THE

"Plebs" Magazine

Vol. IV. July, 1912. No. 6.

EDITORIAL

IT is surely time that the Capitalist Press was given a lead in the way of news headings: This Era of Strikes has evidently overwhelmed the editorial offices, never remarkable for their understanding of this "World of Things as they are," the industrial situation seems to have left them in regard to it, with no more extended vocabulary than Poe's raven—in place of "Nevermore" read "Labour Unrest." Yet to every column given to the latter we are treated to half a dozen containing the evidences of a still greater Unrest—that of the Capitalists. The lot of Gilbert's policeman is as nothing to that of the unhappy and harassed capitalist. Daily his soul is in travail, daily his lamentations of the iniquitous nature of the labourer ascend to the Press-gods, daily does he cry out to them to know how the crooked ways may be made straight and the rough places made smooth. To soothe the capitalist breast and to show them how the Press-gods' hearts yearn towards them, the "Labour Unrest" is printed in yet heavier type and the Prophet Wells's aid is invoked. The Green Gas and The Comet being of the future, and desiring to "escape from a social slide towards the unknown possibilities of social-Democracy," the Prophet utters the talismanic watch-word of "Wake up, Gentlemen!" to the distraught capitalists already suffering from very severe attacks of insomnia. The main effect of the Prophet Wells's efforts apparently has been to rouse that other Genius—"Dr. Nickola" Doyle—to enter the lists in aid of the oppressed capitalist; with truly heroic courage he prophecies that—"the Unrest will Pass away into a cycle of Repose," and remembering the fate (alas!) of other prophecies

The Capitalist Unrest

he valiantly faces the great Demos with a warning, couched of course in his own inimitable and original language, that "his [Demos'] highest wisdom is to do nothing which may drive trade [where, oh where is the rest!—And Capital] from the country and so wither the the roots of his own livelihood." Oh Sir Arthur, Sir Arthur, only your genius is capable of appreciating how easily the root of Demos' livelihood is withered!—especially under the strong rays of Capitalism's Sun. Other Medicine-men having unsuccessfully attempted to prove to the capitalists that all would be well or was well (the Press proved that there was no London Dock strike, or if there was it *only* affected a paltry 150,000 workers) the Press-gods were again called upon to deliver the Men of Possessions from their enemies. After much anxious thought the gods delivered themselves of the following new and startling suggestions, viz.: Try Co-Partnership, compulsory arbitration, and—interview the Premier. A sob of joy broke from the holders of the championship for Directive Ability and they straightway fell to chanting "To Downing Street! To Downing Street!" Thus it came to pass that on June 21st, 1912, the Premier and the élite of the Associated Chambers of Commerce reasoned (?) together on Lost Causes and Forlorn Hopes. It would seem from the Press since that the result was only temporarily sustaining and comforting, so that they might later say with Omar,—

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

* * *

HOWEVER to our knitting—The Premier and the chosen ones. After mutual commiserations on the unrest, plans were unfolded for mutual admiration, consultation and obfuscation. All the proposals were new—in the Iron Age. The first speaker opened by saying that the labour unrest was having a prejudicial effect on the WHOLE COMMUNITY [down, Craik, down!] That the two chief causes of the unrest were (1) increased cost of living (2) Socialist agitation. [Here is cause for complaint—not a word about Syndicalism!] From 1896 to 1910 food prices had risen 20%, an increase likely to be permanent owing to increased output of gold. To meet that a considerable increase in wages had been made [No! not gained by agitation and strikes, but given out of the largeness of the capitalists' hearts.] There were only a few Socialists and Trade Unionists; the vast mass of the workers were not sympathetic to the agitators. ['Tis true the well-known kindness of heart of the employers towards their men had caused non-Socialists and non-Unionists to strike with their organized fellow workers, but that is merely their fun.] Employers desired to

Causes and Remedies

remedy any injustices that existed in works [but on inquiring they had not found any to exist!] Trades which competed strongly with foreigners could not afford the increased cost of production. [This must be sad news for those who hold that increased wages mean increased prices. Also for those wicked agitators who hold that capitalists only produce for profit, for here we are informed, are trades actually carrying on business after cost of production has risen beyond the point employers can afford. Will the latter insist on changing places with their employees?] The remedies the deputation suggested, included:—

(1) Financial responsibility of Unions
(2) Prevention of intimidation
(3) Compulsory arbitration
(4) Co-partnership for profit-sharing
(5) Increase of friendly relations between employer and employed.

Whether the latter "remedy" was placed last on the list to indicate the high ideal, the Ultima Thule of capitalist Earthly Hope, or because it was expected, in some mysterious way, to be the outcome of the adoption of the four preceding "remedies," was not stated. However the ground was now ready for the Grand Palaver and right merrily it proceeded. Faith and Hope were soon shown to be the prevailing sentiments—a great deal of Trust in the Good Sense of the Workers was expressed, though the Premier was given to understand that the form the Good Sense took should be compulsorily fixed by Legislation. In the course of the discussion it became abundantly clear that the only thing all were united upon was that the Labour Unrest should cease. How? Ah, there's the rub!

* * *

ONE of the speakers, Lord Furness, waxed eloquent about the Good Old Days when the settlements arrived at to end strikes and lock-outs were faithfully observed—by the workers, whereas now——! Then he feelingly referred to the wicked holding up of whole industries now in fashion among the workers, and "he claimed as a loyal subject that that ought not to be possible: Loyalty to one's Trade Union was a matter of opinion [morally right to the worker, morally wrong to the capitalist] but surely a union went beyond its proper bounds when it excluded a feeling that was conciliatory towards the Public." [Down, Craik, down!] "To call a strike in any one federated industry throughout the country ought, in his judgment, to be made legally impossible by making it punishable as a conspiracy in restraint of Trade." As to the question of who was to be punished

Arguments ! ! !

he did not know. Then came a demand for the establishment of a Department of Labour. [It is curious how the outgrown demands of Labour are now being adopted by the capitalist!] with power to enforce compulsory arbitration and to exact monetary guarantees for the breach of awards. Anxious as he was for the advance of Labour he felt that Labour's greatest need to-day was to be saved from leaders whose utopian theories were not reconciled with Economic Facts. However troublesome the unrest might be to employers, it was an absolute certainty that permanent irrevocable damage would be sustained by Labour itself. [An increase of wages leads to all sorts of excesses among the workers, undermines Thrift, Sobriety, &c., causes them to keep racing studs and yachts, and destroys the sanctity of the Home!] "Until both strikes and lock-outs were made impossible and Trade Unions and their members took a more rational view of *the* Economic Facts [as taught at Ruskin College] neither co-partnery [How the noble Lord's heart must have ached at the memories this name conjured up—'man's heart is a wonderful thing, especially when it is carried in the purse'!] nor any other mutual scheme could be expected successfully to regulate the interests of Labour and Capital." How the hearts of his fellow-capitalists must have yearned for the good time coming when Strikes would cease from troubling and Labour and Capital be at rest! When Economic Facts would permit of a scheme to successfully regulate the interests of master and wage-slave! How deep must have been their despondency and with what aching voids must they have turned from this beautiful utopia conjured up before their mental gaze by the eloquent lord! But Economic Facts are Pagan, and teach that Capital is Capital, and Labour is Labour, and never the twain shall meet except as antagonists. For "though he [the capitalist] chanted to us the whole creed of the economists, in reality he would not give a brass farthing for it. He leaves this and all such-like subterfuges and juggling tricks to the professors of political economy, who are paid for it. He himself is a practical man; and though he does not always consider what he says outside of his business, yet in his business he knows what he is about." And the capitalists know that the "rational view of Economic Facts," for "rational" read "capitalist," is on the wane among the workers, and so he sets to work to obtain the best means of compulsion to hand.

MORE oratorical efforts followed on Lord Furness's, but the words of wisdom may be passed over without loss to our readers, except a slight reference to the Premier's rebuke to a Scottish mine owner. The latter had remarked that lawlessness among the workers engaged in an industrial dispute was on the increase. This the Hero of Featherstone denied, pointing out that his experience enabled him to judge of this side of the case better than the Scotsman.

MR. ASQUITH'S reply to the Wise Men of Capitalism was worthy of the best (or worst) traditions of the Oxford Union, of which he was formerly a distinguished ornament. He had listened to the deputation with interest and profit (we can rest assured it was the average moral rate for each category). He entirely agreed with the suggestion that the Labour Unrest was due mainly to the rises in the price of necessities during recent years, with which rises in wages had not kept pace; nevertheless, they would find that over a period of thirty years the prices of necessities had fallen while wages had greatly increased. [It is said that necessities could be obtained in the Garden of Eden without money and without price—except the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Our legislators must be descended from the Free-Fooders.] With regard to the effect of increased gold supply on rising prices he would not go into the question, but no one familiar with economic history would doubt that it was an important factor. The establishment of a system of monetary guarantees to insure observance of agreements was no doubt good, and he hoped it would be generally adopted. Compulsory arbitration was impossible as even employers were not agreed upon the efficacy of such a scheme. He promised an immediate inquiry into the working of the Canadian Act, which compulsorily imposed an independent inquiry into industrial disputes before a strike or lock-out was permitted. On the question of the value of profit-sharing the Government were compiling complete statistics of all profit-sharing and co-partnership schemes that had been or were in operation, and the report would be publicly published in September. The Cabinet will consider the question of picketing and the secret ballot. All people of standing deprecate intimidation.

Nothing Doing

WITH this the Grand Palaver ended. Nothing about Economic Facts! or "increase of friendly relations between Capital and Labour." What a chance is here presented for a Melville drama: "The Capitalists Who Took the Wrong Turning." A few turnings higher up for Charing Cross Hospital, gentlemen! trepanning operations night and day. Men who can seriously talk the obsolete nonsense voiced at this meeting badly want their upper story seen to.

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THE increasing exploitation of machinery, with its displacement of the labourers; increasing competitions for markets with immensely increased output of commodities, lessening the average yearly period of employment; the vast aggregations of capital and the consequent intensification of the contrast between the Haves and Have-nots; the necessity for the spread of education to meet the demands of Capitalism for exploitable labour-power in all branches and sections of the productive and distributive mechanism; these are the conditions by which

Nothing Less

Modern Industry produces a class without any possessions except their capacity to labour, yet gifted with the powers of observation and the desire for participating in the wealth which they create. Yet all the while compelled to face the capitalist need for their greater exploitation—the intensification of their productive powers while working; the constant limitations of their expression in their labour, carrying with it the necessity to ever narrowing automatic labour-functions, lower wages and more extended periods of unemployment; the passing of legislation, such as compulsory accident, and now sickness insurance, which has for a result the lowering of the period of their working years and magnifies common ailments into a crime by penalizing them for employment; this class is expected to submit to these degrading conditions, to sacrifice their reasonable desires for a greater share in the wealth they create, for what? Abstractions. What meaning is to be attached to such terms as community, public, loyalty, &c., except so far as they apply to the commonwealth? How can they so apply while the whole social system makes for the degradation of the Many in the interests of the Few? While such a social system exists the Many must be pariahs, Ishmaels, aliens, even in the land of their birth, and they have no duties except to themselves and their class. The more this knowledge of our class position is extended, the more will it result in antagonism to the existing class-rule, the less the power of that class to force its objectionable and degrading servitude upon us. The present Labour Unrest is but the gathering clouds of the storm which is soon to burst in all its irresistible grandeur and power on Capitalism, sweeping the present social system into the oblivion of the out-worn and the out-grown, and clearing the way for a newer and better system wherein the means of subsistence, development and recreation shall be guaranteed to all. The onward march of the workers cannot be stayed by the feeble measures put forward by the upholders of Capitalism, ideas cannot be legislated out of existence, nor economic evolution abolished by Acts of Parliament. On the contrary the very economic forces now in movement must make for the capturing and control of the Parliamentary machinery, even as it makes for control of the industrial forms, by the heir of all the ages—the Modern Proletariat. F.J.C.

Can any readers oblige with copies of the Magazine for April, May, June, and September, 1910; May and August, 1909. Address: EDITOR, Kemp Hall, Oxford. Copies will be paid for and postage.

There is about as much sense arguing with economic facts as with a policeman.—G. S.

Glory, ambition, armies, fleets, thrones, crowns, playthings of grown children.—VICTOR HUGO.

The Emancipation of Labour

WHILE the ideal of human freedom is as long-lived and as persistent as human oppression and servitude, the conception people have had of freedom and the means of acquiring it, have varied as much as their changing material conditions during the long course of historical development. However high man may soar in his aspirations, he can never rise beyond the possibilities and limitations set by the forces and capacity of material production.

Man's conceptions of justice, freedom and right, as much as the conditions involving his enslavement, are primarily determined by the prevailing mode of production and distribution of material goods.

Originally, of course, man was dominated by the as yet uncontrolled forces of nature, and long before he had attained anything like a complete mastery over these, he found himself under the despotic control of a tyrant in human form, whose yoke has ever been more heavy and grievous to bear than any exactions made by ordinary nature. From time to time, under the influence of material developments, aided by the teachings of revolutionaries whose appearance usually coincides with fundamental material changes, a social upheaval has taken place which, while giving temporary relief to the whole of society, has never yet succeeded in permanently emancipating more than a privileged section.

Even in the few cases where whole groups of the enslaved have successfully revolted and escaped from the control of their oppressors, they have never yet succeeded in retaining their freedom and independence for any great length of time. Sometimes, indeed, they have discovered that their dearly-bought freedom was not that unmixed blessing they had imagined it to be. Escape from the bondage of Egypt has more frequently led to the wilderness of scarcity and untold hardship than to that promised land of freedom and plenty, which they had fixed their hopes upon.

Still, in spite of the failures and disappointments, and the murmurings and complaints of the many, the few have ever held aloft the banner of freedom, and cherished the belief that somewhere on in the distance the land of their dreams would be reached.

"Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"—these have been the watchwords of revolutionary enthusiasts, and the rallying cries of the people, at successive stages in mankind's upward journey. They are, as we well know, historically associated with the great French Revolution of a century and a quarter ago, which was, perhaps, the greatest social convulsion the world has ever yet experienced. Yet

we now know that in spite of the almost ferocious determination of the French people to be finally rid of tyranny, and of their success in making the most complete sweep of the old feudal tyrants and their institutions ever made by any nation, the era of liberty, equality and brotherhood which was anticipated and fought for so tenaciously is still awaiting realization. Are we to conclude then that freedom for the masses is, as the cynics say it is, merely a chimera? Must we accept the view that freedom must ever remain a kind of *ignis-fatuus*, which kindles hope sufficiently to make existence for the masses tolerable, but can never be realized in actual social relations. Before we can expect a satisfactory answer to these questions, and an explanation of the failure of past attempts to bring the lasting establishment of universal freedom, it is necessary to have clear views on what constitutes true freedom, and what are the primary and indispensable conditions for its attainment.

When we come to consider the question of what constitutes true freedom, we shall find that each suceeding emancipatory movement in human history has had a different conception of it, and that these different conceptions have corresponded with the different forms of production of successive periods of material development. We must therefore abstract the general elements from all these concrete forms to form a proper conception of what constitutes true freedom. And we shall find that however wide the differences are between the different movements which have advocated freedom, there are certain common features about them all. They all, at least, desired freedom to enjoy the things of life without the necessity of having to become the beasts of burden of the ruling-classes. But the differences also are equally as great as the likenesses. The freedom sought by the early Christians, for example, and the means of realizing it, were widely different from those conceived by the modern working class.

The modern workers do not take their example of freedom from the lilies of the field, who toil and spin not, as did the toil-worn slaves under the Roman Empire. They believe rather in the redeeming power of work, and they look to the marvellous productivity of associated human labour, aided by machinery, as the indispensable means to human salvation.

Consequently, the modern working class believes that it is not by prayer and fasting, and other spiritualistic moonshine, that their hopes will be realized, but by the conscious systematic organization of social labour directed to a given social purpose.

The modern conception of salvation is a real and palpable one, to be obtained by natural means in this world of reality, and not the fantastic proposal sought for by the early Christians, and still half-heartedly pursued by their modern descendants who profess to such redemption by supernatural means in an imaginary world beyond the one perceived by our senses. However, the earlier Christians can

hardly be blamed for their inability of rising above the limitations set by their material environment, though the same excuse hardly applies to their modern disciples who still preserve the same mental attitude.

The possibility of an earthly salvation by purely material means would have seemed as remote and fantastic to the slaves of the early Christian era, as what their proposals now appear to us. Between them and us lie two thousand years of material and intellectual development, which is sufficient to account for the fundamental difference in outlook and attitude. As a result of this development —more especially of the changes and rapid progress made during the past century—we are now able to form a more scientific conception of things. We realize, for instance, that before we can expect the higher social attributes of a developed humanity to flourish, the ground must be prepared by suitable material developments. From this modern standpoint we should, for example, explain the failure of the French Revolution to realize the principles of freedom and equality for which its champions had fought, as being primarily due to the undeveloped state of the productive forces, rather than to the inherent treachery of the leaders of the people, which is ascribed by some as the cause. To prepare the ground for the establishment of general freedom, it was necessary not only to extirpate the petrifying influences of feudalism, but also to allow sufficient time to elapse for the forces of capitalism to unfold themselves, so that they could contribute their share to the historical development of the productive forces of society.

It is in consequence of this development which has taken place during the capitalistic era—a development which corresponds with the transformation of the tools and functions of production from small individual instruments and methods to the gigantic productive forces of modern industry—that the modern working class has been produced, and is being equipped with the necessary organization and discipline as will enable it to fulfil its historic function of setting free the productive forces from the capitalist integument and structure in a manner that will guarantee their full and free development in the future.

It should hardly need any demonstration here that the present poverty and misery of the masses are not due to the unwillingness or incapacity of the workers to produce all that is needed, or that the capitalist system of ownership and remuneration is responsible for the artificial and anomalous scarcity which normally prevail for quite a large proportion of the people. The facts are becoming so glaring that even the dullest must see and understand them. Even should it be necessary after more than two centuries of working-class organization and struggle, to engage in any further proof that no great improvement in the lot of the workers is possible

upon the basis of existing social relationships. The past and present experience of the workers should be sufficient to convince them that they, too, must get ready to play their revolutionary part in historical development, and put an end, not only to the present, but to all possible future forms of exploitation, by taking upon themselves the duty and responsibility of reorganizing the productive and distributive forces of society upon the basis of equal social relations and of the equitable distribution of material wealth. The great achievement awaiting the working class is thus seen to be the carrying to their logical conclusion the principles enunciated by all past emancipatory movements, especially that culminating in the great French Revolution at the close of the eighteenth century.

This revolutionary work of emancipating itself and the whole of society from the remaining forms of exploitation and inequality, will force itself upon the workers with increasing momentum during what is obviously this culminating stage of capitalist development now upon us. The futility of attacking the effects of capitalism, or of expecting to gain any effective control over working-class industrial conditions while the system itself is allowed to continue and while the capitalists remain in possession, is being made painfully obvious by recent happenings, it will be made even more apparent the more the workers rebel against their conditions and the more determined they get in their insistence on alleviation.

Just as futile are the efforts of those who still pin their faith to the fad of moderate organic progress. How trivial, in face of present capitalistic developments, are the effects secured by "people's budgets" and similar schemes whose boasted object is to secure a more equitable distribution of wealth as a means of counteracting present economic laws which lead to aggregation?

The workers should cease to be misled by those vote-catching devices, and instead, should concentrate their efforts on their chief work of building up their system of industrial and political organization, and of educating themselves in the principles of working-class science so that their power may be used to the effective purpose of achieving their own emancipation. The immediate and special work of the working-class movement as soon as it has developed the necessary power and solidarity is the overthrow of capitalist rule and supremacy, in order that its own rule and supremacy may be firmly and universally established. Then in place of antogonistic classes, whose interests are in perpetual conflict, will arise an association of producers and equals with interests and aims in common. For

"Where all rule, nobody serves;
Where all serve, nobody rules."

C. WATKINS.

Poverty is the precursor of revolution.—LORD BRASSEY.

A Tribute

IT has not been our habit to use the scanty pages of this Magazine for the purpose of mutual admiration—and it is not likely to become a habit. Nevertheless, I feel impelled to offer an altogether inadequate tribute to the work on behalf of our movement of our dear friend, Mrs. Bridges Adams. The other day I received a copy of that very lively and up-to-date London Labour newspaper, *The Daily Herald*,—more power to it!—and among other things a letter in the correspondence column caught my eye, it was an appreciation of Mrs. Adams' newest aim, the establishment of a women's residential section of the Central Labour College. It struck me then with vivid force how much of our present success we owe to her untiring efforts on our behalf: and how much the workers' movement generally is indebted to her forceful and convincing educational propaganda.

Two or three days after the strike was declared at Ruskin College in March, 1909, I received a letter from our comrade, heartily wishing us success and saying that she was coming to Oxford to get first-hand information about our movement with a view to helping us by a propagandist tour in the provinces. She came, and as we walked up together from the station we chatted over things of interest to Socialists generally, needless to say, with special regard to educational matters. Being curious to know what attracted her to take such special interest in our side of the movement I questioned her on the matter. Ruskin College it seemed had always been of interest to her as an educational experiment, more especially as a possible centre for educational activities from the working-class point of view. However, events there had not proceeded on the lines she had at first hoped they would take, though she had never given up hope that at some time or other its development would yet be along the lines indicated. During all our conversation I was impressed by the stress she laid upon rank-and-file control of any workers' educational institutions, also of her keenness in probing our educational ideals. I laughingly teased her about the latter and her reply has a lasting place in my memory: "I want to keep pace with the most youthful of you in thought." She has easily succeeded in doing so, while her wide experience and varied knowledge of educational matters, persons, and movements has been of inestimable service to us all.

For three years and three months (the whole time our movement has been in being), Mrs. Adams has propagated, and propagated, and propagated, in Scotland, Wales, North, South, East and West of England she has carried the gospel of the Central Labour College educational programme, roping in helpers and funds, directly and indirectly, and while not sparing herself has insisted on more and more work from us. She has her reward in the affection and

esteem in which we hold her and the knowledge of the success of her efforts. Now the men's side is well under way and occupying an assured position in the Labour Movement she has set out to accomplish the other half of the programme—a residential section for women workers. Need we say that with such a champion its materialization is sure, and will those who appreciate both her work and the object of her labours show their practical sympathy by communicating their desire to help, to her at her London address, 64 Prince of Wales Mansions, Battersea Park, S.W.

To MRS. BRIDGES ADAMS.

Dear Comrade,—You will see this altogether meagre expression of our goodwill, gratitude, and regard. You will no doubt feel a little annoyed at my presumption in writing it. Yet you will forgive me because you will understand that it is born of the desire of one who has no belief in tributes to the dead, but who, while those who are with us, of us, and for us, still pulsate with the joy of life, lays this small offering on the altar of our friendship on behalf of all who have laboured in the cause.

GEO. SIMS.

A Mad Poet's Journal

[The Journal printed below was written by John Clare, the Northamptonshire Peasant Poet, after his escape from a private asylum. He gives here a very graphic account of the sufferings he had to undergo before reaching his home, and addresses it to his supposed wife, Mary Joyce. Mary was his first love, but her father hearing of the courtship would not let her have anything more to do with the "beggar-boy." She had been dead some years when Clare addressed this Journal to her. The verses printed at the end of this Journal are the last he ever penned, and were written shortly before his death in Northampton County Lunatic Asylum. We purpose shortly to give a sketch of his life, and hope to insert some of his beautiful lyrics in the Magazine. The Journal was first printed by F. Martin, in his life of John Clare (published by Macmillan in 1865). Martin tells us that the Journal is printed exactly as Clare wrote it, with one or two trifling alterations in punctuation and spelling. This is an exact reprint of Martin's version].

W.G.E.P.

'*JULY 24th*, 1841.—Returned home out of Essex, and found no Mary. Her and her family are nothing to me now, though she herself was once the dearest of all. And how can I forget!'

After this entry begins what is headed the *Journal*:—

'*July* 18, 1841, *Sunday.*—Felt very melancholy. Went for a walk in the forest in the afternoon. Fell in with some gypsies, one of whom offered to assist in my escape from the madhouse by hiding me in his camp, to which I almost agreed. But I told him I had no money to start with; but if he would do so, I would promise him fifty pounds, and he agreed to do so before Saturday. On Friday I went again, but he did not seem so willing, so I said little about it. On Sunday I went and they were all gone. An old wide-awake hat and an old straw bonnet, of the plum-pudding sort, was left behind, and I put the hat in my pocket, thinking it might be useful for another opportunity. As good luck would have it, it turned out to be so.

July 19, *Monday.*—Did nothing.

July 20, *Tuesday.*—Reconnoitered the road the gypsey had taken, and found it a legible (!) one to make a movement; and having only honest courage and myself in my army, I led the way and my troops soon followed. But being careless in mapping down the road as the gypsey told me, I missed the lane to Enfield Town, and was going down Enfield Highway, till I passed the "Labour-in-vain" public-house, where a person who came out of the door told me the way. I walked down the lane gently, and was soon in Enfield Town, and by and by on the great York Road, where it was all plain sailing. Steering ahead, meeting no enemy and fearing none, I reached Stevenage, where, being night, I got over a gate, and crossed the corner of a green paddock. Seeing a pond or hollow in the corner, I was forced to stay off a respectable distance to keep from falling into it. My legs were nearly knocked up and began to stagger. I scaled over some old rotten palings into the yard, and then had higher palings to clamber over, to get into the shed or hovel; which I did with difficulty, being rather weak. To my good luck, I found some trusses of clover piled up, about six or more feet square, which I gladly mounted and slept on. There were some drags in the hovel, on which I could have reposed had I not found a better bed. I slept soundly, but had a very uneasy dream. I thought my first wife lay on my left arm, and somebody took her away from my side, which made me wake up rather unhappy. I thought as I awoke somebody said "Mary;" but nobody was near. I lay down with my head towards the north, to show myself the steering point in the morning.

July 21.—Daylight was looking in on every side, and fearing my garrison might be taken by storm, and myself be made prisoner, I left my lodging by the way I got in, and thanked God for His kindness in procuring it. For anything in a famine is better than nothing, and any place that giveth the weary rest is a blessing. I gained the North Road again, and steered due north. On the left

hand side, the road under the bank was like a cave; I saw a man and a boy coiled up asleep, whom I hailed, and they awoke to tell me the name of the next village. Somewhere on the London side, near the "Plough" public-house, a man passed me on horseback, in a slop frock, and said, "Here 's another of the broken-down hay-makers," and threw me a penny to get a half of pint of beer, which I picked up, and thanked him for, and when I got to the "Plough," I called for a half pint and drank it. I got a rest, and escaped a very heavy shower in the bargain, by having a shelter till it was over. Afterwards I would have begged a penny of two drovers, but they were very saucy; so I begged no more of anybody.

Having passed a lodge on the left hand, within a mile and a half, or less, of a town—I think it may be St. Ives, or it was St. Neot's, but I forget the name—I sat down to rest on a flint heap, for half an hour or more. While sitting here, I saw a tall gypsey come out of the lodge gate, and make down the road to where I was. When she got up to me, I saw she was a young woman, with a honest-looking countenance, and rather handsome. I spoke to her, and asked her a few questions, which she answered readily and with evident good humour. So I got up, and went on to the next town with her. She cautioned me on the way to put something in my hat to keep the crown up, and said in a lower tone, "You'll be noticed." But not knowing at what she hinted, I took no notice and made no reply. At length she pointed to a small church tower, which she called Shefford Church, and advised me to go on a footway, which would take me direct to it, and would shorten my journey fifteen (!) miles by doing so. I would gladly have taken the young woman's advice, feeling that it was honest, and a nigh guess towards the truth; but fearing I might lose my way, and not be able to find the North Road again, I thanked her, and told her I should keep to the road. She then bid me "good day," and went into a house or shop on the left hand side of the road.

Next I passed three or four good built houses on a hill, and a public-house on the roadside in the hollow below them. I seemed to pass the milestones very quick in the morning, but towards night they seemed to be stretched further asunder. I now got to a village of which I forget the name. The road on the left hand was quite overshadowed by trees, and quite dry. So I sat down half an hour, and made a good many wishes for breakfast. But wishes were no meal; so I got up as hungry as I sat down. I forget here the names of the villages I passed through, but recollect at late evening going through Potton, in Bedfordshire, where I called in a house to light my pipe. There was a civil old woman, and a country wench making lace on a cushion as round as a globe, and a young fellow; all civil people. I asked them a few questions as to the way, and where the clergyman and overseer lived: but they scarcely heard me, and gave no answer. I then went through Potton, and happened to

meet with a kind-talking countryman, who told me the parson lived a good way from where I was. So I went on hopping with a crippled foot; for the gravel had got into my old shoes, one of which had now nearly lost the sole. Had I found the overseer's house at hand or the parson's, I should have given my name, and begged for a shilling to carry me home; but I was forced to brush on penniless, and be thankful I had a leg to move on. I then asked him whether he could tell me of a farmyard anywhere on the road, where I could find a shed and some dry straw, and he said, "Yes, if you will go with me, I will show you the place: it is a public-house on the left hand side of the road, at the sign of the Ram." But seeing a stone heap, I longed to rest, as one of my feet was very painful. So I thanked him for his kindness, and bid him go on. But the good-natured fellow lingered awhile, as if wishing to conduct me; but suddenly recollecting that he had a hamper on his shoulder, and a lock-up bag in his hand, to meet the coach, he started hastily, and was soon out of sight.

I followed, looking in vain for the countryman's straw bed. Not being able to find it, I lay down by the wayside, under some elm trees. Between the wall and the trees there was a thick row, planted some five or six feet from the buildings. I laid there and tried to sleep; but the wind came in between the trees so cold that I quaked like having the ague, and I quitted this lodging to seek another at the "Ram," which I scarcely hoped to find. It now began to grow dark apace, and the odd houses on the road began to light up, and show the inside lot very comfortable, and my outside lot very uncomfortable and wretched. Still I hobbled forward as well as I could, and at last came the "Ram." The shutters were not closed, and the lighted window looked very cheering; but I had no money, and did not like to go in. There was a sort of shed, or gig-house, at the end; but I did not like to lie there, as the people were up; so I still travelled on. The road was very lonely and dark, being over-shaded with trees. At length I came to a place where the road branched off into two turnpikes, one to the right about, and the other straight forward. On going by, I saw a milestone standing under the hedge, and I turned back to read it, to see where the other road led to. I found it led to London. I then suddenly forgot which was north or south, and though I narrowly examined both ways, I could see no tree, or bush, or stone heap that I could recollect having passed.

I went on mile after mile, almost convinced I was going the same way I had come. These thoughts were so strong upon me, and doubts and hopelessness made me turn so feeble, that I was scarcely able to walk. Yet I could not sit down or give up, but shuffled along till I saw a lamp shining as bright as the moon, which, on nearing, I found was suspended over a tollgate. Before I got through, the man came out with a candle, and eyed me narrowly;

but having no fear I stopped to ask him whether I was going northward. He said, "When you get through the gate you are." I thanked him, and went through to the other side, and gathered my old strength as my doubts vanished. I soon cheered up, and hummed the air of "Highland Mary" as I went on. I at length came to an odd house, all alone, near a wood; but I could not see what the sign was, though it seemed to stand, oddly enough, in a sort of a trough, or spout. There was a large porch over the door, and being weary I crept in, and was glad enough to find I could lie with my legs straight. The inmates were all gone to rest, for I could hear them turn over in bed, while I lay at full length on the stones in the porch. I slept here till daylight, and felt very much refreshed. I blest my two wives and both their families when I laid down and when I got up in the morning.

I have but a slight recollection of my journey between here and Stilton, for I was knocked up, and noticed little or nothing. One night I laid in a dyke-bottom, sheltered from the wind, and went asleep for half an hour. When I awoke, I found one side wet through from the water; so I got out and went on. I remember going down a very dark road, hung over on both sides with thick trees; it seemed to extend a mile or two. I then entered a town, where some of the chamber windows had lights shining in them. I felt so weak here that I was forced to sit on the ground to rest myself, and while I sat here a coach that seemed heavily laden came rattling up, and splashing the mud in my face wakened me from a doze. When I had knocked the gravel out of my shoes I started again. There was little to notice, for the road very often looked as stupid as myself. I was often half asleep as I went on.

The third day I satisfied my hunger by eating the grass on the roadside, which seemed to taste something like bread. I was hungry, and eat heartily till I was satisfied; in fact, the meal seemed to do me good. The next and last day I remembered that I had some tobacco, and my box of lucifers being exhausted, I could not light my pipe. So I took to chewing tobacco all day, and eat it when I had done. I was never hungry afterwards. I remember passing through Buckden, and going a length of road afterwards; but I do not recollect the name of any place until I came to Stilton, where I was completely footsore, bleeding, and broken down. When I had got about half way through the town, a gravel causeway invited me to rest myself; so I laid down and nearly went to sleep. A young woman, as I guessed by the voice, came out of a house, and said, "Poor creature;" and another voice more elderly said, "Oh, he shams." But when I got up the latter said, "Oh no, he don't," as I hobbled along very lame. I heard the voices, but never looked back to see where they came from. When I got near the inn at the end of the gravel walk, I met two young women, and asked one of them whether the road branching to the right by the inn did not lead to

Peterborough. She said, "Yes." As soon as ever I was on it, I felt myself on the way home, and went on rather more cheerful, though I was forced to rest oftener than usual.

Before I got to Peterborough, a man and women passed in a cart; and on hailing me as they passed, I found they were neighbours from Helpston, where I used to live. I told them I was knocked-up, which they could easily see, and that I had neither food nor drink since I left Essex. When I had told my story they clubbed together and threw me fivepence out of the cart. I picked it up, and called at a small public-house near the bridge, where I had two half pints of ale, and twopennyworth of bread and cheese. When I had done, I started quite refreshed; only my feet were more crippled than ever, and I could scarcely bear to walk over the stones. Yet I was half ashamed to sit down in the street, and forced myself to keep on the move.

I got through Peterborough better than I expected. When I came to the high road, I rested on the stone-heaps, till I was able to go on afresh. By-and-by I passed Walton, and soon reached Werrington. I was making for the "Beehive" as fast as I could when a cart met me, with a man, a woman, and a boy in it. When nearing me the woman jumped out, and caught fast hold of my hands, and wished me to get into the cart. But I refused; I thought her either drunk or mad. But when I was told it was my second wife, Patty, I got in, and was soon at Northborough. But Mary was not there; neither could I get any information about her, further than the old story of her having died six years ago. But I took no notice of the lie, having seen her myself twelve months ago, alive and well, and as young as ever. So here I am hopeless at home.'

This wonderfully graphic narrative—extraordinary compound of facts and dreams, illuminated by the lurid flame of a marvellous imagination—Clare accompanied by a letter to his visionary spouse. The letter, addressed, 'To Mary Clare, Glinton,' and dated 'Northborough, July 27, 1841,' ran as follows :—

> 'MY DEAR WIFE,—I have written an account of my journey, or rather escape, from Essex, for your amusement. I hope it may divert your leisure hours. I would have told you before that I got here to Northborough last Friday night; but not being able to see you, or to hear where you were, I soon began to feel homeless at home, and shall by and by be nearly hopeless. But I am not so lonely as I was in Essex; for here I can see Glinton Church, and feeling that my Mary is safe if not happy, I am gratified. Though my home is no home to me, my hopes are not entirely hopeless while even the memory of Mary lives so near me. God bless you my dear Mary! Give my love to our dear beautiful family and to your mother, and believe me, as ever I have been and ever shall be,
>
> My dearest Mary,
>
> Your affectionate husband,
>
> JOHN CLARE.'

"I am! yet what I am who cares, or knows?
My friends forsake me like a memory lost.
I am the self-consumer of my woes,
They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,
Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.
And yet I am—I live—though I am toss'd

"Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dream,
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best
Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.

"I long for scenes where man has never trod,
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept;
There to abide with my Creater, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,
The grass below; above the vaulted sky."

Some Definitions

"HOW would you explain and illustrate the meaning of the words money, value, price, profit, slavery, theft, alms?"

We shall begin with the second, leaving the first for third place:—

"Value" is that quality, common to all commodities, which determines the proportion in which they are mutually interchangeable, and which is imparted to all by the amount of labour-power socially necessary for their production.

To illustrate:

The value of an ounce of gold is determined by the amount of labour-power socially necessary to produce it. That amount of labour-power determines how many bales of hay, or yards of calico, are equal to that ounce of gold.

"Price" is the amount of goods that any given commodity will exchange for in the market at a given time. That amount of goods is called the price of the given commodity. If there are no perturbing causes in the market, the price of the given commodity will coincide with its value. If the normality of the market is perturbed the price will rise above, or will sink below the given commodity's value. The normality of the market is subject to two main perturbing causes—supply and demand. If the supply exceeds the demand,

the price will sink below the value: if the supply falls short of the demand, then the price will rise above the value of the given commodity.

To illustrate:

The market being normal, the price of an ounce of gold will be the amount of hay or calico in which is crystalized an amount of socially necessary labour-power for its production equal to the amount of socially necessary labour-power for the production of an ounce of gold:

If the market is perturbed, owing to the supply of gold being in excess of the demand, while the supply and demand of and for hay and calico remain stationary, then the price of the ounce of gold will be a smaller amount of hay or calico:

If the market is perturbed, owing to the supply of gold being below the demand, while the supply and demand of and for hay and calico remain stationary, then the price of the ounce of gold will be a larger amount of hay or calico.

"Money" is the name given to any one commodity through which, for the sake of convenience, the value, and, of course, also the price of all others, is expressed. Owing to this circumstance "money" becomes a "medium of exchange" and is said to be "measure of value."—

To illustrate:

At a time in the history of the race and of money, the commodity then thought to be the most convenient through which to express the value, hence also the price of all others, was cattle. Proof of the fact is preserved down to our own times in the English word "pecuniary," together with its derivatives, all of which are derived from the old Latin word "pecunia" (money), in turn derived from "pecus" (cattle). Later, the precious metals, gold and silver, were selected as the commodity through which to express the value of all others.

All is not said about "money" when this is said. Sociologic progress has effected such developments that the above definition and illustration in money is, to-day, incomplete. Nevertheless, all further definition and illustration is planted upon the definition and illustration just given.

"Money" has become "a creature of law"—partially so, in one aspect; absolutely so in another aspect.

The aspect of money in which it is partially a creature of government arises from the social invention of stamping with the stamp of government certain qualities of the precious metals. This invention saves trade the trouble and inconvenience of weighing the

metal at each transaction. The stamp is presumptive evidence that actual weight and the stamp coincide. The stamp is, however, presumptive evidence only.

To illustrate:

When the purchaser of hay or calico of the value, or be it that day's market price, of £10, lays down ten gold pieces, the seller of the hay or calico is not compelled to accept the coins. If for any of a score of reasons he mistrusts the proffered coins, he is at liberty to decline the exchange. He may be foolish; he may be in error: —that is his business. In that matter he is the sole and last court of appeal. This right proceeds from the barter nature of "purchase and sale," a fact which the differentiation of one commodity from all others, as the one through which to measure the value of all, veils but does not alter. Purchase and sale remain the exchange of value for value, subject to market perturbations. Money in exchange is, accordingly, only partially a "creature of law."

The aspect of money as absolutely "a creature of law" arises from a further social invention, the invention of "Debt," an invention that marks a high degree of perfection in governmental organization. As a "payer of debts" money is the absolute creature of government; the fiat of government is final.

To illustrate:

He who had land, for instance, and wanted cattle and had no other commodity to trade for cattle, and no money to purchase the same, had to remain without the cattle. This being due to the unenforcibility of, or difficulty to enforce the payments of debts. The perfected organization of government removes the difficulty. Debt becomes a social status that government takes charge to liquidate. The land owner then borrows the money he needs under an obligation to return it and pay the interest thereon. When the debt matures the land owner who borrowed say, £100, can make payment by tendering to his creditor a hundred things which government has stamped of the value of one sovereign. It matters not whether gold has since declined in value, and the sovereign has no longer the full exchange value that it had at the time the debt was contracted. The fiat of government—ONE SOVEREIGN—is final. The debtor must accept, he has no redress. Inversely, it matters not whether, since the contraction of the debt, the valve of gold has risen, and the exchange value of the sovereign is far above what it was; in other words, it matters not whether, at maturity of the debt, the debtor has to return a larger value than he received. It matters not. The fiat of government—ONE SOVEREIGN—is final. Money as debt payer is "legal tender," it is a creature of law.

Due to these later acquired aspects by money, the financial world stands on a slippery banana peel, despite the origin of money.

"Profit" is that portion of the wealth produced by the Working Class which the Capitalist Class appropriates by virtue of the private ownership of the necessaries for production, together with the resulting commodity feature of labour-power, which, in the last analysis means the working man himself.

To illustrate:

The capitalist buys labour-power in the labour market at its exchange value, say sixpence an hour. The use value of labour-power is that it yields more wealth than its own value. Hence the labour-power of the value of sixpence an hour yields in that hour more than one shilling's worth of wealth. All that is yielded above the sixpence is profit and is pocketed by the capitalist. "Profit" is another name for "unpaid wages."

"Slavery" is the condition of human beings who are compelled to yield a part of the fruit of their labour to support others.

To illustrate:

The chattel slave, held down by chains or a physical whip, to work produced his own keep and his idle master's. The wage slave, held down by the invisible whip of hunger, produces his own keep and his master's, the idle capitalist's.

"Theft" is the appropriation of the fruit of others labour.

To illustrate:

The Capitalist Class thieves all that part of the wealth produced and which the Working Class does not receive back as wages.

"Alms" is that pittance of the wealth stolen from the Working Class, which the Capitalist Class returns to the Working Class for court plaster to the gashes inflicted by capitalism upon the workers.

To illustrate:

Carnegie presents £50 to the widows and orphans of mine disasters.

New York *Daily People*, 14-viii-1911.

Impatient for the noonday, shall we miss
The sunrise we shall never see again?
And all the tender colours of the dawn,—
The vision of the crimson clouds that hang
Above us, and the lovely morning-star
That will be vanished when the sun is high?

—H. E. HAMILTON KING.

Cause and Effect

RUSKIN COLLEGE, OXFORD

To the Members of the Northumberland Miners' Association

FELLOW TRADE UNIONISTS,—On the motion of Mr. Ben Tillett, seconded by Mr. J. Cairns (your representative on our Executive Committee), Ruskin College has just incurred an expenditure of nearly £10,000 for new buildings. This great step was taken because we trusted to the continuance of your support, well knowing that the College is more efficient than ever before. Just at the moment when we most urgently need your help, and that of every Trade Unionist, you are asked to withdraw half the support you have given us for so many years.

You are asked to take away £52 of the revenue upon which our Executive Committee counted when making their plans, and to transfer this £52 to an institution which is inadequately staffed and badly equipped for the work of educating your members. If this is done, you will play into the hands of a little group of men in London who are deliberately attempting to smash Ruskin College; to smash it, not because they have anything better to offer, not because they can find any fault with the existing management and teaching here, not because they wish to benefit you and your fellow members—but simply because they have personal grievances against Ruskin College, and wish to secure personal benefits.

Do not lend your support to any set of men who are deliberately trying to wreck this institution, regardless of all the work it has done, and is trying to do. Do not be persuaded to leave Ruskin College in the lurch now, when up to the present, you, through your representative on our Committee, have participated in the control of all our work and of all our planning for the future.

Yours fraternally,

GILBERT SLATER, *Principal*; HY. ALLSOPP, *Secretary*.

At yesterday's half-yearly meeting in Newcastle of the Northumberland Miners' Association it was agreed by 44 votes to 11 to send one student to Ruskin College and one student to the Central Labour College.—*The Standard*, London, June, 1912.

Mr. Charles R. Simpson, of Worsbro' Dale, is acting as Liberal sub-agent for that district in the Holmfrith contest, has been in residence two years in Ruskin College, Oxford. The result of the examination for diplomas in economic and political science, published to-day, shows that he has passed with distinction.

—*Sheffield Independent*, June 18th, 1912.

What's the Use of Poetry?

(Speech from Chatterton. A Play)

WHAT'S the use of poetry? Why to live upon, when one can't get bread and cheese, to clothe and warm oneself when one is ragged and cold. What's the use of poetry? To keep faith and hope and worship alive in the heart of man, to reconcile him to life, to make him at home in this world. What's the use of poetry? To pour vitrol on deceit and vice, to seam and sear the detested face of hypocrisy and lies. To add hate to all things hateful and shame to all things shameful. What's the use of poetry? To give more beauty to beauty, more grace to grace, more truth to truth, to deck the flowers of the field, to rain perfume on the rose, and music on the nightingale. What's the use of poetry? To be a stumbling block to the worldly wise and the proud, and a camp and a pillar of fire to children and the childlike. What's the use of poetry? To enbalm the immortal dead, to interpret this aimless universe, to snatch the secrets of the stars, to unleash the seas and the winds, to fling a double rainbow of hope and glory across the heavens, till all the universe shouts with one voice, and beats with one heart, and pants with one breath. What's the use of poetry? To make this wide world drunk with its loveliness, to make this garret a palace, and me the King of Death and Fate. Poetry not real! Not useful! It is you who are not real, you practical people, you herd of money-grabbers, you bats, you owls, you moles, you human vegetables, who root yourselves and fatten up your dull, petty, miserable lives, and eat and drink and sleep, and buy and sell, and toil in one long round of humdrum death in life. It is you who are not real. You were dead and huddled into oblivion before you were born, you do not live at all, you are smoke from the nostrils of Death. Poetry not real, not useful? There is no thing useful but poetry, and no thing real but the poet.

Lots of people are bubbling over with enthusiasm, but bubbles don't accomplish much.—H. THOMPSON.

Fun gives you a forcible hug and shakes laughter out of you whether you will or no.—GARRICK.

Man hath no fate except past days.—EDWIN ARNOLD.

AUGUST MEET

Central Labour College

THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of C.L.C. will be held at the College, 11 & 13 Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W. (close to Earl's Court Station, District Railway)

On Bank Holiday, Monday, August 5th, 1912.

MORNING SESSION to commence at 11 a.m. prompt.

CHAIRMAN - MR. E. EDWARDS, A.S.R.S.

EVENING MEETING

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at CHANDOS HALL, 21a Maiden Lane, nr. Charing Cross Station, at 7 p.m.

CHAIRMAN - MR. DENNIS HIRD.

Speakers - GEO. LANSBURY, M.P., H. M. HYNDMAN, WILL W. CRAIK (Sub-Warden of the College).

"PLEBS" LEAGUE.

Afternoon - - Chair at 3 p.m. sharp.

AGENDA:

1. Secretary's Report
2. Balance Sheet
3. Election of Officers
4. Other Business