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EDITORIAL

A REPORT has recently been issued by the present Executive Committee of Ruskin College addressed to the delegates to the Trade Union Congress, 1910. In this report there is set forth the new constitution of the College with a statement of the work carried on in the College. **“Ruskin” and Labour.** The claim is made that Ruskin College has now been placed without reserve in the hands of the organised workers. What was promised by the Authorities at the public meeting held at Ipswich during Congress week, 1909, has now been faithfully carried out, and that henceforth Ruskin College is a Labour College. Let us see how it works out when examined.



THE report opens by pointing out the circumstances under which the College was established and its subsequent development up to the latest stage. This is how it runs:—“Founded in 1899 by the efforts of private individuals, the College has become more and more closely identified with the Labour movement, and at the end of ten years it was felt that the time was ripe for the control of the College to be vested in Labour organizations.” How pure and undefiled the process of evolution is presented. Nothing but the undisturbed coming to fruition of the tree of knowledge, planted ten years ago. “It was felt that the time was ripe.” How it was felt, how the symptoms of ripeness manifested themselves to the consciousness of the Ruskin authorities, the report does not say. No doubt “it was felt” that it would be wise to maintain an apocryphal silence upon that point. Let us briefly review this ripening process.

FROM the year 1907 it began to appear to the majority of the representative Students in residence, that the College was, so far from becoming "more closely identified with the Labour Movement,"

**At the End
of
Ten Years.**

departing from it and coming into closer relation with the University. The year 1908 was one fruitful with evidence in support of this departure. The attempt to prevent students from speaking in Oxford and taking part in unemployed demonstrations because it gave offence to those in "high places," the introduction of Revision tests for the purpose of "meeting the requirements of the University," and the offer of the University to provide scholarships and exhibitions for Ruskin College students—all these things demanded serious investigation from those in residence. And the results of that investigation determined the action of the students in forming an organization for the purpose of bringing to the notice of the Labour organizations the developments that were taking place, and urging them to prevent any alliance of whatever character between Ruskin College and the University. It was realized that the most effective method of preventing such a relation would be to make Ruskin College definitely and avowedly a Labour College with Labour control. Accordingly the Plebs League was formed in November 1908 and its object was stated in the first issue of the magazine as follows.

"The object of the League is to bring about a definite and more satisfactory connexion between Ruskin College and the Labour Movement."

In the first editorial this object was elaborated and in the course of that elaboration there appears the following :

"Our *ultimate* object is to make Ruskin College a definite wing of the Labour Movement. To accomplish this our *immediate* object must be to secure the financial support of that movement and the greater representation of that movement upon the Executive of the College. Such are the aims and ideals of the League of the Plebs Its mandate clear and pronounced is nothing more nor less than *the education of the workers in the interests of the workers.*"

Once the authorities of Ruskin College knew of the formation of the League and its purpose they proceeded to show how they "felt" towards it. The first step they took was to prohibit Mr. Dennis Hird and Mr. A. J. Hacking from taking any part in its activities. The Sub-Committee which was appointed by the Executive Committee of the College to enquire into the matter reported back on November 17th, 1908. This report was adopted. The "Plebs" League was described in this report "as capable of being an organization whose object would be to force the Executive to move in a

direction in which it would not be desirable to go." Immediately the magazine was published two motions were introduced by Mr. Sydney Ball at the February meeting of the Executive.

- (1.) That in view of the publicity that has been given to the objects of the "Plebs" League, of its definite if unofficial connection with Ruskin College, and consequently of the interpretation likely to be put by the public on the objects of the movement, as was the case with "Young Oxford" and of the resulting damage to the College ;
- (2.) That in view of the fact that the continual agitation of the students while in residence has a damaging effect both upon the discipline and education of the College ;
- (1a) It is desirable that a public statement should be issued clearly defining the position of the College as set out in Article 3 of the Articles of Association.
- (2a) And it is further desirable that a similar communication be made *previously* to the students by the Executive Committee reminding them of the constitution of the College and its aims as laid down in the Articles of Association, and pointing out that an agitation among the students for the purpose of identifying the College with any objects less wide than these is virtually an attempt to subvert the very purpose for which the College was founded, and consequently cannot be treated by the Executive Committee as anything less than an act of disloyalty.

That is to say Ruskin College could not become a Labour College, and that the action of the "Plebs" League in trying to make it so was one of disloyalty to the Executive Committee. *And this in February, 1909. Ten years after the founding of the College.* Yet we are told in this report of 1910 that "at the end of ten years it was felt that the time was ripe for the control of the College to be vested in Labour organizations." To those who are familiar with past statements issued by the College authorities this latest fiction will come as no surprise. As a matter of fact it was not until some time after the "strike," when the idea of an independent working-class College was developing toward materialization, that the Executive of Ruskin College had this peculiar feeling of a still more peculiar ripeness. From the very beginning of their plot-laying they treated lightly the rising agitation against their policy. They never dreamt of the dimensions the consequences of their action would take on in the ranks of the students and of the class whom they represented. And it was only when they realized that their alternate bluffing and bullying availed them nothing that they "felt" their existence threatened and sought to clothe themselves as the apostles and guardians of the democracy.

So far as the "public meeting at Ipswich" was concerned, no one could say from the speeches of the Ruskin representatives, with any definiteness, just what the "steps" were which Ruskin College proposed to take with regard to a new constitution. There were certainly some remarkable

A Peculiar Representation.

statements made at that meeting; some deliberate untruths and many half-truths were told. Mr. Shackleton in the course of his speech remarked that the College "had been charged with not being sufficiently Labour." How did he meet the charge? "If the College became Labour in the narrow sense in which the other was trying to be formed, he would leave it. Ruskin College was not a Trade Union or an I.L.P. Club." Mr. Bowerman also pointed out that the College was non-partisan. He said, "The College was not to teach Trade Unionism, Socialism, or any other ism." And now, in the words of this report, we have it that "the policy announced at Ipswich, last September, has been carried out and Ruskin College has been placed, without reserve, in the hands of the organized workers." How narrow! How partisan! The organized workers are now to elect their representatives to the College Council, from whom the Executive Committee are to be elected and thus we have a democratic and independent working-class institution. But soft you now! Two representatives of each of the following are to sit upon the Council :

The Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress.

The Management Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions.

The Co-operative Union.

The Working Men's Club and Institute Union.

It would be interesting to know what part of the organized Labour movement the last-mentioned body is? What economic or political function does it perform on behalf of the organized workers? Is it admitted simply because its members are working men? If so, then why not allow representation to the Free Labourers' Association? It is rather significant that the Labour Party should be excluded from representation, a party which is an integral part of the organized Labour Movement, while a body like this Club and Institute Union which is no part of that Movement should be admitted. It will be noticed in addition to this that it is the Committees of the T.U.C. and the G.F. of A.U. that are to supply the representatives, and not the Congress or the Federation itself. This is "Cabinet" democracy which is no democracy. One does not require to "Wait and See" to understand the purpose of this policy.



IT is when we come to the third paragraph however that we find the fly in Ruskin's democratic ointment :—"For administrative purposes

an Executive Committee of *nine* will be elected by this representative Council from its own number. The Council will also elect three consultative members to serve with the Executive Committee, who, however, will have no votes. The only restriction put upon the freedom of the Council in the selection of the consultative members is that they shall be 'persons of educational experience.'

**"The Voice
of Jacob."**

This seems to be a peculiar placing "without reserve in the hands of the organized workers." How the presence of a restriction and the absence of reservation coincide, will require some explanation from those trustees of the world's wisdom called "persons of educational experience." Who have imposed this restriction? And who is to decide when the selection is made whether or no the conditions have been complied with? The retiring executive does not say. Possibly this is another case where "it was felt"—felt "that the time was ripe" for making it forever impossible that Ruskin College could become a Labour college. A restricted democracy is no democracy. For it implies the existence of an authority outside and above the "organized workers." Why is the existence of such an authority necessary? For what purpose is this restriction imposed? For the same purpose as was indicated in Mr. Sydney Ball's resolution to the Ruskin Executive in February 1909. To prevent "an attempt to subvert the very purpose for which the College was founded," or in the words of the Sub-Committee reporting in November, 1908, on the Plebs League, "capable of being an organization whose object would be to force the Executive to move in a direction in which it would not be desirable to go." That object as we have already pointed out was the conversion of Ruskin College into a labour College. It was therefore not desirable to make this change from the point of view of the "persons of educational experience" at Ruskin College then. It is not desirable now. It is the undesirability that underlies the existence of this "only restriction."



WHAT is a Labour College? What is a Labour organization? What its function? It is fundamentally a body whose activities are devoted to the raising of the material status of the wage-earning class,—the

**What is a
Labour College?** increase of wages, the decrease of hours and the general improvement in working conditions. But to increase wages or to decrease hours involves a decrease in that part of surplus value taken by the employing or profit-taking class. There is therefore implied in the existence of a Labour organization a struggle between these two classes. The object of the organization is antagonistic to the owners of industry who by virtue of that

ownership control all superstructural institutions. From the nature of the object follows the control of the organization democratically. Democracy is only possible for the Labour Movement within the Movement. It is the purpose of the Trade Union that determines the control of the Trade Union, of the Labour Party that determines the control of the Labour Party. So it must be with a Labour College. The object of the college determines the character of the curriculum and of the control. The object of the Central Labour College is to train students for the Labour Movement, for the successful waging of the struggle which dictates the existence of the Movement. The scope of its teaching is therefore limited by this struggle. The purpose of its teaching is found in the elimination of the struggle. For only after the realization of that purpose can education be broad, unlimited, and impartial.

Following out of this, then, comes the democratic ownership and control of the college. When we examine the constitution of Ruskin College we find no change in the object, no alteration in the character of its education. It is the same non-partizan non-political institution. And yet it is to be controlled by the Labour Movement! Narrow control, but broad education! Partizan administrators, but non-partizan teachers! Students are to receive an "instruction best calculated to make him of service to his fellow workers" and "persons of educational experience" are necessary to see that this instruction is given. Where are the latter to be derived from? What constitutes educational experience? Is it from the University? Is educational experience *having a University training*? The report does not say. And its silence convinces us that the answers to these questions are in the affirmative. The experience of a University Professor is as unnecessary to a Labour College as the experience of capitalist politicians to a Labour Party or the experience of "captains of industry" to a Trade Union. Their ways are not as our ways, nor their aim as our aim. The very presence of these so-called "men of educational experience," proves that R.C. is no more a Labour College now, than it has been, and that this new constitution is simply a replastering of the frontage sufficiently to change its aspect and to get it accepted as a new agency by the Labour Movement. Its democracy is as fictitious as the democracy of the class which it represents. And both fictions have their source in the same economic fact. We are asked to promote this college of ours—Ruskin College. It is not ours. Working men may defend the country. It does not make it theirs. Working men may administer Ruskin College. It does not make it a Labour College.

W. W. C.

Golden Hours

IT was by no caprice of the gods that we met. We were determined to see them. We had written for an interview. We were granted this pleasure, and our most extravagant expectations were realized. One of the greatest joys of the student's life is to chat with the authors of the books that he has read. To clear up difficulties and to exchange ideas. Who among the readers of the "Plebs" has not read the works of that witty French Socialist, Paul Lafargue? Who has not experienced the pleasure of perusing his satirical studies, *The Right to be Lazy*, *The Religion of Capital*, or his more profound *Philosophical Studies*? Who among the "Plebeians" has not entertained a secret desire to see the man and to talk with him? Among the followers of Karl Marx, who has not felt an inward longing to have the pleasure of meeting the living representatives of that brilliant family? We were among those who longed. We are now counted among those who have realized. We have met the "materialist" Lafargue. We have conversed with his clever and charming wife, Laura Marx. We have lunched together in Paris and we have passed never-to-be-forgotten evenings with them in the pretty little home at Draviel; a country village about twelve miles from the Capital.

We first met, by arrangement, at the National Conference of the French Socialist Party. How exceedingly à propos to find the daughter and son-in-law of the founder of the *Internationale* still in the fighting line of the great proletarian army. We, students of the Central Labour College, were most cordially received. A "camarade" announced our arrival. We were not kept waiting. Lafargue comes! What a man! He is conspicuous by the almost pure whiteness of his hair and its luxuriance. His face expresses joviality and his eyes sparkle with a combination of merriment and quick intelligence. He has not escaped the ravages of time, but he still possesses stores of physical and mental energy. The short, sturdy form still indicates the strength and stamina so essential for the part he played during the dark days of the Commune of '71. This same Paul Lafargue, still jovial and buoyant, has been hunted by the bloodhounds of the Commune, driven from his country, barely escaping with his life, to become an exile in Spain, Portugal and England. Always a revolutionary, he has been imprisoned from time to time for his political activities. He was elected *Député* of the French Parliament during one of these incarcerations, his chief supporter being Millerand, who, like the British Burns, has since lost his socialist identity in a capitalist cabinet. Lafargue remained *Député* for two years, during which time he could smile contemptuously at prison gates, for curiously enough, all Deputies are inviolable during their term of office. They only make the law.

This is the man we saw. The intellectual antagonist of Jaurès and the avowed enemy of the Briands and Millerands. Before us stood one of the great pioneers of the French Socialist Party.

After exchanging cordial greetings we were presented to Madame, his wife, Laura Marx Lafargue. What joy! To speak to one, who, from childhood to womanhood, shared the strife and stress, the poverty and pain of the Marx family. She is one of those with whom Marx played and gambolled in the midst of most subtle, scientific analyses. She is one of those who would clamber on his shoulder, pull his long, jet-black hair, and submit him to all the playful annoyances of childhood; annoyances which he bore with patience and tenderness. All this, whilst developing some of the most revolutionary theories in the history of thought. Madame Lafargue is a worthy daughter of the great intellectual. She has inherited much of her father's power and her mother's sympathy. She has shared the life of the turbulent Paul; has figured prominently in the International Socialist Movement; has translated some of the works of her father into several languages, of which, she speaks three perfectly, and reads several others.

Imagine our delight upon being presented to these two remarkable people; a delight which increased with acquaintanceship; a delight which became intoxicating when we were invited to spend some evenings with them at their house in the country. What evenings they were! And how fleeting! On several occasions the gatherings were quite cosmopolitan in character. We were the youngsters of the assembly. The others, Americans, Italians and Spaniards, all eminent Socialists, and one, an exile. Lafargue and his wife evinced a lively interest in our College. They were delighted with our departure in the domain of working-class education. Many were the questions they asked, and, as we explained, how enthusiastic they became! They readily understood the disposition of the University and the dependence of Ruskin College. It was inspiring to hear their fervent wishes for our continued success. This was the kind of movement that Marx himself would have loved to see. When he said "Proletarians Unite," *educational unity* was not absent from his mind. Lafargue regretted living so far away. If he lived in this unhappy isle he would be at the disposal of the College authorities. It is indeed regrettable that only two students, out of so many, should have spoken with this talented man.

We had strolled with our host through the beautiful garden attached to his house. As we sauntered along the pathways, through the shrubberies and among the fruit trees, inhaling the delicate odour of many flowers, Lafargue became reminiscent. He spoke of the days when he and Marx used to walk together from their little house in London into the purer air of Hampstead Heath. He told of his astonishment when Marx first revealed to him his great theory of the development of society and how he drank in

those new ideas as the thirsty hart drinks at the running brook. It was equally astonishing for us to hear this Socialist thinker applying Marx's Historical Method to the evolution of literature. It seemed strange to hear that all the types of literature in the world have been determined by the mode of production peculiar to each economic epoch. To our minds it came as a revelation, as a bolt from the intellectual blue. We were startled. To think that the products of a Homer or a Shelley were determined in exactly the same way as all other superstructural accomplishments! Preposterous! Yet the evidence he adduced in support of his theory was indisputable. It explained why Aristotle, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Milton and Bernard Shaw have written according to definitely established economic relations in the bosom of society itself. There is no space here to outline all those wonderful arguments, but M. Lafargue is generous and our editor is resourceful.

The sun sank slowly behind the distant hills, leaving a lingering tint of red upon the swaying wheatfields, kissing a golden adieu to the beautiful French *campagne*. Just as we suggested that we now understood why he had written *The Right to be Lazy* the stillness of that old garden was broken by the clang of the dinner gong. Being materialists, for whom a golden pheasant was no less resplendent than a golden sunset, we hastily repaired to the *salle à manger*. Madame Lafargue, whose conversation was at once brilliant and witty, lent a certain indescribable charm to the gathering. Her reminiscences were particularly interesting. I give one below:—

Paul had been amorous for some time. He proposed, was refused, and yielded to the impulse of despair. Marx, observing the difference in his demeanour, endeavoured to give comfort to the disconsolate one. The advice given in all the simplicity of his personality was—"Study Mathematics, Paul; it is the only cure."

After coffee we heard men and women explain the general characteristics of the Socialist Movement of other countries. Our outlook extended beyond petty frontiers and destructive Dreamoughts. We spoke of Socialist unity.

We parted at midnight for the last time, carrying with us certain material souvenirs, but above all, we carried with us memories of the pleasantest hours we had ever spent in our lives, and as we walked along the silent country road from Draviel to Juvisy we resolved that we too, like Paul and Laura Lafargue, would give the enthusiasm of our youth and the strength of our manhood to make this, the workers' war-cry, resound more clearly throughout the world: "Proletarians of all countries, unite."

N.B.—To those students, plebeians, and friends of the College who should ever find themselves in France, the doors of the hospitable house of the Lafargues are flung wide open.

FRANK HODGES.

Deterioration

ONCE upon a time there was a wonderful King, and his people loved him very dearly. He had extensive farms and forests which were kept in perfect order. His marvellous cattle and horses were known throughout the world; but, what touched the hearts of his people most of all was his great love for pigs. The King's pigs were known, loved, and revered by every man, woman, and child who lived beneath his rule. They were remarkable—the pigs, not the men, women, and children—for their beauty of form and intelligence. But the King died and his son reigned in his stead. His son took no interest in pigs.

The nation was sad. The young King had been brought up in the country among his father's farms and forests, and was perfectly trained in the management of cattle and trees. He knew that if a tree was to be valuable it must be straight—and in order to grow straight it must have sun and air and nourishment, and space to throw out its arms and grow. He knew that young horses must be carefully reared and fed, and that the mares must rest for some weeks after the foal was born. He knew that health was the first matter of importance among the cattle, and health was encouraged by good food, good stabling, cleanliness, space, and sun. He knew that only the best must breed and that the unfit must be prevented from breeding.

When his father died he turned his back upon the farms and forests and went into the capital there to use his knowledge for the good of his people. He was very young, not quite twenty, and the people thought he was mad. The laws that he introduced caused rebellions, and strikes, and much excitement. For many years it was not safe for him to walk or ride through the city.

* * * * *

Fifty years passed, and the King was still fresh and vigorous, and the country over which he ruled was remarkable throughout the whole world for its great numbers of men and women who were perfect in form and intelligence. The King decided to rest a few days and re-visit the home of his boyhood.

"Where are the pigs?" he asked, laughing. "The pigs my father took such pride in."

"In the sties at the back, your Royal Highness."

He found them. He smelt them. He turned away.

"Those?"

"Yes, your Royal Highness. The race of pigs is deteriorating."

"But look at the filth they are in! Look at the tumble down holes they are in! Look at their food! Food!" he said scornfully. "How can you expect them to grow? How can you expect them to be intelligent when they see nothing but filth? How can they have shiny silken coats when they live in filth?"

"It's their way, your Royal Highness, they wouldn't be happy—"

"Bosh! Where are the horses? . . . My Godfathers!"

"They are not what they used to be your Royal Highness. The race of horses is deteriorating. They are not so big or so active. We've some wonderful pictures—"

"How old is that?"

"Four your Royal Highness."

"Four? You mean forty."

"No, four your Royal Highness. That's her foal. She's been a good mare, we broke her at twelve months and she's worked hard ever since. That's been a good mare too, she's eight, she's nearly done for."

"Poor brutes! I never saw such shapes! What is the shed for?"

"They sleep there if they like in the winter, or when they are ill, but they don't often use it—horses haven't any sense. The cows are beyond your Royal Highness, if—"

"No thanks. I'd rather not." The King turned away. "I'll go back this way through the oak forest."

"Trees are deteriorating your Royal Highness. I think the soil must be used up."

"Soil? Why blame the soil? Look at them! How can sixteen trees develop healthily on a space where there is only room for one? Look at them, could anything be more appalling? They are growing into one another—killing one another in the struggle to live, and those that survive are imperfect and useless. . . . Isn't there a short cut here to the gardens?"

"Yes, your Royal Highness, but—"

"But what? I want to see those marvellous lilies again that grow to such perfection in the Western Garden. They will be in full bloom now."

"We moved them your Royal Highness, they are round here. But lilies have deteriorated since—"

"What do you mean, man? This is a rubbish pit."

"Well, no, not exactly, your Royal Highness, though we do throw odds and ends in here. The lilies—you see—are not what they used to be."

The King turned round and glared at him.

"Not what they used to be! Great heavens! You've thrown them into a pit—a rubbish pit. Left them without sun—without nourishment. Left them to fight against weeds and insects. Left them to grow imperfect—or die! And you thought to grow a lily! Man, are you blind? Are you an absolute fool? What is the good of saying pigs have deteriorated when you force them to live in conditions that would ruin any animal? What is the good of saying

horses have deteriorated when you ruin them before they are born and deform them with work when they are foals? And the cattle—I know what has happened to the cattle. You have let disease run riot among them. You have let the unfit breed. You have produced a herd that is useless and hideous, unsound and unsafe. What is the good of saying trees have deteriorated? What is the good of blaming the lilies because they produced such poor blooms? If you wanted to produce a noble human being, would you cast him into a dark corner and let him wallow in filth? If you wanted to produce healthy children would you leave motherhood unprotected? Would you work the children till they were stunted and deformed? Would you crowd them together so that they had to fight for air and nourishment? Would you throw the young girls into sunless holes? Would you shut all the sunshine out of their lives? Would you leave them to the mercy of sin and poverty and expect to grow lilies—pure, perfect flowers of womanhood? If you tried it you would have the earth littered up with useless, hideous objects. Life would be a night-mare. And after you had been to all this trouble to deform the human form and the human brain, you would turn and tell me calmly—Mankind is deteriorating! My Godfathers!

S.H.

Results and Resolutions

"The most appropriate subject for the Democracy to study is History."—J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, June, 1908.

RUSKIN COLLEGE has a history. One into which has been crowded events, sparkling with humour, tinged with pathos, dulled by political intrigue. Truly an interesting history. History is the evolutionary aspect of one branch of human activity that has been recognized. Recognition is the outcome of contact, and often leads to enquiry, finally to understanding.

The recognition of Ruskin College stimulated a desire in certain circles to bring it into closer contact with the Labour Movement, with a view to a better understanding of its position, its claims and educational tendencies. This idea found an expression in the outbursts on various occasions and culminated in the Student's Strike, a miniature revolution against educational eunuchism. Bloodless, yet not purposeless.

The events which followed, and all matter relating to the actions of the College, and the unruly youths, may still be of interest to some people. They who run may read by applying to Ruskin College and the back numbers of Plebs.

To quote Mr. Bowerman, M.P., at the Ipswich Conference will clinch the argument "The College was not to teach Trade Unionism, Socialism, or any other 'ism." This has the hall mark of authority, of officialism. Were the students' fears groundless? Can a college, a Labour College, be denied all the "isms"? Labourism must be the feature of a Labour College. Labourism means the working-class, its own problems, its own solution. It must be a College controlled by, and in the interests of, the Labour Movement, the Trade Unions, and organized labour.

Like a bolt from the blue Ruskin College authorities have decided that "it was felt the time was ripe for the control of the College to be vested in Labour Organization." 'Report to the Delegates, to the Trade Union Congress, 1910.'

"Felt"! What depths of meaning lie within that simple word. This "coming to consciousness" is further enhanced by saying that the new constitution has been worked out in detail, approved by the Board of Trade "and duly registered at Somerset House." Tremble, ye laymen.

The labour organizations are designated:—"The Parliamentary Committee of Trade Union Congress, The Management Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions, The Co-operative Union, and The Working Men's Club and Institute Union." These foregoing are to send two representatives. Any Trade Union, Co-operative Society, Trades' Council, maintaining one or more students will also have a representative entitled to sit upon its Council. Scrutinise it carefully. It reeks of officialism and indicates a vagueness with regard to Labour organizations. Lo! "restriction to be put upon the freedom of the Council." The muzzling of Demos!

Evolution is the result of inherent and environing forces, the forces within and without. In spite of past protestations Ruskin College has been found capable of movement, but only so far as is necessary to survive. All surviving organisms by the fact that they survive prove that they are useful in some sphere. Now how is Ruskin College to be useful? If it is not to give definitely, working-class teaching, then it is of no use to the workers. Impartiality is idiocy. "The way to get at the merits of a case is not to listen to the fool who imagines himself impartial, but to get it argued with a reckless bias for or against." G. B. S.

Whoever heard of Trade Union impartiality? Do the employing class study a reduction in wages impartially? Are profits merely a figure of speech? One presumes our learned friends think that the Labour Party was infused by the spirit of impartiality. Do the men who compose it, or they who send their representatives think so? The growing industrial unrest is the reply; the attitude of the Trade Unions towards any political chicanery or carping compromise leaves no doubt as to the answer.

Yet when we workers step into the educational field we are "citizens," members of one commonweal, where profits cease from troubling and the workers take their rest, soothed by Shelleian sonnets; where we walk hand in hand with our capitalist brother; where wages, sweating, exploitation are but visions of the past; an educational elysium.

No! a thousand times! There is no educational utopia. It is a figment of distorted brains. It is a characteristic of the ruling class. The cultured ignorant Pauls, with all their fossilized formulas, have discovered an altar to "The Unknown God." "Impartiality" they call it. The Democracy is to be immolated, sacrificed to this "Idea-God," unless the workers are careful.

Ruskin College may be useful, but *not* to the Labour Movement. The new move is a clever one. Let the Labour Movement weigh Ruskin College and all the disciples of Impartiality in the balance; let it investigate the emancipation movements founded on impartiality. In the latter case there is no subject matter; in the former, "once bit twice shy" will apply.

Yet Ruskin College *may* be useful, apart from being an educational fossil or a land mark, to show how far such an institution as the Central Labour College excels it in the efforts of the Democracy to educate itself.

Let us be frank. Ruskin College has served as a valuable experiment in charitable education. The workers don't want charity. Ruskin College has 10 years of comparative respectability behind it and a——reputation. Let it be joined together in the bonds of impartial affinity with the W.E.A., that fair daughter of the University. For goodness sake don't let it lose tone by venturing to woo in the lower walks of life. Society never forgives a mésalliance.

The workers should never forget a deception. Let Ruskin College evolve. That is yet possible. The capitalist system has not yet run its course. It is beginning to be apologetic. Ruskin College is apologizing for waiting 10 years. If it waits long enough this impartial Jacob will get the speckled lambs. The species will be purer for the elimination. Ruskin College will be richer. The Labour Movement will be stronger.

The Labour Movement has no other justification for its existence except the betterment and finally the emancipation of the working-class from the thralldom of industrial, political and educational class rule.

The suffering of the working class is the basis for the pleasure of the ruling class. The mistakes of the former are the profit of the latter. Watch!

MEREDITH F. TITTERINGTON.

OPEN LETTER

TO THE

Delegates attending the A.G.M.

OF THE

Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

FELLOW WORKERS,—This week you meet to deliberate upon the decisions of our administrative body, to discuss the present position occupied by our organization, and to give direction to the course of the A.S.R.S. in the conflict, that has its source in the system of production. The A.S.R.S. is of course but an integral part of the Labour Movement. It has the same forces to overcome as have the other parts—the forces of economic oppression; but to overcome these forces they must first be understood. These forces take personal shape in the owners of the means of production. To railwaymen, they appear directly as the owners of railways. In the action of overcoming, no assistance can be looked for from the latter. *Only the oppressed can abolish oppression.* This abolition however can only be effected intelligently, that is to say, by a clear understanding of how these forces operate and develop. This understanding is comprehended entirely in working-class education. The class character of education has until recently not been clearly perceived. Education has been regarded as uniform in its effects for all members of society, as something which existed outside and above the struggle of economic classes. The idea that the Labour Movement has an educational side, special and independent of the general education furthered by the State, is only now beginning to take root. That idea is materialized in the Central Labour College Movement, the object of which is:—

“To train men and women for the industrial, political and social work of the organised Labour Movement.”

It is this object which at once differentiates it from all other existing educational institution. It is this object which was fundamentally at the bottom of the Ruskin College dispute. The so-called resignation of Mr. Dennis Hird was but an incident externally manifesting the development of independent working-class education, a development called forth by the same economic reality as demanded independent working-class politics. Mr. Hird stood for a Labour College with a definite working-class education.

The authorities of Ruskin College opposed that departure. Hence the resignation. Hence the strike. Hence the Central Labour College.

There can be no uniform education where society is not uniform, no impartial education in a society which is divided into conflicting partisan classes. What is the primary fact in human existence? *It is the will to live.* Here we have something which both owners of railways and railway workers, capitalists and wage earners have in common. But to have *the will to live* and *to live* are two entirely different propositions. The fulfilment of the latter will depend upon the means at the disposal of the individuals. It will depend upon the character of the economic process how the members of society live. And here we fail to find uniformity, and that because of a difference in the form in which the will to live is expressed. For the owners of railways the will to live is expressed in the form of dividends or profits. For the railway workers the will to live is expressed in the form of wages. In the first case, the will to live drives to the acquisition of quantities of unpaid labour in the shape of profits. In the other case the will to live drives the working-class to the realization of more of their labour in the shape of higher prices for the only thing they have got to sell, viz., their labour-power. It is the workers will to live colliding with the capitalists will to live, that gives rise to independent economic organizations such as the A.S.R.S., to independent political organization such as the Labour Party, to independent educational organization such as the Central Labour College. This collision on the other hand gives rise to the organisation of employers, to the Railway Shareholders Association which has recently issued a circular, stating, that "in the first half of 1910 the net profits of the leading English lines available for ordinary dividend were increased by about 30 per cent," and which bluntly calls for a drastic remedy in order "that the idea must be knocked out of them that they can be master and man at the same time." It is the conflict of the two wills that gives rise to injunctions such as the Osborne Judgment, and in a more subtle manner to the promotion of "non-partisan education." *The will to live of the capitalist class demands the control of all social institutions, demands that education shall be of such a character as to maintain and strengthen the existing condition of things.* The will to live of the workers demands for the greater realization of that will independence in all its organized activities.

Education ought to be broad, ought to be open for all, ought to be the same for all, it is often said. Yes, it ought, but it cannot be so long as this conflict for livelihood exists. One might just as reasonably say wealth ought to be freely enjoyed by all, there ought to be no poverty, everyone ought to be free to consume, who produces. But you know, fellow-workers, that this cannot be realized so long as the present economic order remains. Your portion of wealth is

"narrow," so must be your education. Your trade union is narrow. It does not admit Lord Claud Hamilton & Coy. So is your political organization. So must be your educational institutions. *For the working class it is the narrow way that leadeth to the broad life.* To walk in the way we must know it. To overcome the conflict we must understand it. And just as the overcoming is our task alone, so also is the understanding.

There can be no question as to the ever growing need for a clear understanding and recognition of the laws of industrial evolution, of the action and inter-action of the economic forces. For in the degree that we more clearly apprehend the field of battle, do our weapons and methods of warfare become more scientific and effective? As an organization, we have not only to increase our effective strength but to increase the consciousness of that strength. This is the function of working-class education, the purpose of the Central Labour College movement. The possibilities of this movement are even now immeasurable. It does not begin and end at Oxford. Already there have been opened in certain provincial towns classes for the study of these subjects, such as economics and history, which bear directly upon the organization of the working class. These classes will soon extend throughout the country and thus bring to the doors of the wage-earner the knowledge that makes for his power. The college at Oxford will simply become the centre of this great extension movement. Its purpose is to train men to teach their fellows. The results of this work are almost inconceivable. But certain it is, that they will be reflected in the growing conscious and concentrated strength of the Labour Movement.

The A.S.R.S. is a joint controller in the development and destiny of the Central Labour College. It can do much for the college. The college can do much for the A.S.R.S. The institution is in the tender years of its infancy. It requires all the support of the class whose interests it represents, against the common enemy. There are many ways in which you as delegates can help the college. And one important and effective way of helping it, is to be found in your ability to make known to those whom you represent, the nature, purpose and possibilities of this the third army of labour—the educational army. *Organized intelligence and intelligent organization; these are our weapons. We need them both for the day of battle and for the victorious morrow.*

Yours fraternally

WILL W. CRAIK.

Correspondence

To the Editor of the "Plebs" Magazine.

A WORD ON DETERMINISM

Dear Sir,—I am compelled to write a few lines for the edification of simple writers to the "Plebs," who strangely enough, swamp their self created logical minds in the surge of sentimentality. Being a Determinist, I do not blame Mr. Whitehead, knowing how easily it is for one so constituted, to be misunderstood. Yet I *should* like to know the cause of Mr. Whitehead's outburst; being a firm believer that nothing comes into existence without a cause; an inward turn of the logic of James will supply an adequate answer no doubt, which having seen afar off and being persuaded of it I am willing to embrace.

Good is a relative term and only limited evil. Have you never heard of the monotony of goodness and the fact that the more one loses one's righteousness the more amiable one becomes? Oh, Jim!

Visionary Utopias are productive of much evil. Admitted. But it is all a question of taste—and indigestion; "everything is a matter of attitude and relativity"; everything is determined cosmically.

"Socialism will come when the people want it." "Want it" why? because they need it; "need it," because they've found out they want it! You Sophist!

Here I agree with Mr. Whitehead "the safest thing to do is to make the best of what we have got, however imperfect." Although of course we can't get very far with the things we haven't got. By all means let us go on revolving,—evolving, I mean, but I bar the source of inspiration, "without haste and without rest, pushing better up to best." James, you forget yourself! We are Trade Unionists. We believe in the 8 hour day. I am out for vengeance. I have seen visions and I am prepared to go the pace. "With thou beside me singing in the wilderness," there will be evolutions, revolutions and convolutions. We *will* preach our visions—in broadcloth and cigar ashes. We shall meet at Philippi. I am hungry.

Yours deterministically,

JULES BENEDICK.

" 'Really, this is surprising. Do not they *think*? Do they not discover what you call the deception?' " 'Never. There is no case on record of any one of those men ever disturbing a Peer. As for thinking, we have prevented all that. They have so much to learn and they *must* make money, so how should they think? Most of them dare hardly look at politics, or religion, because it would damage their chances of success, unless they are found on the side of the five millions.'"—Lord Fitz in *Shear my Sheep*, by DENNIS HIRD.

Extension Movement

of the

Central Labour College

WINTER is at hand, and the provincial classes of the Central Labour College are about to commence. Mr. W. W. Craik is about to proceed to Rochdale where he laboured so successfully last year. This year the Rochdale friends have arranged for a six months' course with a lecture syllabus even more complete than the last. Rochdale will now become a centre with branches in Bury, Bacup and Preston. Consequently, the scope of operations in the North will be considerably extended. We hope to see classes firmly established in London and South Wales within the next few weeks. For in both parts of the country are men whose enthusiasm for our cause will help to remove all obstacles. Below we print as much of the Rochdale and District Prospectus as space will permit, thus giving the readers an opportunity to see for themselves the character of the subjects to be taught. This prospectus will be followed as closely as possible in all districts where classes will be formed, and by this means the principles of Independent Working-Class Education will become disseminated throughout the country. We need your enthusiasm and support.

Rochdale Labour College Classes

PREAMBLE

AUGUST, 1910.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT is summed up entirely in the struggle of the working class. The source of the struggle is to be found in the prevailing economic system. The struggle must therefore go on and develop with the development of capitalism. The ultimate object of the Labour Movement—the emancipation of the working class from all forms of economic oppression—pre-supposes for its realization, the elimination of the prevailing form. But the latter pre-supposes a knowledge of the forces at work in that form and the laws which govern its development. That knowledge cannot be looked for from above, on the contrary, it is to the interests of the governing class to conceal such knowledge, a fact

which is at the present moment demonstrated in the the movements that disguised as democratic, seek to educate the wage-earning class through the channels of the University.

The Rochdale Labour College Classes are an expression of the necessity of independent action on the educational field, free from affiliation with governing class institutions. They form part of a provincial scheme of education which it is intended to develop throughout the organized Labour Movement and run in conjunction with the Central Labour College at Oxford. Like the latter these classes have for their object the training of men and women for the industrial, political, and social work of the organized Labour Movement.

The form of control and administration are on the same lines as at the Central Labour College, and the subjects of study are those that directly bear upon the object for which those classes are instituted.

The Central Labour College at Oxford is prepared to offer to these classes two Scholarships tenable at that institution. The Scholarships will be awarded at the end of the term on the basis of regular attendance and educational qualifications. Nominations for these Scholarships to come from the local students, acting in conjunction with the lecturer and the local executive, and the awards to be made by the authorities at the Central Labour College.

CONSTITUTION

The Organization is under control of a Council which meets monthly.

Any Organization may affiliate that is eligible to affiliate to the Labour Party, *i.e.* Trade Unions, Socialist and Co-operative Societies.

Affiliated Societies are allowed one representative on the Council.

Societies may become affiliated on payment of a minimum Annual Subscription of 2/6.

Each class promoted by the Council is entitled to one representative on the Council.

Societies granting one or more Scholarships to their members are entitled to one representative on the Council.

LAST WINTER'S CLASSES

Classes extending over a period of three months were conducted by Mr. Craik last winter. The total number of students was fifty-three, almost all of whom were members of some Labour Organization. We are of the opinion that Labour Organizations will not fail to realize the beneficial effect such studies will have, through their members, upon the thought of the Societies. The usefulness of the students to the Societies will be its own recommendation for societies to affiliate.

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE MODES OF PRODUCTION.

Fee for the Course, 6/-. *Thursdays : 8-9.30.*

A.—Organic and Social Evolution (*Darwin & Marx*):

	Lecture No.
1. The Descent of Man from the Animal World	... 1
2. Animal Societies ... ..	... 2
3. The Organization of Human Society ...	... 3
4. The Difference between Human and Animal Societies ... ..	... 4

PUBLIC LECTURE.—The Struggle for Existence (Pre-Human and Human.) I

B.—The Study and Interpretation of History :

1. (a) The Theistic Interpretation	}	5
(b) The "Great Man" "	... ..	
(c) The Idealistic "	... ..	
(d) The Materialistic "	... ..	

PUBLIC LECTURE.—The Development of the Historic Conception. II

C.—The rise of Political Society or the State :

1. Gentile Society ... ..	... 7
2. The Forms of Family Association ...	... 8
3. The Transition to Political Society in Greece	... 9
4. The Transition to Political Society in Rome	... 10
5. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire	... 11

PUBLIC LECTURE.—The Rise of the State in the Ancient World. III

D.—The Development of Political Society in Britain :

1. Early Britain (Pre-Roman) ... ..	... 12	
2. Early Feudalism (Pre-Norman) ...	... 13	
3. Ecclesiastical Feudalism ... ..	... 14	
4. Dissolution of Feudalism :		}	15
(a) The Rise of Commerce and the Conditions of Production ...			
(b) Expropriation of the Peasants from the soil			

PUBLIC LECTURE.—From Feudalism to Capitalism. IV

	Lecture No.
E.—The Development of Industrial Society in Britain :	
1. Handicraft Production and the Guild	16
2. Manufacture and the Trade Union	17
3. Machinofecture and the Unification of Trade Unions	18
4. The Social Revolution	19
PUBLIC LECTURE.—Our Modern Economic System and its successor.	V

NOTE.—While these public lectures will strive to popularly present in a general way the evolution of society they will at the same time be so arranged as to form for the student a résumé of the matter dealt with under each lettered head.

LOGIC

Fee for the Course 6/-. *Tuesdays: 8—9.30.*
(FORMAL).

A.—The Science of Argument :	
1. Deductive	} 1
2. Inductive	
B.—The Parts of an Argument :	
1. Terms	2
2. Propositions	3
3. Definition	4
4. Division	5
C.—Immediate Inference :	
1. Opposition	} 6
2. Permutation	
3. Conversion	
D.—Mediate Inference (the Syllogism)	
1. Rules and Figures	7
2. Conjunctive Syllogisms	} 8
3. Disjunctive Syllogisms	
4. Dilemma	9
E.—Fallacies :	
1. Logical	10
2. Semi-logical	11
3. Material	12
F.—Inductive Argument :	
1. Cause and Effect	} 13
2. Observation and Experiment	
3. Methods of Induction	14
4. Characteristics and Uses of the Methods	15
5. Fallacies of Induction	16

(PHILOSOPHIC.)

The Nature of Human Brain Work.

	Lecture No.
1. Philosophy and the Philosophers	1
2. The General Nature of the Thought Process	2
3. The Nature of things and their Universal Inter-connexion	3
4. The Practice of Reason in Physical Science :	
(a) Cause and Effect	4
(b) Matter and Mind	5
(c) Force and Matter	5
5. The Practice of Reason in Social Science :	
(a) The Wise and Reasonable	6
(b) Morality and Right	7
(c) The Holy	8

ECONOMICS

(ELEMENTARY.)

ECONOMICS IS AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAPITALISTS MODE OF PRODUCTION IN RELATION TO OTHER MODES

Fee for the Course, 6/-. Saturdays : 2.30—4.

A.—The scope of Political Economy :

1. { (a) Economic Categories	}	1
(b) History of the Theories		

B.—Modes of Production :

1. Slave-labour and Mercantilism	2
2. Serf-labour and Artisan Production	3
3. Wage-labour and Capitalist Production	4

C.—Value :

1. The two-fold character of a Commodity	5
2. The two-fold character of Labour	6

D.—The Form of Value :

1. Elementary Form	7	
2. Expanded Form	8	
3. General Form	}	9
4. Money Form		
5. The Fetichism of Commodities	10	

E.—Exchange :

1. Barter and the origin of Private Property	11
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F.—Money and its Functions :

1. Measure of Value	12
2. Medium of Circulation... ..	13
3. Medium of Exchange	14
4. Currency and Credit... ..	15

G.—Capital :

	Lecture No.
1. (a) The Circulation of Capital ...	} 16
(b) Buying and Selling of Labour-power ...	
2. The Two-fold Character of Labour Process ...	17
3. The Two-fold Character of Capital (constant and variable) ...	18

H.—Surplus Value :

1. The Two-fold Character of Surplus Value (absolute and relative) ...	19
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I.—Machinery and Modern Industry :

1. Effects upon Capital and Labour in relation to Hours' Question ...	20
2. Effects upon Capital and Labour in relation to Unemployment ...	21
3. Effects upon Capital and Labour in relation to Surplus Value and Value of Labour-power ...	22

J.—Wages :

1. (a) Nominal ...	} 23
(b) Real ...	
(c) Relative ...	
2. (a) Day Work ...	} 24
(b) Piece Work ...	
(c) Bonus System ...	

TERM

The courses of study commence :—Logic, September 27th, 1910 ; Industrial History, September 29th, 1910 ; Economics, October 1st, 1910. And extend over a period of six months.

STUDENTS

Students are requested to write two essays a month.

A number of reference books will be at the disposal of the students.

The Lecturer will reside in the borough during the term, and will place himself at the disposal of the students for interviews.

Intending students are requested to send in their names and the subjects they intend to study, if possible, not later than September 24th, 1910, to the Secretary,

HAROLD KERSHAW,

7 Boundary Street,

Rochdale.