

# “Plebs” Magazine

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We have received the following statement with a request that it be published in the *Magazine*. We think it of sufficient importance to warrant our holding over the Editorial to permit of this being done. The comments in brackets are those of the Executive of the Central Labour College.—Ed.

## Central Labour College & Ruskin College

### Correspondence *re* Suggested Amalgamation.

**T**HE following correspondence will be better understood if three points are kept in mind—(i.) That the aim of the Central Labour College is to have an educational institution democratically controlled by elected representatives of contributing Labour Organisations and to provide a training and institution in Social Science to meet the requirements of organized Labour—social, industrial and political. (ii.) That St. John's College, Oxford, who are the ground landlords of the houses occupied by the Central Labour College have requested the College to vacate their present premises in August next. The College agreed to this arrangement to protect their immediate landlords (two elderly women in straightened circumstances) from harsh and unfair treatment by St. John's College. Before entering into further obligations in the matter of premises, they wished to find out whether their educational programme could be secured by some reasonable arrangement with Ruskin College on the basis outlined above. This object has not been achieved and the Central Labour College will therefore continue its separate existence. (iii.) That the advances made by the Central Labour College were made in good faith and in the interests of the educational requirements of the Labour Movement. It appears that they have been construed by Ruskin College authorities as evidence of weakness, and on two separate occasions, as will be seen from letters printed below, they have attempted to use the overtures made in a decidedly unfair manner.]

Central Labour College,  
3 Bradmore Road, Oxford,  
Feb. 25, 1910.

To REV. A. J. CARLYLE,  
Ruskin College.

Dear Sir,

I am instructed by the Provisional Committee of the Central Labour College—

1. To forward enclosed resolution.
2. To inform you that if such a conference is to be held it must be on or before the 15th of March, as we are compelled to take or purchase other premises, seeing that we must leave here.

I take it that the conference would be held in Oxford, either at Ruskin or here, as your Council may prefer.

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

(Copy of Resolution).

The Central Labour College was founded to offer education strictly under the control of those Labour organizations sending students. Since then Ruskin College has offered control on almost identical terms. Hence there has arisen a new situation, and two colleges, so apparently similar in aim, may divide the Labour Movement to the detriment of education.

We therefore invite the Council of Ruskin College to appoint four representatives to meet four representatives of the Central Labour College to see if some understanding can be arrived at, by which the two Colleges might become one, if Ruskin College is willing to entertain the idea of an amalgamation in a friendly spirit.

Feb. 26, 1910.

Dear MR. HIRD,

I am much obliged to you for your letter and resolution and will call together the Ruskin College Executive as soon as possible to consider it.

Yours truly,

A. J. CARLYLE,

*Hon. Sec.* Ruskin College Executive.

[About this time friends of Mr. Hird in York had arranged a delegate meeting of Labour organizations to hear a report of the dispute at Ruskin College and the work of the Central Labour College, and a representative from the Executive of Ruskin College was also asked to attend. The following letter was sent to the Convener of this meeting] :—

To J. W. BEAL, ESQ.

Ruskin College, Oxford,  
March 2, 1910.

Dear Sir,

Is there any idea of abandoning the Conference at York? I ask because I have reason to suppose that the Committee of the Central Labour College has under consideration the possibility of *winding up*. If there is no need for us to send delegates, will you kindly wire me to that effect as it is essential that I should let Mr. Jones know immediately.

Yours very truly,

HAWTIN SHURROCK, *Acting Secretary*,

[It would be interesting to know who gave Mr. Shurrock this information and authorized him to send the above letter.]

March 3, 1910.

Dear MR. HIRD,

It has been suggested to me that it might save time if the Committee of the Central Labour College should be disposed to put down some of the points which they would wish to be considered by the Conference which they suggest. I could put these before the Executive of Ruskin at the meeting which has been called.

Yours truly,

A. J. CARLYLE.

March 4, 1910.

Dear MR. CARLYLE,

I have not been able to see the Committee yet, but it seems to me that, if there should be a conference, the best basis would be the *new* constitution of Ruskin College and the "Standing Orders" of this College. Any small points of difference would then be discussed.

I will try and have the "Standing Orders" sent to you soon. With thanks.

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

March 6, 1910.

Dear MR. HIRD,

I laid your letter with the enclosed resolution before the Executive Committee of Ruskin College yesterday afternoon, and I am instructed to inform you that Mr. D. J. Shackleton, Mr. C. W. Bowerman, Professor Lees Smith, and myself have been appointed to meet the representatives of the Central Labour College, to hear what they propose, and to report to the Executive Committee.

The day and time we would propose for the meeting is Thursday, March 10th, at 3.15 p.m. at the House of Commons. I shall be glad to hear from you confirming the date and also giving us the names of the four representatives of the Central Labour College.

Yours truly,

A. J. CARLYLE.

March 8, 1910.

Dear MR. CARLYLE,

Our representatives will meet yours at the House of Commons at 3.15 on Thursday next. Our four are Messrs. Barker, Charles, Sims, and myself.

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

[The Conference was held as arranged and the three following points were put forward by Central Labour College and discussed:

1. (a) That the whole of the Council of College consist of directly elected representatives of contributing Labour organizations, or (b) that 75% consist of such members, the remaining 25% to include ex-students and members of College Staff.

2. That the curriculum shall provide adequate teaching for both sides where different schools of thought exist, e.g. in the social sciences: the official teaching always definitely being that in line with the objects and aims of the Labour Movement.
3. That the Staff of such College be jointly appointed by the two Colleges now existing.

Nothing definite was decided at this meeting. This will, perhaps, be better understood if we mention two of the points put forward by Ruskin College Representatives:—

Mr. Bowerman, "I put it to you that there are 19 students at the Central Labour College at present, and that 16 of these are leaving at Easter, therefore in the event of an amalgamation, we shall have three students to take over."

Prof. Lees Smith, "Ruskin College will consider this on a cash-basis. What is your financial position?"

The answers were, "that we have, and have made arrangements to continue for the year with, twenty students; that in the event of a satisfactory arrangement with Ruskin College, on questions of principle, we would be prepared to conclude our obligations for the current College year and accept full responsibility for obligations incurred, the new arrangements to commence from that time."

It appeared to us that Ruskin College had never seriously considered an amalgamation on terms of *equality*.]

15 March, 1910.

Dear MR. CARLYLE,

According to the arrangements you kindly made a meeting took place at the House of Commons, between your representatives and ours, on Thursday 10th inst. Your representatives are in possession of our views on the three following points:—

1. The Democratic constitution of Council.
2. Nature of Curriculum.
3. The joint appointment of Staff.

We shall be obliged, therefore, if your Council would inform us whether they will agree to amalgamation of the two Colleges on these lines.

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

[About this time the Executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants were considering the question of their future relations with the Central Labour College in order to carry out the resolution of the Annual General Meeting of that body which decided to withdraw from Ruskin College and support the Central Labour College if certain conditions were fulfilled. We learn later that the Executive of Ruskin College placed copies of our correspondence to them before the Railway Servants Executive, thus conveying the impression that Ruskin College were favourable to an amalgamation. The result being that the decision of the former body was deferred till June.]

March 19th, 1910.

Dear MR. HIRD,

The representatives of Ruskin College reported to the Executive Committee on the Conference held between them and the Central Labour College at our meeting last Thursday. I am instructed to ask the representatives of the Central Labour College to be so kind as to forward to the Executive Committee the questions, which it was agreed at the Conference that they should send.

Yours truly,

A. J. CARLYLE.

23 March, 1910.

Dear MR. CARLYLE,

Our approach to Ruskin College was a genuine attempt to stop the war between the two Colleges for the good of education in the Labour Movement. We were hardly met in this spirit by your representatives. We are willing to leave things as they are and maintain our own position. The matter is now in *your* hands. If we can have the assurance of your Executive that they genuinely wish to make the two Colleges one, provided that we could agree on general principles and also arrange details, then we would submit the general principles which we put before your representatives in Conference. So far, we have had no statement from you, whether you wish the two Colleges to be joined or not.

Will your Executive, therefore, say, first of all, whether they wish the two Colleges to become one or not?

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

April 4, 1910.

Dear MR. HIRD,

[Former part deals with another matter.] In the meantime we shall be glad if you can send us the particulars which, as we understand from our representatives, you were to send to our Executive.

Yours truly,

A. J. CARLYLE.

6 April, 1910.

Dear MR. CARLYLE,

I have placed your letter before our Committee, and I am instructed to say that our letter, asking if Ruskin College really desires to unite the two Colleges, remains unanswered. Until it is answered we can do no more. If we have no answer within a week, we shall conclude that you have no wish to unite the two Colleges.

I am also instructed to say that we consider it distinctly dishonourable on the part of Ruskin College to have sent a copy of our letter *re* the uniting of the two Colleges, to the Executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, *before* the matter was in any form to be made public.

Yours truly,

DENNIS HIRD.

[No reply to this letter has been received.]

## Dismissed

**I** DEEM it my duty in justice to myself and, in particular, to the students whose work has come under my notice, to explain the reasons why I am no longer examiner to the Correspondence Department of Ruskin College, Oxford.

The Founder of the College, Mr. Walter Vrooman, regarded the Correspondence Department as a vital part of his educational scheme, and I was appointed by him examiner to the Department. Three other men were about the same time appointed as members of the College staff: Messrs. Dennis Hird (Principal), H. B. Lees Smith, and Bertram Wilson, and we four formed a faculty for the management of the affairs of the College.\*

I served eleven years in my position, having been re-appointed on the 22nd of February, 1903, for a period of seven years, which expired on the 22nd of February, 1910.

The first intimation which I received of the desire on the part of the College authorities to dispense with my services was a letter on the 29th of January, 1910, from Dr. Gilbert Slater, Resident Lecturer in Sociology to Ruskin College, in which he assumed that I intended to sever my connexion with the College, and also spoke of changes contemplated in the work of the Department.

I was naturally surprised to learn that changes had been discussed without any intimation of the same having been given me previously as examiner, and I replied that I had no intention of severing my connexion or I should have given due notice, and I also intimated the same in letters to the Executive Committee and the Council, together with an application for re-appointment. Dr. Slater replied that the Executive Committee would have to consider carefully the work of the Department in view of the decline in the number of essays; he pointed out the very great falling off in the month of January last, and that it was difficult for one man to deal with such a variety of courses as those embraced by the Department.

I stated, in reply, that the decline was, in my opinion, attributable to two causes:—

- (i.) The recent troubles in connexion with the College which had caused a falling off in the number of students;
- (ii.) The General Election.

I also pointed out that I had, in times past, asked the Council that a magazine be started to help the Department, together with an office for the better carrying out of my work, but that neither of these

\* I wish to emphasize this fact since, in "The House of Commons," published by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, it is stated that Mr. Lees Smith is one of the founders of Ruskin College. The same might be said of myself, but both statements are equally untrue and absurd.

requirements was granted. It became obvious to me that the department would be, owing to the changes suggested, much less efficient in the future than it had been in the past. I was offered a position as examiner of essays which would have probably given me an income of only a few shillings weekly, instead of the fixed salary I had received. The subjects which I should have undertaken had I accepted the offer were such as are considered of less importance by the College. I then issued a circular letter to the individual members of the Council in which I embodied my contentions and asked for re-appointment. The meeting of the Council was held formally on the 22nd of February, but was adjourned. On that day, which terminated my seven years' appointment, the College discontinued sending me essays, thus summarily dispensing with my services.

As the Council meeting was adjourned till the 17th of March, upon which day my application for re-appointment was to be heard, the termination of my eleven years' service of the College, with aractically no notice, is, considering the circumstances of the case is shown above, somewhat questionable. The meeting was held on the above day; there were present Miss Weld, Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P. (Chairman) Professor Lees Smith, M.P., Messrs. Shackleton, M.P., Leon, Dunn, Berry, the Rev. A. J. Carlyle, and another gentleman whose identity I could not determine, while Dr. Slater and one of the clerks represented the College. I withdrew while the business of the correspondence department was being discussed, and was subsequently asked to give my opinion.

In my remarks upon the department, I recapitulated the reasons given to Dr. Slater and, subsequently, to the Council, in writing, for its decline, urging its continuance upon the old lines. Dr. Slater interviewed me subsequently, telling me that the Council had decided not to re-appoint me examiner to the Correspondence Department, that I could have resigned on the 22nd of February and no objection could have been made by the Council. I said that I should not have dreamed of doing such a thing, and that otherwise I should have given six months' notice from the 22nd of August last. He said that the Council had decided to pay me a sum of £30. Adverting to the circumstances of my appointment by the Founder of the College and my lengthy term of service, together with the suddenness of my dismissal, I think it will be allowed that this "solatium" is miserably inadequate. Upon re-entering the room to get my hat and coat, I was treated with marked discourtesy by Professor Lees Smith, who was then acting as chairman, and evidently resented my presence; and he enquired whether I had been summoned again by the Council. It is possible that this exhibition of bad taste may have been attributable to fright on the part of the Professor; business relating to "ourselves v. Hird" was the next item on the agenda, and he may

have feared that I intended to remain to hear this! I then left the room, no word of regret or of leave-taking being uttered by any member of the Council.

Professor Lees-Smith was for a number of years a colleague of mine and our relations had been apparently always friendly. He, nevertheless, junior to myself in age and connexion with Ruskin College, thought it fit to sit in judgment on me, a course of action which, one would have thought, no man of taste or feeling would have adopted. His associates on the Council and the Executive Committee, then present, have followed his lead, being unable apparently to realize the peculiarity of his conduct. We may urge that such conduct does not encourage hopes that the re-organization will be really democratic.

I have now given a resumé of matters leading to my compulsory withdrawal from the College.

I am inclined to look more deeply for causes which resulted in my withdrawal than those given by Dr. Slater in his correspondence with me. In one of his letters he has used these words referring to the decline in the number of essays: "This has, of course, nothing to do with the efficiency of your work; it is probably the result of the development in other methods of carrying on educational work of this sort." If no blame is to be attached to me, why was I subjected to such cavalier treatment?

A friend has remarked, "It is evident there was some animus against you." I have, however, been told that "at the Executive Committee, the tone towards you was quite friendly, and, I may say, appreciative." In the words of the poet one may say: "It was all very well to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me down-stairs?" So ends my work with Ruskin College as Examiner of Essays.

It is proposed to establish a Correspondence Department in connexion with the Central Labour College, Oxford, under the guidance of myself, the secretarial work also being under my control.

Next month a fuller statement will be given of the work of the Correspondence Department in the Central Labour College, which we are sure will be of such a character as to recommend itself to readers of the *The Plebs Magazine* and to my old correspondence students.

A. J. HACKING.

Will all Manchester Plebeians communicate with MR. JOHN OWEN, 331, Stretford Road, Hulme.

Two ex-students of Ruskin College are contesting offices in Amalgamated Society of Engineers—Mr. Sykes for Executive, and Mr. F. Stewart, as delegate to General Federation of Trades Annual Meeting. Both reside in Glasgow area. Ruskinians and C.L.C. men would welcome the news of their success and both were held in high esteem in their Oxford days.



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## Definition of Sociology

SO far as the definition of sociology is concerned, it is simply the science of society, or the science of social phenomena. All the more specific definitions that have been proposed have created more confusion than they have cleared up. What is needed in sociology is not definitions, but a clear presentation of the scientific principles underlying it. There is one such principle, failure to recognize which causes most of the difficulty in endeavouring to establish the science. This principle, however, is one that also applies to psychology, biology, and all the other sciences classed as 'complex'—to the biological sciences and the moral sciences. This principle may be formulated as follows :

*In the complex sciences the quality of exactness is only perceptible in their higher generalizations.*

Or, since exactness, i.e. uniformity, invariableness, reliability, &c., is what constitutes scientific law, the same truth may be simplified and reduced to the following form :

*Scientific laws increase in generality as the sciences to which they apply increase in complexity.*

In sociology, therefore, which is the most complex of the sciences, the laws must be the most highly generalized. I shall not attempt to do more here than bring forward a few illustrations of the above propositions. It is clear that the method of sociology is essentially that of generalization, i.e. of grouping phenomena and using the groups as units. Nature works by this method, for example, in chemistry, where it is believed that the higher compounds have as their units compounds of lower orders.

Social phenomena are obtrusive, ever-present, multitudinous. Their very proximity is a bar to their full comprehension. This I have called the 'illusion of the near,' and likened it to trying to see a city or a forest while in its midst. The near is indefinite and unsymmetrical. It presents a multitude of dissimilar, heterogenous objects. They appear to be without order. To see order in them they must be seen from a distance. Beauty is almost a synonym of order. A landscape is beautiful because distance has reduced its chaos of details into order. A mountain seen at a distance is a symmetrical object of rare beauty, but when one is climbing it the rocks and crags, the ridges and gulches, the trees and prostrate logs, the brush and briars, constitute a disordered mass to which the term beauty does not apply. It is much the same with social phenomena. They must be seen as it were, at long range, which brings groups of facts into relief and shows their relations,

What Dr. Edward B. Taylor has called 'ethnographic parallels,' viz. the occurrence of the same or similar customs, practices, ceremonies, arts, beliefs, and even games, symbols and patterns, in peoples of nearly the same culture at widely separated regions of the globe, proves, except in a few cases of known derivation through migration, that there is a uniform law in the psychic and social development of mankind at all times and under all circumstances working the same results. The details will vary with the climate and physical conditions, but if we continue to rise in the process of generalization we shall ultimately reach a plane on which all mankind are alike.

Even in civilized races there are certain things absolutely common to all. The great primary wants are everywhere the same, and they are supplied in substantially the same way the world over. Forms of government seem greatly to differ, but all governments aim to attain the same end. Political parties are bitterly opposed, but there is much more on which all agree than on which they differ. Creeds, cults and sects multiply and seem to present the utmost heterogeneity, but there is a common basis even of belief, and on certain occasions all may and sometimes do unite in a common cause.

Not only are the common wants of men the same, but their passions are also the same, and those acts growing out of them which are regarded as destructive of the social order and are condemned by law and public opinion, are committed in the face of these restraining influence with astonishing regularity. This is not seen by the ordinary observer, and every crime or breach of order is commonly looked upon as exceptional. But when accurate statistics are brought to bear upon this class of social phenomena they prove to be quite as uniform, though not quite so frequent, as the normal operations of life.

The ordinary events of life go unnoticed, but there are certain events that are popularly regarded as extraordinary, notwithstanding the fact that the newspapers every day devote more than half their space to them. One would suppose that people would some time learn that fires, and railroad accidents, and mine disasters, and boiler explosions, and robberies, and defalcations, and murders, and the whole list of events that make up the daily news, were normal social phenomena. Nearly every one of them has occurred nearly every day in nearly every country in the world during the lives of us all and those of our fathers and grandfathers. But this enormous mass of evidence has no effect whatever in dispelling the popular illusion that such events are extraordinary. There is nothing new in 'news' except a difference in the names. The events are always the same. All this applies equally to those larger events that make up the bulk of what is popularly understood as human history. Viewed from the standpoint of sociology, history contains nothing new. It is the continual repetition of the same thing under different

names. This is what is meant by generalization. We have only to carry it far enough in order to arrive at unity. Society is a domain of law and sociology is an abstract science in the sense that it does not attend to details except as aids in arriving at the law that underlies them all.

We may call this the *sociological perspective*. It is the discovery of law in history, whether it be the history of the past or the present, and including under history social as well as political phenomena. There is nothing very new in this. It is really the oldest of all sociological conceptions. The earliest gropings after a social science consisted in a recognition of law in human affairs. The so-called precursors of sociology have been those who have perceived more or less distinctly a method or order in human events. All who have done this, however dimly, have been set down as the heralds of the new science. Such adumbrations of the idea of law in society were frequent in antiquity. They are to be found in the sayings of Socrates and the writings of Aristotle. Lucretius sparkles with them. In medieval times they were more rare, and we scarcely find them in St. Augustine, but Ibn Khaldoun, a Saracen of Tunis, in the fourteenth century gave clear expression to this conception. His work, however, was lost sight of until recently, and Vico, who wrote at the close of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth, was long regarded as the true forerunner of Montesquieu. Still, there were many others both before and after Vico, and passages have been found reflecting this general truth in the writings of Machiavelli, Bruno, Campanella, Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Adam Smith, Ferguson, Fontenelle, Buffon, Turgot, Condorcet, Leibnitz, Kant, Oken, &c.

The theologically inclined, when this truth was brought home to them, characterized it by the phrase 'God in history,' and saw in the order of events the divine hand guiding the acts of men toward some predestined goal. This is perhaps the most common view to-day outside of science. But science deals with phenomena. Sociology therefore can only become a science when human events are recognized as phenomena. When we say that they are due to the *actions* of men, there lurks in the word 'actions' the ghost of the old doctrine of free will, which, in its primitive form, asserts that any one may either perform a given action or not according as he may will. From this point of view it is not supposed that any event in human history need have occurred. If the men whose actions caused it had willed otherwise it would not have occurred.

The scientific view of history is that human events are phenomena of the same general character as other natural phenomena, only more complex and difficult to study on account of the subtle psychic causes that so largely produce them. It has been seen more or less clearly by the men I have named and by many others that there must be causes, and the philosophy of history that gradually emerged from

the chaos of existing history was simply an attempt to ascertain some of these causes and to show how they produced the effects. To those who make the philosophy of history co-extensive with sociology this is all that sociology implies. Certainly it was the first and most essential step in the direction of establishing a science of society. The tendency at first was strong to discover in the environment the chief cause of social variation, and some authors sought to expand the term *climate* to include all this. This doctrine was of course carried too far, as shown by the saying that mountains make freemen while lowlands make slaves.' It was found that this was only half of the truth, that it took account only of the objective environment, while an equally potent factor is the subjective environment: "Those that beyond sea go, will sadly find they change their climate only, not their mind." Character, however acquired, is difficult to change and must be reckoned with in any attempt to interpret human events. This expanded, the study of society from this point of view becomes a true science, and recently it has been given the appropriate name of *mesology*. The great influence of climate and physical conditions must be fully recognized. It reaches back into the domain of ethnology and physiology and doubtless explains the colour of the skin, the character of the hair, and the general physical nature of the different races of men. The psychic effects of the environment are scarcely less important, and the qualities of courage, love of liberty, industry and thrift, ingenuity and intelligence, are all developed by contact with restraining influences adapted to stimulating them and not so severe as to check their growth.

The social effects are still more marked. We first see them in the phenomena of migration and settlement and the ways in which men adapt themselves to the conditions, resources and general character of the region they may chance to occupy. The question asked by the traditional boy in the geography class, why the large rivers all run past the great cities, illustrates how clearly everybody sees natural law at work in society. It is the laws of society that determine the direction in which population moves. For example, in peoples at all advanced the head of navigation of rivers is usually the site of the principal towns. A short time ago, when water was more used than now as a power, there was usually combined with the advantages offered by the head of navigation (vessels being then smaller than now), the additional advantage of the fall in the stream, which is almost always greatest at the point where the piedmont plateau joins the coastal plain. As streams only reach their base level after emerging upon the coastal plain, this sudden fall almost always occurs a short distance above the head of navigation. As this is true of all the streams that drain a continent, a line may be drawn through this point on all the rivers and it will be approximately parallel to the coast. Such a line is called the 'fall line,' and it is a law of population that the first settlements of any country take place along the fall line of its rivers.

There are many laws that can be similarly illustrated, and careful observation reveals the fact that all social phenomena are the results of its laws. The one example given must suffice in the present case. But these social, or sociological, laws may themselves be grouped and generalized, and higher laws discovered. If we carry the process far enough we arrive at last at the fundamental law of everything psychic, especially of everything affected by intelligence. This is the *law of parsimony*. It has, as we shall see, its applications in biology, and its homologue in cosmology, but it was first clearly grasped by the political economists, and by many it is regarded as only an economic law. Here it is usually called the law of *greatest gain for least effort*, and is the basis of scientific economics. But it is much broader than this, and not only plays an important rôle in psychology, but becomes, in that collective psychology which constitutes so nearly the whole of sociology, the scientific corner stone of that science also.

We have seen that the quality of scientific exactness in sociology can only be clearly perceived in some of its higher generalizations, where, neglecting the smaller unities which make its phenomena so exceedingly complex, and dealing only with the large composite unities that the minor ones combine to create, we are able to handle the subject, as it were, in bulk. Here we can plainly see the relations and can be sure of their absolute uniformity and reliability. When we reach the law of parsimony we seem to have attained the maximum stage of generalization, and here we have a law as exact as any in physics or astronomy. It is, for example, perfectly safe to assume that under any and all conceivable circumstances, a sentient and rational being will always seek the greatest gain, or the maximum resultant of gain—his 'marginal' advantage.

Those who affect to be shocked by such a proposition fail to understand it in its full breadth. They think that they themselves at least are exceptions to the law, and that they do not always seek their greatest gain, and they give illustrations of actions performed that result in a loss instead of a gain. This is because they understand by gain only pecuniary gain, or only gain in temporary enjoyment or immediate satisfaction. If they could analyse their feelings they would see that they were merely sacrificing a present to a future advantage, or what they regard as a lower to what they regard as a higher satisfaction. When Henry Clay said (if he did say it) that 'every man has his price,' he may have merely stated this law in a new form. If we make the important qualification that the 'price' is not necessarily a money price, we may see that the statement contains a truth. Even in the lobby, which he probably had in mind, it is well known that downright bribery is very rarely resorted to. It is among the least effective of the lobbyist's methods. There are other far more successful as well as less expensive ways of gaining a legislator's vote. Passes on rail-

roads and other favours of that kind are much more common, but even these are relatively coarse and transparent, and the great vested interests of a country know how to accomplish their ends by much more subtle means. It is only necessary to put those whom they desire to influence under some form of obligation, and this is usually easy of accomplishment. Among the most effective means to this end are social amenities and the establishment in apparently the most disinterested ways of a friendly *entente*, which appeals to the sense of honour and makes any man ashamed to act contrary to the known wishes of a friend. Under such imperative influences as these constituencies are easily forgotten.

But this is by no means the whole meaning of the law. It deals solely with motives, and worthy motives are as effective as unworthy ones. It is based, it is true, on interest, but interest is not always bad. It is much more frequently good. It was necessarily good, at least for the individual, in the beginning, since it had the mission to impel life- and race-preserving activities. Interest may be perverted, but this is the exception. Men feel an interest in doing good, and moral interest is as real as any other. Ratzehofer shows that men have been profoundly moved by what he calls 'transcendental interests,' which he defines as a reaching out after the infinite, and to this he attributes the great religious movements of society. If therefore we take into account all these different kinds of interest, physical, racial, moral, social and transcendental, it becomes clear that all action is based on supposed gain of one or other of these orders.

Still, the world has never reached a stage where the physical and temporary interests have not been paramount, and it is these upon which the economists have established their science. Self-preservation has always been the first law of nature, and that which best insures this is the greatest gain. So unerring is the law that it is easy to create a class of paupers or mendicants by simply letting it be known that food or alms will be given to those who ask. All considerations of pride or self-respect will give way to the imperious law of the greatest gain for the least effort. All ideas of justice which would prompt the giving of an equivalent vanish before it, and men will take what is proffered without thought of a return or sense of gratitude. In this respect men are like animals. In fact, this is precisely the principle that underlies the domestication of animals and the taming of wild beasts. So soon as the creature learns that it will not be injured or molested and that its wants will be supplied, it submits to the will of man and becomes a—parasite. Parasitism, indeed, throughout the organic world is only an application of the law of parsimony. Pauperism produced in the manner described is social parasitism. But parasitism always results in degeneracy, and pauperism, engendered in society by well-meaning persons ignorant of the law of parsimony, is social parasitic degeneracy.

While, therefore, in view of the number and variety of causes that combine to determine any single act no law can be laid as to how any individual will act under a given set of circumstances, we have a law which determines with absolute certainty how all men act under all circumstances. If there is any apparent exception to this law we may be sure that some element has been overlooked in the calculation. Just as, in the case of a heavenly body which is observed to move in a manner at variance with the established laws of gravitation and planetary motion, the astronomer does not doubt the universality of those laws, but attributes the phenomena to some undiscovered body in space of the proper size and in the proper position to cause the perturbation, and proceeds to search for that body; so in human society, if there are events that seem at variance with the fundamental sociological law of parsimony, the sociologist may safely trust the law and proceed to discover the cause of the social perturbation.

LESTER F. WARD.

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Reply to Mr. Frank Hodges, whose article appeared last month.

## Is Optimism Irrational?

**OPTIMISM** is the spice of Life. It is the Science and Art of Life. It teaches us to know Life as it really is, and not as the vile stench of fever vapours which rise from the pestilential marsh, nor the distorted grotesque visions which come from a warped and disordered brain or liver. It teaches us to live. Not like bestial denizens of an under-world, but like Olympian Joves with a Greece and Athens at our feet, the powers of nature at our command and the laurel crown of rationality on our brows. Optimism is the religion of the rotund: the creed of the corpulent. It forms no part of the tenets of those who wear "a lean and hungry look,"—the great attenuated. It is the matin song of the merry mendicant friar, and the inevitable consequence of a good digestive apparatus. The field of Optimism is forbidden ground to the social Mark Tapleys, Uriah Heeps, or Philamons. It is easier for a man to accept the programme of the S. D. P. heedlessly than for a political economist to enter these realms of light. Blatchford has asked for more light. Let him be more optimistic. There are three kinds, or rather degrees, of Optimism namely: *Sub-Rational*, *Rational* and *Ultra-Rational*. For the sake of clear analysis, perspicuity and appreciation, I indicate the biological cleavage between man, as such, and the lower animal forms, by this foregoing classification. In the

lower orders *Sub-Rational Optimism* is the outstanding feature. Here I wish to make clear that I admit of the psychic shadings of the lower forms to the higher, viewed evolutionarily. I don't want anyone to misunderstand me and build up an elaborate argument on this hitherto seeming discrepancy. I hope I have clearly defined and acknowledged it. To proceed, by *Sub-Rational Optimism* is meant an attitude of animal life towards its environment, namely, those activities which are the outcome of instincts and impulses rather than a rational appreciation of immediate or ultimate benefits which will follow from such activities. It is the optimistic aspect of the struggle for existence. These activities are the outcome of inner promptings. They are the animo-dynamic expression of Force. Force, which, biologically considered, has the well-being of the organism as its ultimate object. The inability of any organism to fall into line with this bio-optimistic activity is followed by its elimination. Thus it follows that all existing organisms are organically optimistic, they are bio-optimistic organisms. They have made, biologically determined as they are, the choice between Pleasure and Pain, Life and Death, Extinction and Survival. The foregoing alternatives may appear contradictory and redundant. It must be understood that they refer more particularly to species and not to individuals. Considered narrowly with regard to individuals they appear false. They may be. An illustration will indicate what I mean. It is a well-known fact that in the propagation of lower organisms the parent dies in giving birth to its progeny. In the amœba it loses itself in its progeny. Thus individually the Ultima Thule of Pain-Economy and Pessimism is reached, but owing to the fact that the parent itself is perpetuated in its offspring it acts optimistically by preferring the ultimate pleasure of the species to the immediate and individual expression of pain.

Optimism is synonymous with Existence. The fundamental principle is to survive. Whatever persists is organically optimistic. "Whatever persists, exists," is the Spencerian dictum. The Universe persists, exists. The universe is the unity of all optimistic phases. It is the Cosmic Concord—The Optimistic Ego, therefore Optimism. Now having argued deductively to Universal Optimism I could close this paper by saying the Universe is rational. This would relegate the whole of the discussion to my metaphysical friends and to the small section of my colleagues who are exponents of the Modern Radical Philosophy. Although this statement cannot be disproved by Mathematics or Materialism, yet it can be proved otherwise than by the orthodox method of postulating it. That "man is a rational animal" will be accepted by all present without demur, admitting that subjective investigation is largely responsible for the affirmative. The degree of *Rationality* is determined by the facility manifested in the adjustments "of inner and outer relationships." That process is brought about by a knowledge of Law. When man has so far



progressed in the discovery of law as to eliminate all antagonisms, he will not be, as now, a part of the Cosmos related in constituent antagonisms, but he will be at one with it. He will be of it; submerged and assimilated. The Cosmos is Law, he will be part of the Law. The human aspect is merged in the cosmic. It will be *Rationality* at its zenith and in its purity. The Cosmos being Law, and ultimate Rationality as expressed by man means eventually Cosmic Reconciliation, it follows that the Cosmos is Rational and by a simple conversion Rationality is the Cosmos. We are now face to face with our earlier conclusion that the Cosmos is Optimism. Rationality is the Cosmos, so we have as a result, Rationality is Optimism. We now get from our conclusions the two phases, or aspects of Rational Optimism and Optimistic Rationality. This will be found from a recapitulation to be the logical outcome of our cursory analysis of the Sub-Rational Optimism to be found in the organic world. Perhaps similar gratifying results may be obtained if we probe deep into the inorganic field. It is not unreasonable to think that an atomic or electrical optimism may be found underlying the aggregations and dissipations of the chemical cosmic elements. The next analysis is in the area of *Rational Optimism*.

Rational Optimism is, broadly speaking, the prerogative and characteristic of Man. Here again I must emphasize the fact of the methods of classification enunciated in the earlier part of this paper. It is here that Optimism enters the lists against Pessimism. Neither can exist without the other. The arguments of each can destroy the other, but at the same time cannot justify its own existence except as an antithesis to the other. It is at this juncture, for purposes of polemical and metaphysical discussion, solely a question of alternatives, an endless see-saw, a literary labyrinth. Either, taken by itself, is an abstraction and viewed dialectically will result in self-annihilation. I anticipate no questions on that ground. Having dismissed the contrary of Optimism as represented by the pure abstract conception Pessimism, I turn to the consideration of the phases of Optimism. In my foregoing remarks on the Sub-Rational I arrived at the conclusion that Optimism was rational and consequently by the square of opposition the contradictory is wrong. Irrational Optimism when loosely applied is synonymous with Pessimism. To all whom it may concern and who hoped to be controversial upon this aspect of Optimism, let me state definitely here, I am cognizant of the relativity of things. I marked Optimism from Pessimism as rigidly as my command of language permitted, for argumentative and analytical purposes. Now my sole purpose is to try and prove that, in respect to human activities, Optimism is rational, and not that Irrational Optimism is irrational. That is a paradox. No one noticed it. That is conclusive proof.

Ward says that "Optimism is the normal attitude of sentient beings." Man is a sentient being, therefore an optimist. Some of you may say that I'm heading for the same line of argument. Not

so. It has been laid down that man is a rational being, therefore a rational optimist. This attitude of Optimism is the outstanding feature of all human activities. Please mark the word "activities." Why? Because I want human activities to stand out in vivid contrast to the Micawber-like attitude of "waiting for something to turn up," the folding of the arms, the quietistic spirit, whether expressed in an individual or social attitude. This is certainly Optimism. It is not Dynamic Optimism. It is not Rational Optimism. Rational Optimism is the outcome of Knowledge, of Science. It is the outcome of oppressive influences. The individual or individuals engaged in the betterment of Society are certainly Pessimists when they view conditions which they desire to change. This acts as a stimulus to the rational faculties. The accumulated knowledge and experience is brought into play. Social and human activities are generated. They imply a belief in the efficacy of Reason; a rational optimism is the prevailing psychic factor. All social institutions were largely influenced at their inauguration by this factor; I hope I make my point clear, and as students of Sociology you will be able to follow the line I've indicated and find numerous historico-social examples. So much for the glimpse at the social aspect. Individually considered, Rational Optimism appears to be more potent. In the domain of scientific research the optimistic outlook has rendered incalculable benefit. As a faith in possibilities it has nerved men to stupendous tasks and enormous sacrifices. Look where you will from Galileo down to the recent X Rays' martyrs and you will find Rational Optimism, as a living force, manifested in their lives. This will be apparent to all. In literature I ask you to notice an influence that runs like a thread of gold through the fabric of past and present civilizations. This is shown by writers of Ideals, Golden Ages and Utopias. From Plato through Revelations down to H. G. Wells is a far cry. These productions are the outcome of rational optimistic efforts to stimulate and encourage the intelligence of peoples. They are at one and the same time ideal and practicable. Ideal in aim, practical in application. Literature is largely dominated by Rational Optimism. That is not meant to be ironical, merely scientific. In religious activities all the founders of religions and codes of Ethics were rational optimists. One could enumerate all the names from Confucius to Campbell and receive corroborative evidence.

The optimistic note is sounded in Christianity when Christ said that whoever gave up anything for His sake would be rewarded here and now, and in the world to come.\* Historically, Christianity achieved its purpose and conferred benefits upon mankind. To ignore them is to be mentally blind; to scoff is to be historically ignorant. I cannot enlarge these points in a brief analysis of this kind. They simply serve as mental milestones or psychic sign posts, and as historical evidence in support of the thesis that Optimism is

\* Mark 10 chap., 28-30 v.

Rational. Now I must conclude by dealing with the final phase of Optimism. It may be urged that *Ultra-Rational Optimism* has nothing whatever to do with the present question. Ultra-Rational Optimism is the synthetical creation of the two foregoing. Some who have swallowed the camel may strain at the gnat. Ultra-Rational Optimism is nothing more than another term for "The Cosmic Reconciliation Process," beyond what is now known as the human rational optimistic activity. It is simply the operations of Forces when man in the limited sense of the human being does not exist. When he is no longer the humanist but the cosmicist; that aspect which simply presents him as an expression of Force. With the presentation of Sub-Rational and Ultra-Rational, the Rational Optimism is thrown into greater relief. It is more clearly seen, its vividness is perceived and heightened in the contrasts. That has been my object in treating what appear to be subsidiary aspects. It was necessary in order to place Rational Optimism in its philosophical and scientific perspectives. Rational Optimism is no Will o' the Wisp and Jack o' Lantern that flits in the gloomy dusk of despondency, but rather the first faint Dawn-blush, the twinkling of the stars in the deepening blue, or the joyous twitter of the full-throated gay plumaged songsters. Optimism gives an added zest to Life. Optimism is Life.

MEREDITH F. TITTERINGTON.

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## REVIEW

ANCIENT SOCIETY (See Page 3 of Cover).

There had been previous studies of the life of man before the days of written history, but Morgan's work revolutionized this science as completely as Darwin's works revolutionized biology or Marx's "*Capital*" revolutionized economics.

Although it is a work of wonderful scholarship, it is more than this. It is a revolutionary book, which proves that wealth and poverty are NOT eternally inevitable, but a passing incident in the history of the human race. The underlying principle of this work is the law of historical materialism familiar to all Marxists, namely, that always and everywhere the way people have supplied themselves with food and the other necessities of life has determined their way of living and their way of thinking. Recognizing this principle, Morgan divided the various stages of human development, according to the development reached in industrial arts, into savagery, barbarism and civilization.

The volume is divided into four parts as follows :

Part I. Growth of intelligence through inventions and Discoveries.

Part II. Growth of the idea of Government.

Part III. Growth of the idea of the Family.

Part IV. Growth of the idea of Property.

*Ancient Society* was published thirty-three years ago. A generation of scientists have fought over it and the author's position has been sustained at every essential point. But the book has not yet been read by the class to whom it means the most, the class of those who live by their work,

The price has always been 16s. a copy, a price which few wage labourers could afford to pay. Consequently the book, while famous among scholars, has been unknown among working men.

The copyright having expired, Messrs. Kerr have been enabled to place it upon the market at a price within the reach of the working class.

## Mahmood the Image-Breaker

**W**LD events have modern meanings; only that survives  
Of past history which finds kindred in all hearts and lives.

Mahmood once, the idol-breaker, spreader of the Faith,  
Was at Sunnat tempted sorely, as the legend saith.

In the great Pagoda's centre, monstrous and abhorred,  
Granite on a throne of granite, sat the temple's lord.

Mahmood paused a moment, silenced by the silent face  
That, with eyes of stone unwavering, awed the ancient place.

Then the Brahmins' knelt before him, by his doubt made bold,  
Pledging for their idol's ransom countless gems and gold.

Gold was yellow dirt to Mahmood, but of precious use,  
Since from it the roots of power suck a potent juice.

"Were yon stone alone in question, this would please me well,"  
Mahmood said; "but, with the block there, I my truth must sell.

"Wealth and rule slip down with Fortune, as her wheel turns round;  
He who keeps his faith, he only cannot be discrowned.

"Little were a change of station, loss of life or crown,  
But the wreck was past retrieving if the Man fell down."

So his iron mace he lifted, smote with might and main,  
And the idol, on the pavement tumbling, burst in twain.

Luck obeys the downright striker; from the hollow core,  
Fifty times the Brahmins' offer deluged all the floor.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

## The Holiday

**I**T is gloriously bright to-day. I am in a new world and the  
world lives. I have just committed wholesale slaughter and  
am exulting. Oh, glory! The world is mine. For one brief space  
exists for me the liquid sunshine, the cool breeze and the soft  
chitter of the birds in the trees.

Can you feel with me?

But this morning I started out as yesterday for the factory, for I am a skilled artizan—one of those mixtures of specialized technical skill and general ignorance.

But the fates had led me here, where this morning I write. How gloriously the sun poured through the carriage windows! It seemed to light, the world for me. It brought to me the call of a universe and I could not resist.

Why should I, when life and gladness beckon? The words of Meredith come to me.

"The limbs once raw with growing chains  
Will fret as silken when God's hearers  
Of freedom beckon o'er the plains  
From mounts that show it more than dreams."

It should be more than dreams to me to-day. Yes, oh practical man, grubber. I defied you, and I defy you now.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was splendid. I roamed west-ward, leisurely; and as at each step the factory receded, so fresh vigour and life came to me. I saw men and women turning in to the daily grind by the hundred, and still kept on. Oh! it is sweet to be free.

And the slaughter. Presently I came to Piccadilly, with its solid buildings, its show of wealth and ignorant pride. Can you understand the slaughter?

What right had I, the workman, to be here, strolling leisurely and comfortably in the bright sunshine of the morning? I felt that by all the canons of capitalist morality I had none.

And it was good.  
Yes, it was very good

This simple concrete act of rebellion was of more potency than many arguments.

To-day, I, the workman—I who had been fretting in bondage, had answered the call of nature. Long had I seen the shallowness, the meanness, of the lives of our masters. If it was bad to be a slave, oh, how much more so to be slave to empty-headed fools.

To-day, as I walked among them, I felt my superiority. The soft whirr of their motor cars came to my ears as in imposing array they swept along. The trumpety despots of a day! Yes, I could see them in their grandeur—and triumph. This was my glory! This was the slaughter.

Do you understand?

Presently I left them and turned into the park. They are behind me. I hear but the faint murmur of their traffic. And above the sun shines, the birds twitter, while upon my hair a pleasant breeze is blowing.

C. W. PEACHEY.

## General Social and Economic Development in Greece

(Continued)

### II. From the Revolution of Cleisthenes to the Downfall of Greece

#### THE ATHENIAN STATE

**W**ITH the downfall of gentile society and the institution of political democracy in Athens, merchants' capital widened its field and as a consequence heightened the power of the commercial class. The development of merchants' capital in the ancient world translates itself into the development of slave-labour. That there may be more to sell, there must be more produced. Hence we find a growing number of slaves and as a consequence the impoverishment of the mass of free citizens, who disdained to enter into competition with so mean and ignoble a thing as slave-labour. When Athens reached the height of her prosperity under the administration of Pericles 445-431, B.C. just after the Persian Wars, the slaves were by far the greater portion of the population, being estimated at 400,000 while the number of free citizens including men, women and children are put down at 100,000. The creation of the political state was the necessary outcome of this economic development. The division of labour in society, the concentration of the instruments of production and the divorcement of the great mass of the people from the ownership of these instruments resulting in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, necessitated the concentration of the public power of coercion, divorced from the mass of the people. Once society is divided into classes, a self organized army of the people becomes impossible. The appearance of the state in ancient Athens was simply a testimony to the fact that Athenian Society had become hopelessly divided, against itself, involved in irreconcilable antagonisms which were the product of economic evolution. The state is therefore not something arbitrary forced upon society from without, neither is it the product of the brain cudgellings of wise men, as the possessors of professorial parchment would have us believe, but simply an outgrowth of society which assumes supremacy over society in order to maintain the economic supremacy of the propertied class, to keep down the conflicts which private interests engender, to defend the existing order against the rebellion of the propertiless and exploited mass. *What is the state more than a living monument of that social anarchy, arising from commodity production, in which and by which the product controls the producer. The social control of the social product involves the disappearance of the state, the official form of economic antagonisms.*

#### THE PERSIAN INVASION

During the fifth century, B.C., the Persian Empire had been rapidly extending until, in the language of Cyrus, it stretched from the region of insupportable heat to the region of insupportable cold. Babylon, Phœnicia

and the Grecian states of Asia Minor had fallen before the advance of the Persian power. Darius the third King of Persia 521—485 B.C. determined to add Greece to his dominions. The first expedition was a failure. It did not, however, shake the resolution of Darius and in 490 B.C. the second expedition set out. It however met with disaster at the battle of Marathon. It was the exploit of the Athenians alone, and saved the whole of Greece. Nothing daunted the Persians prepared for a third invasion which was led by Xerxes the son of Darius and probably what was the largest army of ancient times marched across the Hellespont into Greece. This third attack came by no means as a surprise to the Athenians who had since Marathon been making elaborate preparations. They had seen from experience that their power lay on the sea, and so they set to work to equip a powerful navy. *It is only during this third invasion that we find anything like a united Greece. And it was their common fear that drew the city states together.* The fight developed more and more into a sea-fight, and the Persian fleet was destroyed at the battle of Salamis, 480 B.C. On land the invaders ultimately met with disaster, and after the defeats of Plataea and Mykale the Persians finally retired from Greece.

#### THE POWER OF ATHENS

The triumph of Greece over Persia had a similar effect upon the Hellenic people that the defeat of the Spanish Armada had upon England, the defeat of the English in the War of Independence had upon America, and, more recently, the defeat of Russia had upon Japan. The Greeks became a world power, the mistress of the Mediterranean, the commander of trade. Athens in particular became the head quarters of the world commerce. There was always the danger that Persia might renew activities, and the Greeks having recognized in their last experience the value of united action, they formed an alliance known as the Confederacy of Delos. Athens having had the most powerful fleet and having led the way in the recent war was appointed president of the confederacy and empowered to conduct any campaign against the enemies of Greece. Each state had to contribute in ships or money to Athens, who was to be held responsible for the upkeep of the fleet.

After all danger of another Persian invasion was removed, many of the states in the confederacy grew tired of providing Athens with ships and asked that the payment might be made in money. Athens readily consented to the change, for she had now the finest fleet in Greece. Later these states began to recognize that the concentration of the navy in the hands of Athens might become a danger to them, and that the money flowing into the Athenian treasury might help to establish a despotism over the contributors themselves. The consequence of this growing recognition was an attempt on the part of the states to secede from the alliance. But they had been too long in opening their eyes to the danger, and what they had feared was realized. *Athens used the army and fleet provided by the confederacy against the revolt of the confederacy.* Here was the product turned against the producer with a vengeance! The subdued

states now coerced into filling the Athenian coffers became the subjects of Athens, who ruled them in true despotic fashion. At the time of Pericles, the leader of the commercial democracy, who became administrator in 461 B.C., Athens reached the height of her power and prosperity. His aim was to render Athens not only the leading power in Greece but an imperial world-power as well. Pericles directed his policy to the extension of Athenian influence by ornamenting and embellishing Athens, by improved fortifications, and by sculptural and architectural decorations. "And he succeeded in elevating the city to a visible grandeur which made her appear stronger than she really was and which had the further effect of softening to the minds of her subjects the humiliating sense of obedience" (Grote). But all the splendour of her art and literature, all the refinement and culture of the classic city could not conceal the internal antagonisms, that heightened as she rose to eminence, nor obscure the cancer of slave-labour that was eating away her heart.

#### THE DECAY OF ATHENS

If for the mass of the people, the Persian yoke had been escaped, it was only to result in being borne down by the commercial interests of the Athenian profit-seekers. Commercial capital grew apace, the spoils of looting sallies, the wealth of tributary states accumulated in Athens, while slave-labour increased at an alarming rate. The impoverished freemen had to be maintained out of the public purse or they found it more honourable to engage in political corruption on behalf of the plutocrats than to compete with slaves. There were two political parties in Athens, representing the aristocracy and the democracy respectively. *There seems to have been about the same difference between them as that between our own Conservative and Liberal Parties.* The question of taxation was to the fore with both bodies. And the party of the democracy had, in a large measure, succeeded in shifting the burden on to the shoulders of the aristocrats. The wealth and power of Athens had long been repulsive to her old rival Sparta. The latter state lay far behind in economic development. Agriculture was the main industry and this was carried on by a form of labour remarkably like the villeinage of the Middle Ages. Commerce was practically prohibited owing to the nature of the currency which, being of iron, was so cumbrous as to render accumulation impossible. No free citizen was allowed to engage in a mechanical trade. It was a society of soldier citizens in whom military virtue was regarded as the highest and almost the only excellence. The whole city was an armed camp.

It was while the democracy ruled in Athens that the aristocratic party sought to wreak vengeance upon their rival faction by conspiring with Spartan aristocrats to overthrow the Athenian democratic constitution. Other Greek states were drawn into the squabble and there broke out the Peloponnesian War 431-404 B.C. which resulted in the conquest of Athens by Sparta. The triumph of the latter was however the signal for



her own collapse. The Spartans forgot their traditional contempt for wealth and dissipated the Athenian resources, with the result that military discipline relaxed and in the next war Sparta was defeated and passed into obscurity.

In Athens the battle continued to be waged between the two factions, one time the aristocrats would establish an oligarchy; at another the democracy would prevail. Meanwhile the populace grew more and more demoralized, political fraud and commercial swindling took on ever larger dimensions, while at the bottom of the social pit slave-labour piled up. Internal revolt was very often avoided through the development of some external interference. "A foreign expedition might not only divert the popular mind but would prove beneficial by relieving the crowded city of part of its population." (Smith.)

We need not dwell further on the development of the Grecian States. The day of their prosperity and power was passing. Weakened by internal dissensions, by the anarchy of contending plutocratic interests, by the increasing impoverishment of freemen, by the heightening degradation of slave-labour, as well as by the continual petty warfare waged among the states themselves, Greece fell an easy prey to Phillip of Macedon and his son Alexander the Great. Finally, with the decline of the Macedonian Empire, Greece became a Roman province in 146 B.C. The first form of exploitation—slave labour, characteristic of the ancient world, ruined it. *The expansion of commercial capital was conditioned by the expansion of slave-labour and upon that foundation no democracy could stand. The state and democracy exclude each other.* It was so in the ancient world, it is so in the modern world. And as the function of the state is and has always been the means for holding in check the producers of wealth it will only disappear when there is no need to check anybody, when economic servitude is no more.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN GREECE

The religion of early man is *natural* and corresponds to a stage of material development in which he is largely dependent on the spontaneous products of Nature. Such a condition involves a precarious livelihood. This state of things only disappears (in the period preceding civilization) in the degree that man is able to devise means on an ever improving scale for wresting more food, clothing and shelter from the storehouse of Nature. That pre-supposes however a growing understanding of Nature which was just what early man lacked. The overpowering forces, such as fire, wind, water, disease, filled him with fear because of his ignorance of these things and therefore of his inability to control them. These mysteries of nature he met with mysterious measures. *What he did not understand he deified.* And as nature appeared to him as a multiplicity, so accordingly were his gods. *Natural religion* is polytheistic. And this characteristic is in line with the consanguine collectivism upon which ancient society was based. We have already pointed out in our survey of Gentile society the development *on the side of property* from group ownership to individual

ownership, and *on the side of sexual ties*, from group marriage to the marriage of the single man to the single woman. So also is it on the religious field following these material changes, from multiplicity to unity, from the plural to the singular, from polytheism to monotheism. Polytheism expresses itself in two main forms: Nature Worship and Ancestor Worship. Both may exist side by side, although the deification of ancestors is later in time. The various Grecian tribes all traced their descent from some ancestor deity, and we find this form of worship well to the fore in the Heroic Era. At this time the Greeks are on the threshold of civilization. The technical progress already accomplished, the consequent increased productivity of labour and the social relations following therefrom, presupposes a growing control of natural forces, and therefore a growing understanding of the real nature of such. That in turn presupposes the decline of natural religion and of the cults to which that form of religion gave rise. The development of a leisure class who live upon the social labour of others and to whose interest it is to increase the productivity of that labour, renders it possible and necessary for some of the members of that class to turn their attention to observing natural phenomena, in order that it may be harnessed to the on-going economic chariot. This possibility and need is realized in *Natural Philosophy*, which comes to the fore in Greece, and in Athens in particular, 750 B.C. to 450 B.C., a time which marks the transition from gentile society to class rule. Anaximander, Héraclitos and Empedocles, and later Epicurus, were the classic representatives of Natural Philosophy in Greece. We cannot enter here into their many interesting speculations, many of which anticipated modern scientific discoveries. *Their powers of perception were, however, necessarily limited by the economic development of their time.* Technique was not yet able to provide them with the scientific tools essential for accurate investigation. Hence many of their conclusions suffered, and as a result, the doctrine of the untrustworthiness of the sense-perceptions took root.

If Nature was becoming less mysterious and therefore the gods less necessary to explain her processes, the advent of commodity-production with all its social consequences, gave rise to new mysteries and new mysterious explanations. If Nature no longer ruled humanity "with the overpowering force of a god," now the social product ruled the producer. The interests of the individual were at war with those of society, and out of the confusion and the anarchy in social relations there arose on the political field the State, on the ethical field *Moral Philosophy*, and both for the same purpose. Following on the repulsion of the Persian invasion, Moral Philosophy rose to prominence, and in proportion to its growth did Natural Philosophy cease to progress. Plato, the leading representative of one of the chief Ethical Schools, and of that theory from which Theology was to freely borrow, regarded Natural Philosophy as child play. The change of subject involved a change of method. The method of Natural Philosophy was the observation of nature. *The method of Moral Philosophy became the observation of the personality by the*

*individual himself.* The senses might be untrustworthy, other men might lie, but the individual does not lie to himself when he wishes to be truthful. Finally, that which man produced from himself was alone certain knowledge. Within the human breast the philosophers sought for the mysterious regulator of men's actions and conduct. The School of Plato was quite unable to explain the moral law by natural means. Having proved the impossibility of bringing the moral law under the general laws of nature, they then regarded such impossibility to be a certain demonstration that man was something more than natural, that he lived outside of nature as well as inside it, and that the moral law had its source in this supernatural part of him, from whence issued the commands to pursue the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. *From this dualist philosophy there arose a new religion, a new belief in God, Monotheism.* The old Natural Religion had been a purely mechanical affair. The relation of man to his gods was conceived as an external relation. Neither were these Gods outside of Nature but inside Nature, seeing they were a personification of her forces. Polytheism as we have already indicated was an attempt to explain these forces. Such explanation became unnecessary, and therefore Polytheism disappeared in the degree that Natural Philosophy discovered the necessary connexion of cause and effect in nature. *Monotheism did not arise therefore from a need to explain Nature, but the moral nature of man.* For this Plato assumed a spiritual Being standing outside of and over Nature who was the source of all morality. And as the personality was no multiplicity but a unity, so was this spiritual and supernatural power a unity. *The moral law was thus the logical creator of the new Spiritual Religion and the new God,* and when in Christianity God appears as the author of the Moral law, ethics and religion become bound up together. No belief in God therefore no morality. The Platonic philosophy of Dualism with its ethics came more and more to the front as Greece declined. To the great mass of the people the world of experience appeared more and more wretched and capable of producing nothing but pain and misery, a world out of which the Good, the Beautiful, and the True could not come, and so the only alternative was to look to this world of the spirit for redemption, *for rest.* *The need for rest:* that was the final result of all the ethical schools of Greece, and at the bottom of all this metaphysical thought, which opposed the spiritual to the material, was the economic groundwork which permitted the assumption of superiority on the part of an individual over society, and as a permanent feature. The condensation of Polytheism into Monotheism is not to be understood apart from the triumph of individualism over communism, apart from the COMMODITY.

#### THE GREEK VIEW OF WOMAN.

The mother-right had passed away in most Grecian states, Sparta being a notable exception, before the historic period. Still many of the old customs related to the matriarchal period survived for a time. Once commodity-production upon the basis of slave labour has taken hold of

society, it is all up with the freedom of woman. Then comes the time of disregard and of contempt for woman. No where does it come to expression in Greece more openly than in Athens. That fact is of course intelligible when we remember that the development of commercial capital reaches its highest point in the Athenian State.

Plato thanked the gods for eight favours bestowed upon him, the first that he was born a freeman and not a slave, the second that he was born a man and not a woman. According to Thucydides "That wife deserves the highest praise of whom, outside of her home, nothing good or bad is heard," while one of the characters in Maenander exclaim, "a free woman should be bounded by the street door."

If the house woman was assigned special quarters—the gynekonitis, she was isolated, excluded from intercourse with the male visitors of the house; if she leaves the house she must veil herself in order not to awaken the desires of another man. If she committed adultery, the penalty according to the Solonic laws, was her life or her freedom. Her husband was at liberty to sell her into slavery. The rule, however, did not allow for the reverse application. Every man, said Demosthenes the orator, requires besides his wife two mistresses. "We marry a woman in order to obtain legitimate children, and to have a faithful warder in the house, we keep concubines for our service, and daily care and Hetæræ for the enjoyment of love." The only difference between Greek civilization and modern civilization consists not in the matter of fact but in the matter of *candidness*.

Marriage suffered little from romance in Greece. It was simply a means of producing legitimate children. Xenophon tells us that "God ordained the institution of marriage: but on what grounds? Not in the least for the sake of the personal relation that might be established between the husband and the wife but for ends quite external and indifferent to any affection that might exist between them." The chief of these ends he says is the rearing of children *to protect the father* in his old age. During the most flourishing time of Athens, an extensive prostitution developed, patronized by the State. Solon was the first to found the public houses for women and for this openly regarded benefit to the male population, he was praised as a public benefactor. It was precisely says Engels, on the basis of this prostitution that the unique type of Ionic women developed to which we have already referred, viz., the Hetæræ. "That it was necessary to become a Hetæra before one could become a woman constitutes the severest denunciation of the Athenian family." The dark shadow of hetæræism is inseparable from that which casts it and *that is*—the COMMODITY.

W. W. CRAIK.

*Next Month* :—

The General Economic and Social Development of Rome.

Mr. J. H. H. Ballantyne, having emigrated to Canada, has resigned his position on Executive Committee of the League. Another of our members, Mr. G. Pilkington, of Bolton, has also gone to Canada. Good luck attend them.

The Ton Pentre Branch of I.L.P. in March last took advantage of a lecture on Education by Mrs. Bridges Adams, to take up a collection on behalf of the Central Labour College. The amount realized was 6s. 6d. Gallant Little Wales!