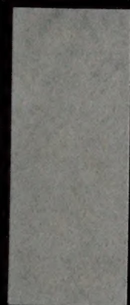

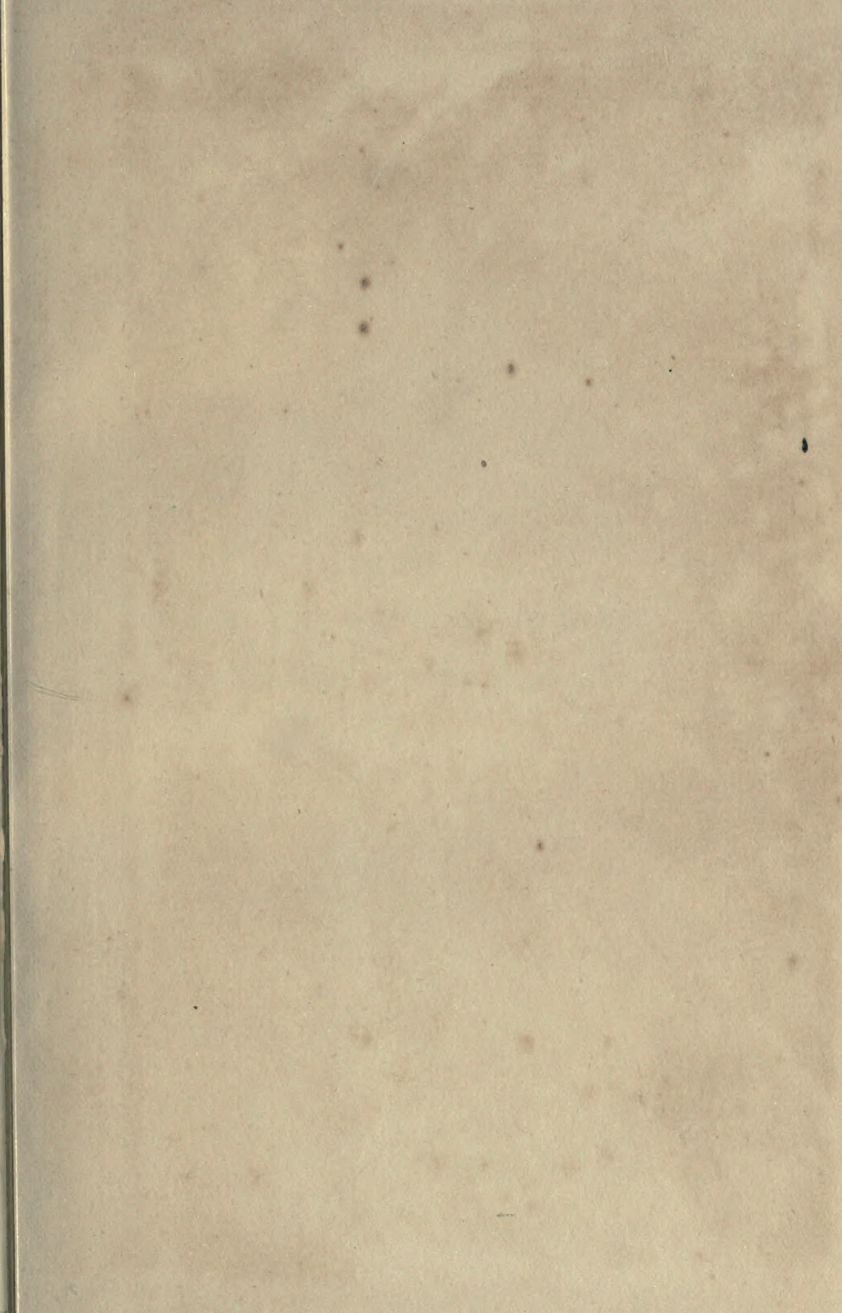

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SOME
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PIONEERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

RAMSDEN BALMFORTH

Author of "The New Reformation," "The Evolution of Christianity" etc.

"Forsooth, brothers, fellowship is Heaven, and lack of fellowship is Hell: fellowship is Life, and lack of fellowship is Death: and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them."

William Morris.

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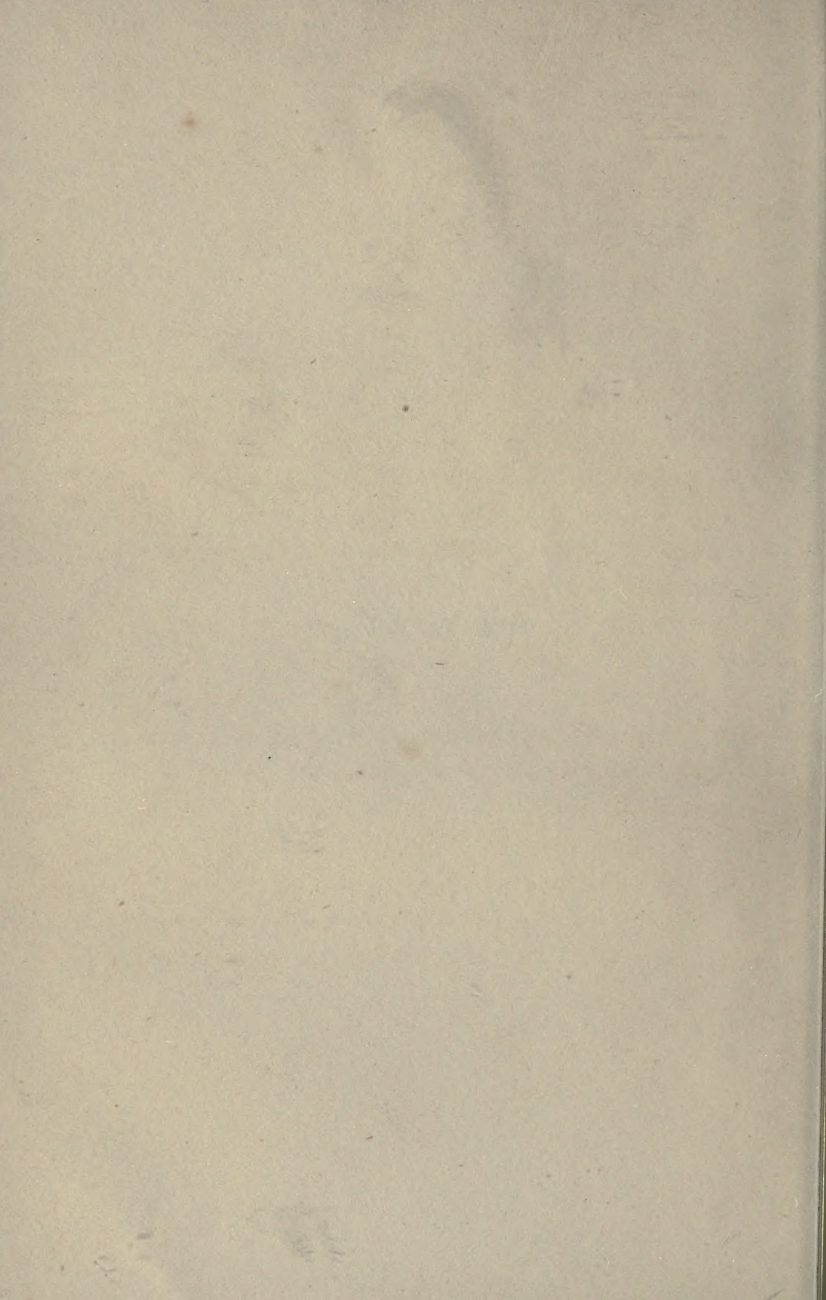
TO

MY WIFE



PREFACE

THE following chapters, with the exception of the one on William Morris, originally appeared in the *Co-operative News*. They are now reprinted in a permanent form in the hope that they will be of service to those who are interested in social questions, and especially to those who wish to make themselves acquainted with some of the most important social and industrial movements of the nineteenth century.

An attempt has been made to give not merely a series of short, detached biographies, but to connect, with each person and movement dealt with, a sort of historico-biographical narrative, showing the development of social and political ideas during the course of the century. The reader will thus be enabled to estimate, to some extent, the vast change in thought and outlook which has taken place during the past eighty years.

I have to thank my brother Owen for kindly undertaking the tedious task of correcting the proof-sheets of this book.

R. B.

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PIONEERS.

INTRODUCTORY.

BIOGRAPHY AND ITS RELATION TO HISTORY.

"THE history of the world," says Carlyle, "is but the biography of great men." The great man, either as soldier, prophet, priest, statesman, philosopher, poet, artist, or inventor, seems to dominate human life, and shape the ever-advancing movement of humanity. A few great soldiers like Alexander, Cæsar, Charles the Great, Napoleon, and Wellington periodically re-shape the map of the world. In philosophy, a few great thinkers—Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Kant, Hegel, Spencer—largely determine the course of the world's thought, and mould the opinions of the best students. A few great poets tower above all others like mountain peaks, to which all minor poets can only aspire. In science, a few great minds determine the tendency of scientific investigation. In religion—perhaps the greatest formative influence in human life, with the exception of industry—the influence of the great man is apparently paramount. The whole story of the Bible is a story of the lives of great men, from Moses and David down to Jesus, Paul, and John. Even in industry, where we seem to depend upon the mass rather than upon the few, one or two great inventors may alter the daily habits and customs of a people's life. Looked at in this way, the history of the world, as Carlyle says, is the biography of great men.

But, like many of Carlyle's sayings, the dictum is one-sided, and needs correcting by a view of human life as a whole. The great mass of humanity are not the mere quips and sports of intellectual and military giants. If we look below the surface of history, we shall find that the achievements of great men are largely dependent on the lives of the people by whom they are surrounded. The great man is often the expression, the creation

of the spirit of his age. That spirit no one can account for. No one can say why, at some periods of history, humanity seems gifted with preternatural energy, at others, seems lulled into unnatural indifference and repose. Each age thus produces its own type of greatness. A Darwin or a Spencer would have been impossible in the Middle Ages. A St. Augustine or a St. Francis would be impossible in the nineteenth century. A certain type of life is necessary to produce a certain type of greatness, which really means that we are all workers together, each in our own separate ways and places. Just as a great commander is dependent on his battalions of soldiers for the carrying on of a great campaign, so every great mind is dependent on innumerable lesser minds for the building up and carrying out of some great design. Plato had his teachers and his forerunners, on whose teachings he had to build his theories. Jesus was indebted to the Jewish doctors, and probably to the Essenes; Augustine was indebted to Paul and to the Fathers of the Church; Erasmus and the Reformers were indebted to the scholars of the Renaissance. Every great investigator and explorer simply carries on the work of hundreds who have gone before. We shall see this the more clearly if we consider the many things, small in themselves, but having great and far-reaching consequences, which have been slowly built into the fabric of our civilised life. The invention of fire, for example, of paper, of glass, of chimneys—which did not come into use in England until the fourteenth century, and were not commonly used until much later—of many implements of domestic use, the discovery and use of iron and coal, the art of writing and printing, the invention of figures and their use in numeration and arithmetic, the growth and manufacture of wool, silk, and cotton, the manufacture of clothing and other fabrics, the application of steam power and electricity, the discovery of the relation of the laws of sound to music, of light to optics, of proportion and geometry to architecture, of the higher mathematics to astronomy, of the chart and the compass to geography, of chemistry to the analysis of inanimate nature, of physiology and anatomy to the wondrous processes of life itself. In all this vast round of investigation, of discovery, of advancing knowledge, countless workers have added

their little mite of service; the common-place things of our every-day life have been the material which they have subdued to their purposes; we ourselves are links in the chain of thought and life, and "they also serve who only stand and wait." If the discovery of a Newton depended on the falling of an apple, how much more must the thoughts and lives of the greatest men be formed and coloured by the millions of subtle influences which palpitate through every secret chamber of our human life?

And so a science of history becomes possible—a science which would not be possible were we limited to a few great names which dominate human life. For if, as Carlyle's words would lead us to suppose, great men appeared like meteors, and then disappeared from the firmament of humanity after drawing and moulding society by the powerful influence of their personality and their will, we should be as mere puppets in their hands. In that case a science of history would be impossible. But when we once recognise that history is made up of innumerable lives and influences, we can enter into a comparison of periods, can draw lessons for our future policy, and so make the life of the past a tentative guide for the life of the present and the future. History, as some one—Fichte, I think—has said, may be said to have passed through three stages. First, the superstitious stage, in which the world and humanity were regarded as the "theatre of God's judgments," and the doings of man were placed on the shoulders of Providence; second, the romantic stage, in which men wrote what they *imagined* had brought about actual events, thereby mixing fact and legend; third, the scientific stage, on which we are now entering, and which bases itself on the careful sifting of evidence and the equally careful accumulation of facts. As an example of the latter method, I might mention Charles Booth's work on "Life and Labour in East London," by which we get a fairly accurate picture of the social and industrial life of the people—the result of the investigation of a large number of workers which may prove of immense service to other workers in the same field, and which may, perhaps, influence future legislation.

What, then, is the true relation of biography—of the lives of great men—to history? The true relation is surely this—that the

great man interprets aright the thought of his age, and gives clear and accurate expression to the beliefs and aspirations that are slowly and confusedly simmering in millions of minds. Or, if he is in advance of his age, he points out the weaknesses, the errors, and the baseness of the time, awakens loftier hopes and aspirations, and impregnates the minds of his disciples with higher and purer ideals of life. He is thus not merely the exponent of the spirit of the age, he is the spirit of the age in advance—poet, prophet, martyr, philosopher, or statesman. In this sense we all, as Carlyle says, "love great men; love, venerate, and bow down submissive before them. Does not every true man feel that he is himself made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him?" That is, a great man does not dominate and coerce humanity to his will; he helps it to draw out the best that exists in its heart and mind. And so, when a great name sounds in our ears, and appears on the printed page before our eyes, our minds leap to the thought, or the life, or the principle, for which that name stands. Our mental horizon is widened, our spiritual nature is exalted, our whole soul takes on a nobler form of stature, because we drink of the spirit which has fed a greater life than our own: this being an indispensable condition of that spiritual exaltation—that we *know*, and place ourselves in sympathy with, the life and mind which we would emulate. And so, as the name of Jesus, for example, rises to our lips, we think of the holiness, the purity, the self-sacrifice of that life. Our own thoughts are refined from their grosser relations, and words which we should then shame to utter die upon our lips. But if we do not know that life, or similar lives, or if we refuse, as sensual people do, to put ourselves in sympathetic relation with it, then in our egotistical shallowness and over-cleverness we give utterance to thoughts and words which only show our own vulgarity and impurity, and shock and repel the purer natures by which we may happen to be surrounded. And so with all great lives —the more we can put ourselves into sympathetic relation with them, the more will they affect our own lives for good. That is the use of the lives of great men, and the use of the record of their thoughts and deeds—not to dominate an age, but to lead it, to educe or draw out of the lives of their fellow-men the nobler

part of them. They inhabit a loftier spiritual sphere, into which we enter with labour and difficulty, but when once we have entered, we breathe a diviner air.

History, then, is not confined to the lives of the great; it must include the influence and the working of those lives on humanity at large, on the life of the home, the workshop, the street, the club, the village, the church, the town, the nation. And though history never exactly repeats itself, though the future always brings slightly different problems to those of the past, yet there are elements in human nature which are so constant, and change so little from age to age, that the history of the past may often be made an index to the life of the future. "Humanity," says Fichte, "must make its journey on its own feet. By its own strength it must recreate its own true being. In Paradise—the Paradise of innocence and childhood, without knowledge, without labour, without art—humanity awakes to life. Scarcely has it gathered courage to venture upon independent existence when the angel comes with the fiery sword of compulsion to good, and drives it forth from the seat of its innocence and peace. Fugitive and irresolute, it wanders through the empty waste, scarcely daring to plant its foot firmly anywhere, lest the ground should sink beneath it. Grown bolder by necessity, it settles in some poor corner, and in the sweat of its brow, roots out the thorns and thistles of barbarism from the soil on which it would rear the beloved fruit of knowledge. Enjoyment opens its eyes, and builds a paradise for itself after the image of the paradise which it has lost; the Tree of Life arises, mankind stretches forth its hand to the fruit, and eats and lives in immortality."

In this pilgrimage from the Paradise of Innocence to the Paradise of Knowledge, great men are our leaders. Their relation to us is not that of dominance on the one hand and subservience on the other; it is one of sympathetic association, in varying degree, of course, between two types of mind having the same moral and spiritual bent. If the root of the matter is not in us we cannot follow in their footsteps; their greatness is partly lost to us. Not wholly lost—it cannot be that. If we cannot drink at the original source, we can take the living water as it filters through intermediate souls. Fortunately, however, none of us

are so poor in spirit that we cannot appreciate some one type of greatness, and so allow the influence of a greater mind and spirit than our own to vitalise and exalt our souls.

I remember how, some years ago, a certain well-known journalist went down to a populous constituency with the intention of standing as a Parliamentary candidate for one of the divisions there. He soon went away, however, disgusted with the fulsome adulation and hero-worship of the electors. He did not see, he said, that he was worth so much that the plaudits of the people should ring for him. Then he wrote an article in his paper saying that the people did not want leaders, that they ought to lead themselves and rely upon themselves, because leaders so often misled them. That may be partly true of political leaders, but it is not true in the main. We all require leaders, masters, teachers. None of us are so wise that we can do without the wisdom of some greater mind than our own. Even the wisest men are only wise in one or two directions. A Gladstone, for example, may be wise in politics, but we should never think of following his lead in science. There, and in many other directions, he himself has to be content with treading in the footsteps of others. The life of each is so bound up with that of all, that every one of us helps to make history, some more, some less. The degrees of worth and influence are as numerous as mankind itself, and each one of us may so live as to help to purify and uplift the little sphere in which our influence is cast. This it is which makes history—not merely the lives of the great, but the influence of those lives on our lives, and our lives on those of others. No single soul is isolated. Each one of us is as a knot of rootlets from which we may send out leaves, and flowers, and fruit in many directions.

It is with this thought, and partly for the purpose of stimulating, if possible, the study of history and biography, that I write this short series of papers on some social pioneers of the nineteenth century, in which I shall try to throw as much light as I can upon the social history of the time. Some of the names I shall take are not great names. Some of them are men and women whom the world has almost forgotten, but they are men and women who have helped to make our nineteenth century

life sweeter, purer, and happier for having lived in it. Men and women like William Cobbett, Francis Place, Robert Owen, Elizabeth Fry, Lord Shaftesbury, Richard Cobden, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Kingsley and the Christian Socialists. The record of the labours of these will not only give us some insight into the lives of our immediate forefathers in one of the most important periods of English history; it will show us how powerfully the efforts of those of our fellow-men who are not great may influence the life of humanity for good.

I.

WILLIAM COBBETT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORM, 1762—1835.

I.

THE nineteenth century has been well termed a century of reconstruction. Every phase of life has felt the vitalising breath of a re-formative influence. Theology and religion have been reconstructed and charged with a more charitable spirit. Science has immensely increased man's power over nature. Political and social institutions have been created or re-modelled. Parliament has been repeatedly reformed. Municipalities, county councils, parish and district councils, school boards, and boards of guardians of the poor have been created. The newspaper press has become the greatest power in the land. And in addition to all this, our industrial life has been completely transformed. The domestic system of industry, with its hand-loom, its spinning wheel, its blacksmith's roadside forge, its travelling coaches, its tallow candles and oil lamps, has slowly passed away, and given place to the power-loom, the spinning jenny, the great iron works, the steam engine, the electric light, the telegraph and the telephone, and the thousand and one inventions which go to make up our complex industrial and social life. In this great work of reconstruction there have been many toilers. Some, whose names are written large on the page of history, and whose life work has been carried on amid the clamour of popular argument and applause; others, whose names, now nearly forgotten, were once household words in the homes of the people, whose life work was carried on amidst obloquy, misrepresentation, and bigotry, but who laid the foundation of causes and of movements, for the success of which others have received the honour and the credit. It is to the life and work of these—the pioneers of

progress and reform—that I wish to draw attention in this series of short biographies.

One could hardly select a more characteristic personality to illustrate the beginnings, in the political sphere, of the reconstructive movement to which I have alluded, than that of William Cobbett. Cobbett, a sturdy English yeoman, with all the instincts and prejudices of a yeoman, represented the best of the industrial life of the past in conflict with the worst of the industrial and social life in which he passed his manhood. Beginning public life as a high Tory, the abuses and corruptions which were rampant in politics, and the cruelties and oppressions which then made industrial life a nightmare of wretchedness, compelled him into the attitude of the agitator and reformer.

William Cobbett was born at Farnham (famous for its hops), in Surrey, on the ninth of March, 1762. His grandfather was a farm labourer, and his father a farmer, and Cobbett always spoke and wrote with pride of his humble up-bringing and the frugal household in which he passed his early years. His sketches of his boyish country life are very fresh and vivid reading. "I do not remember the time," he says, "when I did not earn my living. My first occupation was driving the small birds from the turnip seed and the rooks from the peas. When I first trudged afield, with my wooden bottle and my satchel slung over my shoulders, I was hardly able to climb the gates and stiles, and at the close of the day, to reach home was a task of infinite difficulty. My next employment was weeding wheat, and leading a single horse at harrowing barley. Hoeing peas followed, and hence I arrived at the honour of joining the reapers in harvest, driving the team and holding the plough. In the winter evenings my father taught us all to read and write, and gave us a pretty tolerable knowledge of arithmetic." His pictures of nature are very simple and charming. "When I was a little boy," he says, "I was, in the barley-sowing season, going along by the side of a field near Waverley Abbey; the primroses and bluebells bespangling the banks on both sides of me, a thousand linnets singing in a spreading oak over my head, while the jingle of the traces and the whistling of the plough-boys saluted my ear from over the hedge; and, as it were to snatch me from the enchant-

ment, the hounds at that instant having started a hare in the hanger on the other side of the field, came up scampering over it in full cry, taking me after them many a mile. I was not more than eight years old, but this particular scene has presented itself to my mind many times every year from that day to this. I always enjoy it over again." Of this part of his life, he records an incident which is typical of his whole after-career. A huntsman had given him a cut with a whip because he had jumped in amongst the hounds and pulled a hare from them. The next time the hounds were out, Cobbett went on to the common with a red herring, and waited his opportunity. Soon the hare came skipping by towards the south, and Cobbett immediately drew his herring across the trail and went off west, over the roughest part of the common, through hedges and ditches, twirling his herring about over hill and down dale, through a swamp, and finally pitching it into the river. Then Cobbett went on to the banks of a neighbouring hill to enjoy the discomfiture of the puzzled huntsmen, fuming, swearing, blaming, and disputing with each other, covered with mire, and going soaking home empty-handed at the end of a drizzling day. The incident is typical of Cobbett's whole life—his continual fight against tyranny and injustice, and his determination to be even with the oppressor.

Everyone, I suppose, has heard or read of Cobbett's leaving home at eleven years of age to try and find work in the beautiful botanical gardens at Kew. He had 6½d. in his pocket, 3d. of which he spent on bread and cheese and small beer; a halfpenny he lost, leaving him 3d. in his pocket. "With this for my whole fortune," he says, "I was trudging through Richmond in my blue smock frock, and my red garters tied under my knees, when, staring about me, my eye fell upon a little book in a bookseller's window, 'The Tale of a Tub,' price 3d. The title was so odd that my curiosity was excited. I had the 3d., but then I could have no supper. In I went, and got the little book, which I was so impatient to read that I got over into a field at the upper corner of Kew Gardens, where there stood a haystack. On the shady side of this I sat down to read. The book was so different from anything that I had ever read before; it was something so new to my mind that, though I could not at all understand some

of it, it delighted me beyond description, and it produced what I have always considered a birth of the intellect. I read on till it was dark, without any thought about supper or bed. When I could see no longer, I put my little book in my pocket, and tumbled down by the side of the stack, where I slept till the birds in Kew Gardens awaked me in the morning, when off I started to Kew, reading my little book. The singularity of my dress, the simplicity of my manner, my confident and lively air, and, doubtless, his own compassion besides, induced the gardener, who was a Scotchman, to give me victuals, find me lodgings, and set me to work."

These pleasant incidents of boyhood, however, were soon to give place to a more strenuous life. After trying to enlist as a sailor in the navy, and working like a galley-slave eight weary months in a lawyer's office in London, from early morning to late in the evening, Cobbett, in his twenty-third year, enlisted as a soldier. During the eight years of discipline, duty, and self-education which followed, he laid the foundation of knowledge which was to serve him afterwards in the battles of his public life. While the other soldiers were spending their time in dissipation, Cobbett was applying himself to severe study. "The pains I took," he says, "cannot be described. I procured me a grammar, wrote the whole of it out two or three times, got it by heart, repeated it every morning and every evening, and when on guard I imposed on myself the task of saying it all over once every time I was posted sentinel. . . . I had to read and to write amidst the talking, laughing, singing, whistling, and brawling of at least half-a-score of the most thoughtless of men." The whole week's food allowed to the soldiers was not too much for one day. "I have often seen," he says, "strong men actually crying on account of hunger. Out of the 6d. a day allowance, we had to pay for washing, mending, soap, shoes, and underclothing." What he spent on pens, ink, and paper had often to come out of the money which he needed to buy food. At the end of little more than a year he was made sergeant-major, and sent to join his regiment in Nova Scotia. Here he continued his studies, extending them to logic, geometry, and French.

After eight years of army life, Cobbett returned to England,

and married a young girl named Ann Reid, whom he had met in New Brunswick. He had placed in her keeping the sum of 150 guineas, the whole of his savings, telling her at the same time to spend whatever she pleased in case of necessity. His intended wife came to England some time before her future husband, and on his rejoining her, he found her in service, with the 150 guineas untouched. Loyal as he was, Cobbett soon found that England, in those days of coercion and repression of opinion, was no safe place for him. He had already been concerned in the joint-authorship of a pamphlet entitled "The Soldier's Friend," in which he had laid bare the wholesale corruption by which the army administration was infested, and the consequent defrauding and ill-treatment of the soldiers. Cobbett determined to prove his part of the case, but finding that the books of the regiment would not be placed at his disposal, that his evidence would probably expose the backs of some innocent fellow-soldiers to the lash, that every obstacle was likely to be put in his way by the authorities, and that a charge of conspiracy would be entered against him if he failed, Cobbett, after spending six months in France, left England for America. He settled in Philadelphia, earning his living for a time by teaching English to the numerous French emigrants there, and publishing, about the same time, an English grammar in French for the use of Frenchmen. Here, also, his real public life begins. The States of America at that time were seething with the new ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, and republicanism, which had been stimulated by the French Revolution and the American revolt from English domination. England, with its then half-monarchical, half-aristocratic, and tyrannical government, and its opposition to the doctrines of the French Revolution, was decidedly unpopular in America, where its attempt to domineer over the colonies had not been forgotten. Philadelphia was then a hot-bed of democracy, and England and English institutions were regarded with undisguised hatred. Cobbett, filled with an ardent loyalty to King, Lords, and Commons, and with that intense affection for England which animated him to the last hour of his life, at once entered the lists against her enemies. His vigorous and pungent English, his clear and direct style, his determination to give back quite as much as he got in

the way of literary abuse, soon raised him to the front rank of pamphleteers. A newspaper writer of the time had applied to him, amongst other choice epithets, the designation of "Porcupine." Cobbett at once adopted the name as a nom-de-plume, and the writings of "Peter Porcupine" soon became famous, both in England and America. In addition to many pamphlets, he brought out a newspaper entitled "Porcupine's Gazette," and published a short biography of the "Life and Adventures of Peter Porcupine." The quarrel between the respective parties—the Royalists and Tories, headed by Cobbett on the one hand, and the Democrats and Republicans on the other—became so fierce that Cobbett was twice prosecuted for libel, the first time being acquitted, the second time being fined £1,000. This was paid by public subscription, but the annoyance and expense of the trial had doubtless something to do with the return of Cobbett to England. He wound up his business in America, and reached England in July, 1800. His literary fame as a journalist and pamphleteer had preceded him. He had already had offers of help, either for his family or friends, from the English Minister in America, for his services to the cause of King and Constitution, and as soon as he arrived in London, he was sought out by numerous gentlemen in the Tory party, amongst these being William Wyndham, then Secretary of State for War. Cobbett was invited to dine with Wyndham, and there met George Canning, George Hammond, and William Pitt (Prime Minister). All this meant but one thing—Cobbett was to be patted on the back and become the popular literary advocate and defender of the Government. But he was not the man to sacrifice his independence. He was at this time a true, zealous, and honest-hearted Tory yeoman, a firm lover of the King and Constitution of England, but also a hater of injustice, dishonesty, or hypocrisy, and possessed by an unflinching determination to expose abuses, whether in high places or low.

About this time he paid a visit to his old home. There the thoughts and memories of his childhood came rushing into his mind. "All at once," he says, "I saw my pretty little garden, my little blue smock frock, my little nailed shoes, my pretty pigeons that I used to feed out of my hands, the last kind words

and tears of my gentle and tender-hearted and affectionate mother. I looked down at my dress—what a change! What scenes I had gone through! How altered my state! I had dined the day before at a Secretary of State's, in company with Mr. Pitt, and had been waited upon by men in gaudy liveries! I had had nobody to assist me in the world; no teachers of any sort; nobody to shelter me from the consequences of bad, and no one to counsel me to good, behaviour. I felt proud. The distinctions of rank, birth, and wealth all became nothing in my eyes, and from that moment I resolved never to bend before them."

But Cobbett was soon to be tested. It was the common practice of both political parties of that time to fee or find places for their chief literary defenders. One, Cobbett says, John Reeves, was joint patentee of the office of King's printer, with an income of £4,000 a year. Another, John Bowles, was a Commissioner of Dutch property, with a pretty considerable emolument. Others had sinecures ranging from £300 to £500 a year. So Cobbett's turn came. Mr. Hammond (one of the Under-Secretaries of State) offered him the proprietorship of a newspaper, including presses, type, and other necessary machinery, as a free gift. Cobbett declined it, saying that he preferred to maintain his independence, and reminding him of the fable of the wolf and the mastiff. "If I cannot be fat, I will at least be free; no one loves chains, though they be made of gold," said the wolf, when he saw the mark of the collar round the mastiff's neck, So Cobbett started a paper called the "Porcupine" on his own account. It appeared with the motto, "Fear God, Honour the King," and announced its intention of opposing, by every means in its power, what it called the pestiferous reform and republican notions then beginning to prevail. Eighteen months later he started his paper called the "Political Register," and published first at 10d., then at 1s., and afterwards at 7d., which lived thirty-three years, and became one of the most famous political weeklies of the time. For three or four years he rendered yeoman service to his party, and when, in 1802, war again broke out between France and England, Cobbett wrote a long manifesto—which he placed at the service of the Ministry—rousing the people to hatred of the French. This manifesto, so full of vehement yet conscientious racial hatred and

prejudice, is a striking indication of the state of public feeling at that time. It was printed by the Government, and sent round to all the clergy of the kingdom, with instructions to post it on the church doors, deposit copies in the pews, and distribute them amongst the poor.

But Cobbett's views were slowly undergoing a great change. Loyal as he ever was to the Crown and Constitution of England, four years of life in political circles in London was sufficient to convince him of the necessity for reform, both in the Legislature and administration. The press and political parties were utterly corrupt. Hundreds of thousands of pounds was paid away yearly to pensioners and place-men. The son of the Prime Minister (Addington), when only twelve years of age, had a sinecure of £3,000 a year. The National Debt was rising by scores of millions of pounds through the huge expenditure caused by the wars with Napoleon. The House of Commons did not even pretend to represent the people. Many of those who were opposed to reform openly declared that "the people had nothing to do with the laws but to obey them." The condition of the people was one of continuous, bitter, and grinding poverty. Wages in the agricultural districts were so low that poor-law relief was actually given in aid of wages—a practice which made them still lower, while the poor-rate rose by leaps and bounds. In some parishes every labourer was a pauper. In the now rapidly-growing towns the new factory system and the long hours of labour had begun to affect for ill the physique of the people, particularly that of the children. The price of bread had risen enormously, and duties on other articles of consumption pressed heavily on the scanty means of the poor.

In these circumstances it was no wonder that the articles in the "Political Register" began to take on a radical tone, to expose abuses, to denounce mis-government, and to urge the necessity for reform. Cobbett was soon disowned by his late friends. Opposition papers were started, and the Government talked about silencing the agitator, as it had attempted to silence others, by prosecuting him for libel. The opportunity soon came. A mutiny of the Militia had broken out at Ely through some stoppage of pay, and five of the ring-leaders were sentenced

to receive 500 lashes each. Cobbett knew what such a sentence meant. He had seen strong, hardy soldiers fall sick to the ground at sight of it. If the culprit fainted under it, he had to receive it on two, three, or four separate occasions. Cobbett strongly denounced the atrocious practice in the "Register." The Government immediately pounced upon him for seditious libel, and he was fined £1,000 and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. The result was, however, that an agitation was set on foot for the abolition of the practice; flogging in the army ultimately fell into desuetude, and was finally abolished by official decree.

Cobbett still continued to write for his "Political Register" from his prison, and his release was celebrated by a public dinner, a public meeting, and, in some of the villages near London, by the ringing of bells. He was now the greatest political educational force in the country. Cheap reprints of the "Register" were sold by thousands. His writings were read in nearly every cottage in the manufacturing districts of South Lancashire, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and the Scotch manufacturing towns. Hampden Clubs—that is, reform clubs—started up by the score, and wherever this educational force appeared, rioting, rick-burning, and machine-breaking, which had been steadily on the increase through the great misery of the people, gave place to constitutional agitation. Cobbett sternly set his face against every attempt at reform by force. In 1816 he published an address to journeymen and labourers, describing in plain and homely, yet vigorous language, the evils from which the country was suffering, and urging the people to claim their due share of political power. Of this address, 44,000 copies were sold within a month. The agitation for reform was now extending so rapidly that Ministers became alarmed. They decided to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, so that any political writer or speaker might be arrested without trial. An Act was also passed giving greater powers to the magistrates for preventing, where they thought necessary, the holding of political meetings. Cobbett, thinking himself in danger of imprisonment without form of trial, took a trip to America, and wrote articles for his "Register" from the other side of the Atlantic. While he was in America,

there took place that massacre in St. Peter's Field, Manchester, which sent a thrill of indignation throughout England, and which marks one of the turning-points of the political history of the working classes. Though Cobbett could take no part in the Manchester meeting, an account of the occurrences of that day must be given here, if only to enable the reader to better gauge the strength and importance of the movement to which the sturdy reformer devoted the best years of his life.

II.

It is difficult for the present generation to realise the intense bitterness and hatred which characterised the social and political struggles of the early part of the century. On the one side there was an aristocratic Government, quite out of touch with the feelings and aspirations of the great bulk of the people, and bent upon retaining its own privileges, for the good, as it deemed, of the nation itself; on the other side, there were the masses of the people—the labouring population of the agricultural districts and the growing population of the towns—filled with dim, inarticulate yearnings for a juster order, which would at least secure to them the simple joys and comforts of the home. The press, which, in our modern days, is the natural voice of the people, had not yet risen to power, and the only other channel for the expression of popular opinion—the right of public meeting—was restricted and hampered by a jealous and despotic Government. England really consisted of two nations, the rich and the poor, the governing classes and the governed, and the bitter feeling existing between the two was intensified, not only by the consciousness of wrong to which the people could not give formal and adequate expression, but also by the heavy taxation engendered by the European war, and the great industrial changes which were wrenching the people from old and settled habits and pursuits. The hot indignation and passion of the more rebellious spirits found vent in rick-burning, machine-breaking, and spasmodic rioting. In 1816 the distress was very severe, and in the south of England rick fires began to blaze almost nightly, while in the north, large bodies of labourers assembled, bearing banners

inscribed with the motto, "Bread or Blood." The immediate effect of this method of agitation was simply to cause the governing powers to adopt severer measures of repression. It was only when the popular "agitators" arose, when the people could find an outlet for the expression of their sense of wrong, when political or reform clubs were started, where grievances could be discussed and information diffused, that the agitation for reform began to take a more effective shape. These clubs, which took the name of Hampden and Spencean societies, the latter aiming at the nationalisation of the land as well as political reform, were especially numerous in the north of England, and occasionally sent delegates to "Reform" Conventions in London, Manchester, and other large towns. It was these clubs, in conjunction with the Manchester reformers, which organised a great demonstration to be held in St. Peter's Field, Manchester, on August 16th, 1819. Large bodies of working-men streamed in procession to the appointed meeting-place, from the many towns and villages surrounding Manchester, until some 80,000 persons were gathered together on the spot. The processions were attended by bands of music, flags, and banners, bearing the mottoes, "Equal Representation or Death," "Unity and Strength," "Liberty and Fraternity," "Annual Parliaments," "Universal Suffrage." "I never saw a gayer spectacle," says an eye-witness (Mr. Alexander Prentice). "There were haggard-looking men certainly, but the majority were young persons, in their best Sunday suits, and the light-coloured dresses of the cheerful, tidy-looking women, relieved the effect of the dark fustian worn by the men. The marching order was what we often see now in the processions of Sunday School children and temperance societies. The numerous flags seem to have been brought to add to the picturesque effect of the pageant." Henry Hunt (a famous political orator of the time) was to be the chairman of the meeting. On the previous night, however, the county magistrates had decided to arrest Hunt and the other leaders, at the meeting, while they were in the midst of their followers. The effect of this mad resolve was to bring the authorities into direct conflict with the people. Nadin (the chief-constable) announced that he could not accomplish the arrest without

military force. Forty yeomanry cavalry were placed at his disposal by the magistrates, and these attempted to force their way to the platform. The horsemen's ranks were soon broken and swamped, or hemmed in, by the dense crowd. Then orders were given to the commander of some troops of Hussars, which were in readiness close at hand, to go to the relief of the yeomanry. Immediately the scene became appalling. The description may be given in the words of Samuel Bamford. "'Stand fast,' cried Bamford, when he saw the troops darting forward, 'they are riding upon us; stand fast.' And there was a general cry in our quarter of 'stand fast.' The cavalry were in confusion; they evidently could not, with all the weight of man and horse, penetrate that compact mass of human beings, and their sabres were plied to hew a way through naked, held-up hands and defenceless heads, and then chopped limbs and wound-gaping skulls were seen, and groans and cries were mingled with the din of that horrid confusion. 'For shame! for shame!' was shouted. Then, 'Break, break, they are killing them in front, and they cannot get away,' and there was a general cry of 'Break! break!' For a moment the crowd held back as in a pause; there was a rush, heavy and resistless as a headlong sea, and a sound like low thunder, with screams, prayers, and imprecations from the crowd, moiled and sabre-doomed, who could not escape. On the breaking of the crowd, the yeomanry wheeled, and dashing wherever there was an opening, they followed, pressing, and wounding. Many females appeared as the crowd opened, and striplings or mere youths also were found. Their cries were piteous and heartrending, and would, one might have supposed, have disarmed any human resentment; but here their appeals were in vain. Women, white-vested maids, and tender youths were indiscriminately sabred or trampled. In ten minutes from the commencement of the havoc the field was an open and almost deserted space. The sun looked down through a sultry and motionless air. The hustings remained with a few broken and hewed flag-staves erect, and a torn and gashed banner or two, whilst over the whole field were strewed caps, bonnets, hats, shawls, and shoes, trampled, torn, and bloody. Several mounds of human beings still remained where they had

fallen, crushed down and smothered. Some of these still groaning, others with staring eyes, were gasping for breath, and others would never breathe more. All was silent, save those low sounds, and the occasional snorting and pawing of steeds." [1] Eight men, two women, and a child, were taken up dead or mortally injured. The wounded, to the number of five or six hundred, had fled, or been carried, to their homes. The leaders were put upon their trial, five of them being found guilty of sedition, and sentenced to imprisonment for various terms—Hunt for two years and a half, Bamford and others for one year.

It was this massacre, arising partly out of brutal disregard for the people's claims and aspirations, and partly out of culpable want of tact on the part of the authorities, that called forth Shelley's splendid outburst, "The Masque of Anarchy," the concluding stanzas of which have furnished the peroration of scores of political orators, but which will be best remembered for its short, concentrated word-pictures of the fundamental conditions of domestic happiness and national well-being.

"What art thou, Freedom?

. . . .

"For the labourer thou art bread,
And a comely table spread,
From his daily labour come,
In a neat and happy home.

"Thou art clothes, and fire, and food
For the trampled multitude:
No—in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be,
As in Eagland now we see.

"Thou art Justice—ne'er for gold
May thy righteous laws be sold
As laws are in England—thou
Shield'st alike the high and low.

1 Bamford's "Life of a Radical," Chap. XXV.

"Thou art Love—the rich have kist
Thy feet, and, like him following Christ,
Give their substance to the free,
And through the rough world follow thee.

"Science, and Poetry, and Thought
Are thy lamps; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, they curse it not.

"Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless,
Art thou: let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness."

The immediate effect of the Peterloo massacre, as it was called, was increased repression on the part of the Government. Several popular leaders, notably Sir Francis Burdett, Sir Charles Wolseley, and the Rev. Mr. Harrison, were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment for taking part in the agitation in other parts of the country. Earl Fitzwilliam was dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenantship of the West Riding for having taken part in the Yorkshire county meeting. Parliament was specially summoned, and the famous "Six Acts" were passed, having for their object the more speedy punishment of political offenders, the prevention of the training of persons to the use of arms, the seizure and detention of arms by justices of the peace, the extension of the newspaper stamp duty to other publications, the more effectual prevention and punishment of political agitation, or, to use the official phrase, "blasphemous and seditious libels," and the further limitation of the right of public meeting.

To return, however, to Cobbett. He had now been in America over two years, engaged in literary work, and contributing regularly to the "Register." He returned to England in November of 1819, three months after the Manchester massacre, and was received by his friends with rejoicings and addresses of welcome. He was forbidden, however, to make public entry into Manchester. Military arrangements were made to prevent a demonstration. Several pieces of cannon were brought into the

town, and Hussars were stationed on the Liverpool-road to obtain information as to his movements. The bellman of Bolton was sentenced to ten weeks' imprisonment for publicly announcing Mr. Cobbett's safe return. Cobbett and the other Reform leaders, however, steadily set their faces against every form of violence, even yielding, for a time, the old English custom of the right of public meeting for the discussion of grievances.

Immediately on his return from America, Cobbett again threw himself with characteristic ardour into the political movements of the time. Other questions were now being agitated, notably the removal of civil and political disabilities from Roman Catholics, the members of the Roman Catholic Church being at that time deprived of the right to sit in Parliament, and excluded from posts of distinction in the national and civic service, as well as from the jury box. This movement Cobbett helped by publishing a "History of the Protestant Reformation," which, though extravagantly written, had the effect of dispelling from the popular mind many ignorant prejudices which prevailed against the Catholics. Other questions, such as the demand for the abolition of the Game Laws, which pressed with iniquitous severity on the labouring population of the agricultural districts; the right of public meeting, and a free press; the unjust incidence of taxation—all these were regularly discussed, both in the "Weekly Register" and on public platforms. In 1820, Cobbett contested the town of Coventry for a seat in Parliament, but was heavily defeated, and again in 1826 he was nominated for Preston, with a like result.

I have not space to trace Cobbett's influence on the later phases of the movement for Parliamentary reform. It is enough to remember that the great Reform Bill of 1832—the story of which will be told in another chapter—which, in the opinion of most historians, prevented a civil war in England, was due not merely to the statesmen—the Greys, and the Russells—who were instrumental in passing it, but to the men who, like Cobbett, fought for it in the dark days of obloquy, of misrepresentation, and of persecution.

During all the later years of the agitation, Cobbett's activity was prodigious. Besides editing and writing for his weekly

"Political Register," he wrote a "Parliamentary History of England," and as early as 1803 he had begun to publish the Parliamentary debates, a work which, in 1812, was taken over by Mr. Hansard, and has been continued ever since. In 1809 he began the publication of a collection of State trials. In 1818 he brought out his "English Grammar," which has been of service to scores of thousands of English youths, and of which 10,000 copies were sold within a few weeks of publication. In 1823 he published a "French Grammar," and shortly afterwards his "History of the Protestant Reformation." In 1830 appeared his "Advice to Young Men," which is still very racy reading. In addition to these works, he wrote and published numerous political pamphlets, and also works on gardening, planting, farming, and country life. He retained his love of the country to the last, and in the autumn of 1821 began a series of journeys on horseback through Berkshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire, and published the result of his observations in a series of "Rural Rides," which gave vivid and interesting descriptions of the agricultural life of the time. In 1830 he began a series of cheap reprints from his "Register," entitled "Cobbett's Twopenny Trash or Politics for the Poor." It was one of these re-prints which again brought upon him the vexation of a Government prosecution, "for raising discontent in the minds of the labourers, with the intent to incite them to acts of violence." This charge—a most ridiculous one—Cobbett easily disproved by a reference to his published writings, and the trial broke down. From that time the press of England has been free from political prosecutions.

In December, 1832, Cobbett was returned, along with John Fielding, as M. P. for Oldham, in the first reformed Parliament. But his work was done. His place was not in the Palace of Westminster, but in the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of people in the hamlets, villages, and towns of England and Scotland. In June, 1835, at the age of seventy-three, his first and last illness came upon him. He still continued to write for his paper, the "Political Register," but his strength gradually fell, and on the morning of the 18th of June he passed peacefully into his last sleep—the quiet and natural death of old age.

So passed away the sturdy, honest, incorruptible reformer. Vain, erratic, and egotistic, no doubt, often boasting that the erstwhile ploughboy wielded a pen which could make the greatest statesmen in England tremble, that rugged form always held an honest and upright mind, a steadfast and resolute will, a kind and affectionate heart. His uniqueness for us lies in this—that he sprang from the soil, and his life is typical of part of that reconstructive process to which I alluded at the beginning of this slight sketch —the change and reconstruction of England from an agricultural into a manufacturing nation. Our modern popular reformers spring from the workshop, the factory, or the mine. Cobbett sprang from the peasantry of England. He was never a Republican, not even a Radical, in the modern sense of that word. So late as 1831, he said: "I am for a Government of King, Lords, and Commons, but let what else come, I am for the freedom, the happiness, and greatness of England, and, above all things, for the good feeding and clothing of those who raise all the food and make all the clothing." The time in which he lived, and especially from 1800 to 1832, was a time in which every effort was needed to unmask corruption in Church and State, to enlighten the people, even at cost of imprisonment; to break down privilege, and face oppression; to free the press, both from its corruption and its shackles; to emancipate the people from its own ignorance and servility, and from the domination of a class Government. All this had to be accomplished before we could live our freer life of to-day, and in that work William Cobbett was one of the sturdiest pioneers.

II.

THE STORY OF THE GREAT REFORM BILL, 1832.

THE great Reform Bill of 1832 marks so important an epoch in modern political history, and the recognition of that importance is so necessary to the full understanding of the purpose of these chapters, that it will be worth while devoting a separate chapter to its history, and to a brief description of the passionate scenes and stirring events which accompanied its progress through both Houses of Parliament. Like all great measures it was the outcome and culmination of years of political agitation. In the eighteenth century, men like Horne Tooke, Major Cartwright, Dr. Priestley, Thomas Paine, Dr. Price, and the Rev. Thos. F. Palmer had continually pleaded for a fairer system of Parliamentary representation, and as early as 1779 a County Association for the Promotion of Reform was formed in Yorkshire. In 1782-3-5, Pitt himself moved for a reform of Parliament, but was defeated on each occasion. Then came the French Revolution, which sent so many of our statesmen over to the side of reaction. The question of Parliamentary reform dropped into the background, until, in 1793, Mr. Grey—afterwards Earl Grey—took up the cause. In that year a petition, signed by inhabitants of Sheffield, Norwich, Birmingham, Huddersfield, and other places, declared that 154 Peers and Commoners procured, by purchase or patronage, the return of 307 members—a clear majority of the then House of Commons. The fright produced by the French Revolution, however, effectually impeded the growth of any reform movement, and it was not until the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, that the question again came into prominence. The distress produced by the war was now very great, and the despotic measures resorted to by the Government added to the fierceness of the resentment engendered by misgovernment, heavy taxation, and scarcity of food. The demand for the represen-

tation of the people in Parliament now became more loud and pressing. Men like William Cobbett, Henry Hunt, Major Cartwright, Francis Place, and Sir Francis Burdett, constituted themselves the popular leaders of the movement. Political reform clubs sprang into existence. In 1819 there took place that Peterloo massacre, described in another chapter, the indirect effect of which was to increase the bitter feeling existing between the two classes, and to strengthen the demand for reform. The great towns were now growing in numbers and importance, and gave point to the political war-cry of the first half of the nineteenth century, "Taxation without representation is tyranny." Information was gradually diffused amongst the masses of the people. No political system could stand for long in the face of facts like the following: That the majority of the House of Commons was made up of placemen, that is, nominees of lords and commoners; that seats in the Commons could be openly bought, £3,500 being about the average market price; that some of the smaller boroughs, which only contained a few score of voters, returned one, or even two members (Gatton, for example, only contained five voters), while large towns, like Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, were unrepresented; that the borough of Beeralston (represented) paid only £3 9s. in assessed taxes, Bramber £16 8s. 9d., Bishop's Castle £40 17s. 1d., while Marylebone (unrepresented) paid £290,376, Tower Hamlets £118,546, Finsbury £205,948, and Manchester £40,094; that Rutland, the smallest county in England, returned as many county members as Yorkshire, the largest county; and that the enormous expenses attendant on elections, and the open and widespread practice of bribery, rendered fair representation impossible.

Inside the House of Commons, however, the movement made little progress, and the attention of the country was for a time diverted by the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. A motion by the Marquis of Blandford, in 1830, in favour of reform, received only eleven supporters. A proposal by Lord John Russell, in the same year, to give representatives to Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, was rejected by 183 to 140. Another bill, introduced by Daniel O'Connell, which provided for annual parliaments, adult suffrage, and the ballot, found only thirteen

supporters in a house of 322; and a motion by Lord Howick, for checking bribery at elections, was defeated by a large majority. These attempts show at once how little headway reform principles had made in the House of Commons; and also, how utterly the House misrepresented the feeling of the country, for within a year a general election was held and a majority of members favourable to reform was returned.

In June, 1830, an event occurred which gave a great impetus to the cause. George IV, who had long been a bitter and obstinate opponent of reform principles, died, and the "Sailor King," William IV, who was known to be in sympathy with reform, came to the throne. In the same year, however, immediately after the general election necessitated by the death of the King, the Duke of Wellington, speaking in the House of Lords, declared that "he had never heard or read of any measure, up to the present moment, which could in any degree satisfy his mind that the state of the representation could be improved. He was fully convinced that the country possessed, at the present moment, a legislature which answered all the good purposes of legislation, and this to a greater degree than any legislature ever had answered in any country whatever." The men of Birmingham, Leeds, and Manchester did not think so. In November of the same year the Ministry was defeated, on a motion for a committee on the Civil List, and the Duke resigned. The King sent for Earl Grey, who undertook to form a Government, provided that Parliamentary reform should be regarded as a Cabinet question. This was agreed to. The Ministry included Lord Melbourne, Lord Durham, Lord Brougham, Lord Palmerston, and Lord Goderich. The year in which the Ministry was formed (1830) was called the year 1 of the people's cause. After the formation of the government, Parliament adjourned until February, 1831.

During the interval, while Ministers were busy preparing their great measure of Reform, the people set to work to give them their support. From the vast populations of the unrepresented towns, shoals of petitions were sent to Parliament praying for a reform of the House of Commons. Manufacturers, merchants, tradesmen, and artisans began to organise themselves

into political Unions, in order to be ready for the mighty struggle which was to take place.

Parliament reassembled on February 3rd, 1831. On March 1st the Reform Bill was introduced by Lord John Russell. It had been prepared mainly by Earl Grey and Lord Durham. So closely had the provisions of the measure been kept secret, that the greatest friends of the ministers themselves knew nothing of them. At the dinner parties which were held in London on that day, the guests sat watching the clock, waiting for tidings of the contents of the Bill. When these became known the effect was remarkable. Inside the House a large number of members treated the whole thing as a huge jest. They could not believe that such a measure could possibly become law. Lord John Russell was continually interrupted by shouts of laughter. As he read out the list of boroughs proposed to be disfranchised, the members for these boroughs rose one after another in their places and gave him a mocking bow. Many members came away and said the bill would never be heard of again. Lord Sidmouth, a high old Tory, said to Earl Grey, "I hope God will forgive you on account of this Bill, I don't think I can." But the temper of the country was different. As soon as the scheme appeared in the newspapers the following morning, it created immense enthusiasm. The ultra-reformers were dissatisfied at some of its provisions—as well they might be—but it was universally regarded as a great measure, and all sections of the reform party felt that they must close their ranks against the common enemy. The main provisions of the Bill were these:—Sixty "rotten boroughs" were to be completely disfranchised, and forty-seven, returning two members each, were to be reduced to one member each, thus setting free 168 seats, most of which were to be given to the manufacturing towns and to populous divisions of counties. The borough franchise was to be conferred on all inhabitants of houses of the yearly value of £10; and the county franchise on copy-holders to the value of £10 a year, and holders of leases of not less than twenty-one years, whose annual rent was not less than £50. It was computed that these changes would add nearly 500,000 persons to the electoral roll.

The debate which followed the introduction of the measure

occupied seven nights, and the first reading was passed without a division. In the division on the second reading 302 voted for, and 301 against the Bill. Ministers decided to go on, and the people illuminated. After Easter the House went into committee on the Bill, and within a week the Government received two defeats. They decided to appeal to the country, but had great difficulty in persuading the king to dissolve Parliament. The peers and the anti-reformers were strongly against a dissolution, as they knew the country was against them. Lords Grey and Durham were closeted with the king several hours, urging him to dissolve. At the same time Lord Wharncliffe, in the House of Lords, was moving an address to the throne remonstrating against a prorogation. As soon as the king heard of it, he was decided. "What," he said, "do they dare to meddle with my prerogative? I will show them what I can and what I will do!" Shortly afterwards the boom of cannon announced that he was on his way to the Houses of Parliament. The anti-reformers were frantic. When he arrived at the gilded chamber he found the Lords pushing and hustling one another, and shaking their hands in one another's faces. The scene in the Commons was even more exciting. In brief, but firm words, the king announced his intention of proroguing Parliament with a view to its immediate dissolution. "All is over," whispered the anti-reformers one to another. Members went home hoarse, heated, and exhausted, and one great battle-cry rang throughout the length and breadth of the land, "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill."

The elections took place amid great excitement, and resulted in a complete triumph for the Reform Party. The Bill was again introduced into the House of Commons on the 24th of June, and passed the second reading by a majority of 136.

But the brunt of the battle was only just beginning. It was at once evident that the Bill would have to meet the fiercest opposition in committee. Every borough which was proposed to be disfranchised was fought for, every population return questioned, every point contested. All through the hot months of July and August the contest continued, and honourable members, worn and haggard with night after night of wrangling, pined for rest and fresh air. On the 7th of September the committee reported,

and the Bill passed the final division In the House of Commons by a majority of 109. The announcement was received with tremendous cheering by the crowds which surrounded the House, cheering which ran along the streets, and was caught up again and again. Before daylight the news had spread into the country, and wherever it went it was received with the waving of flags, the ringing of bells, and shouts of joy and triumph.

But the question was now asked, "What will the Lords do with it?"—a question which was soon to be answered. The debate on the second reading in the Lords was opened by Earl Grey, who had voted for reform nearly fifty years before. It extended over five nights, from October 3rd to October 7th, and was listened to by a crowded and brilliant assemblage. In the division the Bill was thrown out by a majority of 41. Twenty-one bishops voted against the Bill. Had they voted on the other side, the Bill would have passed the Lords by a majority of one.

The contest now passed from Parliament into the hands of the people. Instead of asking, "What will the Lords do with it?" men were now boldly putting the question, "What shall we do with the Lords?" Serious riots occurred at Derby, Nottingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, and London. Several peers were insulted in the streets, and Lord Londonderry was struck insensible from his horse by a stone. The great body of the reformers stood firm and calm, and immediately set to work to support the Ministers. On October 31st, a National Political Union was formed in London, with branch associations in the provinces. Monster petitions were sent to the King, praying him to create such a number of peers as would be sufficient to pass the bill, and great reform demonstrations were held in every populous district, Birmingham being the centre of the agitation.

Parliament re-assembled, after a short recess, on the 6th of December, and the Reform Bill was introduced for the third time. The second reading passed by a majority of 162; and again the same weary round of opposition, wrangling, and division after division, was repeated in committee. The discussions were drawn out until nearly the end of March, and the Bill was again sent up to the Lords in April. It was at once evident that a

change had taken place in the temper of the peers. Many of them saw that it would be more dangerous to throw out the Bill than to pass it. The debate extended from the 9th to the 13th of April, and the division was taken at seven o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the House having been crowded all night. For the first time the Bill passed its second reading in the Lords, by a majority of nine. But it was only a change of tactics. When the House met again, on the 7th of May, after the Easter recess, the Government were defeated by a majority of thirty-five on the first division in committee. Then it was found that a most discreditable intrigue had taken place with the object of scotching the bill. Some of the leading anti-reformers had been in constant communication and intercourse with the King. He was now very old; he had no knowledge of statesmanship; the riots at Nottingham and Bristol had frightened him; his wife—who had great influence over him,—his sisters, and some of his children were opposed to the Reform Bill, and were kept in constant alarm by their Conservative friends. They filled the King's mind with fears and apprehensions, and the anti-reformers thought that if they allowed the Bill to pass the second reading, they might damage it in committee, without coming into conflict with the wishes of the King. Immediately the Government had been defeated Earl Grey asked for an adjournment. The next day, on the 8th of May, the Cabinet decided to ask the King to create such a number of peers as would enable them to carry the Bill without material alteration. Earl Grey and Lord Brougham went to Windsor to make this request. It is reported that the King wept, but would not consent. He said that he must consider the wishes of his wife and children. The next day the whole Cabinet resigned, and the King sent for the Duke of Wellington.

On that same day, the 7th of May, on which the Lords had scotched the Bill, one of the greatest of the Reform demonstrations was held at Newhall Hill, Birmingham, a demonstration organised by the United Political Unions. The people streamed from all parts of the Midlands until over 150,000 were present, with 700 banners waving over their heads, and accompanied by 200 bands of music. Everyone felt the gravity of the occasion. Silence was produced by sound of trumpets, and the vast multi-

tude joined in singing the following hymn, then familiar in nearly every cottage in the land:—

> Lo! we answer! See, we come,
>   Quick at Freedom's holy call,
> We come! we come! we come! we come!
>   To do the glorious work of all.
> And hark! we raise from sea to sea
> The sacred watchword, Liberty!
>
> God is our guide! From field, from wave,
>   From plough, from anvil, and from loom
> We come, our country's rights to save,
>   And speak a tyrant faction's doom.
> And hark! we raise from sea to sea
> The sacred watchword, Liberty!
>
> God is our guide! No swords we draw,
>   We kindle not war's battle fires;
> By union, justice, reason, law,
>   We claim the birthright of our sires.
> We raise the watchword, Liberty!
> We will, we will, we will be free!

Towards the close of the meeting a solemn scene was witnessed. "Here," said one of the speakers, Mr. Salt, "I call upon you to repeat, with head uncovered, in the face of Heaven and the God of Justice and Mercy, the following words after me." Every man bared his head, and uttered slowly after the speaker, these words: "With unbroken faith, through every peril and privation, we here devote ourselves and our children to our country's cause."

Meanwhile the Duke of Wellington was taking his measures. He made every preparation for putting down risings, and undertook to quiet the country in ten days. Orders were issued from the Horse Guards for all the officers on furlough to join their regiments. Orders were also sent to the barracks at Birmingham that the Scots Greys should be daily and nightly booted and saddled, and supplied with ball cartridge, ready for use at a moment's notice. On the Sunday following the Newhall Hill

meeting the soldiers were sharpening their swords; not since the battle of Waterloo had the same thing been done. Old soldiers spoke of it in a solemn, quiet way to the young ones.

The people, on their side, were active. As soon as the Ministry resigned, there was such mourning throughout England as had not been known for years. The mail roads were sprinkled over for miles with people on the watch for news from London. Men forsook their business. The bells tolled or were muffled. In many towns black crape was hung over the signs of the King's Head, and busts of the Queen were seen with halters round the neck. The political unions met daily. The National Union declared itself in permanent session, and 1,500 new members entered in one day. Petitions were sent to the Commons, urging them to refuse supplies until the Bill was passed. Monster Reform meetings passed resolutions pledging themselves to pay no taxes until the Bill became law. Arrangements were made for the political unions to march on London, and encamp on Hampstead Heath. There was some talk of seizing the families of the principal Lords and carrying them prisoners into the towns as hostages. On the Saturday night, after the Newhall Hill meeting, the Birmingham leaders went down to London to discuss plans for circumventing the Duke, with the Westminster Reformers. On the Sunday morning the hoardings of London were covered with large placards containing the words, "Run for gold, and stop the Duke." Within three days over one million pounds had been withdrawn from the Bank of England.

For nine days England was without a government. The Duke of Wellington went from door to door amongst his Tory friends trying to form an administration. But the Tories themselves were divided. Some refused to have anything to do with a compromise; others refused to undertake the responsibility of government without a compromise. Then reports got abroad that the soldiers were not to be relied upon. It was known that some of the Scots Greys were members of the Reform Union. Several yeomanry corps had already sent in their resignations, and the police inspectors reported that the police were not to be depended upon to act against the people. On Tuesday, the 15th of May, a few days after the soldiers had been sharpening their swords,

the Duke of Wellington was compelled to announce to the King that all his negotiations had failed. On Thursday, the 17th, the King sent for his old Ministers, an announcement which was received with universal rejoicing. Before the close of the interview the King handed to Lord Brougham the following written permit:—

"The King grants permission to Earl Grey and to his Chancellor, Lord Brougham, to create such a number of peers as will be sufficient to ensure the passing of the Reform Bill.

(Signed) "WILLIAM R.

"Windsor, May 17th, 1832."

There was no necessity, however, to create new peers. After the decision of the King was made known, the Duke and his friends gave up the contest, and, after formal protest, retired from the House. In the first division in committee only thirty-six of the anti-reform peers turned up to vote against the government. The next night the number fell down to fifteen. The measure passed rapidly through Committee by the end of May, and on June 7th, 1832, the first great Reform Bill became the law of the land.

How the reformed Parliament went to work—abolishing slavery throughout British dominions; voting the first grant of £20,000 towards a system of national education; reforming the Poor-Law; appointing the first factory inspectors, and so laying the foundation of much beneficent factory administration and legislation; how the middle classes, having got the franchise for themselves, neglected to grant it to the working classes for thirty-five years more; how reaction followed reform, and led to the dark days of the anti-Corn Law agitation, and to the still darker days which engendered the fierce indignation of the Chartists—all this must be left to be told in future chapters.

III.

FRANCIS PLACE AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION, 1771—1854.

I.

If William Cobbett may be taken as a type of the old English yeoman, unconsciously voicing the protest of the past against the evils of the rising industrialism, Francis Place may be taken as the type of the modern town-politician—keen, dogged, persistent, well-informed; voicing, as every true reformer voices, the protest of the future against the evil and injustice of the present. And yet, Place was something more than a type. Standing head and shoulders above any of the contemporary reformers in political tact and sagacity, in power of organisation, and in attention to detail, he had a greater influence on the legislation of the first half of the century than any other working-man of his time—for though Place, by his unaided efforts, ultimately rose to the ranks of the middle class, he ever remained, by instinct and sympathy, true to the class from which he sprang. His biography, so ably written by Mr. Graham Wallas—and to which I am indebted for most of the information contained in this sketch—is virtually the backstairs history of one side of the politics of the first half of the nineteenth century. Into the intricacies of this backstairs history it is, of course, impossible for me to enter. I can only refer to the more important movements in which Place played a leading part, and advise the reader who desires fuller information to go to Mr. Wallas's excellent book.

Francis Place was born in London on November 3rd, 1771. His child-life was far from happy, his father being little better than a brute. But Francis had the advantage—no small one in those days—of some sort of school life, until he was nearly fourteen. He was then apprenticed to a man named France to learn

the art of leather breeches making. From this time onwards, until the close of his apprenticeship, in 1789, his surroundings were of the most depressing and even degrading nature. In 1790 he met his future wife, Elizabeth Chadd, a circumstance which marked a turning-point in his life. In March, 1791, they were married, he at the age of nineteen, she at seventeen, their joint earnings reaching the sum of about 17s. a week. Leather breeches making was then a decaying industry. His fellow-workmen in the trade decided upon a strike, and Place, though having nothing to do with the initiation of the dispute, soon became one of the chief organisers. The strike failed, and Place and another workman were marked out for punishment—they were never to be employed again by any master breeches maker. During the next eight months he could obtain no employment whatever. "Our sufferings were great indeed," he says. "As long as we had anything which could be pawned, we did not suffer much from actual hunger; but after everything had been pawned 'but what we stood upright in,' we suffered much from actual hunger. When I sometimes looked at my wife in her comfortless, forlorn, and all but ragged condition, I could hardly endure our wretched state, and know not what mischief or crimes it might have driven me to commit, had not the instructions of my good schoolmaster, and my previous reading, enabled me to form something like correct notions, and to hold to them."

This long period of keen suffering burnt itself into Place's memory, and no doubt had its effect in moulding the spirit and temper in which he set himself to his future work. "The hopes of a man who has no other means than those of his own hands to help himself," he says, "are but too often illusory, and in a vast number of cases the disappointments are more than can be steadily met; and men give up in despair, become reckless, and after a life of poverty, end their days prematurely in misery. I have seen a vast many such, who, when the evil day has come upon them, have kept on working steadily but hopelessly, more like horses in a mill, or mere machines, than human beings, their feelings blunted, poor, stultified, moving animals, working on, yet unable to support their families in anything like comfort; frequently wanting the common necessaries of life, yet never giving

up until 'misery has eaten them to the bone,' none knowing, none caring for them; no one to administer a word of comfort, or, if an occasion occurred which might be of service to them, none to rouse them to take advantage of it; all above them in circumstances calumniating them, classing them with the dissolute, the profligate, and the dishonest, from whom the character of the whole of the working people is taken. Yet I have witnessed in this class of persons so despised, so unjustly judged of by their betters as to means, virtues which I have not seen to the same extent among any other description of the people."

During this out-of-work period Place devoted himself to a thorough course of intellectual self-improvement. He read many historical, political, and philosophical works, including those of Hume, Adam Smith, and John Locke. He taught himself the higher branches of arithmetic, and made some progress in algebra and geometry. When work again came, however, all this was put aside, and he and his wife worked sixteen hours a day until they had restored the home and paid their debts.

Place now began to take some interest in contemporary politics. The French Revolution had already filled men's minds with "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." In 1794, he joined the London Corresponding Society, an advanced political organisation in reality, but adopting its peculiar name to avoid collision with the law, which forbade the federation of political bodies. In the same year he was appointed a member of one of several committees to give assistance to Thomas Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall, who had been accused and were about to be tried for high treason. While still a member of the Corresponding Society—which came to an end in 1798—he determined to raise himself into the position of master, or employer of labour, and ultimately took a shop at Charing Cross. Here, for the next five or six years, he devoted himself to his business, gave up every form of public life, and laid the foundation of that modest competency which, in after years, enabled him to devote himself almost exclusively to projects of political and social reform. Even while immersed over head and ears in business, however, he never abandoned the practice of reading and studying two or three hours every night after the business of

the day was closed, "which never happened till half-past nine o'clock." In this way he kept himself acquainted with current politics, and familiarised himself with political history and philosophy, until, in course of time, he had accumulated a considerable library behind his shop, which became the rendezvous of the most famous Radical politicians and political thinkers of the time.

When, some years later, Place returned to active political life he began to cultivate the acquaintance of several leading Whigs, but finding that the Whigs of that time were little or no better than the Tories, he assisted in the formation of an independent Radical party, with the aim of organising the then popular constituency of Westminster in the Radical interest. Mainly owing to Place's power of organisation, Westminster was dominated by Radical and reform influences for nearly a quarter of a century before the great Reform Bill. At election times he would neglect his business for weeks together, working in the committee-rooms from early morning until midnight.

A more interesting phase of Place's life, however, was his connection and friendship with Jeremy Bentham. Bentham, and the school which he founded, had a great influence on English, and, indeed, European philosophical and political thought—an influence which cannot possibly be measured. In 1812, James Mill introduced Place to Bentham, but it was not until 1816 that any real intimacy began. In 1817, Place having made a considerable fortune, went to stay with Bentham at his and Mill's residence at Ford Abbey, in Devonshire. Here, at the age of forty-five, he began a course of educational discipline at which a public school boy would have revolted. Mr. Wallas, his biographer, quotes as follows from Place's letters to his wife, describing his life at this period:—"I have been pacing the walks from ten to two—four hours' hard work at Latin. I use all the care and diligence I possess or can command at this very, very difficult study; but my master gives me a good character, and says I shall certainly accomplish my purpose. Nouns substantive and adjectives have been gone through, not slightly, but fully; pronouns as much as they are said to be useful; the verb *esse-sum* has been subdued; and I am loving away in all possible moods and tenses with *amare*. Every day I am obliged to decline a number of nouns and

adjectives chosen at random by others, and to say all I have gone through. If I am not at school, no one ever was." And again: "All our days are alike, so an account of one may do for all. Mill is up between five and six; he and John (Stuart Mill, his son, then eleven years of age) compare his proofs (of the 'History of India'), John reading the copy and his father the proof. Wilhelmina and Clara are in the saloon before seven, and as soon as the proofs are done with, John gets to the further end of the room to teach his sisters. When this has been done, and part of the time while it is doing, he learns geometry; this continues to nine o'clock, when breakfast is ready. Mr. Bentham rises soon after seven, and about eight gets to his employment. I rise at six and go to work; at nine, breakfast in the parlour. Breakfast ended, Mill hears Wilhelmina and Clara, and then John. Lessons are heard under a broad balcony, walking from end to end. All the lessons are performed aloud, and occupy fully three hours, say till one o'clock. From nine to twelve Mr. Bentham continues working; from twelve to one he performs upon an organ in the saloon. From breakfast-time to one o'clock I am occupied in learning Latin; this is also done aloud in the walks, and already I have conquered the substantives and adjectives. During this period Colls (Bentham's amanuensis) gets a lesson of Latin from Mill, and of French from me. At one we all three walk in the lanes and fields for an hour. At two all go to work again till dinner, at six. After dinner, Mill and I take a sharp walk for two hours, say, till a quarter-past eight, then one of us alternately walks with Mr. Bentham for an hour; then comes tea, at which we read the periodical publications; and eleven o'clock comes but too soon, and we all go to bed."

Soon after this Place helped Mill with the mechanical parts of the "History of India," and immediately after its publication in 1818, he, along with Ricardo and Hume, left no stone unturned to secure Mill an appointment as assistant-examiner in the East India House, at a salary of £800 a year. From this time onward Place's relationship with Bentham became more constant and intimate. They stood to each other as master and disciple, but their influence was reciprocal, Bentham helping Place in the region of philosophy and political theory, Place helping Bentham in the

region of the practical application of theories. After Bentham's death, in 1832, Place wrote of him as "my twenty years' friend, my good master, from whom I learned I know not how much, as it spread in so many directions. He was my constant, excellent, and venerable preceptor, of whom I think every day of my life, whose death I continually lament, whose memory I revere, and whose absence I deplore."

From this brief résumé of Place's early career, the reader will perceive how thoroughly he had qualified himself for the position of a patient, tactful, laborious, and indefatigable reformer. The hard struggles of his youth and early manhood, his experiences as a trade union organiser, his work in connection with the Westminster elections, his long course of thorough self-education, his insight into the foibles and weaknesses of human nature, attained through the medium of his business—the practical application of the "philosophy of clothes"—and, lastly, his thorough grounding in politics, economics, and utilitarian philosophy by his intimacy with Bentham and the Benthamite school—all these things helped to raise him, in tact, in power of organisation, in knowledge, and in statesmanship, miles and miles above the popular reformers of the day. While they were haranguing crowds with empty rhetoric, he was quietly turning elections and influencing legislators by organisation, methodical accumulation of facts, and well-directed knowledge. So excellent in political wisdom and so sound in judgment does he nearly always show himself, that an abstract of his political reflections might well be published to-day as a handy guide to latter-day reformers. Mr. Wallas quotes one of Place's contemporaries (Richard Carlile) as writing of him thus.: "The writer of this, though by circumstances separated from the immediate acquaintance of Mr. Place for several years past, can, by the experience of eighteen and the well-founded report of forty years, pronounce him a prodigy of useful, resolute, consistent, political exertion, and indefatigable labour, which evidently continues unabated to this day. . . Francis Place, by his assistant labours and advice given to members of the House of Commons, has produced more effect in that House than any man who was ever a member." Another writer quoted by Mr. Wallas, facetiously delivers himself thus in the "European

Magazine": "Candidly speaking, and without any amplification, we scarcely know of a thing that Mr. Place has not done, meaning, of course, in the way of promoting civil, religious, and other kind of liberty. He is, adopting the Oriental similitude, the cow's horn upon which stands the tortoise, upon which stand the worlds in all their number and variety. The electors of Westminster depend upon Mr. Place, not only in the choice of the men whom they entrust as their representatives, but in the very subjects in which those men deal. When it is said that Sir Francis Burdett or John C. Hobhouse made a proposition or a speech, thus or thus, there is a misnomer in the assertion, for the proposition or the speech belongs in justice to Mr. Place, and in all that demonstration of frantic freedom, that tumultuous tide of popularity which they propel, he is the influential luminary, the moon which stirs up the waters. . . Nor is it in the senate house alone that the political tact and talents of this illustrious man are exerted in benefiting the world. All those schemes which are now in progress for rendering Westminster the fountain of philosophy and civilisation, as well as of liberty, can have originated with none other than Mr. Place. It is true that Mr. Jeremy Bentham is his senior by a year or two, but still we see no reason why Jeremy should not be the pupil, and Mr. Place the instructor; and we are quite sure that of the other philosophers of Queen's-square (Bentham's place of residence), he is the manufacturer. Now, the singular part of the business is, that the others should get all the merit. Those codes, catechisms, and constitutions, which, if the world had but read them, would have done it so much good, all have his imprint upon them, or rather, perhaps, we should say, his spirit in them. The government of Mill, the political economy of M'Culloch, the speeches of Dr. Borthwick Gilchrist, the lectures of Dr. Birkbeck, the poetry of Bowring—all have a smack of Place in them."

The centre and headquarters of all this political, social, industrial, and educational propaganda was, of course, Place's library at the back of his shop at Charing Cross. Here, surrounded by books, pamphlets, journals, newspaper cuttings, Parliamentary reports, and memoranda of all kinds, and on nearly every conceivable subject which had to do with the elevation of humanity,

all arranged in perfect order, Place ruled his world. He consistently refused to meet people, however important they might be, at their homes. His independent spirit would not brook inequality of social intercourse. "My library," he says, "was a sort of gossiping shop for such persons as were in any way engaged in public matters having the benefit of the people for their object. No one who knew me would hesitate to consult with me on any subject on which I could either give or procure information." And again: "When I lived at Charing Cross my library was frequented very much in the manner of a common coffee-house room. It was open to a considerable number of persons, many of them members of Parliament." In this library, also, was collected a vast mass of economic, political, and historical material, from which Place might draw for the purpose of coaching his political pupils, and which, says Mr. Wallas, is now collected in seventy volumes of "Place Manuscripts" in the British Museum. One of the most efficient and eminent of Place's pupils was the celebrated Radical, Joseph Hume. The two, for a long time after Place had disciplined and educated Hume to his work, acted almost like partners in a political business, and the efficiency and influence of the latter in the House of Commons was almost wholly due to Place's continuous coaching. Other members, too, were in continual communication and intercourse with Place, and were indebted largely to him both for their election to the House and the work they accomplished there. What fruit this great influence, and quiet, and almost unknown, work bore, we are now in a position to estimate.

II.

It is difficult to enumerate the actual and palpable results of Place's activity. He always preferred to work in the background, leaving others to take the merit and the praise. In addition to the assistance he rendered to many of the trade unions of the time—both in organisation and in settling industrial disputes, the help and information he gave to members and committees in Parliament, the organisation of the Westminster elections, and other matters—must be mentioned his exertions in the cause of

education. As a member of the "British and Foreign School Society," and other educational organisations, he worked energetically to promote the formation of both elementary and higher schools. In 1823 he helped to found the London Mechanics' Institute, devoting, for some weeks, "the whole of his time from morning to night," to the work of interviewing trade union officials, drafting rules and circulars, and collecting subscriptions. The Institute was opened in 1824, and the first set of lectures was attended by some eight or nine hundred workingmen each night.

But the most palpable and definite result of Place's power of organisation was the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824-25—a piece of statesmanship which well illustrates the peculiar nature of his genius. The Combination Laws were a series of statutes which had been passed in the eighteenth century against combinations of workmen in particular trades. As early as 1720 the master tailors complained to Parliament that "the journeymen tailors in and about the cities of London and Westminster, to the number of 7,000 and upwards, have lately entered into a combination to raise their wages and leave off working an hour sooner than they used to do; and for the better carrying on their design, have subscribed their respective names in books prepared for that purpose . . . and collect several considerable sums of money to defend any prosecutions against them." [1] Parliament then passed an Act against either giving or taking more than a maximum wage, and prohibiting combination. The same sort of thing occurred in other trades. In 1741 it was complained against the wool-combers that "they had formed themselves into a sort of corporation," by which they "pretend" to take care of the sick or out of work, by means of weekly subscriptions, and when "they became a little formidable, they gave laws to their masters, as also to themselves." Parliament obligingly interfered, and by 1760 quite a series of measures had been enacted with the object of regulating wages and preventing combination, until, in 1799, a general Act was passed forbidding combination in any trade whatever.

[1] "The History of Trade Unionism." By Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Chapter II.

The practical effect of this policy was to subject workmen to the most grinding tyranny of employers, magistrates, judges and the law. A trade unionist became an outcast of society. Refusal to work at reduced wages meant liability to imprisonment, or to impressment in the army or the navy. "Justice," says Place, "was entirely out of the question; the working-men could seldom obtain a hearing before a magistrate—never without impatience and insult, and never could they calculate on even an approximation to a rational conclusion . . . Could an accurate account be given of proceedings, of hearings before magistrates, trials at sessions and in the Court of King's Bench, the gross injustice, the foul invectives, and terrible punishments inflicted, would not, after a few years have passed away, be credited on any but the best evidence." And though the Acts against combination were supposed to apply to masters as well as to men, "during the whole period of repression, whilst thousands of journeymen suffered for the crime of combination, there is absolutely no case on record in which an employer was punished for the same offence." [1]

It was to remedy this state of things that Place, at first almost single-handed, devoted some of the best years of his life. He had himself been a journeyman, and he knew, by painful experience, the sufferings which working people have often to endure. "When I became a master," he says, "I did not forget that I had been a journeyman, and I acted accordingly. Never in my life did I call any man who worked for me out of his name. I always paid the highest rate of wages, and whenever the men struck for an increase of wages, I never suffered them to leave me, but at all the three strikes which occurred whilst I remained in business, I gave the advance as soon as it was asked, though these advances raised the men's wages from a guinea and ninepence a week to six-and-thirty shillings."

In 1810, by evidence which he gave before a committee of the House of Commons, Place had succeeded in defeating a proposal to make more stringent the law forbidding combinations in the

[1] "The History of Trade Unionism." By Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Chapter II.

tailoring trade, and in 1814, with the great mass of public opinion against him, the workmen themselves stating that a movement against the laws would be hopeless, he set himself seriously to work to procure the repeal of the laws. He wrote numerous letters to trade societies, and articles for daily and weekly newspapers in London and the provinces, and accumulated a mass of information relative to the trade disputes which were continually occurring. For a long time no impression appeared to have been made, but Place's labours were by no means thrown away. In 1818, a small weekly newspaper called the "Gorgon" was started by a Mr. Wade, a wool-comber. To this Place contributed, and supplied the editor with much material with reference to the working and effects of the obnoxious laws. Copies of this publication were judiciously distributed amongst trade societies, manufacturers, newspaper editors, and members of Parliament. The leaven now began to work. Joseph Hume began to take a deeper interest in the question. There was an evident reluctance in some places to enforce the laws against workmen. Several members of Parliament became convinced that the laws were mischievous. In 1819 Place had induced many workmen to start "penny-a-week societies," for the purpose of defraying the expenses of sending delegates to London to give evidence before a Parliamentary Committee on the wages of labour. Nothing was done in Parliament, however, until 1822, when Hume announced that he intended to bring in a bill to repeal the obnoxious laws. The time was not yet ripe for effective action, and Place induced Hume to hold his hand, supplying him, at the same time with papers and MSS. on the subject. These were afterwards passed on to M'Culloch, then editor of the "Scotsman," who made use of them both in that paper, and in an article which he wrote for the "Edinburgh Review," which had a powerful effect on many members in the House. In 1824 so many members had consented to vote for the repeal of the laws that Huskisson, then President of the Board of Trade, agreed not to oppose the appointment of a Select Committee on the subject. When Hume proposed his motion, however, Huskisson drew back, and succeeded in persuading him to limit the scope of the committee's inquiries to the emigration of artisans and the exportation of

machinery. Place was out-manœuvred. All his labour seemed likely to go for nothing. He wrote two letters to Hume. One, diplomatic, to be shown to Huskisson. The other, plain, straightforward, and private, for Hume himself, stating clearly the state of the case, showing how most of the intelligent workmen in the country were depending on Hume's efforts, and pleading for the carrying out of the previous understanding. The letters had the desired effect. Hume obtained his committee on Feb. 12th, 1824.

But the Parliamentary work had only begun. Hume, who acted as chairman, knew comparatively little of the details of the subject, and had to depend wholly on Place. The latter offered to attend him in committee as his assistant, but the committee would not allow this. A circular letter was sent out to the mayors of the chief towns and to the principal manufacturers, announcing the appointment of the committee, and inviting evidence. This was re-printed in nearly all the newspapers, and both employers and workmen sent up deputations to give evidence. The workmen naturally made their way to Place, who examined them, took down particulars of their cases, and prepared briefs for Hume. The proceedings of the committee were printed from day to day, a copy being sent by Hume to Place, who went through them, indexed them, annotated them where necessary, and then returned them to Hume, who had thus a fairly complete view of the case always before him. It was the object of both Place and Hume to get through the work of the committee and the ensuing bills with as little discussion as possible, in order to avoid the hostility of the manufacturing interest. To this end, in place of the usual report at the conclusion of the committee's work, a series of resolutions were drawn up, which served the purpose both of minimising discussion and smoothing the way for the progress of the bills through the House. The resolutions were passed, the bills drawn in as few words as possible, members were button-holed and induced to refrain from making long speeches, and in a short space of time three bills were passed almost without comment either within or without the House. The first was "An Act to repeal the laws relating to the combinations of workmen"; the second, "An Act to consolidate and amend the laws relative to the arbitration

of disputes between masters and workmen"; the third, "An Act to repeal the laws relative to artisans going abroad."

No sooner were the bills passed than the workmen in many trades began to form unions and to agitate for an increase of wages. A wave of commercial prosperity favoured their purpose, and soon masters and men throughout a great part of the country were in the thick of industrial conflict. The employers were up in arms. Ministers became alarmed, and Hume and Place actually wrote to many of the leaders of the workmen throughout the country, appealing to them to moderate their demands, as they were endangering the existence of the new laws, and so paving the way for the re-enactment of the old ones. The great shipbuilders were especially busy, and waited upon Huskisson with the object of persuading him to repeal the new laws, whilst the "Times" attacked the workmen with especial bitterness. Huskisson was so far influenced that in the following session he moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the working of the Act relating to combinations passed in the previous session. He condemned the Act in strong terms, declared that it encouraged the commission of crimes, and gave an alarming account of the state of the country consequent on the passing of the Act.

This right-about-face on the part of Huskisson came as a great blow to the reformers. The new committee was appointed. Here was the whole intricate business to go through once more in the face of a hostile chairman and a picked committee, for Huskisson and Peel had been careful to select members whom they knew to be inclined to their own views and opposed to those of the men. But they dared not keep Hume off the committee, and this fact saved the situation. Huskisson had intended to have the inquiry over in a few days, but Place and Hume determined otherwise. They made effective use of the Easter holidays, which occurred just before the sittings of the committee, and wrote to many of the trade societies throughout the country, urging them to send delegates to give evidence before the new committee. Place also wrote a pamphlet, entitled, "Observations on Mr. Huskisson's Speech, &c." of which two thousand copies were carefully distributed, and had considerable

effect. "My mind was fully made up," says Place; "I laid every other matter and thing aside; opened my house to the workmen; did everything I could; and saw everybody who was at all likely either to be made useful, or prevented being mischievous. Nothing that could be done by me, by Mr. Hume, by the trades committee, or by others, was omitted to be done."

The committee met secretly, and took great pains to prevent their proceedings being made known. Here, again, Hume baulked their intention. He kept Place informed of all that passed, and the latter prepared the men for reply. But the committee, while accepting evidence against the men from any employer who cared to tender it, refused to hear rebutting evidence from the workmen. It was with the utmost difficulty that Hume induced them to hear counter-evidence from the men who had been accused by name, and even many of these were refused a hearing. The masters were allowed to consult whomsoever they pleased; to enter the committee-room when they pleased, and give and receive what instructions and advice were deemed necessary. But the workmen were to have no assistance; they were shut out from the committee-room, and those who were allowed to enter were cross-questioned and bullied by the members of a hostile committee. Place was threatened with imprisonment for daring to "tamper" with the witnesses.

Notwithstanding all these precautions, however, the intentions of Huskisson and Peel were completely defeated. After the committee had reported, a bill was prepared which the masters, and the shipbuilders in particular, tried to make as coercive as possible, while Hume strove to modify the measure. He, and Burdett, and Hobhouse, were attacked by the whole Ministerial bench with a vehemence which Place describes as shameless, disgraceful, and insulting. Place himself was alluded to with "rancorous hostility." But all to no purpose. The reformers sturdily stood their ground, and, indirectly aided by one or two able lawyers in the House, succeeded in passing the measure in a form which differed little from the Act of the previous year. The penalties for intimidation were increased, but the laws which forbade combinations of workmen for the purpose of altering wages and hours of labour were entirely swept away.

The next great movement in which Place took a pretty considerable part was the struggle over the great Reform Bill of 1832. As I have already given the story of that struggle, I need not enter into its details again. It is interesting to know, however, that Place was rendering much more effective help towards the passing of the bill than were platform orators. He had the ear of several influential members in the House, and knew the dangers to which the bill was exposed by the action of the weak-kneed reformers on the one hand and the extremists, who were insisting on Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, on the other. Though not averse to these measures, Place knew that it was not the time to insist upon them, and it required all his tact to prevent the London movement being captured by the extremists, and the more influential promoters of the bill from being influenced by Tory compromisers. It was undoubtedly Place's vigour and decision which helped to prevent the latter calamity, by the organisation of a deputation, which waited upon Earl Grey at a quarter to eleven at night to protest against the dropping of the old bill and the preparation of a new one. Even Earl Grey was not by any means sound on the point, and he voted in the Cabinet for a compromise. During the whole of the campaign Place was unceasingly active, organising and strengthening the National Political Union, conferring with the provincial leaders, and concerting measures with them with a view to a national rising. His library was virtually the headquarters of the movement in London. It was his hand which drafted the celebrated placard, "To stop the Duke, go for gold," which had no little effect in defeating the anti-reform efforts of the Duke of Wellington. At a still later stage he wrote a letter to Sir John Cam Hobhouse, with a view to its being placed before Ministers, giving details of the then condition of things, and describing the determination of the reformers. "No such letter," says his biographer, "was ever before written by the organiser of a rising to a War Minister, for the purpose of its being laid before the Executive Government." Place's object was so to influence the minds of Ministers as to cause them to adhere to their determination to insist on the creation of such a number of peers as would ensure the passing of the bill, and also to prevent, by any means

possible, the formation of an administration by the Duke of Wellington, which would have meant civil war. As the reader knows, these objects were accomplished, and the bill passed.

Immediately after the passing of the Reform Bill, Place turned his attention to other reforms, notably to the necessity for shorter Parliaments, the ballot, the abolition of the house and window taxes, and the newspaper stamp duty. He saw that the Reform Bill, in itself, was "of little value, but as a commencement of the breaking up of the old rotten system, it is invaluable." But in order to carry on his policy of reform, Place found that he must again part company with the Whigs. His opinion of them was never a very high one, and in the course of the next few years, in consequence, mainly, of their detestable policy regarding the "taxes on knowledge," Place became one of their most furious opponents. About this time (1833) his private means became considerably reduced, owing to the incompetence of his solicitor, and he left the house at Charing Cross and took a smaller residence in Brompton-square—a fact which considerably affected his political activities, Brompton-square being not so easy of access from the House of Commons. From 1834 to 1836 he did useful work in connection with the Poor-Law Commission and the new Poor Law—by which he certainly did not increase his popularity—and also in connection with the Municipal Corporations Commission, and the Municipal Reform Bill of 1835—a measure of almost equal importance to the Reform Bill of 1832. On the question of the newspaper stamp duty, he could produce no effect on Ministers. Even Hume flagged, and Place expressed his disgust in strong denunciatory language, which was truly merited by the Government. James Watson, Henry Hetherington, John Cleave, and many others suffered repeatedly for selling unstamped newspapers, and the policy of the Government increased in severity after the passing of the Reform Bill. In 1836, however, the fourpenny stamp was reduced to a penny, and the latter was finally abolished in 1855.

Place, out of harmony with the Whigs and even the Parliamentary Radicals, now threw himself into the working-class movement, which led to the Chartist agitation. He, along with William Lovett and a few others, drew up the "People's Charter," with its famous

six points—universal suffrage, the ballot, payment of members, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts, and the abolition of the property qualification for Parliament. But the Chartist agitation was not the sort of movement which could command Place's whole-hearted sympathy. It was conducted too violently and tactlessly for one who was a born tactician. Place knew perfectly well, what the Chartists themselves would never admit, that the movement could not possibly be immediately successful, but he gave it what assistance he could in the hope that it would lead to the formation of a strong democratic party. The story of the Chartist agitation must, however, be told in a separate chapter.

In 1839, Place assisted in the movement for the establishment of the penny postage scheme, and in 1840 began to organise London on behalf of the Anti-Corn Law League, often working from early morning to midnight. But the "old firebrand," as one of his fellow-reformers called him, was now seventy years of age, and his health had begun to give way. In November 1841, he attended a meeting of the council of the Anti-Corn Law League in Manchester, caught cold on the return journey, and was laid up for some time with a serious illness. Again, in 1844, he was attacked with paralysis. He slowly recovered, however, from both illnesses, and attended the weekly meetings of the League until the repeal of the Corn Laws. Almost to the last he was able to take an interest in public affairs, and wrote in 1850 that, "thanks to former reasonings, I have neither lost cheerfulness, nor even been unhappy, during twenty-four consecutive hours." On the morning of the first of January, 1854, he was found to have died suddenly during the night.

Never, perhaps, was there a more disinterested reformer in a field where self-seeking and vulgar ambitions so often take the sweetness out of public service. So long as good was likely to be attained, he never thought of himself, but was quite content to allow others to enjoy the applause and reap the reward. Were our modern democratic movements gifted with more men of the like spirit—so self-forgetful, and yet, at the same time, so cautious, so thorough, so able in council, so fertile in resource, and so tactful in fight—democracy would indeed have left its leading-strings behind it, and would enter upon those conquests in political and social development which so many of us are working and waiting to see.

IV.

ELIZABETH FRY AND PRISON REFORM, 1780—1845.

A GREATER contrast could hardly be presented between the life and labours of two individuals than that between William Cobbett, or Francis Place, and Elizabeth Fry. The two former bring before us some of the noblest elements of human nature—the struggle against oppression, the desire for freedom, the aspiration for a juster order, the binding together of men in a great and noble cause; the latter takes us into the lowest dens of infamy and vice, and presents to our saddened hearts the spectacle of some of the highest attributes of human nature trembling towards their ruin. Elizabeth Fry has too often been represented by goody-goody people as a sort of saint whose virtues the criminal classes merely served to bring into activity and relief, but we shall see that she, too, takes her place, along with Cobbett, Place, and other political and social reformers, in the necessary work of the social reconstruction of England. The work of Cobbett and Place lay amongst the honest toilers—the peasantry and the artisans. Elizabeth Fry's lay amongst the vicious, the fallen, and the outcast. But the work of the elevation of human nature knows no bounds, and certainly no distinction of class.

Before one can appreciate the nature of the work which Elizabeth Fry undertook, it is necessary to know something of the people and the times in which she lived. There are some strangely-constituted people still living, who sigh for what they call the "good old days," but I fancy that if they could only have a short experience of what the "good old days" really were, they would soon be sighing for the better days in which we are now living, and for the still better days that are to come. We have already seen something of what our grandfathers and great-grandfathers had to endure in the way of political tyranny

and corrupt government, and in future chapters I shall have something to say about the industrial and social evils to which they had to submit. At present I can only briefly indicate the moral condition of England towards the close of the last, and the beginning of the present, century. Let us take gambling and drinking, for example. It is sometimes said that gambling is on the increase. In proportion to population, I think that is doubtful, though it is difficult to judge. In the last century the Government itself supported and authorised the practice by the organisation of State lotteries. Little more than a hundred years ago the Government reaped as much as £260,000 a year by the traffic. Lottery tickets were given away at many of the shops with the articles sold, just as "presents" are now given by unscrupulous shopkeepers. Dice and the wheel of fortune, by which the youth of the time might try their chance, were kept at the fruit stalls in the streets. Women gambled almost as much as men, and while the master and mistress were betting in the drawing-room, the servants were gambling with cards in the kitchen. As to drinking, the vice was undoubtedly far more widespread than it is to-day. A century ago, to drink, and drink heavily, was considered one of the accomplishments of a gentleman, and the examples set by the upper classes demoralised all sections of society. Even the clergy were tainted with the vice. Beer was sold from stalls and wheel-barrows in the streets, just as fruit is sold now. Drinking-houses were far more numerous than now in proportion to population, and it is recorded of one enterprising publican in Southwark that he invited custom by placing on his signboard what he thought to be the following tempting notice:—

Drunk for 1d.
Dead drunk for 2d.
Clean straw for nothing.

A general coarseness of manners prevailed amongst all classes alike. Cock-fighting, dog-fighting, rabbit-coursing, and other degrading sports were the pastime even of the gentry, and the working classes were not slow to follow the example of their so-called superiors. "Large numbers of working people," say Messrs. J. M.

Ludlow and Lloyd Jones, in their "Progress of the Working Classes," "attended fairs and wakes, at the latter of which jumping in sacks, climbing greased poles, grinning through horse-collars for tobacco, hunting pigs with soaped tails, were the choicest diversions... An almost general unchastity prevailed... But drink was the mainspring of enjoyment. When Saturday evening came, indulgences began which continued till Sunday evening. Fiddles were to be heard on all sides, and limp-looking men and palefaced women thronged the public-houses, and reeled and jigged till they were turned, drunk and riotous, into the streets at most unreasonable hours. On the Sunday morning the public-houses were again thronged, that the thirst following the indulgence of the night might be quenched."

With the morality of society at such a low ebb, it is difficult to conceive nowadays the depths of vice and degradation to which the criminal classes must have sunk. The state of the prison population of the last century and the beginning of this, it is impossible to describe. A generation before Elizabeth Fry took up the work, John Howard had done his best to lay bare the horrible state of many of the European, as well as English prisons. Howard's labours were much more extensive and far-reaching than those of Mrs. Fry, and they paved the way for reform, both in the administration of the law and the treatment of criminals. He spent the great part of a long life in visiting some of the foulest dens in all parts of Europe, and his work formed the basis of the reconstructive labours of many who came after him. But, though something was done to mitigate the worst horrors, society was not then ready for the reform of the criminal law and the more humane and sensible treatment of offenders, and many of the evils which Howard exposed were still in existence when Elizabeth Fry took up her self-appointed work. The treatment and reform of criminals is now recognised as a most important branch of sociological science. The existence of a criminal class is really a disease in the body politic which only wise remedies, carefully and patiently applied, can alleviate and extirpate. A hundred years ago the public mind was in a state of chaos on the subject. While philanthropists and thinkers like Howard, Bentham, Eden, and Romilly were preparing the nation

for a more scientific system of criminal law, and a more humane application of its rules and principles, the executive and administrative classes—officialdom, in short—were pursuing a directly antagonistic policy. One of the judges—Judge Heath—laid down his principles in no half-hearted fashion. "If you imprison at home," he said, "the criminal is soon thrown back upon you hardened in guilt. If you transport, you corrupt infant societies, and sow the seeds of atrocious crimes over the habitable globe. There is no regenerating a felon in this life. And, for his own sake, as well as for the sake of society, I think it better to hang." [1] And so society hanged, for offences great and small alike. By an Act of George II., commonly called the Black Act, it was made a capital offence to wound, steal, or destroy any red or fallow deer in any park or forest, to unlawfully kill, maim, or wound any cattle, or to cut down or otherwise destroy any trees planted for profit, ornament, or shelter. A later law made it a capital offence to steal or kill any sheep or cattle, and by another, forgery, smuggling, coining, and even stealing or shoplifting of goods to the value of 5s., might be, and often were, visited by the penalty of death. As late as 1816, a child of ten years of age lay under sentence of death in Newgate for the latter offence, and in the same year the House of Lords rejected a measure of Sir Samuel Romilly's, which had for its object the repeal of these barbarous enactments. George Cruikshank, the celebrated caricaturist, tells how, passing Newgate Gaol in 1818, he saw several persons suspended from the gibbet, two of these being women who had been executed for passing forged one-pound notes. Determined to do what he could to stop such terrible punishments, he produced a mock representation of one-pound notes, bearing on its face the picture of a huge gallows with several criminals, men and women, dangling from it, dead. The circulation of the caricature created a great sensation, and did much to reform and elevate public opinion on the subject. Mrs. Fry also records, amongst others, the case of a woman named Harriet Skelton, who had been led by her husband into passing

[1] Quoted by Hepworth Dixon in his work on "John Howard and the Prison World of Europe."

forged notes. Her case excited the strongest compassion. Mrs. Fry exerted herself strenuously on behalf of the unfortunate woman, waited upon the bank directors and the Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth—a man of the old blood and iron school—and prevailed upon the Duke of Gloucester to intervene. But all to no purpose—the law took its course, and the woman was hanged. It is hard to believe that such things occurred in England only eighty years ago, and that the same punishment was meted out for the paltry offences of shop-lifting, rick-burning, and sheep-stealing as for the most brutal assaults and murders. Yet when, in 1810, Sir Samuel Romilly prevailed upon the House of Commons to pass a Bill abolishing the penalty of death for shop-lifting, the House of Lords rejected the Bill.

This, then, was the state of things which Elizabeth Fry set herself to mitigate and reform. She was the daughter of John and Catherine Gurney, and was born at Norwich on the 21st of May, 1780. The Gurneys had been members of the Society of Friends from the time of its foundation by George Fox. The Gurney family, however, seem to have belonged to the broader section of the Friends. They abjured the strict garb of their co-religionists, mingled in the social and musical pleasures of Norwich, and taught their children music and dancing. Elizabeth speaks of herself, as a child, as obstinate and contradictious in spirit, and as a girl, as having "the greatest fear of religion in case she should be enthusiastic." Judging from her journal, however, there was evidently a serious bent in her character even at this early period, for she writes of herself thus:—"I am seventeen to-day. Am I a happier or a better creature than I was this day twelvemonths? I know I am happier; I think I am better. I hope I shall be happier this day year than I am now. I hope to be quite an altered person; to have more knowledge; to have my mind in greater order; and my heart, too, that wants to be put in order quite as much, if not more, than any part of me... I have not tried to improve myself. I have given way to my passions, and let them have command over me. I have known my faults, and not corrected them, and now I am determined I will once more try with redoubled ardour to overcome my wicked inclinations. I must not flirt, I must not be out of temper with the children; I must

not contradict without a cause; I must not allow myself to be angry; I must not exaggerate, which I am inclined to do; I must not give way to luxury; I must not be idle in mind; I must try to give way to every good feeling, and overcome every bad... I have lately been too satirical, so as to hurt sometimes; remember, it is always a fault to hurt others."

Shortly after this time, however, when Miss Gurney was eighteen years of age, a travelling preacher in connection with the Friends, named William Savery, visited Norwich. His preaching seems to have caused a new starting-point in her life. She, who had hitherto been careless in her attendance and attention at meeting, was visibly affected by the quiet yet earnest preaching of William Savery. "From that day," says her sister, "her love of the world and of pleasure seemed gone." Her father took her on a visit to London, but neither theatre-going nor amusements seemed to revive a desire even for the slight modicum of pleasure in which she had previously indulged. She resolved to adopt the strict practices of the Friends, donned the plain costume which was then common amongst them, spent her leisure in philanthropic work, and opened a school for the benefit of the poor children of Norwich.

At the age of twenty, Miss Gurney married Mr. Joseph Fry, of London, and there continued her work amongst the poor. One cold winter's day she was accosted by a woman with a half-naked child in her arms, suffering from whooping cough. Mrs. Fry offered to accompany her to her home, but this the woman tried to evade. Mrs. Fry succeeded in following her, however, and on arriving at the house, found a number of children in various stages of disease, wretchedness, and neglect. The next day she sent her own medical attendant to the house, but the baby-farmer, with all her children, had disappeared.

I have not space to recount one-half Mrs. Fry's labours amongst the poor wherever she happened to reside. At the age of thirty-one she was acknowledged as a minister by the Society of Friends, and frequently conducted religious services. Her journal seems to breathe that atmosphere of piety, charity, humility, and devotion, by which the Friends have done so much to sweeten and purify the religious life of England.

It was in 1813 that Mrs. Fry first visited a prison with the object of ministering to those who were confined there. Newgate, the prison to which she first went, needed some such visitant. At that time all the female prisoners, to the number of three hundred, tried and untried, young and old, misdemeanants of all classes of offence from begging to murder, were crowded into four compartments—two wards and two cells. Here they lived, cooked, washed, and slept on boards. To those who had money, liquor was supplied inside the prison. Some were miserably poor and insufficiently clad. Others had their children with them. The brawling, and fighting, and lawlessness prevailing led onlookers to describe the place as a "hell upon earth." Into this den, with another lady Friend, Mrs. Fry penetrated. Her first care was to provide clothing for those who needed it. Then she seems to have come to the conclusion that her task was a hopeless one, for three years passed away before she took any further active steps. Then she began work in earnest. "She worked a miracle," says one writer, "in an incredibly short space of time. The ward into which she penetrated was like a den of wild beasts; it was filled with women unsexed, fighting, swearing, dancing, gaming, yelling, and justly deserved its name as 'a hell above ground.' Within a month it was transformed, and presented, says an eye-witness, a scene where stillness and propriety reigned. The wild beasts were tamed."

Her first care, after providing necessary clothing for the inmates, was to start a school for the children inside the prison. She got the women to appoint a school-mistress from amongst themselves. Then a ladies' association was started, consisting at first of eleven Quakeresses and the wife of a clergyman. Their object was to provide for the clothing, instruction, and employment of the women; to introduce them to a knowledge of the Scriptures, and to form in them, as much as possible, those habits of sobriety, order, and industry which may render them docile and peaceable whilst in prison, and respectable when they leave it. Rules were then drawn up by which the prisoners were asked to abide. These were mainly in the direction of the promotion of order, good conduct, and useful occupation. A matron was appointed; the prisoners were divided into

classes, with a monitor for each class; cleanliness was insisted upon, and material was found for the women by which all might employ their time in useful occupation. It speaks volumes for the influence of Mrs. Fry and her co-workers that they were able to accomplish these things by appealing to the self-respect and relying upon the voluntary help of the prisoners themselves.

Under the influence of Mrs. Fry and the ladies' committee, the women's section soon became, comparatively speaking, a model prison. The attention of gaol committees, the sheriffs, and the city authorities was called to the work, and a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to investigate and report upon the condition of the London prisons. Mrs. Fry gave evidence before the committee, and reported that in the ten months in which she had been at work the female prisoners at Newgate had made nearly twenty thousand articles of wearing apparel, their conduct had much improved, rules were seldom broken, and what had once been a riotous den, unfit for the entry of civilised human beings, had been converted into a place of industry, quiet, and order.

Mrs. Fry soon became one of the celebrities of the hour, patronised by philanthropists, statesmen, and even royalty itself. But the devout and humble-minded Quakeress was not the kind of woman to have her head turned by honours and celebrity. She extended the field of her labours, and addressed herself to the better treatment and reformation of the female convicts who were periodically shipped, chained and ironed like cattle, to the convict settlements of Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, where they were put ashore without so much as a hut in which they might be received or take refuge. Mrs. Fry again brought about a more humane treatment of the criminals, and furnished them with materials for work by which they might earn something to provide food and lodging on reaching their destination. In 1818, she visited many of the prisons in the north of England and Scotland, unearthing horrors which far surpassed those of Newgate. At Haddington, in particular, she found the prisoners immured in loathsome cells, deprived of light and sufficiency of fresh air, and in some cases encumbered with irons. A pretty general idea of our prison system at that time may be gained

from the fact that in 1818 it was found that "out of 518 prisons in the United Kingdom, to which a total of upwards of 100,000 persons had been committed in a year, only twenty-three prisons were divided according to law, fifty-nine had no division whatever to separate males from females, 136 had only one division for the purpose, sixty-eight had only two divisions, and so on. In 445 prisons no work of any description had been introduced for the employment of prisoners; in the balance some work was done, but with the most meagre results. All the prisoners passed their time in absolute idleness, or killed it by gambling and loose conversation. The debtors were crowded almost inconceivably." In many of the prisons useless methods of work were invented and forced upon the prisoners as a punishment—barbarous practices, such as the treadmill, shot-drill, and carrying heavy weights from one side of the prison yard to the other.

On her return to London, Mrs. Fry threw herself into the movement for abolishing capital punishment for all offences except the crime of murder. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, in supporting the measure in Parliament in 1821, appealed most strongly for a more enlightened administration of punishment. "During the last century," he said, "the people have made enormous strides in all that tends to civilise and soften mankind, while the laws have contracted a ferocity which did not belong to them in the most savage period of history; and to such extremes of distance have they proceeded, that I do believe there never was a law so harsh as a British law, or so merciful and humane a people as the British people. And yet, to this mild and merciful people, is left the execution of that rigid and cruel law." The measure was again defeated, however, this time by a very small majority, and it was not until 1837 that the law was relaxed.

From this time onwards Mrs. Fry devoted her life to the question of prison reform, ever extending the sphere of her labours, again visiting most of the large towns of England and Scotland, frequently bringing her saintly influence to bear on the prisoners themselves, and stimulating the authorities to a higher estimate and better performance of their duties. She also established, or assisted in establishing, voluntary agencies for the

carrying out of her suggestions, always insisting on the necessity for classification according to character and merit, provision of useful work, a fixed and suitable dietary, proper clothing and sanitation, and a strict code of regulations. It is only by carrying on the work begun by John Howard and this noble-hearted and and high-souled woman that we have realised the necessity for the adoption of more sensible methods in the treatment of the most depraved class of the community. We now recognise, or are beginning to recognise, that punishment, however severe, must be remedial and reformatory, never vindictive; and though the science of criminal sociology and the reform and cultivation of character is still in its infancy, many workers are now investigating and studying in the same field, and society is awakening to a sense of its responsibilities.

In 1832 and 1835, Mrs. Fry again gave valuable evidence before Select Committees of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and in 1838, 1839, and 1840 visited many of the prisons of France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, and Denmark, spending some of her days in the lowest dens of infamy, and some of her evenings as the guest of statesmen, kings, and queens, everywhere suggesting reforms, and having the satisfaction of knowing that in many cases her suggestions were carried into effect. Neither was her beneficent activity confined to the criminal classes. Hospitals and asylums were also visited, and more enlightened and humane principles of treatment and discipline suggested.

Her long labours, however, her extensive travels and investigations, her widespread activity, her voluminous correspondence, the management of her household, and the up-bringing of her numerous family of eleven children—all these were now rapidly tending to undermine a constitution which had never been of the strongest, and after an illness extending over many months, she died at Ramsgate on October 13th, 1845.

Human nature is a very sad thing and a very noble thing, and here, in the life and labours of Elizabeth Fry, we meet it both in its heights of nobility and in its depths of sadness and depravity. Wherever wickedness, vice, ill-treatment, pain, the night of imbecility were at their worst, this modern saint brought her sympathetic and illuminating presence. Her labours bring

before us the seamy side of human life, but it is a side which, if we are worthy of our manhood or womanhood, we are bound to consider. From the days of her girlhood to the day of her death, she seemed to live as in the great Task-master's eye, shrinking from all self-seeking, honour, or pride, and content to cast on all around her the rays of her humility, her gentleness, and her love.

V.

ROBERT OWEN AND THE EARLY CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT, 1771—1858.

I.

We have already seen, in the short sketches of the life of Cobbett and Place, something of the labours and struggles of the political reformers of the early part of the century; of their unceasing war, often at severe cost to themselves, against political corruption and political tyranny in all its forms. Their aim was to purify public life, to make Parliament a truly representative assembly, and to place political machinery in the hands of the whole people, instead of allowing it to be confined to the hands of a class. "The rest—the social elevation of the people —will come," they said, "in due course. Let us first get hold of the political and legislative machine." On the other hand, the social reformers, while seeking the aid of Parliament in rectifying gross wrongs and abuses, especially in the matter of factory legislation, thought that much might be done by the people themselves without the intervention of Parliament. From this spirit was born the temperance movement, the mechanics' institutes, the co-operative movement, and a hundred schemes for ameliorating the lot of the labouring poor, most of which schemes have now passed into oblivion. We shall see, in future chapters, how these two trends of public activity come occasionally into conflict. Both are necessary. There is a sphere, continually extending, in which Parliament can effectually promote the welfare of the people; there is another sphere in which the people can more effectually help themselves, without waiting for the application of legislative machinery. The subject of our present sketch belonged, by nature and temperament, to the social wing of reformers, taking little or no interest in purely political move-

ments, though anxious to secure the aid of Governments in the promotion of his schemes.

Robert Owen was born in Newtown, Montgomeryshire, on the 14th May, 1771. His father was a saddler, and, in addition to his trade, had the management of the local post-office. Robert was sent to school at an early age and soon showed a taste for learning. At the age of seven he was promoted to the position of monitor in the school, and soon assimilated all the knowledge that the master was able to give. While still a child his mind was occupied with religious subjects; the local clergyman and doctor lent him books which he read with avidity; and, by the age of nine, he had composed three sermons, which he shortly afterwards destroyed, fearing, as many sermon spinners since his time have feared, a charge of plagiarism. At the age of ten he was sent by his parents to join his eldest brother who had started business as a saddler in London. Here, however, he stayed only a few weeks, a situation being offered him by a Mr. James M'Guffog, a hosier, of Stamford, who engaged him for a term of three years. While in this situation young Owen managed to devote five hours a day to study, and his one form of recreation appears to have been to wander alone in the neighbouring park of Lord Burleigh—a habit of which he afterwards speaks with fond recollections. Leaving Stamford at the end of his term he again made his way to London, and obtained a situation in which he had to work more than double the hours in which he had been engaged at Stamford. Finding this labour too severe, his friends secured him a situation in Manchester, where, in addition to board and lodging, he received a salary of £40 a year. Here he stayed until the age of eighteen, when, hearing of the new inventions and discoveries which were then revolutionising the cotton manufacturing industry, he determined to begin business on his own account, borrowed £100 from his brother, entered into partnership with a man named Jones, and the two, with forty men at work, began making machinery for the spinning of cotton. The partnership lasted only a few months, when Owen began a totally different business—that of spinning cotton yarn. This he sold to the manufacturers of muslins, and it is interesting to note that Owen records in his "Recollections"

that these muslins were then sold retail at 9s. and 9s. 6d. a yard. The same class of material, he says, writing seventy years afterwards, but of better quality, could then be bought at 2d. a yard. Owen did not long continue manufacturing on his own account. He applied for and obtained the position of manager at the works of Mr. Drinkwater, at a salary of £300 a year. Here, although only nineteen years of age, he had to control and direct the labour of 500 men. His genius for management soon showed itself. By his tact and skill he soon gained the confidence of the workpeople—"their order and discipline exceeded that of any other set of men in or near Manchester, and for regularity and sobriety they were an example which none could then imitate." Before many months had passed, Mr. Drinkwater offered to raise his salary by £100 a year for the next two years, and then receive him as a partner in the concern. This, Owen agreed to, but family matters interfering with the arrangement, Mr. Drinkwater asked to be allowed to annul the agreement, a proposal which Owen responded to by burning his copy of the contract and resigning his position. Almost immediately he had two offers of partnership, which he refused, ultimately engaging himself as managing partner to the Chorlton Twist Company. By this time he had acquired the reputation of being one of the most skilful cotton manufacturers in England, and was well known in Manchester for the boldness and independence of his views. About this time he joined the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, and there made his first speech. Here also he met John Dalton, the professor of natural philosophy, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Owen took an active part in the debates, and by his clearness and pertinacity in discussion, acquired the name of "the reasoning machine."

His business as a cotton-manufacturer frequently led him to travel in Scotland, and it was while on a visit to Glasgow that he first met Miss Dale, whom he afterwards married, and whose father was the proprietor of some extensive cotton mills at New Lanark. As soon as Owen saw these mills he was struck by the natural advantages which their situation afforded, and learning, shortly afterwards, that Mr. Dale, who was getting old, was willing to dispose of the property, he persuaded the Chorlton Twist

Company to make Mr. Dale an offer of £60,000 for the works. The terms were accepted. Shortly afterwards Owen married Miss Dale, and before very long was appointed by his firm as manager of the establishment at New Lanark, with full control, at a salary of £1,000 a year and one-ninth of the profits. He entered on his duties on January 1st, 1800, and at once determined to attempt an experiment which he had long been anxious to test.

It is necessary here that I should explain Owen's educational theory, for it is on this theory that all his future work and teachings were based. The problem he attempted to solve, and which he thought he had solved, is the same problem which besets educational reformers to-day. Are acquired characteristics transmitted by heredity? If so, to what extent is the formation of character determined by hereditary influences, and how far is it modified by education and surrounding circumstances? Owen, after much study upon the subject, had come to the conclusion that man's character is determined by the circumstances and surroundings in which he is brought up; or, to use the words of his celebrated formula: "The character of man is formed *for* him and not *by* him." Hence, he said, change the circumstances, the environment, of man; replace unhealthy, immoral, and vicious conditions of life by healthy, moral, and virtuous influences, and you will produce healthy, moral, and virtuous characters. This side of the evolution of character, or the evolution of human nature, he emphasised almost to the total exclusion of hereditary influences and other factors. Indeed, he so persistently refused to allow the importance of these other factors that he seriously compromised his reputation as a thinker amongst scientific men. Much the same problem is being debated to-day by Spencer and Weismann, and their respective followers. And it is just because neither side has proved its case—because, that is, we do not know exactly to what extent character is determined by hereditary influences on the one hand and modified by education and environment on the other, that we take care, or should take care, that succeeding generations are born into the healthiest moral and physical surroundings. Every character may be endowed with a certain amount of psychic energy, hereditarily predisposed

to manifest itself in certain directions; but the ultimate evolution of any one character will depend as to whether it is trained for and placed, say, on the Stock Exchange, or in a mine, a factory, or a university. Character may be likened to a body to which a number of springs are attached, and which, plunged into the ocean of life, manifests activities in accordance with the particular springs which are touched or played upon. To what extent these springs are affected by ancestral influences, and to what extent by the nature of their surroundings, is a problem which has yet to be solved.

The merit of Owen, however, was that he illustrated, in a very practical manner, his particular aspect of the truth. The moment he had got a free hand in the management of the New Lanark Mills he set himself to work out the problem of a reformed society. Although the mills had previously had the reputation of being well conducted, the condition of the workpeople was far from satisfactory. Children of very tender years were employed in the mills. "They hated their slavery," says Owen; "many absconded; some were stunted and even dwarfed in stature from premature overwork." The condition of the families in the village was also very bad. "The people lived almost without control—in habits of vice, poverty, idleness, debt, and destitution." Owen immediately began a thorough reform. His first care was to diminish the temptation to drunkenness and vice. The pothouses were gradually closed. The duty of temperance was steadily inculcated. Wives were taught to make the home more comfortable, and thereby lessen the attractions of the drinking-houses. Vice and immorality were visited by fines, which went to support the sick and the aged. In order to limit the evils of the credit system, by which the poor were often bound by debt to the shopkeeper, Owen established a store at the mills, at which goods were sold at a little over cost price, the profits being devoted to the purposes of education. The age at which children were employed was raised to eight years, and parents were encouraged not to send them until they were ten. The village school was open to all from the age of five without any charge.

In carrying out these reforms Owen met with opposition from all sides. Even the workpeople themselves, often ignorant and

superstitious, regarded him as a foreigner who had come to make as much profit as he could out of their labour. They refused to accept his reforms, or to aid in carrying them out, until an episode occurred which served to dispel their suspicions. In 1806 the United States, by reason of commercial differences with England, laid an embargo on the export of cotton. General distress ensued in the cotton manufacturing districts. The embargo lasted four months, and many of the master spinners dismissed their employés. During the whole of this period, however, the workpeople of New Lanark were paid over £7,000 in wages for their enforced idleness. From this time onward confidence was established between manager and workpeople. Some time after this, Owen proposed to spend a sum of £5,000 on new schools, but his partners refused to sanction the expenditure. He immediately offered to buy the establishment for the sum of £84,000, but not having sufficient capital himself, he invited three or four other gentlemen to join him in the undertaking. The new partners, however, were no more complaisant than the old ones. They objected to find money for Owen's philanthropic schemes, and ultimately determined to dissolve the partnership and force a public sale of the mills. They circulated reports calculated to damage Owen's reputation as a manager, and to depreciate the value of the property. By these means they expected to buy back the mills for £40,000. Owen threw up the management in disgust, and went to London, taking with him four essays, explaining and defending his theories as to the formation of character. These he had privately printed and circulated, with the object of attracting wealthy and influential sympathisers. Finding these more numerous than he had anticipated, he started a company for the purchase of New Lanark, the shares in which were to be £10,000 each. Two of the persons whom he induced to join him in his undertaking were Jeremy Bentham, the political philosopher, and William Allen, a member of the Society of Friends, and one of the most noted philanthropists of the time. Having obtained sufficient financial support, he went down to New Lanark, to attend the sale of the property. His late partners expected to be able to buy the mills for about £40,000, a sum much below their value, but they were ultimately knocked down to Owen for

the sum of £114,000, to the jubilation of his friends and the mortification of his enemies. The reception of Owen and his friends by the villagers was most enthusiastic, the horses being taken from the carriage, and the vehicle, with its occupants, drawn in triumph by the excited and jubilant workpeople. This was on the last day of the year 1813.

Owen had now a free hand for the promotion of his schemes, and he at once set to work to put them into more complete operation. New schools were built, and an infant school—the first of its kind in Great Britain—was started. Owen saw that it was necessary to begin with the children in the earliest years if his views as to the formation of character were to be carried into effect. Children were therefore received into the infant school as soon as they could walk. Their obedience was won by kindness, rather than by fear of punishment, and their education up to six years of age was made a matter of pleasure and amusement, by which their young faculties were awakened and stimulated, rather than a hard and dry task which repelled by its tediousness. In the schools they were surrounded by pictures and natural objects. In the summer they were taken for walks by their teachers. Games, singing, drill, and dancing formed part of the curriculum, and it was a pleasing sight to see some scores of children, from three years old and upwards, keeping time to the music with their feet. Evening classes were also held for adults, and a library, reading-room, and concert-room added to the mills. In 1819 a public kitchen and dining-room were opened for the use of the workpeople.

This remarkable combination of business and philanthropy continued for fifteen years, and aroused a considerable amount of interest. Princes, peers, and distinguished travellers made it in their way to visit the reformed community on the banks of the Clyde. The Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia offered to transplant Owen and a number of operatives to that country, in order that the new system of society might be introduced there. The Duke of Kent (father of Queen Victoria) sent his physician to investigate and report upon the subject. A deputation from Leeds reported that the establishment is "conducted in a manner superior to any other the deputation ever witnessed, and dispenses

more happiness than perhaps any other institution in the kingdom."

This chorus of approbation, however, was by no means universal. Mr. Owen was assailed on various sides, and notably by the commercial and the more bigoted religious classes. His fellow-manufacturers looked upon him as a visionary, while orthodox religious people regarded with alarm the teaching of a man who openly repudiated the prevailing theological doctrines of the time. Indeed, it was these religious differences which ultimately led to the break-up of the New Lanark establishment. William Allen, one of the Quaker partners, a man very far removed from Owen in matters of religious conviction, made it a condition on entering the partnership that nothing derogatory to the Christian religion should be introduced into the schools or institutions; that the Bible was to be used in the schools; and that no book was to be placed in the library without the sanction of the partners. Owen, though averse to these conditions, preferring a purely secular education, was nevertheless obliged to accept them. For some years all went well, and Allen and his friends paid occasional visits to New Lanark with the object of satisfying themselves as to the general management of the establishment, and especially as to the religious training of the children. In 1822, however, serious differences arose between Owen and Allen on the subject. A peace was arranged, but the partners were too irreconcilably opposed to each other on religious questions to work long in harmony together. Other differences occurred, a teacher was sent down from London, at the instance of the London partners, to direct the educational establishment, and Owen, seeing his own principles of training, which were the foundation of his system, set at nought, retired from the firm in December, 1828.

Commercially, the experiment at New Lanark was an undoubted success. Owen had a genius for management, and made large profits for the firm. Socially and educationally the experiment was a success too, but it was a kind of success which was dependent on the personal influence of one man. Society will never be reformed in that way, not only because all employers will never be like Robert Owen, but because civilisation is too complex, and its industrial arrangements too intricate, to allow of

the industrial problem being solved by the universal establishment of small self-governing communities. But Owen had the genius to discover, and the sagacity to apply, principles which have yet a great part to play in the organisation of industry and the evolution of humanity.

But we must now retrace our steps somewhat to note some other phases of Owen's untiring activity.

II.

To give a detailed account of all the schemes and movements in which Owen engaged himself, would require a very large volume. I can only briefly review here the more important incidents in his life, and give a short account of the movements which he started or influenced. And amongst these I cannot omit the early efforts in the direction of factory reform.

Owen, both in his early experiences at Manchester, and later, at New Lanark, had noted the great evils of the factory system, and especially its demoralising influence on the life of the children. The new system, with its ingenious mechanical contrivances, lent itself very readily to child labour. So readily, indeed, that manufacturers had a difficulty in getting sufficient children for their requirements, and, in addition to this, many parents at first looked with suspicion on the new factories, and would not allow their little ones to go into them. An expedient was then resorted to which opens up a very dark page in English industrial history. By the Elizabethan poor law, orphans and indigent children were placed in the hands of the parish authorities, and these latter had power to apprentice them to such work or trade as they deemed suitable. When, then, the supply of child-labour in the factories ran short, the manufacturers applied to the overseers of the poor for "apprentices". The children were conveyed to the manufacturing towns, and there the mill-owners arranged to examine the children, and take such as seemed most fitted for their purpose. Sometimes the overseers arranged or insisted that the employer should take at least one idiot along with a batch of apprentices. As to what became of these idiots, history is silent. But as to the treatment of the

"apprentices"—children of six years and upwards—the heart-rending cruelty, the slow starvation, the excessive labour, to which they were subjected, would make the annals of slavery pale. The children were not infrequently deceived by false and glowing accounts of the good times that were in store for them, accounts which usually received a woeful realisation. "It was the custom," writes Mr. John Fielden, who had personally investigated the system, "for the master to clothe his apprentices, and to feed and lodge them in an apprentice-house near the factory; overseers were appointed to see to the work, whose interest it was to work the children to the utmost, because their pay was in proportion to the quantity of work that they could exact. Cruelty was, of course, the consequence, and there is abundant evidence on record, and preserved in the recollections of some who still live (1836), to show that in many of the manufacturing districts, but particularly, I am afraid, in the guilty county (Lancashire) to which I belong, cruelties the most heart-rending were practised upon the unoffending and friendless creatures who were thus consigned to the charge of master-manufacturers; that they were harassed to the brink of death by excess of labour; that they were flogged, fettered, and tortured in the most exquisite refinement of cruelty; that they were in many cases starved to the bone, while flogged to their work, and that even in some instances they were driven to commit suicide to evade the cruelties of a world in which, though born to it so recently, their happiest moments had been passed in the garb and coercion of a workhouse." The apprentices were worked fourteen hours a day; in busy times relays went from mill to bed, and bed to mill, the same beds being thus occupied day and night, while the food supplied was so meagre in quantity and nauseous in quality that the children were often glad to get an opportunity of sharing the meals of the pigs. Inside the mills the treatment was such as seems now incredible, and were it not for the well-authenticated testimony of one of these apprentices—a Robert Blincoe—whose evidence was published at the time, we might well believe it impossible that human beings capable of such ferocious cruelty could exist. Blincoe was apprenticed at the age of seven, and being too little to reach the

machinery, he was placed on a block. But this was only of small service, as he could not well keep pace with the machinery, and so was beaten repeatedly until his body became covered with bruises. Sometimes the hours of labour were extended to sixteen per day. Four years later he was transferred, along with other apprentices, to another factory, where the treatment meted out was even more savage and brutal. Wounds were inflicted on his head and body by blows from rollers; plasters were put upon the wounds, and then forcibly wrenched off before the sore had healed; small hand-vices were fixed to his nose and ears; his teeth were filed; his hands were tied behind him, and then one of his legs fastened to his hands; and, in addition, he had to endure long-continued and merciless floggings. Nor was Blincoe an exception. "All the punishments he suffered were inflicted on others, and in some cases even to a worse degree than on himself." Those apprentices who were suspected of the intention of running away had irons rivetted to their legs and ankles.

It is a curious commentary on our boasted humanity that the hardships and abominations of the apprenticeship system were only brought to light by the foulness and disease which emanated from the dens in which the children were worked and housed. In 1796 a committee, called "The Manchester Board of Health," was appointed to investigate the subject, and this committee ultimately passed a series of resolutions calling attention to the excessive hours of labour, the debilitating effect of the system on the lives of the children, the total lack of educational facilities, the fevers and other contagious diseases to which the insanitary conditions gave rise, and asking for legislation to remedy the more patent evils.

Out of this condition of things the factory agitation arose, and though a fuller account of the later phases of that movement must be left to be given when we come to consider the life of Lord Shaftesbury, I must briefly indicate here the part which Owen played in it. As early as 1802 the elder Sir Robert Peel had passed through Parliament an Act for the protection of apprentices, limiting the hours of labour to twelve per day, prohibiting night-work, providing for the elementary education of the apprentices, and prescribing that male and female apprentices

were not to sleep in the same room. Apart from the inadequacy of the protection which the Act granted, it applied only to apprentices, still leaving other children wholly unprotected. It was not until 1816 that anything further was done, when, through the efforts of Owen and others, a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the expediency of applying the Act of 1802 to other children. For some years before this, Owen had been agitating the question, and in 1815 he made a journey through the manufacturing districts of England and Scotland with the object of collecting evidence concerning the condition of the children employed in factories. "The facts we collected," writes his son, Robert Dale Owen, who accompanied him, "seemed to me terrible almost beyond belief. In some large factories, from one-fourth to one-fifth of the children were either cripples or otherwise deformed, or permanently injured by excessive toil, sometimes by brutal abuse." Owen prepared a Bill of his own with a view to securing an immediate remedy by Parliament. This Bill forbade the employment of children under ten years of age in factories, limited the hours of labour for young persons to 10½ hours per day, and also prohibited night-work. So strong was the opposition of the manufacturers, however, that after much delay a less adequate measure was passed in 1819, forbidding the employment of children under nine years of age, limiting the hours of labour to twelve per day, and applying only to còtton mills. It was not till 1833 that Owen's views received legislative sanction.

It is well to note here that Owen's advocacy of factory reform was really based, not merely on philanthropic sentiment, but on a desire to promote the establishment of a true system of social and economic science, with a view to the improvement of character. It is this which raises Owen above all the early social reformers, and which accounts for the clear-sighted and far-seeing manner in which he advocated his views. He knew what he was aiming at, and he expounded his aims in the light of well-defined principles, while the philanthropists were merely possessed by a wholesome horror of the evils and cruelties which attended, or were engendered by, the factory system. Perhaps I cannot do better than illustrate his position by one or two brief extracts

from his writings about this time. In 1818 he issued an "Appeal to British Master Manufacturers," an appeal which was all the more powerful from the fact that he was a master-manufacturer himself, and that he had made, for his firm, as much as £32,000 a year profit while observing the very conditions which he was urging his fellow-manufacturers to adopt. This was an effective answer to the argument that the industry would not bear the extra expense entailed by reduced hours and the limitation of child-labour. "An excess of labour and confinement," he says, "prematurely weakens and destroys all the functions of the animal frame; and few constitutions can be preserved in health and vigour under a regular occupation in our manufactories for more than ten hours per day, exclusive of the time required for meals. It may, however, perhaps appear to you that you have no particular interest in attending to the health and comforts of the working-classes, provided you can get work well and cheaply performed by them. Every master-manufacturer is most anxious to have his work cheaply performed, and as he is perpetually exerting all his faculties to attain this object, he considers low wages to be essential to his success. By one master or other, every means are used to reduce wages to the lowest possible point, and if but one succeeds, the others must follow in their own defence. Yet, when the subject is properly considered, no evil ought to be more dreaded by master-manufacturers than low wages of labour, or a want of the means to procure reasonable comfort among the working classes. These, in consequence of their numbers, are the greatest consumers of all articles; and it will always be found that when wages are high, the country prospers; when they are low, all classes suffer from the highest to the lowest, but more particularly the manufacturing interest, for food must be first purchased, and the remainder only of the labourer's wages can be expended in manufactures. It is, therefore, essentially the interest of the master-manufacturers that the wages of the labourer should be high, and that he should be allowed the necessary time and instruction to enable him to expend them judiciously. The most substantial support to the trade, commerce, and manufactures of this and of every country are the labouring classes of its population, and the real property

of any nation may be at all times accurately ascertained by the amount of wages, or the extent of the comforts which the productive classes can obtain in return for their labour. If, therefore, this class of our population is so degraded and oppressed that they can only procure the bare necessaries of life, they are lost as customers to the manufacturers; and it is to be recollected that at least two-thirds of all countries derive their immediate support from the wages of labour, and in this country chiefly from trade and manufactures." And again, his appeal to the manufacturers on behalf of the children is equally pertinent: "I think an intelligent slave-master would not, on the sole principle of pecuniary gain, employ his young slaves even ten hours a day at so early an age. And we know that judicious farmers will not prematurely put their young beasts of burden to work; and that when they do put them to work, it is with great moderation at first, and, we must remember, too, in a healthy atmosphere. But children from seven to eight years of age are employed with young persons and women of all ages, for fourteen or fifteen hours per day, in many of our manufactures, carried on in buildings in which the atmosphere is by no means the most favourable to human life. If the well-being of our fellow-creatures be a more important object than a fractional diminution of the prime cost of a few articles of commerce, often very useless ones, and if that object be a primary consideration in any change in the practices and habits of society, then surely the present generation has gone far astray from the right course when it has exchanged nine hours of healthy and really productive labour for fourteen hours of unhealthy and often useless or pernicious employment. To mark the contrast of the two systems, look at the healthy, comparatively well-trained, Scottish peasant boy, who attends the parochial school until he is fourteen or fifteen years old, and then turn your eyes to the feeble, pale, and wretched flax or cotton-spinning children, who, at an early age, are doomed all the year round to one unvarying occupation for fourteen or fifteen hours a day, going to their work in winter before it is light in the morning, and returning long after dark. And here I may well ask, How should we like our children, girls as well as boys, to be thus employed? Would any

of us permit our slaves, if we were obliged to maintain them, to be so treated? Surely it is but necessary to call your attention to these facts, and you must instantly be aware of the injustice and useless cruelty which we thus inflict upon the most helpless beings in society. At this moment I feel almost ashamed to address any human being on such a subject."

Owen's activities at this period were by no means confined to the movement in favour of factory reform. At this time (1817) a Parliamentary Committee was sitting to investigate the working of the poor laws, and Owen was invited to send in a report on the causes of poverty, along with suggestions for remedying or mitigating the evil. His suggested remedies took the form of a recommendation that the Government or the poor-law authorities should provide, in every union or county, a farm, and, where possible, a factory, for the employment of the poor. In this way the poor would be able to support themselves, and it would be much better for the country that they should be kept in industry than in idleness. As, however, the provision of employment was not, of itself, sufficient security for that improvement and elevation of character which was an essential part of all Owen's social schemes, he suggested that arrangements should be made by the authorities for the education and training of the children, and the gradual improvement of the character of the adults. To this end, private sleeping and sitting-rooms, and common dining, cooking, recreation, and reading-rooms should be provided in one vast building. Every means should be adopted for strengthening the social sympathies, and laying the basis of a transformed society. Thus the poor-law and every other social problem would be solved by the establishment of "communities" throughout the whole country. Owen furnished the Parliamentary Committee with a model plan of his establishment, the like of which he desired to see dotted over the country. Each institution would accommodate about 1,200, and, with farm and manufactories attached, would probably cost about £100,000.

The scheme was received with much enthusiasm. The leading papers directed attention to it, and spoke of Owen as "one of the most distinguished and worthy benefactors of the human race." He was now regarded as the most popular philanthropist

of the time, and his schemes commanded the sympathy of rich and poor alike. But Owen was soon to set three-fourths of the world against him, and to convert this universal sympathy into blind, unreasoning prejudice and hatred. It is difficult to convey any idea of the excesses to which theological bigotry and intolerance were carried in the early years of the present century, when so-called heretics--Catholics, Jews, Dissenters, Agnostics—were excluded from colleges and from positions of public trust, and sometimes even committed to prison for the advocacy of their opinions. This almost universal prejudice Owen determined to brave. The reader will already have noticed that Owen's religious views were what was termed "heretical" in those days, and that his opinions on the subject of free will and moral responsibility were not in accord with the theological doctrines of the time. Indeed he had long before come to the conclusion that religion—or, as he meant and should have said, the many false forms of religion, for he afterwards called himself the founder of "Rational Religion"—was at the root of most of the misery, superstition, and bigotry with which mankind was afflicted. Up to this time he had kept his anti-theological views mainly to himself, but owing partly to the taunts of the narrow-minded, and partly to what he conceived to be his duty to society, he determined to make his views known, and to point out the false basis on which society rested. This was done at one of a series of meetings held in 1817, at the City of London Tavern, where he had been expounding his social views. The hall was crowded, hundreds being unable to gain admittance. Owen attacked the prevailing notions of moral responsibility on which religion is based. Man was the creature of circumstances. Born in Turkey, he could no more help being brought up a Mohammedan, than a man, born in Spain, could help being a Catholic, or in England, a Protestant. All the religions of the world were false because they directed man's attention either to superstitious imaginings or to vague speculations about an unknown future, instead of to the growth of human sympathy, the formation and elevation of human character, and the improvement of man's condition and surroundings here on earth.

The avowal of these heterodox opinions at once undermined

Owen's popularity and influence. He himself had expected to be mobbed at the meeting at which he gave utterance to them. The audience cheered, however, even those who dissented being moved to admiration by his courage. Brougham, afterwards Lord Chancellor, meeting Owen in the street the next day, inquired, in his characteristically vigorous way, "How the devil could you say what you did yesterday at your public meeting? If any of us had said half as much, we should have been burned alive, and here you are quietly walking as if nothing had occurred." Nevertheless, the movement in favour of the application of Owen's theories received a decided check. The Dukes of Kent and Sussex and other influential men still stood by him, but when a public appealfor funds was made, only some £8,000 was subscribed; and when, in 1819, Sir William de Crespigny moved, in Parliament, for a committee of inquiry with a view to adopting Owen's plans for the relief of the poor, only sixteen votes were recorded in favour of the motion, the Chancellor of the Exchequer objecting to the scheme on account of the anti-religious principles with which it was associated.

Undaunted, however, either by indifference or opposition, Owen continued the advocacy of his views. Committees and societies were formed for the purpose of carrying his scheme into effect. In 1822 he visited Ireland and held a great meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, the Lord Mayor being in the chair, supported by eminent dignitaries in Church and State. We find, in the social and economic controversies of our own day, a curious echo of the sentiments to which Owen gave utterance at this and other meetings. Every properly-trained individual, he said, can produce, with the aid of machinery, much more than he requires for his own support, and yet there is misery and want on every hand. The reason for this is to be found in the fact that the land and the instruments of production are in the hands of comparatively few people, who will not allow them to be used save on such terms as will bring large profits to themselves. Thus the production of wealth is restricted, wealth itself is unfairly divided, and its exchange for mutual advantage is limited by the want of markets. And yet, said Owen, truly enough, everyone has got a demand in his own person for food,

clothing, and the necessaries of life: everyone is a living market. Therefore, give to everyone the right and the opportunity to labour, and with that will come the power to purchase and the certainty of a continuous and permanent demand for commodities. Depressions of trade, with their consequent poverty, will disappear, because everyone will have purchasing power.

Here again, however, any good that might have resulted from Owen's efforts was neutralised by his advocacy of his usual metaphysical doctrines. His views were denounced as contrary to the Christian religion and inimical to morality. His influential supporters fell away, and though humbler and poorer sympathizers were numerous enough, they were naturally unable to afford the financial assistance necessary for a fair and thorough trial of his schemes. Nevertheless, through the munificent generosity of Owen himself and a few others, experiments were ultimately made. At Orbiston, near Glasgow, through the instrumentality of Abram Combe, brother of George Combe, the phrenologist, an estate was bought for the sum of £20,000, and building operations commenced in 1825. One hundred families were soon gathered together; a newspaper, the "Orbiston Register," was issued in connection with the institution; workshops were started; children under twelve were placed at school; and provision was made for recreation and intellectual improvement. Under Combe's able leadership all went well. Unfortunately, however, the latter fell a victim to over-exertion, and died in 1827. Deprived of the sagacious management of Combe, and menaced by the intervention of his executors, who forced on the sale of the estate and buildings, the community soon afterwards dissolved.

Want of space forbids me giving an account of the numerous social schemes and communities in which Owen was directly or indirectly interested. New Harmony (Indiana) in the United States, whither Owen had gone to explain his system, and where he was allowed to address the House of Representatives, must be mentioned; also Nashoba, in Tennessee, connected with the name and exertions of Frances Wright, afterwards Madame d'Arusmont, a talented and cultured literary advocate and lecturer of the time; Ralahine, in Ireland, associated with the name and labours of E. T. Craig; and the last great attempt of all at

Queenwood, in Hampshire, the failure of which destroyed the last hopes of the community builders. The causes of failure and disruption in all were many and varied—internal dissensions, financial difficulties, incompatibility of temperament and disposition, ignorance and inexperience in business management and methods of government—all these helped to pave the way to dissolution. The memory of these forlorn attempts at communism only serves now to remind latter-day social reformers that not in isolation, or by isolated groups, is the battle of humanity to be won, but in the stress and conflict of great movements, ramifying into every nook and corner of the social fabric, where every pulse-beat tells in favour of a larger and nobler life for all.

III.

One scheme of Owen's I must describe before passing on to give an account of the later phases of his activity—that is, the system of "Labour Exchanges," which excited great hopes amongst the social reformers of the time. These institutions were established with the object of bringing the producer into more direct relation to the consumer, of introducing a more equitable method of remunerating labour, by means of "Labour Notes," and of solving, or helping forward the solution of, the problem of the unemployed. The artisan took his product—shoes, clothing, furniture, or other commodity—to the exchange, received a "labour note" representing the value of the commodity, less a commission for defraying expenses, and then, with his "note," could purchase any article of similar value which might be in the exchange at the moment. Arrangements were also made with outside tradesmen by which the "notes," within a given circle, became negotiable. So rapidly did the idea take hold of the public mind that within a very short time several exchange bazaars were opened in London, and one or two in the provinces. The one with which Mr. Owen was most intimately connected was opened in September, 1832, in Gray's Inn-road, London, with considerable éclat. The institution succeeded so well that upon two occasions it had to be closed, the pressure of business being too great for the staff. The street became impassable. In one week the value of

the deposits amounted, it was said, to nearly £10,000. A "Labour Exchange Gazette" was started, with the object of promoting the extension of the movement. Unfortunately, the Gray's Inn-road establishment came to an abrupt and violent end. The directors had neglected to make any formal agreement with the owner of the premises, and the cupidity of this gentleman being excited by the success of the scheme, he first of all demanded an exorbitant price for the building and fixtures, then an enormous rent, and not being able to get either, forcibly took possession of the premises, and turned the directors into the street. The number of exchanges on the last day on which the bazaar was open amounted to 5,850. Other institutions of a similar character, however, were not so well conducted from a business point of view. In such undertakings the roads to ruin are numerous, while there is only one road to success. How much depends, for example, on the proper appraisement of value! In some exchanges a scale of 6d. per hour was fixed as the labour cost of the commodity. Appraisers fixed the number of hours which a given commodity was likely to have taken in the making, and to this sum was added the cost of the raw material. But it is obvious that any institution will soon come to grief if it ignores the utility or want of utility of the articles which it has to dispose of. Its "labour notes" will soon depreciate in value. And this is exactly what happened, with deplorable results to many of the institutions concerned. Yet the popularity which the exchanges attained during the brief period of their existence shows that they met a very general need. Properly managed, they might have become permanent institutions, helping to bring the temporarily unemployed handworkers into serviceable relation to each other by providing them with a market for their commodities.

By this time co-operative activity had manifested itself in many other directions besides that of labour exchanges. As early as 1821, Owen and his disciples had issued a co-operative newspaper called the "Economist," and from that time onwards an immense amount of co-operative periodical literature was published. This led to attempts to apply the principle in various ways, and so a number of societies, both distributive and manufacturing, sprang into existence. As early as 1795 a co-operative

corn-mill was started at Hull, quite apart from, and anterior to, the Owenite movement, and in the early part of the century co-operative societies were established at Whitby, Woolwich, Devonport, Meltham, Huddersfield, and other places. Owenism, however, stimulated co-operative activity to such an extent that by 1832 several hundred societies were in existence. In the same year a great Co-operative Congress assembled in London, 800 persons attending on the first day. Several co-operative newspapers were started. A bazaar and exhibition was held in the Royal Exchange, Liverpool, where co-operatively-manufactured goods were exhibited and sold in large quantities. Notwithstanding this early promise of success, however, within a few years nearly the whole of these societies had ceased to exist. The history of the modern co-operative movement does not really begin until 1844, when twenty-eight flannel-weavers of Rochdale began to subscribe two-pence a week with a view to opening a co-operative store, and with the ultimate object of organising "the powers of production, distribution, education, and government." They hit upon the popular device of dividing profits in proportion to the amount of purchases made by each member, and so secured success. Nevertheless, the early failures to which I have alluded simply repeat the experience of all great movements. They were largely due to lack of experience in business methods, want of mutual confidence, and the lack of legal protection of the accumulated funds, the societies being often at the mercy of some unscrupulous official. It is but fair to note that Owen himself looked somewhat disdainfully on these efforts at co-operative trading. Though they grew out of his teachings and principles, his own schemes were always of a much more ambitious nature.

From this time onwards Owenism may be said to have developed, or degenerated, into a sect. The United Kingdom was mapped out into districts, with a council and secretary for each. Paid missionaries were appointed to organise the movement and spread the light. The "New Moral World," the organ of the new sect, appeared in 1834, and continued to appear till 1845. The organisation of the new faith took the title of the "Society of Rational Religionists." An institution was opened in Charlotte-

street, London, where lectures were delivered every Sunday, and discussions held on weekdays. The principles of the new religion, as expounded in the "New Moral World," were such as have already been explained—that character is largely determined by cirumstances; that all religions, except the "Rational" one, were based largely upon superstition; that happiness and self-perfection were the chief ends of existence; that these could best be promoted by co-operation and association, instead of competition; and that association must take the form of small self-governing communities. The propaganda spread rapidly in the provinces. Enthusiastic self-educated disciples preached the new social faith with zeal and energy. Public halls, costing in some cases thousands of pounds, were built at Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Rochdale, Huddersfield, and other places. In 1839, as many as fifty-eight provincial societies were in existence, embracing most of the principal towns in the Kingdom. Schools were opened in connection with the movement. Hymns were sung and readings given at the Sunday lectures or services, and special forms of service were used for the naming of children and the burial of the dead. It was computed that about 100,000 people became members of the new sect. To this movement Mr. Owen gave his untiring energy, sometimes lecturing every evening in the week and twice on Sundays, holding public debates with opponents, travelling sometimes a large part of the night, editing the "New Moral World," writing pamphlets, organising and presiding over congresses, conferences, and committees, and paying occasional visits abroad to advocate the claims of the new system to eminent foreigners.

It is not to be wondered at that this heterodox propaganda generated a counter-movement. Orthodox adversaries followed the social missionaries from town to town, disputing their arguments, and often stirring up bitter social and theological strife. Persecution was brought into play. Employers of labour were occasionally prevailed upon to discharge workmen who were known to be Owenite Socialists. Public lecture-halls were sometimes refused the missionaries for the explanation and advocacy of their views. Persistent misrepresentation was as common then as it is to-day, with the added bitterness then of the odium theo-

logicum. In 1840, the Bishop of Exeter brought the subject before the House of Lords, and urged the Government to prosecute the Rational Religionists for blasphemy. Owen immediately issued a manifesto in reply to the Bishop, of which 50,000 copies were speedily sold. In course of time the energy generated by this social religion gradually dissipated itself in other directions. Much of it went to build up the modern co-operative movement; some of it drifted into Chartism; some, again, went to form the secularist movement which was initiated by Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, and extended and developed by the titanic energy and vigorous eloquence of Charles Bradlaugh.

Owen was now at an advanced age, and during the latter years of his life seems to have dropped out of public view. The last community of which he became the head—that of Queenwood Hall, Tytherly, in Hampshire—begun in great faith and confidence in 1839, and continued for some years with some measure of success, ultimately languished for want of capital, and was afterwards transformed into an educational establishment.

A few years before his death Owen became a Spiritualist, and averred that he had had communication with the spirits of many ancient and modern teachers, including his old friend and patron, the Duke of Kent. It was as though, disappointed with the non-accomplishment of the millennium on earth, his undaunted spirit looked forward to its establishment in other spheres. He was far, however, from accepting any form of orthodoxy, and maintained to the last hour of his life that religion—by which he meant baseless superstitions and theologies—"has ever been the bane of humanity, and the cause of all its crimes, irrationalities, absurdities, and sufferings." He still continued his advocacy of the principles of social science so far as his advancing years would allow. In 1858, he attended the annual meeting of the Social Science Association at Liverpool. On attempting to address the gathering, his voice failed him, and he had to be assisted back to his bed. On recovering sufficiently, he journeyed to his birthplace in Wales, where he died within a few days, at the age of eighty-seven.

So passed away one of the most single-minded reformers of the nineteenth century. No man is infallible. Certainly Robert Owen

was not. We know now that his great and fundamental doctrine—the doctrine that man's character is formed by outward circumstances—is only half a truth, though a very important half—a half which we are recognising and acting upon more and more in all our educational schemes and institutions. Behind and above all circumstances is the character and the individuality of man, the inheritance of thousands of ancestors stretching far back to the remotest ages of antiquity, every generation adding its increment of moral, intellectual, and spiritual force and power to the generations yet to come. These are the two half-truths which a true educational system has to take into account—inherited individuality on the one hand, environment on the other. We know, also, that the world will never be converted to socialism by isolated socialistic communities. Men cannot cut themselves aloof from all the advantages of civilisation; they cannot go into the desert and start the world afresh, and, in such rude beginnings, compete with all the refinements, the organisations, the institutions, the learning, the wealth which civilisation affords. The world is ours, civilisation is ours, the land is ours, its value is created by the whole of the people, its mineral wealth is stored by Nature herself—these are the heritage of all the ages, and we should all be sharers in that inheritance. Socialism, then, must come, if it is to come, not by isolation, but by the general consensus of opinion of the whole of the nation. We see now, also, that Robert Owen and his disciples were wrong in their diatribes against religion. We now recognise that we are but pilgrims journeying towards the Infinite, that everyone must think, and believe, and worship, in accordance with his deepest feelings and convictions, and on these points, on which we know so little, we agree to differ. But, for all his mistakes, Robert Owen stands out as one of the most earnest and self-sacrificing social reformers of the nineteenth century. The founder of infant schools in England; the pioneer of that vast co-operative movement which now spreads like a net-work over the length and breadth of the land; the advocate of those Factory Acts which have lightened the toil of millions of human beings, the persistent and pertinacious agitator who, by his invincible logic, demonstrated the justice of, and the necessity for, what is now termed a "living wage"; the large-

minded philanthropist who pleaded for that "equality of opportunity" which most social reformers now regard as an indispensable condition of effectual social improvement—in all this we recognise the passionate devotion, the generous self-sacrifice, and the unswerving loyalty of one who strove to make the life of the people purer, sweeter, and brighter by his having lived and worked amongst them.

VI.

LORD SHAFTESBURY AND FACTORY REFORM, 1801—1885.

In commencing these chapters I pointed out that the reconstructive process of development which so strongly characterises our nineteenth century life has been chiefly distinguished by the changes which have taken place in industrial processes, industrial habits, and industrial life. The change from the domestic system to the factory system, from the hand-loom to the power-loom, from the spinning-wheel to the spinning-jenny, from the roadside forge to the huge iron manufactory, from the stage-coach to the steam-engine, from the sailing vessel to the steamer, from the world of oil lamps and tallow candles to our modern world of gas and electric lights—all these, along with the tens of thousands of complicated manufacturing processes to which mechanical inventions have given rise, have completely transformed the customs, the habits, and the conditions of our life. To give even a brief and partial description of this change in industrial life lies outside the scope of these slight sketches. I can only hope to give a very faint picture of its influence on the social life of the people, and of the part which Lord Shaftesbury and others played in bringing the common principles of morality and humanity to bear upon hard and soulless economic and commercial usages.

I have already, in the short record of the life and labours of Robert Owen, given a brief account of the early history of the factory movement, and the cruelties which factory life inflicted on the children. It was really the "cry of the children" which roused the sympathies, not only of Lord Ashley, but of the better part of the British nation. Before Lord Ashley entered the field, men like Owen, Cobbett, John Fielden, Richard Oastler, and Michael Thomas Sadler, had lifted up their voices, calling

loudly for legislation; and later, Mrs. Gaskell, Benjamin Disraeli, Charles Dickens, and Mrs. Browning swelled the note of indignation. It was in connection with this movement that Lord Ashley first took that prominent position in philanthropic activity which he retained for over fifty years.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in London on the 28th of April, 1801. Educated first at Harrow, and afterwards at Christ Church, Oxford, he was duly equipped for taking his part in the public life of the nation, and entered the House of Commons as member for Woodstock in his twenty-sixth year. Two years later he was appointed to a minor office in the then Government, and was, about the same time, instrumental in promoting a reform of the law for the better treatment of pauper lunatics, whose shocking condition I referred to in the record of Mrs. Fry's labours. The factory controversy was then assuming a more serious phase, and when, in 1833, Michael Thomas Sadler, the then leader of the movement, lost his seat in Parliament, Lord Ashley was appealed to to take his place. Instant resolution was necessary. At this hour, says his biographer (Mr. Edwin Hodder), "he stood at the parting of the ways. On the one hand lay ease, influence, promotion, and troops of friends; on the other, an unpopular cause, unceasing labour amidst every kind of opposition, perpetual worry and anxiety, estrangement of friends, annihilation of leisure, and a life among the poor. It was between these he had to choose. To espouse the factory cause was to give up home, comfort, and domestic leisure... He laid the matter before his wife, painted in dark colours all the sacrifices it meant; weighed the burden it would place on her young shoulders, and waited for the verdict. 'It is your duty,' she said, 'and the consequences we must leave. Go forward, and to Victory!'"

Lord Ashley at once threw himself into the work. A Parliamentary Committee had already sat and taken evidence on the question. Witnesses from Holmfirth, Huddersfield, Leeds, Bradford, and other places, workmen, workwomen, and overlookers, gave evidence as to the cruelty practised in the mills. Children under seven, and sometimes under six years of age, were worked fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen hours a day. Unable

to keep awake for so long a time, they were kept to their labours by frequent beatings with straps and rollers, and occasionally dipped over head in cold water. No interval was allowed for breakfast and tea, which had to be eaten whilst standing and working, while only forty, and in some cases thirty, minutes were allowed for dinner, only a few of the best masters allowing an hour. Many of the children died, others were injured for life, by the harsh treatment and the unhealthy conditions of their employment.[1]

In investigating this state of things, and accumulating facts, Lord Ashley's labours were incessant. He was at work day and night, prosecuting inquiries and mastering all the details of the movement. "I made it an invariable rule," he says, "to see everything with my own eyes, to take nothing on trust or hear-say. In factories, I examined the mills, the machinery, the homes, and saw the workers and their work in all its details. In collieries, I went down into the pits. It gave me a power I could not otherwise have had. I could speak of things from actual experience, and I used often to hear things from the poor sufferers themselves which were invaluable to me. I got to know their habits of thought and action, and their actual wants. I sat and had tea and talk with them hundreds of times."

The opponents of factory legislation were also active. Notwithstanding the completeness of the testimony given before Mr. Sadler's Parliamentary Committee, they called for a Royal Commission of Inquiry to visit the manufacturing districts, and got their motion carried by a majority of one. The reformers were exasperated. They regarded the Commission as a device to delay legislation, and in many towns refused to give evidence. It was undoubtedly one-sided, and the "Times" described its instructions to its assistant-commissioners for the conduct of the inquiry as a "mass of impotent and stupid verbiage." The reformers, however, hit upon a novel device for impressing the commissioners with the evils of factory life. In all the large towns where the commissioners sat, they arranged processions of factory children and deformed workpeople, and marched

[1] See *ante*—Robert Owen.

them, with banners, past the hotels in which the commissioners were staying. "Never, surely," says an eye-witness of one of these processions, "was so interesting an exhibition witnessed; not less than 3,000 ragged, wretched little ones were there, attended by at least 15,000 spectators. The commissioners had a full opportunity afforded them of witnessing the disgusting effects of slavery in factories—an unanswerable argument that employment such as their dress and dirt exhibited they had been engaged in, ought not to be prolonged to longer hours than the felon is condemned or the black slave[1] constrained to labour." To the surprise of friends and foes alike, even the commission reported in favour of legislation, and Lord Ashley, seizing the opportunity, introduced a bill for limiting the hours of labour for "women and young persons" to ten hours a day. Lord Althorp, on behalf of the Government, opposed the principal features of the measure as being too drastic, and it was defeated in committee by an overwhelming majority, 238 to 93. A moderate measure of reform, by which children and young persons were protected, was soon afterwards introduced by the Government, but the reformers had set their hearts on a Ten Hours Bill. The agitation was continued in the country by Oastler, Fielden, Joseph Rayner Stephens, the Rev. G. S. Bull, and other well-known reformers. Accurate measurements were made, by which it was computed that a child working in a cotton mill, and tending the machinery, was obliged to walk no less a distance than twenty-five, and sometimes thirty, miles daily. An attempt on the part of the Government, in 1836, to repeal the most important clause of Lord Althorp's Act was defeated by the vigilance of Lord Ashley. The agitation for the Ten Hours Bill dragged on for some years longer, the proposal being defeated time after time in Parliament, where one or two famous scenes took place in the debates, John Bright being especially bitter in his opposition; but the reformers ultimately triumphed in the year 1847, amid great rejoicing in all the manufacturing districts throughout England and Scotland.

[1] The House of Commons, in its discussions on the question of negro emancipation, had already expressed its conviction that 45 hours a week was long enough for an adult negro to work.

Meanwhile Lord Ashley had been busy in other directions. In 1840 he brought forward a motion praying for the appointment of a commission to inquire into the condition of children employed in mines and collieries, and other branches of manufacture not coming under the designation of mills and factories. His opponents had taunted him with bestowing narrow and exclusive attention upon the children in factories alone, while the condition of the children in other trades was quite as grievous. So he got the Children's Commission appointed, and was soon busily engaged investigating the condition of children in mines, collieries, print works, and other industries. In 1841 he was asked to take office under Sir Robert Peel, but declined, in order that he might have a free hand in his philanthropic labours.

Lord Ashley soon found that only a tithe of his work had been accomplished. He found children of six years of age in the mines, women and girls, as well as men and boys, half-naked, dragging small waggons or corves of coals along narrow, wet, underground passages, in which they could not stand upright; pumping water, in which they stood ankle deep, in the underbottom of the pits; carrying half-hundredweight creels of coals up ladders which, in the aggregate, equalled the height of St. Paul's Cathedral. In the lace, silk, print, and other industries children were found working in relays, lying about on the floor weary and exhausted, waiting for their turn to come, and some so small that they had to be placed on stools before they could reach their work. In the chimney-sweeping industry, the reports, to use the words of Lord Shaftesbury's biographer, were "records of sickening horrors," which read "like a chapter from some terrible record of the Dark Ages. Little children, from four to eight years of age, the majority of them orphans, the rest bartered or sold by brutal parents, were trained to force their way up the long, narrow, winding passages of chimneys to clear away the soot. In order to do this, they had to move up and down by pressing every joint in their bodies against the hard and often broken surface of the chimneys; and to prevent their hands and knees streaming with blood, the children were rubbed with brine before a hot fire to harden their flesh. Their skin being choked in every pore, they were liable to a frightful disorder, called

chimney-sweepers' (or sooty) cancer, involving one of the most horrible forms of physical suffering; they began the day's work at four, three, or even two in the morning; they were half-stifled by the hot, sulphurous air in the flues; often they would get stuck in a chimney, and faint from the effects of terror, exhaustion, and foul air, and then, if the usual remedy of lighted straw failed to 'bring them round,' they were often half-killed, and sometimes killed outright, by the very means used to extricate them. They were morally and intellectually degraded to the lowest possible point. Out of 384 boys examined by order of a Commission of Inquiry so recently as 1864, only six could write and twenty-six could read, most of them very imperfectly."

Yet, in the face of these facts, and similar facts in connection with child-labour in mines, when Lord Ashley proposed legislation, the House of Commons allowed the Chimney-Sweepers Bill to drop; the mine-owners objected that they could not work the mines at a profit without child-labour; and in the debate in Parliament, Mr. J. Pease (of Darlington) declared that "if the hours of labour were abridged, he must, unless he submitted to torture and over-drive the children, inevitably close his manufactory." [1]

The story here, as in all reforms, is one of defeat after defeat, followed by ultimate triumph. So early as 1842, however, immediately after the first report of the commission, Lord Ashley and his friends succeeded in passing a Bill through Parliament by which boys under ten, and all females, were prohibited from working underground. The Ten Hours Bill of 1847 also brought material relief to all concerned in manufactures, and the later Acts of 1850—the Coal and Iron Mines Act, which introduced a number of precautions ensuring the health and safety of miners, and provided for the appointment of a staff of inspectors; of 1867—the Factory Acts Extension Act, and the Workshop Regulation Act, which brought nearly all manufacturing establishments under supervision; of 1878—the Factory and Workshop Act, which consolidated previous laws; and of 1897—the Workmen's compensation Act, which secures compensation for injury to workmen, and

[1] Ibid. p. 163.

tends to reduce the liability to preventible accidents—all these, with numerous minor measures, have gone to make up that splendid series of legislative enactments—still being completed—which are a standing monument to the civilising and humanising influences of our nineteenth-century life. It should be noted, however, that it was not until 1864 that some degree of justice was secured to juvenile chimney-sweepers by the "Chimney-Sweepers Regulation Act" of that year. Even this measure proved largely ineffective, for in March, 1873, a boy of seven years of age was killed in a flue in Washington, in the county of Durham, and in 1875 a youth of fourteen was suffocated in a flue at Cambridge. The press then took up the question, and in the same year a new Bill was passed at the instance of Lord Shaftesbury, which effectually prevented the repetition of such enormities. The introduction of chimney-sweeping machines also tended towards the abolition of boy-labour.

But Lord Ashley's activity was by no means confined to his labours on behalf of the manual workers of the country. In 1845 he again took up the lunacy question, and brought forward and carried two bills in Parliament for the regulation of lunatic asylums and the better care and treatment of lunatics, whose wretched condition he had himself investigated, and which he vividly described to the House. In the same year he took the chair as president of the first public meeting of the Ragged Schools Union, a position which he occupied every year for nearly forty years. In 1846, in order to familiarise himself with the life and the necessities of the poor, he determined to explore the unknown parts of the Metropolis—a mission, he says, which was "fruitful in terrible experiences." "He went," says his biographer, "into the vilest rookeries, and became acquainted with the most ignorant and depraved; he visited the ragged schools that were in existence at the time, and inspired hope and courage in the teachers by his presence; he took his place in the school beside them, and spoke kindly words to the wondering listeners. A strange sight was a ragged school audience in those days. There were to be seen 'the cunning expression of the cadger, the sharp, acute face of the street minstrel; the costermonger out of work; the cropped head of the felon who had just left gaol;

the pallid and thinly-clad woman, weakened by long-continued sickness and penury; the spare form of him, who, once in affluence, had wasted his substance in riotous living.' And among this motley assembly Lord Ashley would sit with his calm eyes gazing sorrowfully upon them, and his pleasant voice trying to utter words of hope." [1] Within ten years after Lord Ashley joined it, the Ragged School Union was able to report that it had established a free day school for infants; an evening school for youths and adults engaged in daily occupation; a women's evening school for improving character and extending domestic usefulness, thereby making better mothers and more comfortable homes; industrial classes to teach youths tailoring and shoemaking; employment in the shape of wood-chopping; a home for boys when first engaged in places, apart from unwholesome contamination; a night refuge for the destitute; a clothing society for the naked; a distribution of bread to the starving; a room to dry clothes worn in the rain during the day; Bible classes; a school missionary to attend the sick and to bring youthful wanderers to the school; and a ragged church for the worship of God. This, and like work, along with our national system of education, has reduced juvenile crime by more than seventy-five per cent. Out of the same movement there sprang the training-ships, the reformatories, and the Shoeblack Brigade, which owe so much to Lord Shaftesbury's indefatigable zeal.

But Lord Ashley's investigations into the condition of the London poor were productive of even more fruitful results. He found hundreds of human beings packed in small courts, occupying less area than a good-sized barn, where the drainage was bad, the air foul, and the light of heaven hardly penetrated—centres of physical and moral evil, of vice, dirt, disease, and contagion. In one parish alone it was found that out of 1,500 families, nearly 1,000 lived in single rooms. The people, inured to long continued habits, customs, and surroundings, were sometimes as hard to reform as slaves who have become accustomed to their slavery. Lord Shaftesbury gives a characteristic reminiscence of one of his experiences—one room he visited was

[1] Ibid. p. 261.

so wretchedly dirty that he persuaded the inhabitants to have it whitewashed. The next time he visited the place he was surprised to see numbers of large black streaks down the walls. On asking the reason of the man who occupied the house, he was informed that the place looked so cold after being whitewashed that he was obliged to take the paint brush and give it a few touches. It was stated in Parliament in 1840 that in Liverpool alone "there were 7,860 cellars used as dwellings, inhabited by 39,000 people. In Manchester and Salford, out of 37,000 habitations which were examined, no less than 18,400 were ill-furnished, and 10,400 altogether without furniture. In Bury, the dwellings of 3,000 families were visited. In 773 of them the families slept three and four in a bed; in 209, four and five slept in a bed; in sixty-seven, five and six slept in a bed; and in fifteen, six and seven slept in a bed. In Newcastle-on-Tyne, the residences of 26,000 poor people were examined, and those who saw them gave a most appalling account of the misery, filth, and want of air, which prevailed." It should be said, however, that the year 1840 was a period of exceptional distress.

When, in 1849, the cholera visited London, and played such sad havoc in the reeking courts and alleys—as many as 1,881 victims being carried off in one week—when, at the same time, all who could well do so were flying in fear from London, Lord Ashley, along with Dr. Southwood Smith and Mr. Edwin Chadwick, were working day and night in the midst of the plague. The danger past, Lord Ashley attacked the problem of over-crowding in a scientific way. In 1851, he introduced two bills into Parliament—one for the establishment of model lodging-houses by local authorities, and another for the inspection and regulation of common lodging-houses; and it is largely through his labours that we have obtained those measures for the promotion of the public health and the better housing of the poor which have done so much to promote the comfort of the people, and to reduce the rate of mortality in our large towns.

In June, 1851, his father died, and Lord Ashley succeeded to the estate and title, and passed into the House of Peers as the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury. Here, again, he was ever ready to help forward any measure affecting the social welfare of the

people. He was repeatedly invited to take office, both by Conservative and Liberal Premiers, but as often declined. In 1861-3, he took a prominent part in stirring the sympathies of the English people on behalf of the down-trodden Poles, and in rousing public opinion against Russia's barbarous treatment of the Polish people, and her unjust attempts to crush out Polish nationality. His activity in connection with religious societies, foreign missions, city missions, Bible societies, pastoral aid societies, the Young Men's Christian Associations, and kindred institutions, is too varied to be detailed here. Night after night he was called upon to attend public meetings, conferences, anniversaries, opening ceremonies, and prize distributions in connection with the numerous societies with whose work he was associated, while his Parliamentary duties, his promotion of public bills and measures, his labours on the Board of Health, his voluminous correspondence, and his personal investigations into the state of factories, mines, and workshops, and the condition of the poor, left little time for private leisure. Many times he grew despondent. Particularly in his labours on the factory question, he laments the almost universal indifference of the clergy and ministers of religion, [1] the cunning hostility of Sir Robert Peel, [2] the bitter animosity of John Bright, and the opposition of Brougham, Gladstone, Harriet Martineau, the economists and the manufacturers, while he acknowledges the helpful services of the Radicals.

But we must remember that Lord Shaftesbury himself was not perfect—neither is any man. He voted against the Reform Bill of 1832, spoke against the Reform Bill of 1867, viewed with disfavour the Reform Bill of 1884, and looked with suspicion upon the Ballot. In religious questions, though exceedingly devout, earnest, and sincere, he was apt to be narrow and bigoted, voting against the admission of Jews to Parliament, and being strongly opposed to the substitution of the affirmation for the oath. When "Ecce Homo," a book which is now almost universally admitted to be full of high and pure religious feeling, was first published, Lord Shaftesbury denounced it as "the most pestilential book ever vomited from the jaws of hell"; of Renan's "Life of Jesus,"

[1] Ibid. pp. 75 and 378. [2] Ibid. p. 378.

he declared that it "was written for the most iniquitous purposes"; he spoke very strongly against Bishop Colenso's work on the Pentateuch, and also against the "Essays and Reviews," and even opposed the appointment of Dr. Temple to the Bishopric of London for the part he had taken in the preparation of the latter work.

These matters, however, we can now afford to forget. Imperfection, mistakes, want of light and clarity of vision, are inseparable from all men, all parties, all movements. What we have to do is to try to separate the good from the evil, to forget and forgive the errors, and use the experience of the pioneers of the past for the guidance and conduct of our own private and public life. Doing that, we shall recognise in the Earl of Shaftesbury one—and not the least—of that noble band of social reformers who have made the life of our nineteenth century brighter and happier by their self-denying labour and love.

VII.

RICHARD COBDEN AND THE ANTI-CORN-LAW MOVEMENT, 1804–1865.

RICHARD COBDEN represents a type of Englishman which has had a good deal to do with the making of industrial England—the manufacturing and commercial middle class, at its best. Represents it, with its limitations and its narrowness, and yet, along with these, and in greater degree, with its hard, practical common-sense, its philanthropic spirit, and its real, earnest desire to promote the public good and the welfare of England. The middle-class ideal, as Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin have so well shown, has not been a very high one. It has concerned itself too much with "machinery," with material prosperity, with the "gospel of getting on." It has too often substituted charity for justice. It has too often stood aloof, in selfish fear and jealousy, from the great constructive social movements of the century. The movement into which Richard Cobden threw the strength and energy of the best years of his life can hardly be called a constructive movement, and yet it was a work which it was absolutely necessary to accomplish before constructive social work could be efficiently done. As Mr. John Morley, in his "Life of Cobden," well says, "the abolition of the protective duties on food, and the shattering of the protective system, was, on one side, the beginning of our great modern struggle against class preponderance at home, and, on another side, the dawn of higher ideals of civilisation all over the world." Social students may differ as to how far the Anti-Corn-Law agitation was animated and controlled by class interests, but they can hardly differ as to the fact that the abolition of the bread tax was a necessary preliminary to the development of those forms of industrial organisation which have taken such a commanding place in the industrial life of the last half-century.

Richard Cobden was born at Dunford, in Sussex, on the 3rd of June, 1804. One of a family of eleven children—a family reduced to poverty by the crisis caused by the collapse of the inflated prices of agricultural produce in 1813—his childhood, save for the love of a good and hard-working mother, was by no means a happy one. He received the rudiments of education at a dame's school near his home, and tended his father's sheep out of school-hours. The family drifting deeper into poverty, a sister of Mrs. Cobden's undertook the expense of Richard's education, and at the age of ten he was sent to a boys' school in Yorkshire. Here he was "ill-fed, ill-taught, and illused," [1] the school being apparently of the type of "Dotheboys Hall." Once a quarter the lad was allowed to write to his parents in the following style. The letter is dated March 25th, 1817:—

"Honoured Parents,—You cannot tell what rapture I feel at my once more having the pleasure of addressing my parents, and though the distance is so great, yet I have an opportunity of conveying it to you free of expense. It is now turned three years since our separation took place, and I assure you I look back with more pleasure to that period than to any other part of my life, which was spent to no effectual purpose; and I beg to return you my most sincere thanks as being the means of my gaining such a sense of learning as will enable me to gain a genteel livelihood whenever I am called into the world to do for myself."

From this cruel mockery of school and education, Cobden was released in 1819, when he passed to his uncle's warehouse in London. Here he was installed as clerk, and soon aroused his uncle's ire by his devotion to study. His industry and attention to business, however, ultimately won the goodwill of his employers, and he was promoted to the position of traveller. In 1828, Cobden and two friends started in business for themselves in Manchester. Three years later they took over a calico-printing factory at Sabden, a little village a few miles from Blackburn. Here he established a school, and began to interest himself in the subject of public education. Neither was he idle

[1] Morley's "Life of Cobden." Chap. I.

as regarded his own self-improvement, notwithstanding the many calls of his business. Acting under the creative impulse which was a part of his nature, he produced two plays, which, "luckily for me," he says, were rejected by those to whom he submitted them. In 1833 and 1834 he travelled for some months on the Continent, and in 1835 he passed several weeks in America, thereby adding to his practical and business knowledge of the world. It was in the latter year that his first important piece of public work appeared in the shape of a political pamphlet on "England, Ireland, and America." This was followed in 1836 by a pamphlet on "Russia," which really dealt with the political and commercial relations of that country and England, as affected by their past and future policy in relation to the Eastern question. Cobden saw that a new England—a manufacturing England—was virtually springing into being, and he felt that these new conditions necessitated a review of the principles on which both our domestic and our foreign policy were based. "His whole scheme rested," as John Morley says, "upon the wide positive base of a great social expediency. To political exclusion, to commercial monopoly and restriction, to the preponderance of a territorial aristocracy in the Legislature, he steadfastly opposed the contention that they were all fatally incompatible with an industrial system, which it was beyond the power of any statesman or any order in the country to choose between accepting and casting out." Only in "material well-being can we have the surest foundation for a solid fabric of morality and enlightenment among the people." [1] On the question of our international relationships, Cobden was right. The Peace and International Arbitration movements have grown considerably since his day, and no sensible man would now think of urging the arbitrament of the sword where the arbitrament of reason can be brought to bear in the settlement of disputes. But on the question of domestic policy, Cobden, though right on the particular point he chose for attack—the protective duties—was apt to be narrow and short-sighted respecting the principles which should guide, and are now beginning to guide, industrial evolution.

[1] Morley's "Life of Cobden." Chap. IV.

In 1837, Cobden stood as a candidate for Parliament for the borough of Stockport, but was defeated. About the same time he felt the necessity of devoting himself to the administration of his now rapidly-growing business. But he would not give up public life. "Let us remember," he wrote to his brother, "that to live usefully is far better than living long. And do not let us deprive ourselves of the gratification at last—a gratification which the selfish never have—that we have not embittered our whole lives with heaping up money, but that we have given a part of our time to more rational and worthy exertion." Shortly afterwards he also wrote: "I hope you will join us in a cry for schoolmasters as a first step to Radicalism.... I have unbounded faith in the people, and would risk universal suffrage to-morrow in preference to the present franchise. But we shall never obtain even an approach towards such a change, except by one of two paths—Revolution or the School-house." In the autumn of 1838 the chief work of his life began.

It was in October, 1838, that a small body of men in Manchester formed the Anti-Corn-Law Association, out of which grew the Anti-Corn-Law-League. Cobden joined the association soon after its formation, and immediately became one of its most prominent supporters. Its object was declared to be the total and immediate repeal of the corn and provision laws. A nobleman who was not out of sympathy with the object of the promoters of the league told them that they would as soon "overturn the monarchy," as obtain total repeal, and in the following session, Mr. Villiers' annual motion in favour of considering the removal of the duties was defeated by 344 to 197. The early days of the campaign soon brought home to the minds of the repealers the fact that the task they had set themselves was no light one. They had against them the powerful prejudices and the tremendous influence of the territorial aristocracy, backed by the ignorance of the agricultural labourer and the town artisan. Even the Chartists viewed them with suspicion, and condemned the movement as a dodge of the manufacturers to lower wages and delay Parliamentary reform. At Arundel, the Mayor refused the league lecturer the use of the Town Hall. At Petersfield, the representative of the league was refused bed and board at the

chief hotel. At Newark and Retford, also, there was not an innkeeper who dared let the lecturer a room. At Worksop, neither lecture-room nor printer could be obtained, and the lecturer was assaulted in the streets. At Cambridge, the aristocratic undergraduates interrupted the league meeting by a destructive riot. One farmer offered a bushel of wheat to anyone who would throw the lecturer into the river.

The party press was not far behind-hand. One London newspaper, says Mr. Morley, described the members of the league as unprincipled schemers and self-conceited socialists! Another declared that it was composed of commercial and political swindlers. And a third denounced the organisation as a disloyal faction, and its speakers as revolutionary emissaries, whom the authorities should peremptorily put down.

The condition of things throughout the country, however, gave a stimulus to the energy of the repealers. The distress, both in the agricultural and the manufacturing districts, bordered on a state of famine. In Carlisle, says Harriet Martineau in her "History of the Thirty Years' Peace," the Committee of Inquiry reported that a fourth of the population was in danger of starvation. In Stockport, 3,000 dwelling-houses were empty, and 5,000 persons were walking the streets in idleness. In Manchester, respectable families bought penny-worths of outside scraps of bacon to moisten their potatoes; children were given "blue milk" on alternate days to moisten their oatmeal with, and sacks of shavings served as bedding. At Leeds, the pauper stone-heap amounted to 150,000 tons. At Hinckley, one-third of the inhabitants were paupers. "In Dorsetshire," says the same writer, "a man and his wife had for wages 2s. 6d. per week and three loaves; and the ablest labourers had 6s. or 7s. In Wiltshire, the poor peasants held open-air meetings after work, which was necessarily after dark. There, by the light of one or two flaring candles, the man or the woman who had a story to tell stood on a chair, and related how their children were fed and clothed in old times—poorly enough, but still, so as to keep body and soul together; and now how they could nohow manage to do it. The bare details of the ages of their children, and what the little things could do, and of the prices of bacon and bread, and

calico, and coals, had more pathos in them than any oratory heard elsewhere." [1]

On the other hand, the league had against it one of the strongest Governments of the first half of the nineteenth century—a Government which contained most of the ablest statesmen of the time, which commanded a large majority in both Houses of Parliament, and which was led by the greatest political leader and statesman since the days of Pitt. In the election which had placed this Government in power, in 1841, Cobden was returned as member for Stockport. In the same year John Bright, bowed with grief by the death of his wife, entered into the famous compact with his friend. Cobden said to him, "There are thousands of homes in England at this moment where wives, mothers, and children are dying of hunger. When the first paroxysm of your grief is past, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest till the Corn Law is repealed." "I accepted his invitation," says Bright, "and from that time we never ceased to labour hard on behalf of the resolution which we had made."

It would make too long a story to enter into a detailed account of the work of the league. Lecturers were sent throughout the country. Tracts were printed. Anti-Corn-Law hymns and songs were composed and sung at their meetings. A newspaper was started. Petitions by the thousand were sent up to Parliament. Bazaars were held, at which enormous sums were raised. The original Free Trade Hall at Manchester was built as a kind of head-quarters and gathering-centre for the movement. As the league increased its activity, controversy became personal, bitter, and venomous. Cobden was falsely charged with enforcing the truck system upon his workpeople. The manufacturers were denounced as slave-drivers, who poisoned and choked their workpeople with the devil's dust which they used for the fraudulent adulteration of their cloths. On the other hand, the country party were taunted with the condition of the labourers on their estates, the starvation wages on which they (the labourers) had to maintain existence, and the undrained and fever-haunted dens in which they were forced to live. Peel's effigy was carried on

[1] "History of the Thirty Years' Peace." Book VI, chap. V.

gibbets through the streets of some of the manufacturing towns, and, after a mock trial, was hurled into a bonfire as a traitor to his country.

Meanwhile, the Government was being slowly forced to modify its policy. In February, 1842, Peel proposed a sliding-scale, regulated according to the rise or fall in the price of wheat, in place of a fixed duty. Later on in the same session he introduced his famous Budget, by which an abatement of duty was made on 750 articles. To make up for the consequent temporary deficit in the revenue, an income-tax of 7d. in the pound on all incomes over £150 was imposed for a limited period only. Fortunately, however, the tax has never been withdrawn, and the principle of direct taxation in proportion to ability to pay has become too firmly rooted in our financial system ever to be given up. These measures satisfied neither the friends nor the opponents of the Government, but its supporters accepted them, in fear of having to accept something worse if they were rejected.

In 1843, Villiers' annual motion for the repeal of the obnoxious laws was defeated by a majority of 131 votes in a House of 381. But the league was gaining ground throughout the country, and Cobden was slowly making himself a force to be reckoned with, both in the House and out of it. The league had already been spending a hundred pounds a week. Now, Cobden said, it ought to spend a thousand. The council had already determined to raise a fund of £50,000 in order to carry on the agitation on a greater scale. "The scheme which we specially aim at carrying out," wrote Cobden, "is this: To make an attack upon every registered elector of the Kingdom, county and borough, by sending to each a packet of publications embracing the whole argument as it affects both the agricultural and trading view of the question. We are procuring the copies of the registers for the purpose. But the plan involves an expense of £20,000. Add to this, our increased expenditure in lectures, &c., and the contemplated cost of the spring deputations in London, and we shall require £50,000 to do justice to the cause before next June." The staff of lecturers was again sent forth. Each elector was besieged with leaflets and pamphlets. The chief speakers of the league scoured the country, both north and south of the Tweed. The meetings

and subsequent discussions sometimes lasted for hours. Farmers were known to travel thirty or forty miles to listen to the speakers—afraid to be seen at the meetings in their own neighbourhood. At Colchester, the meeting lasted six hours, Cobden and Charles Villiers, on the one hand, meeting the arguments of Sir John Tyrrell and Mr. Ferrand, M. P., on the other. The facts, figures, and logic of the league speakers carried conviction everywhere. Meetings which began with hostile feelings ended by carrying resolutions in favour of repeal by majorities of four and five to one. The report of the league for 1843 stated that 500 persons had been employed in distributing tracts from house to house. Five millions of such tracts had been sent to Parliamentary electors, and several millions more to non-electors. The mere weight of paper thus circulated was no less than one hundred tons. One-hundred-and-forty towns had been visited, besides meetings in the agricultural districts. A hundred thousand pounds was asked for to meet the work of the ensuing year. Undoubtedly, the Anti-Corn-Law agitators had a genius for political as well as commercial business. In July, 1843, John Bright was returned as member of Parliament for the city of Durham.

During the session of 1844, Parliament was engaged with other questions than the Corn Law, notably, the Factory Bill, on Cobden's attitude to which a word must be said later. A revival of trade had temporarily weakened the force of the agitation against the obnoxious duties—so strongly is man's political ideals connected with his stomach. But the leading spirits of the league were by no means idle. The towns had been converted. The electoral register had been transformed. Cobden now set himself to reform the county register. An old Act of Parliament of the time of Henry VI limited the "freehold" franchise to those who owned land to the value of 40s. and upwards. The league made this franchise known, made it popular. Every artisan who had saved a little money was advised to invest it in a plot of ground on which he might build his own house, and so get his name placed on the county register. The suggestion was taken up with enthusiasm, and by the beginning of 1845, many thousands of skilled artisans, book-keepers, and shopkeepers had qualified for the county vote.

Things were now silently moving towards a crisis. In the beginning of 1845 the position of the Government seemed as strong as ever. Trade was prosperous. The ranks of the country party were welded together more strongly than ever in their hatred of free trade. On the other hand, the league was temporarily disheartened by the fear of the withdrawal of Cobden from public life owing to the state of his private affairs. The turning-point for both sides, however, came in the autumn of the same year. Before the session ended, disquieting rumours had come over from Ireland with reference to the potato crop. Ere many weeks had passed, the crop was known to have failed, and the country was on the verge of famine. A bread tax in a country blighted by famine was inhuman, and Sir Robert Peel saw this. In the beginning of November, the Cabinet met four times within a week. Peel advised a suspension of the duties, but Ministers could not agree, and on the 6th of November they separated without coming to a decision.

On the 22nd of November, Lord John Russell wrote a letter to his constituents in the City of London declaring in favour of the removal of the duties. This meant that the great Whig party had come round to Cobden's programme. But Sir Robert Peel had, privately, come to the same conclusion. He again called Ministers together, but was unable to carry them with him, and on the 5th of December he resigned office, rather than be responsible for the government of the country. The Queen sent for Lord John Russell, who tried to form an administration, but failed. For fourteen days the country, which was in a state of great excitement and suspense, was without a responsible administration. On the 20th December the Queen again sent for Sir Robert Peel, who agreed to resume office, believing that from his now more secure vantage-ground, he could carry his party with him. Meanwhile the league prepared itself to give him all the support it could, and resolved to raise a quarter of a million of money for the purposes of further agitation.

Parliament met on the 19th of January, 1846, and within a few days Peel made known his proposals, to a House crowded in every part, in a speech lasting four hours. The obnoxious duties were to be gradually reduced, and finally abolished in three

years' time. After prolonged debates, the measure passed its second reading on March 27th by a majority of eighty-eight, and its third reading on May 16th, at four o'clock in the morning, by a majority of ninety-eight. In the Lords, the majority for the measure on the second reading was forty-seven, and, amid almost universal rejoicing, the bill became law on the 26th of June.

The extreme protectionists, however, were too bitterly offended to think of aught but revenge, and on the very same night on which the Corn Bill passed the Lords, they managed, by a recombination of party groups, to inflict a severe defeat on the Government on the Irish Coercion Bill. In resigning office three days later, Sir Robert Peel paid the following magnanimous tribute to Cobden:—"In reference to our proposing these measures," he said, referring to the abolition of the duties on food, "I have no wish to rob any person of the credit which is justly due to him for them. But I may say that neither the gentlemen sitting on the benches opposite, nor myself, nor the gentlemen sitting round me—I say that neither of us are the parties who are strictly entitled to the merit. There has been a combination of parties, and that combination of parties, together with the influence of the Government, has led to the ultimate success of the measures. But, sir, there is a name which ought to be associated with the success of these measures; it is not the name of the noble lord the member for London, neither is it my name. Sir, the name which ought to be, and which will be, associated with the success of these measures is the name of a man who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has advocated their cause with untiring energy, and by appeals to reason, expressed by an eloquence, the more to be admired because it was unaffected and unadorned—the name which ought to be, and will be, associated with the success of these measures is the name of Richard Cobden. Without scruple, sir, I attribute the success of these measures to him." That night the fallen Minister was awaited outside the House by a multitude of people, who bared their heads as he appeared, and escorted him to his home.

Its work accomplished, the Anti-Corn-Law League dissolved, after presenting to Cobden a magnificent testimonial—near upon £80,000—for his long years of indefatigable and arduous labour.

Broken in health, and, but for this timely recognition of his services, in fortune also, by his devotion to the great cause he had at heart, he withdrew himself for a time from public life, and sought rest and recuperated energy on the Continent.

I need not follow, in detail, the later stages of Cobden's career. The most important piece of work accomplished in his later years was the negotiation of the Commercial Treaty with France in 1859-60—a work which required the exercise of the most delicate tact, patience, and judgment, and which called forth from Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, a well-deserved tribute of praise. In the same connection, the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, wrote to him offering him a Baronetcy or a Privy Councillorship, but Cobden declined the honour, being too plain and homely-minded a man to care about titles and decorations.

In concluding this brief survey of Cobden's chief labours, I must try to summarise his views and attitude on two important questions which will long continue to perplex and agitate the minds of all earnest reformers. First, with regard to his labours in the cause of international peace, I do not think they can be exaggerated. Without being—as he was so often falsely termed—either a peace-at-any-price man or a believer in the millennium, he insisted, even at loss of political influence, that the arbitrament of reason and intelligence must, as in civil disputes, take the place of the barbarous methods of arbitrament by bayonet or sword. "My plan," he said, writing to George Combe, "does not embrace the scheme of a congress of nations, or imply the belief in the millennium, or demand your homage to the principles of non-resistance. I simply propose that England should offer to enter into an agreement with other countries, France, for instance, binding them to refer any dispute to arbitration. I do not mean to refer the matter to another sovereign power, but that each party should appoint plenipotentiaries in the form of commissioners, with a proviso for calling in arbitrators in case they cannot agree. In fact, I wish merely to bind them to do that before a war, which nations always virtually do after it. We have many precedents in favour of my plan. One advantage about it is that it could do no harm, for the worst that could happen

would be a resort to the means which has hitherto been the only mode of settling national quarrels." In these matters, Cobden was animated neither by a vague sentimentalism nor a selfish commercialism, but by an earnest desire to promote the welfare of the people, and by an ideal of sane and friendly international relationship and co-operation for the benefit of all.

Secondly, on the question of industrial legislation and organisation, Cobden, though he rose above the narrow prejudices of his school, was undoubtedly in the wrong. History has already settled that. He would have solved the industrial problem by establishing free competition, both for capital, commodities, and labour, and so, from this point of view, he, and Bright, and the Manchester School, opposed much useful factory legislation. But human labour means human life, and human life, with all its wealth of sympathy, aspiration, and affection, is something infinitely more complex than a bale of cotton. As Mr. John Morley himself, in his "Life of Cobden," well says: "The answer of modern statesmanship to the industrial problem is 'that unfettered individual competition is not a principle to which the regulation of industry may be entrusted.'" The Manchester School was too much lacking in the quality of imagination to be entrusted with the control of the industrial destinies of the nation. Many of them, in their desire for material prosperity, would have been quite content if, as Mr. Ruskin has somewhere put it, Lancashire had been developed into a cotton mill, Yorkshire into a woollen factory, Derbyshire into a limekiln, the Midlands into an iron foundry, and Northumberland and Durham into a coal-mine. But the humanitarian sense of England, aided by the robust individuality of her workmen, and the literary power of some of her greatest writers, revolted against such a sordid national ideal, and turned the constructive energies of her statesmen into other channels, through which the more degrading conditions of our industrial and social life have been ameliorated, and their intolerable burden lightened.

Neither was Cobden wise or far-sighted in his attitude towards trade unions. Here, again, history has proved that trade organisations are a necessary part of the industrial constitution of England —necessary in the interests of solid and industrial peace, and necessary, also, to secure to workmen something like fairness in

their bargainings with capital, and in the conditions of their livelihood and labour. Notwithstanding these limitations, however, Cobden often rose above the narrow interests and prejudices of his school. He did insist, even in quarters where he was often in danger of being misunderstood and misrepresented, that a deep sense of moral responsibility should always be indissolubly connected with the use of capital; that it was not always right to borrow money in the cheapest market and lend it in the dearest; that in the increasing complexity of our modern democratic life the right use of capital is a matter of vital public importance. His economic errors were the natural errors of a man surrounded from his youth by commercial and manufacturing interests and influences, but his mind was too broad, and fair, and candid to be entirely dominated by these influences. "The manliest and gentlest spirit that ever quitted or tenanted a human form," John Bright said of him at the time of his death. And though there may have been in his career points of industrial policy on which time has passed its condemnation, no one can read the record of his life without feeling that, while doing so, one is in the spiritual presence of one of the most sincere, self-sacrificing, courageous, and single-minded political reformers of the century.

VIII.

JOHN STUART MILL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION, 1806—1873.

I.

If there is one political thinker who towers head and shoulders above all others in this nineteenth century, that thinker is John Stuart Mill. He reminds us of the ancient Greek philosophers —so calm, so dispassionate, so impersonal, so completely master of the subjects of which he treats. Hitherto, in this series of sketches, we have been concerned mainly with the men of action in politics. Mill belongs to the men of thought. The men of thought preside over the birth of history; the men of action enact the drama. The influence of the former is deeper, wider, more far-reaching. They help to mould the thought, and therefore the life, of future generations. Their words, studied in our great schools and universities, become the doctrines and formulas of ministries and policies, and are so carried to the ends of the earth. Of these men of thought, in the domain of politics, John Stuart Mill was one of the Masters.

Mill was born in London on the 20th of May, 1806. His education, both elementary and higher, may be said to have begun in his cradle. "I have no remembrance of the time," he says in his "Autobiography," "when I began to learn Greek. I have been told that it was when I was three years old. My earliest recollection on the subject is that of committing to memory what my father termed vocables, being lists of common Greek words, with their signification in English, which he wrote out for me on cards. Of grammar, until some years later, I learnt no more than the inflexions of the nouns and verbs; but, after a course of vocables, proceeded at once to translation; and I faintly remember going through 'Æsop's Fables,' the first Greek book which

I read. I learnt no Latin until my eighth year." Arithmetic, at this time, was reserved for the evenings. Here is part of his reading before he reached the age of eight: Herodotus, Xenophon's "Anabasis," "Cyropœdia," and "Memorials of Socrates"; some of the lives of the philosophers, by Diogenes Laertius; part of Lucian; the first six Dialogues of Plato (in the common arrangement), Robertson's, Hume's, and Gibbon's histories; Watson's "Philip the Second and Third"; Hooke's "History of Rome"; Rollin's "Ancient History"; Langhorne's "Plutarch"; Mosheim; and for lighter reading, Anson's Voyages, "Robinson Crusoe," "Arabian Nights," "Don Quixote," and Miss Edgeworth's tales. In his eighth year he began learning Latin, and from this time acted as teacher to his younger brothers and sisters. About the same time he began to read the Greek poets, and a little later to study Euclid and algebra.

But this was only the mechanical part of his education. His father—James Mill—was both historian and philosopher, and the cold, critical, unimaginative nature of his mind made itself felt in his methods of training and education. He bestowed especial care on the training of John, with results which, though possibly beneficial to the world at large, seem to have been purchased at too great a cost to the finer and tenderer feelings of child nature. John always speaks of his father with the highest respect, but we gather from the "Autobiography" that the deeper springs of affection were seldom touched. "I never was a boy," he once said, a sentence which, in itself, is a condemnation of the severer aspects of his father's training.

Part of this training consisted in the systematic and almost daily examination of the boy by the father. "My father's health," he says, to quote again from the "Autobiography," "required considerable and constant exercise, and he walked habitually before breakfast, generally in the green lanes towards Hornsey. In these walks I always accompanied him, and with my earliest recollections of green fields and wild flowers, is mingled that of the account I gave him daily of what I had read the day before." And again, "I well remember how, and in what particular walk, in the neighbourhood of Bagshot Heath, he first attempted by questions to make me think on the subject, and frame some

conception of what constituted the utility of the syllogistic logic, and when I had failed in this, to make me understand it by explanations."

So the education and training continued, becoming more severe with the years. Different branches of science, political economy, logic, and philosophy were added to previous studies. His father gave him "a sort of lectures" in their walks, and then required a written account of what he had said, "which he made me re-write over and over again until it was clear, precise, and tolerably complete... I do not believe that any scientific teaching ever was more thorough, or better fitted for training the faculties, than the mode in which logic and political economy were taught to me by my father. Striving, even in an exaggerated degree, to call forth the activity of my faculties, by making me find out everything for myself, he gave his explanations not before, but after, I had felt the full force of the difficulties; and not only gave me an accurate knowledge of these two great subjects, as far as they were then understood, but made me a thinker on both... Mine was not an education of cram. My father never permitted anything which I learnt to degenerate into a mere exercise of memory. He strove to make the understanding not only go along with every step of the teaching, but, if possible, precede it."

For Mill's opinion and summing-up of the advantages and disadvantages of this system of education, I must refer the reader to the "Autobiography," which he will find intensely interesting. On the intellectual side it was distinctly advantageous; on the emotional side it, or rather its method, had many drawbacks. But this thorough training and discipline undoubtedly laid the foundation, better, perhaps, than a University training could have done, for Mill's great, though unostentatious, after-career and influence.

In the year 1820, when Mill had reached the age of fourteen, there came a break in this student-life. He was invited by Sir Samuel Bentham—brother to the great Jeremy, with whom Mill had been acquainted from his earliest years—to spend six months with the family in the South of France, a visit which was extended to nearly a year. But the visit was by no means a holiday. Here is a sample day: "July 7th. Rose 5-45; five chapters Voltaire till 7; till 7-15, forty-six lines of Virgil; till 8, Lucian's

"Jupiter Confutatus"; music lesson till 9; Lucian continued till 9-30, and finished after breakfast at 10-15; a call; read Thomson and made tables till 12-15; seven propositions of Legendre; till 1-30 wrote exercises and various miscellanies; till 2-30 the treatise on Adverbs; till 3-45 Thomson; "Livre Géographique" and "Miscellanies" till 5; goes for first lesson to music-mistress; dined on return; then dancing lesson." In 1821 he returned to England, read up the history of the French Revolution, which fired his imagination, studied much English philosophy, and made the acquaintance of many young men who were destined to attain some celebrity, including Macaulay, Charles Villiers, Romilly, Lord Belper, and John and Charles Austin. In May, 1823, his professional occupation for the next thirty-five years of his life was determined by his father securing him an appointment in the corresponding office of the East India Company, where he ultimately rose to one of the highest positions.

So ends the life of the youth. The life of the man was equally strenuous. The first of his writings to appear in print were published in the "Traveller" newspaper in 1822—that is, when he was sixteen years of age, and during the next year a considerable number of articles by him appeared in the "Traveller" and the "Morning Chronicle." About the same time he started the Utilitarian Society, and a year or two afterwards became one of the most frequent speakers at the Speculative Debating Society. He soon became known as one of the champions of utilitarianism and philosophic Radicalism. In 1824 he began to write for the "Westminster Review," and soon became its most frequent contributor. At the same time he was learning German, and reading two mornings a week, from 8-30 to 10, with the members of the Utilitarian Society. About this time—at the age of twenty—there occurred what he calls "a crisis" in his mental history. Hitherto, his mind had been full of the thought of human improvement, and the hopes and struggles connected with it. Suddenly, he found himself in a state of unaccountable depression, during which this question occurred to him, "Suppose that all your objects in life were realised, that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant, would this be a great joy and

happiness to you?" And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered "No!" "At this my heart sank within me; the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down. All my happiness was to have been found in the continual pursuit of this end. The end had ceased to charm, and how could there ever again be any interest in the means? I seemed to have nothing left to live for. At first I hoped that the cloud would pass away of itself; but it did not. A night's sleep—the sovereign remedy for the smaller vexations of life—had no effcct on it. I woke to a renewed consciousness of the woful fact. For some months the cloud seemed to grow thicker and thicker." This stage of depression was really a reaction from his previous training, which had been too narrowly critical and rationalistic. The feelings had been dwarfed, the imagination starved. His father had cut up human nature into sections, developed those parts which he thought to be of most value, and treated the others with negligence and even scorn. The experience is worth noting, because it had a distinctly modifying influence on Mill's own philosophy. He was not so rigidly utilitarian—in the narrow sense—as before. He still held, with the Utilitarians, that happiness is the test of conduct and the supreme end of life. But the word received an enormous ennoblement and expansion; it should not be the direct end, but an end found, as it were, by the way; it should not only embrace the whole of humanity, but should be an ideal towards which humanity itself should reach. It is worth noting also that the author from whom he got most help during this trying experience, and whose words came as "a medicine" to his mind, was Wordsworth, whom most people enjoy best after they have passed the storm and stress of youth.

In reality, Mill was throwing off, or rather modifying, the influence which his father's theories had had upon him, in more ways than one. He found that the problems of government and democracy were much more complex than he had been led to believe by Bentham and his father; that the old political economy, with its theory of "freedom of contract," had by no means said the last word as to methods of social improvement; and that the theories of the socialist school, especially that of Saint-Simon and

Auguste Comte, had a decided value in forming the ideal towards which human society should tend.

From 1830 to 1840 Mill was virtually laying the foundation for the larger, permanent philosophic and economic works which made so deep an impression on his generation. He was at the same time writing continually for the newspapers, and for the "London Review," the "London and Westminster Review," "Tait's Magazine," and the "Jurist." He was also writing his "System of Logic." Meanwhile he had received rapid promotion at the India House. In 1828 he was promoted over the heads of all the clerks, and made an assistant, sixth in rank, at £600 a year. By 1836 he had reached third place, with a salary of £1,200 a year. In 1843 the "System of Logic" was published, and achieved an immediate success. It was received with admiration and enthusiasm by the advanced school in philosophy and sociology. Widely used as an authoritative treatise in our Universities, the "Logic" is one of those works which alone would have established the world-wide influence and reputation of any man. The same may be said of his "Principles of Political Economy," which appeared in 1848, and for which Mill had been prepared both by his father's training and his own after-studies.

In 1851, Mill was married to Mrs. John Taylor, with whom he had been on terms of the most intimate friendship for many years. This friendship, and the marriage by which, two years after the death of Mr. Taylor, it was consummated, forms really the poem of Mill's life. It is hardly possible to convey an idea of the admiration and affection in which she was held by him. I need only quote part of the dedication of his work on "Liberty," and the inscription which Mill wrote for her grave. Both are written in a strain of almost worshipful exaltation. "To the beloved and deplored memory of her who was the inspirer, and in part the author, of all that is best in my writings—the friend and wife, whose exalted sense of truth and right was my strongest incitement, and whose approbation was my chief reward—I dedicate this volume... Were I but capable of interpreting to the world one-half the great thoughts and noble feelings which are buried in her grave, I should be the medium of a greater benefit to it than is ever likely to arise from anything that I can

write, unprompted and unassisted by her all but unrivalled wisdom." And for her grave he wrote: "Her great and loving heart, her noble soul, her clear, powerful, original, and comprehensive intellect, made her the guide and support, the instructor in wisdom, and the example in goodness, as she was the sole earthly delight of those who had the happiness to belong to her. As earnest for all public good as she was generous and devoted to all who surrounded her, her influence has been felt in many of the greatest improvements of the age, and will be in those still to come. Were there even a few hearts and intellects like hers, this earth would already become the hoped for heaven." Mrs. Mill died in 1858, and Mill, his whole future life overshadowed by his great loss, set himself, as he pathetically says, "because I know that she would have wished it, to endeavour to make the best of what life I have left, and to work on for her purposes with such diminished strength as can be derived from thoughts of her, and communion with her memory."

The first fruits of this determination were seen in fresh literary labour and the production of several new works. "Liberty"—virtually the joint work of himself and his wife—appeared in 1859, and "Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform" the same year. Mill had already retired on pension in 1858, owing to the transfer of the Indian Government from the Company to the Crown. In 1861 his treatise on "Representative Government" was published; in 1863, his most considerable ethical treatise, "Utilitarianism"; and in 1865, his "Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy."

In 1865, Mill, on the invitation of the Westminster Radicals, became a Parliamentary candidate for that constituency. The candidature was a unique one. Mill wrote to his supporters, in response to their invitation, that he would neither canvass nor incur any expense in the election. If elected, he could not undertake to give any of his time and labour to their local interests. He would answer no questions on the subject of his religious opinions; and he advocated the right of women to representation in Parliament on the same terms as men—then a political heresy. A well-known literary man gave it as his opinion "that the Almighty Himself would have no chance of being elected on such

a programme." Mill's supporters, however, decided to adopt him. His opponents were not very scrupulous. They placarded the walls of the constituency in large type, with a famous passage from his "Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy," directed against the doctrine that God governs the world on principles which the highest human morality would not sanction. The whole passage runs as follows: "When I am told that I must believe this (doctrine), and at the same time call this being by the names which express and affirm the highest human morality, I say in plain terms that I will not. Whatever power such a being may have over me, there is one thing which he shall not do—he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go." Despite the tactics of his enemies, however, Mill was elected by a majority of some hundreds over his Conservative opponent.

Mill was very active in current politics at this time, both in the House and out of it. He took a leading part in the agitation against Governor Eyre for his high-handed conduct in the Jamaica insurrection; and he was largely instrumental, through his great influence with the Reform Leaguers of the time, in preventing a second riot in Hyde Park, where the reformers, in defiance of the Government, had determined to test the right of public meeting. Inside the House he spoke frequently on such subjects as the Irish question, the Irish Church, the Reform proposals, the National Debt, the Jamaica question, capital punishment, and the Alabama claims. But he was no orator, and he probably influenced the House more by what he *was* than by what he said. Mr. Gladstone called him "the Saint of Rationalism," and said of him afterwards: "He did us all good." At the General Election of 1868, Mill was defeated at Westminster, and retired to Avignon in the south of France. A letter written in 1871 to George Odger, a working-man's candidate for Southwark, is interesting as giving his opinions and advice on a question of policy which has much agitated labour politicians. "It is plain that the Whigs intend to monopolise political power as long as they can without coalescing in any degree with the

Radicals. The working-men are quite right in allowing Tories to get into the House to defeat this exclusive feeling of the Whigs, and may do it without sacrificing any principle. The working-men's policy is to insist upon their own representation, and in default of success, to permit Tories to be sent into the House until the Whig majority is seriously threatened, when, of course, the Whigs will be happy to *compromise*, and allow a few working-men representatives in the House." The italics are mine. Mill, though holding advanced views, both socially and politically, was not an extremist, and recognised the absolute necessity for compromise, as well as the necessity, occasionally, for extreme measures which would force a compromise.

In 1866, Mill was elected Lord Rector of St. Andrew's University. On retiring to Avignon, he again devoted himself more closely to literary work. His work on the "Subjection of Women" appeared in 1869. For some time previously he had been busy preparing a new edition of his father's "Analysis of the Human Mind," and he was also meditating a work on Socialism. Life, however, could not be so strenuous with him as it had been, and he lived very happily and comfortably with his step-daughter at Avignon. In 1871 he attended Grote's funeral at Westminster Abbey, and made the remark, "In no very long time I shall be laid in the ground with a very different ceremonial from that." Two years more, however, elapsed before the end came. "His favourite text," says Mr. W. L. Courtney, "had been, 'The night cometh when no man can work,' and on the night of his death (May 8th), when he was informed that he would not recover, he said simply, 'My work is done.'" So died the "Saint of Rationalism," than whom the Catholic Church itself could hardly find a greater.

His "Autobiography," "Three Essays on Religion," and "Chapters on Socialism" were published within a few years after his death, and his correspondence with Gustave d'Eichthal, a St. Simonian, appeared quite recently. It is impossible to give even a bare account of his teachings in a brief sketch like this, but one must try to give an outline of his position and principles on the political, social, and economic questions with which these sketches are more closely concerned.

II.

It has often been said that John Stuart Mill represents an age of transition, and that, therefore, much of his thought is transitional. This is largely true, but it is only part of the truth. Mill's mind and nature were so impersonal and so fair that they were, in the highest degree, receptive of all the best influences and teachings of his time. But Mill was something more than an interpreter of his age. There are occasions when he rises above it, and becomes almost prophetic in his insight into the future. Wherever destructive work was needed, as in the rottenness which cumbered our political institutions in the earlier half of the century, he was a giant on the attacking side. But he saw more clearly than did his predecessors and contemporaries the necessity for constructive work also. Especially, in the field of economics, did he inaugurate a new and humaner method of approaching the problems which surround this great subject. And in a hundred other ways he set the thoughtful minds of his generation thinking on lines which were destined to lead to higher levels of political, social, and even religious life.

It is impossible, here, to give an outline of the whole of Mill's teaching—one can only touch, in the briefest way, on those of his works which are most closely connected with the subject-matter of these sketches. First in the order of development, though it was written at a comparatively late period of Mill's life, comes the work "On Liberty." I say first in the order of development because it represents and defends principles and ideas which, though in a sense permanent, needed much greater insistence and support in the first half of the century than they need to-day. It is significant that the work was written at a time when Mill and his wife had declared themselves, at least in ideal, Socialists. [1] Hence it may be concluded that he saw no danger to individual liberty in the adoption of the socialist ideal. Indeed, the adoption of this ideal may be necessary to the full development of individuality. This, at any rate to Mill, is the true end of social science. "It is not," he says, "by wearing down

[1] See "Autobiography," pp. 231—234. Sixth edition.

into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings, and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. In proportion to the development of his individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is, therefore, capable of being more valuable to others." Hence the end of government and the end of man, "prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole." The treatise on "Liberty," then, is a clear, cold, logical application of the text from Wilhelm von Humboldt's "Sphere and Duties of Government," by which it is prefaced. "The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity."[1] This is not the liberty, once so much praised by many, to indirectly coerce others to one's own uses for the purpose of private profit, or the "liberty to die of starvation," so keenly satirised by Carlyle—it is the liberty, and, therefore, the opportunity, for all to develop their highest powers and capacities to the fullest extent. It is unfortunate that Mill lays so much stress on what Government should not do, rather than what it *should* do, to promote this liberty, but the limitation was virtually imposed upon him by the circumstances of the time. That is all the more reason why the "Liberty" should be read in connection with Mill's other political and economic works, which deal more fully with other aspects of the science of government. The chapter on "The Liberty of Thought and Discussion" is especially valuable, Mill recognising that the greatest danger to liberty of discussion in our modern days comes, not from the interference of Government, but from social pre-

[1] "On Liberty." pp. 36, 37. People's edition.

judices, customs, fashions, the despotism of ignorance and selfishness, and the fear of losing social caste. Indeed, the whole book is at once a tonic for timid heretics and reformers, and as complete an answer to bigotry and intolerance as could possibly be given. Kingsley, on reading it, declared that it made him "a clearer-headed, braver-minded man on the spot."

Passing from the consideration of this principle, which, in so far as it relates to the necessity for perfect freedom in the formation and expression of conscientious thought and opinion, is one of the first essentials of a democratic state of society, we come to Mill's opinions and teachings as to the ideal form of government. "The ideally best form of government," he says, "is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the community, every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being, at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in the government, by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general." [1] It does not, of course, follow that this ideal is practicable in all times, circumstances, and states of civilisation, but it is that towards which all progressive societies should tend to conform. "There ought to be no pariahs in a full-grown and civilised nation; no persons disqualified, except through their own default. Everyone is degraded, whether aware of it or not, when other people, without consulting him, take upon themselves unlimited power to regulate his destiny." [2] But there are, in the nature of the case, necessary conditions attached to the realisation of this ideal. And one of these conditions is universal free education. [3] "I regard it as wholly inadmissible that any person should participate in the suffrage without being able to read, write, and perform the common operations of arithmetic... This condition should, therefore, in all cases accompany universal suffrage; and it would, after a few years, exclude none but those who cared so little for the privilege, that their vote, if given, would not in general be an indication of any real political opinion." [4] Anyone who might be excluded,

[1] "On Representative Government," p. 21. People's edition.
[2] Ibid., p. 68. [3] Ibid., p. 68. [4] Ibid., pp. 68, 69.

would really be excluded "by his own laziness." But though all should share in the responsibilities of government, Mill will not allow that all have a right to share on equal terms. "When two persons who have a joint interest in any business differ in opinion, does justice require that both opinions should be held of exactly equal value?... No one but a fool, and only a fool of a peculiar description, feels offended by the acknowledgment that there are others whose opinion, and even whose wish, is entitled to a greater amount of consideration than his."[1] How, then, should these opinions be valued, and what should determine the amount of voting power which should be conferred on different individuals? Not considerations of property. That would be "entirely inadmissible." Mill would determine it by and through a system of national education and general examination. In default of this, he even makes the dangerous suggestion, that a person's occupation might be made a test—a suggestion which, in my humble opinion, should be unhesitatingly condemned on the ground that it would tend to perpetuate unworthy class interests and distinctions. All this runs counter to our modern notions of "one man one vote"; but with reference to an educational scale of voting power, one must admit that there is something to be said for Mill's contention, when one remembers the number of elections that are determined by the votes of men whose ignorance and cupidity are played upon by unscrupulous political partisans.

Mill would grant the suffrage to women on the same terms as those on which it is granted to men. He would provide for a system of proportional representation by which minorities might be sure of representation—a necessary provision, as new truth always begins with minorities. He also favours Hare's system of election—large constituencies and considerable choice of candidates, and a method of voting by which the vote of each citizen, if not needed to secure the election of the candidate for whom it was cast, could be transferred to the second in order in the voter's preference. That is, if, in the election of ten members in a given constituency, the one highest on the poll should receive 10,000 votes, and only 6,000 were really necessary to secure his

[1] "On Representative Government," pp. 70, 71. People's edition.

election, the 4,000 wasted votes would be transferred to the candidates for whom a secondary preference had been expressed on the voting paper, and would then be utilised, instead of thrown away. Under our present system, a minority of votes may actually command a majority of representatives. This scheme, however, is somewhat complicated, and probably a system of second ballots will be tried in preference to it. It must be remembered that democratic systems of government and election are still very crude and infantile, and numerous developments are necessary in order to secure a perfect expression of the will of the electorate. Mill argued against the ballot, and in favour of shorter Parliaments—triennial, for preference—and the payment of election expenses out of the rates.

One of the most suggestive of Mill's proposals is one with reference to the method of legislation. He makes a distinction between "controlling the business of Government and actually doing it," or, between "the function of making laws and the function of getting good laws made." He therefore recommends the establishment of a Legislative Commission, composed of highly-trained minds, on which would fall the task of framing laws in obedience to the instructions of Parliament. "No measure would become a law until expressly sanctioned by Parliament; and Parliament, or either House, would have the power not only of rejecting, but of sending back a bill to the Commission for reconsideration or improvement. Either House might also exercise its initiative by referring any subject to the Commission, with directions to prepare a law." This would not only save an immense amount of time, but the actual work of legislation would be more efficiently done. Mill holds that a large representative body is radically unfit for the work of making laws—it should rather represent the will of the people, and see that that will is put into shape and carried into actual practice by its servants. He also emphasises the distinction between legislation and administration, on which so much confusion exists in the minds of many modern democrats, who appear to think that the popular will should concern itself with every detail of administration, on which it may be in a state of absolute ignorance. "The proper duty of a representative assembly in regard to matters of administration," he says, "is not to decide them

by its own vote, but to take care that the persons who have to decide them shall be the proper persons." [1] And again: "No executive functionaries should be appointed by popular election, neither by the votes of the people themselves, nor by those of their representatives. The entire business of government is skilled employment; the qualifications for the discharge of it are of that special and professional kind which cannot be properly judged of except by persons who have themselves some share of those qualifications, or some practical experience of them. The business of finding the fittest persons to fill public employments—not merely selecting the best who offer, but looking out for the absolutely best, and taking note of all fit persons who are met with, that they may be found when wanted—is very laborious, and requires a delicate as well as highly-conscientious discernment." [2] The whole of Mill's writings on this subject, and especially chapters five and fourteen of his work on "Representative Government," are well worth careful study. Democracy is still in its infancy, and it will make many mistakes. A study of Mill will give us clearer insight, and put us on our guard against unforeseen dangers. Perhaps I cannot better conclude this portion of my subject than by quoting a short passage from his "Dissertations and Discussions": "We should endeavour to set before ourselves the ideal conception of a perfect representative Government, however distant, not to say doubtful, may be the hope of actually obtaining it; to the intent that whatever is now done may, if possible, be in the direction of what is best, and may bring the actual fact nearer, and not further off from the standard of right, at however great a distance it may still remain from that standard. Though we may be only sailing from the port of London to that of Hull, let us still guide our navigation by the North Star."

III.

Passing from the political to the economic and social side of Mill's teachings, we get still clearer evidence of that restrained

[1] "On Representative Government," p. 38. [2] Ibid., p. 104.

"enthusiasm for humanity" which makes itself felt in all his speculations. And here again we see how faithfully he represents the transitional character of his age, and yet how he so often rises above it. A large part of his "Political Economy" is simply a re-statement and systematisation of the work of his predecessors, but it is also much more. He has left behind the abstract method of his fore-runners. His work is instinct with human feelings and moral ideals, which tend to modify the application of abstract principles. He draws a distinction between the laws and conditions of the production of wealth, and the laws of distribution. The former, he says, "partake of the character of physical truths. There is nothing optional or arbitrary in them." But "it is not so with the distribution of wealth. That is a matter of human institution solely. The things once there, mankind, individually or collectively, can do with them as they like... Society can subject the distribution of wealth to whatever rules it thinks best." [1] Here is quite a new standpoint compared with that of his predecessors. Wages, for example, or the remuneration of labour, becomes subject not to physical laws which may, if uncontrolled, drive down that remuneration to a bare subsistence level, but to moral laws and influences depending on the character of a people. This new standpoint, which opens long vistas of human improvement, was due to three influences working upon and in Mill's mind. First, his early acquaintance with the writings of Comte and the socialists of the school of St. Simon; second, the influence of his wife's personality; and, lastly, that "enthusiasm of humanity" to which I have already alluded, and which was really one of the strongest formative elements in Mill's complex nature. In reference to his wife and himself, for example, he writes thus in his "Autobiography": "Our ideal of ultimate improvement went far beyond democracy, and would class us decidedly under the general designation of socialists. While we repudiated with the greatest energy that tyranny of society over the individual which most socialistic systems are supposed to involve, we yet looked forward to a time when society will no longer be divided into the idle and the industrious; when

[1] "Principles of Political Economy." Book II, chap. I, sec. 1.

the rule that they who do not work shall not eat, will be applied not to paupers only, but impartially to all; when the division of the produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on the accident of birth, will be made by concert on an acknowledged principle of justice... The social problems of the future we considered to be, how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour."[1] No wonder that the dry bones of the old political economy were shaken by a mind that could speculate like this; that his treatise on the subject should include a chapter like that on the "probable future of the labouring classes"; and that that treatise should also contain passages like the following: "If the choice were to be made between communism, with all its chances, and the present state of society, with all its sufferings and injustices; if the institution of private property necessarily carried with it, as a consequence, that the produce of labour should be apportioned as we now see it, almost in an inverse ratio to the labour—the largest portions to those who have never worked at all, the next largest to those whose work is almost nominal, and so in a descending scale, the remuneration dwindling as the work grows harder and more disagreeable, until the most fatiguing and exhausting bodily labour cannot count with certainty on being able to earn even the necessaries of life; if this or communism were the alternative, all the difficulties, great or small, of communism would be but as dust in the balance."[2]

It is obvious, then, that even in his "Political Economy," Mill condemned the existing order of things as strongly as does the modern socialist. In a famous passage, he questions whether "all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being. They have enabled a greater population to live the same life of drudgery and imprisonment, and an increased number of manufacturers and others to make fortunes. They have increased the comforts of the middle classes. But

[1] "Autobiography." pp. 231, 232.

[2] "Principles of Political Economy." Book II., chap 1., sec. 3.

they have not yet begun to effect those great changes in human destiny which it is in their nature and in their futurity to accomplish."[1] And yet Mill could hardly be called a socialist, except in an ideal, or, perhaps, I should say a Fabian, sense. His suggestions are very tentative. He will not indulge in a wholesale condemnation of competition. "I agree," he says, "with the socialist writers in their conception of the form which industrial operations tend to assume in the advance of improvement, and I entirely share their opinion that the time is ripe for commencing this transformation, and that it should, by all just and effectual means, be aided and encouraged. But while I agree and sympathise with socialists in this practical portion of their aims, I utterly dissent from the most conspicuous and vehement part of their teaching, their declamations against competition."[2] And he approvingly quotes a French writer who says that "the deepest root of the evils and iniquities which fill the industrial world is not competition, but the subjection of labour to capital, and the enormous share which the possessors of the instruments of industry are able to take from the produce."[3] "Competition may not be the best conceivable stimulus, but it is at present a necessary one, and no one can foresee the time when it will not be indispensable to progress."[4]

It is obvious from these passages how strongly Mill is swayed by different ideals. He favours the socialist ideal, but cannot yet see or forecast the industrial machinery by which it is to be realised. He does not attempt to discriminate between baneful competition and healthy competition—say, for determining respective capacities. He stands "between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born." Even while commending competition, he is enthusiastic in praise of co-operation. He calls the latter a "noble ideal," and says "there is no more certain incident of the progressive change taking place in society than the continual growth of the principle and practice of co-opera-

[1] Ibid. Book IV., chap. VI., sec. II. It must be remembered that this was written fifty years ago. Mill would certainly not write the first sentence again to-day.

[2] Ibid. Book IV., chap. VII., sec. 7. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

tion"[1]—"the transformation of human life from a conflict of classes struggling for opposite interests to a friendly rivalry in the pursuit of a good common to all."[2] And again: "The form of association, which, if mankind continue to improve, must be expected in the end to predominate, is not that which can exist between a capitalist as chief, and workpeople without a voice in the management, but the association of the labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and working under managers elected or removable by themselves."[3] "There is not a more accurate test of the progress of civilisation than the progress of the power of co-operation."[4]

This sympathetic, yet reserved and cautious attitude towards socialism, Mill retained to the end of his life, as may be seen by his "Autobiography," and the "Chapters on Socialism," which were published after his death. He was certainly not to be blamed for his caution. The time was not ripe for schemes. We have travelled a long way since his day towards the municipalisation of certain industries, direct employment of labour by governing bodies, the regulation of competition, and the control of industry through both the Legislature and trade unions. Yet all these, if Mill did not foreshadow, he virtually predicted, in substance, if not in form. "The result of our review of the various difficulties of socialism," he says, "has led us to the conclusion that the various schemes for managing the productive resources of the country by public, instead of private, agency, have a case for trial, and some of them may eventually establish their claims to preference over the existing order of things; but that they are at present workable only by the *élite* of mankind, and have yet to prove their power of training mankind at large to the state of improvement which they pre-suppose."[5] As to one other socialistic reform, he was still more emphatic—the

[1] Ibid. Book IV., chap. I., sec. 2.

[2] Ibid. Book IV., chap. VII., sec. 6.

[3] Ibid. Book IV., chap. VII., sec. 6.

[4] "Dissertations and Discussions." Vol. I., p. 165.

[5] "Chapters on Socialism," in *Fortnightly Review* for 1879, p. 525.

absorption by the State of that "unearned increment" of value which is created by the growth of society, and to which private individuals have no rightful claim. [1] Sometimes, indeed, he seems to lean more towards communism than to socialism, as when he says: "For my own part, not believing in universal selfishness, I have no difficulty in admitting that communism would even now be practicable among the *élite* of mankind, and may become so among the rest." [2]

It only remains for me to add a few words as to Mill's ethical standpoint, which is closely connected with his social philosophy. His only treatise which deals exclusively with the subject is his "Utilitarianism," a name which is apt to be misleading. Mill protested with indignation against that narrow view of the utilitarian theory which represented, or mis-represented, it as laying down personal pleasure as the standard of morality and the supreme end of life. "The utilitarian morality," he says, "does recognise in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others... I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality." [3] And as to the consequences of adopting the utilitarian ideal, he writes: "Society between equals can only exist on the understanding that the interests of all are to be regarded equally. And since, in all states of civilisation, every person has equals, everyone is obliged to live on these terms with somebody; and in every age some advance is made towards a state in which it will be impossible to live permanently on

[1] "Principles of Political Economy." Book V., chap. II., sec. 5.

[2] "Representative Government," p. 22. See also "Chapters on Socialism" (III).

[3] "Utilitarianism," pp. 24, 25.

other terms with anybody. In this way people grow up unable to conceive as possible to them a state of total disregard of other people's interests... Not only does all strengthening of social ties and all healthy growth of society give to each individual a stronger personal interest in practically consulting the welfare of others; it also leads him to identify his *feelings* more and more with their good, or at least with an ever greater degree of practical consideration for it... The good of others becomes to him a thing naturally and necessarily to be attended to, like any of the physical conditions of our existence... Consequently, the smallest germs of this feeling are laid hold of and nourished by the contagion of sympathy and the influences of education; and a complete web of corroborative association is woven round it by the powerful agency of the external sanctions. This mode of conceiving ourselves and human life, as civilisation goes on, is felt to be more and more natural. Every step in political improvement renders it more so by removing the sources of opposition of interest, and levelling those inequalities of legal privilege between individuals or classes, owing to which there are large portions whose happiness it is still practicable to disregard. In an improving state of the human mind, the influences are constantly on the increase, which tend to generate in each individual a feeling of unity with all the rest; which feeling, if perfect, would make him never think of, or desire, any beneficial condition for himself, in the benefits of which they are not included." [1]

Such is the brief outline of Mill's political and social theories which the limits of this sketch allow. I must conclude by advising my readers to go to the works themselves for a fuller and clearer view, by a study of which everyone can hardly fail to be influenced towards a more thoughtful attitude respecting measures and methods of political and social reform.

[1] Ibid. pp. 47, 48.

IX.

CHARLES KINGSLEY AND THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT, 1819—1875.

Charles Kingsley—clergyman, poet, novelist, and social reformer—represents the social movement of the middle of the century on its inner, spiritual side, as Shaftesbury and the factory reformers represented it on its material side. He was happily endowed with that fine spirit and power of personality which brings inspiration to whatever movement it may be connected with. The Church of England owes much to him. The social and industrial movements of forty years ago owe much to him. All sections of religious life and thought are largely indebted to him for the wider and freer religious atmosphere we breathe today. Frowned upon, misrepresented, and bitterly and maliciously attacked by the orthodox people of his time, he was, nevertheless, one of the healthiest and most inspiring influences in the social and religious life of the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Kingsley was born at Holne, in Devonshire, on June 12th, 1819. At the age of five, his precocious intellectual energy showed itself in the production of sermons, poems, and brain fever, from which latter complaint he suffered more than once. His father, who was also a clergyman, was frequently transferred from one living to another, but the fishing village of Clovelly, in Devonshire, where Charles spent part of his boyhood, has become historically associated with his name. It was here that he became familiarised with that wild coast scenery and seafaring life, the impressions of which still live in some of his poems and novels. Whilst living at Clovelly his father sent him to a school at Clifton, near Bristol, where he was first brought into contact, as a spectator, with that stormy side of public life in which he afterwards played so prominent and tranquillising a part. This was in 1831-2, when the excitement over the great Reform Bill was at its height, and

boiling over in a mad riot at Bristol, amongst other places—a riot in which some hundreds of people were killed. From Clifton, he went to Helston Grammar School, enjoying to the full the healthy, active, outdoor sports of the school; then to King's College, London; then to Cambridge. Here religious doubts began to enter his mind. These, however, were slowly overcome, and it was doubtless the process of overcoming them which led him to give up the intention of entering the profession of the law, and study for holy orders. At the age of twenty-three he was appointed to a curacy at Eversley, in Hampshire, and so entered upon active public work. The writers who had the greatest formative influence upon his mind up to this time were Frederick Denison Maurice (the eminent theologian) and Thomas Carlyle.

Kingsley was soon head over ears in work in his parish. He was daily brought into contact with the life of the agricultural labourer, then one of unrelieved sordidness, hardship, and degradation. "Nothing was more real," says one of his friends of this period of his life, "than Kingsley's visiting. He believed absolutely in the message he bore to the poor, and in the health his ministrations conveyed to their souls; but he was, at the same time, a zealous sanitary reformer, and cared for their bodies also. I was with him once when he visited a sick man suffering from fever. The atmosphere of the little ground-floor bedroom was horrible; but before the rector said a word, he ran upstairs, and, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants of the cottage, bored with a large auger he had brought with him, several holes above the sick man's head, for ventilation." By these means, by constant visiting, and the establishment of regular evening meetings, night schools, and classes, he soon acquired considerable influence over the people of his parish. So several uneventful years passed away, until there came the startling events of 1848. Revolution broke out on the Continent. Riots took place in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Liverpool. The Duke of Wellington was put in command of the troops, and he at once barricaded the bridges and Downing-street, and garrisoned the Bank of England and other public buildings. The Chartist agitation was then at its height, and the more hot-headed supporters of

the movement were drilling themselves on the moors at midnight, and talking of using physical force against the Government. At the same time, says Thomas Hughes, "a series of articles appeared in the 'Morning Chronicle' on 'London Labour and the London Poor,' which startled the well-to-do classes out of their jubilant and scornful attitude, and disclosed a state of things which made all fair-minded people wonder, not that there had been violent speaking and some rioting, but that the Metropolis had escaped a revolution."

It was this state of things that brought Charles Kingsley to the front as a social reformer. With a heart alive with sympathy, full of enthusiasm for God and the right, burning with indignation against all forms of wrong, and hating with all the intensity of his nature that narrowness of mind which looked upon religion as the saving of one's own soul and body, without much consideration of other people's souls and bodies, he was soon in the heat of agitation and controversy. He preached to his own people on the social and political disturbances of the time—a thing not so common then as now—and joined himself to a band of clever young University men, clergymen, and barristers, led by Frederick Denison Maurice, who called themselves Christian Socialists, and who were striving to guide the agitated forces of society into safe, constitutional, and self-educative channels. New periodicals were started; tracts and pamphlets were issued, and Kingsley almost immediately became famous as "Parson Lot," the *nom-de-plume* under which he wrote. From the very first he appealed to the self-respect of the men he addressed, denounced the slightest incitement to force or violence, and insisted on the necessity for self-reformation as the preliminary to social or political reformation. "God will only reform society," he said, "on the condition of our reforming every man his own self." "Men's hearts cannot be changed by Acts of Parliament," he continued—a truism which overlooks the fact that if men's hearts and feelings cannot be altogether changed, they can at least be modified for good by wise legislation. "It is mainly the fault of the parsons," he continues, in a letter addressed to the working people, "that you do not know that the true 'Reformer's Guide,' the true poor man's book, the true Voice of God against tyrants, idlers, and humbugs,

is the Bible. The Bible demands for the poor as much, and more, than they demand for themselves; it expresses the deepest yearnings of the poor man's heart far more nobly, more searchingly, more daringly, more eloquently than any modern author has done." One of the most famous of the tracts which he wrote under the name of "Parson Lot" was entitled "Cheap Clothes and Nasty." After describing in detail some of the terrible results of the sweating system which was then, and even still is, practised in the tailoring trade, he asks: "What can be done? First, this can be done. That no man who calls himself a Christian—no man who calls himself a man—shall ever disgrace himself by dealing at any show-shop or slop-shop. It is easy enough to know them. The ticketed garments, the impudent puffs, the trumpery decorations proclaim them—everyone knows them at first sight—he who pretends not to do so is simply either a fool or a liar. Let no man enter them—they are the temples of Moloch—their thresholds are rank with human blood. God's curse is on them, and on those who, by supporting them, are partakers of their sins. Above all, let no clergyman deal at them. Poverty—and many clergymen are poor; doubly poor, because society often requires them to keep up the dress of gentlemen on the income of an artisan; because, too, the demands on their charity are quadruple those of any other class,—yet poverty is no excuse. The thing is damnable; not Christianity only, but common humanity cries out against it. Woe to those who dare to outrage in private the principles which they preach in public. God is not mocked; and his curse will find out the priest at the altar, as well as the nobleman in his castle."

It was about this time, also, that Kingsley wrote his famous books, "Yeast," and "Alton Locke," the former giving a lurid description of the then state of the agricultural population of the country—the monotonous and hopeless daily drudgery, the wretched and overcrowded homes, the dull and degrading recreations and amusements. The teachings of the book may be gathered from the following extract from a speech of the principal character;—"If a man living in civilised society has one right which he can demand, it is this, that the State which exists by his labour shall enable him to develop, or at least not hinder

his developing, his whole faculties to the very utmost, however lofty that may be. While a man who might be an author remains a spade-drudge, or a journeyman while he has capacities for a master, while any man able to rise in life remains by social circumstances lower than he is willing to place himself, that man has a right to complain of the State's injustice and neglect." "Alton Locke" gave an equally or even more vivid description than "Yeast" of the despair, the hopes, the yearnings, the disappointments, the aspirations, of the more intelligent artisans of the towns. The disclosures of the horrors of the sweating system in the tailoring trade had wrought Kingsley's spirit to fever heat, and the result was "Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet." Who, indeed, has not read the book? Who has not been moved by its intense religious fervour, its glowing enthusiasm, its lofty indignation and scorn, its burning words which come straight from the burning heart, its "wild intensity," as Carlyle called it, "which holds the reader fast as by a spell"? And yet the book, although welcomed with joy and enthusiasm by the nobler and more tolerant minds of the day, was received with antagonism and even bitterness by the religious press, and its author denounced as a disgrace to the Church, a corrupter of the morals of youth, and a destroyer of society!

Kingsley, however, continued his social and political educational work, indifferent to the hostility which he had aroused. During the year 1849, when the cholera was making sad havoc in the poorer districts of London, he threw himself into the cause of sanitary reform; preaching, lecturing, and writing in behalf of purity, and cleanliness, and health for the body as well as for the soul. While in London he visited the cholera district of Bermondsey. "Oh, God!" he says, writing to his wife, "what I saw! People having no water to drink—hundreds of them—but the water of the common sewer, which stagnated full of... dead fish, cats, and dogs, under their windows. At the time the cholera was raging, Walsh saw them throwing untold horrors into the ditch, and then dipping out the water and drinking it... It is most pathetic to see the poor souls struggle for cleanliness, to see how they scrub and polish their little scrap of pavement; and then go through the house, and see 'society' leaving at the

back poisons and filth such as would drive a lady mad in twenty-four hours. Oh! that I had the tongue of St. James, to plead for these poor fellows, to tell what I saw myself, to stir up some rich men to go and rescue them from the tyranny of the small shopkeeping landlords, who get their rents out of the flesh and blood of these men."

As soon as the cholera danger was over, Kingsley again threw himself heart and soul into the social movement, writing for a periodical called the "Christian Socialist," and helping in the formation and work of a Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations. It was about this time (1851) that the opposition of his more orthodox brethren came to a head. Kingsley, amongst other clergymen, had been invited to preach one of a series of sermons on social questions in one of the London churches, in connection with the great exhibition of 1851. The incumbent of the church himself begged that the author of "Alton Locke" should be one of the preachers, saying that he had "read Mr. Kingsley's works with the greatest interest." Kingsley duly came down, and preached a sermon on the "Message of the Church to the Labouring Man," taking as his text the well-known words, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor," &c. "What is that Gospel?" he asked. And then went on, "I assert that the business for which God sends a Christian priest in a Christian nation is to preach freedom, equality, and brotherhood in the fullest, deepest, widest meaning of those three great words; that is, as far as he so does, he is a true priest, doing his Lord's work with his Lord's blessing on him; that in so far as he does not, he is no priest at all, but a traitor to God and man... There are two freedoms—the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; the true, where a man is free to do what he ought. Two equalities—the false, which reduces all intellects and all characters to a dead level, and gives the same power to the bad as to the good, to the wise as to the foolish, ending thus in practice in the grossest inequality; the true, wherein each man has equal power to educate and use whatever faculties or talents God has given him, be they less or more. Two brotherhoods—the false, where a man chooses who shall be his brothers, and whom he

will treat as such; the true, in which a man believes that all are his brothers, not by the will of the flesh, or the will of man, but by the will of God, whose children they are all alike... All systems of society which favour the accumulation of capital in a few hands, which oust the masses from the soil which their forefathers possessed of old, which reduce them to the level of serfs and day-labourers, living on wages and on alms, which crush them down with debt, or in any wise degrade and enslave them, or deny them a permanent stake in the Commonwealth, are contrary to the Kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed." As soon as Kingsley had finished his discourse, the incumbent of the church got up at the altar, and said that, while he agreed with some parts of the sermon, he thought it his painful duty to say that he believed much of it to be untrue, and unsound and dangerous in doctrine. Immediately the congregation was full of suppressed excitement. It was thought that Kingsley would reply, but he simply bowed his head, pronounced the Benediction with quiet solemnity, and left the pulpit. The attack thus begun was carried on in the newspapers, and the Bishop of London forbade him to preach in the city. On reading the sermon, however, and after an interview with Kingsley, he withdrew the prohibition. Meanwhile, letters of sympathy were pouring in from all quarters, and there was some talk of starting a free church in which he might be at liberty to teach and preach his views without interference. Exhausted with work and controversy, however, Kingsley had to withdraw from the heat of the conflict, and seek rest and change on the Continent.

On his return to England, he again entered upon active public work, turning his attention to the constructive side of the social problem, more especially in conjunction with Mr. J. M. Ludlow, in the direction of promoting the formation of workmen's productive associations. These early attempts at co-operative production mostly failed, and Kingsley seems to have anticipated as much. Writing several years afterwards, he says: "Association will be the next form of industrial development, I doubt not, for production; but it will require two generations of previous training, both in morality and in drill, to make the workmen capable of it." And again: "As for any schemes of Maurice's or mine, it is

a slight matter whether they have failed or not. The failure of a hundred schemes would not alter my conviction. For it is my belief that not self-interest, but self-sacrifice, is the only law upon which human society can be grounded with any hope of prosperity or permanence."

This prophecy has proved largely true. But I may point out to the reader, that from the economic and politic standpoint, there was a weak place in the Christian socialist form of association. The associations which Kingsley, Maurice, and Ludlow helped to establish were associations of producers—that is, co-operative productive workshops or societies carried on by the workmen themselves. They had no necessary connection with any organised body of co-operative consumers. Hence, with no assured market, and often weak and struggling for want of capital, they could not compete with the highly-organised and expensive establishments and machinery which the great capitalist could command. The modern co-operative movement, profiting by experience, has sought, with some measure of success, to remedy these weaknesses. The great Co-operative Wholesale Societies, which are really associations of consumers, already conduct and manage large productive establishments for the satisfaction of the wants of their federated members, and thus have an assured market for their products, although the "drill" or the education of the producer, is somewhat lost sight of in these establishments from the fact that the workman is not allowed any share or representation in the management. On the other hand, there are a considerable number of successful producers' associations in which the education of the producer, and the development of his character through the responsibilities attaching to the management of industrial organisations, are made the chief aim of association. These societies, through the Labour Association in London, are feeling their way towards federation, and they also invite the co-operation of associations of consumers. They take the name of "co-partnership" societies, from the fact that they provide for the practical co-operation and representation of all the elements which go to make up wealth or value—producer, consumer, and capitalist. It is now practically certain that both these forms of co-operation—federated associations of consumers,

and federated co-partnership societies—are nearer to the solution of the industrial problem than were the Christian Socialist associations of producers, which failed through inherent weakness, and the imperfection of constitutional organisation.

The earlier Chartist and industrial agitation, which had first drawn forth the active sympathies of Kingsley, was now rapidly declining and taking its place in the strata of history, and he turned his attention more particularly to sanitary reform. By means of an address which he delivered at the Midland Institute at Birmingham, a gentleman was prompted to give the sum of £2,000 for the purpose of founding classes and lectures for the teaching of human physiology and the science of health. His own strong love of clean, healthy, active, outdoor life and games, and exercise, and his hatred of disease and dirt in any shape or form, made him as earnest a preacher of the necessity for purity and health for the body as he was for the purity and health of mind and soul. He still found time for literary work, however, and in 1853 his "Hypatia," which had already appeared as a serial, was published in book form. The book, which deals with a stirring period in the early life of Christianity, is penetrated through and through with high moral enthusiasm, but it again elicited most bitter animosity from a section of the Church party. Kingsley's influence, however, was now too powerful to be thwarted. His writings had given him a high place among the *littérateurs* of the time. Honours soon afterwards began to crowd upon him. In 1859 he was appointed one of Her Majesty's Chaplains; in 1860 Professor of Modern History at Cambridge; in 1861 he was invited to give private instruction to the Prince of Wales; and in 1869 he was made a Canon of Chester Cathedral. His social reform work, with the exception of lectures and writings on sanitary science, and in strenuous support of the medical education of women, was now over. I have no space to speak of his literary activity, his novels, poems, lectures, sermons, the publication of which continued almost to the day of his death.

"We should be wary," says Milton, "what persecution we raise against the living labours of public men; how we spill the seasoned life of man preserved and stored up in books; since we see

a kind of homicide may be committed, sometimes a martyrdom" —a quotation which Mrs. Kingsley places at the head of one of her chapters of the "Memories"; and it was certainly well exemplified in the life of Charles Kingsley. Denounced in his early days as a disgrace to the Church and an enemy of society, there stood round his grave in Eversley churchyard, bishops, deans, peers, members of Parliament, Churchmen and Dissenters, soldiers and sailors, artisans and peasants. Men of every rank and profession had felt the influence of his fine personality. He was not merely a clergyman; he was a whole-hearted, high-souled man. "Never shall I forget," said Max Muller, "the moment when for the last time I gazed upon the manly features of Charles Kingsley—features which death had rendered calm, grand, sublime. The constant struggle that in life seemed to allow no rest to his expression; the spirit, like a caged lion, shaking the bars of his prison; the mind striving for utterance, the soul wearying for loving response—all that was over. There remained only the satisfied expression of triumph and peace, as of a soldier who had fought a good fight, and who, while sinking into the stillness of the slumber of death, listens to the distant sounds of music and to the shouts of victory. One saw the ideal man, as Nature had meant him to be."

We, who live in these after days, must be content with the story of his life and work, and the influence of his spirit as it lives and burns in his books. And this, in itself, is a great treasure. What young man or young woman has not been stirred by the wild intensity and burning eloquence of "Alton Locke"? Who has not felt his pulses thrill at the sound of that magnificent lilting chant:—

"The day of the Lord is at hand, at hand!
  Its storms roll up the sky;
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold;
  All dreamers toss and sigh;
The night is darkest before the morn;
When the clouds are heavy then breaks the dawn;
  And the day of the Lord is at hand!
The day of the Lord is at hand!"

Who, also, has not been fascinated by the glowing and stirring pages of "Hypatia"? What schoolboy and schoolgirl has not read and re-read "Three Fishers Went Sailing" and "The Sands of Dee"? What little maiden is there that has not learned by heart those beautiful, well-known lines?—

> "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever,
> Do noble deeds, not dream them all day long,
> And so make Life, Death, and the great Forever,
> One grand, sweet song."

All this, and much more than I can tell, we owe to that strong, large-hearted, loving, generous, chivalrous soul. Living always as in the sight of God, and looking upon his own life as a sacred trust to be spent in the service of the Holy Spirit as it flows forth in every form of good, he helps us by his high example to become better and braver men and women, helping mankind forward also towards the realisation of whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report. Truly, we may say of him as Wordsworth says of the "Happy Warrior"—

> "His high endeavours were an inward light
> That made the path before him always bright."

X.

THOMAS CARLYLE AND THE ORGANISATION OF LABOUR, 1795—1881.

I.

THOMAS CARLYLE and John Ruskin, to whom we now come in the natural order of historical development, have long taken their place as the "prophets" of the nineteenth century. Like Mill, they were men of thought rather than men of action, and consequently they have had, and will have, a more lasting influence on English life and thought than men of action, save of the most powerful type, can possibly exercise. Holding themselves aloof from current politics, they make the politics, because they mould the thought of the future. Apart from their social and economic teachings, both take a high and unique place in English literature. It is, however, mainly to their social and economic teachings that we must confine ourselves in these chapters.

The reader will have noted how, in the period covered by these chapters, the political and the social problem have changed. In the early part of the century, the work to be done, especially in the political sphere, was destructive. Political exclusion, commercial monopoly, class privileges, had all to be broken down. The air rang with the cries—"Liberty," "Equality," "Fraternity," "The Rights of Man." It was the after-math, in ideas, of the French Revolution. Bentham, James Mill, Place, Hume, Cobbett, and all who followed in their wake, though they had certain ideals of social and political life in their minds, found their way blocked at every turn, and were forced into the position of iconoclasts by sheer weight of circumstance. Cobden, too, carried on the same work in the commercial sphere. Owen, Oastler, Shaftesbury, and Kingsley represent the humanitarian sense striving to permeate the slowly-rising new order with freer ideals

of social justice. With John Stuart Mill we enter upon the period of transition. His fine sense of justice, his exact methods of thought and scientific habit of mind, brought a new constructive influence into the sphere of economics and politics. We have now to see how Carlyle and Ruskin influenced that transitional period, and, indirectly, the constructive social movements which followed it.

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, on the 4th of December, 1795. His father, James Carlyle, was then a stone-mason, afterwards a farmer. His mother was a certain Margaret Aitken, second wife to James Carlyle—"pious, just, and wise." Of both, Carlyle speaks with respect and reverence, and of his mother with affection and love. "No man of my day can have had better parents," he said. The child-life was simple, not over-joyous, and subject to a somewhat severe discipline. But there are glimpses of poetry about it. "On fine evenings I was wont to carry forth my supper (bread crumb boiled in milk), and eat it out of doors. On the coping of the wall, which I could reach by climbing, my porringer was placed. There many a sunset have I, looking at the distant mountains, consumed, not without relish, my evening meal. Those hues of gold and azure, that hush of world's expectation as day died, were still a Hebrew speech for me. Nevertheless I was looking at the fair illumined letters, and had an eye for the gilding."

His earlier years of education were passed in the village school at Ecclefechan. At the age of ten he was sent to the Grammar School of Annan, and thence passed to the University of Edinburgh, walking the whole way with a fellow-student—a distance of eighty miles, "my mother and father walking with me in the dark, frosty November morning through the village to set us on our way." "I repeatedly walked through that country up to Edinburgh and down by myself in subsequent years, and nowhere remember such affectionate, sad, and thoughtful, and in fact interesting and salutary journeys. I have had days clear as Italy, days moist and dripping, overhung with the infinite of silent gray, and perhaps the latter were the preferable in certain moods. You had the world and its waste imbroglios of joy and woe, of light and darkness, to yourself alone. You could strip barefoot

if it suited better, carry shoes and socks over shoulder, hung on your stick; clean shirt and comb were in your pocket; *omnia mea mecum porto*; you lodged with shepherds who had clean, solid cottages, wholesome eggs, milk, oatbread, porridge, clean blankets to their beds, and a great deal of human sense and unadulterated natural politeness—canty, shrewd, and witty fellows when you set them talking; knew from their hill-tops every bit of country between Forth and Solway, and all the shepherd inhabitants within fifty miles, being a kind of confraternity of shepherds from father to son."

Carlyle left college, after a not very happy or brilliant career, in 1814, and obtained a post as mathematical master at Annan. He still continued his University studies, however, with a view to entering the ministry. Afterwards, finding that he could not subscribe to the creeds or articles of any Church, he turned to the study of law. But neither tutorship, the ministry, nor the law proved acceptable to his spirit, and it was only after a considerable period of doubt and depression that he finally resolved on the profession of literature. It was during this period also that his "doubts" came to a head. He found that he could never be a Christian, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, but it was something to pass from the depression and pessimism of the "Everlasting No" to the deep conviction and belief in the over-mastering realities of Truth and Duty, and the Supreme Power which makes for Righteousness. The reader will find the transition portrayed in "Sartor Resartus": "All at once there rose a thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What art thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength;

a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear nor whining Sorrow was in it, but indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance. Thus had the Everlasting No pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my being, of my Me, and then it was that my whole Me stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its protest... The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'... It is with man's Soul as it was with Nature; the beginning of Creation is—Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when, over the tempest-tost Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light!... I, too, could now say to myself: 'Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even World-kin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called To-day, for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.'"

And in gentler fashion he wrote to his mother, who at this time had been inquiring anxiously about his spiritual welfare: "As to the latter, though it becomes not the human worm to boast, I would fain persuade you not to entertain so many doubts. Your character and mine are far more similar than you imagine; and our opinions, too, though clothed in different garbs, are, I well know, still analagous at bottom. I respect your religious sentiments, and honour you for feeling them more than if you were the highest woman in the world without them. Be easy, I entreat you, on my account; the world will use me better than before; and if it should not, let us hope to meet in that upper country, when the vain fever of life is gone by, in the country where all darkness shall be light, and where the exercise of our affections will not be thwarted by the infirmities of human nature any more... I am happy to think in the meantime that you do not feel uneasy about my future destiny. Providence, as you observe, will order it better or worse, and with His award, so

nothing mean or wicked lie before me, I shall study to rest satisfied."

In 1821 Carlyle was first introduced to Jane Baillie Welsh, the lady who afterwards became his wife, though it was not until 1824 that they became definitely engaged, and not until 1826 that they were married. Of this marriage it is sufficient here to say that Jane Welsh, as well as Carlyle, was a genius, and that two geniuses in one household are not exactly the sort of elements which produce unalloyed happiness. There cannot be the least doubt that Carlyle was a hard man to live with. Nevertheless, the union did ultimately produce feelings and experiences of deep beauty, pathos, and love, which neither, perhaps, would have been willing to surrender could they have re-chosen their lot.

Meanwhile, in the period of friendship and courtship, Carlyle had devoted himself to the study of German literature. In 1823 his "Life of Schiller" began to appear in the "London Magazine," and in 1824 his translation of "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship" was published. Goethe's writings exercised a great influence over him, Carlyle accepting and reverencing the great German as a master. During the same period also he accepted a position as tutor to the three sons of Charles Buller, a retired Anglo-Indian, residing with them for a time in Edinburgh, Perthshire, and London. At the termination of this engagement he went to live for a time at Hoddam Hill, a farm near the Solway, with his brother Alexander. His brother managed the farm, while Thomas worked at German translations, in which he was now making a name. In 1826 came his marriage, and a quiet, but busy, eighteen months of Edinburgh life, still working mainly at German literature, and review articles thereon. Then, financial prospects not being bright, he and his wife removed to the farm at Craigenputtock, part of his wife's inheritance—a lonely, out-of-the-way place, fifteen miles from the nearest town, Dumfries. Here "Sartor" was written in 1830. Carlyle failed to obtain a publisher for it, and the work ultimately appeared in monthly instalments in "Fraser's Magazine," only to be almost universally condemned. "A heap of clotted nonsense," wrote one critic. "Fraser's" readers rebelled against the "stuff," and

it was found advisable not to issue in book form, save a reprint of fifty copies for private circulation. Yet, a few months before Carlyle's death, a cheap edition was issued, and 30,000 copies sold within a few weeks. A short visit from Emerson, "one of the most lovable creatures we had ever looked on," brightened the last year of the solitary Craigenputtock time, and in 1834 the Carlyles moved to the now world-famed house in Cheyne-row, Chelsea. His first great piece of work here was the "French Revolution," for which he had done some years' preparatory reading. Everyone knows the story of the calamity which befell the MS. of the first volume. It was borrowed by John Stuart Mill, left carelessly lying about by him, and burnt by the servant girl as waste paper. Mill, "terribly cut up," Carlyle says, offered him £200 as compensation for the loss, but could only induce him to accept £100. He immediately set about re-writing the first volume, which he completed in 1835, and the whole history was ready for the publishers in the early part of 1837. In the same year he began to give courses of lectures in Willis's rooms on German literature, European literature, and "Heroes."

In 1840 his "Chartism," a lengthy essay on the most interesting political movement of the time, and dealing also with cognate subjects, appeared—his first important contribution to the social question. This was followed in 1843 by "Past and Present." The condition of England, as the reader of these chapters will have seen, was enough to drive every earnest heart to indignation, if not rebellion, and Carlyle's was one of the most earnest hearts in England. The phrases of this book have since become the watch-words of the more intelligent of the working classes, but I must leave any account of its teachings for a later section of this chapter. About the same time, also, he was preparing the "Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell," which, on its publication in 1845, soon revolutionised the then current estimate of the great Protector. In 1849 appeared "Latter-day Pamphlets," which marks the extreme turning-point in the evolution of his political philosophy from Radicalism to Absolutism. Next came the "Life of Sterling," after which he braced himself for his greatest work, the "History of Friedrich II," an immense task, involving long years of the most patient labour and research—

toil which, he says, "crushed down" both his own and his wife's existence. "I did stand by that dismal task with all my time and all my means, day and night wrestling with it as with the ugliest dragon which blotted out the daylight and the rest of the world till I should get it slain." The first two volumes appeared in 1858, and the fifth and sixth in 1865. In the latter year he was elected to the Lord Rectorship of Edinburgh University, and delivered his Rectorial address to the students in the spring of 1866. Honours now fell thick upon him. He was, by this time, everywhere recognised as the greatest literary force of the age.

This bare enumeration of facts, however, tells us nothing, save that Carlyle was in himself one of the best living illustrations of his gospel of work. Two others must, however, be recorded. One was the death of his mother in 1853. The event cast a shadow over his life. The relation between the two had always been one of the tenderest. "O pious mother! Kind, good, brave, and truthful soul as I have ever found, and more than I have elsewhere found in the world. Your poor Tom—long out of his schooldays now—has fallen very lonely, very lame and bròken in this pilgrimage of his . . . From your grave in Ecclefechan Kirkyard yonder you bid him trust in God; and that also he will try if he can understand and do." The other was the death of his wife, which occurred shortly after the Edinburgh address in 1866, and while Carlyle was still away from home. She had not been strong for years, and on the afternoon of April 21st she was found dead in her carriage while driving round Hyde Park. She had suffered from heart disease, and an accident to a favourite dog during the drive, along with the ensuing excitement, proved too much for the over-strained heart. The blow brought agonies of unavailing sorrow and remorse, which Carlyle never outlived. The "Reminiscences" become a dirge. "Never for a thousand years shall I forget that arrival here (in London) of ours, my first unwelcomed by her. She lay in her coffin, lovely in death. Pale death and things not mine or ours had possession of our poor darling." "Oh that I had you yet but for five minutes beside me, to tell you all!" "All of sunshine that remained in my life went out in that sudden moment. All

of strength too often seems to have gone . . . Were it permitted I would pray, but to whom? I can well understand the invocation of saints. One's prayer now has to be voiceless, done with the heart still, but also with the hands still more . . . Time was to bring relief, said everybody, but time has not, to any extent, nor, in truth, did I much wish him." "Cherish what is dearest while you have it near you, and wait not till it is far away." "Blind and deaf that we are; oh, think, if thou yet love anybody living; wait not till death sweep down the paltry little dust-clouds and dissonances of the moment, and all be at last so mournfully clear and beautiful, when it is too late!" So the strong life deepened into the gloom of night, and passed into the great valley where the countless multitudes gather to their rest.

It is not easy to present a fair or a complete estimate of the character of such a man. Perhaps the qualities which stand out most clearly are his passion for truth and his passion for work. Neither for fear nor favour, for reward nor applause, would he trim his words or obscure the facts as they presented themselves to his mind. His passion for work found scope in the assimilation and reproduction of immense stores of intellectual material, transformed and illuminated by his peculiar genius. But even these two qualities, as they found expression in him, need qualification. His passion for truth did not prevent him giving offensive utterance to unjust and untrue judgments of some of his contemporaries, judgments which even a little reflection would have either modified or silenced. And his passion for work was often accompanied by groanings of the spirit. He reminds one of Sisyphus rather than of Hercules. His boundless egotism was the natural result of his strength of will and his inborn conviction that he had an ideal to uphold and a message to proclaim. But egotism, as we all know, though it may have its virtues, has more certainly its vices, and it sometimes led him to depreciate work—as, for example, in the case of Mill—which was as valuable, and which will live as long as his. Nevertheless, despite his egotism, his pride and self-dependence, his pessimism, and his harsh judgments, there were in him deeps of tenderness, loyalty, and noble indignation, and heights of integrity, aspiration, and passionate yearning and exhortation, which few spirits are

blessed with. It is these, and the teachings in which they are embodied, which have made him one of the master-spirits of the nineteenth century.

II.

Thomas Carlyle stands at the opposite pole of thought to John Stuart Mill. Both were, in a sense, "heretics" to the prevailing beliefs of their time, but they approached the problems of life and destiny from directly opposite points of view. Mill was a Utilitarian, Carlyle was a Transcendentalist, and scorned Utilitarianism. Mill based his system of thought on inductions drawn from experience and association; Carlyle based his teachings on deductions from intuition, or insight into the moral and spiritual nature of man and the world. Mill pieced his ideal together after a consideration of all the facts at his command; Carlyle claimed to see the ideal clear, by reason of the revelation contained in his own moral and spiritual nature. In a word, one was a philosopher, the other was a prophet.

A proper understanding of Carlyle's philosophic position will furnish the key to his political and social teachings. In his early manhood he was strongly influenced by German thinkers and writers, particularly by Goethe, Richter, and Fichte. Fichte's theory of the "Divine Idea of the World" is the dominating thought of "Sartor Resartus." "The Universe," says Fichte, "is not, in deed and truth, that which it seems to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man: but it is something higher, which lies behind mere natural appearance. In its widest sense, this foundation of all appearance may be aptly named the Divine Idea of the world. This thought, with its indestructible certainty, enters and fills the soul of every honest student; this, namely: 'I, this sent, this expressly commissioned individual, as I may now call myself, am actually here, have entered into existence for this cause and no other, that the eternal counsel of God in this universe may through me be seen of men in another hitherto unknown light, may be made clearly manifest in the world, so as not to be extinguished; and this phase of the Divine Thought, thus bound up with my personality, is the only true living being

within me; all else, though looked upon even by myself as belonging to my being, is dream, shadow, nothing—this alone is imperishable and eternal within me.'" This, I say, is the dominating thought of "Sartor Resartus," with its continual refrain about the "Eternities," and the "Immensities." The soul, the "Me," the "Eternal Essence" is everything—all else is but "clothes."

> "'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,
> And weave for God the garment thou see'st Him by."

This view of the world, to one who sincerely holds it, has important consequences. To Carlyle, it meant that he who most truly embodies the Divine Idea, he who sees it most clearly, and expresses it in action most truly, is the Great Man, the Hero. To him homage and power should be given. This is the foundation of Carlyle's Hero-worship. "Universal History is at bottom the history of Great Men." Reverence for great men is the basis of loyalty, society, religion. "We all love great men; love, venerate, and bow down submissive before great men: nay, can we honestly bow down to anything else? Ah, does not every true man feel that he is himself made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him? No nobler or more blessed feeling dwells in man's heart."

From this it is but a step to Carlyle's theory of government by the Hero, the Strong Man, by which he means, of course, not mere physical force, but mental or spiritual strength. Hence, too, his contempt for Democracy and Liberty (though it is well to remember that he began life as a radical). What is the use, he is constantly asking, of placing power in the hands of the intellectually feeble, of those who have no insight, of those who but feebly embody the Divine Idea? It would simply make confusion worse confounded. "There is a divine message or eternal regulation of the Universe. How find it? All the world answers me, 'Count heads, ask universal suffrage by the ballot-box and that will tell!' From Adam's time till now the Universe was wont to be of a somewhat abstruse nature, partially disclosing itself to the wise and noble-minded alone, whose number was

not the majority. Of what use towards the general result of finding out what it is wise to do, can the fools be? .... If of ten men nine are recognisable as fools, which is a common calculation, how in the name of wonder will you ever get a ballot-box to grind you out wisdom from the votes of these ten men? Only by reducing to zero nine of these votes can wisdom ever issue from your ten. The mass of men consulted at the hustings upon any high matter whatsoever is as ugly an exhibition of human stupidity as this world sees..... Democracy is for ever impossible! The Universe is a monarchy and a hierarchy, the noble in the high places, the ignoble in the low; this is in all times and in all places the Almighty Maker's law." And again: "Liberty, I am told, is a divine thing. Liberty, when it becomes the 'Liberty to die by starvation,' is not so divine!... The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, 'Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?'—is one of the pleasantest!"

All this, though there is a modicum of truth about it, represents the reactionary side of Carlyle's teaching. It is utterly impracticable, and, if practicable, would be unjust. Even if we admit the desirability of "Strong Man Government," no rational method of appointing the "Strong Man" has yet been discovered, save that of election. Secondly, we are all embodiments, in varying degrees, of the "Divine Idea." Hence we all have our notions of what is right and what is wrong, and the notion of a Galilean carpenter may be nearer eternal right and truth than that of Emperor or Cæsar. Even a "fool" knows when he is being oppressed, though he may not know how to get rid of the oppression. That is, Carlyle confuses the essence, or the spirit of government, with its *method*. Mill's political ideal is far nearer the truth. "The idea of rational democracy," says Mill, "is not that people themselves govern, but that they have security for good government. This security they can only have by retaining in their own hands the ultimate control. The people ought to be masters employing servants more skilful than themselves." And, lastly, Carlyle's method of government would tend to undermine individual responsibility. Obedience, loyalty, hero-

worship, or teacher-worship is a virtue. Without it we should become narrow, shallow-minded, self-conceited, ever thinking our own light to be the light of the world. But the sense of responsibility is also a virtue, and responsibility can only come with liberty. The opportunity for the cultivation of this sense of responsibility, of self-government, is the right of every man—it is what Plato would call one of the "goods" of the soul. As Emerson well puts it: "It is a low benefit to give me something; it is a high benefit to enable me to do somewhat of myself." Of course, it is a question for discussion as to how much liberty should be given in any given case or circumstances, but no one now-a-days can doubt, I think, that representative government develops the feeling of responsibility much more efficiently than would a system under which the people were like "dumb, driven cattle."

But this theory of the "Divine Idea of the World," and the teacher, prophet, or hero, as its embodiment, came to be, through Carlyle, one of the strongest formative influences of the age. Its reactionary elements, to which I have just alluded, and which were accidental rather than essential, simply fell dead, and not all Carlyle's burning eloquence and stinging satire could give them life. But its positive and progressive elements became a new gospel. Its most important characteristics, as expounded by Carlyle, were its implications—its necessary implications—of (1) the solidarity of mankind; (2) the supremacy of justice in human society, as against charity or philanthropy; (3) the categorical imperative of duty, expressed or embodied in effort, work.

The first principle, the solidarity of mankind, is simply Paul's doctrine, "we are members one of another," applied to our political, social, and industrial relationships. But it is something more than a doctrine—it is an irrevocable law which is wrought in the very nature of things, and which mankind ignores at its peril. "All things, the minutest that man does, minutely influence all men, the very look of his face blesses or curses whomso it lights on, and so generates ever new blessing or new cursing. I say that there is not a Red Indian, hunting by Lake Winnipeg, can quarrel with his squaw but the whole world must smart for it: will not the price of beaver rise? It is a mathematical fact that the casting of this pebble from my hand alters the centre

of gravity of the Universe." "*Man is a Spirit*, and bound by invisible bonds to *all men*." Hence, to Carlyle, human society is a much more sacred thing than is commonly supposed, and certainly much more sacred than was commonly supposed at the time when he wrote "Sartor Resartus" and "Past and Present." "Call ye that a Society where there is no longer any social idea extant; not so much as the idea of a common home, but only of a common over-crowded lodging-house? Where each, isolated, regardless of his neighbour, turned against his neighbour, clutches what he can get, and cries 'Mine!' and calls it peace, because, in the cut-purse and cut-throat scramble, no steel knives, but only a far cunninger sort, can be employed? Where friendship, communion, has become an incredible tradition... Where your priest has no tongue but for plate-licking; and your high guides and governors cannot guide; but on all hands hear it passionately proclaimed: *Laissez faire*; leave us alone of *your* guidance; such light is darker than darkness; eat you your wages, and sleep!"

But human society, in its best sense, is impossible without justice. Supreme justice is the realisation of the "Divine Idea," and though we may never reach this, we must approximate towards it. What, then, is justice as applied to human society? Its first essential is the proper "apportioning of wages to work. Give me this, you have given me all. Pay to every man accurately what he has worked for, what he has earned and done and deserved—to this man broad lands and honours, to that man high gibbets and treadmills; what more have I to ask? Heaven's kingdom, which we daily pray for, *has* come; God's will is done on earth even as it is in heaven! This *is* the radiance of celestial justice; in the light or in the fire of which all impediments, vested interests, and iron cannon are more and more melting like wax and disappearing from the pathways of men. A thing ever struggling forward, irrepressible, advancing inevitably, perfecting itself, all days more and more."

But how are we to obtain this justice, or approximate towards it? Here Carlyle does not help us. His teaching is purely negative. He only tells us how we shall *not* get it. Not by cut-throat competition, *laissez faire*, landed aristocracy, game laws, corn

laws—the condition of England, at the time "Past and Present" was written, was an emphatic, and even a tragic, protest against all these things. "There is not a horse in England, able and willing to work, but *has* due food and lodging, and goes about sleek-coated, satisfied in heart. And you say, It is impossible. Brothers, I answer, if for you it be impossible, what is to become of you? It is impossible for us to believe it to be impossible. The human brain, looking at these sleek English horses, refuses to believe in such impossibility for English men.... Such a platitude of a world, in which all working horses could be well fed, and innumerable working men should die starved, were it not best to end it, to have done with it?"

The only remedy, then, which Carlyle had to propose for this state of things, the only suggestion he had for bringing "Heaven's invisible justice" down to earth, was his "Strong Man" theory, and that we have seen to be impracticable. As a variation of that theory he seems to have hope of the "Captains of Industry." But even here he has his doubts. "Plugson, bucanier-like, says to his workmen: 'Noble spinners, this is the Hundred Thousand we have gained, wherein I mean to dwell and plant vineyards; the hundred thousand is mine, the three and sixpence daily was yours: adieu, noble spinners; drink my health with this groat each, which I give you over and above!' The entirely unjust Captain of Industry, say I; not Chevalier, but Bucanier! 'Commercial Law' does indeed acquit him; asks, with wide eyes, What else? So, too, Howel Davies asks, Was it not according to the strictest Bucanier Custom? Did I depart in any jot or tittle from the Laws of the Bucaniers?"

The chief value, then, of Carlyle, for us, is the withering scorn with which he assails the commercial and Mammonite ideals of the time. His work in this direction was chiefly destructive, but it was none the less useful and necessary. He saw and emphasised the necessity both for the reorganisation of labour and the reorganisation of trade. "The saddest news is that we should find our National Existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other People. A most narrow stand for a great nation to base itself on!.... My friends, suppose we quitted that stand,

suppose we came honestly down from it, and said: 'This is our minimum of cotton-prices. We care not, for the present, to make cotton any cheaper. Do you, if it seems so blessed to you, make cotton cheaper. Fill your lungs with cotton-fuzz, your hearts with copperas-fumes, with rage and mutiny; become ye the general gnomes of Europe, slaves of the lamp!' I admire a Nation which fancies it will die if it do not undersell all other Nations, to the end of the world. Brothers, we will cease to *under*sell them; we will be content to *equal*-sell them, to be happy selling equally with them! I do not see the use of underselling them. Cotton-cloth is already two-pence a yard or lower; and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us. Let inventive men cease to spend their existence incessantly contriving how cotton can be made cheaper; and try to invent, a little, how cotton at its present cheapness could be somewhat justlier divided among us. Let inventive men consider, whether the Secret of this Universe, and of Man's Life there, does, after all, as we rashly fancy it, consist in making money? There is One God, just, supreme, almighty: but is Mammon the name of him? . . . In brief, all this Mammon-Gospel, of Supply-and-Demand, Competition, Laissez-faire, and Devil take the hindmost, begins to be one of the shabbiest Gospels ever preached; or altogether the shabbiest."

It is a curious commentary on Carlyle's political, as distinct from his social theories, that this very task of the "Organisation of Labour," or so much of it as has yet been accomplished, has been undertaken by that very Democracy upon which, as a political force, he threw so much scorn. His great phrases—"A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," "Organisation of labour," "Justice before charity," "Permanence of employment," "Chivalry of labour"—these have become the watchwords and rallying cries of our Trade Union and Labour leaders. To them belongs the honour of having begun this great task of the organisation of industry, of which no one can yet see the end. Through them, or largely by means of their ceaseless efforts, Parliament itself has been brought to help in the work by insisting upon fair and healthy conditions of labour. The reconcilement of Liberty with Justice, a difficult

problem for every age, and especially difficult in such an intricate business as the proper adjustment of industrial relationships, has been undertaken by our labour organisations with such measure of success as to have promoted very materially the welfare of the people.

And so Carlyle has become indirectly a constructive as well as a destructive force, though in far other manner than he anticipated. The old order has to be broken down before the new can arise. Principles require stating with tiresome iteration before they can be applied. He was constructive also in the power with which he appealed to men to transform their ideals of duty, effort, work, into the realities of actual life. "*Do the duty which lies nearest thee,* which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer ... The situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy ideal; work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free." "There is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. In idleness alone is there perpetual despair ... All true work is religion, and whatsoever religion is not work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will ... A man perfects himself by working. Foul jungles are cleared away, fair seed-fields rise instead, and stately cities; and withal the man himself first ceases to be a jungle and foul unwholesome desert thereby. Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt, desire, sorrow, remorse, indignation, despair itself, all these like hell-dogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor day-worker, as of every man; but he bends himself with free valour against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring far off into the caves." There is hardly any finer passage in our nineteenth century literature than that in "Sartor Resartus"—too long to quote—descriptive of the two craftsmen. And the same may be said of some of the concluding passages of "Past and Present":—"Not a May game is this man's life, but a battle and a march, a warfare with principalities and powers. No idle promenade through fragrant orange

groves and green flowery spaces, waited on by the choral Muses and the rosy Hours; it is a stern pilgrimage through burning sandy solitudes, through regions of thick-ribbed ice. He walks among men; loves men, with inexpressible soft pity—as they *cannot* love him: but his soul dwells in solitude, in the uttermost parts of Creation. In green oases by the palm-tree wells, he rests a space; but anon he has to journey forward, escorted by the Terrors and the Splendours, the Archdemons and Archangels. All Heaven, all Pandemonium are his escort. The stars keen-glancing, from the Immensities, send tidings to him; the graves, silent with their dead, from the Eternities. Deep calls for him unto Deep... It is to you, ye Workers, who do already work, and are as grown men, noble and honourable in a sort, that the whole world calls for new work and nobleness. Subdue mutiny, discord, widespread despair, by manfulness, justice, mercy, and wisdom. Chaos is dark, deep as Hell; let light be, and there is instead a green flowery World. Oh, it is great, and there is no other greatness. To make some nook of God's Creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed! It is work for a God."

Such was Thomas Carlyle, one of the greatest of our nineteenth century prophets, and nearest akin, perhaps, in style and spirit, to the prophets of old. Like them, too, his mission was to purify and uplift our moral and religious life. There is nothing very new in his teachings. We may have read the same thing often before in other words. But *his* words are illumined by a great and powerful spirit, which penetrates to the most secret recesses of the soul. As Browning well puts it:—

> "The great God-function
> Is, to furnish a motive and injunction
> For practising what we know already."

And that is what Carlyle does for us. His sentences are like clarion-calls to nobler life, stirring our sluggish spirits to more faithful endeavour. He came at a time when Society needed re-creating, when Liberty had come to mean Liberty for the few

to lord it over the many, when Justice needed higher and wider interpretations. Out of the very deeps of his pessimism there came a tenderness, a large-heartedness, and a purpose, which remoulded the Ideal for us, and thereby taught two or three generations of Englishmen that there is something nobler than money-getting, something higher than material prosperity. The man who does that enlarges our conception of the Supreme Good, and brings our spirits nearer—in insight, in aspiration, in endeavour—to the Eternal Source of things. He himself, with all his faults, was a not unworthy expression and embodiment of the Divine Idea, re-fashioning the human spirit in accordance with his finer vision. And so this peasant-prophet of Ecclefechan becomes one of the Saviours of society. Not in vain did he "emerge from the Inane," pass stormfully through his earthward pilgrimage, and enter, at last, into those "Immensities" and "Eternities" which, in their awful silences, filled his soul with that sense of mystery and sorrow out of which was born his deep tenderness for Man.

XI.

JOHN RUSKIN AND THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY, 1819—1900.

I.

In social philosophy, John Ruskin has been called—and has, indeed, called himself—the pupil of Carlyle; but it is one of those cases in which the pupil surpasses the master. Carlyle saw what was wrong, and pointed out the wrong with a force and directness unsurpassed by any other living writer. Ruskin not only saw what was wrong—re-enforcing Carlyle's condemnations with a wonderful eloquence—he also made valuable and fruitful contributions towards a remedy. True, his remedies are not always infallible, but they have been far more widely effective than is commonly supposed in moulding economic thought and usage, and laying the foundations of a true social science. His suggestions on education—artistic, moral, and intellectual—have done much to raise the educational ideals of the nation. He was one of the first to set the example in the matter of providing healthy homes for the working classes. He has helped to stimulate the movement for the preservation of footpaths against the encroachments of selfish landowners. Long before Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Bill of 1881, he had advocated fair rents and fixity of tenure—principles which formed the basis of that bill. His teachings with respect to hand-work and handicraft are now being carried out in all our best schools. His insistence upon the necessity for recreation and due leisure from mechanical toil has given strength to the movement for shorter hours of labour. While his loudly and long-proclaimed conviction that wages should be fixed by some juster method than that of competition, and that the worker should be protected from poverty in old age, has led to the modern demand for a minimum wage

and old-age pensions. These are the palpable and direct results of his teaching. His indirect influence on the life and thought of our time is too great and far-reaching to be estimated. From the very fact that his work was more constructive than Carlyle's, it will have a more permanent and lasting effect. Even now his books on social questions are more widely read and more deeply studied than those of Carlyle, with the exception, perhaps, of "Sartor Resartus," while his hold upon the affections of Englishmen is far stronger and deeper than the sage of Chelsea, with his harshness and brusquerie, could possibly command. Carlyle we respect and admire; Ruskin we reverence and love.

John Ruskin was born in London on the 8th of February, 1819. He had the advantage of being trained and educated under a wise father, a loving mother, a peaceful and well-ordered home, and delightful surroundings. His father was a wine merchant, and one feature of his early education was the journeys he took every summer through some of the most beautiful scenery in England and Scotland, and sometimes on the Continent, when the father went to visit his customers to receive their orders. The family travelled in a post-chaise, stopping occasionally to enjoy more fully some specially beautiful scene, or to stroll along some country lane or field-path, to revel in the quieter and hidden beauties of Nature, or to view the artistic treasures of some famous country mansion. "In such journeyings, whenever they brought me near hills, and in all mountain ground and scenery, I had a pleasure—as early as I can remember, and continuing until I was eighteen or twenty—infinitely greater than any which has been since possible to me in anything, comparable for intensity only to the joy of a lover, in being near a noble and kind mistress, but no more explicable or definable than love itself."

The home life was somewhat Puritanical, not to say severe, in its discipline. "The law was, that I should find my own amusement. No toys of any kind were at first allowed... I had a bunch of keys to play with as long as I was capable only of pleasure in what glittered and jingled; as I grew older, I had a cart and a ball, and when I was five or six years old, two boxes of well-cut wooden bricks. With these modest, but, I still think, entirely sufficient possessions, and being always summarily whipped

if I cried, did not do as I was bid, or tumbled on the stairs, I soon attained serene and secure methods of life and motion." His mother intended that he should become a clergyman, and this probably accounts for the large part which the Bible played in his education. "My mother," he says, "so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make every word of them familiar to my ear in habitual music, yet in that familiarity reverenced, as transcending all thought and ordaining all conduct." She read the Bible through with him many times, taking two or three chapters each day. Some of the finest chapters she compelled him to learn by heart. Amongst these we may note the 23rd, 90th, and 119th Psalms, several chapters of Proverbs, 5th, 6th, and 7th of Matthew, and the 13th of I. Corinthians. The curious reader will find the complete list in the second chapter of "Præterita," but we may doubt whether Ruskin himself would pronounce them the best passages in Hebrew literature. Still he says, "Though I have picked up the elements of a little further knowledge—in mathematics, meteorology, and the like, in after life—and owe not a little to the teaching of many people, this maternal installation of my mind in that property of chapters, I count very confidently the most precious, and, on the whole, the one *essential* part of all my education." On the moral side, the teaching was equally complete. "For best and truest beginning of all blessings, I had been taught the perfect meaning of peace, in thought, act, and word. I had never heard my father's or mother's voice once raised in any question with each other; nor seen an angry, or even slightly hurt or offended, glance in the eyes of either. I had never heard a servant scolded, nor even suddenly, passionately, or in any severe manner blamed. I had never seen a moment's trouble or disorder in any household matter; nor anything whatever either done in a hurry, or undone in due time." Truly, that is the noblest and most effective kind of education—by example. That "peace of the home" is the foundation of all domestic happiness and well-being. Stupid and altogether selfish people pride themselves on the strength of will which enables them to "have their own way," not seeing that that is the very thing which breaks the peace of the home, and subordinates the claims and the well-being of others to the

brutality of their own self-will. "Next to this quite priceless gift of peace, I had received the perfect understanding of the natures of obedience and faith. I obeyed word, or lifted finger, of father or mother, simply as a ship her helm... And my practice in faith was soon complete; nothing was ever promised me that was not given; nothing ever threatened me that was not inflicted; and nothing ever told me that was not true. Peace, obedience, faith; these three for chief good; next to these, the habit of fixed attention with both eyes and mind... Lastly, an extreme perfection in palate and all other bodily senses, given by the utter prohibition of cake, wine, and comfits."

This course of training was not, according to Ruskin himself, without its disadvantages. It was toop recise and formal, leaving too little scope for the cultivation of his own will and judgment. "My strength was never exercised, my patience never tried, and my courage never fortified. My judgment of right and wrong, and powers of independent action, were left entirely undeveloped, because the bridle and blinkers were never taken off me... leaving my character, at the most important moment for its construction, cramped indeed, but not disciplined, and only by protection innocent, instead of by practice virtuous."

For light reading, as he grew older, he had "Robinson Crusoe," Miss Edgeworth's tales, the "Pilgrim's Progress," Scott's novels, and Pope's translation of the "Iliad." His father read Shakespeare, Scott, and "Don Quixote" to his mother in the evenings, and so "I heard all the Shakespeare comedies and historical plays again and again, all Scott, and all 'Don Quixote'."

Added to this delightful home life, varied by equally delightful travel, was the fact that his father had an almost perfect taste in the appreciation of pictures—no small advantage in the education of a great art critic. "My father had a quite infallible natural judgment in painting, and though it had never been cultivated, so as to enable him to understand the Italian schools, his sense of the power of the northern masters was as true and passionate as that of the most accomplished artist. He never, when I was old enough to care for what he himself delighted in, allowed me to look at a bad picture."

From this home training and education, assisted occasionally

by private tutors, he passed to the school of the Rev. Thomas Dale, near his home at Herne Hill, and thence, in due course, to Christ Church, Oxford. Meanwhile, however, one or two circumstances occurred which had something to do with determining the manifestion, if not the bent, of his genius. On his thirteenth or fourteenth birthday, his father's partner (Mr. Henry Telford) gave him a copy of Roger's poem on "Italy," with vignettes by Turner, and so, he says, "determined the main tenour of my life." This was his first introduction to Turner's work, his defence of which, in after years, first brought him into the maelstrom of public controversy. At the age of fourteen he and his parents went on a long tour up the Rhine, and over the Alps to northern Italy, and this was followed in the next year by a tour in Normandy, where the architecture of Abbeville, Rouen, and Rheims "determined the first centre and circle of future life-work." How these tours influenced him may be imagined from his description of his first view of the Alps, which should be read in its entirety. "Suddenly—behold—beyond! There was no thought in any of us for a moment of their being clouds. They were clear as crystal, sharp on the pure horizon sky, and already tinged with rose by the sinking sun. Infinitely beyond all that we had ever thought or dreamed—the seen walls of lost Eden could not have been more beautiful to us; not more awful, round heaven, the walls of sacred Death. It is not possible to imagine, in any time of the world, a more blessed entrance into life for a child of such a temperament as mine. For me, the Alps and their people were alike beautiful in their snow and their humanity; and I wanted, neither for them nor myself, sight of any thrones in heaven but the rocks, or of any spirits in heaven but the clouds... I went down that evening from the garden-terrace of Schaffhausen with my destiny fixed in all of it that was to be sacred and useful. To that terrace, and the shore of the Lake of Geneva, my heart and faith return to this day, in every impulse that is yet nobly alive in them, and every thought that has in it help or peace."

Ruskin entered into residence at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1837. Throughout the three years of his residence there, his mother lodged in the High-street, in order that she might be near him,

and his father came down at the end of each week. Happy days! The Oxford career was, however, broken by a journey to Italy in 1840, necessitated by weak health—a journey which delayed the taking of his degree, but which was productive of fruitful results in other ways. In 1843, at the early age of twenty-four, appeared the first volume of his first great work, "Modern Painters." The work was begun as a defence of Turner from the strictures which many of the critics had passed upon his paintings, but it ultimately developed into an exposition of the principles of art, and, indirectly and incidentally, of morality also, the whole five volumes, with other work of like nature, taking some twenty years of arduous labour. In 1849 appeared "The Seven Lamps of Architecture"—an analysis of the expression and embodiment of a people's life as revealed in its noblest buildings. The first volume of "The Stones of Venice" appeared in 1851, and brought out still more clearly Mr. Ruskin's strong convictions on the relation of art to life and work. In 1859, two lectures on "Art and Its Application to Decoration and Manufacture" were published under the title of the "Two Paths." These great works contain, in essence, the principles which Mr. Ruskin was afterwards to apply to political and social economy. No greater or more stupid mistake could be made than to suppose that Mr. Ruskin, from being the greatest art critic of his time, suddenly turned from this to the exposition of a subject which he had not fully studied. His social teachings are really implied in his art teachings, and develop from the latter as naturally as action, in a well-ordered life, develops from thought. This I shall try to show more conclusively in the second portion of this chapter. I can only stay here to correct the widespread but most mistaken impression that Mr. Ruskin may be regarded as an expert in the one field, but not in the other.

Mr. Ruskin's work as a social reformer, then, is really of a piece with his work as an art teacher. It is only for purposes of historical or biographical convenience that one can speak of "periods" in his life. His more active and direct work as a social reformer began about 1860, by the publication of a series of essays on economic subjects in the "Cornhill Magazine." The

outcry against them was so loud and bitter that the editor was compelled to discontinue the publication of them. These essays, which form the well-known volume, "Unto This Last," have now taken their place as one of the standard works of the new politico-economic school. Other lectures and writings dealing with similar and connected subjects were given and published under the titles, "Sesame and Lilies," "The Crown of Wild Olive," "A Joy for Ever," and "Munera Pulveris." In 1867, Mr. Ruskin began a series of letters to Mr. Thomas Dixon (a working-man of Sunderland), dealing with certain social, educational, and political questions of the time. These were afterwards published under the title, "Time and Tide." In 1871, this direct attempt to influence the more thoughtful of the working classes took a more definite and public shape by the publication of a monthly letter to the working-men of Great Britain under the title of "Fors Clavigera," afterwards published together in eight volumes. It was in "Fors Clavigera" that he made his proposal for the establishment of the Guild of St. George, with the object of "buying and securing land in England which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen with their own hands and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave," in order "to make some small piece of English ground beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful." The guild was established, and land secured, but the scheme has not been a success to any appreciable degree.

In 1867, Mr. Ruskin was appointed Rede Lecturer at Cambridge, and in 1870, Slade Professor of Art at Oxford University. His lectures drew crowds of listeners; some of them had to be delivered twice; for others, the Sheldonian Theatre had to be utilised. His influence on the undergraduates at this time was as that of a Master, and, to the curious in such matters, the piece of road at Oxford which he induced some of his enthusiastic disciples to make or mend, as an experiment in hard, matter-of-fact, manual labour, is still pointed out.

All this, however, represents but a portion of Mr. Ruskin's immense labours. His artistic and scientific work shows powers and results of accurate observation and skill which must have consumed untold hours of precious time and labour. His social

and economic teachings produced a storm of criticism which involved him in bitter and lengthy controversy; while his various schemes of social improvement and his many private charities brought in their train an amount of tedious and pettyfogging work which many a country squire would look upon as hard labour. Despite his uncertain health, the amount of work he has accomplished has been enormous, and he may fairly be classed with Gladstone and Carlyle as one of the intellectual giants of the century.

In addition to this, the qualities of his heart have been as fine as those of his head. It is, comparatively speaking, a small thing that he has disposed of an immense fortune in private and public gifts and charities. What I prefer to dwell upon is the depths of sympathy and tenderness, and the strong sense of justice and honour which has led him to champion the cause of the oppressed and laborious poor as it has never been championed before. I question whether there is any public man, Gladstone, perhaps, excepted, who has been loved with a deeper and more reverential love, by the thoughtful working-men and women of England. There are passages in his writings which touch a deeper chord than does either the eloquence of Gladstone or the rhetoric of Carlyle.

While these words were being written his life was waning to its close, and hundreds of thousands of people in all parts of the English-speaking world were thinking of him in his darkening hours with that deep sympathy and affection which spring from the thought of a master who has given them nobler views of life, and taught them to live "by admiration, hope, and love." One of the greatest figures in nineteenth-century life and literature, his teachings will long continue to influence the thought and life of the future, bringing a joy, a blessing, and an appreciation of life's beauties which we should not otherwise have known. What those teachings are in the main, I will now try to indicate.

II.

To get at the root of Ruskin's teachings we must return to the theory of the "Divine Idea" which dominated the thought of Carlyle. But while Carlyle derived his theory of the "Divine

Idea" from German philosophy, Ruskin derived his from his artistic instincts and from—Plato. "In all true works of arts," says Carlyle, "wilt thou discern Eternity looking through Time, the God-like rendered visible." Plato and Ruskin say much the same thing, but in different words. "The true order of going or being led by another to the things of love," says Plato, in the "Symposium," "is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which one mounts upwards for the sake of absolute beauty, going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. This, my dear Socrates, is that life above all others which men should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute—a beauty which, if you once beheld, you would see not to be after the measure of gold and garments... Do you not see that in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities, and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to be the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may?" And in the "Republic" also, Plato points out that all our earthly striving—our work, our pleasures, our life—the things we make, the pictures we paint, the houses and the cities we build, are, or ought to be, the result of a noble strife to make all these things, all our life, in harmony with the Divine image, the Divine Idea—in short, a struggle towards perfection.

And that, too, is Ruskin's teaching. All the noblest Art is directly and intimately connected with the soul of man. It "declares the perfectness and eternal beauty of the work of God, and tests all work of man by concurrence with or subjection to that." Everything that is out of harmony with this, and especially everything that affects the soul of man for ill, has the curse of darkness upon it. "Art is valuable or otherwise, only as it expresses the personality, activity, and living perception of a good and great human soul... All art is great, good, and true, only so far as it is distinctively the work of manhood in its entire and highest sense—that is to say, not the work of limbs and fingers, but of the soul." Now, when Ruskin comes to test the work of

man by this principle of its concurrence, or otherwise, with the "eternal beauty" or "Divine Image" of things as they ought to be—the real with the ideal—the poisonous manufactures, the pretentious wares, the monstrous collections of bricks and chimneys, the huddled "homes," the reeking courts and alleys, the shrieking railway stations, and the crowded, overgrown cities—when he contrasts all these, I say, with the "Divine Idea" of things, then we can understand the fierceness of his indignation. The greater part of our life and all the things that we create, so far from being Divine, are Devilish. The human soul, instead of being the most sacred thing in our sight, is daily and hourly crushed and degraded. "The great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities, louder than their furnace blast, is all in very deed for this—that we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; but to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages." Mr. Ruskin's point of view, from which he never departed, and which determines the whole of his social and economic teaching, is clearly and definitely expressed in that chapter on "The Nature of Gothic," in the second volume of the "Stones of Venice," which every student of Work in its relation to Life should read. One or two passages I must quote.

"In the make and nature of every man, however rude or simple, whom we employ in manual labour, there are some powers for better things; some tardy imagination, torpid capacity for emotion, tottering steps of thought, there are, even at the worst; and in most cases it is all our own fault that they are tardy or torpid. But they cannot be strengthened, unless we are content to take them in their feebleness, and unless we prize and honour them in their imperfection above the best and most perfect manual skill. And this is what we have to do with all our labourers—to look for the thoughtful part of them, and get that out of them, whatever we lose for it, whatever faults and errors we are obliged to take with it. For the best that is in them cannot manifest itself but in company with much error. Understand this clearly—you can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve

any number of given lines or forms with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind. But if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks; and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool."

"And observe, you are put to stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of a creature or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must unhumanise them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves. The eye of the soul must be bent upon the finger-point, and the soul's force must fill all the invisible nerves that guide it, ten hours a day, that it may not err from its steely precision, and so soul and sight be worn away, and the whole human being be lost at last—a heap of sawdust, so far as its intellectual work in this world is concerned, saved only by its Heart, which cannot go into the form of cogs and compasses, but expands, after the ten hours are over, into fireside humanity. On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing, and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dulness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause; but out comes the whole majesty of him also, and we know the height of it only when we see the clouds settling upon him. And, whether the clouds be bright or dark, there will be transfiguration behind and within them." ... For men "to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognised abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels and weighed with its hammer-strokes—this nature bade not—this God blesses not—thus humanity for no long time is able to endure."

The reader will now readily understand the full force of Mr. Ruskin's great aphorism, "There is no Wealth but Life—Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration." He will also understand how widely this aphorism separates Mr. Ruskin from the old Political Economy. It alters both the motive and aim of economic science, as understood and taught by its orthodox and commercial expounders. If there is no wealth but Life, and all that develops and ministers unto Life's noblest activities and powers, how much of our commercial and manufacturing system must be condemned? And at once a further step is necessary. For if Life be the highest form of Wealth, it must at least be properly nourished, properly clothed, properly housed, properly educated, ere it can do its work worthily or well. Here again we see the wide difference between the old Political Economy and the new. The old began with *things;* the new begins with *men.*

The new, or the true, Political Economy, then, has to do with the making, the guarding, the ordering, and the disposal of Wealth, or Life. It strives to do this, according to Mr. Ruskin, with Justice, or such approximation to Justice as the highest human wisdom can attain to, for Justice, too, has its Divine Image or Ideal. But how is this Justice to be obtained? and what are the principles which should determine its application? The answer of the old Political Economy was that Justice will be obtained by free competition—the competition of men with each other. As Adam Smith put it, the selfishness of each would indirectly promote the welfare of all. But Mr. Ruskin is most severe in his condemnation of such a principle. Competition, he says—the competition of the powerful against the weak, of the rich against the poor, of the talented against the untalented, of those who are born with great advantages against those who are born with great disadvantages—this will never produce Justice. In a system of free competition, the unscrupulous, the unjust, will ever neutralise the efforts of the just, and their practices will tend to drag down the general standard of life to their own base level. There must be a higher law to which all must conform. Hence—"Government and Co-operation are, in all things, and eternally, the laws of Life. Anarchy and Competition, eternally, and in all things, the laws of Death." And again—in the preface to "Munera

Pulveris"—"It is not a law of Nature that wages are determined by competition... The fact which vulgar political economists have been weak enough to imagine a law, is only that, for the last twenty years, a number of very senseless persons have attempted to determine wages in that manner, and have, in a measure, succeeded in occasionally doing so." Wages, then, which represent, or should represent, the just reward or payment for each individual's contribution to the national wealth, must be determined by some other method than competition. What is that method? Here Mr. Ruskin is not very definite, as, indeed, one could hardly expect him to be, seeing that the forms of social and industrial organisation which are to fit the higher morality must grow rather than be made. But he points out that the wages of our highest classes of workers—our statesmen, clergy, doctors, lawyers, and civil servants—are fixed in quite other manner than by competition—that is, either by Government, municipalities, or public opinion working through certain forms of social organisation. Why should not the same principle be adopted for all classes of workers? The trade unions are already feeling their way towards a solution of the problem, and public opinion is coming to be recognised more and more as a factor in the settlement of industrial disputes—that is, virtually, in the regulation of wages and hours of labour. And so we may arrive at a closer approximation to Ideal Justice by laying down some such principle as this—That the reward of labour shall be determined, not by competition, but by the moral sense of the community, working through either the local or national Government, or through such forms of industrial organisation as shall most readily adapt themselves to our moral and social needs.

But there are other ways in which Mr. Ruskin would have the State strive to realise the Divine Ideal of Justice. The reason why certain classes in the State are deprived of their fair share of the national produce is that other classes obtain command (1) over the labour of multitudes of other men, and tax it for their own profit; (2) over "treasure-trove, as of mines; and (3) by speculation (commercial gambling)." Wherever one class receives more than its fair share, another class must receive less than its fair share. Mr. Ruskin would stop, or at least limit,

these sources of injustice by nationalising the land, mines, railroads, and waterways, and so making rent and interest, as far as possible, national, instead of personal, income. "Neither road, nor railroad, nor canal, should ever pay dividends to anybody. They should pay their working expenses and no more." And again: "Wholly unjustifiable rents are for things which are not, and which it is criminal to consider as, personal or exchangeable property. Bodies of men, land, water, and air are the principal of these things. ... Bodies of men or women, then (and much more, as I said before, their souls), must not be bought or sold. Neither must land, nor water, nor air, these being the necessary sustenance of men's bodies and souls." ("Time and Tide.") Mr. Ruskin would enforce, most sternly and uncompromisingly, the Biblical injunction, "He that will not work, neither shall he eat." And inasmuch as rent and interest represent a return or payment for which no work has been done by the receiver, they fall within the category of Mr. Ruskin's condemnation. All payment or reward of labour should be by definitely-fixed salaries, and no payment should be made to individuals for work which they have not done, else other individuals have to go without payment, or with reduced and unjust payment, for work which they have done. I have not space to elaborate Mr. Ruskin's arguments on this point, but must refer the reader to the works themselves, particularly to those passages in "Fors Clavigera" which deal with the subject. Perhaps I may be permitted to remark that there is a certain futility in discussing the abolition of a practice which cannot possibly be abolished under the existing state of society. So long as individuals have power to extort Rent and Interest, so long will Rent and Interest be extorted, and no law will avail to stop the practice. They can only be abolished, or absorbed, by the State, when the State obtains control of the means by which they are extorted—the land and the capital of the country. By that time the reservoirs of fictitious capital, in the shape of high land values and watered stock, by which the system of usury is largely maintained, will be dried up, and money, instead of being bought, will go a-begging. Rent stands in a somewhat different category to Interest, in form, though not in essence. For healthy, well-favoured, and otherwise valuable sites will always

command more than unhealthy, unfruitful, and ill-favoured sites; and the State will, when the land is nationalised, naturally and rightly pocket the difference between the two, i.e., Rent.

All this, however, admirable as it may be in principle, may seem to be impracticable for the average man, and so Mr. Ruskin, in the preface to "Unto this Last"—which work contains, in a concentrated form, the pith of his social and economic teaching—lays down four moderate proposals, which governing authorities should immediately adopt. First—"That there should be training schools for youths established, at Government cost, and under Government discipline, over the whole country; that every child born in the country should be permitted to pass through them," and that, at least, the following three things should be imperatively taught:—(a) The laws of health; (b) habits of gentleness and justice; (c) the calling by which he or she is to live. Secondly—"That, in connection with these training schools, there should be established, also entirely under Government regulation, manufactories and workshops for the production and sale of every necessary of life, and for the exercise of every useful art. And that—interfering no whit with private enterprise, nor setting any restraints or tax on private trade, but leaving both to do their best, and beat the Government if they could, there should, at these Government manufactories and shops, be authoritatively good and exemplary work done, and pure and true substance sold, so that a man could be sure, if he chose to pay the Government price, that he got for his money bread that was bread, ale that was ale, and work that was work." Thirdly—"That any man, or woman, or boy, or girl, out of employment, should be at once received at the nearest Government school, and set to such work as it appeared, on trial, they were fit for, at a fixed rate of wages, determinable every year; that, being found incapable of work, through ignorance, they should be taught; or being found incapable of work through sickness, should be tended; but that being found objecting to work, they should be set, under compulsion of the strictest nature, to the more painful and degrading forms of necessary toil." Lastly—"That for the old and destitute, comfort and home should be provided, which provision, when misfortune had been, by the working of such a

system, sifted from guilt, would be honourable, instead of disgraceful, to the receiver. For a labourer serves his country with his spade, just as a man in the middle ranks of life serves it with sword, pen, or lancet. If the service be less, and, therefore, the wages during health less, then the reward when health is broken may be less, but not less honourable; and it ought to be quite as natural and straightforward a matter for a labourer to take his pension from the parish, because he has deserved well of his parish, as for a man in higher rank to take his pension from his country, because he has deserved well of his country."

In this plan, Education takes first place—and Mr. Ruskin's system of education embraces the whole of the powers and capabilities of a man—physical, intellectual, artistic, moral. "I believe every man in a Christian kingdom ought to be equally well educated. But I would have his education to purpose, stern, practicable, irresistible, in moral habits, in bodily strength and beauty, in all faculties of mind capable of being developed under the circumstances of the individual, and especially in the technical knowledge of his own business; but yet, infinitely various in its effort, directed to make one youth humble and another confident, to tranquillise this mind, to put some spark of ambition into that, now to urge and now to restrain." And the "Divine Idea" comes out again in the sentence, "If the child has other things right, round it, and given to it, in time, pictures of flowers, and beasts, and things in Heaven, and Heavenly earth, may be useful to it—*but see first that its realities* [the conditions of its life] *are heavenly*."

Indeed, Mr. Ruskin's system of education, as well as his system of social science and political economy, springs from his definition, his conception of Wealth. That wrong, everything else is wrong. If our conception of Wealth is merely gold, houses, land, we may pile Pelion upon Ossa, and still be poor indeed. But if it be "Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration," things of beauty, and powers of thought, and affection, and action, then we may be possessed of but a modest material competence, and still be richer than Midas. "That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions

of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest, helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."

Such is the bare and inadequate outline of Ruskin's philosophy of Life which the exigencies of space enable me to place before the reader. But if I have succeeded in inducing the latter to go to the works themselves, with all their wealth of imagery, their aptness of illustration, and their power of expression, my aim will have been accomplished, and the reader's life enriched.

XII.

WILLIAM MORRIS: POET AND SOCIALIST.

By the death of William Morris, England lost a personality which stood to our modern social life in somewhat the same relation as the Hebrew prophets and psalmists stood to the age in which they lived. Full of the same passionate and rebellious spirit against wrong, and the effeminacy and undue luxury won by the ways of wrong, full also of the same intense longing for a juster and more joyful life, his robust and homely figure seemed like an incarnate prophecy of the order yet to be. A man of many-sided individuality—tradesman, printer, house-decorator, lecturer, artist, poet, craftsman—his life and work, though we may not know it, touches ours at many points. The very papers on the walls of our homes are brighter and more beautiful because of his influence, because his sensitive and refined taste in house decoration affected the many industries connected therewith. He has brought into our English life a desire for sweeter, healthier, homelier ways of living; he has given to latter-day English poetry a sense of peace, of restfulness, of charm, which it sadly lacked; and, for mankind at large, he has intensified that sense of *camaraderie*, of fellowship, which, at its highest and best, is the perfect flower and perfume of a true social life. When the light of William Morris went out, England lost not merely a great poet, not merely a great artist, but, first and foremost, a genuine, warm-hearted, whole-souled English gentleman.

Of all his many-sided activities I have not space to write, even if I were able, but, to those readers who may not know very much of the man and his writings, I may say something which will help to bring home to their minds a sense of the beauty and the greatness of his work, and of the healthiness and wholesomeness of his influence on our modern life; something which may stimulate them to read his writings for themselves, and move

them, perhaps, to look upon his extreme views with a kindlier and more impartial spirit. For the battle in which he fought will be a stern and long one, and no one knows the largeness of heart and the tolerance of spirit we may yet require.

Born at Walthamstow in 1834, and educated first at Marlborough School and then at Exeter College, Oxford, it is said that Morris was destined for the Church. With all due deference to the Church, however, I think we may fairly congratulate ourselves that that intention was not carried out. Coming under the influence of Rossetti at Oxford, he decided to adopt an artistic career, and, in company with two or three artistic friends, he established a business in London which ultimately revolutionised the art of decoration. Before entering into business as a practical house-decorator, however, he had already achieved considerable distinction as a poet by the publication of "The Defence of Guenevere" in his twenty-fourth year, a distinction which was to culminate in world-wide fame as a first-rank poet on the appearance of "The Life and Death of Jason," in 1867, and the first part of "The Earthly Paradise," in 1868. The title of the latter work, "The Earthly Paradise," which comprises a number of Greek and mediæval myths and romances done into verse, is typical of his whole life and philosophy. "The Earthly Paradise"—that is, his aim was to bring all the joy, the happiness, and the loveliness that men conceived of heaven down to earth. Tennyson had dealt with Nature and Life, and the problems of life, with a certain aristocratic and intellectual distinction; Matthew Arnold, in his poetry especially, had approached the same problems with the austere melancholy of the student; Browning, with his doctrine of "divine discontent," of persistent struggle, of continuous achievement, had taught us that evil and misery were the stuff by which our souls must be tested, and so strengthened and uplifted by combat with the ills of life. Morris, however, approached life from an entirely different standpoint, the standpoint of the artist, pure and simple. "Away," he virtually said, "with your intellectual distinction, with your austerity and melancholy, with your persistent struggle and unrest. Let us rest. Let us enter into the joy of our inheritance. Let us make life glad, and joyful, and peaceful. Nature

is lovely. The radiant sky, the clear sunshine, the fragrance of the flowers, the lilt of the birds, the lowing of the kine, the beauty of the fields and the woods, the bounteous harvests, the quiet, peaceful homes—all these things call us to a life of gladness. Let us enter into life in that spirit." And so Morris takes us back to the Middle Ages, to the times of the peasant, and the yeoman, and the craftsman, when the rush of towns was unknown, and England lived and slept under the shadows of great Cathedrals, or amid scenes of rural beauty. Even his renderings of the Greek and Norse myths are instinct with this spirit. To the ancient dramatists the stories of the gods and heroes were typical of the sorrows and strivings of humanity—of its hopes, its fears, its loves and its hates, its aspiration and its despair, and the inevitable conflict of these with Fate or Destiny. But with Morris they become so much material for quickening the interest in and enjoyment of life.

> "Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
> Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
> Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
> Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
> Telling a tale not too importunate
> To those who in the sleepy region stay,
> Lulled by the singer of an empty day.
>
> "Then let the others go! and if indeed
> In some old garden thou and I have wrought,
> And made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded seed,
> And fragrance of old days and deeds have brought
> Back to folk weary; all was not for nought.
> No little part it was for me to play—
> The idle singer of an empty day."

And as in his Poetry, so in his Art. Art, for him, is no ideal realm, no *dilettante's* pleasure-house for the intellectually distinguished, it is something the influence of which every man and woman and child should be taught to feel, and which must be brought down into the daily life of the school, the street, the workshop, and the home. "The aim of Art," he said, "is to increase

the happiness of men by giving them beauty and interest, by giving them hope and bodily pleasure in their work; or, shortly, to make man's work happy and his rest fruitful." And in that spirit he established the factory at Merton Abbey, amid the fair fields of Surrey, where the workmen were comrades and craftsmen like himself, where none were set to a task in which he did not take a pride and delight, where the reward was generous, and the hours of labour reasonable, and the leisure long, and the work inspired and directed by the conscious intelligence of each individual mind. Difficult as this was from the point of view of Art, it was comparatively easy to a man like William Morris, from the point view of trade. The work was so excellent of its kind that he was virtually above competition, and could claim such a price as would afford generous remuneration to all concerned. But it was always his principle, nay, it was part of the moral nature of the man himself, that he always put Art, the loveliness or the joyfulness of the work itself, before all other considerations. We have no right, he said, to demand or to use things "which must be made by labour degrading to the makers." Whenever we do that, we are taking away the happiness of life from one or other of our fellow-creatures—that happiness which we ourselves crave, and of which we cannot, therefore, rightly deprive our fellow-creatures. Whenever such a thing is done we hurt ourselves by our effeminacy, and undue luxury, and unconscious brutality, and help to crush and deaden the soul of a fellow human being.

Just as, to Carlyle, it was a tragedy that "one man should die ignorant who had a capacity for knowledge," so, to William Morris, it was a tragedy that one man should die deprived of access to all the avenues of beauty, or with soul deadened by waste or unproductive toil. And so Morris is especially severe upon the ugliness, the dirtiness, the squalor, the smoke, the din of our overcrowded manufacturing towns. And severer still upon those machine-made goods which go by the name of artistic ware, of which so many of our houses are too often full, and which, by their cheapness, their pretentiousness, their showiness, and their vulgarity, shut out from view those more delicate and beautiful hand-made fabrics and hand-painted wares by which Art is truly exemplified. Hence, it will easily be understood that

Morris's social "Utopia" is entirely different from those wooden and mechanical representations of future society of which Bellamy's "Looking Backward" was the most successful example. Most of these centre in the town. Morris's "Utopia" centres in the country. It is redolent of the fragrance of wild flowers, the scent of new-mown hay, the breezes of hill, and down, and moorland. The great manufacturing towns have vanished; the streams and rivers flow with crystal clearness and are merry with trout and salmon; money is kept in museums as a curiosity; houses are surrounded with gardens and orchards; women reach the height of their beauty at forty, instead of twenty, because of the glad, and joyous, and healthy life they lead; men work, not because they are compelled, but because they delight in creating beautiful things; and the craftsmen of the North go down for a holiday to the fields and orchards of the South, and are there received with all the joys of fellowship and goodwill. "Fellowship," that is the keynote of William Morris's social theories. Because you are a man or a woman, he would say, and because I am a man, therefore, we are brothers and sisters marching towards a common home, and we must help each other to live at our very happiest and best. His great saying, "Fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell: fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death," has passed almost into a proverb. His passion and enthusiasm for humanity, though inspired and modulated by his artistic longings and impulses, burns even stronger than these. "He who doeth well in fellowship," he says, "and because of fellowship, shall not fail, though he seem to fail to-day, but in days hereafter shall he and his work yet be alive, and men be holpen by them to strive again and yet again.... And man shall help man, and the saints in heaven shall be glad, because men no more fear each other; and the churl shall be ashamed, and shall hide his churlishness till it be gone, and he be no more a churl; and fellowship shall be established in heaven and on the earth."

"And what wealth then shall be left us
  When none shall gather gold
To buy his friend in the market,
  And pinch and pine the sold?

"Nay, what save the lovely city,
  And the little house on the hill,
And the wastes and the woodland beauty,
  And the happy fields we till;

"And the homes of ancient stories,
  The tombs of the mighty dead;
And the wise men seeking out marvels,
  And the poet's teeming head;

"And the painter's hand of wonder,
  And the marvellous fiddle-bow,
And the banded choir of music:
  All those that do and know."

Such was the ideal, the "Utopia" of William Morris, and I doubt whether any man or woman who has a taste for poetry can read his lines without feeling their sweetness and beauty, and the healthy breeze of inspiration which they bring; or whether any man or woman who has a longing for higher things can read any of his prose works without saying: "Yes, *this* is what *ought to be*." And when all men say that, then what "ought to be" *will* be. And yet with all deference to the dead poet, I cannot refrain from uttering one word of criticism which seems to me to be necessary. Morris takes us back, in imagination, to the Middle Ages. So fair and beautiful does he paint the times that are gone, so glad and joyous does he picture the lives then lived, that we are almost led to believe, by the charm of his poetry and romance, that the Age of Gold lies in the past. That cannot be. The Golden Age is in the future. In those beautiful pictures of the past we do not see the dark and sombre side—the mud cabins, the windowless houses, the sordid and cheerless homes, the narrow streets, the pestilential courts, the monotonous labour of the fields, the slavery of the serf, the fever-stricken cities, the agues, the rheumatisms, the sweating sicknesses, the black deaths, which have been driven from our midst by the patient discoveries of modern science. No, the Golden Age lies in the future. Machinery may be a curse, or it may be a blessing. That is as we make it. It becomes a

curse when men and women are turned into mere appendages to it, and the ceaseless strain of hand and eye and muscle wait "from dewy morn hill dewy eve" upon its tireless energies. It will become a blessing when we learn to control it and use it for the necessities of life, for lightening the drudgery of monotonous toil, compressing it within the smallest possible limits, and leaving the fair domain of Art to be built by human hands and lives, which will then worship all the more fervently in her temples, because they will have leisure and longing to enjoy her brightness and her beauty. And that is coming even now. Already the "marvellous fiddle-bow" is in the hands of the school-boy and the school-girl; already the tuneful music of "banded choirs" issues from multitudes of children's voices; already the little ones in our schools are learning the artistic delights of producing beautiful things by the work of their own hands. And so Morris's influence, even in this matter, helped and strengthened as it has been by his master Ruskin, has been a great and noble one, and will grow and strengthen with the years.

It is true, indeed, that no one man can present a complete view of life, with all its variously coloured ideals, its many-sided activities. We live by and in fellowship in all things. We have need for all our modern prophets and psalmists. For Tennyson, with his courtly grace and refinement, his ideal knight whose "strength is as the strength of ten, because his heart is pure," his ideal kingdom of Camelot, where men are led onward and upward by the high, white flame of Aspiration and of Love. We have need of Arnold with his "earnest air," his austere morality which can only find its prototype on the "breast of God." We have need also of Browning, with his incentives to persistent struggle and achievement, his ringing appeals for the work of the "girded loin and the burning lamp." And we have need, too, of this last sweet singer of all, with his tales of fair women and brave men, his longings for the peace, and calm, and joy, and beauty of well-earned leisure and repose. For the prophets of olden time—Amos, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah—we have our meed of respect and reverence, and their words still bring strength "in the time of trouble." But these, our modern

prophets, we love with a stronger love, because the tones of their voices have rung in our ears, because their eyes have shone upon us and lit ours with like emotion; because their words have called us to take our places in the great battle-march of Humanity.

"I care not," said the German poet, Heine, "that men lay a laurel-wreath on my tomb, but lay a sword there, for I was a great soldier in the Liberation War of Hunanity." William Morris may well claim both the laurel-wreath and the sword, for he, too, has been a singer and a soldier in the Liberation War of Humanity. And, "though he seem to fail to-day, in days hereafter shall he and his work yet be alive, and men be holpen by them to strive again and yet again." And so we doff our hats, in reverence, as we take our leave of the genial, honest, warm-hearted, true-hearted craftsman, whose handiwork has brightened and beautified our hearths and homes, whose example has inspired our hearts afresh, and whose tuneful words have added to the joyful harmonies and music of our life.

XIII.

THE CHARTIST MOVEMENT.

THE Chartist movement was one to which all social and political reformers look back with a certain amount of pride, mingled with a greater amount of sadness. Pride, because it was a movement inspired by great ideals; because it called forth a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice which is rare in public movements, and caught up on its "moral force" side some of the finest and most thoughtful working-men of the time. Sadness, because its ideals were either shattered, or passed on, by the natural process of evolution, into other movements and other parties; because its spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice was broken by brutal persecution and imprisonment; and because its "moral force" was largely neutralised, and its adherents deluded and misled, by one or two inordinately vain and self-seeking agitators.

The movement, like all such, sprang into being from a variety of causes, the chief of which were—the extreme disappointment caused by the failure of the reformed Parliament to fulfil the expectations which had been formed of it, and the deep poverty and wretchedness of large sections of the working classes, especially in the large manufacturing towns. It was felt by the working-class leaders that the movement which had succeeded in forcing the Reform Bill through had been mainly a middle-class movement, aided by the working class, and yet serving only middle-class objects and aims. They naturally expected that the franchise would be extended to their ranks by those to whom they had rendered such efficient service. But re-action always follows reform. And when, as the years passed, no sign of political justice, not to mention gratitude, was made by the leaders of the newly-enfranchised classes, and the poverty of the great mass of the people seemed to deepen rather than lighten, a deep and bitter division sprang up between the leaders of the latter

and the leaders of the middle classes, namely, the Whigs. Out of this disappointment, bitterness, hatred, and hostility, was born the Chartist movement.

The actual beginnings of the movement, and the formulation of the points of the "Charter," may be traced to the "Working Men's Association," an organisation which was formed in 1836, and which was an outcome of the agitation for an unstamped Press. In that year, after a wearying crusade, during which some hundreds of prosecutions and imprisonments were made against the agitators by the then Whig Government, a compromise was arrived at by which the newspaper stamp was reduced to a penny. This was a virtual victory for the reformers. But instead of dispersing they turned their political energies into other directions, and formed the organisation called the "Working Men's Association." The chief founders were William Lovett, Henry Hetherington, John Cleave, James Watson, Henry Vincent, George Julian Harney, and some other well-known reformers of the time. Francis Place, too, attended many of their meetings, and, along with Lovett, helped to draft the proposals which ultimately became known as the People's Charter. These proposals, which were also embodied in a Bill to be introduced into Parliament, were, briefly, as follows:—(1) Universal manhood suffrage, (2) abolition of property qualification for Parliament, (3) payment of members, (4) equal electoral districts, (5) annual Parliaments, (6) the ballot. The Charter, with an accompanying address drawn up by Lovett, who might be called the embodied conscience of the movement, was first published to the world on May 8th, 1838.

Immediately great political meetings were organised in various towns, at which the Charter was enthusiastically approved. Immense gatherings were held in Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Newcastle, and other places. Other associations, like the Birmingham Political Union, lent their support to the movement. A National Petition was organised and a general convention of delegates from all parts of the country called to meet in February, 1839. Meanwhile, as in all reform movements, dissensions had begun to manifest themselves. The fact that the movement was pioneered and organised by different, though kindred associations,

was really a source of weakness and divided counsels. Then, again, a "physical force" party, whose avowed aim was a recourse to armed measures, had sprung up in the movement in opposition to the "moral force" party led by Lovett. A further cause of disunion was found in the character and temper of some of the leaders themselves. Of these, perhaps the most culpable was Feargus O'Connor. O'Connor was the editor and chief proprietor of the "Northern Star," the principal working-class newspaper of the time, and, through its pages, wielded great influence. Possessing lungs of brass and a voice like a trumpet, he was the most effective out-door orator of his time, and the idol of the immense assemblages which were often brought together in those days. Unfortunately, both for the movement and for himself, he was a man of unbounded conceit and egotism, extremely jealous of precedence, and regarding himself as a sort of uncrowned king of the working classes.

O'Connor and his party soon gained control of the Convention, which met in London, and sat from February to May, 1839, listening to speeches, passing resolutions on the state of the nation, the Poor-Law, the Factory system, and other questions, and formulating a policy for the new movement. The latter included proposals which were both unwise and impracticable. One of the unwise ones was that the adherents of the movement should provide themselves with arms to defend their rights. And one of the impracticable ones was that the people should abstain from all labour for a month, to be called the "sacred month." After a three months' session in London the Convention adjourned to Birmingham, where, with slight modification, the previous proposals were confirmed. Great meetings were again held in various parts of the country. A monster Petition was organised. Pikes were forged in large numbers, and the more ardent spirits in the North drilled nightly on the moors.

Meanwhile, the Government began to take counter-measures. Lord John Russell—who, by his declaration that the Reform Bill of 1832 was to him the final form of the English constitution, had earned for himself the nick-name of "Finality Jack"—issued a proclamation to the Lords-Lieutenant of the counties, authorising them to supply arms to any persons who might offer their

services in the interest of public peace, with the view of putting down any Chartist risings. The town authorities at Birmingham, also, decided to prohibit the meetings of the Convention, which had been held daily in the Bull Ring. This step, to say the least, was decidedly arbitrary, as the Bull Ring was the recognised rendezvous for all classes, and had been constantly used for political meetings during the Reform agitation. The decision of the authorities led to a disturbance, and three of the Chartist leaders, William Lovett, John Collins, and Dr. Taylor, were arrested. Riots followed and more arrests were made. The Chartists were wrought to a fury of indignation. Great meetings were held throughout the country, inflammatory speeches were made, and strongly-worded resolutions passed. Much more serious events occurred at Newport in Monmouthshire, on November 4th, 1839. Henry Vincent, a famous Chartist orator, and some others, had been imprisoned in Monmouth jail, and it was reported that the miners were determined to secure their liberation by force. Whatever their object, some thousands of miners, many of them armed, assembled and marched into Newport on Sunday, November 4th. There they came into conflict with the military near the Westgate Hotel. Shots were fired on both sides, and within a few minutes ten of the Chartists lay dead on the ground, and fifty others were more or less seriously wounded. The multitude fled. The leaders were arrested and brought to trial, John Frost, the Newport delegate to the Convention, being ably defended by Sir Frederick Pollock. Frost, Jones, and Williams, who pleaded not guilty, and five others who pleaded guilty, were sentenced to death, but this was afterwards commuted to transportation, the prisoners being finally released after fifteen years' servitude.

The Government struck equally hard in other parts of the country, and before many months were over most of the Chartist leaders, and some hundreds of the rank and file were in prison, where the punishment meted out to them was scandalously severe. In the north risings were prevented by the alertness and skill of Sir Charles Napier and the military forces under his command. What the people had to expect in the event of an outbreak may be gathered from a passage in his diary: "The

plot thickens. Meetings increase and are so violent, and arms so abound, I know not what to think. The Duke of Portland tells me there is no doubt of an intended general rising. Poor people! They will suffer. They have set all England against them and their physical force. Fools! We have the physical force, not they. They talk of their hundreds of thousands of men! Who is to move them when I am dancing round them with cavalry, and pelting them with cannon-shot? What would their hundred thousand men do with my one hundred rockets wriggling their fiery tails among them, roaring, scorching, tearing, smashing all they came near? And when, in desperation and despair, they broke to fly, how would they bear five regiments of cavalry careering through them? Poor men! Poor men! How little they know of physical force."[1]

The reader will now understand something of the bitterness and fierceness engendered in the breasts of the Chartists, especially when he remembers the grinding poverty which was then prevalent in thousands of homes. He willl understand, also, why the Chartists sullenly held themselves aloof from contemporary movements, such as the Anti-Corn-Law agitation, refusing to be satisfied with anything less than the Charter. He will understand, too, something of the despair which temporarily settled upon the minds of the rank and file as their leaders were swept into prison, their newspapers silenced, and their proud purposes of the early Convention days trampled into oblivion.

But the despair was only temporary. On the release of the leading Chartist prisoners in 1840-41 the old enthusiasm returned. Feargus O'Connor and Bronterre O'Brien were greeted by immense crowds. The former, with his usual egotism, had declared that on his release he would appear in a suit of fustian "in order to show how completely he identified himself with the working classes." A suit of fustian was accordingly presented to him. On his liberation he was met at York by many delegates from various parts of the country, and rode through the town in a triumphal car, followed by some thousands of the admiring populace.

[1] "Life and Opinions of Sir C. J. Napier," by Sir W. F. D. Napier, vol. II, p. 69.

But dissensions soon broke out again. An attempt to unite the advanced section of the middle classes with the Chartists in a "complete suffrage," movement was strongly denounced by O'Connor, and produced much personal bitterness. The National Charter Association had already been formed in 1840, with the object of uniting all the local associations in one central organisation; but here, again, personal ambitions and jealousies hindered the effectiveness of the movement. The Anti-Corn-Law League was also now growing into a popular and powerful organisation, and an attempt was made by some of the Chartists to bring about an alliance with the League, but here, again, O'Connor intervened, fearing, as Dr. Gammage, the historian of the movement, says, that his personal ascendancy would be endangered. Nevertheless, the movement made progress. In a very short time the National Association embraced 400 branches and 40,000 members. A band of lecturers traversed the country, explaining the principles of the Charter and enrolling adherents to the cause. There was still a strong leaven of the "physical force" element in the movement, and the opposition to the Anti-Corn-Law League became more pronounced and bitter. In the summer of 1842 disturbances took place in the Potteries and in Lancashire. In connection with the former, Thomas Cooper was put on trial for sedition, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Stafford Gaol, where he composed his "Purgatory of Suicides."

It is impossible to follow the movement in detail through all its demonstrations, conventions, conferences, land schemes, monster petitions, and lamentable dissensions, in the space at my disposal. The success of the Anti-Corn-Law agitation drew public attention away from the movement for a time, but, after the repeal of the Corn Duties in 1846, interest and enthusiasm again revived. In that year also, Ernest Jones, a young barrister and poet, joined the movement, and soon attained a leading place in its counsels. His earnest and impassioned eloquence caught the ear of the multitude, and his "Chartist Songs" won their hearts. He might be termed the poet of Chartism, as Ebenezer Elliott was of the Anti-Corn-Law movement. One of his most impassioned lyrics was written in commemoration of a great demonstration held on Blackstone Edge on the 2nd of August,

1846. It is in the metre of Campbell's "Hohenlinden." A few stanzas may be given here:—

"O'er plains and cities far away,
All lorn and lost the morning lay,
When sunk the sun, at break of day,
In smoke of mill and factory.

"But waved the wind on Blackstone height
A standard of the broad sunlight,
And sung that morn with trumpet might
A sounding song of Liberty!

"And grew the glorious music higher,
When, pouring with his heart on fire,
Old Yorkshire came with Lancashire
And all his noblest chivalry.

"The men who give—not those who take!
The hands that bless—yet hearts that break—
Those toilers for their foemen's sake!
Old England's true nobility!

. . . .

"Then every eye grew keen and bright,
And every pulse was dancing light,
For every heart had felt the might
Of truth presaging victory.

"And up to heaven the descant ran,
With no cold roof 'twixt God and man,
To dash back from its frowning span
A Church-prayer's listless mockery.

"Then distant cities quaked to hear,
When rolled from that high hill the cheer
Of—Hope to Slaves! to Tyrants fear!
And God and Man for Liberty."

At the General Election in 1847 a number of Chartist candidates were run, and a number of others more or less favourable to the Charter. Of the former Feargus O'Connor was returned for Nottingham, and of the latter the more notable victories were

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the return of Thomas Wakley and T. Slingsby Duncombe for Finsbury, Colonel Perronet Thompson for Bradford, and W. J. Fox for Oldham. Ernest Jones contested Halifax, and Henry Vincent, Ipswich, but, along with many others in different parts of the country, were unsuccessful.

The culminating point of the movement, however, was reached in 1848—that memorable year in which the spirit of revolution ran like a flame through the whole of Europe. In France Louis Philippe was dethroned, the troops fraternised with the people, and a Republic was proclaimed amid universal enthusiasm. In Vienna a representative government was established, and Metternich, the schoolmaster of despots, compelled to flee. In every kingdom and duchy of Germany democracy triumphed. A German Parliament assembled at Frankfort. Hungary obtained a ministry headed by Count Batthyani and Louis Kossuth. Bohemia obtained a separate constitution. Schleswig and Holstein revolted against Denmark. The Italian cities drove out their foreign garrisons, and once more assumed for a time their ancient glory. All this, occurring within three months, could not but send a thrill through the democratic movement in England. Enthusiastic demonstrations were organised, with the object of sending fraternal greetings to the French Republicans and other Continental democrats. A new Chartist Convention was called together, another monster petition organised, and a great holiday and demonstration arranged to take place on the 10th of April on Kennington Common. From this place of meeting a huge procession was organised to proceed through London, and present the petition for the Charter, in person, to the Houses of Parliament. The Government became alarmed, and feared a rising. The procession was forbidden. The Duke of Wellington was put in command of the troops and called upon to defend London. Tens of thousands of special constables were sworn in. Troops were brought up by night and placed along the route of the intended procession. Cannon were placed in position on the bridges and on river steamers. Marines were posted at the Admiralty. The Bank, the General Post Office, and other public buildings were fortified, and on the morning of the 10th the shops in the great thoroughfares remained closed.

Happily, through the good sense of the Government and the Chartist leaders, a collision was averted. The former announced that they would allow the demonstration, but not the procession, and they would also permit the Chartist Executive to present the petition. The compromise was accepted. Some 50,000 people assembled on Kennington Common, and the leaders had then the difficult task of persuading them to abandon the procession. This was accomplished, however, and the petition, containing, it was said, over five million signatures, and being some miles in length, was committed to the care of the Executive, hauled to the Houses of Parliament in cars, and there presented by Feargus O'Connor. The petition was referred to the Committee on Petitions, which reported that the number of signatures was under two millions, and that some of these were fictitious. A debate took place in the House, but nothing was done. This rather tame conclusion to the proceedings of the great tenth of April, especially after the previous loud talk about forcing Parliament to accept the Charter, did not serve to increase the popularity of, or respect for, the movement. Signs of decadence began to manifest themselves. Funds diminished. O'Connor's Land scheme came to a disastrous collapse in 1851, and he himself became insane. Fierce recriminations followed, and the organisation of the movement suffered accordingly. The wave of re-action following excitement and revolution had also its effect. The only further important event that need be chronicled here was the arrest and trial of Ernest Jones and some others for sedition in June, 1848. The former was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. His release in 1850 was the signal for much enthusiasm and great demonstrations, for he was greatly loved, but the movement never regained its former vigour. Its leaders drifted into other political and social channels, and its energies became absorbed into other fields of activity—Co-operation, Christian Socialism, Trade Unionism, and Radicalism.

So ended the Chartist movement. One of the most striking things about it was the number of men of unusual ability who gave it their services. Amongst others, and in addition to those already named in the course of this article, may be mentioned: W. J. Linton, Gerald Massey, George Jacob Holyoake, Samuel

Kidd, Lloyd Jones, Dr. Gammage, William Carpenter, G. W. M, Reynolds, W. P. Roberts, and Dr. M'Donnell. There were many others, also, of conspicuous ability, whose names are now forgotten. And the most pathetic things about the movement were the endless bickerings and dissensions, and the apparent fruitlessness of its endeavours. I say apparent fruitlessness, because the direct results were so meagre. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the Chartist movement was really fruitless. No movement of its magnitude and intensity can be fruitless. It may have looked too much to outward means, and too little to inward and spiritual reform; but it was an excellent means of political education for the working classes. It paved the way for later political reforms, and we owe it to the men who lived amid obloquy and misrepresentation, and who now lie in unknown and forgotten graves, that our present political freedom closely approximates to the ideal of the Charter. That is the sad side of progress; some sow and toil amid storm or shine, while others reap the fruit of their labour and the honour of reward. Let us take courage from the fact that there is a joy and a glory even in the fight. And let us think lovingly and tenderly of the men who gave their lives to causes and to movements out of which our own freedom was born. Other times bring other ideals. It is for us to preserve, undimmed, the Lamp of Service which our forefathers trimmed and fed with their energies, and so pass on to after generations, in increased measure, the heritage which has been bestowed upon us.

XIV.

THE TRADE UNIONIST MOVEMENT.

It is impossible, within the limits of a brief chapter like this, to give anything like a complete idea of the scope of trade union activity during the century. But my purpose will be served if I can convey to the mind of the reader a true impression of the importance of that activity, of the principles which underlie the movement, and of its relation to other social and industrial reform movements of the century. Like all such movements, it has had to pass through the usual three stages—first, unreasoning opposition and persecution; second, neglect and contempt, or misrepresentation; third, gradual recognition and acceptance. Even now, one may occasionally find ignorant and prejudiced people who look upon trade unionism as a movement mainly for promoting strikes and fostering ill-will between employers and workmen. As a matter of fact, every political economist and social reformer of repute now regards the movement as a necessary and permanent factor in the industrial constitution of the country.

It may save some confusion of thought, and aid the interpretation of the true place and meaning of one of the most important industrial movements of the century, if I state at the outset the moral principle on which trade unionism, consciously or unconsciously bases itself. That principle is, briefly, that the workman, as workman, has a right to a voice—not the sole voice—in determining the conditions under which, and the wages for which, he will work. That is really the principle of Carlyle and Ruskin, the principle of co-operation, over again—that the reward of labour should be determined, not by competition, but by the moral sense of the community. For example, one workman, with only a few shillings in his pocket, and a wife and family at home dependent on his earnings, will be at a disadvantage in bargaining with an employer who,

possessing a certain amount of capital, is not so close to mere subsistence level, and who, where there is no trade union, can probably bargain individually with a thousand other workmen in the same circumstances as the first. But if the thousand workmen combine and so obtain the power to hold back their labour for a time, the employer is bound to confer or enter upon a discussion with them as to what is right and what is wrong. A moral principle comes in at once. Reason takes the place of the brute force of coercive circumstances. The employer may produce his books; he may try to show that the rate of profit will not afford better terms than those originally offered; he may contend that prices will not allow a higher rate of profit—in any case, and whatever may be the issue, he has conceded the essential principle of trade unionism, that a moral principle, not competition, should determine the reward and the conditions of labour. This, of course, is a very simple statement of the problem. In the further evolution of industry both workman, employer, and consumer (price-payer) may have something to say as to the conditions and terms under which labour should be performed.

In tracing the development of trade union activity, I need not, for my purpose here, go further back than the date of the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1825, and I must refer the reader to the chapter on Francis Place for information as to that all-important event in trades-union history. The repeal of these obnoxious laws was followed by a widespread increase of activity and the multiplication of organisations. A trade union newspaper was also started. A disastrous financial panic, however, followed by a period of commercial depression, militated against the success of these mushroom organisations. Thousands of workmen were thrown out of employment, and any attempt to increase, or even to maintain, the then rate of wages met with almost certain defeat, and sometimes the break-up of the union.

This check to the development of unionism proved only temporary, and with the revival of faith and enthusiasm more ambitious schemes and projects were started. In 1829 and 1830 John Doherty, one of the most indefatigable of the trades-union pioneers of the early part of the century, and a man of wide and far-reaching aims, attempted to organise a national association

of all the trades. As many as one hundred-and-fifty separate unions affiliated themselves with the new organisation. A newspaper, called "The Voice of the People," was started, with Doherty as editor, and the association claimed at one time to have the support of a hundred thousand members. Internal dissensions and imperfect organisation soon paved the way for the dissolution of the association. The workmen had not yet learnt the alphabet of successful organisation even in their own trades, and were therefore not likely to be successful in the much more difficult task of the federation of all the trades. Another attempt at federation, however, was made in 1834. During the preceding year, the employers, exasperated by the language of a rather strong Builders' Union, had determined to try to crush out trade unionism by what was known as "the presentation of the document"—that is, they publicly declared that no man need apply for work at their particular establishments unless he was prepared to sign a document to the effect that he would have nothing to do with trade unionism in any shape or form. This extreme measure exasperated the workmen, and doubtless had no little to do with stimulating renewed activity on their part. At any rate, the "Grand National Consolidated Trades Union" was formed in 1834. It was proposed by this organisation to include all the working classes, by means of lodges formed in the various trades, in one vast federation. Robert Owen was the chief mover and organiser, and contemplated turning the movement into an organisation for the promotion of his favourite scheme of industrial communities. Within a few weeks, say Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb—to whose "History of Trade Unionism" I am indebted for most of the facts in this chapter—the Union "appears to have been joined by at least half-a-million members.... A positive mania for trade unionism set in, and numerous missionary delegates perambulated the country." The association had four paid officers, and an executive committee in London administered its affairs. The huge organisation soon found itself involved in sectional disputes. The propertied classes became alarmed, and certain old Acts of Parliament were strained to bring some of the agitators within the meshes of the law. The most flagrant case of this form of coercion was the trial and

transportation of six Dorchester labourers, who were found guilty of administering illegal oaths. The wages of agricultural labourers in the district of Dorchester had sunk to seven shillings a week. Two delegates from the "Grand National" visited the district, and easily persuaded several of the labourers to form a "lodge." Unfortunately, the ceremony of initiation included the administration of a certain oath, binding the members to the observance of the lodge rules. Six labourers were immediately arrested, and ultimately sentenced to the infamous punishment of seven years' transportation, Lord Melbourne defending the sentence in Parliament on behalf of the Government. A widespread agitation was immediately set on foot for the release of the unfortunate victims, a monster procession to the Home Office was organised, and a petition, with over a quarter-of-a-million signatures presented; but four years passed away before the men were released. Meanwhile both the funds and the credit of the "Grand National" were being impaired by a series of disastrous strikes and lock-outs. The employers met demands for more reasonable conditions of labour by the presentation of the "document," and by the end of the year 1834 the huge organisation was gradually falling to pieces.

During the next few years several new movements came into being, claiming working-class support, and each, in its own way, widening the ideas and educating the minds of the rapidly-multiplying town artisans. Chartism, Factory Reform, Owenism, and the Anti-Corn-Law League each brought their contribution to the social and political ferment of the time. After the failure of the "Grand National," trade unionism languished somewhat, and it was not until the forties that a revival became manifest, more particularly in the establishment of a Miners' Association of Great Britain in 1841, the amalgamation of the Typographical societies in 1844, the re-establishment of the Potters' Union and the organisation of national societies in several other trades. Another attempt at federation was made by the formation of a National Association of United Trades in 1845, an organisation conducted in a much more statesmanlike manner than the previous attempts, and which seems to have acted more as an advisory than an administrative body. Learning wisdom by

experience, a more cautious spirit began to animate the unions, and the leaders and officials began to counsel conciliation and diplomacy rather than a too frequent resort to the brute weapon of the strike.

One of the most important events of this period, however, in the trade-union world, was the amalgamation of the Engineers' societies by the tact and skill of William Newton and William Allan, in 1850. The elaborate constitution of the Amalgamated Society served as a model both for old and new unions. Its financial condition gave it a strength which no union had ever known before. Its Friendly Society benefits helped to weld it into one compact whole; while its system of representation and administration, guarded by an elaborate series of checks and counter-checks, gave it a unity of purpose which no trade society had hitherto attained. Within a year of its formation, it became embroiled in a three months' dispute with the employers, who hoped to break up the organisation by the presentation of the "document." But although the Engineers sustained severe defeat as a result of the struggle—during which they were ably supported by a talented band of "Christian Socialists," including Messrs. E. V. Neale, Thos. Hughes, J. M. Ludlow, and the present Marquis of Ripon—within three years they were stronger in membership and funds than they had ever been before. A demand for a nine-hours' day by the London building trades in 1859, and the renewed presentation of the "document" by the employers, brought the whole trade-union world into line, with the result that a compromise was arrived at—the hated instrument of coercion being withdrawn, and the men returning to work on the same terms as before.

These great and historic strikes helped to create a feeling of solidarity amongst the various trades, and to direct public attention to trades-union principles. As a result of the latter dispute, also, came the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and the London Trades Council. These and other great societies also brought into existence a set of trained trades-union officials, able, by their experience, to grapple with the many problems which were continually arising around them.

But the very growth of these huge organisations tended to

produce a feeling of alarm in the minds of the employing classes. The "lock-out" was substituted for the "document," and the general inconvenience caused by continual stoppages of work produced an unfavourable impression against the men amongst the general public. The explosion of a can of gunpowder in a workman's house at Sheffield and a series of "rattening" outrages—that is, the temporary confiscation of a workman's tools when his union subscriptions happened to be in arrears—produced a feeling of something like terror in the minds of the timid section of the public. About the same time a judgment in the Court of Queen's Bench virtually deprived the trade unions of any legal status, and thereby took away the protection of the law from their accumulated funds. A determined attack was made on trade unionism by its enemies, who tried to connect and identify it with the Sheffield outrages. The Government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the whole subject, with a view to legislation. In this crisis the leaders of the movement wisely availed themselves of the services of Mr. Frederic Harrison and Prof. Beesly, and the band of Christian Socialists before mentioned. Thomas Hughes was appointed on the Commission, and Mr. Frederic Harrison was accepted by the Government as the nominee of the workmen. The case for the unions was well put by Robert Applegarth, the secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, and William Allan, the secretary of the engineers, and well defended against the attacks of the employers by Messrs. Harrison and Hughes. The sectional inquiry into the outrages showed that only a very insignificant number of trade unionists were implicated, and that the practices were merely the rapidly-dying survival of the secret and semi-barbarous usages of earlier times. On the whole, the result of the Commission was a distinct gain to unionism. Thoughtful employers, like Mr. (now Lord) Brassey, publicly admitted its beneficial influence. But the legislative results were by no means an unmixed good. The unions were legalised by the Trade Union Act of 1871, but the Criminal Law Amendment Act of the same year virtually defeated the main object of trade unionism by declaring that while a strike was legal, any collective action to make a strike successful was illegal; in other words, came within the meaning of "criminal

conspiracy." The Act soon became an instrument of tyranny, and it was only after four years of persistent agitation that the Trade Union Charter was won, peaceful organisation of strikes permitted, and collective bargaining recognised by the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871, and the passing of the Employers and Workmen Act, and the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875.

The agitation which preceded the passing of these measures brought two new forces into the field of political and social life—the Trades Union Congress, which held its first meeting at Manchester in 1868, but which only became completely representative in 1871, and the introduction of Labour members to the House of Commons. At the General Election of 1874, the trade unionists, disgusted with the treatment accorded them by the then Liberal Government, put forward no fewer than thirteen candidates. Of these, two were returned—Alexander Macdonald and Thomas Burt. A considerable amount of feeling was evoked by this departure from traditional party lines, but the action of the Labour men was defended by, amongst others, such recognised thinkers as John Stuart Mill [1] and Professor Beesly, the Positivist.

It hardly comes within the scope of this chapter to trace the later developments of trade unionism, as I am concerned here mainly with the pioneer stage of the movement; nor need I detail the growth of the great organisations in the various industries —mining, cotton-manufacturing, shoe-making, ironworkers, boilermakers, masons, the railway and carrying industries, and the later developments of the new unionism. But mention must be made of the pioneer work of Joseph Arch amongst the agricultural labourers; Thomas Birtwistle amongst the cotton operatives; Edwin Coulson amongst the bricklayers; Martin Jude, William Crawford, and Alexander Macdonald amongst the miners; William Dronfield amongst the compositors; T. J. Dunning amongst the bookbinders; John Gast amongst the shipwrights; Daniel Guile and John Kane, ironworkers; George Odger, shoemakers; Robert Knight, boilermakers; Mrs. Paterson amongst women

[1] See Mill's letter to George Odger in the chapter on Mill.

workers; J. D. Prior, carpenters; George Shipton and George Howell, London Trades Council; not to mention many other humbler and less known workers. All these helped to give trade unionism a permanent and honoured place in the industrial constitution of the country. The men who had been denounced as "paid agitators," "pot-house politicians," and "idlers living on the hard-won earnings of their fellows," were now elected as members of Parliament, town and county councillors, members of school boards and boards of guardians, or appointed as civil servants or justices of the peace.

On the beneficial work and results of trade unionism I need not dwell at any length. These are now universally admitted, save by ignorant and prejudiced critics. But as the influence of trade unionism on wages, or the standard of life, was at one time contested by the economists themselves, I may give one or two facts bearing on the point. It might be sufficient to point out that the unorganised trades, that is, the trades in which there is no union, or in which the union is weak, are invariably the most wretchedly treated and the most badly paid. Or I might adduce the testimony of Sir Robert Giffen, who estimates that the rise in wages in most trades during the past sixty years has been from 50 to 100 per cent. But the most decisive testimony is given by Mr. Sidney Webb,[1] who tells us that in Glasgow, in the thirties, the joiners were fighting hard for a standard wage of 21s. per week, whereas they are now enjoying 36s per week. In the same city, in 1853, the masons were receiving 5d. per hour, now they are receiving 8½d. per hour. In Edinburgh, in the early years of the century, compositors were able to earn from 14s. to 18s. per week. In 1833 their wages were 21s. per week, in 1861 26s., while now the minimum weekly wage in the same city in 32s. 6d. In London, in the same trade, the rate was 6d. per hour in 1861, now it is 8½d. In 1831 the miners of Northumberland were receiving a minimum of 15s. a week for a twelve-hours' day. Now, their wages are much higher than that for a shorter working day. Similar facts might be

[1] See Fabian Tract No. 75, "Labour in the Longest Reign," by Sidney Webb.

given of other industries. In addition to this general raising of wages in the skilled industries—unskilled and women's labour has by no means fared so well—there has been a substantial reduction in the hours of labour. While, by a series of excellent Factory, Workshop, and Mining laws, the conditions of labour have been rendered much less dangerous and unhealthy than formerly. It would be unfair to credit trade unionism with the whole of this improvement. Education, and the general raising of moral conceptions pervading industrial relationships have done much, but, undoubtedly, unionism has been one of the most effective forces at work. On the other hand, it must be mentioned that the unions have sometimes taken a narrow and selfish view of their rights and duties; they have sometimes attempted to impose regulations which have militated against the rights of the consumer; and they have occasionally attempted to enforce their claims in ways and methods which have provoked reprisals. But with the growth of responsibility, the widening of outlook, a more intimate acquaintance with the complexity and intricacy of trade and industry, especially in its international aspects, and a more sympathetic insight into the claims of other members of the commonweal, these faults and errors of judgment and of policy are rapidly passing away, and a more statesmanlike attitude is taking their place. This is already perceptible in the management of the larger unions.

Of the ultimate place of trade unionism in the future evolution of industry it is unnecessary here to speak. It is obvious that it is still in a stage of transition, and that it is slowly feeling its way towards a more harmonious adaptation of itself to the social and industrial forces by which it is surrounded, and with which it must work. The three great problems by which it is at present beset—problems which have been forced upon it by the development of the New Unionism—are really more or less conscious efforts in the direction of this harmonious adaptation. These problems are—(1) the fixing of a minimum wage in each industry, by which a certain and reasonable standard of life shall be secured to the workman, and by which also, *so far*, prices shall be made to follow wages; (2) the federation of the unions themselves, in order to bring the various grades of workers into

sympathetic touch with each other; (3) the fair and adequate representation of the workers on any industrial boards which may be formed for the regulation and control of industry. These problems really mean the co-operation of (1) the producers with the consumers; (2) of the producers with each other; and (3) of both with that mass of congealed or stored labour which we call capital. And when these problems are solved, or in the solving of them, we shall probably have reached that stage of co-operation or co-partnership in industry, which will allow to every man and woman in the State the opportunity for the exercise and development of all their highest faculties and powers. This, at any rate, should be the aim of all social and industrial reformers, and in so far as trade unionism promotes this aim, in so far will it be of service in furthering the realisation of the perfect State.

XV.

THE LATER CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

In writing of Robert Owen I gave a brief account of the earlier days of co-operation—the days of hardship, failure, and disappointment. It will tend to complete the "idea" of these chapters if I now give a brief account of the later phases of the movement —its days of struggle, of ever-widening activity, and of success.

As already mentioned in a previous chapter, the great date of modern co-operation is the year 1844. In that year—a year in which the condition, and perhaps the hopes, of the working classes had sunk almost to their lowest ebb—the Rochdale weavers opened their humble but now famous "store." The story has been so often told that it need not be repeated here in detail. In that year, or rather in the closing months of 1843, a few poor weavers, some of them Owenite Socialists, met together to discuss the industrial and social situation with a view to suggesting ways and means for the betterment of their condition. The result of their discussion was that they decided to subscribe the magnificent sum of twopence weekly with a view to "the establishment of a store for the sale of provisions, clothing, etc., the manufacture of such articles as the society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment," and the further grand project, that "as soon as practicable this Society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government; or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home-colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies." By the winter of 1844 sufficient capital—£28—had been subscribed to commence operations, and on the evening of the 21st of December of that year, amid the humorous taunts and derision of the street urchins of the surrounding neighbourhood, the humble store in Toad-lane, Rochdale, was opened and operations commenced by the weavers in person. I need not carry the history of this particular

society any further. Mr. G. J. Holyoake, the historian of the movement, has told the story as no other person can tell it. I need only say that out of these small beginnings the store system has spread like a gigantic net-work over the whole of Great Britain, until now there are some eighteen hundred separate societies, embracing over 1,600,000 members, with a capital of nearly twenty million pounds, doing a business of over sixty millions a year, and returning over six million pounds yearly in profit to their members. The secrets of this enormous success have been mainly two—(1) ready-money payments, (2) the system of dividend on purchases.

Perhaps I shall make this chapter of greater interest and utility if I describe the main features of the development of the movement, and try to make its workings comprehensible to the uninitiated. These developments cover four great fields of activity. (1) The retail distributive movement, (2) the wholesale distributive movement, (3) the productive or manufacturing side, and (4) the propaganda or educational side.

(1) Of the retail distributive movement I need not say much—its activity is more or less manifest in every town in England. It consists of separate, self-governing, independent societies, formed on the plan of the Rochdale pioneers, carrying on, in the larger towns, nearly all kinds of business, in some cases even manufacturing certain commodities to supply the wants of their members and the general public; organising savings-banks for the young; building and selling houses to members by the monthly or quarterly payment system; and always, in societies of the *higher* and less selfish type, maintaining an educational department—libraries, classes, lectures, concerts, etc.—out of the general profits. The capital of these societies is built up largely out of profits, which are returned to members quarterly or half-yearly, in the shape of dividend on their purchases, and which are often re-invested by them in the society as private savings. The progress of this side of the movement has been rapid and continuous. With the assistance of the Hon. R. A. Slaney, M.P., Mr. John Stuart Mill, Mr. E. V. Neale, and the "Christian Socialists," the Industrial and Provident Societies Act—the "Magna Charta" of co-operation—was passed in 1852, giving co-operative societies a

recognised legal status. In 1857 Mr. Holyoake published his "History of the Rochdale Pioneers," which gave a great impetus to the store movement, the story of the little band at Rochdale inciting similar efforts throughout a large part of the North of England. Within twenty years of the formation of the Rochdale Society over four hundred and fifty stores sprang into existence, embracing over 90,000 members, and doing a business of £2,400,000 per annum. The Leeds Society, now the largest of its kind in the kingdom, with a membership of 38,000, a capital of half-a-million, and an annual business of over a million pounds, was started in 1847. Some idea of the present magnitude of the movement will be gained from the figures given above.

(2) Alongside this *Retail* Distributive movement there exists the *Wholesale* Distributive organisation. This consists of a federation of the retail self-governing stores, subscribing capital in proportion to their membership. The management is vested in committees elected by the individual stores or societies, each society having votes in proportion to the number of its members. The object of the federation is to supply individual societies, through the Wholesale agency, with commodities at the lowest possible price, without the intervention of the middleman. The advantages are obvious. Small stores cannot command the market as large stores can. They cannot afford to employ the most able and experienced buyers. They are apt to be at the mercy of the middleman. They cannot follow the intricacies of the market, the course of foreign trade, and the oscillations of price due to sudden changes of demand or supply. Hence a Wholesale agency was an absolute necessity, following the law of the natural evolution of industry from the small to the large concern. This Wholesale agency, then, was established in 1863, and began business in 1864. Its formation was largely due to the initiative of Mr. Abraham Greenwood, then a leading member of the Rochdale Pioneers. Beginning under the cumbrous title of the "North of England Co-operative Wholesale Industrial and Provident Society Limited," which was afterwards shortened to the "Co-operative Wholesale Society Limited," its immediate and ultimate success exceeded all anticipations. Beginning with a capital of £2,455, federated societies representing 18,337 mem-

bers, and a business for the first complete year of £120,754, it now has a capital of over two million pounds, embraces federated societies representing considerably over a million members, and does a business of over twelve million pounds per annum. It has branches and depôts in various parts of England and Ireland; buyers permanently stationed in Ireland, America, Australia, and on the Continent; owns five steamships; does a large Banking business; and has a dozen or more manufactories for the production of commodities. The later phases of this immense activity were developed under the chairmanship and self-sacrificing energy of the late J. T. W. Mitchell. A separate Wholesale Society—established in 1869—exists in Scotland, and does a business of five million pounds per annum, and is almost equally active with the English Wholesale in the productive or manufacturing business. This productive side of the movement, and its connection with distribution, must now be explained.

(3) To describe this productive side with sufficient clearness to make it comprehensible to the outsider is somewhat difficult, matters are so complicated. Let us take, first, the productive movement pure and simple, that is, apart from distribution. As already intimated in the chapter on Robert Owen and the Early Co-operative Movement, many co-operative productive or manufacturing societies were started on Owenite principles long before the successful establishment of the distributive side of the movement in 1844. Most of these, however, came to grief. And again, during the "Christian Socialist" period, a number of societies were started on the "self-governing workshop" principle, by which the actual workers should own or borrow all the necessary capital, elect the committee of management, and receive all the ultimate profit. These, too, failed, partly through lack of experience, partly because the constitution and management of the societies were unfitted for the very difficult task which had to be accomplished. Again, in the early seventies, further efforts were made on lines which approached towards a truer solution of the problem of associative or co-operative production. These efforts received a further stimulus by the establishment, in 1884, of the "Labour Association for promoting co-operative production, based on the co-partnership of the workers." These newer

lines of development, shortly to be described, have been productive of great success. In 1883, according to official statistics, there were but some fifteen of these co-partnership societies in existence, with a capital of £103,436, producing goods to the value of £160,751, and showing a profit of £9,031. At the end of 1897 the number of societies had increased to 169, with a capital of £1,180,906, producing and selling goods to the value of £2,714,346, showing a profit for the year of £137,506, and distributing to the workers as dividend on their wages the sum of £16,253.

Alongside this co-partnership form of productive co-operation there has been built up a large productive or manufacturing business in connection with the two great Wholesale distributive societies. This is called the consumers' form of productive co-operation. Its extension has been almost coincident with the co-partnership form. In 1889, the two Wholesales, in their various manufacturing establishments, produced commodities to the value of about £368.000, employing 2,993 workers in their productive departments. In 1897 they produced commodities to the value of £2,494,019, employing 10,736 productive workers.

What, then, are the respective theories, virtues, and defects, of these two forms of co-operative production? The co-partnership theory is this—that the worker, as a worker, has a right to a voice in the determination of the conditions of his labour. That this voice (or vote) can only be effectively gained and used by his becoming a partner in the concern in which he works; and that the best way of securing to him this voice, or partnership, is by recognising his right to a share of the profit which his labour helps to create, a portion of which must be capitalised in his individual name. He thus becomes a partner, with the right to elect such of his fellow-workers as he deems advisable, to represent him on the board of management. The other copartner is capital, or the representative of capital, which, being supplied in large measure from outside, has also a right to a voice in its own direction, if only to see that it is safely and effectively used. The advantages are obvious. The worker is directly interested in the success of his particular concern. He becomes a responsible factor instead of a mere "hand." In the words of

Kant's great saying, "Men are looked upon as ends in themselves, not as means for the use of others." It is to the credit of the co-partnership system that it seeks to create character—men and women—not mere working machines. The weaknesses, however, are equally obvious. The societies are often handicapped for lack of capital. Not being in immediate or constitutional touch with the consumers, their market is often insecure. And they have not yet solved the problem of federation, in order to avoid competition amongst themselves, though they are working their way towards it.

On the other hand, the consumers' theory of co-operative production is this—that the consumers, through their federated stores, that is, through the great Wholesales, knowing as a simple matter of book-keeping, their wants, should start manufactories for the supply of those wants. Under this plan the consumers, through their representatives, control and manage the various undertakings or factories. The workers' right to a share of the profits, or to direct representation on the boards of management, is denied. Profit, say the advocates of this plan, does not really exist in this form of co-operation. It is really so much surplus over cost of production which the consumer pays in the price of commodities, and which should be returned to the consumer as dividend on his purchases. The worker, it is said, should be satisfied with a fair or standard wage, which will gradually tend to increase as all production comes under the control of the consumer. The advantages of this form of productive co-operation are that there is always a plentiful supply of capital with which to start new undertakings, the federated societies hardly knowing what to do with their huge accumulations. There is always, also, a sure market for the commodities produced, as the great Wholesales are necessarily in direct and constitutional touch with the federated societies, and supply can be regulated in accordance with demand. But the weaknesses of this plan are also obvious. The workers are still regarded as mere "hands," as under the ordinary competitive system. They have no direct interest in their work. Character is ignored, or subordinated to mere material ends. The management of local factories by central committees, sitting perhaps scores or hundreds of miles away from the scene

of operations, tends to produce a mechanical officialism. Representation and control are onesided, and it is a matter of common experience that where consumers alone control production the quality of commodities is apt to suffer either through perverted taste or desire for cheapness. Perhaps the same result would ensue if producers alone controlled production, but that only shows the necessity for the co-operation or partnership of the two.

But it is not my purpose here to elaborate arguments on either side. I would merely emphasise the fact that in the future evolution of industry a reconciliation of both principles must be found. It is impossible for all the local industries, especially such as the building and allied trades, baking, carrying, and locomotive industries, to be managed from one centre. And, on the other hand, it is unlikely that the great trade union organisations, which represent the producing factor, would submit to be controlled solely by representatives of consumers. Indeed, they are already, and rightly, taking their place on the Conciliation Boards in the various industries. From the other point of view, it may be urged that the Federation of productive or copartnership societies is becoming an increasing necessity, and some means must ultimately be found for regulating supply in accordance with demand. But already there are indications of a reconciliation. On the one hand, the co-partnership societies have already begun a Federation. And, on the other hand, one of the great Wholesales—the Scottish—recognises the right of its workers to representation and a share in the profits. Constitution-making is a very slow and delicate process. The relation of consumption to production, and *vice versâ*, and the relation of the worker to his work, are problems which cover the whole field of industrial life. It is these problems which co-operative production is attempting to solve.

(4) We come now, lastly, to the propaganda and educational side of the question. The leaders of the co-operative movement, from its earliest inception in the days of Robert Owen, have always laid stress on the necessity for education. The Rochdale Pioneers devoted 2½ per cent. of their profits to education. Other societies followed their example. Others, again, devote a smaller portion of their profits to educational purposes, while the more

selfish and unenlightened societies devote nothing at all. This local educational activity, wherever it has been engaged in, has been of great service in forming truer ideals of individual and social life, and in strengthening the sense of individual and social responsibility. Great libraries have been formed. Classes in scientific, artistic, economic, and historical subjects have been established. Lectures by competent teachers have been given. Local monthly magazines or records are issued. Singing classes and concerts have been organised—all, in their way, helping to stimulate social activity and widen the bonds of social intercourse. But a truer idea of this educational and social propaganda side of the movement will be gained from a brief review of its national and historical aspect. In the early years of the co-operative movement, both in the Owenite time and in the period of Christian Socialist activity, and again in the early days of the distributive movement, many co-operative conferences were held, with a view to organising propaganda work. But it was not until 1869 that the first national co-operative Congress was held (in London). At this Congress a central co-operative board was formed, consisting of two sections, the London and the provincial. This board ultimately developed into the present Co-operative Union. Under this Union, Great Britain is mapped out into seven sections. Each section, through the associated societies, elects its own sectional board, which arranges conferences and meetings, assists struggling societies with advice and organising power, organises lectures and exhibitions, and watches over and stimulates interest in the movement generally. Each section is also subdivided into Conference districts, which organise local or district conferences, discuss principles and details of business management, and compile and issue statistics as to the growth of societies in the district. Representatives from each of the sectional boards form a United Board, which is virtually the governing body of the Union. This board itself is divided into committees, whose special business it is to deal with education, production, international and foreign inquiry, Parliamentary affairs, propaganda, and other matters. The board has a paid staff at its command. It is the recognised referee in all legal matters pertaining to the movement. It publishes pamphlets and books

bearing upon the principles, management, and work of the movement. Its educational committee issues an advisory programme to individual societies as to the work which they might take up. It holds examinations in the history and principles of the movement, in industrial history, and in co-operative book-keeping and auditing. The Union has also endowed two Oxford University scholarships, in memory of the work done by two of its ablest pioneers, E. Vansittart Neale and Thomas Hughes. The funds for this unsleeping and multifarious activity are provided by the individual societies, which subscribe to the Union in proportion to the number of their members.

Other phases of this vast movement must be briefly noticed. The "Co-operative News," the official organ of the movement, was started in 1871, and has now a circulation of over 50,000 copies a week. "Labour Co-partnership," the organ of the Labour Association, is issued monthly, and concerns itself more particularly with the productive side of the movement. Besides these, the Scottish societies issue the "Scottish Co-operator," the English Wholesale Society publishes "The Wheatsheaf," and numerous individual societies publish local monthly Records or Magazines. The Women's Co-operative Guild was established in 1883, and now numbers some 250 branches and over 12,000 members. Its work in stimulating the "woman movement," and in forming truer and higher ideals of home and social life, can hardly be over-estimated. Great co-operative festivals and exhibitions are held periodically in London and the provinces.

Of the pioneers and workers in this vast movement it would be almost invidious to select names, but one can hardly forbear mentioning the devoted and self-sacrificing labours of such men as E. Vansittart Neale, Thomas Hughes, Lloyd Jones, J. M. Ludlow, J. T. W. Mitchell, Samuel Bamford, Thomas Blandford—the Sir Galahad amongst the younger men—and the historian of the movement, George Jacob Holyoake.

Such is a bird's-eye glance at this, the most wonderful industrial and social movement of the century, the "State within a State," as Lord Rosebery has so happily called it. Political movements require great powers of organisation; the trades-union movement requires still greater powers of organisation, admini-

stration, and statesmanship; but the co-operative movement calls for even greater and more sustained powers of management, administration, and devotion to the common weal. It seeks to solve the problem of commercial crises by regulating supply in accordance with demand; to undermine the speculative instinct which feeds the feverish desire for wealth; to curb the caprices of fashion and restrain the vagaries of personal vanity by the cultivation of that ideal of "plain living and high thinking" which makes the perfect man. Its aim is nothing less than the reconstruction of industry, commerce, and social life on those principles of equity which will afford opportunity to every individual in the State to live his or her life at its highest and best. The movement has indeed its weaknesses, which I have no time to touch upon here, but they are the weaknesses which are common to all the processes and movements of human evolution, and which will gradually disappear with growing knowledge and experience. No one, of course, can foresee the ultimate form of organisation which the evolution of industry and society will take. But whatever that form may be, whether municipal, socialistic, or communistic, or a reconciliation of these with individual effort and initiative, the co-operative movement of the nineteenth century will have helped to prepare the way for the realisation of this higher order of society.

XVI.

THE EDUCATIONAL REFORMERS.

It is perhaps fitting that this series of chapters on the various reform movements of the century should close with a brief account of the work of the educational reformers. Education, as someone has said, is the panacea for every social evil. But then—what is education? What should it include, and by what methods should it be given? Should it not include the training and development of all the faculties—physical, intellectual, artistic, moral—to their highest capacity? These questions go to the very roots of the problem of social reform. We are too apt to think, with the party politicians, that progress comes only by antagonism, conflict, and the beating of our opponents. It does not. It comes most safely and securely by the education both of ourselves and our opponents. It is something to be grateful for that the general ideal of education has risen so much during the century. And though we are far from realising our ideal, we can look back to the educational state of the nation at the beginning of this century with a feeling of thankfulness for what has been accomplished, and of relief at the thought that in these matters we are slowly entering on the right path of development.

English elementary education began with the Charity Schools, which were started by various religious bodies towards the end of the seventeenth, and more numerously, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The teaching given was severely limited in its scope, as it was feared that the so-called "inferior orders" would become educated "above their station," and so "imbibe notions of pride." Theological motives then as now, were also at work, many of the schools being started as "fortresses against Popery." The establishment of Sunday Schools towards the end of the century by Theophilus Lindsey and Robert Raikes, and the formation of the Sunday School Union in 1803, also extended the work of primary education. In these schools the methods

of teaching were very primitive and haphazard, but in them many thousands of children received the only instruction in reading and writing that they ever had.

It was not until 1798 that the beginnings of our present system were laid, and then of course, only in a purely voluntary way. In that year Joseph Lancaster, then only eighteen years of age, started a school for the poor with nearly a hundred scholars, a number which soon increased to three hundred. Lancaster was possessed by a fervent and genuine enthusiasm for education. At the age of fourteen he attempted to run away to Jamaica, with the object of teaching the slaves to read. He was indebted for his system, which was looked upon as a very notable invention, to Dr. Andrew Bell, of the Madras Asylum, who in 1797 had published a little book, entitled "an Experiment in Education," giving an account of the system he had adopted in Madras. This system afterwards became known as the "monitorial system." By it the children of an upper standard were set to teach the children who were a stage lower. "Give me four-and-twenty children to-day," said Dr. Bell, "and I will supply you to-morrow with as many teachers." To teach a thousand children without teachers—save the headmasters—seemed the perfection of economy. The system was cheap and showy—two considerations dear to the mind and pocket of the greatest commercial nation in the world. By it the children were taught to repeat their lessons—mistakes and all, like parrots. Instead of education being an unfolding or a development from within, it became a mechanical and often brutal system of cram. This cheap and superficial method still lingers amongst us even to-day, some sixty per cent. of our primary school teachers being "untrained," or, at any rate, inefficiently trained. Nevertheless, Lancaster was regarded as a public benefactor, and schools spread rapidly. Then some pious person discovered that the religious instruction given in the Lancasterian schools was unsectarian, and therefore "inimical to the interests of the Established Church." A bitter controversy arose. The "Church party" championed the system of Dr. Bell, who happened to belong to the Church of England, while the Dissenters ranged themselves in support of Lancaster. This division, and a good deal of the bitterness connected with

it, has continued down to to-day, and seems likely to continue for a generation or two longer, to the great detriment of the cause of education itself. In 1808 there was formed the Royal Lancasterian Institution, which in 1814 developed into the "British and Foreign Schools Society," while in 1811 there was established the "National Society" for the promotion of education, an institution designed to promote the interests of the Church, as the former was designed to promote the interests of dissent, or undenominationalism. The way in which the children's education was mixed up with theology in those days may be gathered from the fact that the reading lessons were almost wholly confined to the Bible; texts of Scripture were used for the copybooks; and Biblical history was combined with arithmetic in this way: "Of Jacob's four wives, Leah had six sons; Rachel had two; Bilhah two; and Zilpah had also two. How many sons had Jacob?"

A further step in the beginnings of a general system of education was taken by Robert Owen, in the formation of an infant school at New Lanark—the first of its kind in Great Britain. This was followed up by the establishment of an infant school at Westminster, in 1819, under the auspices of Brougham, James Mill, and others, with James Buchanan (a New Lanark self-taught teacher) as master. Another infant school was established in Spitalfields, in 1820, by Samuel Wilderspin, who devoted a considerable portion of his life to the cause. He succeeded in establishing the Infant School Society in 1824. His methods were much more sensible than those of Lancaster, being based on the Pestalozzian principle of slowly developing and unfolding all the faculties of the child, rather than on the mechanical system of parrot-like repetition. The establishment and spread of "Mechanics' Institutes," from 1824 onwards, also helped forward the cause.

In 1807, the voice of the educator was heard in Parliament. In that year, Mr. Samuel Whitbread introduced a Parochial Schools Bill, which was intended to give power to overseers, with the consent of the vestry, to raise money for the establishment and support of the parochial schools. The bill was passed by the Commons, but thrown out by the Lords. The prejudice

against popular education was very strong. Even Dr. Bell, educationist as he was, wrote in this fashion:—"It is not proposed that the children of the poor be educated in an expensive manner, or even taught to write and cipher.... There is a risk of elevating, by an indiscriminate education, the minds of those doomed to drudgery of daily labour, above their condition, and thereby rendering them discontented and unhappy in their lot. It may suffice to teach the generality, on an economical plan, to read their bible and understand the doctrines of our holy religion." [1] This is charming, especially as coming from a clergyman of that religion which was founded by one of the poorest of the poor, who certainly was discontented and unhappy in *his* lot. It is well matched, however, by a speech which was made in the Commons by a Mr. Davies Giddy, in opposition to Mr. Whitbread's bill. "However specious in theory," said Mr. Giddy, "the project might be, of giving education to the labouring classes of the poor, it would, in effect, be found to be prejudicial to their morals and their happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture, and other laborious employments to which their rank in society has destined them; instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them factious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books, and publications against Christianity; it would render them insolent to their superiors; and, in a few years, the result would be that the legislature would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power towards them, and to furnish the executive magistrates with much more vigorous laws than were now in force." [2] The ghost of these sentiments still lingers amongst belated school managers and boards, as may be seen by the discussions which sometimes take place when it is proposed that a new piano, or some other improvement, should be made in the school accessories, curriculum, or teaching.

In 1816, Henry (afterwards Lord) Brougham entered on his

[1] "An Experiment in Education," page 60 (1797).

[2] Quoted in "English National Education," by H. Holman, page 54.

campaign in favour of national education. Brougham, by his vigorous methods, soon managed to incur the hatred of opponents, some of them declaring that they would not allow him "to come to their houses, not even to weed the garden." In 1816 he succeeded in obtaining a select committee of the Commons to inquire into the educational condition of London, Westminster, and Southwark. The investigations brought to light a lamentable state of things. In presenting the report of this committee Brougham stated that there were 120,000 children in London wholly without means of education. Shortly afterwards he proposed that a Parliamentary commission should be appointed to inquire into the administration of charitable and educational endowments in England and Wales. The proposal was strongly opposed by the Lords, and though the commission was ultimately appointed, the Lords refused to endow it with compulsory powers of investigation. It nevertheless issued valuable reports for many years, and ultimately led to the permanent establishment of the Charity Commissioners, a body which has done excellent work in putting an end to the grosser abuses connected with the misappropriation of educational endowments.

Brougham again returned to the charge in 1820 by introducing a bill for the promotion of education and the establishment of schools throughout the country. The initiative was to be placed in the hands of the members of the Quarter Sessions. The money was to come partly from the Imperial exchequer, partly from the local rates, and partly from school fees. Each schoolmaster was to be a communicant of the Church of England, and approved by the clergyman of the parish, and the fees and the course of teaching were to be fixed by the clergy. Brougham, in framing his bill, had gone a good deal further than he himself privately approved, in order to conciliate the Church, but in doing so he simply roused the ire of the dissenters, and so fell between two stools. So strong and widespread was the opposition to the bill that it had to be withdrawn.

While Parliament, or the educationists inside Parliament, were thus tentatively feeling their way, the voluntaryists were doing fairly good work outside. The two national societies had started some hundreds of schools throughout the country, and though

the education given was very poor and limited, it was better than nothing. In 1818 the proportion of the population in school was 1 in 17; by 1833 it had gone up to 1 in 11. It was in this latter year that the State took its first step towards the establishment of a State system of education. It was the first session of the reformed Parliament, and "reform" of all kinds was in the air. In August of that year £20,000 was quietly voted in Committee of Supply for the purposes of education. As there was no machinery in existence for superintending the administration of the grant, it was divided between the two societies before mentioned—the National and the British and Foreign—in proportion to the amount of the private subscriptions which they themselves raised. This continued for six years, when a further and greater step was taken in the virtual formation of our present Education Department by the appointment of a committee of the Privy Council. Inspectors were appointed, and the annual grant raised from £20,000 to £30,000. In the same year, says Mr. Holman in his "English National Education," that this sum was voted for the education of some three million children, £70,000 was voted for building royal stables.

The establishment of governmental control was made not a moment too soon. Many of the schools were in very bad condition, and the quality of the education given was wretched—poor and underpaid teachers, bad methods, wretchedly inefficient school materials, and equally wretched school buildings. Much of the money that had previously been granted had been virtually wasted through lack of a proper system of inspection. Even after the appointment of government inspectors, many of the clergy preferred to sacrifice their share of the grant rather than permit the inspectors to enter their schools, while the proposal to establish a normal school for the training of teachers was met with such bitter opposition that it had to be withdrawn. There is no sadder chapter in our nineteenth century social history than this continual obstruction of the national good by sectarian jealousy and bigotry.

Again, in 1843 an attempt was made by the Government to bring factory children under the moralising influence of education by a clause in the Factory Bill of that year, enacting that

all factory children between the ages of eight and thirteen should attend school at least three hours a day; but as the management clauses provided that a majority of the school managers, as well as the headmasters, should always be Churchmen, the clause had to be withdrawn amid a storm of opposition.

Meanwhile, the Committee of Council was doing good work, and slowly bringing the schools more and more under the surveillance of the State. In 1839 it had secured as its secretary Sir J. P. Kay-Shuttleworth, a man exceptionally well qualified for the position. He began his professional life as an M.D., working in a poor and populous district in Manchester, and was shortly afterwards appointed medical officer to the Ancoats and Ardwick Dispensary. His writings on questions affecting the condition of the lives of the poor attracted the attention of the Government, and he was appointed an assistant Poor-Law commissioner in 1835. He had carefully studied the writings of the famous educationists of the Continent, and had made himself practically acquainted with the school systems at work in Holland, France, Prussia, and Switzerland. At his suggestion, and under his supervision, the country was mapped out into five inspectorial districts; additional inspectors and sub-inspectors were appointed; school furniture and accessories were improved; minutes on methods of teaching were issued; and manuals for teachers and primers for pupils were prepared.

A further step forward was taken by the introduction of the pupil-teacher system from Holland in 1845. Canon Mozley had been appointed to report on the condition and methods of education in primary schools. He condemned the monitorial system root and branch. "Not more than half the children learn to read," he said. Of this half fifty per cent. could only read the Bible. Only one-quarter had ever written on paper, and only one-third knew anything of arithmetic. "I should in vain describe my feelings," he says again, "on going through the bundle of pamphlets from which the children were taught." These wretched methods and results, he said, arose from setting children who knew nothing, to teach other children who knew less. This report gave the monitorial system, as then worked, its death-blow, and paved the way for the introduction of the pupil-teacher system. This

system was really only a superior form of the monitorial system. To attempt to educate and train teachers while they are doing their daily work in school leads only to the most deplorable results. The training is bound to be superficial. The system is ruinous to the health and efficiency of the teacher and to the proper education of the scholar. It was condemned in Holland, whence it was introduced, more than a generation ago, but then, as Mr. Holman, in his "English National Education" well says, "England is the country in which dead systems of education live."

By 1852 the education grant had risen to £160,000, and another revolutionary step was taken in 1853, by the introduction of the system of capitation grants. By this step the education of the people was definitely placed in the hands of the Government. Each school was henceforth to receive a grant of so much per head, to be paid, however, only for those school children who should make a certain number of attendances in the year. The registers and school accounts were to be kept in accordance with the instructions of the Committee of Council, and three-fourths of the children were to pass such an examination as the Committee should prescribe. In 1856 the Committee of Council was reconstituted with enlarged powers, henceforth to be definitely known as the Education Department, presided over by a Vice-President of the Council.

In 1855 Sir John Pakington brought forward a bill, afterwards withdrawn, for establishing schools out of local rates; and again in 1857 endeavoured to persuade the Commons to affirm the principles of the bill. The following year he succeeded in obtaining the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the then state of popular education in England. The commission reported in 1861. It was estimated that nearly a million children attended no school whatever, and that of those who did, less than one-half were under inspection. The attendance at school was very irregular—about one-third of the children being present less than 100 days in the year. The average "school-life" of children was about four years. The education given in the inspected schools was found to be much better than that given in privately-managed and uninspected schools. As to these, the report disclosed a frightful state of things. No place

was too mean in which to hold a school—cellars, bed-rooms, kitchens, work-shops, were utilised for the purpose. No person was considered too ignorant to set up as a school-master or mistress—old soldiers, aged needle-women, cripples, consumptives, small shopkeepers, vendors of lollipops, servants out of work, old weavers and shoemakers—anyone was considered to be fit for a teacher if he or she could not do anything else. It was estimated that some 800,000 children were attending these wretched, uninspected, and inefficient "schools."

The Vice-President of the Council at this time was Robert Lowe, who, to remedy this state of things, introduced the system of "payment by results," that is, the amount of the Government grant was made to depend on the number of "passes" which the teachers could obtain. Again the "cheap and showy," so dear to the heart of the commercial-minded Englishman. Elementary education now became a system of "cram," and school children so many money-making machines. Mechanical perfection in the three R's, and the earning of grants for the school, were now the be-all and end-all of child life, as far as the nation was concerned.

The first promise of genuine and enduring reform came in 1870. Much agitation had taken place during the sixties in favour of a national system of education, the Education League, formed at Birmingham, being particularly active. At the close of 1868 the Liberal party had come into power with a majority of about 120. It was pledged to reform, and in its second session introduced the famous Compulsory Education Bill of 1870. The bill was placed in the hands of the late W. E. Forster, who forced it through its various stages with a Puritan dourness and pertinacity which ultimately triumphed over all the various interests and obstacles raised against him. I need not recapitulate the provisions of that bill: its creation of our school-board system, its insistence upon regular attendance at school, and the obvious determination of its promoters to create a complete system of national education by which the whole country should be covered with good schools. All this is sufficiently well known. Still greater progress has since been made. In 1876 and 1880 compulsion was made still more stringent, and in 1891 school fees were

abolished, and the way opened for that free educational ladder to the universities which all educational reformers wish to see established.

But, what is of even greater importance, a wiser and humaner spirit has been infused into our educational ideals and methods. The theory of the three R's has been banished to the limbo of barbarism. History, science, art, music, languages, book-keeping, shorthand, woodwork, cookery, and domestic economy now form a part of the curriculum of our best elementary schools. While in the evening continuation schools, in addition to the above subjects, the more practical subjects of agriculture, horticulture, dairywork, various forms of technical instruction, needlework, housewifery, and the life and duties of the citizen are also taught. School libraries and museums, savings' banks, concerts, botanical and geological excursions, are organised in connection with many of the schools. The system of "payment by results" has been considerably modified, and some degree of liberty of classification has been given to the teachers. While the humaner side has been brought out in such instructions as this from the Department: "The infant school contemplates in the length, variety, and character of its lessons the training of scholars whose delicate frames require very careful treatment. It is essential, therefore, that the length of the lesson should not in any case exceed thirty minutes, and should be confined in most cases to twenty minutes, and that the lessons should be varied in length according to the section of the school, so that in the babies' room the actual work of the lesson should not be more than a quarter of an hour. Each lesson should also be followed by intervals of rest and song; the subjects of the lessons should be varied, beginning in the lowest section with familiar objects and animals, and interspersed with songs and stories appropriate to the lesson; the spontaneous and co-operative activity of the scholars should form the object and animate the spirit of the lesson." We all know what a debt of gratitude the nation owes to Mr. A. H. D. Acland for his self-sacrificing efforts in the cause of this wider and humaner education.

But though much has been accomplished, much remains to be done. It is strange that the nation which prides itself on being

the greatest civilising influence in the world should, nearly a century after the time of Pestalozzi, Frœbel, Herbart, and Fellenberg, have yet adopted so little of their spirit. The Kindergarten system is not by any means so widely spread as it ought to be. We have hardly yet begun to *think* about the problem of *moral* education as distinct from intellectual. Our system of secondary education is in a "chaotic" state; while our ideal of what the teacher ought to be is very, very low. Mr. Holman, to whose book I have been largely indebted, gives the following advertisement as having appeared in a Cumberland paper in 1897: "Schoolmistress wanted, for dame school at Berrier, to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, also knitting and sewing. Salary, £6 per year and a free house. The wife of a shoemaker or working man might suit." The vast majority of our teachers receive no college training whatever, and the training colleges we have are mostly in the hands of the sects—that is, are privately managed, and in many cases shut off from the breath of a high educational spirit. How much we have yet to learn in this matter! The teachers of a nation's children should be the wisest and best people in that nation. They should be in continual contact with the noblest and purest educational influences—artistic, intellectual, moral—which the nation can command. Our teachers should be the guides—as, indeed, in many of our universities they are—to higher and nobler ways of life. All our problems are summed up in this one word, "Education."

In closing this series of chapters I would ask the reader to regard them as merely introductory to the subjects with which they deal. There can be no more important study than that of our relations to our fellow-men as exemplified in the social and political life of the past, and as they ought to be in the present and the future. Not only our work and worth as a nation and an empire, but, what is of far more consequence, our worth and well-being as responsible individuals, will depend on our ideals and conceptions of such great words as Justice, Progress, Wealth, Happiness, Good. And though we ought never to rest in final conceptions of the Good—all life being an unfolding, as it were

—every bit of knowledge, rightly used, will help us to realise the ideals we now have, and so serve to widen and uplift the ideals which will inspire and mould the future.

> "To insight profounder
>   Man's spirit must dive,
> His aye-rolling orbit
>   No goal will arrive;
> The heavens that now draw him
>   With sweetness untold,
> Once found,—for new heavens
>   He spurneth the old."

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE MORE IMPORTANT EVENTS REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING PAGES.

1776. Declaration of American Independence.
Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* published.

1782. Pitt declares in favour of Parliamentary Reform.
Robert Raikes begins his Sunday School Work.

1789. Beginning of the French Revolution, and of the re-actionary period in English Government.

1793. Important Petition from Yorkshire freeholders praying for a reform of Parliament.

1796. Manchester Board of Health appointed to investigate the conditions of employment of workhouse apprentices.

1797. Robert Owen begins his work at New Lanark and establishes there the first Infant School in Great Britain.

1798. Joseph Lancaster begins his system of elementary education in London.

1799. Trade Combinations forbidden by Act of Parliament.

1802. Act passed for the protection of workhouse apprentices.

1808. Royal Lancasterian Institution for the promotion of education founded. Developed in 1814 into the British and Foreign School Society.

1811. The National Society for the promotion of education established.
The Luddite riots, machine-breaking etc. begin.

1813. Elizabeth Fry begins her work of Prison Reform.
Robert Owen publishes his "Essays on the Formation of Character."

1815. Battle of Waterloo and beginning of the Great Peace.
Robert Owen proposes a Ten Hours Bill.

1816. Cobbett publishes his "Twopenny Trash."

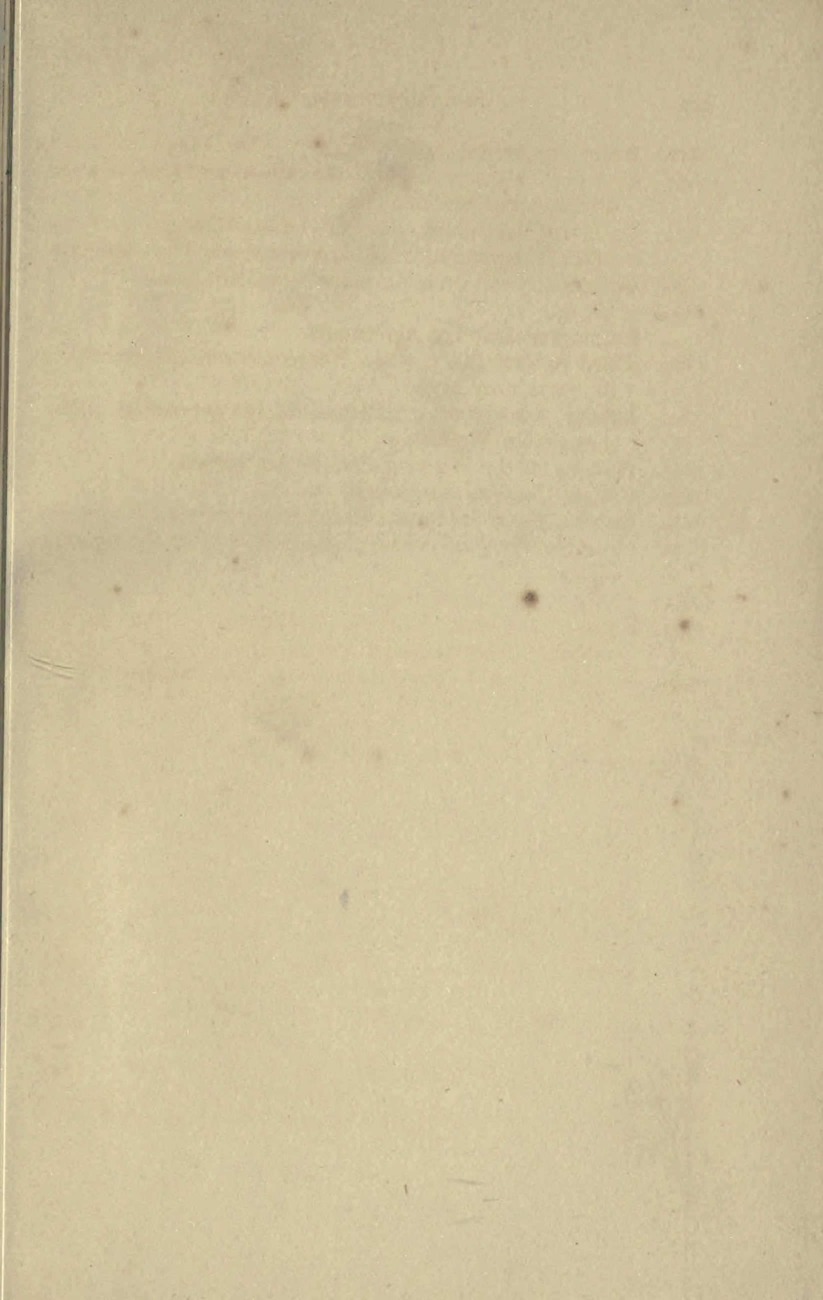
1817. Habeas Corpus Act Suspended.

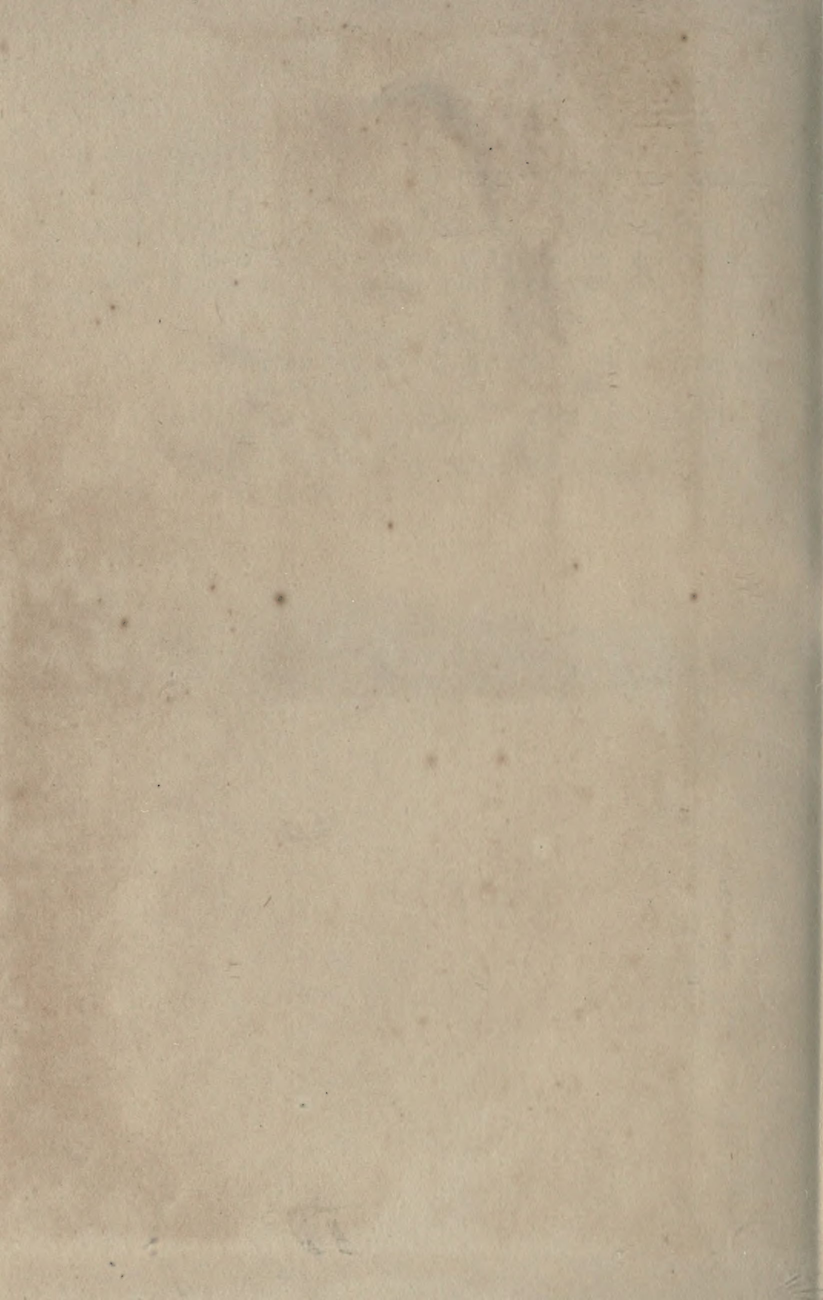
1819. Massacre in St. Peter's Field (Peterloo) Manchester, and publication of Shelley's "Masque of Anarchy" on the event.

1820. Six Acts passed for the repression of free speech, free press, right of public meeting, drilling, for the right to search for arms, and for the speedy punishment of political offenders.
George III. died. Accession of George IV.
1824. First Mechanics' Institute established.
1824-5. Repeal of the Combination Laws.
1829. Catholic Emancipation Bill passed.
1830. Death of George IV. Accession of William IV.
1831. Reform Bill Riots at Bristol, Nottingham, etc.
1832. First Reform Bill passed. Suffrage granted to £10 householders.
1833. First grant of £20,000 voted towards popular elementary education.
First Factory Inspectors appointed. (Lord Althorp's Act.)
Lord Ashley becomes leader of the Factory Reform movement.
Abolition of Slavery throughout British dominions.
1834. New Poor Law.
Six Dorchester Labourers sentenced to penal servitude for joining a Trade Union.
1835. Municipal Reform Bill passed.
1836. Fourpenny Newspaper Stamp reduced to a penny.
1837. Death of William IV. Accession of Queen Victoria.
1838. Publication of the "People's Charter."
Formation of the Anti-Corn-Law League.
1839. Chartist rising at Newport, Wales.
First Inspectors of Schools appointed.
Committee of Council on Education formed.
1840. Penny Post established.
Concordat between the State and the voluntary educational organisations.
1841. Abolition of death-penalty for forgery and embezzlement.
Widespread and deep distress throughout the country.
1842. Sir Robert Peel imposes an Income Tax.
Act passed by which children under ten and all females are prohibited from working underground.
1843. Carlyle's "Past and Present" published.

1844. Beginning of the modern Co-operative Movement by the "Rochdale Pioneers."
1845. Monitorial System in schools condemned, and Pupil-teacher System introduced.
1846. Corn Laws repealed.
1847. Ten Hours Bill passed.
1848. Revolutions on the Continent.
Great Chartist demonstration in London.
Mill's "Principles of Political Economy" published.
1849. Cholera in England.
1851. Formation of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
Christian Socialist activity, and establishment of Co-operative Workshops.
1852. Great Strike in the Engineering trade. Presentation of "The Document" by employers, requiring workmen to disclaim all connection with Trade Unionism.
Industrial and Provident Societies Act passed.
1855. Newspaper Stamp Duty abolished.
1856. Committee of Council re-constituted as the Education Department, and Vice-President appointed.
1860. Ruskin's "Unto This Last" published.
First Board of Conciliation in Industry formed.
1861. Paper Duties abolished.
Robert Lowe introduces the New Code, with the system of Payment by Results in elementary schools.
1863. Co-operative Wholesale Society established.
1867. Second Reform Bill passed. Household suffrage granted in towns.
Royal Commission on Trade Unionism.
Factory Acts Extension Act, and Workshop Regulation Act bring nearly all manufactories under State supervision.
1868. First Trades Union Congress, meets in Manchester.
1869. Central Co-operative Board established.
1870. Forster's Compulsory Education Bill passed, and School Boards established.
1871. Formation of the Local Government Board.
Trades Unions legalised.
1872. England divided into urban and rural sanitary districts.

1872. Ballot Act passed.
1874. First two Labour members—Macdonald and Burt—elected to the House of Commons.
1875. Collective bargaining through Trades Unions, and the peaceful organisation of strikes receive legal sanction.
1876. Compulsion in education made more stringent.
1880. do. do.
Employers' Liability Act passed.
1884. Third Reform Bill passed. Household suffrage granted in the rural districts.
Labour Association established for the promotion of Co-partnership Workshops.
1885. Housing of the Working Classes Act passed.
1888. County Councils established.
1889. London Dock Strike and development of New Unionism.
1890. Municipalities empowered to build houses for the working classes.
1891. Free education introduced.
1894. Parish and District Councils established.
1897. Workmen's Compensation Act passed.
1899. World's Peace Conference meets at The Hague.





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