THE

"Plebs" Magazine

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EDITORIAL

THE second session of the Rochdale Labour College Classes which began in October last is just on the point of coming to a close. The first session which opened in January 1910 and concluded in May, 1910, was remarkably successful for a pioneer effort. Rochdale has a reputation in the working-class movement for pioneering, and certainly this latest phase of pioneer activity suffers nothing either in comparison or in the object aimed at. The considerable success attained is due in a very large measure to the untiring, unselfish, and thorough work of the Secretary and Organizer, Mr. Harold Kershaw. Coming to Ruskin College in 1909 as a holder of a Worker's Educational Association Scholarship, our worthy Plebeian was naturally an admirer and follower of W.E.A. principles and methods. We can well remember how strenuously he would defend the position of the W.E.A. He was not even content to take up the defensive; he was oftener aggressive. And it was his very aggressiveness that led him to see clean through the hollowness and helplessness of W.E.A. and Ruskin College principles and policy, as a force in fighting the battles of the working class. Saul became Paul on the road to Damascus! During the dispute at Ruskin College he rendered yeoman service in the building up of the new Educational Movement that was to take material shape in the Central Labour College. And with the latter in existence, he was quick to grasp the importance of the need for the movement's provincial ramifications. No sooner had he returned from Oxford (which was in September, 1909) than he was hard at work, making possible the first provincial expression of the Central Labour College movement, in the shape of the Rochdale Classes. In accomplishing the task, he has had to fight foes of the kind that "lie in wait privily," and has made sacrifices of the kind that few would have the hardihood to make.

The Rochdale Classes.

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WHEN the first session opened, there were three classes held weekly in Rochdale, while a short course of lectures was delivered to a

Something Accomplished.

class at Preston, organized by another zealous and able worker, Mr. John Porter. The total number of students attending these four classes was about 90 on the average. The classes fully justified their existence, and their success inspired the opening up of the wider sphere of work that has characterized the second session which is now closing. Indeed the organization ought now to be known as the Rochdale and District classes although the district has been rather a wide one, a defect which will disappear in next session's work. During the past six months classes have been held weekly at Preston, St. Helens, Bacup, and Bury, while in Rochdale, three classes have been conducted. Every day in the week has thus been occupied with class work, and in addition, public lectures have been delivered under the auspices of the classes on Sunday evenings at all the centres, with the exception of Bacup. The total number of students attending these classes during the past session has been an average of 150. The main subject which has formed the course of study has been Industrtal History, and the results have been very satisfactory. Indeed, in every way the session's work (unless we except the financial aspect) has exceeded in success our most hopeful anticipations. Reports from the Secretaries of the various classes will be published in the May number of the Magazine, and we hope that what has been accomplished here in Lancashire will serve to inspire our members and sympathizers generally to go and do likewise.

> Only begin, and then the mind grows heated,
> Begin, and then the work will be completed.

It is a great work that we have embarked upon, a work that gets right down to the very bottom of working-class solidarity and progress. We require to direct all available energy into this important department of working-class education, so that on a map of these isles we may be able to soon show a network of educational fortifications, out of which shall issue the means of protecting and promoting the advance of the great army of Labour.

Finance and the Future Work.

THE financial side of the past session's work does not yet present as favourable an appearance as one would desire, there still being a loss on the session's work. It is a progress, however, in comparison with the work of the previous session, and that notwithstanding the fact that the latter was a term of shorter duration, and still further the fact, that owing to the area being a very wide one, the railway companies encroached considerablyon the receipts. We hope to solve this problem next session by contracting the area, and by other minor economies. Instead of having one wide area we hope to be able to organize *three* narrower areas in Lancashire. One of these areas will embrace Rochdale, Bacup,

Bury, Oldham, and probably Radcliffe. This will not only reduce the financial expenditure but will lighten the task of the lecturer. A conference is being held in Rochdale on Good Friday, where the plan of campaign for next year's work will be formulated by delegates representing various industrial centres in Lancashire. One thing is certain, the more this provincial work grows and extends, the more will the Central Labour College be strengthened. The latter, while it has made marvellous progress, is by no means out of the danger zone. Members and readers will receive with this issue a statement of the College's position and what is required of them. We suggest to them the possibilities of an active summer's propaganda, with a happy sequel on August Bank Holiday at Oxford, when the largest gathering together of the supporters of the movement will make the third Annual Meeting triumphantly point to the all-conquering course of real working-class education. Here is Rhodes! Leap here!

THERE is one other important matter arising out of the Rochdale classes that calls for attention. It is the natural desire of the Central Labour College authorities to secure men well-fitted for the task of not only studying social questions, but for training their fellows as well, through the mediumship of these classes. The latter offer a good means of selecting and securing the best fitted. Recognizing this, the Central Labour College offered to the Rochdale classes two scholarships. Only financial considerations prevented the offering of a scholarship to each class. Here the importance of securing financial support to the College is again manifest. And until such times as this obstacle is removed, it might not be impossible for a class to raise in its district, a sum of money equal to half of the scholarship and there is little doubt that the College would offer freely the other half. The scholarship, available for twelve months, is valued at £52. Five candidates have entered for the two scholarships now offered and the names of the successful candidates will appear in the May number of the Magazine. We commend this eminently great work to all active workers in the Labour Movement that they may appreciate it by putting forth some little effort towards helping to increase the financial power of the Central Labour College and thus enabling it to extend its sphere of indispensable usefulness throughout the industrial centres of the land.

College Scholarships.

W. W. C.

We have a small supply of a new book by Karl Kautsky, *The Road to Power*, published in America. Price, bound in cloth, 1/8; in paper covers, 10d. Both prices include postage.

Herbert Spencer's Sociology

"LET nought but good be said of the dead." In these days, when science mourns, no one covets the task of pointing out defects. If Herbert Spencer did not create sociology, he at least raised it into life and started it on its grand career. It required courage to do this and to embody it in a great scientific system on an equal footing with biology, psychology and ethics at a time when others passed it by and disdained to speak its name. This brave act will always be regarded as more than atoning for any shortcomings that the most critical will ever find in Herbert Spencer's sociology. As one of those who have freely criticized that part of his vast scheme during his lifetime, the present writer feels it incumbent, frankly, to avow that nothing he could say in disparagement of certain aspects of Spencer's treatment of the subject appreciably diminishes the debt of gratitude which he, in common with all lovers of truth, acknowledges to Herbert Spencer for the three monumental volumes in which he has unfolded that science.

But the saying is too trite to need repeating that there is always danger of resting any case upon authority, however great, and that the only condition to progress in any science or in any field of inquiry is fearless and independent scrutiny of the basic doctrines of even the greatest masters. It is, therefore, no derogation from the magnitude of Spencer's achievement to say that, like all things human, it has its defects. In the present case it is perhaps better to say that it has one defect, for by the side of this one all the others are dwarfed into insignificance. And but for the weighty and vital character of this defect, it would be unworthy of any one at a time like the present to point it out, and thus break the even flow of just and sincere praise for one who has made an epoch and has now laid down his pen.

How shall we formulate this one salient deficiency in Herbert Spencer's sociology? It may sound too dramatic to say that it consists in ignoring the human mind as a factor in sociology. True, his system embraces two volumes on psychology. Nevertheless, I make bold to affirm not only that he did not base his sociology upon his psychology, but that his psychology is of a kind such that sociology could not be based upon it. Written before the biology and transferred to a position between that and the sociology, where, of course, it should stand, it is, nevertheless, as completely isolated as if it formed no part of the Synthetic Philosophy. The sociology, great as are its intrinsic merits, does not represent a science like other sciences, upon which man can lay hold and use as an instrument for his own advancement. Every other science rests upon a body of uniform laws which have been discovered by investigation, and which, as soon and as fast as discovered, can be put to immediate

use in furthering the interests of life and ameliorating the condition of mankind. The science of sociology as taught by Spencer is a complete exception in this respect. Its laws are not pointed out, and there is not only no intimation that if there are social laws they may be utilized to human advantage, but there is a distinct implication, repeatedly expressed, that no such use can be made of them.

In Spencer's psychology spare allusion is made to the most fundamental and essential of the intellectual faculties, the faculty of invention. This is the faculty that has the chief value in sociology. It is the one that has produced nearly all the effects that distinguish man from an animal. But for it he could never have migrated and peopled the earth. It is the basis of all the arts. It underlies all discovery in science. It has accomplished the whole of what is called material civilization. It has done this by applying the known laws of nature to the uses of man. The various sciences, one after another, as fast as established by the discovery of their laws, have thus been put to practical service. There is no law of nature which cannot be made available for such purposes to a greater or less extent. It is the essence of a science that it shall explain certain invariable laws governing the phenomena with which it deals. All true sciences are of that character. If sociology is really a science it must also possess this character. And as man has been able to make practical use of every other science, it must follow that when social laws are really known and a social science is established he will be able to make a practical use of it. This in Spencer's sociology is at least impliedly denied, and in his other works it is expressly and vehemently denied.

To every science there corresponds an art. If there is a social science there must be a social art. That there is such an art no one can doubt, but thus far, it must be frankly confessed, it has remained chiefly an empirical art. In this respect it does not differ from all other arts. All have their empirical stage before they reach their scientific stage. But the empirical arts have all been useful, and the social art, even in its empirical stage, has been the most useful of all, since it has been the condition to the development of all the other arts—nay, to the very existence of society itself. But just as the usefulness of all other arts has been enormously increased by scientific discovery, so the usefulness of the social art will be increased, and in quite as great proportion, by the discovery and application of the laws and principles underlying social phenomena. It is not necessary to point out what all this is to consist in. I have attempted this on numerous occasions and gone as far as possible with the light we possess. But the essential thing is to recognize social phenomena as a field for scientific discovery and for the exercise of the inventive faculty precisely as in other departments of science and art. This class of scientific research once recognized and entered upon, the possible directions that it shall take, the

methods and the technique will soon reveal themselves. If there are social laws and social forces, work in the social field will differ from that in other fields only in the nature of these laws and forces. Just as invention in the physical world consists in directing physical forces into channels of human advantage, so invention in the social world must consist in directing the social forces into such channels. The empirical social art seeks to drive men to do what is supposed to be for the interest of society. The inventor never seeks to coerce natural forces. By means of appropriate apparatus devised by his ingenuity he causes or *induces* them spontaneously to flow in the desired channels. It must be so with the social inventor, and social invention, once seriously undertaken, will speedily do away with all mandatory, prohibitory, and penal legislation, and inaugurate an era of scientific, or *attractive* legislation, which will make obedience to law the form of action that the individual most desires, thus rendering the operations of society automatic and spontaneous.

Of all this we find absolutely nothing in any of the writings of Herbert Spencer.

There is another point of view from which we may contemplate Herbert Spencer's sociology. In his biology we are taught that organic evolution takes place through the joint action of differentiation and integration. Organic progress is measured by the degree to which organs and structures are multiplied to serve the various ends of higher and higher life, and by the degree to which these multiplied structures and organs are then subordinated to the directive influence of a more and more perfect nervous system, and ultimately to the absolute control of one supreme directive organ, the perfected brain. It is these two conditions which constitute, respectively, organic differentiation and organic integration.

Mr. Spencer early espoused the doctrine that human society constitutes an organism analogous in many respects to the organisms of which the world of life is composed. He pointed out these analogies in great numbers and supplied the most convincing arguments for the doctrine that have yet been adduced. But it is noteworthy that he generally, and no doubt intentionally, avoided, as far as possible, those analogies that relate to the nervous system, although it is here that the most important ones are to be found. He did, however, say that the function of Parliament was analogous to that of the brain of animals, and it is the prevailing view of those who defend the social organism theory that government is the sociological homologue of the brain.

Certain it is that organic integration is effected solely through the nervous system, and, in the higher organisms, through the brain. The various organs and structures would never spontaneously co-operate in the interest of the whole organism and work together in

that perfect harmony necessary to carry on the functions of life without an organized nervous system to give and execute the commands of the creature. Mr. Spencer laid great stress on social differentiation, but was almost silent as to social integration. But what is social integration? Evidently it is some co-ordinating system that regulates the manifold organs of society and requires them to work in harmony for the good of the whole. And what can this be but the power, however constituted and by whatever name called, that every society, however undeveloped, possesses, and which is the agent and exponent of the society? Sociologists prefer to speak of collective action, or of the action of society itself, rather than to use the narrower, less correct, and more or less objectionable word government. That term is apt to be taken to mean the particular persons whom society at any given time has selected as its agents to execute its will and conduct its affairs. These persons are nothing but instruments and of no significance from the sociological point of view. The action taken in any case is that of society acting as an integrated unit, in the same sense as the acts of an animal or a man are those of the complete organism under the control of a nervous system presided over by a supreme central ganglion or brain.

Is the analogy, then, to stop with differentiation only? Is the social organism nothing but a complex mass of highly differentiated organs and structures without any co-ordinating and controlling system capable of making them work to some prescribed end and co-operate in carrying on the functions of society? Such is the conclusion to be drawn from Herbert Spencer's sociology.

Mr. Spencer started out in his great career as an avowed and extreme individualist, thoroughly imbued with the doctrines of the economists of his day. Individualism was then, and is still, taken to mean the opposite of collectivism. But, properly viewed, it is nothing of the kind. It can be successfully shown that there is nothing contradictory in the two doctrines, and that true individualism is not only consistent with true collectivism, but can, in fact, only be attained by means of it. This may seem paradoxical, but it will seem still more so when I say that the proof of it has been chiefly supplied by Mr. Spencer himself.

In defending the doctrine of the social organism he introduced certain qualifications. He enumerated, first, the respects in which a society resembles an organism, and, secondly, those in which it differs from one. Although he reduced these latter to a minimum, and often showed that they were more apparent than real, there remained one which he saw to be fundamental. He said:—

> The last, and perhaps the most important distinction, is that while in the body of an animal only a special tissue is endowed with feeling, in society all the members are endowed with feeling. . . . It is well that the ves of all parts of an animal should be merged in the life of the whole,

because the whole has a corporate consciousness capable of happiness or misery. But it is not so with a society, since its living units do not and cannot lose individual consciousness, and since the community, as a whole, has no corporate consciousness. And this is the everlasting reason why the welfare of citizens cannot rightly be sacrificed to some supposed benfit of the state, but why, on the other hand, the state is to be maintained for the benefit of citizens. The corporate life must here be subservient to the lives of the parts, instead of the lives of the parts being subservient to the corporate life.

Thus we see that it was upon this one important respect in which society differs from an organism that Mr. Spencer justified his individualism and maintained that his attitude of hostility to collective action was in harmony with his general scheme of philosophy. In this he was certainly mistaken, and, what is more, it is this undeniable fact that the individual alone is capable of enjoyment and suffering that constitutes the chief argument for striving to attain the maximum social integration.

According to the Lamarckian law, which Mr. Spencer fully accepted, it is function that creates organs. Whatever organs, structures, or parts an organism acquires, they have all been developed in response to a demand growing out of the needs of the organism. The consequence is that all development, whether organic or social, always is and must necessarily be in the direction of some specific advantage to be derived therefrom. And, conversely, whatever is demanded as such an advantage will ultimately be supplied by the development of the structure, organ, or part that is adapted to secure it. Now, as he says, it was manifestly to the advantage of the organism that the manifold parts should come under the complete dominion of the whole organism. Any individual liberty on the part of the various organs and structures would quickly entail the destruction of the organism with all its parts. And all because it is the organism that is sensitive and conscious, while the parts may be regarded as, relatively at least, insensible and unconscious.

All this is reversed in a society, and for the very reason that Mr. Spencer gives, viz., that here it is the parts that are sensitive and conscious, while the society as such is unconscious and incapable of either enjoyment or suffering. This it is that explains the difference between social integration and organic integration. The former, according to the Lamarckian law, is directed exclusively towards securing the interests of the parts, i.e., of individuals. It is, and must necessarily be, introduced for this purpose. Nothing can originate, either in the organic or the superorganic world, which is not advantageous. To conceive of the origin of a disadvantageous organ, or structure, or institution, is to misunderstand the first principle of evolution. The end is the cause of the means, which arises solely for the sake of the end. The end is always the *good*

of something. The idea of a good involves that of the capacity to feel. In a word, it implies a sentient being. An organism is such a being, but a cell or gland is not. An individual man is such a being, but a state or a society is not. It follows that organic development must be in the direction of securing the interests of the organism and not of its parts, while social development must be in the direction of securing the interest of the individual and not of society as such. The general means employed in both cases has been integration, but organic and social integration are unlike in this respect.

Just as in the organic world structures have been the means employed in securing the end—the good of the organism—so in the superorganic world society has been the means employed in securing the end—the good of the individual. This social integration, which is the scientific expression for collectivism, is the only means by which the freedom and happiness of the individual can be secured. Primarily it was the only means by which the human race could protect itself from hostile influences and continue to exist. And now, as always, it is the only means of protecting individuals from the egoistic domination of other individuals. Without a co-ordinating and restraining power to regulate the conduct of individuals toward one another and prevent the wholesale exploitation of the weak by the strong, liberty and happiness would be impossible. The highest aim of true individualism is the maximum individual liberty. Social integration somewhat restricts the individual's freedom, but this restriction is as nothing compared to that which other individuals would cause in its absence. Even Mr. Spencer's "equal freedom" can only be attained through such collective restraint as shall forbid one individual to interfere with the liberty of another. Within these limits the more complete the social integration the greater the real and legitimate liberty of every individual.

The existing "social unrest," of which we are hearing so much, is due in the main to the imperfect state of social integration at which the world has arrived, and its sole remedy must be through more and more complete integration. The present social movement is wholly in this direction. Mr. Spencer saw the movement, but he misinterpreted it. He saw in it "the coming slavery," instead of the coming liberation of mankind. He imagined that it was morbid, abnormal and temporary, whereas it is perfectly healthy, normal, and destined to continue. He did not perceive that the fundamental distinction which he so clearly pointed out between the animal and the social organism necessarily reverses the direction of social evolution and causes it to work for the good of the individual.

The movement towards collectivism, which no one with his eyes open can fail to see taking place, in spite of all that the philosophers may say, is really a true social evolution, proceeding on natural

principles, and aiming at the same end as all other forms of social progress—the good of mankind. It differs from organic evolution only in the fact that it seeks the good of the parts instead of the whole, of individuals instead of society considered as something to be benefitted. If Mr. Spencer had seen this he might have made his sociology not only symmetrical in itself but harmonious with his entire scheme of philosophy, of which it would have become the natural culmination and the true crown.

The Independent, New York. LESTER F. WARD.

Ben Tillett's Reply to Open Letter

March 31st, 1911.

DEAR SIMS,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, together with a copy of "Plebs" Magazine.

In view of past personal relationships, you might have had the courtesy to ask me these questions personally.

My only reply to you at present is, my opinions are unchanged up till now.

Yours sincerely,

BEN TILLETT.

DEAR BEN, I. iv. 11.

Your letter of the 31st ult. to hand, with many thanks. I am at a loss to understand your treating the matter under discussion as a personal question. It is far from being so, as the following brief statement will show.

In October, 1908, the students of Ruskin College, as a result of the rapid development of anti-labour educational methods in that institution, formed a League known as the "Plebs," the object of the League being to agitate for a "closer connexion between Ruskin College and the Labour Movement," this to be brought about, mainly, by the increase of Labour representatives on the Council of Ruskin College. Knowing you as an advanced Labour Leader interested in education, the students approached you for, and secured your support.

Following hard upon the establishment of the League, and before its Magazine could be published, a special inquiry was held on the internal affairs of the College. That inquiry has two interesting points for us at this stage: (1) it branded the economic "professor" of Ruskin College as a capitalist economist of no great brilliance, and promised to appoint an economist from the Labour standpoint; (2) it was held to contain sufficient evidence to warrant the dismissal of the Principal of the College —Dennis Hird. (The inquiry was held during the Christmas vacation 1908-9.)

Both before and after the inquiry just mentioned the Executive Committee of Ruskin College met and held council as to the attitude to be adopted by them towards the "Plebs" League. It was finally decided that the League must be outlawed, the reasons given for this being that its object was opposed to the constitution of the College and that it sought to press the Council of the College to tread an undesired path.

On the 26th of March, 1909, Mr. Hird announced to the students that his resignation had been demanded and tendered. The students went on strike. You were informed of these two facts, and on March 30th sent the letter which was published in the last issue of the Magazine. Your letter left no doubt of your attitude towards us, and consequently you were publicly announced as a supporter of the "striker" students and the new college that evolved from that event—the Central Labour College. In all that subsequently transpired you gave us no reason to believe that your opinion had altered—until the recent public announcement was made that you had joined the Council of Ruskin College. Since then we have received many inquiries to know why you had changed your opinion about Ruskin College and ourselves. Hence the open letter.

What has changed in the situation at Ruskin College since March 1909? The new constitution is but a parody of "the wolf—in sheep's clothing"; *a non-partisan Labour* Council is to control Ruskin College. (If your views have not changed we should like to hear your candid opinion of such a monstrosity.) A non-partisan Labour Council is to succeed the old council of non-partisan oddities. What a change! That the old University gang are to control the education is quite clear from the letter of Mr. Allsopp's, which we reprinted in the February number of the PLEBS MAGAZINE. Mr. Allsopp's letter also shows that the W. E. A. is so far satisfied with "the great change," that they intend to send some students to the college—"birds of a feather," &c.

Now a word regarding the economic "professor"—Mr. Furniss. When the committee of inquiry, before mentioned, were going into the question of his fitness to teach economics at Ruskin College his fitness for the post did not, to say the least, appear overwhelmingly established; they did not suggest his removal it is true, but they did suggest the appointment of another teacher of economics, and one more favourable to the Labour point of view. That, apparently, was the sop they offered to the Labour movement to propitiate them for the sacrifice of Dennis Hird which was about to be consumated. It seems that the sop was not regarded favourably: anyway, the people in charge of Ruskin College, with the cynicism and contempt they have always treated the Labour movement, have since restored the "old master." Mr. Furniss is now heralded abroad as a brilliant economist, a "brilliance" which curiously enough was never realized by the students until the Council's recent announcement. It is said that "a new broom sweeps clean"; certain it is that the new Council have swept Mr. Furniss's record clean, and under the latest "puff" small wonder if even *he* hardly recognized the erstwhile despised economist.

During the year 1910 a large number of the lectures for Ruskin College students were given at the ordinary Oxford colleges. In addition to this a class was started for the purpose of preparing the students for the diploma in capitalist economics conferred by Oxford University. Of course, a bait. The teacher of this class was Mr. Tawney of the W. E. A. Hearing that Mr. Tawney was treating the class to a criticism of Marxian economics the C. L. C. Debating Society challenged him to a debate on the theory of value. At first he accepted, but later found that he was too busy to keep the engagement.

So far as the Central Labour College is concerned no change has taken place in its teaching. It still holds strenuously to the principle of independence in working-class education, because of the class nature of education in social science. In spite of the hard struggle it has had to exist, it persists, and not without a certain measure of success. The Labour Leaders who have been and are among our supporters are so few that when one leaves us, as you appear to have done, many inquiries reach us for information as to the reasons for the desertion. That is why I claimed, in penning my letter to you, that the matter is not personal; it interests and concerns all who have definite views on the subject of working-class education, more particularly the members of the "Plebs" League, among whom are many of your personal friends and admirers.

Yours fraternally,

GEO. SIMS.

DEAR SIMS, April 7th, 1911.

I have nothing to add, except that I hope the new venture will be a success. Am speaking with Dennis on Sunday, will say something then.

Yours sincerely,

BEN TILLETT.

The Division of Governmental Functions

THE very existence of government postulates the existence of social classes, of the need for a coercive power, to maintain and preserve vested interests. The rise of the State quite clearly depicts the character of government. In the ancient world, this institution is seen in Greece and in Rome, slowly rising as an instrument of legalized oppression; as the necessary institution to perpetuate the subjection of the masses of the lowly. Immediately private property began to develop, an institution of a coercive character was necessary in the interests of the *property owners*. The sacred rights of the individual citizen now demanded that the rights of property should be strictly enforced. Property needed protection,

while at the same time the growing complexity of social life demanded a tax levying authority. Thus, the State, a class institution for the maintenance of class rule, arose.

The Basis of all Investigation

This fundamental truth that the State is in reality a tyrannical expression of class rule, that it exists, not for social dignity or the exaltation of caste, but for the preservation of propertied interests, must be the basis of all investigation into the nature of the various sub-divisions of the State. It is clear that whatever the constitution of a State, a vast amount of business must be locally administered. The question we wish to settle in this article is whether that local administration is affected, or not, by the capitalist character of the State. Does the State, as the organ of repression, the instrument used by the ruling class to give a semblance of moral right to their exploitation of the working class, reflect its class character upon its forms of administration? If the materialist conception of history rests upon the solid foundation of truth, then economic developments should affect the *entire* polity of a nation. Does it affect administration? The idea is prevalent in certain circles that government and administration are synonymous. History demonstrates the fallacy of such an idea. The underlying thought is that the economic gradations in modern society prove a mutuality of relationship between all the members of society. Thus, there being *no conflict of classes*, the rights of citizenship being open to all, government is not oppression, but merely *direction*. It follows from this reasoning that government and administration are but different forms of the directive social labour. In other words, the terms are expressive only of a division in "governmental" labour. A false premise ever leads to false conclusions! The form of social organization is controlled by the economic system of society, which, in turn, decides the forms of government and administration. *Government refers to persons, administration refers to things.*

In a complex society there must of necessity be a complex administration. If the form of society requires *government*, then administration is inevitably of a class character. Capitalist society generates a series of contradictions, not the least of which is the contradiction between administration and its existing form. Government has become class administration, whilst administration has become class government. The fallacy referred to above is the outcome of this truth. The form of expression is mistaken for the thing itself, and finality of expression thus assumed. All Western countries have a more or less developed system of division of governmental labour, which division is in accord with the division of society into economic classes. Throughout history, in whatever epoch or country, broadly speaking, the same "governmental" divisions have appeared. The social organization of man has its vestiges, just as natural science.

"In the twilight of human society, the division of labour was overwhelmingly natural." The natural divisions of primitive man have been reproduced in modern society. Blood relationship was the essential qualification for membership of the group or gens, except in exceptional cases. This blood relationship found its counterpart in the kinship tie of the Teutonic mark or township, from which our modern township or parish is a direct evolution, as manifested in the survivals of the old "three field" system of communal labour. With the Iroquois Indians the social (corresponding to Western *governmental* formations in modern times) formations were as follows:—

(1) The gens:—the unit.
(2) The phratery:—the intermediate division.
(3) The tribe.
(4) The federation of tribes.

In Saxon times in this country the governmental formations were as follows:

(1) The township:—the unit of administration.
(2) The hundred:—the intermediate division.
(3) The shire.
(4) The state.

To-day, in this country, these administrative divisions are reproduced in (1) the Parish, (2) the Rural and Urban Districts, (3) the County. Prussia has the District, the Circle, and the Province; France, the Canton, the Arrondissement, and the Department.

Prof. Lester Ward has already shown in the PLEBS that the "four estates" of European history are but the counterpart of the old Brahminic castes of India. The "four estates" are, of course:

(1) the Crown, (2) the landed nobility, (3) the capitalist plutocracy, (4) the dispossessed multitude, which correspond to (1) the State, (2) the County, (3) the Borough and Urban districts, (4) the Parish. The county is notoriously the area over which the landed gentry hold sway, the towns and industrial areas generally are in the hands of the industrial exploiters, while the parish, although invariably controlled by small property owners and petty squires, still retains its democratic character. This is to be explained by the fact, that the variation from the ancient township has been but slight, while the borough and urban districts have been evolved because of the direct "governmental" needs of capitalism.

THE GOVERNMENTAL "ORGANISIMS"

Prof. Alfred Marshall in his *Principles of Economics* says that recent researches have indicated "a fundamental unity of action

between the laws of nature in the physical and in the moral world. This central unity is set forth in the general rule that the development of the organism, whether social or physical, involves greater sub-divisions of labour on the one hand, and on the other, a more intimate connexion between them."

As a principle *this* we can endorse, but list! Sydney J. Chapman, M.A., says of this view, "in other words, society is an organic whole, and its end is a determinant of the organization of labour (whether industrial or governmental) within it." If the end of society is a determinant of its industrial organization, then the industrial organization being on the basis of production for exchange, the end of capitalist society is its own perpetuation.

If, on the other hand, the end of society is a determinant of the governmental organization of labour, then government being the coercion of the property-less in the interests of the propertied, it follows that the end of society is the preservation of its economic divisions.

Chapman further says that a developed Western people seems to be invariably drawn by *the bonds of civic feeling* into formations somewhat like those indicated in the following scheme:

1. The locality, a political organism.
   - (*a*) The district or parish: a simple political organism, part of a larger whole, and a whole itself, but not of parts.
   - (*b*) The province or county: a complex political organism, part of a larger whole, and a whole of parts.

2. The Nation: a complex organism in its ultimate form, a whole of parts, but not part of a larger whole." "Bonds of civic feeling" is distinctly good. It has quite a Worker's Educational Association flavour. If citizenship was not something quite so abstract, and class divisions had been relegated to the limbo of decadent institutions, there might be some justification for attributing the causation of governmental formations to civic feeling. Economic conditions are the basis of life. The material conditions produce the State; the growing complexity of industrial life produced its sub-divisions.

It would be superfluous to expect an orthodox economist to recognize that the very existence of "political organisms" is dependent upon a system of society which stifles all "bonds of civic feeling" amongst the mass of the people. When "the principle admitted by Chapman to be a logical deduction from the existing division of governmental labour, is actually applied, the principle that the matters, which fall within the scope of government should be distributed amongst the various governing bodies, central and

local, according to their capacities and efficiences, things will begin to move. The death knell of capitalist property will be heard o'er the land, and the sexton called into requisition.

Then the "bonds of civic feeling" will begin to manifest themselves. It will be the triumph of mutual aid and fellowship, the breaking of the fetters of centuries.

For it is decreed, O Chapman, that the organism, biological or political (?), that is cursed with incapacity and inefficiency, or in other words, that is unable to adapt itself to changed conditions of existence is doomed to premature decay.

Political institutions, having fulfilled their functions, will disappear. With their disappearance, government will be at an end, and true administration again enthroned.

E. ARCHBOLD.

"Survival of the Fittest"

IN northern climes, the polar bear
Protects himself with fat and hair,
Where snow is deep and ice is stark,
And half the year is cold and dark,
He still survives a clime like that
By growing fur, by growing fat.
These traits, O bear, which thou transmittest
Prove the Survival of the Fittest.

To polar regions waste and wan,
Comes the encroaching race of man,
A puny, feeble, little bubber,
He has no fur, he has no blubber.
The scornful bear sat down at ease
To see the stranger starve and freeze—
But, lo! the stranger slew the bear,
And ate his fat and wore his hair;
These deeds, O man, which thou committest
Prove the Survival of the Fittest.

In modern times the millionaire
Protects himself as did the bear:
Where poverty and hunger are
He counts his bullion by the car:
Where thousands perish still he thrives
The wealth, O Crœsus, thou transmittest
Proves the Survival of the Fittest.

But, lo! some people, odd and funny,
Some without a cent of money—
The simple, common human race
Chose to improve their dwelling place:
They had no use for millionaires,
They calmly said the world was theirs,
They were so wise, so strong, so many,
The millionaires?—there wasn't any
These deeds, O man, which thou committest
Prove the Survival of the Fittest.

MRS. CHARLOTTE STETSON.

Proposed Honorarium Fund for the Secretary of the League

THE undersigned Committee of Plebs League have decided to submit a proposal to the general body of members and sympathizers for the raising of a Honorarium Fund in behalf of George Sims, the Secretary of the League.

For the past two years Sims has given practically the whole of his time and services, without fee or reward, to the furthering of the objects of the League. What this sacrifice has really amounted to no one but himself and those in close touch with him know. The work involved in bringing out the Magazine each month, in attending to the mass of correspondence, and in the general organizing work of the League has entailed a tremendous amount of labour and anxiety. The value of this work alone calls for some immediate recognition in the way of remuneration.

But, unfortunately, this is not the only reason for this appeal at the present moment. For several months, Sims has been suffering from a serious illness, which, a few weeks ago, led to his utter collapse. He is now compelled to take complete rest, and to undergo special and expensive treatment. This treatment, however, is apparently doing him good, and in spite of the earlier pessimistic report of his medical adviser, it is hoped that, with continued treatment on the present lines, a complete recovery will be rendered possible. To ensure continued and adequate treatment, and to remove all financial difficulties and worries, it is proposed to immediately establish a Honorarium Fund as a formal recognition of the splendid services Sims has rendered to the cause of working-class education.

In submitting this proposal, we earnestly appeal to every reader of the Magazine, and to every member and supporter of the League, to contribute to the Fund as generously as their means will allow, at the earliest possible moment.

Cash and money orders should be sent to the Treasurer of the Honorarium Fund:—

MR. EDWARD GILL,
83 Queen Street,
Abertillery, Mon.

On behalf of the Plebs Executive Committee,

Yours faithfully,

C. WATKINS.
W. W. CRAIK.
EDWARD GILL.
W. G. E. PRATLEY.

Important Notice

Members are reminded that the current year's subscriptions to the League for Membership and for the Magazine have been due some months. Also many Agents' Accounts for Magazine are over-due. Owing to the illness of Mr. Sims, the usual notices for arrears have been delayed. For the same reason much additional work has been caused in publishing the Magazine, this will be lightened if the now over-due accounts are forwarded without delay. Unless this is done it will jeoparadize the future of the Magazine.

CENTRAL LABOUR COLLEGE

It will be remembered that at the Conference held last August in connexion with the Central Labour College, the announcement was made that an extension of the lease of the premises in Bradmore Road had been granted till March 25th, 1911. This extension having expired it was necessary to seek new quarters, with the result that the College is now housed at 5, Park Town. The new premises are situated in a pleasant quarter of North Oxford, and are suitable in every way for the requirements of the College. In connexion with the new premises an appeal for funds has been issued, which we hope will meet with a ready response.

"The more a ruling class is able to assimilate the most prominent men of a ruled class, the more solid and dangerous is its rule."

KARL MARX.

Lincoln and his Times

"Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth; he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of such as he finds close at hand."—Karl Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire.*

A FEW years ago, I read in one of our humourous publications—was it *Puck*?—a "Dialogue in Hades." The participants therein were Lincoln and Washington, the latter of whom lamented the fact that his countrymen's adulation had converted him into an idol bereft of life and blood, revered, it is true, but as a sort of symbol, not known and loved as a human being. The dialogue intimated that Lincoln had happily escaped the sad fate of being misunderstood and elevated into something he was not, and Washington declared that "Abe" ought to be duly thankful.

In a measure, this is correct; yet Lincoln IS misunderstood, despite the fact that he has not been converted into a fetish.

Lincoln is misunderstood, his character and career distorted, to the extent that the part he played in certain events is exaggerated and falsely interpreted. The appelation of "Great Emancipator" reverently bestowed upon him is symptomatic of the manner in which Lincoln is misunderstood.

There is no more significant page in the historic annals of America, none more brilliant and inspiring, than the "Abolitionist movement," and the destruction of chattel slavery. The men and women engaged in that movement were imbued with inspiring ideals, the incidents of that event were thrilling; and both coincide to illumine many an object-lesson for the modern "Abolitionist movement"—the Socialist movement. Yet the actual part played by the Abolitionists is not understood; and it does not detract from their great services to maintain that they are given more credit than they deserve.

Unanimous are the bourgeois historians in attributing the emancipation of the chattel slaves to the agitation of Wendell Phillips, Garrison, and other Abolitionists, the influence of Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the indomitable anti-slavery posture of Charles Sumner in the Senate, and, above all, to the aggressiveness, integrity and genius of Abraham Lincoln. Most biographers love to narrate that while on a voyage down the Mississippi, during his youth, Lincoln witnessed the revolting scene of slaves being sold at the auction-block; and this so grieved and shocked him that he resolved, if ever given the opportunity, to abolish chattel slavery; "By God, if ever I get the chance to hit this institution, I'll hit it hard." And to this resolve is attributed much of the influence and power ultimately resulting in the great emancipation.

The error is pardonable, seeing it is rooted in that hoary superstition dominating bourgeois historians, the "Great Man" theory of social development. Emerson in his "Essay on History" thus stated this method: "All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history—only biography." Its sublimated essence finds expression in Carlyle, according to whom events are moulded by "heroes"; without Luther, for instance, there could have been no Reformation, Carlyle seeming not to know or ignore the fact that men of more brilliant attainments than Luther had sought to usher in a reformation, but had failed, and that the "burly German monk" succeeded only because the material social conditions were favourable to the reformatory movement.

That *men* create movements is a "truth" that is essentially false the falsity lying in its being but a partial truth. While men are the makers of movements, *they and the movements created by them are the products of the social conditions prevailing in a given society*, and these conditions are, in the last analysis, determined by the material economic structure. "The development of ideas," which many substitute for the "Great Man" theory, is likewise erroneous. Ideas are not independent factors; they arise and develop to the extent that social conditions are favourable. As natural science seeks the ultimate cause of cosmic phenomena in MATERIAL-EFFICIENT forces, so the Socialist school of historical criticism seeks the ultimate cause of social phenomena—ideas, movements, events—in the MATERIAL-ECONOMIC forces of society and the imminent laws of their development.

The agitation of the Abolitionists, and the genius of Lincoln did not constitute the motive-force that overthrew the system of chattel slavery. The "Abolitionist movement" arose, the event culminating in the "Emancipation Proclamation" was rendered possible, by virtue of social conditions which, through the progress of economic development, had made necessary and imperative the abolition of Negro slavery.

What were those conditions? How did they arise?

Two main tendencies existed within the early stream of immigration to that portion of the New World which later became the United States. The Settlers in northern colonies (New England and New York, New Jersey and Delaware partially) were mostly petty bourgeois and artisans, possessed of republican and "liberal" ideas, which fact, coupled to the geographical conditions favouring small farming, industry, and commerce, discouraged the rise of chattel slavery. The colonists settling in Virginia and south of it, at least the dominant influential portion, were of "Cavalier" stock, dominated by the feudalic spirit and desire for large landed estates.

Such estates require docile labourers, if they would not disintegrate; and serfs being absent, Negro slaves filled in the gap nicely. Added to this, and vastly more important, was the fact that field labour in the south for a white man was a tremendous strain, due to the climatic conditions; and as the topography there made agriculture mandatory as the chief industry, a set of labourers were required who could toil in the scorching fields without injury. Hence arose the demand for Negro slavery; and when a Dutch sloop in August of the year 1619 entered the harbour of Jamestown and sold twenty Negroes to the colonists, the slave trade made its appearance and developed large proportions, its human merchandise finding a ready market among the southern planters. Slavery became an established and powerful institution south of the Delaware, although it never acquired even a foothold in the North—what vestiges of slavery appearing here being introduced by migratory southerners.

The first draft of Declaration of Independence contained a vigorous condemnation of King George for his sanction of the "execrable" slave trade. The planter aristocracy was powerful enough, however, to compel the excision of that passage. And when the question arose at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, the delegates from the northern colonies almost unanimously opposed the extension of slavery, and were attacked by the southern delegates. The result was a compromise: the southerners were allowed the free importation of slaves until 1808, in exchange for the right granted the northerners to impose a protective tariff.

As capitalism in the Northern States developed, the anachronism of chattel slavery existing side by side with "free" wage labour became manifest; and in even tempo with the increase in the power and influence of northern capital, anti-slavery sentiment arose and acquired strength, until in the forties, when capitalism became a national factor, the definite "Abolitionist Movement" came into being. Parenthetically, it in no way detracts from the sincerity of purpose of the Abolitionist to maintain that their movement was the resultant of material-social forces, in the same manner as it does not impugn the sincerity and high purpose of Socialists to declare that our movement is a product of economic conditions.

Capitalism is international; and one of its prime needs is the "mobility of commodities." Labour in capitalist society being a commodity, the "mobility of labour" becomes also necessary, and this chattel slavery, with its "fixity of labour," precludes. The consequence was a struggle between the rising capitalist class and the slave-owning aristocracy. This struggle, possessing many subsidiary phases, assumed ONE momentous, dominant aspect—the struggle for control of the national government.

The slave-owners had hitherto controlled the government, dictating legislation in conformity with their own interests; and as the chattel slave system was reactionary, this hampered the development of capital. Capital revolted. Its first object was to restrict the number of "slave" states by legislating that slavery should not be allowed in new states admitted into the Union, thereby reducing the number of representatives and the consequent power of the slave aristocracy in the national government. The bloody and fratricidal fight in Kansas caused by the virtual repudiation, in 1850, of the Missouri Compromise, the Dred Scott Decision, the persecution of the "Abolitionists," were all incidents in the progress of the combat.

The outcome of the struggle was the formation, in 1856, of the Republican party to represent northern capitalist interests. The purpose of the new party was not to free the negroes, but to *restrict* the extension of slavery, thereby cutting down the prestige of the South in the national government. The Republican party sought to capture the government in the interests of the capitalist class; and this it succeeded in doing with the election of Lincoln to the presidency in 1860.

The conduct of the new government demonstrated that its intention was *not* to abolish slavery, but merely to restrict it. Sixteen months after the commencement of the Civil War, Lincoln wrote in a letter to Horace Greely: "My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the union without freeing any slave, I would do it: if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that." It was found that the best way to preserve the Union and the dominance of the capitalist class was to destroy slavery, as thereby a powerful blow would be struck at the prestige and power of the South. Accordingly, after the victory at Antietam, to be exact, on September 22, 1862, Lincoln proclaimed that on and after January 1, 1863, all slaves in states or part of states then in rebellion should be free; and on January 1, 1863, came the final edict forever abolishing chattel slavery in the United States—the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Lincoln. These acts were wrung from the Republican Government by the exigencies of war.

I have no doubt that Lincoln passionately desired to destroy slavery; that the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation was one of the happiest moments of his life; yet, if material necessity had not dictated the act, he would have been powerless to do anything.

The freeing of the Negro was an immense stride forward in American social development; it paved the way for the Socialist Emancipation Proclamation. But it failed to accomplish what the Abolitionists expected. To the slavery and exploitation of chattel

labour succeeded the exploitation and slavery of wage labour. The servitude implied in the wages system was made more bitter by the virus of racial prejudice. The Negro suffered in the depths of social degradation. A few Negroes, it is true, rose to affluence and freedom; but to the extent that those few rose higher, the vast majority of their race sank lower. This fact disillusioned many of the most intelligent and progressive of the Abolitionists. They realized that the wages system must be abolished if actual freedom for the Negro, as well as for the white man (both being victims of the identical system of exploitation) was to be achieved. To the Abolitionist propaganda succeeded the propaganda for the abolition of wage slavery; and Wendell Phillips was the leader.

As to whether Lincoln would have done as Phillips did, one cannot definitely say. If "circumstantial evidence" be considered sufficiently weighty, the answer would have to be an affirmative one. Many of Lincoln's utterances pulsate with revolutionary ardour. None but a revolutionist, albeit an unconscious one, could have said: "Labour is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labour, and could never have existed if labour had not first existed." But the assassin's bullet cut short Lincoln's brilliant career; and we are left in doubt as to whither his intellectual development would have led him.

Lincoln was the supreme product of American development. He transcends all other national "leaders" in his simplicity, integrity, moral stamina, and genius. Ever modest, he neither posed nor depreciated his worth. Never did he appeal to the galleries. His heart ever beat in sympathy with the lowly and the oppressed. Although the bitter fratricidal war revolted his humanity, he never flinched, but calmly, in the midst of defeat and calumny, directed the nation's forces to ultimate victory. Posterity has not impugned his sincerity, though many of his ignorant or vicious contemporaries did. In brief, Abraham Lincoln possessed in ample measure the sterling qualities that are needed and find opportunity for active expression in a momentous crisis such as he participated in.

Weekly People, New York. LOUIS C. FRAINA.

Pride is as cruel a begger as want, and a great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more that your appearance may be all of a piece.—*Franklin.*

Conscience is the most elastic material in the world; to-day you cannot stretch it over a molehill, to-morrow it hides a mountain. —*Lord Lytton.*

One of the most striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives.—*Mark Twain.*

Ruskin College and Oxford

AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT

AN interesting development is reported in connexion with the movement for promoting closer association between Oxford University and Ruskin College, Oxford. The Senate of the University have agreed to admit a certain number of eligible students from the Labour College to the University examinations. This offer has now been accepted by the College authorities, and 12 students of the College will be entered at the forthcoming examination for the diploma in economics and political science.

South Wales Daily News, April 13th, 1911.

Our Labour correspondent writes: Now that Ruskin College, Oxford, has passed under the direct control of the Labour Movement, steps are being taken to establish a closer connexion with the University. The experiment of throwing open to College students the lectures at the University has proved very successful, and the privilege was largely taken advantage of during last term. It is now proposed that a number of College students shall be permitted to enter for the diploma in economic and political science offered by the University, and the result of this experiment is looked forward to with some interest by the College authorities.

Edinburgh Evening News, April 13th, 1911.

OUR MEMBERS' SUCCESSES

A contest has recently taken place for the purpose of electing four members to the South Wales Miners' Executive Council. Among the successful candidates were Noah Ablett and Noah Rees—Noah Ablett topping the poll. Noah Rees has also been elected a member of the Rhondda Urban District Council by a majority over his opponent of 584.