

# THE "Plebs" Magazine

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## EDITORIAL

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**W**E presume that all readers of this Magazine are readers of the *Daily Herald*. If there are any who do not, then we dare issue an Editorial commandment: "Thou shalt have no other *Daily's* before the *Daily Herald*." The *Herald* arises to meet

**The "Daily Herald" and the C.L.C.**

the same working-class needs as those which called into existence the Central Labour College. And both meet these needs in the same independent way, both are founded on the self-sufficiency of the working class to develop its own supplies. And both will prosper in the degree that they develop that principle. Both merit condemnation in so far as they depart from it. The times demand from those institutions, that exist to promote the deliverance of the working class from the bondage of capitalist slavery, a greater self-reliance, a more and more fearless and outspoken criticism of things as they are, and a clearer presentation of the policy required to effectively remove the disease-creating rubbish and effect the cleanly condition of social democracy.

The Central Labour College has always had great difficulty in securing a statement of its case and claims in the columns of the Press. There are one or two honourable exceptions. But these exceptions were not capitalist papers.



PARTICULARLY the *Railway Review* has done trojan work for the College. But probably the fullest statement of the controversy between the C.L.C. and Ruskin College is that which has appeared and is still appearing in the *Daily Herald*. The state-

**R.C. v. C.L.C.** ment of course could be much fuller but the pages of the *Daily Herald* are too limited as yet to allow of this. We very much appreciate the space so far provided. Ruskin College cannot complain that it has been unfairly treated in

the voicing of its claims. And the Central Labour College has certainly no desire to in any way prevent its case from being adequately put. We are perfectly satisfied that the best way to expose the real character of Ruskin College is out of the testimony of its own witnesses. Certainly the bulk of the letters that have been appearing in the *Herald*, defending Ruskin College, constitute a condemnation of that institution.



THE ball was set a-rolling by the Simpson case. Simpson, a Ruskin College student, whose intelligence had just been certified by the University authorities as being of the Diploma character, left Ruskin College to act as an election agent for the Liberal candidate **Liberal Ruskin** in the Holmfirth Division at the recent bye-election in which a Labour candidate was contesting. It was not surprising that the incident should be exposed in the *Herald*. Mr. Henry Allsopp hastened to point out in the pages of the *Herald* that this incident should not be laid to the charge of Ruskin College. Ruskin College was not to blame, for "Simpson had always been a Liberal." Evidently the training at Ruskin College was incapable of turning him from the errors of the past. His ignorance must have been shocking, surely. But stay! He was awarded a Diploma, and that with Honours too. Well, then, how is it? The authorities who awarded him the Diploma may have been depravedly ignorant. Let us be charitable and conclude that the intelligence of Oxford is the highest form of ignorance. But let us return to Mr. Allsopp. His enthusiasm for Ruskin College outran his discretion with very damning effect to R.C. First of all, he says, Ruskin College was not to blame. He therefore implies that Simpson was at fault. But now the Secretary of R.C. goes on to say that "the Simpson episode very well illustrates how thoroughly representative of the working-class movement R.C. is." Here Simpson's case is no longer a matter for regret, but a matter testifying to the virtue of R.C. But the most important point of all to be noted is Allsopp's view of the working-class movement. It is clear as daylight that he regards the Liberal Party to be a part of the working-class movement. Else why should he say that Simpson's Liberal electioneering proves how "thoroughly representative of the working-class movement Ruskin College is." And there can be no escape from cataloguing Toryism as another part of the working-class movement. And with that there ceases to be a working-class movement at all. It is from this pretty plain what there is in the claim of Ruskin College to be a Labour College. There is nothing but ignorance and roguishness in it. A Labour College that represents Liberalism is indeed a comic spectacle, and while the people who are staying that spectacle may be well qualified for such circus performances, they are quite unfit for the theoretical work of a Labour College. There is indeed no wonder that Simpson remained a Liberal. Evidently the educational advice of H. B. Lees Smith,

Liberal M.P. for Northampton, has been very effective, as witness, not only Simpson's case, but also the comparatively large number of students that R.C. has turned out for Labour Exchanges, Insurance lectureships, Free Trade propagandists, W.E.A. lecturers. This is, of course, justified by Ruskin College on the ground that it "democratizes the Civil Service," a phrase which sounds very sweet indeed in the ears of the aspirants for this great work of democratization. There may be some simple souls who are carried away by these high flown phrases, but if their simplicity is not of the kind that varies inversely with sanity they cannot for long suffer from the illusion. The phrase must fade in face of the fact. Ruskin College has contributed liberally to the democratizing process. First of all David Shackleton and Richard Bell, the Labour members of the Ruskin College executive in our day were called into the vineyard. What splendid work they have done for the Labour Movement in their new spheres is well known! so well known that it is never mentioned. Then there was the never-to-be-forgotten Secretary, Mr. Bertram Wilson, whose working-class sympathies were so all pervading, that he sacrificed himself with Heapian humility upon the democratic altar of a Labour Exchange. Another soul-stirring spectacle was afforded at the close of 1908, when H. B. Lees Smith recklessly threw off his cap and gown to take up the noble and disinterested work of democratizing the Liberal Party in the interests of the working class. How whole-heartedly he has flung himself into this work, and how valuable the results is evidenced by his vote *against* the Labour Party's amendment to the Mines' Minimum Wage Bill. The latest victim to democratization from the official side of R.C. is the present Secretary and Vice-Principal, Mr. Henry Allsopp, who has just been appointed one of His Majesty's Chief Inspectors of Elementary Schools. Kismet! Example is better than precept, particularly *official* example and the students of Ruskin College have not been neglectful. They have only followed in the train of their tutors, and in accordance with the character of their tutition. A sample of it is afforded by Mr. Allsopp's recent text book on Industrial History. We quote from Chapter III, pp. 139-140:—

The twentieth century indeed sees the world of labour in a very serious state of unrest. On the one hand are the unions, steadily growing stronger, steadily becoming more enlightened and steadily raising their demands for a larger share in the profit of industry. On the other hand are the employers becoming more and more closely associated in "combines," which may before long become "trusts" like those of America, with huge supplies of money which are to be devoted to crushing all opposition to their desire for big profits. Fortunately the antagonism between the two sets of forces is more apparent than real, and as each side becomes more fully aware of the needs of the other side, as each side becomes more broadly and sanely educated, there will be a fairer and wiser adjustment of their relations. In fact the chief characteristic of the industrial world now is the faith that is placed in "Conciliation Boards" on paper. The antagonism between the two, although it

appears to be increasing, is in fact slowly, but surely, diminishing. The amount of co-operation between employers and employed is increasing.

It is interesting to add that the book is dedicated to Albert Mansbridge of the W.E.A. Mr. Allsopp has certainly justified his appointment.



THE affinity of Ruskin College and such institutions as Labour Exchanges is grounded upon the identical interests and policy which they represent. Like Ruskin College, a Labour Exchange must be impartial and neutral. In both cases the impartiality and neutrality turn into their

**What  
Impartiality  
really means**

The conditions of society are such that they cannot be other than partisan. They must be either for the interests of the working class or the interests of the capitalist class. Just look at the impartiality of a Labour Exchange. The official must provide employment for the trade unionist and the non-unionist, for a member of the Free Labourers' Association, as well as for a member of the A.S.E. How well the Labour Exchanges have supplied strike breakers is the common knowledge of trade unionists throughout the country. During the recent Dockers' Strike the Labour Exchange has done trojan work for Devonport & Co. There can be no vaulting over the fact that the man who refuses to join the trade union is a menace to the interests of the man who is inside the union, that the unorganized jeopardize the interests of the organized. It follows therefore that the Labour Exchange in giving facilities to the non-unionists is acting against the interests of the trade unionist, that the Labour Exchange is therefore not impartial but partisan, that it is the creature of the capitalist class. When a member of the working class enters the Labour Exchange as an official he has thus not only tied his hands for taking an active part in the Labour Movement, but he has turned himself into a tool used against the Labour Movement. Where then can there be a greater irony than when a trade union's funds are used for the purpose of training men who by the character of that training are fitted for the function not of promoting the progress of the trade union but for the function of encompassing its defeat? Ruskin College as an educational institution, claiming to be Labour, can not be on two sides at one and the same time any more than can a Labour Exchange. And it is not. The works of its hands prove that it too is simply an agency for clogging the wheels of the Labour Movement by young men taken from that movement. And that is the modern capitalist policy; to check the proletariat by men assimilated from its ranks. In those pregnant words of Marx :—

"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."

W. W. C.

## Mines' Minimum Wage Act

**T**HE negotiations over the Mines' Minimum Wage Act proceed apace, needless to say with little satisfaction to the miners. The Act itself was a compromise, possible only by the weakening of a large minority of the representatives of the miners in the Federation Conferences, and exploited for all it was worth to Capitalist interests by the Capitalist Press. From the leader who was an Englishman first and a Trade Unionist after, to the others less known but just as easily weakened in the fight of the miners for the right to a living wage, all hastened on the consummation of employers' hopes by bringing about the intervention of Parliament. Of course, and we say it without any desire to imply traitorous intent on the part of these representatives, compromise is not at all difficult to contemplate when the results are of little immediate concern to the parties negotiating, always remembering that compromise is always in favour of the master class. One cannot forget that the majority of the men's representatives, in disputes, are in some sort of position either in the Union or in the mines, &c., and therefore are not, as a rule, directly affected by the result of these movements, and one cannot easily put oneself in the other fellow's place—just as one can argue more detachedly on punishment when the offender has not injured oneself or very dear friends.

When we say that compromise is always in favour of the employer we mean that while he may have to submit to a slight clipping of his profits, it is not likely to be such a close shave as if the struggle continued on the men's part directly; or as even the after results of an immediate defeat of the men which inevitably tends to a levelling up of accounts on their part by more perfect preparation for the next struggle accompanied by an added spice of vindictiveness from the remembrance of the former defeat. Compromise on the other hand encourages the retention of the teaching of the useful services of the employer and his sweet reasonableness if approached with a properly chastened spirit.



**T**HE one great mistake of the recent Miners' Strike, as many knew at the time and more have seen since, was the time allowed the employers generally, and the mine-owners in particular, to prepare for the imminent battle. The employers reaped the full reward in more ways than one: first, by enhanced prices for their commodities, and this does not apply entirely to coal, due to the way in which the Press exploited the uncertainty of supplies on the men's notices expiring. Consequently there was a demand for newspapers and an even more

insistent and panic-stricken demand for commodities likely to be affected by stoppage of the coal industry. The first result as we say was high prices, therefore increased profits for the employers; the second was preparation by the vested interests for the struggle and consequently the conditions for a protracted fight, leading as it inevitably must at the present stage of industrial organization to a weakening of the solidarity of the rank and file, confronted by empty larders and hungry mouths, and the temperature suited to compromise on the part of representatives, many of them having no better preparation for the solving of the economic problems confronting them than is to be gathered from history, as taught in the elementary schools, plus *The Arabian Nights Entertainment*; Economics according to Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; and for Literature the *Methodist Recorder*, the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, and the *News of the World*. (All this kind of reading is useful and instructive provided it is accompanied by a like acquaintanceship with more exclusively proletarian scientific literature on history and economics.) Such representatives having regaled themselves with the Capitalist Press accounts of the suffering of the PUBLIC (for *Public* in this case the Press insists is synonymous with the workers) and the *Public's* anger at the men for prolonging the dispute (for mark you! the Press is always careful to show that it is the workers only who are responsible for the suffering brought about by a dispute) straightway fall victims to their whole mental outlook and capitulate to the forces of "Law, Order, and Progress," all of which are symbolized by Capitalist Interests, as embodied in the Mines' Minimum Wage Act.



THAT the Act had not secured the conditions the miners struck work to obtain was explained to Mr. Asquith by a deputation from the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on July 15th last. It will be remembered that the Act contained some "safeguards"

**Duped!** —for the employer, and Mr. Smillie explained to the Premier that the employers had been up to their old games again, that is putting into force the "safeguards" so as to invalidate the improved conditions supposed to have been secured by the Act. In this particular case the employers had insisted on men signing out of the Act or leave their employment. Complaints were also made that the Awards under the Act had not reached the minimum which Mr. Asquith had himself accepted as a reasonable one, *viz.*, 5s. a day. Mr. Asquith's reply to the deputation was of the usual Cabinet-Minister type, and as a sample of typical evasion; intended mis-representation; muddleheadedness; but withal, suggestiveness that we give it as reported:—

PREMIER'S REPLY

In reply to the deputation, Mr. Asquith said he was sorry that their late chairman, Mr. Enoch Edwards, was no longer with

them—(hear, hear)—and that they had not the opportunity of hearing the expression of that mellow wisdom and fair-mindedness which characterized his utterances. There had been, as was inevitable, some amount of misunderstanding, possibly not complete logical harmony between all the awards which had been given, but upon the whole no one could doubt that the claim of the men for a minimum wage—which he told them very nearly at the beginning of their negotiations was a claim the reasonableness of which the Government and Parliament recognized in passing, this Act—had had enormous consequences for good through the length and breadth of this important industry. He was very glad to hear that the 2s. minimum for boys had practically been conceded everywhere.

In regard to the 5s., he told the Federation and the House of Commons at the time, that, whatever his sympathy with the claim the Government did not feel justified in possibly altering local conditions, and putting a fixed figure into an act of Parliament; and he gathered that, although they had not in every case got the 5s., still they had got 4s. 6d. or 4s. 9d. That was, no doubt, a slight margin of difference, but that might be remedied by representation. He did not think it would justify the Government, at this stage, in interfering with an Act of this kind.

In a case of this kind it was impossible to expect complete satisfaction. He could not sit there, as a Court of Appeal from the statutory bodies; but of course, if a sufficiently strong case were made out, Parliament could be appealed to for amending legislation. But he could not say that the case they had put before him that day was sufficient to justify Parliament in ripping up this Act, and amending it at this stage. On the contrary, he thought the Act had worked very well, and that when things had settled down that reasonable satisfaction would be given. He was perfectly certain *the miners had derived an enormous benefit from the passing of the Act, and he did not believe that either the employers or consumers were going to suffer in consequence.* [The italics are ours.]

A member of the deputation asked whether the Premier would reply to them on the point of men being asked to contract themselves out of the Act.

Mr. Asquith : I should have thought that your organizations were sufficiently strong to deal with a case of that kind. I know how strong they are, and I should have thought they could have protected their members against compulsory contracting-out.

A delegate : It must be remembered that we have powerful organizations opposed to us.

Mr. Asquith : But you are not so unevenly matched. I cannot help thinking that you can protect yourselves.

Mr. Smillie : We are able to protect ourselves by striking, but the Minimum Wage Act was intended to prevent that.

Mr. Asquith: I agree. We shall be very pleased to receive evidence as to the practice which is alleged to exist. At present it does not seem that it exists to any extent.

The deputation thanked Mr. Asquith and withdrew.



PROBABLY the Premier had his tongue in his cheek, remembering how the miners at Hanley had voted, realizing that if they could be so easily duped politically there was small chance of their taking immediate industrial action against the fraudulent

**Was it  
Contempt?**

character of the Minimum Wage Act, and any signs of restlessness could be dealt with as they arose. The reference to Mr. Enoch Edwards was double-barrelled; first, it implied that Mr. Edwards would not have been of the opinion of the deputation, second that the new President was lacking in wisdom. In the first case a reference to Mr. Edwards's speeches during the recent strike would have given the lie direct to the insinuation; as regards the second it is to be hoped that Mr. Smillie will soon undeceive the Premier, and the best way to do that is to cultivate the fighting spirit in the Miners' Federation. The Premier's further contributions would be laughable if the matter was not so serious. Mr. Asquith stated during the dispute that 5s. was a reasonable minimum, and he claims that Parliament recognized this, while not wishing to put exact figures into the Act, yet having proof that this sum has not been conceded in the awards—and consequently Parliament's implied approval scouted—he says there is no reason for interference with the results of the awards by Parliament, that the Act had worked well, and some time in the future, *no doubt*, things would work out all right. The only way this can come about, and the deputation and Miners generally should take Mr. Asquith's hint, is through the Federation taking action as an industry. The Premier's muddleheadedness—or was it contempt for the reasoning powers of the deputation—was exhibited in the sentence we have put into italics: how in the name of all that's wonderful is this idyllic state of affairs to be brought about? everybody to gain and no one to lose! What the deputation thanked Mr. Asquith for it is difficult to see, his answer practically amounts to a statement that they were a lot of noodles who were talking about things they did not understand, and making complaints where they ought to be offering prayers of thanksgiving. But perhaps they were thanking him for so clearly expressing the utter indifference with which capitalist politicians regard the interests of the workers—we hope so, for that would spell a welcome change of attitude on the part of the leaders of the Federation, which again would mean better working conditions for the miners in the very near future. And a more vigorous and revolutionary policy on the part of the miners is sadly needed—Hanley election proves that.



WE said at the commencement of these notes that, needless to say, the Minimum Wage Act brings little satisfaction to the miners. Why? In the first place the fixing of a figure minimum wage by

### The Minimum Wage

Parliament tends to ossify the minimum to a maximum. True, what has been once accomplished can be again done. But Parliamentary methods are slow and cumbersome, particularly in wages questions, as all the reactionary forces are stirred into activity immediately one section is attacked, realizing that an injury to one in this direction presages an injury to all sooner or later. The legarthic methods of legislation are not stirred in any way by the indifference of workers to their own political interests such as recent bye-elections have shown. In the second place, any Act of Parliament, such as the one under discussion, which merely gives pious expression to the minimum wage demand is little more than waste-paper when it comes to concrete application. What does an independent award amount to any way? What is the nature of the independence ascribed to the arbitrator? A man of position he must be, which being interpreted means that he brings to the task of deciding between the merits of the antagonistic claims of masters and men all the instincts, training, and prejudices of the possessing class; he may, and perhaps usually does, impose upon himself with the superstition of independence, honestly think himself capable of isolating himself from all tendency to favour one at the expense of the other, as well might an elephant hope to hide himself behind a flea; for the Etheopian cannot change his skin or the leopard his spots, both could be painted but it would not change their nature. And the natural result of a surfeit of capitalist moral, economic, and historical theory is capitalist decisions. This is more and more the case with the growing understanding of the working class as to the nature of profits, rent, and interest; for the so-called independent arbitrator lives in the world and being intelligent enough to take up the rôle of arbitrator he necessarily knows of the advance of these opinions, and being a man who thinks, however superficially on the training he has received, he consciously or unconsciously has a prejudice on the subject,—and be sure it is not in the direction of the working class. It is not therefore to be wondered at that awards under the Mines' Minimum Wage Act are not *exactly* all that could be desired by the workers. It may, of course, be said that the employers themselves are dissatisfied with the awards at times. It may be so, change is hardly ever welcomed by them in the matter of wages, but has ever anyone heard of an employer who was pleased at the result achieved by a successful strike on the part of his workman. To lose a small portion of his profits under an arbitrator's award may be painful, but it is usually tempered for the employer by the sound reasoning that what is thus secured by the men is hardly likely to be the full pound of flesh they would have exacted from a successful strike—and

arbitrators' awards suggest that a strike would not have been altogether unsuccessful. Finally, we quote the following on "Arbitration," from the pen of D. de Leon, as worthy of thought while on this subject.



"**ARBITRATION**—meaning, of course, the composing of controversies between capitalists and working men—is, when 'free' ineffective; when 'compulsory,' tyrannical and, consequently, also, in the long run, ineffective. The term 'arbitration,' like the term 'contract,' is technical. They presuppose **Compulsory Arbitration** peership, equality; they also presuppose a common ground upon which the interested parties can stand. There is no such equality between capitalist and working man, no common ground upon which both can stand.

In the social system under which the capitalist is a fact, the working man is a chattel, held in the servitude of wage slavery. 'Arbitration' between slaveholder and slave is a misnomer. Either the slave is a finality, and then he is below 'arbitration'; or he is not a finality, and then he is above 'arbitration.'

Applying these fundamental premises, we get:

1st. The slave who is a finality will not need being 'arbitrated' about; he is a crushed man;

2nd. The slave who is not a finality, to wit, the working class will reject 'arbitration' as a farce and an insult. For one thing his slavery status deprives him of the power to enforce a favourable award; for another thing, when he has the power to enforce an award he will also have the power to break his chains: he will not use the power for less.

3rd. The slavery of the working class not being a finality, compulsory arbitration is but a veiled attempt to render the present status of wage slavery permanent. The tyrannical method, always suicidal, is in this instance particularly ineffective. Capitalism can not drop the false pretence of 'free labour' without committing suicide.

There is nothing to 'arbitrate' between capitalist and workman—unless it be in the Shakespearean sense that

Thoughts speculative their unsure hope relate,  
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate."

F. J. C.

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Make your educational laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle; but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age.—RUSKIN.

## The Critic

THE atmosphere of the Labour world is more or less alive just now with the doctrine of "no politics in the Union." We seem to have drifted back about 30 years in this respect. True! the present cry is claimed as *the* revolutionary slogan, whereas its predecessor was admittedly reactionary—but the intended result of the former would be to carry us back to "the Good Old Times" (?) Another revival is that of some of our comrades who would dearly love to have us all produce the certificate of our successful passage to the revolutionary state before they can possibly have any dealings with us. "'Tis but a fiat of impossible good"! We live in a world of give and take, and while this may leave us open to the cry of "opportunist" it is not necessarily the sort of opportunism that is generally (and rightly) discredited. There are two forms of opportunism—the one that leads to the broad and open highway of Capitalism and into the ranks of its apologists and supporters; the other is the opportunism which teaches us to make the best of the material we have to work with and for in the ranks of organized Labour (and to the making perfect of organization likewise) never allowing ourselves to forget that unless we become as little children we can never hope to enter the Kingdom of Labour. This latter kind of opportunism need never take away from our efficiency as advocates of revolutionary change, on the contrary it should greatly add to our power as propagandists; it does not mean dumbly following, or being driven with the mass of the less advanced of our fellows, rather it means the posture of frankly helpful, and capable critics—showing by our readiness to assist the machinery and means of organization at hand, our fitness to advise in the more important and difficult work of *re*-organization in line with the changed and changing conditions of the times.

Take, for example, the *non*—and anti-parliamentarians. One cannot say, for example, how far their propaganda has had its effect in the paucity of Labour votes in the recent election at Hanley. Its effect may have been *nil* so far as this particular district goes, and the result indicated may be entirely due to the peculiar character of its former representation, which seems to have been that of a so-called Labour constituency dependent on Liberal organization and support. There is no reason to doubt, however, that Hanley presented the world with the (unfortunately) recently common spectacle of the workers being urged to refrain from voting for the representative of organized Labour by two antagonistic sections, viz., Capitalists and Labourers. Here we might say that, for our present purposes, we are not particularly concerned with the character of the Labour Party's candidate,—whether he was a revolutionary certificate rank or otherwise deponent knoweth not—being altogether of the opinion that with a change in the outlook of the rank and file the political representatives will become "approved."

This attitude of "no politics in the Union," or, for the matter of that "for the workmen as workmen," can be easily understood from the point of view of our masters; for in spite of the quaint conceit of some so-called "Revolutionary Unionists," backed up by the small but latterly much-in-evidence Anarchists among us, our masters have and do fear the political representation of Labour, more especially since recently the industrial attitude of the rank and file has added to the former a little of the much-needed "ginger." Most masters realize instinctively that once the workers get the necessary balance between the industrial and political weapons that for them (the masters) life will be "hell with the lid off," that being so they assist the "no politics" propaganda. In their case it is pure self-preservation. But is it so with our Revolutionaries—industrial and otherwise—is their cause improved by the "no politics" campaign? Does this sort of propaganda lead to clear thinking among the workers? We trow not. The Hanley workers are asked by the "very reds" not to vote at the election. Well and good if they are *quite* convinced that Parliament is useless from the workers standpoint. But is it? It would seem not—even to the Anarchists. For quite recently, and in our opinion rightly, these very people were organizing protest meetings among the workers owing to the vindictive use of an obsolete Statue against the Syndicalist leaders.

And these resolutions of protest were addressed to the manipulators of the Parliamentary machinery—to the various members of the Government and Opposition parties who are held to have the "directive ability" in that home of the lost hopes of the workers, according to our non-parliamentarians!

We do not know anything of the district under consideration, but we do know that "very red" dwellers in other districts, who organized protest meetings as mentioned, advised Hanley, and are advising other places, not to vote for the Labour candidate as Parliamentary effort is useless. Is this the sort of thing that is going to produce the much-needed clear-cut revolutionary thought among our fellow-workers? Blowing hot and cold on such an important matter as Parliamentary action by the workers is to say the least of it a little confusing to those of our fellows who are just beginning to slough the out-worn creeds (?) of Capitalist politics. As a result, many who have been moved a little towards class-consciousness by recent industrial action are thrown back again to old and sentimental lines of reasoning—rewashed in the Capitalist Jordon. At the risk of being labelled pedantic, academic, and any other of the ever-ready adjectives of such comrades deponent asserted that such a doctrine as has been outlined above in so far as it applies to the "very reds," is a result of immature thought. This attitude of mind comes of too much generalization and too little consideration of sober facts. As a matter of fact there is far too much of the Arnold Roller type of

reasoning (save the mark!) about the "very reds." With £200 capital, or credit, one cannot build a £1,000 residence, though there is nothing to prevent one building a £1,000 castle in the air—unfortunately. However effectively industrial action *might* have been used to secure the release of Messrs. Mann, Bowman & Co., the victims of Capitalist jurisprudence aforementioned, our "very reds" must, sorrowfully it may be, admit that the organized workers are not prepared for such measures—at present—and they must also face the fact that whatever effectual pressure was brought to bear on the "powers that be" in this case was via the much despised and theoretically rejected Parliamentary machinery.

As regards the attitude adopted by our friends of the certificate brand—the latter day saints—much can be said in justification of their point of view—and they have said it seventy times seven—and a little can be said against it—is it not written in the books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, &c., according to the opportunists—yet will we again arraign them before the judgment seat of proletarian interests.

In the first place what is the first outward effect of this attitude? So far as deponent hath experienced, it is indifference, or even antagonism, to the Trades Unions. They are reactionary bodies with whom no saint can have relations without being defiled—not that we mean to infer that any connexion of membership that may have existed before "conversion to the only true faith" is necessarily severed, on the contrary the connexion in most cases seems to be maintained merely to enable the "very reds" to pronounce the curse on their fellow-members who still walk in the outer darkness. Some who come to the true faith without having previously suffered the defilement which membership of the Trade Union is supposed by our friends to bring seize upon all the weaknesses and shortcomings of the Trade Unions and their leaders as a pretext for remaining among the un-organized. Verily the way of the "very reds" in these cases is a candle by day and a pillar of darkness by night—so far as effective propaganda is concerned! The average man gravitates towards the Trade Union membership in a sort of instinctive realization of his common interests with his fellow workers. The forms and methods of the Trades Unions are already ossified as experience and custom have evolved them. 'Tis true the period of effectiveness may long have been past—it is indeed so with many sides of the Trade Union's activities—but that is not immediately understood, and in some cases, never. Some travel on and reach the higher ground of theoretical understanding of their class needs. What is their duty? Assuredly it is to point the moral and adorn the tale of the various failures of the Union to "make good." How can this best be accomplished? Surely not by pharisaical aloofness! The average member of a Trade Union is only impressed by activity for and on behalf of the Union. He is willing and ready to hear and

perhaps—in time—adopt suggestions for changed methods, *but*, only from those whose work have in his opinion given him rhyme and reason for his opposition to the existing methods. The man who has held office, the man who has attended the Union meetings regularly, the man who has helpfully discussed with him the various difficulties confronting organized efforts, this is the man who will secure our average man's support for any proposals for greater effectiveness in organization or method. Our average man is apt to be impatient of criticism unbacked by works, of eternal advice unaccompanied by efforts towards its realization in concrete form ; he wants suggestions for the immediate present, is not altogether averse to small changes, and where these prove satisfactory, to changes on a larger scale, but wordy generalizations by themselves are not for him. Can we wonder at the average man's impatience if he is treated as a *knowing* transgressor when he himself is aware—only too painfully aware—of the need for changed methods and tactics, is not afraid of the most drastic proposals *always* providing he *understands* them and can honestly anticipate a possibility of their success if adopted. How often have many of us found that the opposition to new proposals we have advocated has arisen more from our style of presentation than from the nature of the proposed changes ! If only we could try and go back sometimes and imagine how these things would most favourably appeal to ourselves in our more unregenerate days ! That's a real difficulty, but it has to be overcome if we are to win support for progressive effort.

What applies to our friends' attitude to industrial organization, applies equally to political matters — we are considering the "certificate stagers" as not in opposition to political action, in the sense of Parliament representation of organized Labour. Take, for example, such a question as the legalized limit to the working day. Some of us have moved on to the advocacy of a Six Hours Day, yet if we look facts in the face we are compelled to admit that even if we have silenced opposition among our fellow-workers to the Eight Hours Day movement we have not secured their general *support* to that proposal—least of all their *enthusiastic* support. Such a measure as the Eight Hours Day belongs, for some of us, to the days of our childhood so far as the advanced movement is concerned—we are therefore apt to forget that the measures suggested in our childhood have not yet obtained general approbation from our fellow-workers. Let us therefore again emphasize the fact that to be successful propagandists we must become as little children, we must advance slowly, think and speak in simple terms, have faith, hope, and Charity—and allied to these as befits our larger growth, Courage, for knowledge should bring to the simplicity and outspokenness of the child this one added virtue—that we fear not to speak and act according to the truth that is in us.

Little were a change of station, loss of life or crown,  
But the wreck were past redeeming, if the Man fell down.—BRUMAIRE.

## Political Government

**I**N modern society one of the instruments which the capitalists use to keep the working people in subjection is the political government. There is nothing natural about political government—it is purely artificial—set up by the rulers for the sole purpose of keeping the ruled in subjection. Therefore, when the ruled, the exploited, become aware of the exploitation they are being subjected to, and when they realize this exploitation to the extent of rising against it with an intent to put an end to it, then they must of necessity move against the political government which makes the exploitation legal—which countenances, nay, more, which ENFORCES this exploitation by means of the military and police power with which all political governments are backed up.

In mediæval times, i.e., four or five hundred years ago, political government existed as well as it does in modern times. But it was not the same kind of political government. In those days it consisted of absolute monarchies, i.e., kingdoms where the monarch and those few "nobles" which he gathered around him had absolute control of everything. The majority of the people had a voice in nothing; what the "nobles" said had to be law. Occasionally, when the "nobles" fell out among themselves or quarrelled with the king, the people had a chance to assert themselves, and sometimes, when they were wide awake and wise enough, they did so, and thus gained much which they otherwise would have had to do without.

In those days, when the majority of the people had no voice in the making of the laws, they were forced to use violence and physical force when they sought redress—providing of course, that there was no quarrel among the rulers during which the ruled could secure redress by passive measures, such as to refuse to fight for their masters, &c.

It was in this way, by force of arms,—by a revolution—that the right to voice and vote in the shaping of their own destinies was secured by the people about the time of the eighteenth century.

This social revolution is known as the Bourgeois Revolution. It took place in America in 1776, in France in 1793, and in England at the time of Cromwell. This Bourgeois Revolution is the one which secured political rights for some of the male inhabitants of the countries in which it took place. It should be borne in mind that the establishing of political rights for the people provided the means to extend and improve those rights whenever the enfranchised—the people—desired to do so.

With the vast majority of the people enfranchised as they are to-day, and with the franchise being ever extended by means of granting it to women and decreasing the length of time of residence necessary before casting a vote, any change desired in the make up of society

can be brought about in a peaceful manner. Were it not so the work and fight of our fathers have been in vain, for we would then be forced to use the same crude methods to gain our ends which they used to gain theirs. The peaceful, ballot-box means of solving our difficulties is one of the points which mark the difference between barbarism and civilization. That is why Socialists speak of righting our wrongs "on the civilized plane of the ballot."

Why should we use physical force and warlike means to accomplish our emancipation from all slavery when we can do it without, by means of the ballot? Is a bullet better than a ballot? Is it better to kill an adversary than to defeat him in a peaceful trial of strength which allows him time afterwards to see the error of his ways and reform?

The argument—or at least its sponsors consider it an argument—is often advanced by persons who want nothing to do with the ballot box, that the oppressors of the people will never surrender their right to exploit without a try of physical force. "No ruling class," they say, "has ever given up its seat of ease without a fight. Therefore," conclude these wonderful logicians, "we should not waste time with any ballot-box farce but should proceed right away with the physical force."

When these people say that in no previous revolution has the ruling class given up its seat of power, its right to exploit, without a fight they say true. But it must be remembered that the subject class did not have political rights previous to those revolutions, and in attempting to secure those rights it was they who started the physical force.

But with political rights secured and developed was also developed the Genius of the Age, which demands ever more loudly and ever more insistently, Fair Play.

It is, of course, impossible to say whether a future revolution will be peaceful or turbulent. To insure its being peaceful it is best to have the necessary physical force back of it to make it a success if the defeated minority should decide to obstruct the path. Should the minority desire to dispute the result of the peaceful trial of strength—the election—the mere fact that the physical force requisite to enforce the electoral decree is in readiness will deter them from it. That this will be the case appears more probable every day.

At the last great social revolution was the Bourgeois Revolution which ushered in capitalism after feudalism had served its purpose, so the next great social revolution will be the Proletarian or Socialist Revolution, which will erect the Industrial Democracy—Socialism—on the ruins of the old, worn-out capitalist regime.

It is the working class—the toilers in the mills and mines and factories, the workers on land and railroad—which must bring this revolution. The Bourgeois Revolution was accomplished by the then bourgeoisie, with the help of the class below them, the oncoming



proletariat. The Proletarian Revolution can only be accomplished by the proletariat itself, because there is no other class to aid it in the work. The capitalist system tends to eliminate all classes, except the capitalist class and the working class, which are thus brought face-to-face for the final test of strength.

The working class must therefore organize itself upon the political field into a political party for the purpose of capturing the political state and, after the revolution is accomplished, abolishing it. This political party of the working class must have but one demand—**REVOLUTION**—the overthrow of the capitalist system. Only then can it unite the whole working class under one banner.

And for the necessary physical force to back up the fiat of the ballot and take over and run the industries of the world, the working class must organize itself into **ONE UNION** subdivided by industries.

And in the end the two arms—the political and the economic—must work together with one demand, the overthrow of capitalism—with one goal, the Industrial Republic.

*Weekly People.*

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## New College

### Scheme for Training Working Women

BY MRS. BRIDGES ADAMS

**N**O student of the organized working-class movement in England can fail to be struck by the great deficiency of trained working women as propagandists, and as representatives on public bodies.

Even in the Unions in which women are organized together with the men, few of the official positions are held by women.

At the last Trade Union Congress, while the textile workers, cotton operatives, and weavers combined had 83 delegates representing 203,901 members (of whom the majority are women,) not more than three of those delegates were women.

As an education propagandist, especially as an uncompromising opponent of child labour, I have been brought much into contact with some of the most thoughtful of the women textile workers, and in questioning them as to why women Trade Unionists play so small a part in the management of their Unions, and in the working class movement generally, I am told, and often there is bitterness in the telling, that the women lack confidence in themselves, that they need education and training, and I have been frequently reminded that there is no Labour College for women.

Realizing the force of this, I have for some time past coupled with my propaganda on behalf of the Central Labour College for men, a proposal for a working women's college under joint control, with the men's college. I have discussed the question fully in conversation, and in discussion lectures, with working men and women in various parts of the country, with a most encouraging response.

#### THE SCHEME

My proposals are as follows :—

That a house for residence for, say, 15 to 20 women students be taken within easy reach of the men's college.

That the course of study be for two years where possible ; in other cases for one year.

That the curriculum for men and women be the same, and that while the women shall reside in their own hostel, they shall attend the lectures at the men's college, where the fine lecture halls are sufficiently large to admit of the increased attendance.

That the cost of board and tuition be as at the men's college, £52 per annum.

That a rent guarantee fund and also a scholarship fund be formed, that Trade Unions and sympathizers be appealed to for financial assistance. And that women's Trade Unions be asked to provide scholarships to enable members to become students.

I may here mention that the textile factory workers, of whom the majority are women, out of Trade Union funds maintain six [3?] students at Ruskin College. These Unions will now be asked to send as many women students to the working women's college. Other working women's organizations, the various Socialist bodies, the adult Socialist Sunday Schools, and the classes in industrial history and economics, which the Central Labour College is conducting in Lancashire, Yorkshire and elsewhere, will also be recruiting ground for students for the women's college ; and, as an aid to securing the most suitable material, women in sympathy with the movement will be appointed as honorary district organizers.

#### MEN SHOULD HELP

Speaking with an intimate knowledge of the Trade Union movement, I can say that there are good reasons for hoping that the great Trade Unions—even mere men's Trade Unions—will not withhold their sympathy and support from this important education movement. Members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants may reasonably congratulate themselves that the

first article on the proposed working Women's College was published in the *Railway Review*.

The Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union has inside and outside the Trade Union world a reputation to live up to in matters educational. And who knows? Perhaps the Miners' Federation will be glad to atone for the little mistake at the Labour Party Conference at Birmingham by founding—as a beginning—some half-dozen scholarships at the women's Labour College, for the daughters of miners.

We shall ask the Federation where are the sisters of the young miners who are doing such good work for their class in South Wales and other mining districts? In America, too, are many comrades wishing "God speed" to this new Women's Education Movement, and leading members of the German Social Democratic Party, of which the authoress of *The Autobiography of a Working Woman* is an honoured member, are watching with interest the efforts being made to enable English working women to equip themselves to take their place beside their men comrades in the industrial, political, and educational work of the Labour Movement.

And last, but by no means least, I assume that the first Labour Daily will be a strong friend on our side, ready to help in the early and difficult days.

The *Herald* can help to point out to the organized workers, and to sympathizers outside the working-class movement, the possibilities which lie in the working women's college, which year by year will send out bands of working women, who combined with a first-hand knowledge of the needs of the common people a systematic and sympathetic training in an institution controlled by the working-class organizations, in which the atmosphere is frankly partial to the standpoint of the most militant section of the Trade Union Movement.

#### TO HELP THE LABOUR CAUSE

Such women will not only help to increase the Labour Unrest, they will help to organize intelligently, with a clear knowledge of the end in view, and under the banner of organized Labour, the discontent of which that unrest is the manifestation.

Women so trained, and understanding how the workers' children are robbed of their childhood, would, as Labour representatives on education authorities, make short work of the charity-organizers, the bureaucrats, and other superior persons, who, to the detriment

of education, control those bodies to-day. Such women would help to see to it that starving children should be fed, and not mocked by a cold-blooded, permissive Act.

Much of the necessary spade work having been done, I now confidently appeal to the *Herald* to use its influence on behalf of the Working Women's College.

*Daily Herald.* 22-v-1912.

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## The Age Forms the Man

**OF** DRYDEN as of almost every man who has been distinguished either in the literary or in the political world, it may be said that the course which he pursued, and the effect which he produced, depended less on his personal qualities than on the circumstances in which he was placed. Those who have read history with discrimination, know the fallacy of those panegyrics and invectives which represent individuals as effecting great moral and intellectual revolutions, subverting established systems, and imprinting a new character on their age. The difference between one man and another is by no means so great as the superstitious crowd supposes. But the same feelings which, in ancient Rome produced the apotheosis of a popular emperor, and, in modern Rome, the canonization of a devout prelate, lead men to cherish an illusion which furnishes them with something to adore. By a law of association, from the operation of which even minds the most strictly regulated by reason are not wholly exempt, misery disposes us to hatred, and happiness to love, although their may be no person to whom our misery or our happiness can be ascribed. The peevishness of an invalid vents itself even on those who alleviate his pain. The good humour of a man, elated by success, often displays itself towards enemies. In the same manner, the feelings of pleasure and admiration, to which the contemplation, of great events give birth, make an object where they do not find it. Thus, nations descend to the absurdities of Egyptian idolatry, and worship stocks and reptiles—Sacheverells and Wilkeses. They even fall prostrate before a deity to which they have themselves given the form which commands their veneration, and which, unless fashioned by them, would have remained a shapeless block. They persuade themselves that they are the creatures of what they have themselves created. For, in fact, it is the age that forms the man, not the man that forms the age. Great minds do indeed react on the society which has made them what they are; but they only pay with interest what they have received. We extol Bacon, and sneer at Aquinas. But if their situations had been changed, Bacon might have been the Angelical Doctor, the most subtle Aristotelian of the schools; the Dominican might have led forth the sciences from their house of

bondage. If Luther had been born in the tenth century, he would have effected no reformation. If he had never been born at all, it is evident that the sixteenth century could not have elapsed without a great schism in the church. Voltaire, in the days of Louis the Fourteenth, would probably have been, like most of the literary men of that time, a zealous Jansenist, eminent among the defenders of efficacious grace, a bitter assailant of the lax morality of the Jesuits, and the unreasonable decisions of the Sorbonne. If Pascal had entered on his literary career, when intelligence was more general, and abuses at the same time more flagrant, when the church was polluted by the Iscariot Dubois, the court disgraced by the orders of Canillac, and the nation sacrificed to the juggles of Law; if he had lived to see a dynasty of harlots, an empty treasury, and a crowded harem, an army formidable only to those whom it should have protected, a priesthood just religious enough to be intolerant, he might possibly, like every man of genius in France, have imbibed extravagant prejudices against Monarchy and Christianity. The wit which blasted the sophisms of Escobar—the impassioned eloquence which defended the sisters of Port Royal—the intellectual hardihood which was not beaten down even by Papal authority, might have raised him to the Patriarchate of the Philosophical Church. It was long disputed whether the honour of inventing the method of Fluxions belonged to Newton or to Leibnitz. It is now generally allowed that these great men made the same discovery at the same time. Mathematical science, indeed, had then reached such a point, that if neither of them had ever existed, the principle must inevitably have occurred to some person within a few years. So in our time the doctrine of rent, now universally received by political economists, was propounded almost at the same moment, by two writers unconnected with each other. Preceding speculators had long been blundering round about it; and it could not possibly have been missed much longer by the most heedless inquirer.

We are inclined to think that with respect to every addition which has been made to the stock of human knowledge, the case has been similar; that without Copernicus we should have been Copernicans,—that without Columbus America would have been discovered,—that without Locke we should have possessed a just theory of the origin of human ideas. Society indeed has its great men and its little men, as the earth has its mountains and its valleys. But the inequalities of intellect, like the inequalities of the surface of the globe, bear so small a proportion to the mass, that, in calculating its great revolutions, they may safely be neglected. The sun illuminates the hills, while it is still below the horizon; and truth is discovered by the highest minds a little before it becomes manifest to the multitude. This is the extent of their superiority. They are the first to catch and reflect a light, which, without their assistance, must, in a short time, be visible to those who lie far beneath them.—From Lord Macauley's Essays.

## The Dying Child

He could not die when trees were green,  
 For he loved the time too well.  
 His little hands, when flowers were seen,  
 Were held for the bluebell,  
 As he was carried o'er the green.

His eye glanced at the white-nosed bee ;  
 He knew those children of the Spring :  
 When he was well and on the lea  
 He held one in his hands to sing,  
 Which filled his heart with Glee.

Infants, the children of the Spring !  
 How can an infant die  
 When butterflies are on the wing,  
 Green grass, and such a sky ?  
 How can they die at Spring ?

He held his hands for daisies white,  
 And then for violets blue,  
 And took them all to bed at night  
 That in the green fields grew,  
 As childhood's sweet delight.

And then he shut his little eyes,  
 And flowers would notice not ;  
 Birds' nests and eggs caused no surprise,  
 He now no blossoms got :  
 They met with plaintive sighs.

When Winter came and blasts did sigh,  
 And bare were plain and tree,  
 As he for ease in bed did lie  
 His soul seemed with the free,  
 He died so quietly.

JOHN CLARE,

## The Lover's Invitation

Now the wheat is in the ear, and the rose is on the brere,  
 And blue-caps so divinely blue, with poppies of bright scarlet hue,  
 Maiden, at the close o' eve, wilt thou, dear, thy cottage leave,  
 And walk with one that loves thee ?

When the even's tiny tears bead upon the grassy spears,  
 And the spider's lace is wet with its pinhead blebs of dew,  
 Wilt thou lay thy work aside and walk by brooklets dim descried,  
 Where I delight to love thee ?

While thy footfall lightly press'd tramples by the sky-lark's nest,  
 And the cockle's streaky eyes mark the snug place where it lies,  
 Mary, put thy work away, and walk at dewy close o' day,  
 With me to kiss and love thee.

There's something in the time so sweet, when lovers in the evening  
 meet,  
 The air so still, the sky so mild, like slumbers of the cradled child,  
 The moon looks over field of love, among the ivy sleeps the dove ;  
 To see thee is to love thee.

JOHN CLARE.

Luck is ever waiting for something to turn up. Labour, with keen eyes and strong will, will turn up something.—COBDEN.

We complain of want of enthusiasm, but as soon as enthusiasm appears among us, we are still more afraid, and we run for the fire-engine.—ARCHBISHOP BENSON.

When two men grow angry, he who is first silent is the wiser.—TALMUD.

Knowledge and timber shouldn't be much used till they are seasoned.—O. W. HOLMES.

So near is falsehood to truth that a wise man would do well not to trust himself too near the narrow edge.—CICERO.

## AUGUST MEET

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# Central Labour College

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### 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.

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### 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.,**  
**WILL W. CRAIK (Sub-Warden of the College).**

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## "PLEBS" LEAGUE.

AT THE COLLEGE.

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

#### AGENDA :

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