labour-time of the workman and its division into two parts, when the matter of a strike for the improvement in the physical conditions of the so-called common folk takes practical shape, the W.E.A. have nothing to offer but the miserable statement, that in accordance with their non-partizan policy, *they cannot take sides.* The very best they can suggest, to quote from Professor MacGregor's letter, is "the hope that the dispute may not terminate without some precedent for future conciliation," and that "a middle way, honourable to both sides might still be found" through arbitration! Thus we see that from the point of view of Professor MacGregor, and this is characteristic of the W.E.A. conception of society, it is possible to reconcile the two sides, that in short, capitalism, like the University and the W.E.A., "ought to exist for all classes." It avails nothing in defence of the W.E.A. to plead that those questions are controversial. The very answer to the question, Why are those questions controversial? is sufficient to put the W.E.A. out of court, as an agency for the emancipation of Labour. If they were to effectively assist the working class, it could only be by facing those controversial questions and not by flying away from them. The controversy is nothing but the whole Labour problem. The controversial questions are but the reflex of contending classes. And it is precisely the function of working-class education to take part in the theoretical contention, and to draw from it, not negative results, but scientific results, which are positive and unequivocal.



It is to apply the scientific results already developed to the class struggle, and from that struggle to still further extend the science,

that the Central Labour College devotes its energies. If working-class education is to be used in the service of that class, then the workers must independently organize, control and direct it. These conditions are fulfilled in the C.L.C. movement. It does its work free

from any interference, from those who have yet to understand the first principles of social science. The proletariat can understand itself much better without a University culture, than with it. It, in this way, is not liable to be deceived or confused by conventional methods of thinking. To any intellectual who has emancipated himself from this culture of confusion, and who, understanding the working class, wishes to work for its triumph, there will be extended the hearty welcome as to a fellow soldier. But no one would expect him to assume either the position of Citizen Sadler or MacGregor! And herein is one of the safeguards of independent working-class education. No railwayman has any doubts as to what side the C.L.C. will take in a strike against the Railway Companies? It may sound self-righteous to talk in this way. We do not profess to be adepts in the spineless language of a spineless type that is ever halting by the fence and remaining there until the field is clear. We feel sure that the experience of the revolting workmen at Leeds will strengthen them for the fight of the future, and that it will already have served to tear the mask off the face of some of their former pretentious friends. For the rest, we can meanwhile say with Lassalle :

" Disguise  
Will never stand upon the stage of history,  
Where, in the masses turmoil, man is known  
But by his armour and device!"

W.W.C.

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## Plebeians Note!

A notice of motion has been sent in to endow two scholarships at the Central Labour College valued at £65 per annum each (including grants to students).

This will be discussed at the annual conference of the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees, to be held in London during April.

We appeal to all supporters of the C.L.C. who are Co-operative employees to bring the matter before their branches in order that the motion may be carried into effect. Sympathisers would render great assistance by stating the C.L.C. case wherever possible to A.U.C.E. branches. A vigorous movement will bring success.

J. G. MARSDEN,  
*Burnley Branch.*

## "Relief" to "Main"

(A Definite Working-Class Policy)

THE experience so dearly purchased by the working class during the past few years is so vivid in the mind of every intelligent worker that it is unnecessary to re-state even the most important events, to prove the necessity for a definite policy in the Industrial, Political, and Educational Departments of the Labour Movement.

As a mental rehearsal of the tragedy is more likely to bring out pictures of a few hero-leaders, or of many ignorant officers and followers, than of lost opportunities; and as neither hero-worship, nor recriminations on ourselves, or others, can save us from our enemies, I want to cast a glance forward, and help others to formulate a policy according to our needs as a *working* class, to persistently resolve that such a policy, when democratically set out, shall be adhered to by all of us in the interest of the *working* class, and to ensure that no instrument of our own manufacture shall be capable of preventing us changing such a policy whenever the changed conditions—as at the present time—demand an alteration.

Without reverting to the need for "craft" or "trade" policies by "Trade" Unions in the past, I think it necessary to emphasize that the Unions of the future must adopt a "*class*" policy, because unless that is done, we shall be wasting our substance against each other, instead of against the "class" that lives on our "unpaid" Labour, i.e., the difference between what we produce in value and what we are paid in wages.

When I speak, or write, of these opposing "classes," I do not thereby create classes, as has been very foolishly supposed by some members in each class; I merely set out what is becoming obvious that the Capitalist system of production for profit divides mankind in general, into two great distinct classes, one class working hard and living poorly; the other living high on the profits wrung from the poor, and that as the interest of the capitalist is to secure as much profit (as much of every pound produced by the workers) as possible, and as the interest of the worker is to secure as much as possible of every pound produced by him, there is a conflict of interests which is reflected in the industrial field by Trade Unions, in the political arena by the Labour and Socialist parties, and in the educational systems by the Central Labour College.

This brings me to the "**Main Line**" of Trade Unionism, namely: the "interest of the worker" as such, against the "interest of the capitalist" as such, unless, remembering a previous experience with the editor of a certain journal, I am allowed an interpolation about this "interest struggle" or "class war."

It may be true, and is, that some individual members of each class are opposed to a "war to the teeth," but it is true also that each



class is struggling (at war) with the other for a *brighter and more prosperous future* for their own class—themselves. It is also true that, except in this opposition, I am not more concerned with the condemnation of individual members of the capitalist class, than I am with certain actions of Trade Union officers that arrogate to themselves the title and authority of "Leaders."

Thus far I have set out five general principles for discussion, and I hope adoption, by organised workmen in general through their respective Unions, viz.: **A definite policy; democratically formulated; adhered to by all members; in the interest of our class; and making of non-fettering instruments** (as in rules, agreements, &c.)

I am sure those who are engaged in the running departments on OUR railways, will bear with me while I explain—for the benefit of those less conversant with the terms "Relief" and "Main"—that there are many private sidings and depôts where traffic is attached to goods and mineral trains standing on a "goods" or "avoiding" line; that before a train travels any considerable distance it is switched on to the "Relief" (in some cases termed "Slow") line, or the "Main" line to continue its journey, the most important trains travelling main line in preference to any other train, or line of rails.

For many years the organised railwaymen of this country were unorganised, the freight was neither "marshalled" nor "coupled" up, and when in 1911 the train was coupled and **consequently** switched on to the "Main Line," a great step forward was made, which has been of great educational value to the workers generally, and to railwaymen particularly.

The train was switched back on to the "Relief" by an enemy and owing to faulty "couplings" it "broke loose."

Some of the parts have been "remarshalled" and "recoupled"; brought from the "Avoiding Line"—where with petty "shunting" there was so great a fear of small accidents in the canvassing struggle for competitive traffic, and fighting for preference to enter certain "sidings"—on to the "Relief Line" with a "load" sufficient to go forward, but with too many passengers desiring those "refreshers" which a train on the Main Line travelling speedily to its destination afford so little opportunity for.

If the railwaymen, and other workers, are going to get on the Main line of Unionism *they* must know how to do the work of their own class without relief, or aid, from the enemy, either through the State or any other capitalist institution. Time wasted in the practice of being almost "forcibly fed" by capitalist theories, "sweetened to taste"; in administering the so-called State Insurance benefits; or in considering, and discussing, "draft rules" by the State for our adoption, only robs us of the opportunity—so sorely needed—of making our own machinery, preparing our own plans for the fight, and getting on with our own necessary work.

If the five general principles set out are generally adopted and pursued, the eyes of the workers will be always toward the goal of complete emancipation from wage-slavery, and every step taken will be a conscious and intelligent effort to give easy birth to the new social order now being formed in the womb of the present.

From this general policy there must arise, in the natural order of things, certain prominences that each industrial section must deal with specifically, even if the other industrial workers supply the ammunition and ensure the food supply.

With railwaymen, seamen, motormen, &c., it is necessary that a Conference representative of all workers in the Transport Industry, should as early as possible meet and resolve:—

1. Never to convey "scab" labour to a dispute area, nor make it possible for such to be conveyed.
2. Never to convey "troops," or "Police," to a strike area, because it is by the display, and use of state-force, and "scab" labour, that the capitalist secures victories over sections of the working class, and it is obviously our duty to support the wage workers, and not the profiteers.
3. Never to date agreements, or contracts about the supplying or withholding of Labour-Power, because it is an unnecessary manufacture of fetters for men in the same industry, as even the railwaymen may find in the future when necessarily breaking these self-made chains.

If we are strong enough to secure the eight-hour day for all railwaymen *we* do not gain extra strength by enacting that the same shall be in operation for a certain number of years. When some are demanding "recognition," the time-limit idea is never advocated in connexion therewith, and there is no more need for the more important and material matters to be bound by such a restriction. The strength to maintain lies in the best possible organization and methods, not in a piece of parchment.

4. To formulate a policy that shall encourage the complete "Fusion" of all purely Transport Unions, such as those of Railwaymen, Dockers, Draymen, &c., and a sound working agreement with such as may be termed Semi-Transport workers, such as Postal-Servants, for a Railway or Postal dispute, as for instance, either a "Tube" or Busmen's dispute in London, or in connection with Tramway workers in the provinces.

The consideration of these four proposals raise the question of negotiation and recognition, which railwaymen in particular would do well to grapple with, so that these, with the foregoing, may be discussed at the next Annual Meetings.

The only importance I personally attach to recognition is that of danger, lest the railwaymen get too much of a certain brand which is favoured by the employing class; the two are so bound together that if by "recognition" we mean negotiation only through a Trade Union office, or officer, the negotiation question can be very easily, though not very satisfactorily, disposed of.

If a national question, or programme, is the subject, the central body such as an Executive Council, with the officers, should negotiate. If a Programme or question affecting one railway only, then a railway Council or Conference. If a local question, then a local District Council, Branch, or groups of Branches.

When men are sufficiently well organized and educated in labour questions as to successfully fight any question, they, by the same strength and without strife will call to their aid, unchallenged, such men and machinery as they will.

There is a great fight ahead of us, and for that fight we must have men of strong **will** power to avoid catch-points, men that will, when necessary, translate that *will* into **action** in a whole-hearted and class conscious manner: men of **thought** to study the system of production and who will by Thought, Will, and Action, be able to take over, and use, for the workers, the earth and all that rightly belongs to them.

ERNEST EDWARDS,

*President West Midland District Council, N.U.R.*

## Shaw on Ibsen

*The Quintessence of Ibsenism: Now Completed to the Death of Ibsen*

By BERNARD SHAW (Constable, 3/6 net)



“**M**ODERN European literature and music,” declares Mr. Shaw in the final chapter of this book, “now form a Bible far surpassing in importance to us the ancient Hebrew Bible that has served us so long. The notion that inspiration is something that happened thousands of years ago, and was then finished and done with, never to occur again: in other words, the theory that God retired from business at that period and has not since been heard from, is as silly as it is blasphemous. He who does not believe that revelation is continuous does not believe in revelation at all, however familiar his parrots’ tongue and pew-sleepy ear may be with the word.

There comes a time when the formula Thus spake Zarathustra succeeds to the formula Thus saith the Lord, and when the parable of the doll’s house is more to our purpose than the parable of the prodigal son. . . . Ibsen has proved the right of the drama to take scriptural rank, and his own right to canonical rank as one of the major prophets of the modern Bible.”

So too, we may add, has Mr. Shaw. And *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* is one of the most edifying books in the new scriptures. A book by one major prophet on another major prophet has a dual interest. Mr. Shaw's book is far and away the best exposition of the works of the prophet Ibsen that has yet appeared; not least because it contains so much quintessential Shaw!

But let us be critical—even of the scriptures. Let us examine these two claims put forward by Mr. Shaw on behalf of Ibsen: (1) that Ibsen has proved the right of the drama to take scriptural rank (i.e., that the drama may discuss ideas, may be propagandist, may be, in short, the vehicle of a new 'gospel'); (2) that Ibsen has proved his own right to canonical rank as one of the major prophets of this Newest Testament.

There are still amongst us numberless Scribes and Pharisees (academic persons, that is, who are chiefly preoccupied with phrases and formulas) who deny to the drama a place in the scriptures. They stand at the corners of the streets and cry aloud (with variations) the words, "Art for Art's sake." They have "great argument, about it and about"; they refer to the voice of Authority (one Aristotle); and they insist that the cardinal dogma of the true faith declares that Art must not be didactic. Of them Mr. Shaw writes:

To this day they remain blind to a new technical factor in the art of popular stage-play making which every considerable playwright has been thrusting under their noses for a whole generation. This technical factor in the play is the discussion. Formerly you had in what was called a well-made play an exposition in the first act, a situation in the second, an unravelling in the third. Now you have exposition, situation, and discussion; and the *discussion is the test of the playwright*. . . . The discussion conquered Europe in Ibsen's *Doll's House*; and now the serious playwright recognizes in the *discussion* not only the main test of his highest powers, but also the centre of his play's interest.

Observe that Mr. Shaw meets the Pharisees on their own ground. They condemn the discussion-drama for reasons of technique; he accordingly defends it as a technical development—an inevitable development

if the drama was ever again to be raised above the childish demand for fables without morals. Children have a settled arbitrary morality: therefore to them moralising is nothing but an intolerable platitudinizing. The morality of the grown-up is also very largely a settled morality, either purely conventional and of no ethical significance . . . or else too obvious in its ethics to leave any room for discussion. Now when a play is only a story of how a villain tries to separate an honest young pair of betrothed lovers, to gain the hand of the woman by calumny, and to ruin the man by forgery, murder, false witness, and other commonplaces of the Newgate Calendar, the introduction of a discussion would clearly be ridiculous. There is nothing for sane people to discuss. . . .

But this sort of drama is soon exhausted by people who go often to the theatre. . . . An interesting play cannot in the nature of things mean anything but a play in which *problems of conduct and character of personal importance to the audience* are raised and suggestively discussed. . . .

This, then, is the extension of the old dramatic form effected by Ibsen. Up to a certain point in the last act, *A Doll's House* is a play that might be turned into a very ordinary French drama by the excision of a few lines, and the substitution of a sentimental happy ending for the famous last scene. . . . But at just that point in the last act, the heroine very unexpectedly (by the wiseacres) stops her emotional acting and says: "We must sit down and *discuss* all this that has been happening between us."

And since in the modern Bible discussion takes the place of dogmatic assertion, the discussion-drama cannot be denied scriptural rank. (It might be noted here that, as Mr. Shaw pointed out in the Prologue to *Fanny's First Play*, the very Pharisees who, in theory, condemn the discussion-drama are not, in practice, unintelligent enough to prefer popular melodrama, which conforms much more fully to their critical canons).

Let us proceed to consider the second of Mr. Shaw's claims—Ibsen's right to rank as a major prophet. What was this prophet's teaching? What problems of conduct and character did he discuss? What did he attack—for an acquiescent prophet is a contradiction in terms?

He attacked (says Mr. Shaw) Ideals and Idealism. He taught "that the real slavery of to-day is slavery to ideals of goodness." He discussed problems of conduct and character, as they affect present-day men and women, in relation to their ideals.

What Ibsen insists on is that there is no golden rule; that conduct must justify itself by its effect upon life and not by its conformity to any rule or ideal.

(Just as Art—of the drama or any other—must justify itself by its criticism of life, and not by its conformity to any rule or ideal).

The statement that Ibsen's plays have an immoral tendency is, in the sense in which it is used, quite true. Immorality does not necessarily imply mischievous conduct: it implies conduct, mischievous or not, which does not conform to current ideals. . . . *The main effect of his plays is to keep before the public the importance of being always prepared to act immorally.*

Ibsen preached the defiance of Duty (as currently understood). The last step in the evolution of the conception of duty, after man has successively outgrown his senses of (primal) duty to God, and then his sense of (primal) duty to his neighbour, is taken when

a sense at last arises in him of his duty to himself . . . The evangelist of this last step must therefore preach the repudiation of duty.

Just as in the past, "every step of progress has meant a duty repudiated, and a scripture torn up," so now we have to realize that "duty is the primal curse from which we must redeem ourselves before we can advance another step on the road."

Now when man grows brave enough to tear up the old scriptures,

he dares more and more to face facts and tell himself the truth. For in his infancy of terror and helplessness he could not face the most inexorable; and facts being of all things the most inexorable, he masked all the threatening ones as fast as he discovered them; so that now every mask requires a hero to tear it off. . . . The masks were his ideals; and what, he would ask, would life be without ideals? Thus he became an idealist, and remained so until he dared to begin pulling the masks off and looking the spectres in the face—dared, that is, to be more and more a realist. . . .

The idealist says, "Realism means egotism; and egotism means depravity." The realist declares that when a man abnegates the will to live and be free in a world of the living and free, seeking only to conform to ideals for the sake of being, not himself, but a 'good man,' that he is morally dead and rotten, and must be left unheeded to abide his resurrection, if that by good luck arrive before his bodily death.

So much for a general statement of the gospel of Ibsenism. We may now proceed to consider one or two of Mr. Shaw's analyses of individual plays—having been prepared "to learn without misgiving that a typical Ibsen play is one in which the leading lady is an unwomanly woman, and the villain an idealist." Mr. Shaw classifies the plays (commencing with *Brand*, written in 1866) into three groups; (1) the 'autobiographical extravaganzas,' *Brand*, *Peer Gynt* and *Emperor and Galilean*, which, though their theme was idealism, were all written "whilst Ibsen's intellectual consciousness of his theme was yet incomplete," and in which he simply portrayed sides of himself. (One may be permitted to regret that *The Pretenders*, being written before *Brand*, is not included in Mr. Shaw's list; though its omission provides an interesting exercise for the devout, who can test their grasp of the Shavian interpretation of the Ibsenist doctrine by applying it to this play). (2) The objective anti-idealist plays, from *Pillars of Society* (1877) to *Hedda Gabler* (1890), written when

having completed his analysis of idealism, he could now construct methodical illustrations for its social working. . . . With his eyes thus opened, instances of the mischief of idealism crowded upon him so rapidly that he began deliberately to inculcate this lesson by writing realistic prose plays of modern life, abandoning all production of art for art's sake. . . . No more verse, no more tragedy for the sake of tears or comedy for the sake of laughter, no more seeking to produce specimens of art forms in order that literary critics might fill the public belly with the east wind. The critics, it is true, soon declared that he had ceased to be an artist; but he, having some-

thing else to do with his talent than to fulfil critics' definitions, took no notice of them, not thinking their ideal sufficiently important to write a play about.

In the third group Mr. Shaw puts the last four plays Ibsen wrote, *The Master Builder*, *Little Eyolf*, *John Gabriel Borkman*, and *When We Dead Awaken*, declaring that although

his magic is extraordinarily potent in these four plays, and his purpose more powerful, yet the shadow of death is here ; for all four, except *Little Eyolf*, are tragedies of the dead, deserted and mocked by the young who are still full of life.

It is difficult to synopsisise Mr. Shaw's outlines, which are themselves synopses, of the plays. But we must attempt to do this in at least two or three instances.

Brand the priest is an idealist of heroic earnestness, strength, and courage . . . . He declares himself the champion, not of things as they are, nor of things as they can be made, but of things as they ought to be. Things as they ought to be mean for him things as ordered by men conformed to his ideal of the perfect Adam, who, again, is not man as he is or can be, but man conformed to all the ideals ; man as it is his *duty* to be. In insisting on this conformity, Brand spares neither himself nor anyone else . . . . Aspiring from height to height of devotion to his ideal, he plunges from depth to depth of murderous cruelty . . . .

His child dies from the severity of the climate, because he will not forsake his post. He forces his wife to give to a gipsy woman the dead child's clothes, only seeing in her desire to hold-back one little garment as a sacred relic "the imperfection of the imperfect Eve." She too dies, brokenhearted.

He calls upon his congregation to follow him to worship God in his own temple, the mountains. After a brief practical experience of this arrangement, they change their minds, and stone him. The very mountains themselves stone him, indeed, for he is killed by an avalanche.

It is only too easy for a new prophet to be misunderstood ; the orthodox, with whom words and phrases take the place of ideas, are slow to grasp all the implications of a new gospel. This was the case with *Brand*. "The edification with which the pious received the poem" was the beginning of Ibsen's European reputation !

Brand died a saint, having caused more intense suffering by his saintliness than the most talented sinner could possibly have done with twice his opportunities.

But Ibsen had to make his moral plainer before the Scribes, Pharisees, and Philistines realized his meaning. Even the first play of the definitely 'objective anti-idealist' series, *Pillars of Society*, was hardly successful in making his position quite clear. The conclusion come to in the last scene of that play, that 'Truth

and Freedom are the true pillars of society,' was not (so far as the words were concerned) likely to shock the orthodox. The new prophet had yet to make quite clear what he meant by the words Truth and Freedom. By the one he meant

the unflinching recognition of facts, and the abandonment of the conspiracy to ignore such of them as do not bolster up the ideals.

By Freedom he meant "freedom from the tyranny of the orthodox ideals." In his next play, *A Doll's House*, he accordingly took good care to avoid misconception. He 'went baldheaded' (as American Philistines express it) for "the sweet home, the womanly woman, and the happy family life of the idealist's dream." He insisted that this beautiful vision was based on the idea that a woman was a doll, with no right to call her soul her own. He invented, as we have already seen, a new technical 'form,' the discussion, and let the doll and her perfectly-irreproachable owner talk things out. And he brought down the curtain by making the doll slam the front-door behind her, on husband, home, and children. The slam of the door made the orthodox jump—at last!

But Ibsen had not done yet. The doll's highest duty, shouted the Pharisees, was to have sacrificed herself for the ideal, and stayed by her husband's side. So in his next play, *Ghosts*,

Ibsen returned to the charge with an uncompromising and outspoken attack on marriage as a useless sacrifice of human beings to an ideal. It is the story of a woman who has faithfully acted as a model wife and mother, sacrificing herself at every point with selfless thoroughness.

She has been tempted to go out and slam the door after her; has proposed to abandon her husband and live with a clergyman who is in love with her.

The clergyman recalls her to her duty, and makes her behave as a virtuous woman. She afterwards tells him that this was a crime on his part. Ibsen agrees with her, and has written the play to bring you round to his opinion.

The idealists were roused at last. Their shrieks were loud and long. Mr. Shaw fills three pages with specimens (diligently collected by Mr. William Archer) of English criticisms on this play when it was first produced in this country in 1891. "Candid foulness . . . Literary carrion . . . naked loathsomeness . . . garbage and offal"; these are some of the phrases which indicate what idealism is capable of in the way of hostile criticism. Ibsen was a "crazy fanatic," and his admirers "muck-ferreting dogs."

The crazy fanatic, having been denounced as an enemy of Society (for the criticisms of his countrymen had been on much the same level as those of their English prototypes), proceeded calmly to



write a play entitled *An Enemy of the People*, in which he and his critics, under a thin disguise, are the dramatis personæ.

The play deals with a local majority of middle-class people who are peculiarly interested in concealing the fact that the famous baths, which attract visitors to their shops and hotels, are contaminated by sewage. When an honest doctor insists on exposing this danger, the townspeople immediately disguise themselves ideally. Feeling the disadvantage of appearing in their true character as a conspiracy of interested rogues against an honest man, they pose as Society, as The People, as Democracy, as the solid Liberal Majority, and other imposing abstractions, the doctor, in attacking them, being of course thereby made an enemy of The People, a danger to Society, a traitor to Democracy, an apostate from the great Liberal party, and so on.

We are up against respectable ideals now with a vengeance. Democracy itself has some home truths to face.

All abstractions invested with collective consciousness or collective authority, set above the individual, and exacting duty from him on pretence of acting or thinking with greater validity than he, are man-eating idols red with human sacrifices.

Nor are we to conclude from this that Ibsen's position was Anarchism, which is merely "the idealization of the repudiation of Governments."

But we cannot quote the whole of the scriptures—*The Plebs* not being an ideal publication, but one strictly limited to a fixed number of pages. In play after play Ibsen developed his thesis. Mr. Shaw points out, in his plea for an Ibsen theatre, that

the plays, as they succeed one another, are parts of a continuous discussion; the difficulty left by one is dealt with in the next . . . . The plays should, like Wagner's Ring, be performed in cycles; so that Ibsen may hunt you down from position to position until you are finally cornered . . . .

And that is the end of the plays of Henrik Ibsen. The end, too, let us hope, of the *idols*,\* domestic, moral, religious, and political, in whose name we have been twaddled into misery and confusion and hypocrisy unspeakable. For Ibsen's dead hand still keeps the grip he laid on their masks when he first tore them off; and whilst that grip holds, all the King's horses and all the King's men will find it hard to set those Humpty-Dumpties up again.

It only remains to be stated that three volumes of the major prophet's plays are now published in the Everyman Series (1/-). One contains *A Doll's House*, *The Wild Duck*, and *The Lady from the Sea*, all three realistic 'objective anti-idealist' dramas; a second volume contains *The Pretenders* (written previous to *Brand*), *Pillars of Society*, and *Rosmersholm*; and a third, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *The Warriors of Helgeland* (another early historical play). So that important sections of the new Bible are obtainable at a moderate price.

J. F. HORRABIN.

\* Synonym for *ideals*.



THE LABOUR "GIANT."

*The Gentleman in Cap and Gown (to his Employer):—*"Keep that weapon in the background, my dear sir. Let me try the effect of kindness."

Drawn for *The Plebs* by Harold Batho.

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