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CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM
IN ENGLAND

ARTHUR V. WOODWORTH, PH.D.

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Christian Socialism in England

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PREFACE

MY purpose in this book is to trace the historical development of Christian Socialism from its origin under Maurice and Kingsley to its present form in the Christian Social Union, and to show, as far as possible, the connection between the two. The history of the early movement was written some years ago by Professor Brentano[1] of Munich, and his work still remains the standard authority. I have, however, made an independent study from the original sources, and have had the kindly criticism of Mr. J. M. Ludlow, one of the founders of the original movement under Maurice.

The story of the connection of the Christian Socialists with the later development of Co-operation and Trades Unionism has been told by Mrs. Sidney Webb in her history of "The

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[1] Brentano: "Die Christliche Sociale Bewegung in England."

Co-operative Movement," and in Mr. and Mrs. Webb's "History of Trades Unionism," and I have relied largely upon their results for the material for this part of the work.

The rest of the book is essentially original investigation from the present available sources. The list of authorities will be found in the bibliography at the end of the volume.

My especial thanks are due to Professor Schulze-Gaevernitz of Freiburg in Baden for his inspiring and wise criticisms; and to Mr. J. M. Ludlow of London, and the Rev. John Carter of Oxford.

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CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM IN ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

PROPERLY to understand Christian Socialism in England to-day, it is necessary to go back to the early movement under Maurice and Kingsley. For, while that ended in apparent failure in 1854, it had generated a new power, which, growing stronger and stronger, has at last resulted in a wider undertaking of education in the needs of the industrial classes. Such a movement, rightly guided, might well become a powerful factor in the future of the English Church, and exert a considerable influence on the affairs of the nation.

The year 1848, "that awful year," as Maurice once called it, is one of the landmarks in the social history of Europe. Socialism, which had for many years been regarded as the dream of the enthusiast without real definite force, suddenly showed its power to produce profound political changes. The Revolution in France was imitated on a smaller scale in most of the continental countries. In France alone the Revolutionists overthrew the ruling dynasty, but the European disturbances had the common element of being middle-class movements. In England, on the contrary, the agitation was confined to the working classes, and Chartism, which had been merely smouldering since 1842, burst once more into flame under the unfortunate leadership of Feargus O'Connor. Aside from the spirit of revolution which seemed to be in the air from 1830 to 1848, there were three main causes which gave direction to the movement in England. The first of these was the result of the Reform Bill of 1832. The labouring classes were encouraged to agitate for the passage of this bill, and their leaders were led to believe that it would directly benefit the working man. The bill as passed, however, extended the franchise to a larger class of copy-holders and free-holders, but actually restricted the rights of free-men to vote. The labour leaders, therefore, felt that the first step should be renewed agitation for a wider extension of the franchise. The second cause was the repeal of the Poor Law of Elizabeth. Under this old law, a person need only have the name entered on the parish roll to be sure of relief. But with the repeal of the law in 1834 all outdoor relief stopped, and the one prop on which the labourer had learned to lean was withdrawn. The consequent distress was very great, and the misery in which the poor lived at the time presents a heartrending picture. But the underlying cause of all the distress was the readjustment of economic conditions consequent upon the substitution of machinery for the old hand trades. This meant the introduction of the factory system, and the herding of great masses in the towns. It was, in fact, the first step in the problem of the great cities.

It is thus intelligible that the demand in England should be for political reform rather than for social, as in France. The labour leaders wanted the right to vote. They wanted representatives of their own order in Parliament, so that they might make clear the distress which the repeal of the Poor Law had caused, and they had a vague sense, which still finds expression, that in some indefinite way righteousness by legislation was the short cut to reform. The People's Charter seemed to offer all that was hoped for, and its six points were the political *credo* of all socialistic agitators in England. These points were: (1) Universal suffrage; (2) Annual Parliaments; (3) Vote by ballot; (4) Equal electoral districts; (5) Payment of members; (6) No property qualification. This was certainly not a very revolutionary programme, but it kept England in a state of alarm until its final disappearance in 1848.

I

Political and Social Conditions in England in 1848—Causes of Agitation — Fiasco of April 10 — "Politics for the People"—The Name "Christian Socialist"—Co-operation *v.* Competition—Formation of the Productive Co-operative Societies — Their Failure.

In the midst of the blind terror which the Chartist agitation caused, the Church turned for the most part a deaf ear to all appeal. So far from making any effort to know the meaning of, or to appreciate the elements of justice in the cause it represented, the clergy's voices were often loudest in the cry for oppression. In the spring of 1848 almost the first clergyman to attempt to understand the need was Frederick Denison Maurice, at that time professor at King's College and chaplain of Lincoln's Inn. Already, in March, he had said in a sermon on the Lord's Prayer:

" How can one ever make it a charge against any people that they hope for a brotherhood upon earth? Every hope points upwards: if it cannot find an object, it is in search of one; you cannot crush it without robbing your fellow creature of a witness for God, and an instrument of purification. . . . Christianity as a mere system of doctrines or practices will never make men brothers. By Christianity we must understand the reconciliation of mankind to God in Christ. We must understand the power and privilege of saying 'Our Father,' 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.' . . . This prayer does not treat the projects of men for universal societies, unbounded pantocracies, as too large. It overreaches them all with these words, 'as in Heaven.'"

"The whole spirit of Christian Socialism," says Mr. Ludlow, "is in such passages, though the term was not used till two years later."[1]

The Chartist movement culminated on the 10th of April, 1848. A monster petition, said by the presenters to contain over five million signatures, was to be presented to Parliament by the full force of Chartists marching to Westminster in military order. London was thrown into the wildest terror. The troops were placed under the control of the Duke of Wellington, and a great number of special constables were sworn in. The procession was forbidden by law, and on the eventful day only a few thousand men met at the rendezvous — Kennington Common —and, after the customary speeches on such occasions, dispersed. The petition, when examined later, was found full of fictitious names, and vastly over-estimated in the number of signatures. Unfortunately, the affair had been heralded so loudly, and had caused so much terror, that the fiasco was as greatly magnified, and Chartism from that day was dead.

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[1] *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1896, pp. 110, 111.

Maurice, already deeply interested in the condition of the working men, was keenly interested in the excitement attending this Chartist demonstration. The day before the presentation of the petition, Kingsley, who had made Maurice's acquaintance a short time earlier, came up to London to offer such service as he could. Then a small knot of men grouped themselves about Maurice, and decided to issue placards for the walls "to speak a word for God with,"[1] as Kingsley put it. Kingsley himself wrote the placard, which was posted all over London on April 11.

"Workmen of England: you say that you are wronged. Many of you are wronged; and many besides yourselves know it. Almost all men who have heads and hearts know it—above all, the working clergy know it. They go into your houses; they see the shameful filth and darkness in which you are forced to live crowded together; they see your children growing up in ignorance and temptation for want of fit education; they see intelligent and well-read men among you shut out from a Freeman's just right of voting, and they see, too, the noble patience and self-control with which you have as yet borne with these evils. They see it, and God sees it.

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[1] "Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memoirs of his Life," edited by his wife, p. 62. The references are to the one volume edition of 1883.

"Working men of England: you have more friends than you think for. Friends who expect nothing from you, but who love you because you are their brothers; and who fear God, and therefore dare not neglect you, His children; men who are drudging and sacrificing themselves to get you your rights; men who know what your rights are better than you know yourselves, who are trying to get for you something nobler than charters and dozens of Acts of Parliament, more useful than this 'fifty-thousandth share in a talker in the National Palaver at Westminster' can give you. You may disbelieve them, insult them—you cannot stop their working for you, beseeching you, as you love yourselves, to turn back from the precipice of riot which ends in the gulf of universal distrust, stagnation, starvation. You think the Charter would make you free—would to God it would! The Charter is not bad, if the men who use it are not bad! But will the Charter make you free? Will it free you from the slavery to ten-pound bribes? Slavery to gin and beer? Slavery to every spouter who flatters your self-conceit, and stirs up bitterness and headlong rage in you? That, I guess, is real slavery: to be a slave to one's own stomach, one's own pocket, one's own temper. Will the Charter cure that? Friends, you want more than Acts of Parliament can give.

"Englishmen! Saxons! Workers of the great, cool-headed, strong-handed nation of England, the workshop of the world, the leaders of freedom for seven hundred years, men say you have common sense! then do not humbug yourselves into meaning 'license' when you cry for 'liberty.' Who would dare refuse you freedom? For the Almighty God, and Jesus Christ, the poor man who died for poor men, will bring it about for you, though all the Mammonites of the earth were against you. A nobler day is dawning for England, a day of freedom, science, industry! But there will be no true freedom without virtue, no true science without religion, no true industry without the fear of God, and love to your fellow citizens.

"Workers of England, be wise, and then you must be free, for you will be fit to be free.

"A WORKING PARSON."

This poster is the first utterance of the group of men afterwards to be known as Christian Socialists. Every line of it bears the stamp of Carlyle's influence, who was then in the full vigour of the early years of his London experience, and, like a Hebrew prophet, was rousing the nation to a sense of its shortcomings. It is interesting to note that in the later publications of the Christian Socialists this influence tends to disappear as the strong personality of Maurice began to impress itself on his followers. Already one or two of the more serious-minded among the Chartist leaders had been drawn to Lincoln's Inn by Maurice's preaching, and with a view to attracting still more of the now scattered Chartist forces, it was decided in May to issue a weekly periodical called *Politics for the People*, of which Maurice and

Mr. J. M. Ludlow[1] should be joint-editors. Mr. Ludlow was a young barrister, who had been in Paris just after the February revolution, and his account of the events, which he wrote to Maurice, was later described by the latter as having "had a very powerful effect" on his thoughts at the time, and having "given a direction to them ever since."[2]

Their notion of the word *Politics* can be seen from the opening number of the paper, which appeared May 6, 1848. Politics, they said, includes not only "the rights of a man in the eyes of the law, and his functions, if any, in the business of government," but "the rate of his wages and the interest he gets for his money, and the state of his dwelling, and the cut of his coat, and the print he stops to look at, and the tune he hums, and the books he reads, and the talk he has with his neighbours, and the love he bears his wife and children and friends, and the blessing he asks of his God—ay, and still more, the love which he does not bear to others, and the blessing he does not ask of his God—all are political matters."

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[1] Mr. Ludlow's contributions were signed "J. T."

[2] *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1896, p. 111.

In the second number Kingsley began a series of "Letters to Chartists" over the signature of "Parson Lot."

"My only quarrel with the Charter," he says, "is that it does not go far enough in reform. I want to see you free; but I do not see how what you ask for will give you what you want. I think you have fallen into just the same mistake as the rich of whom you complain—the very mistake which has been our curse and our nightmare—I mean the mistake of fancying that legislative reform is social reform, or that men's hearts can be changed by Act of Parliament. If anyone can tell me of a country where a charter has made the rogues honest, or the idle industrious, I shall alter my opinion of the Charter, but not till then."[1]

Men who were working in such a spirit could not fail to impress the labouring men with their sincerity. Nor was their effort fruitless, for about this time Maurice met for the first time "a set of Chartists at a coffee-house, in the hope of organising some regular meetings with them at some other place."[2] This conference does

[1] *Politics for the People*, No. 2, p. 28.

[2] "Life of Maurice," Vol. I., p. 536.

not seem to have been productive of any direct results at the moment, but it must have encouraged the leaders to believe that the working man was ready to be guided if they could win his confidence.

After three months *Politics for the People* suspended publication. Its results, however, had not been unimportant. It had gathered a group of earnest young men about Maurice, and when the paper failed, they transferred their energies to the setting up of a free evening school for men and boys in a yard off Great Ormund Street. A few months later Maurice began a series of weekly meetings for Bible reading. "These were continued," says Mr. Ludlow, "for several years, and I shall always say were the very heart of the movement while it lasted."[1] It was about this time that "Tom" Hughes, afterwards author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays," joined the movement. At first some of the members felt that he was too good a cricketer to be of any real service in the more serious work of life. They soon found, however, that he was as earnest as he was active, and down to the day of his death the labour cause in co-operation and in trades unionism had no better friend.

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[1] *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1896, p. 112.

In the autumn of 1849 Mr. Ludlow went to Paris, and was so much impressed with the brotherly spirit and material prosperity of the societies for productive co-operation (*Associations Ouvrières*)—then in their "golden time"—that he urged the formation of such societies in England. The conferences held with the workmen seemed to show unmistakably that some form of labour associations was the subject uppermost in their minds. And the leaders "could no longer remain content either with mere talk on the one hand, or with evening schooling and some individual visiting on the other."[1] At the same time Maurice decided to issue a series of tracts called *Tracts on Christian Socialism*, and the weekly paper was revived early in 1850 under the title of *The Christian Socialist.* Maurice chose the name himself, and wrote to Mr. Ludlow in January, 1850: "*Tracts on Christian Socialism* is, it seems to me, the only title which will define our object, and will commit us at once to the conflict we must engage in, sooner or later, with the unsocial Christians and the unchristian Socialists. It is a great thing not to leave people to poke out our object and proclaim it with infinite triumph: 'Why, you are Socialists in disguise!' 'In disguise? not a bit of it. There it is staring you in the face upon the title-page.' 'You want to thrust in ever so much priestcraft under a good revolutionary name.' 'Well, did we not warn you of it? Did we not profess that our intended something was quite different from what your Owenish lecturers meant?'"[1]

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[1] "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., p. 30.

So many of the attacks on the movement have centred on its name rather than on the thoughts or deeds of its founders that it may be worth while to pause for a moment to determine just what the name meant to the men who used it first. The year 1848 was, as already said, a year of crisis in Europe. Socialism had startled people by an unexpected demonstration of power, and an indefinite feeling pervaded the public, such as is seen to be operative to some extent in Germany to-day, that anything connected with the working classes, and especially with their organisation, was of necessity socialistic, not to say revolutionary.

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[1] "Life of Maurice," Vol. II., p. 35.

Three years before Kingsley had said, "The new element is Democracy in Church and State. Waiving the question of its evil or its good, we cannot stop it. Let us Christianise it instead."[1] Maurice, in much the same vein, wrote, "Our great desire is to Christianise socialism."[2] There can be but little doubt that at that time co-operation was regarded as distinctly socialistic, and Maurice may well have felt that in undertaking a co-operative work in the same field, though in a different spirit from the Owenites, he was none the less laying himself open to the charge of Socialism. But it was because he appreciated the difference between his own principles and those of the ordinary socialist that he felt the need of the prefix Christian.[3] Maurice had, in a way, disarmed criticism by defining his use of the term Socialism at the start. But even when the name was first chosen, E. V. Neale, who had just joined the group about Maurice, disliked it. He felt, he said, that it was "a mistake, tending on the one hand to alienate Christians who were not socialists, and on the other socialists who were not Christians."[1] The wisdom of choosing this name is then a question which has been debated almost from the beginning. It is rather one of feeling than of accurate definition, but the inquiry seems to spring up almost instinctively—was it not an error to choose a name involving so sharp an antithesis?

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[1] "Kingsley's Life and Letters," p. 58.

[2] "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., p. 36.

[3] It is interesting in this connection to note that in Germany the Social Democracy has a propaganda arranged with a catechism, etc., quite after the model of a religious sect. It is assumed in Germany that any Social Democrat is opposed to Christianity, and because it is a means of opposing the Social Democracy is probably one reason that the present Kaiser lays so much stress on orthodox religion.

There has been and still is a belief in the public mind that socialism puts the stress in human development on environment, while Christianity emphasises the power of character. The one aim of all types of socialism is the perfect society. The purpose of Christianity in the last resort is the perfect individual. The notion of Christianity as concerned primarily with the individual is the Puritan conception, and is one side of truth. But it is a side which received considerable emphasis through the Wesleyan movement during the eighteenth century; and this influence was still strongly felt in the Evangelical party of the Church of England in the middle of the nineteenth century. The socialist had another ideal, which Taine brings out clearly in a comparison of French and English social movements.

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[1] Holyoake, "The Co-operative Movement," p. 390.

"These men," he says, "were devoted to abstract truth as the Puritan to divine truth; they followed philosophy as the Puritan followed religion; they had for their aim universal salvation as the Puritan had individual salvation. They fought against evil in society as the Puritan fought against it in the soul."

The two ideals presented by the socialist programme and the Christian Church are not essentially inconsistent, for in the perfect state each includes the other. The fundamental command of Christianity is to love God, but the second is like unto it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And socialism, however its teaching may be distorted, has its real hold to-day in the open, public misery of individual suffering, which is both produced by and in turn reproduces degraded moral conditions.

The perfect individual would tend to produce a perfect environment, and the reaction of perfect social and economic conditions would exert a strong influence in upbuilding individual character. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Christian or the socialist would produce his results by working from opposite ends of the problem. The Christian begins with the character of the individual, the socialist with the structure of society. The question is fundamental, and entirely readjusts one's point of view. Shall reformation proceed from within or from without?

The answer which Maurice gave was typical of his mode of thought. Reformation, he said, must proceed from both directions at once. These two methods are opposite, but not essentially opposed, and as they are both working towards the same end, the Church must claim and use them both. At that time the term *Socialism* was not connected in the public mind with the definite scheme of social reorganisation with which later discussions have made the world so familiar. The early socialist writers were almost unknown to the great public, and it is only since the Revolution of 1848 that socialism has been reduced to the present philosophic system by its greatest apostle, Karl Marx. Maurice had, therefore, a very great justification for his choice of the name Christian Socialism, and its use seemed to strengthen his position, for the first effect of the name was then, and still is, to call immediate attention to the practical side of Christianity, which the movement always emphasises. Maurice met the objection to the name he had chosen in the first *Tract on Christian Socialism.* "The watchword of the Socialist," he said, "is Co-operation; the watchword of the Anti-Socialist is Competition. Anyone who recognises the principle of co-operation as a stronger and truer principle than that of competition has a right to the honour or the disgrace of being called a Socialist."[1] Maurice, and Kingsley—the great populariser of Maurice—then proceeded to explain what they meant by the terms *Co-operation* and *Competition.*

The first tract which appeared with this object in view was the one entitled, "Christian

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[1] "Christian Socialism" (pamphlet), by Rev. F. D. Maurice, p. 4.

Socialism: A Dialogue between Somebody (a person of respectability) and Nobody (the writer)." It was written by Maurice to make clear "the real meaning and objects" of the Christian Socialists. The underlying motive was to show that all schemes for social improvement have failed, and must fail, which attempt to found a new social order instead of trying to understand and use God's method. We overcome the world, not by putting ourselves in opposition to it, but by bringing ourselves into harmony with it, and using it for the highest purposes. "The experiments of the socialists have failed," says Maurice, "because they sought to create a new state of things instead of proclaiming what that state of things is which God has made, and which we are trying to set at naught."[1]

The false conditions which man had created lay to Maurice's mind in the principle of competition. The emphasis on this word is explained by the political history of the times. In 1841 Richard Cobden began the Free Trade agitation in Manchester, and under his lead an active group of writers soon made themselves famous under the name of "The Manchester School." The basis of their system lay in the economic exigencies of the moment. Manchester had rapidly developed so great a manufacturing industry that already the trade was reaching out for new markets. The exporter usually finds free trade to his advantage, and so it happened that the situation began in the North and reached London only when the struggle grew keen in Parliament. The popular phrase, *laissez faire*, sums up the teaching of the school. Their great cry, "do not interfere with the laws of trade," was called by Ferdinand Lasalle the "night watchman's idea," because it seemed to conceive of the State as existing simply to prevent the individual from interfering with his neighbours. Competition was described as the life of trade, and, after Peel had suddenly changed sides and repealed the Corn Laws in 1846, the teachings of the Manchester School were accepted as authoritative by practically all classes in England. Maurice probably knew little of the agitation in the North, but he saw the evils of the system of *laissez faire* as applied to the London working men, and began at once a vigorous protest.

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[1] "Christian Socialism," Maurice, p. 16.

"Competition," he says, "is put forth as the law of the universe. That is a lie. The time has come for us to declare that it is a lie, by word and deed. I see no way but by associating for work instead of for strikes."[1]

Kingsley had already taken his leader at his word, and in his "Cheap Clothes and Nasty," sang the praises of competition with all the vigour of his satirical pen:

"Sweet competition! Heavenly maid! Nowadays hymned alike by penny-a-liners and philosophers as the ground of all society—the only real preserver of the earth! Why not of Heaven too? Perhaps there is competition among the angels, and Gabriel and Raphael have won their rank by doing the maximum of worship on the minimum of grace? We shall know some day. In the meanwhile 'these are thy works, thou parent of all good!' Man eating man, eaten by man, in every variety of degree and method! Why does not some enthusiastic political economist write an epic on 'The Conservation of Cannibalism'?[2]

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[1] "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., p. 32.

[2] Kingsley, "Cheap Clothes and Nasty." (This famous pamphlet is now reprinted as an introduction to "Alton Locke"—new edition.)

The principle of co-operation, which was to take the place of this cannibalistic competition, was the principle of association for work instead of for strikes. Already, in 1844, the workmen in Lancashire had begun the movement of distributive co-operation known as the Rochdale plan. They started in a small way in a back street in Rochdale, one member acting as salesman, another as secretary, and a third as cashier. There were twenty-eight members, and the total capital was £28. Partly to accumulate capital, and partly to avoid the enmity of the shopkeepers, they accepted the current prices of the town as a fair standard. A surplus between selling price and cost of production was therefore unavoidable. The only question was how to distribute it. Three methods of distribution were open to them: (1) To distribute to the owner or owners of the capital; (2) to the workers (whether brain or manual); (3) to the customers. They adopted the third method, and profits were divided in proportion to the purchase of each member. This system was undoubtedly the best from the purely commercial standpoint, because it gave each member a personal interest in up-building the trade of the store. The first system, of distributing profits only to the owners of capital, placed the undertaking practically on the basis of other privately owned shops. The second method, of distributing to the workers, became impracticable so soon as the membership increased to a point where all could not help in the actual management. The third way, of dividing profits as a percentage on purchases, was, in fact, an indirect method of eliminating profit on price, for the surplus over cost price, given by the purchaser, was returned to him in the form of a dividend. This system of distributive co-operation had begun to attract attention by 1850, because of its growing success. But it is doubtful if Maurice and his followers had, at this time, any very clear idea of its tendencies and purpose, or if it would have appealed to them as representing in any sense the reform which they wished to inaugurate. The Rochdale Co-operative Stores dealt only with the problem of distribution, and did not touch the question of production. This question, which involves the relation of employer and employed, they conceived to be the real heart of the labour problem. Nor did they believe that labour could be sure of its just proportion of the profits of production unless profits were divided in proportion to the labour expended. Their plan was framed after the model of the *Associations Ouvrières*, which had survived the collapse of the Atelier Nationaux in Paris. These associations were simply groups of skilled artisans in certain trades, founded on the plans of Buchez, who urged each group of fellow-workers to elect an associate as the director of their common labour. All profits of the business, after paying the current rate of wages, were to be divided into two parts: one to form a common fund or capital, and the other to be divided in proportion to the labour given by each member. The object of this plan was, therefore, to dispense with the *entrepreneur*. To state briefly, the Rochdale Co-operative Stores was really an association of consumers for the supply of their own wants. Its distinctive feature was the distribution of profits in proportion to the total purchases of each member. The Christian Socialist plan was an association of producers, in which groups of working men became their own employers, and distributed profits in proportion to the labour of each member. Early in 1850 the first association of working tailors was formed, with funds advanced by the Christian Socialists. At a meeting of journeymen tailors it was resolved that "individual selfishness, as embodied in the competitive system, lies at the root of the evils under which English industry now suffers. That the remedy for the evils of competition lies in the brotherly and Christian principle of Co-operation—that is, of joint work, with shared or common profits; and that this principle might be widely and readily applied in the formation of Tailors' Working Associations."[1]

The setting up of this association brought in a most valuable recruit, Edward Vansittart Neale, for nearly forty years closely allied with the co-operative movement, and well-known as the secretary of the Co-operative Union. He threw himself heart and soul into the movement, and, with the others, was nominated by Maurice a member of the Council of the "Society for Promoting Working Men's

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[1] "History of the Working Tailors' Association" (*Tracts on Socialism*, No. 2), by Thomas Hughes.

Associations." The success which at first attended the Tailors' Association caused others to spring rapidly into being. Twelve associations were actually founded,[1] but it is notable that all were in industries untransformed by the use of machinery. Three of the associations were made up of tailors, three of shoemakers, two of builders, and the other four were composed of piano-makers, printers, smiths, and bakers. At first they were founded on the French type of Buchez, which placed the management entirely in the hands of the workmen. But this form of self-government made too great demands upon the limited training of the men. They were not able to enter into the noble ideals of their founders, and quarrelled first with their managers and then among themselves. In fact, it soon became evident to the promoters that the men were unfit for self-government, and it became necessary to establish a central body of control.

Mrs. Webb gives an extract from the first and final report of the Society for Promoting

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[1] For an excellent account of this form of co-operation, the reader is referred to Mrs. Webb's monograph on "The Co-operative Movement," pp. 117 *et seq.*

Working Men's Associations, published in 1852, which is worth quoting in full.[1]

"In the first nine months of our life as a society we set up three sets of shoemakers in association, supplying in two instances the whole of the funds, and in the other all but five. None of the men were picked; we accepted them just as they came to us. We gave them absolute self-government, merely reserving to ourselves certain rights of interference in cases of dispute or mismanagement while any capital remained due to us. Each of these associations had quarrelled with and turned out its original manager within six months; one, the West End Bootmakers', went to pieces altogether before nine months had gone. The other two struggled on till the beginning of the year, never paying their way, and continually quarrelling. By the joint assent of the Council and the Central Board, they were then amalgamated, and some of the worst members turned out; but still matters went wrong until, in May last, we were obliged by another great outbreak and threatening insolvency to take away all self-government from the associates, leaving them only, in cases of tyranny, an appeal to the Society against their manager. . . . Where the associations are successful, the great danger which they and all who are interested in them have to guard against is exclusiveness. The associates find their own position greatly improved, and fear to endanger it by taking in new members. They are apt, therefore, to make too stringent rules as to admission, and to require payments from new members proportionate to the capital which the society has gained, and such as few of the most skilful of working men can pay out of their present wages. The effect of this will be that a great many small associations will spring up, instead of a few large ones, unless working men will look forward, and take a broader and more Christian view of their work. These small associations will compete with and ruin one another."

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[1] "The Co-operative Movement," Mrs. Sidney Webb, p. 123.

As a matter of fact, the Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations came to an end in 1854, with an empty treasury. All of the promoters had lost more or less money in the undertaking, and Neale had actually impoverished himself. The tailors' associations continued for some years longer, but, as a social movement, the plan was abandoned by the founders with the dissolution of the central association. Maurice was considerably hurt by the discovery that the men had so little appreciation of the spirit under which they were supposed to be working. He complained that they regarded the movement merely as giving a better opportunity for "a more successful rivalship than is possible under the present system;"[1] while to his mind the very object of co-operation was to do away with the spirit of rivalry.

Both Maurice and Kingsley felt that the associations were a failure because the men were not fit for them. It is, however, a question how far this explains why they should have come to nothing. No one acquainted with modern conditions can fail to feel the force of Mrs. Webb's criticism[2] that the cause of failure lay deeper than any individual weakness of the workers, and was, in fact, inherent in modern conditions. As she points out, Buchez wished to do away with the *entrepreneur*. But he was considering only the artistic handicrafts, where men "used tools and not machines;" that is, such industries as remain uncapitalistic. The modern conditions with the vast accumulations of capital and the highly organised army of workers is constantly demanding more perfect organisation, and greater capacity in its Captains of Industry.

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[1] "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., p. 43.

[2] "The Co-operative Movement," by Mrs. Sidney Webb, pp. 138-169.

II

The Real Power of the Christian Socialists—"The Assertion of God's Order"—Maurice's Notion of the Ideal—Weakness of their Economic Theory—Maurice, the Thinker.

But if the Christian Socialists failed in the work they took directly in hand, they had at least a very powerful influence on the entire Co-operative Movement. First of all, whether their application of the principle of brotherliness was economically sound or not, the high ideal which they stood for could not fail to exercise a helpful influence. No man quite reaches his ideal, and the fact that Hughes and Neale set a standard before the co-operators of Great

Britain which they could not reach, had at least the effect of giving the movement a better tone, which it is a mistake to under-estimate. The man who said at the meeting of the Co-operative Wholesale in 1869 that "persons having the interest of co-operation at heart should divest themselves of all transcendental ideals as to principle,"[1] was not a safe guide for any movement. It is from such men that the effort comes to make cheap or adulterated goods in order to increase the dividends. Against the influence of such men high ideals are a necessity. And whatever we may think of the method of reaching it, the co-operative ideal of the Christian Socialists was certainly a high one. Opposed to the notion of a mere successful rivalry in the co-operative field, they offered the principle of association for mutual helpfulness in production.

There was, too, a practical side to their work which had had a profound influence on the development of the labour movement. Up to 1852 the co-operative associations had no legal status unless they were willing to organise as companies with unlimited liabilities. The British workman is instinctively shy of such organisations, and Hughes, Neale and Ludlow interested themselves in the passing of an act to remedy this defect. They succeeded in interesting several M.P.'s in the matter, and in 1852 "The Industrial and Provident Societies' Act" was passed. Limited liability was not granted to co-operative societies until 1862, but the original act, as indeed most of the subsequent changes, were framed by Christian Socialists.

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[1] "E. V. Neale as a Christian Socialist," by Thomas Hughes, *Ec. Rev.*, III., pp. 38 and 176.

The organisation of the co-operative societies brought the Christian Socialist into contact with trades unionism, for the trades union leaders naturally felt a keen interest in watching the attitude which the new movement took in regard to their organisation. The leaders, too, were well known to Maurice and his followers, and gave such help as they could in organising the new societies. Contact with the actual problem soon produced its effect on men like Hughes and Mr. Ludlow, and when the engineers' strike broke out in 1852, they threw themselves heartily into the fray in spite of their theoretical opposition to competition. Aside from their generous subscriptions, they rendered valuable service by letters to newspapers, public speeches, etc., to obtain a fair hearing for the men. The strike ended in a signal failure, and the men were not only forced to return to work on the employers' terms, but were also obliged to sign the so-called "document," by which they agreed to abandon the Union. Most of the men contended afterward that this signature was wrung from them under compulsion, and did not live up to their agreement to resign their unions, an act of bad faith which Hughes described as "inexcusable."[1] But it did not deprive them of his generous and continued support, either then or later. And Mr. Ludlow wrote in 1896: "To nothing in my life do I look back with more satisfaction."[2] Nor were their efforts unrewarded, for the friendly relations then established gave the Christian Socialists a name with the trades unions which helped them very much in founding their co-operative societies, and in giving them a hearing in the Working Men's College, which was founded in 1854.

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[1] See "History of Trades Unionism," Webb, p. 167.

[2] J. M. Ludlow in *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1896, p. 116.

Writing to Mr. Ludlow in 1866 about the failure of the Christian Socialist Co-operative Societies, Maurice said that he had never repented, and would never repent, the movement, nor their assertion of co-operation as the proper basis for business life. "But," he said, "the more I compared our proceedings with those of the men who were working unhelped in Rochdale and elsewhere in the north, the more I was convinced that we should mar the cause grievously, and weaken any moral influence which we might possess, by continuing to meddle with the commercial part of the business; that doing little, and that little badly, we should become the victims of clever sharpers . . . and should bring disgrace upon a principle which we felt to be sound. . . . A college expresses to my mind . . . precisely the work that we could undertake as professional men; we might bungle in this also, but there seemed to me a manifest divine direction toward it in all our previous studies and pursuits."[1]

In attempting any review of the early Christian Socialism, one must remember first of all that it was primarily a religious rather than an economic or even a social movement. Maurice felt that they had made the mistake of leaving people in doubt as to whether they were attempting to found a new commercial scheme on a religious basis, or introducing a new religion into commerce. He was, however, perfectly clear in his own mind as to what he wished to do. "To set trade and commerce right," he said, "we must find some ground, not for them, but for those who are concerned in them, to stand upon. That is my formula."

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[1] "Life of Maurice," Vol. II., pp. 549, 550.

It is, I hope, already clear how different Maurice's idea of socialism was from what we usually understand by that word. To Maurice the whole idea of socialism was merely the assertion of God's order; and this necessitated that there should be no cut-and-dried formula, but the movement should go forward with the faith that God would reveal the future step by step. The Socialist State, in which man attempted to shape his own destiny, seemed to Maurice a direct contradiction of this principle of faith.

"Christian Socialism," he said, "is, to my mind, the assertion of God's order. Every attempt to hide it under a great machinery, call it organisation of labour, or what you like, I must protest against as hindering the gradual development of what I regard as a divine purpose, as an attempt to create a new constitution of society, when what we want is that the old constitution shall exhibit its true functions and energies."[1] This "old constitution" was for Maurice a very Tory sort of constitution. There is little that can be directly quoted, but yet, especially in the earlier writings, there is much to show that he has been deeply influenced by the Oxford Movement. It was not long after Maurice left the University that Newman stirred the soul of England by the issue of *Tracts for the Times.* The manifest elements of strength which gave Tractarianism its vital force must have touched Maurice deeply, and only his profound intellect and deep sympathy with every variety of religious thought kept him from yielding to the emotional influence. In his notion of democracy he would have heartily agreed with Kingsley, who wrote: "A true democracy such as you and

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[1] "Life of Maurice," Vol. II., p. 44.

I should wish to see is impossible without a Church, and a Queen, and, as I believe, without a gentry"[1]—not a very revolutionary attitude, even for a clergyman in the middle of the century.

This, then, was the creed with which the Christian Socialists made their direct appeal to the working men. On the one hand, association for work under the ideal of brotherliness; and on the other, the re-establishment of the social system—not on a new basis—but on the old. The change to present conditions had destroyed the true relation of master and servant, of employer and employed; but the new order was to give the masters a principle of humanity, a true feeling of responsibility which would make it impossible for them to take advantage of the labourers; while the workmen, under the new conditions of peace and prosperity, were to be filled with the joy of service.

Such an ideal contained the necessary reactionary element which is the usual accompaniment of ideals formulated away from the real heart of an economic movement. The key to England's rapid development at this time, the reason for the sudden appearance of a labour problem, lay in the wonderful growth of the manufacturing industries in the north. Maurice and Kingsley and the men about them were mostly Londoners, and were thus behind the real social development of the English workmen. This ideal of a new relation of brotherliness between employer and employed was suited to the past rather than to the future, because in the north the evolution of the "great industry" was already establishing a new relation in which the employer, through the fact that he often employed hundreds of men, was cut off from the personal relations with his work-people. To-day it is the trade unions and other organisations of the men themselves which have undertaken the personal oversight of the workers. But from the point of view of the development of the "great industry," the whole co-operative ideal of the early Christian Socialists was false. It was suited only to small, unorganised industries, which had not yet had time to adjust themselves to the modern processes, and it is noticeable that only such industries appear in the list of trades in which the Christian Socialists attempted to start the co-operative movement.

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[1] "Kingsley's Life," p. 130.

The weakness of the Christian Socialists lay in the fact that the future was to be quite different from what they imagined. Their strength lay in the fact that they were unconsciously an element in the development going on about them.

But though the associations themselves were a failure, the Christian Socialists gave expression to an ideal of brotherliness which reached an ever-widening circle through the appeal of its inherent truth. It is a remarkable fact that in England to-day thousands have had their interest in social problems first awakened by reading Kingsley's novels; and among the clergy who are active in social work, Maurice is the recognised authority. Maurice was the head of the group which gathered about him, not only in the sense that he was the thinking power, but also that from him came the initiative for most of the definite actions. At the time of the engineers' strike a discussion had been arranged on the subject, "What are the relations which should exist between capital and labour?" The discussion, however, was set aside at Maurice's instance, because he disliked discussions on "Capital and Labour," preferring, he said, to discuss "Men, their duties and relationships." The suppression of Lord Ripon's pamphlet on Democracy furnishes a striking example of his power over the Christian Socialist group. It had been already printed in Maurice's absence, and when he returned, he read it in its printed form, ready for distribution. He objected strongly to allowing it to appear, and though considerably disappointed, the rest of the men submitted without a word, and the printed pamphlet never saw the light.

Such a man was necessarily a very remarkable character. But to make clear just where his strength lay is no easy task. Professor Brentano, however, who had the opportunity to know him personally, has given unquestionably the best estimate of his character. He says:

"The characteristic of the man which left the deepest impression on me was a striking union of severe earnestness of purpose with irresistible kindliness. These two qualities were at once the cause and the effect of the complete drenching of his whole being in Christianity. It is necessary to be perfectly clear as to what this means. Nothing is more usual than to meet people who emphatically call themselves Christians and talk about Christianity. But it is very seldom that one finds men who, in all their judgments and in all their dealings with others, are actually guided by the Christian spirit. People believe in Christianity in general, but in each separate case they believe in self with all its interests, inclinations, prejudices and whims. Maurice was not merely guided in his general views of the world by Christian doctrines; it was impossible for him to think of any aspect of nature or of social life otherwise than from the Christian point of view, nor could he enter into any relations with men in which that Christianity, which had transfused itself into his flesh and blood, did not find expression in the simplicity and gentleness which combined with his earnestness to form that loving sympathy which was so free from any trace of arrogance or self-seeking. Such a man was evidently marked out by his whole nature to exercise the influence of an apostle. And he gathered about him a group of brilliant, talented young men, who, filled with his spirit, and uplifted by his example, offered themselves with reckless self-sacrifice to the great purpose which their master had set before him."[1]

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[1] Brentano, "Christliche Sociale Bewegung in England," pp. 7, 8. See also "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., pp. 2, 3.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION, 1854-1877

I

Later Phases of Christian Socialism—The Working Men's College—Influence of Trade Unionism—Builders' Strike, 1857—Trades Union Act of 1871.

THE first chapter of Christian Socialism closed in 1854 with the failure of the productive co-operative associations. From that time, while there was no party which has called itself Christian Socialist until 1877 (the date of the founding of the Guild of St. Matthew), the movement is to be followed in two distinct streams. First is the work of the original group about Maurice, a set of men who threw their energy into various parts of the labour movement, and influenced it deeply with their old ideals; and secondly, there is the clerical group which was more largely interested in Maurice's theology. In them too, however, the social power of Maurice's principles worked, and from them has sprung the modern phase of Christian Socialism—the Christian Social Union.

The greatest difficulty in writing of this period lies in the process of selection. The early Christian Socialism was a leaven. It is impossible to measure the influence of Kingsley's novels on the general public, or of Maurice's social theories on the clergy. One can only say that since the middle of the century, the interest in social questions and the knowledge of the labour problems has so increased among all classes that none would dispute Mr. Ludlow's assertion that he finds nowadays "boys fresh from school, girls from the governess's room, with minds at once better instructed and more open on social subjects than those of their fathers and mothers thirty or forty years ago."[1] From one point of view the whole modern interest in the labouring classes—university settlements, and university extension lectures, the spread of technical education, charity organisations and children's country holiday funds—all are more or less directly or indirectly traceable to the influence of the Christian

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[1] *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1896, p. 117.

Socialist movement of the middle of the century. But they are not Christian Socialism. The Christian Socialism of Maurice had two objects: First, the opening of the doors of the Church so that the working man might once more take his place in the Kingdom of Christ, and learn that the Bible, not the latest revolutionary Chartist tract, was "the true reformer's guide." And then, approaching the economic problem in the new spirit of Christian brotherliness, it would be possible to rearrange industrial conditions by the gradual substitution of association for the present practice of competition; or, as Maurice would have expressed it, the readjustment of present social conditions to agreement with Bible teaching.

The first of these ideals found no definite expression from an organised group until the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam founded the Guild of St. Matthew. The second was kept fresh by the few devoted leaders most closely associated with Maurice, who turned their energies to the co-operative and trades union movements. None of the other movements, however closely allied in thought or in purpose, have seen fit to call themselves Christian Socialist, and they are therefore excluded from the limits of the present discussion.

When the co-operative schemes of the Christian Socialists failed, the leaders first transferred their activities to the new Working Men's College. This college was not then and there created, but was a natural outgrowth from Maurice's Bible class. Already for a year classes had been held in the "Hall of Association," chiefly, but not entirely, for the associate co-operative members and their families. These were now expanded, with outside help, into a regular college. The model was to be, as far as possible, King's College and University College, London, with the management in the hands of the faculty, which must certainly at first teach without pay. The scholars were to pay a small fee for the lectures, unless exempt because of poverty, so that they might help in raising sufficient funds to extend the instruction so as to include boys and women. The instruction given was very varied, and it was hoped that the smaller classes might serve as a means of forming friendships between teachers and scholars.

The college was opened in the autumn of

1854, with Maurice as president, and has had an unbroken existence from that day to this. Mr. Maurice's broad religious sympathies made any ecclesiastical test either for teachers or scholars an impossibility. Men of the widest range of views were attracted to the work, and learned there to understand and to sympathise with the working classes. Among the famous names of past teachers may be mentioned those of Professor J. R. Seeley, Mr. Frederick Harrison, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Ruskin, Huxley, Tyndall, and many others. The college has given a great impetus to educational work among the working men, and from it have grown directly other institutions, one of the most interesting of which is the South London Art Gallery and Library established by W. Rossiter, the first student Fellow of the College. When Maurice died in 1870, Thomas Hughes was elected president, and continued the work along the old lines until within a few years of his death. It is consequently safe to say that the college is still continued on the policy of its founder, the wisdom of whose judgment is shown in the ever-widening prosperity of the institution.

But the activity of the young men who had been roused to enthusiasm by Maurice's teachings was by no means satisfied with giving instruction. The previous chapter has already told of the generous enthusiasm with which they supported the engineers' strike in 1852. During the next four years there was a period of business prosperity, and this, combined with unsuccessful strikes in other parts of the country, tended to bring strikes into disrepute. At the same time the more thoughtful of the working men, under the stimulus of prosperity, were becoming interested in the principle of industrial co-operation.

The success of the Rochdale co-operative distributive societies in the north was already causing similar societies to be formed by London working men.

But the intelligent and enthusiastic support which the Christian Socialists had given to the engineers' strike turned the attention of the workmen to their scheme of "self-governing co-operative workshops," which were just at the moment being established in London. When these ended in commercial disaster in 1854, the hopes of the men were turned back once more to their trades unions as the most efficient fulcrum from which to manage the economic and financial lever.

The era of strikes began again in 1857 with the trade depression, and led the newly-formed "Association for the Promotion of Social Science" to constitute a committee of inquiry into trade societies and disputes. Maurice was a member of the committee, and the valuable report[1] issued was contributed to, among others, by Hughes and J. M. Ludlow. Again the Christian Socialists came to the fore in 1861, when war broke out between the master-builders and their operatives. The two causes were a renewed agitation for the nine hour day, and the decision on the part of the employers to substitute payment by the hour for the previous custom of paying by the day. When the operatives petitioned for a nine hour day, three London builders answered that they would engage their men hereafter by the hour instead of by the day. "This arrangement," they added, "of payment by the hour will enable any workman employed by us to work any number of hours he may think proper."[1] The men saw at once that this alleged freedom was illusory. As a matter of fact it destroyed the trades unionism principle of "collective bargaining" with the labourer, and experience had taught them that if each was apparently free to work as many hours as he pleased, each would, as a matter of fact, be forced to work the length of day which was fixed by the desire and capacity of those willing to work longest. The men failed to make their point clear, however, until two letters, explaining the economic principle which was at stake, were written to the newspapers by "Eight Positivists and Christian Socialists."[2] These letters were largely instrumental in bringing about the compromise in which the struggle ended. "From this time forth," says Mr. Webb, "this talented group of young barristers and literary men became the trusted legal experts and political advisers of the leaders of the Trades Union Movement."[3]

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[1] "Report on Trade Societies and Strikes," London, 1860.

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[1] Webb's "History of Trades Unionism," p. 228. Note.

[2] The signers were Godfrey Lushington, Frederick Harrison, Thomas Hughes, J. M. Ludlow, E. S. Beesley, R. H. Hutton, R. B. Litchfield, and T. R. Bennet.

[3] Webb's "History of Trades Unionism," p. 229.

Again, in 1867-70, when the whole fabric of trades union organisations seemed threatened it was among this group of Christian Socialists that men found their keenest champions. The Act of 1825 had given trades societies no legal status. But in 1855 a Friendly Societies Act was passed, which contained a clause enabling any society, established for a purpose not illegal, to deposit its rules with the Registrar of the Friendly Societies, and so to have the privilege of having disputes among its members dealt with by the magistrates.[1] Under this Act the trades unions had long supposed that they were legally protected against the dishonesty of their officers. In 1867, however, the boilermakers had occasion to proceed against their treasurer, and to their astonishment the Queen's Bench declared that, "if not actually criminal, they were yet so far in restraint of trade as to render the Society an illegal association."[2] The result was to put the trades union funds, amounting to over a quarter of a million sterling, at the mercy of the local secretaries.

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[1] Webb's "Trades Unionism," p. 245.

[2] Webb's "Trades Unionism," p. 245.

Immediate efforts were made for remedial legislation. In the same year, however, a series of outrages at Sheffield was laid at the door of the trades unionists, and Parliament delayed all action by appointing a Committee of Inquiry into the general subject. Thomas Hughes had championed the cause of the men so warmly on the floor of Parliament that he was placed on the commission. Fortunately, Mr. Frederick Harrison, the well-known positivist, who had been associated with the Christian Socialists as far back as the early days of the Working Men's College, was also put on the committee. After three years of hard work a bill was finally passed (1871) legalising trades unions.

According to the provisions of the bill, "No Trade Union, however wide its objects, was henceforth to be illegal merely because it was 'in restraint of trade.' Every Union was to be entitled to be registered if its rules were not expressly in contravention of the criminal law. And, finally, the registration which gave the Unions complete protection for their funds was so devised as to leave untouched their internal organisation and arrangements, and to prevent their being sued or proceeded against in a court of law."[1] At the same time, however, the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was passed, which increased in stringency the former acts against strikes and strikers, and practically made all combination for strikes illegal. It was only after four more years of agitation that this was repealed and the legal right of the men to combine for strikes was recognised.

II

Co-operation Movement—Newcastle Congress, 1879—Hughes' Address—Congress of 1888—Final Vote of the Christian Socialist Ideal—Real Cause of the Failure—Ludlow, Hughes, and Neale.

This activity of the Christian Socialists in the trades unions shows that their scheme of social reform was not confined by the narrow limits of their own co-operative plan. But their influence on the general co-operative movement has been much deeper than on trades unionism. In fact, some of the co-operators, who are most inclined to exploit the whole co-operative plan as a mere money-making scheme, do not hesitate to say that their power as speakers and writers has given these men a much greater influence than they deserved. Even the failure of the Christian Socialist "Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations" seemed rather to strengthen the connection of its leaders with the co-operative movement as a whole. Already, in 1852, they had called a co-operative conference, composed of delegates from the various co-operative bodies throughout the country. When their societies failed, they virtually resigned the management of the movement into the hands of this body. These conferences were superseded in 1860 by the Co-operative Congress, which met in London. This congress included both the productive and the distributive co-operative societies, and on the list of conveners appear the names of seven of the old Christian Socialists. When the present Co-operative Union was formed in 1870 by the fusion of the north and the south, the anomaly of combining productive and distributive co-operative societies in the same congress was continued, and the old names still reappear in prominent connections. In 1879 the important task of drafting the "Manual for Co-operators" was entrusted to Hughes and Neale,

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[1] Webb's "History of Trades Unionism," pp. 259, 260.

Ever since the Newcastle Congress of 1873, "sharing profits with labour" has been affirmed and reaffirmed as the basal principle of co-operation. Each year the delegates at the Congress have reaffirmed their faith, and the managers have continued to run the stores on the Rochdale principle of dividing profits according to purchases. In the beginning of the Rochdale pioneers, when each of the twenty-eight members was supposed to serve in turn as counterman or cashier, the distinction between the Christian Socialist plan of distribution according to labour, and the Rochdale plan of distribution according to purchases, was not so marked. But even then it is clear that the Rochdale plan would tend to benefit most the member who was already in financial circumstances more fortunate than his fellows. His dividend would be larger in proportion to the excess of his expenditure over theirs, and thus the capitalistic element would be emphasised among fellow-workmen. But in the meantime, while the great Co-operative Congresses were debating the principle of distributing profits, the membership of the societies was advancing rapidly towards the million mark, and they had thousands of work-people in their employ, both as shopmen and as manual workers. They had founded large wholesale co-operative establishments where the different distributive societies could purchase to better advantage than in the open market, and had inaugurated the system of manufacturing many of the goods which were handled through these wholesale co-operative stores. The co-operative societies had therefore themselves become large employers of labour, and the Christian Socialists felt that the principle involved in the question of the rights of labour to share in management and profits had come to affect so large a number in the co-operative movement that it must be definitely settled. As far back as 1869 Hughes had said in an address to the Congress, "In one respect, indeed, there has been an apparent backsliding" (since 1852), "for at that time there were certainly" (in London) "a far greater proportion of productive associations—in proportion to the whole number of societies—than there are now. . . . What has been the cause of this? . . . In those days every society recognised as their main object the making men of their members—training them to feel their relationship to each other, the worth of fellowship in work, the duty of aiding and training their weaker brethren; and regarded the making of profits, the production of wealth, as a means only to this end; while since that time, they have to a great extent given in to the prevailing heresy of our day, and have treated the making of profits and the production of wealth as the end and not the means."[1]

The question was, however, debated periodically without producing any definite result until the Carlisle Congress in 1887, when Hughes said in his address:

"Two roads lie before us, along both of which we cannot travel, and of which it is extremely important that we choose the right one." He supported a resolution that the productive wholesales be reorganised as self-governing workshops, and added: "You cannot give men a share in the profits and not do it. Is one right and the other wrong? If one is right and the other wrong, say which is right and which is wrong, and stick to the right and give up the wrong." He closed by saying that " If the co-operators denied the cardinal doctrine of self-governing and profit-sharing workshops, he and his followers would retire from the Co-operative Union."[1]

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[1] "Proceedings of the Co-operative Congress held in London, May 31 and June 1, 2, 3, 1869." Edited by J. M. Ludlow. (Putnam, Paternoster Row, London, N.D.)

The speech was followed by a stormy debate, and finally the whole question was referred to the next Congress.

Certainly at the Dewsbury Congress in 1888 the Idealists had things their own way. The inaugural address was delivered by Mr. Neale, who made a strong plea for the Christian Socialist ideal, and closed with a ringing appeal:

"Fellow Co-operators! it rests with you to realise the ideal that the historian of co-operation ascribes to it. Will you refuse to realise that ideal? Is the historian of coming ages to say of the British workers who form this great Union: 'They might have assured the future of Labour; they did sacrifice it at the shrine of "Divi," who rewarded them with the jingle of a few additional pennies in their own pockets.' I hope better things of you. . . . The air is filled with the sound of the Partnership of Industry.

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[1] Mrs. Webb, " The Co-operative Movement," p. 177.

. . . I cannot bring myself to think that you will turn a deaf ear to the call. Rather do I augur that some Holyoake of the future will be able to record of the co-operators of Great Britain: 'They had moralised distribution and exchange; they went on to moralise production. They had largely diffused among numerous bodies of working men and women, by means of dividends on their own consumption . . . wealth and the power belonging to it. They used this power so as permanently to bring within reach of the working population . . . the advantages of riches without the evils attending the chase after them. They did for the toiling masses to whom they gave employment what they would have wished to be done to themselves; and by so doing they

'Rang out the darkness of the land,
Rang in the Christ who is to be.'"[1]

Nothing could have breathed more fully the early spirit of the Christian Socialists. The enthusiasm of the old hero's conviction was apparently irresistible, and the Congress reasserted with turbulent enthusiasm the principle of profit-sharing production. Mr. Holyoake said that the decision was "deliberate and decisive." The result, however, was that of 1503 societies, to whom a circular was addressed asking if they were themselves ready to carry out this principle or to use their influence to have it carried out, only 488 replied.[1] Of these, 274 societies were ready to use their influence, and 180 were willing to consider the adoption of profit-sharing in their own establishments.[2] When, however, these 180 were further investigated at the end of another year, only 35 replied to the questions which were sent them—14 being associations of producers, the net result being that four societies were ready to recommend a bonus system to their members, and five suggested conflicting schemes of profit-sharing. The rest of the societies either refused to answer or "deemed themselves incompetent to suggest."

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[1] "Inaugural Address delivered at the 20th Co-operative Congress, Dewsbury, 1888," p. 22, by E. V. Neale. Issued by the Century Co-operative Board, Manchester.

As Mrs. Webb points out, the fact that the Co-operative Congress is not called upon to transact business, nor even to elect the central board, explains to some extent the disparity between the words and the deeds of the co-operators. Nevertheless, the sentiment in favour of the Christian Socialist ideal must be a very shallow one if it evaporates so quickly on being transported from the hall of the Co-operative Congress. It is, as a matter of fact, a dangerously easy thing for a brilliant and enthusiastic speaker to rouse an audience to give public expression to noble feelings which each individual is too lazy to put into practice for himself. The influence of men like Hughes and Neale is always inspiring, but the old plan of distribution according to purchases is easiest in practice, and makes the dividend surer; and when the co-operator gets into his quarterly meeting, and comes to discuss the reduction of expenses and the increase of profits, he loses sight of the broad field of industrial development which the wider vision of the idealist opened up to him. It is no doubt difficult for the labour man to enter into the statesman-like plans of the Christian Socialist leaders, and rise above the petty commercialism of ordinary business standards; and this is unquestionably an age of commercialism. The most far-seeing of the working men see that the leading nation of the day is the one which gains and holds the commercial supremacy, and they naturally regard the immediate financial success of their own scheme as of prime importance. But when one looks back at the beneficent influence which the old Christian Socialist leaders have had on the general development of the movement, when one sees the untiring energy with which they have helped the co-operators to their present safe position, it is with a feeling of regret that one finds the present movement turning its back upon the old leaders. It seems a sort of ingratitude. No doubt, for the moment, the men are right, but there is something deeper after all than what Carlyle called the "Cash-nexus." Ideals do play their part in human development; and, though at times the influence may be obscured, it is, in the light of history, the important rôle. Even if the Christian Socialist ideal of co-operation was founded on a false economic basis, and the men in rejecting it have proved themselves wiser than their leaders; nevertheless, the old Christian Socialists have been of immense service to the co-operative movement, and to England herself, in keeping steadily before men the larger outlook.

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[1] Mrs. Webb, "The Co-operative Movement," p. 177.

[2] Mrs. Webb, "The Co-operative Movement," p. 178.

It would not be just to close an account of the connection of the Christian Socialists with the labour movement without a reference to the three chief actors. Less has been said perhaps about J. M. Ludlow than the other leaders, because for many years his work lay in another field. But to tell the story of his connection with the Friendly Societies would be to write the history of the movement during the developing period in which he acted as Registrar. His office placed him practically at the head of the working men's institutions of self-help, and connected them with the machinery for State supervision. The splendid condition in which these societies exist to-day is a perpetual compliment to the quality of his work, and a continual proof of his life of noble unselfishness.

Of the two other leaders Thomas Hughes was much the better known to the public at large. His work as an author brought his name into prominence many years ago, and his death in 1896 revived the general knowledge in his splendid life of manly, courageous service.

But outside the co-operative world and beyond the circle of his friends, the name of Edward Vansittart Neale was not so well known. It was, however, to him that the co-operative movement owed most. During the early days of the movement, he sacrificed his private fortune to the cause, and when the second chapter of his connection with the co-operative movement began, in 1869, he devoted his time to the work of General Secretary as unstintingly as he had previously sacrificed his money. Professor Brentano was astonished when he came to England in 1883 to see a man already old sacrificing his time and personal comfort to the labour cause. When Neale died in 1892, Brentano wrote of him: "A hero and a saint. Of the names of the men who have done most to bring the social evolution in England into a peaceful way, his will stand first."[1]

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[1] "E. V. Neale as a Christian Socialist," *Ec. Rev.*, III., 38 and 175.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CHANGES, 1848-1880

THE year 1877 marks the beginning of a new era in Christian Socialism in England. The movement of 1848 was an outgrowth from the political and economic conditions of the times. The terror inspired by the Chartist agitation was its immediate cause, and the result was the attempt of Maurice and his followers to meet the threatening economic conditions by the establishment of the productive co-operative societies, through which they fondly hoped to revolutionise the industrial world. But the movement of 1877 began in a parish guild in East London, and was primarily intended to direct the thought of the members towards the more careful study of social questions, especially in relation to the Church. No definite social aim was set before them. The members of the early Christian Socialist group were mainly the working men employed in the societies' co-operative workshops. The members of the later Christian Socialist movement are almost entirely drawn from the upper middle classes, or at least from those distinctly above the grade of artisan; and they confined their attention for some years to a study of social questions with almost no attempt at direct participation in the course of economic or political events. This change in the form of the movement becomes all the more striking when we discover that its leaders still turn back to Maurice as its founder, and find in his writings, as his earlier followers did in his spoken word, the authority for all their acts. So radical a departure from earlier methods must have some deeper foundation than a mere change in interpretation or a difference in the parts of his writings chosen for especial emphasis. The great alteration has come in the changed political, economic, and religious conditions of the two periods, though they are separated by little more than a quarter of a century. Probably no period of equal extent in English history marks so great changes in the conditions of living among the labouring classes and in the religious thought of the well-to-do as the years from 1840 to 1880. It will be well to consider under their separate headings some of these changes in economic conditions and in religious thought, to endeavour to trace their cause, and to note their influence on the new phase of Christian Socialism.

I

Economic Changes — Environment: Political, Economic—Growth of the Labourer in Morale—Agricultural Conditions.

Science and democracy have been pointed out as the two great forces in the nineteenth century, and, looked at broadly, all the great economic changes may be traced to one or the other of these influences.

On the side of the working classes, democracy has given them a much more important relative position in the State, and science has revolutionised the means of production as well as the factory and the home conditions. On the side of the upper classes, democracy has entirely changed the point of view from which they look at the labouring man and his organisations, and science has revolutionised their theology.

The material conditions of the labourer have changed almost beyond belief. At the time when Engels wrote his famous book,[1] in 1844, the working man lived under miserable conditions and was being plundered by long hours and low wages to a point that made debauchery his one resource of amusement. In 1877 the increase in wages and the change in home surroundings, due to sanitary and dwelling-house legislation, had raised him so far above his former condition that, whereas in 1844 continental critics were predicting social revolution, in less than half a century England was being held up to continental Europe as a model of "social peace."[2]

In 1848 the working man lived in slums, where the working classes were densely crowded. The streets in which they lived, and all the neighbouring streets, were composed of long rows of two-storey three and four room cottages, with the cellars often used as dwellings. The streets were generally unpaved, rough, dirty, filled with vegetable and animal refuse, without sewers or gutters, but supplied with foul stagnant pools instead.[1] The atmosphere in such streets may better be imagined than described, especially when we realise that in fine weather lines were stretched across the street and hung with wet clothing. It was the usual thing for the family consisting of a man, his wife, and four or five children to occupy one room, and the rent for this in London averaged about four shillings per week. The usual food consisted of oatmeal without milk for breakfast, and potatoes for the other meals. Meat was an uncommon luxury. The man's wages in the factory, if he was fortunate enough to have steady work, were perhaps fifteen shillings a week. But many of his mates were out of work. The year 1844 was at the close of a period of transition. Labour-saving machinery had recently been introduced, and this had led to the discharge of many old hands and the substitution of women and children. The men thus thrown out of employment in many cases did the housework, cooked and mended, and "minded the baby," while the wife and the older children left at half-past five in the morning for the factory, and came back at half-past seven or eight in the evening. Against these conditions the unions had proved themselves almost powerless, and the record shows but a small percentage of successful strikes. Certainly no man could hope to save under such conditions, and, if he were fortunate enough to belong to a Friendly Society, about all he could look forward to was a decent funeral.

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[1] Engels, "Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844" (Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London).

[2] In 1890 a book by a well-known German economist appeared, entitled "Social Peace." In this the English labour movement is held up to Europe as a model to be followed. "Social Peace," by Schulze-Gaeverintz (Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London).

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[1] Engels, "Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844," p. 26.

In less than half a century later the worst of the slums in London, and in most other great towns, were rapidly disappearing. The workman lived in two rooms, perhaps in a "model dwelling," for which he paid seven to eight shillings per week. The building was constructed with every sanitary precaution and kept clean. The labourer went to and from his work through well-paved and carefully-sewered streets, and perhaps met as he left his home in the morning one of the sanitary inspectors, whose business it was to see that prescribed limits of cleanliness were maintained. His friend across the way no longer lived in a damp cellar with windows below the level of the filthy street, for such places were now declared by law uninhabitable. His food had greatly improved, both in quantity and quality, and meat had ceased to be an unusual luxury.

At the factory the change in conditions was no less marked. The series of experiments forced on the masters by the unions had taught them that in spite of the great part played by machinery, improved conditions and shorter hours of labour actually tended to increase production, at least in the more highly developed industries. The old unsanitary and ill-ventilated factories were swept away, and kept away by State regulation and inspection. Women and children work only under greatly restricted conditions, and the workman's hours of labour have sunk from fourteen and even eighteen hours a day to eight and ten. His money wages show an advance, which in many cases is equivalent to over one hundred per cent., and even the wages of agricultural labourers have risen, though in a comparatively slight degree.[1] The trades unions, too, which in the forties were still struggling for recognition, have come to occupy a place of power. In 1880 they had

[1] The following list of wages is copied by Schulze-Gaevernitz from Robert Giffin's "Progress of the Working Classes," (London, 1884) and gives some notion of the rise in wages between 1830 and 1880.

Occupation.	*Place.*	*Wages 50 years ago, per week.*	*Wages present time, per week.*	*Increase. Amount &*	*Per cent.*
Carpenters...	Manchester	24/0	34/0	10/0	42%
" ...	Glasgow	14/0	26/0	12/0	85%
Miners	Staffordshire	2/8	4/0	1/4	50%
Pattern......	Huddersfield	16/0	25/0	9/0	55%
Weavers	"	12/0	26/0	14/0	115%
Weavers (men)...	Bradford	8/3	20/6	12/3	150%
Spinning (children)..	—	4/5	11/6	7/1	160%

See Professor Schulze-Gaevernitz, "Social Peace," London, 1893, p. 283. Nor does this represent his entire gain, for prices have fallen, especially for corn, which has always been the workman's staff of life. "The average price of wheat was 58s. 7d. between 1837 and 1846, and 48s. 9d. between 1874 and 1884." That this rise in wages and fall in prices of articles of the labourer's consumption has resulted in a rise in the standard of living is proved from the statistics, which show that the consumption of the primary articles of food and luxury has increased enormously. The consumption *per capita* of tea and sugar, for example, was about four times as great in 1880 as in 1840. The statistics also show a distinct fall in the death-rate.

a strong reserve fighting fund, and granted besides out-of-work and sick pay to members.

Finally the State and private philanthropy both take an active interest in the labour man's hours of recreation; and public libraries, lectures, and play-grounds all do their part to make him a better man, both in body and mind. Under such conditions it is not to be wondered at that he is a finer type than his compeer in 1848; that he is more intelligent, more self-respecting, and much more independent of his social superiors. For all these reasons it was naturally much easier for Maurice to gather a group of workmen to discuss the economic and political conditions than for his present-day followers. The labour man to-day would turn much more readily to his own leaders.

The fact that the Guild of St. Matthew turned its attention to the agricultural problem is partly due to this new condition which prevailed in the manufacturing industries, but much more to the rapid economic development of this period. Ever since the days of Cromwell, England may be said to have had a perpetual Irish question, and Englishmen are in this way accustomed to discussions on all phases of the agricultural problem. During the last part of the seventies there had been an unusual amount of discussion, and the question of English agriculture was beginning to demand attention. The rapid growth of manufactures had withdrawn labour and capital from the farming industries, and necessitated the importation of larger and larger quantities of corn. The competition with the new lands of the Americas was, too, fast forcing the English farmer to the wall. Agricultural prices fell rapidly, and wages and profits suffered severely. Naturally the agricultural labourer was by no means holding his own in the general advance, and was actually sinking in the comparative industrial scale, as his fellow-workmen in the manufacturing trades advanced. When the Guild of St. Matthew, therefore, called especial attention to the agricultural labourer, and when many members of the guild became active workers in the English Land Restoration League they were merely suiting themselves to the demand of the times. The particular form which this work took, which will be explained in the account of the guild itself, was due to the influence of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," and to Alfred Russell Wallace's "Land Nationalisation."

In the political field the influence of democracy is still more marked. The extension of the ballot since the Reform Bill of 1832 has finally resulted in practically universal male suffrage. The general drift of legislation is more and more toward State interference. Factory laws, supported by an army of inspectors, protect the labourer against the capitalist who would take advantage of his position as employer. Since 1870 the State provides and supervises the public education of its children, and in many municipalities the marked tendency toward the municipalisation of public works is really nothing more than an evidence of the increasing power of the democracy on legislation.

But the development of leaders from among the ranks of the working men themselves has been one of the most significant of all the changes. It indicates a moral growth in the working classes which is the direct result of their institutions of self-help. Of these the three most important are the Friendly Societies, where the men have learned to make provision for the future; the Trades Unions, where they have learned the principle of mutual aid; and the Co-operative Societies, where they have stood together, and successfully, against the entire force of outside competition. As this is the historical order in which these institutions came into prominence, one may almost trace the expanding power which led the men from the principle of self-help to mutual aid, and note the growth of morale which gave them power to enter successfully the great fields of competitive business. And these associations not only have developed obligations toward themselves, but also have imposed duties toward the public.

II

Religious Changes—Catholic Revival—Growth of Scientific Knowledge—Maurice's Position—Thomas Hill Green—Demand for Character True Basis of Union for all Church Parties in the Christian Social Union.

The half century from 1830 to 1880 is a time of greater upheaval in English theological thought than any period since the Reformation. The Oxford movement on the one hand, and the application of the scientific method to theological research on the other, each in turn convulsed the Church with a struggle which for the moment seemed, to the participants at least, to threaten her very existence.

The eighteenth century marks a low point in the religious life of England. The sects tended to become theological rather than religious, and the Established Church was hopelessly in the clutches of an indifference which applauded the fox-hunting parson and regarded Church livings as plums of patronage to be doled out to the fool of family. The picture of the parson in the contemporaneous novel is not flattering to the religious demands of the congregations, but it seems to be a fairly true picture of a disproportionately large number of the clergy. Wrapped in a cold formalism, these men preached a dreary morality divorced from all vital religion. The reaction was severe. The Wesleys and Whitfield preached the doctrine of repentance and justification by faith to congregations wrought to the highest emotional pitch, and swept thousands into a great religious revival. Even after they left the Church and founded Methodism, their influence was strong among a large body of the clergy who were known as Evangelicals, and these men kept alive in their parishes many of the Wesleyan practices. But Wesleyanism was distinctly a middle-class movement, and did not touch either the intellectual or the hereditary aristocracy. It is needless to say that throughout the eighteenth century there was always to be found in the Church a small body of devoted men who took the highest, most unselfish view of their profession. But it was not till the century was well passed, and the influence of the shallow optimism of Paley had begun to wane, that a group of young men at Oxford began a counter-reformation which was destined to create a new party in the Church.

When the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed, and the new Parliament met, many of the Conservatives, and especially those among the clergy, were in a state of serious alarm. The passage of Lord Stanley's Irish Church Temporalities

Bill (1835), suppressing one half of the Irish Episcopate, seemed to them to justify their gloomiest forebodings. Among those who watched this movement with the keenest interest was a group of young Oxford scholars, who had for some years been preparing themselves to arouse the Church by the study of early Church doctrine and practices. They began with the publication of a series of *Tracts for the Times*, which soon set England ablaze. Hurrell Froude, Newman, Pusey, Wilberforce and other well-known names contributed to the series, which, beginning with the Irish Bishoprics, went on to advocate Apostolic Succession, the Efficacy of the Sacraments, Priestly Absolution, and the Authority of the Church, until it finally ended, in 1841, in Newman's famous Tract XC., which was an attempt to show that the Thirty-nine Articles were not inconsistent with Roman Catholic doctrine. The final withdrawal of Newman and a large number of his followers into the Roman Catholic Church in 1845 is a matter of history. But the withdrawal of these men by no means ended their influence in the body they had left. The excitement attendant upon the entire discussion led primarily to a distinct revival of interest in religion, and after their withdrawal many practices which they revived tended to keep this interest alive. To-day the High Church practices are a matter of everyday occurrence, and the continued discussion of their more radical innovations has made them familiar knowledge even to the casual reader. But in 1840 auricular confession and absolution, the efficacy of the sacraments and the authority of the clergy seemed strange and popish doctrines. The substitution of the word *mass* for the old familiar *communion,* and the emphasis laid on the conformity to Church fasts and feasts in their proper order and season, all tended to deepen the suspicions with which the easy-going Churchmen regarded these startling innovations. But however questionable the influence of these practices might be in tending to rouse desires which only the Church of Rome could properly claim to satisfy, it was unquestionably true that the Oxford movement had touched a fundamental truth in practical morality. The influence of a steady habit of religious thought, developed by the regular attendance on frequent services, was much more conducive to the upbuilding of Christian character than the periodic excitements which the methods of Wesley had brought into a certain section of the Church, and the emphasis on the Christian year brought into prominence at stated intervals doctrines which the enthusiastic Evangelical had been in danger of overlooking. It is these phases of the Oxford movement which exert most influence on the Christian Socialists to-day. Doctrine and worship alike are a means to an end—the upbuilding of the Christlike character.

The second phase in the religious development of this period was of a quite different character. The first was, in a sense at least, a reaction from Methodism and came from within the Church. The second was entirely due to the development of science, and was forced upon the Church from without. At about the time the excitement consequent upon the large withdrawals to Rome had begun to cool, a section of thinking men in the Church were already becoming uneasy over the discoveries of geology which seemed to throw discredit upon the opening chapters of Genesis. But before they could prepare them for the fray, England was suddenly roused to the wildest excitement by the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species."

It is to-day difficult to realise fully the terror with which a generation educated to believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible regarded the publication of this book. But the acceptance of its fundamentals forced the members of any branch of the Christian Church to a complete readjustment of their religious philosophy, and at first religious men might well have felt that if they began throwing over old beliefs, there might be no logical standing-ground short of atheism. The very next year after this book appeared the scientific method was applied to the Bible for the first time in an English book, and the English Church was thrown into a panic by the publication of "Essays and Reviews." This book was a collection of essays by seven well-known scholars and thinkers, treating leading religious questions in the light of the new thought. Its cause and purpose is made clear in a letter from Jowett to Stanley in 1858, asking him to join with others in a volume of theological essays. "The object," he says, "is to say what we think freely within the limits of the Church of England. . . . We do not wish to do anything rash or irritating to the public or to the University, but we are determined not to submit to this abominable system of terrorism which prevents the statement of the plainest facts, and makes true theology and theological education impossible. Pusey and his friends are perfectly aware of your opinions, and the Dean's, and Temple's, and Müller's, but they are determined to prevent your expressing them."[1] The book introduced the reader to the higher criticism, and for the first time the Bible was subject to the treatment accorded to other historical works. While somewhat crude in some of its statements, it was in general the presentation of what the ordinary broad

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[1] The subjects with their authors were: "Education of the World," Frederick Temple; "Bunsen's Biblical Researches," Roland Williams; "On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity," Baden Powell; "The National Church," Henry Bristowe Wilson; "Mosaic Cosmogony," C. W. Goodwin; "Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750," Mark Pattison; "The Interpretation of Scripture," Benjamin Jowett. "Life of Benjamin Jowett," Vol. I., p. 275, by Evelyn Abbot and Lewis Campbell (London, John Murray, 1897).

Churchman accepts to-day as a matter of course. But the theories of geological and biological research had not before been applied to the Bible, nor had the Old Testament been tried in the search-light of historical criticism, which relegated much of the earlier portion to the realms of tradition common to the origin and development of all early peoples. Dean Church wrote to a friend in 1861 with reference to Darwin's "Origin of Species": "The book, I have no doubt, would be the subject still of a great row if there was not a much greater row going on about 'Essays and Reviews.'"[1]

"The effect of this book," says Lecky, "in making the religious questions which it discussed familiar to the great body of educated men was probably by far the most important of its consequences."[2] But, in the meantime, two of the writers had been selected for trial before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. When they were finally acquitted, Stanley summed up the case and wrote: "That the Church of England does not hold—(1) Verbal Inspiration; (2) Imputed Righteousness;

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[1] "Jowett's Life," Vol. I., p. 290, note.

[2] Lecky, "Democracy and Liberty," Vol. I., p. 425.

(3) Eternity of Torment, is now, I trust, fixed for ever. I hope that all will now go on smoothly, and that the Bible may be really read without those terrible nightmares."[1]

Official recognition of the implied heresy of these new teachings ended with this trial of the authors of "Essays and Reviews," but beneath the surface the struggle of the two parties has gone on even up to to-day. The end was inevitable, however, when the inherent truth of the new discoveries won a place in general education for their essential principles. As the new generation came up, they demanded a reconciliation, or, at least, a readjustment, which should enable a man to accept the current facts of scientific knowledge without appearing to deny the fundamentals of religion. And some went a step farther and asked that these be brought into accord with many helpful religious practices which had come as an heritage from the Oxford Movement. The demand for this reconciliation was one reason why the men who had been brought up as disciples of Pusey turned to Maurice's writings for help.

Maurice regarded the publication of "Essays and Reviews" with considerable disfavour. He wrote Mr. Ludlow soon after their publication: "If these confusions are to be taken as any settlement of questions, as any substitute for that which is believed in Christendom at the present day, if any human being is content to rest in these confusions, the effect must be mischievous. But the acknowledgment of them may not in the end prove mischievous. It has, of course, two issues: thorough infidelity or a deeper faith. If we shrink from that issue, if we are afraid to try it, we decide for the first alternative, we have ceased to believe in God."[1] On the same subject he wrote the Bishop of Argyle a little later: "I am frightened more than I can express at the temper of those who are busy in the condemnation of their brethren, and are not busy in the discovery and confession of their own heresies and sins."[2] These letters were characteristic of his whole thought—a willingness to accept all truth, and a mind keen to reconcile the new with the old. But the fundamental which has impressed itself on his

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[1] "Life of Stanley," Vol. II., p. 44.

[1] "Life of Maurice," Vol. II., p. 390.

[2] "Maurice's Life," Vol. II., p. 391.

followers was the fact that all truth was of value only in so far as it influenced character.

Certainly both the impatient Radical and the reactionary Conservative can learn a lesson from this connection of Maurice with present-day Christian Socialism. The man who was expelled from King's College, London, because of his revolutionary socialistic theories: the man who, but for his dislike of all parties, would have been the acknowledged leader of the party opposed to Newman and Pusey: this man has slowly permeated the thought of the party opposed to him, until he is to-day the acknowledged master of the Christian Social Union, a society which has for one of its headquarters the house which Pusey founded at Oxford. One reason for this reconciliation lies in the fact that the High Churchman by his practices developed the character which the Broad Churchman demanded in his theology. The High Church practices had, in brief, a definite psychological justification for their use as a means of character building, because the regular recurrence of the daily services, and such other religious exercises as were indulged in, was one of the most natural methods of producing that pure-mindedness which is of the very essence of character. When these High Churchmen came, therefore, to read Maurice, they found in new and developed form the rationale for their own practices, not perhaps in a definite essay on the purpose of Sacramentalism, but in Maurice's repeated emphasis of the meaning and power of character.

The Broad Churchman also was, to a certain extent, influenced in turn by the effect which he inevitably saw that the High Church practices produced on character; but to a much less extent, for he was by nature more a psychological mystic, and looked for communion with the divine through the inner revelation of God to his own heart, rather than through the outward ministration of a priesthood.

The connection of thought, however, between Maurice and his present-day High Church followers, despite its clearness in general outline, loses itself in too many ramifications to be completely explicable by any general principle. Nor is the attempt to trace the historical development altogether satisfactory in its results. The two vital elements in the English Church which have united to form the thought of the Christian Socialist of to-day are the Broad Church and the High Church movements.

1. The Broad Church party is the direct out-growth of the scientific discoveries of the middle of the century, and some of its ablest men contributed to "Essays and Reviews." They start from the fundamental theory of Maurice that dogma is comparatively unimportant, except in so far as it influences character, and they have been ably represented in the Christian Social Union by the late Bishop of Durham. He was at Cambridge when Maurice was appointed professor there in 1866, and learned from him the Christian Socialist answer to the social problem. How deeply he was influenced by his contact with Maurice his later writings bear witness. As President of the Christian Social Union, he did much to keep alive these ideas, four of his pamphlets being accepted as officially expressing the general principles of the Union.

2. The High Church, or, as they prefer to call themselves, the "Catholic" element, stands for

the corporate life of the Church. They are the direct successors of the Oxford Movement, and are represented in the Christian Socialism of to-day by two distinct branches. The first is through Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, who has been the leader of the Guild of St. Matthew since its beginning. He was a student at Cambridge under Maurice, and claims to be his immediate follower. A study of the guild which he has founded, however, makes clear how far afield his extreme High Churchmanship carries him from the principles and practices of the early Christian Socialists. The second branch of the High Church element is quite independent, and is represented by the Bishop of Worcester (Right Rev. Charles Gore), Canon Scott-Holland, and many of the other young leaders of the Christian Social Union.

Thomas Hill Green was the great power at Oxford when these men were undergraduates. His philosophy was strongly Hegelian, and he was working with Arnold Toynbee to construct a social philosophy which should represent the Hegelian idea of the world as the manifestation of divine will. To this group of enthusiastic young High Church scholars, however, the Church, not the State, as Hegel had taught, was the social ideal, and the way to make the world the true manifestation of divine will was to bring the whole of life into the Church. Maurice reached much the same conclusion, but from a different direction. The "Kingdom of Christ" which he wished to see established was a universal brotherhood of mankind wherein competition should cease and mutual unselfishness make each consider his neighbour's good even before his own. He believed the Church to be the invisible body composed of all the followers of Christ. The High Churchman believed it to be a visible "Holy Catholic and Apostolic" body composed of those who accepted certain rites and doctrines necessary for salvation. Maurice was guided by his love of humanity, and sought to bring the world into the Church, because the Church offered the surest remedy for the misery which he saw in the world about him. The High Church Christian Socialist, however, is moved primarily by his love for the Church, and, with no less love for humanity, works for the Church, believing that in so doing he is working for the best good of all mankind. When the day comes that the Church and humanity are actually coextensive, there will be no difference between the two points of view. Of course one must not overlook the fact that the High Churchman encounters with bravery and wisdom a condition in many of the slums where spiritual work is, for the present, impossible. Nor does he forget the influence which, as a citizen, he must use rightly for the good of the State. Nevertheless, until the time comes when the Church and humanity are one, an unmistakable difference will still underlie the two principles. Often the two will work absolutely together; but underneath will always be felt the subtle difference beteen the Christian Socialism of Maurice and that of his High Church followers.

The striking element common to both parties is the union in the demand for character, which is indicative of the present reaction from Evangelicism. This is met logically in Maurice's theology, and one practical means of its accomplishment lies through the High Church observances.

But this, while it offers an efficient working basis for union, does not satisfactorily explain the logical theory of reconciliation of two opposing schools of thought. Nor can the historical development which has been sketched offer more than a suggestion. One or two of the leaders of the Christian Social Union, in reply to the direct question, have answered frankly that they have felt no need for such logical explanation; and probably they are right. There is a deeper foundation for truth than logic can always offer. Starting from Maurice's fundamental of the paramount importance of character, his present-day followers might well accept the truth wherever they find it, and for the present ignore any logical inconsistencies between Maurice and Pusey, between Darwin's "Origin of Species" and the early Church Fathers. Much that startled the world in Darwin's great book has become the commonplace of the schoolroom, and educated men can no longer ignore it or frown it down. Much that the fervid Evangelical regarded as disguised popery in the Oxford Movement has been proved to be merely a simple, direct help to practical Christian living. To refuse to face the issue which science raised would have been to accept one horn of Maurice's dilemma—"thorough infidelity." But to meet it squarely and to begin to reconcile present knowledge with ancient practice was to take the first step in the other direction toward "a deeper faith." Each man must, in his own experience, find the particular form of presentation in which truth makes its most direct appeal to his own heart. Experience shows that the form differs widely for different types of individuals. But it has been characteristic of the Christian Church that she gathered to herself the best truth in each age, and with holy wisdom sanctified it and reconciled it with her past for the healing of her children. The position of the Christian Social Union, and, to a lesser extent, of the Guild of St. Matthew, seems to be in keeping with this spirit. Without any attempt at a logical defence of the theological reconciliation, which may be more or less acceptable according to one's ecclesiastical affiliations, is it not possible to recognise and applaud this breadth of spiritual development which is ready to accept and to use all truth?

To sum up: the economic and the religious conditions in England had undergone a very violent change during the period from 1840 to 1880, and this change explains the difference between the modern and the earlier forms of Christian Socialism. From the economic standpoint industry has hardened from its early unorganised, crude state, and the labourer has developed from a state of dependent poverty to a condition of self-dependent power. And whereas, in 1840, he looked to the upper classes for strength and encouragement, he turns to-day to his own leaders and finds in his own organisations the force which has given him a new morale. Only in the rural districts is labour still weak and unorganised, and here the Guild of St. Matthew has undertaken a distinct special work. The Christian Socialist of to-day therefore finds an entirely different problem from that which confronted the group about Maurice. Then it was possible, in a way, to help to guide the newly forming industry into its permanent channels. To-day the industrial channels are as fixed as the other and older portions of the social structure, and the problem which requires study is how to modify and to readjust so as to do away with existing evils, rather than to offer a new solution to the problem of industrial organisation.

On the religious side the change has been no less marked. Maurice, who objected to the idea of any ecclesiastical parties, had the one idea of bringing the working man into the Church and making it play its part in the development of character. The Church was merely the necessary teacher to show man the way to universal brotherhood, as the first step in the new industrial scheme which was to supplant the war of competition with the reign of industrial peace. But the Oxford Movement on the one hand, and the growth of scientific knowledge typified by Darwin's "Origin of Species," and "Essays and Reviews," on the other, intensified the struggle of High Church and Broad Church until there was danger that theology should supplant religion. At this crisis a group of High Churchmen, facing social problems in the slums of London, rediscovered Maurice, and in his accentuation of the paramount importance of character found the key which reconciled the value of the High Church emphasis on ritual with the new truths of science which the earlier ritualists had felt to be absolutely antagonistic to their practices.

For these reasons the present-day Christian

Socialism will be found to be more studious and less active than the movement in 1850, and on the religious side, while presenting what seems at first the curious anomaly of a combination of High and Broad Church tendencies, will be found to have its logical basis firm in the belief learned from Maurice that the final justification for all theory and practice must be sought in its influence on character.

CHAPTER IV

THE GUILD OF ST. MATTHEW

Foundation of the Guild—Its Original Object—Charles Bradlaugh—Teaching of the Guild as Defined by the Warden—History of the Guild—Early Interest in Land Nationalisation — Interest in Current Politics—The English Land Restoration League.

THE Guild of St. Matthew was founded on St. Peter's Day, 1877, by the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam. Mr. Headlam had been a student at the university under Maurice and Kingsley, and had learned Christian Socialism from personal contact with the leaders. In 1877, while curate of St. Matthew's Church, Bethnal Green, East London, he started the society as a parish guild. Its objects were to encourage a better observance of the prayer-book rules of worship; to assist in the removal of prejudices against the sacraments of the Church; and to promote "friendly intercourse, recreation and education" among the Guild members. Not long after this, Mr. Headlam resigned his curacy. His strong personality had, however, attached a number of young men to him permanently, and it was decided to continue the Guild of St. Matthew, giving it a wider scope and appealing to greater numbers than could be done by a mere parish society.

The society presented the somewhat startling combination of extreme High Church principles with radical social views. To-day this has become the natural order of association; but when the society was formed, the men who were conservatives in ecclesiastical affairs and radicals in politics were much more exceptional. It was therefore with considerable surprise that people heard Mr. Headlam say: "Our position toward Maurice and Kingsley is that of enthusiastic disciples. We know that some of their experiments were failures, but we think we are carrying out their principles more faithfully than those who merely go in for co-operation."[1] In their work among the agricultural labourers they were certainly following in the practical footsteps of Maurice, but their position in ecclesiastical affairs shows a much greater debt to the Oxford Movement than to the theology of Maurice.

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[1] "Socialism of To-day," E. Laveleye; chapter on "Socialism" by G. H. Orpen, p. 303 (Field, Tuer & Co., London).

Starting with the assumption that the opposition to the Church came largely from a misconception of her purpose and a misunderstanding of her doctrines, Mr. Headlam aimed to found an organisation which could, first of all, meet the current atheistic attacks upon her.

One natural and perhaps inevitable result of the critical discussion of the Bible which was just filtering down to the working classes was the rapid spread of atheism among the common people. "Bible-smashing," as it was popularly called, was the favourite task of the Sunday afternoon orator; and he might well have been encouraged by the waning influence of the Church among the labouring classes during these years. Charles Bradlaugh was one of the best representatives of this class of atheist orators. He was a man of character and wide influence. Born in 1833, at the age of twenty he was already lecturing in the Hall of Science in London. He was a radical opponent of Christianity, but was also antagonistic to the popular socialistic schemes, and after a few years of preparatory lecturing, exerted a wide influence both on the platform and in his paper called the *National Reformer*. In 1880 he was elected to Parliament, but refused to take the oath, as he denied the existence of God. Finally, after he had been elected for the third time, he took his seat in 1886, and during the next five years gained a high reputation from his keen sense and fine debating powers. As a self-made man he appealed especially to the working classes, and possessed a strong influence among them. By aggressive Churchmen he was usually chosen as their special object of attack, and up to the time of his death in 1891 he always proved himself a worthy opponent.

That a society, one of whose chief objects was to meet these attacks, could properly be founded outside the shelter of the Church Mr. Headlam did not for a moment believe. To his philosophy the Church claimed all the activities of daily life, and so the Church Guild was the natural form of organisation. "Guilds," he says, "generally bear witness to truths and do work which, in the stress of ordinary parochial and diocesan affairs, might be forgotten or neglected. There is another thing, too, to be remembered about guilds: they are the best possible preventives against that most fatal sin—the sin of Schism. . . . If the holy men in a hurry who founded the various sects had but founded guilds instead, what might not England have been spared?"[1]

The principles of the Guild were set out originally in its three objects and three rules. The objects are:

"I. To get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of 'secularists' against the Church, her sacraments and doctrines, and to endeavour to justify God to the people.

"II. To promote frequent and reverent worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teachings of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

"III. To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation."

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[1] "The Guild of St. Matthew: an Appeal to Churchmen," p. 5 *seq.* (London, at the office of the Society, 1890).

The rules are:

"1. To carry out Object I.—*collectively* (*e.g.*, by means of lectures, classes, the dissemination of suitable literature, etc.), and *individually* by personal influence.

"2. To communicate on all Great Festivals, and at least to be present at a celebration of the Holy Communion as regularly as possible on Sundays and Holy Days.

"3. To meet annually in united worship on the Feast of St. Matthew (September 21), which day shall be the Festival of the Guild. (Members at too great a distance from London to attend the Special Festival Service of the Guild, or otherwise *bonâ fide* prevented from doing so, are considered to fulfil this Rule by communicating for the intention of the Guild on St. Matthew's Day or within the octave)."

The objects of the Guild stated in this brief form open a wide field for action. One asks at once just which of the many paths the Guild follows. It will perhaps be easiest to make this clear by discussing the three objects in the light of Mr. Headlam's various public utterances; for up to the present time Mr. Headlam has been the recognised mouthpiece of the Guild.

The first object is "to get rid, by every possible means, of existing prejudices, especially on the part of 'secularists' against the Church, her sacraments and doctrines, and to endeavour to justify God to the people." The fundamental for right living is a proper faith. "We protest," says Mr. Headlam, "against the notion that belief is of no importance. A want of faith and a bad faith alike impoverish life; the former inevitably leads to the latter. Individualism in religion (Protestantism, Atheism, etc.) destroys the bond between man and man, making the believer other-worldly and inhuman, and the unbeliever self-centred and unsocial."[1] The problem which the unbeliever presents is simple, whatever may be the difficulty of its accomplishment. He must be brought into the Church. But it is the believer with a bad faith who is difficult to manage. He it is who thinks and talks as though "other-worldliness" were the note of a true Christian—"as if his main object should be to get to Heaven after death." This point of view, however, Mr. Headlam points out, is by no means in accord with

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[1] Leaflet entitled "The Guild of St. Matthew: What it is, and who should join it." Issued by the Society, February, 1895.

Christ's life and teachings. "Who, according to Jesus Christ, was the man who was in Hell? It was the rich man who was in Hell; not simply because he was rich, but he was there because he allowed the contrast between rich and poor to go on as a matter of course, day after day, without taking any kind of pains to put a stop to it. That, according to Christ, was the worst state into which it was possible for a man to fall."[1] Christ came as the friend of the poor, and gave no sanction to the teaching that the poor have to put up with their lot here, looking for a great reward hereafter; and that the ministers of Christ should teach the poor to be resigned and submissive, and tell them of the rich reward in the next world. On the contrary, it is the duty of every minister of Christ to stir up a divine discontent in the hearts of the people. But the teaching of Christ went even further. He talked a great deal about the Kingdom of Heaven which He had come to found, and was constantly comparing it with the every-day world around Him. This Kingdom, however, is not, as many suppose, a place up in the clouds. It is a new society and point of view of life here and now. "Live," Christ said . . . "as members of the righteous society which I have come to found upon earth, and then you will be clothed as beautifully as the lily, and fed as surely as the birds."[1] But we have lived on the opposite plan, as rivals and competitors instead of as mutual helpers. To quote Maurice, whom Headlam is following very closely here, we have made competition, not co-operation, the basis of our actions. Mr. Headlam has no co-operative panacea to offer, but he holds out the Church to the working man as the one cure for his social ills.

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[1] "Christian Socialism," by S. D. Headlam, p. 4. (Fabian Tract, No. 42.)

The centre of Christian worship, however, is what Mr. Headlam has come of late years to call the *Mass*. When the second object of the Guild was formulated some years ago, it read: "To promote frequent and reverend worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teaching of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common

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[1] "Christian Socialism," p. 3, by Rev. S. D. Headlam; compare "The Kingdom of Christ," by F. D. Maurice.

Prayer." In explaining this in 1895, Mr. Headlam wrote: "The Mass is the most important Christian service, and the most easily understood. It is ordained by Christ Himself, and must be for that reason the chief centre of Christian worship. . . . It protects against man-made barriers; it brings men to God, and holds them together. As the holy sacrifice, it teaches the democratic lesson that Christ and those who are like Him serve rather than rule; give rather than take. It humbles a man before God and his fellows, and thus drives away cant, hypocrisy, and self-righteousness."[1] But this is capable of an interpretation which might fail to make clear the sacramental attitude of the Guild. The sacrament has a much more definite power, for in it we find the full blessing when it is attended by "people believing in the real Presence."[2] "It is," Mr. Headlam points out, "because in such a service we worship the Present Power in this present world that we differ from a religion which gives men the

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[1] "The Guild of St. Matthew: What it is, and who should join it," p. 2.

[2] "The Catholicity of the English Church," p. 9, by Rev. S. D. Headlam. (London, October, 1898.)

Bible, and tells them to search it for eternal life. We offer a sacramental religion which exalts the man; one whom you can know, and by whom you are attracted, and which says: seeing Him you see God." While openly advocating the restoration of the Mass to what Mr. Headlam believes to be "its proper place in every church in England," he is by no means ready to stop there. The warden says frankly that he believes that the present attack on "Catholic practices" is being made "in order that eventually and by degrees all those who want Catholic doctrine and practice may be forced into submission to the Roman See in order to get it. I hope and believe," he goes on to say, "that we may trust our bishops not thus to play into the hands of the Papacy. It is our right and our duty to foster, among other things to which our enemies object, a reasonable reverence for our Lady, which surely includes the right to speak to her, and the offering of the Holy Sacrifice not only for the living but also for the dead (as was done as far back, at any rate, as the burial of the mother of St. Augustine); what common-sense being can object to these things?"[1] But if Mr. Headlam is somewhat extreme in his own views, he is, at least, equally strenuous in demanding for others the same toleration for their beliefs that he demands for his own.

To those who have read Maurice, it is evident how far this branch of the Christian Socialist Movement has wandered from the fundamental principles of the founders. The only trace of the early movement on its intellectual side is the broad tolerance which always characterised Maurice, and the emphasis on the value of the Church as a much neglected means of help for the working classes. But the Church meant to Maurice something very different from the extreme sacramentalism of Headlam. Much as Maurice hated party tags, he has always been looked up to as the profound thinker of the Broad Church Movement. When Mr. Headlam poses as his disciple and follower, one can only ask wonderingly where in Maurice's teachings such doctrines are to be found.

The third object of the Guild is "To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation." This Mr. Headlam explains as follows:

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[1] "The Catholicity of the English Church," p. 10, by Rev. S. D. Headlam.

"Men must be made to consider social questions; for as God became Man, human life is of divine importance. Christ's Body is still wounded wherever human life is maimed, whether by luxury or poverty. Since all men are God's sons, we are bound to claim equal opportunities for all, and it is evident that the present inequality of opportunity is due to the fact that the three main elements of production, the three instruments for the support of human life—Education, Capital, and Land—are in the possession of the few and beyond the control of the whole people."[1] It is self-evident that the present conditions are built on a system of injustice, and that it cannot be God's will that a few should have far too much and the many lead starved and suffering lives. But men must be roused to appreciate present conditions. The first step is education—and education for duties. This leads to common work, and hence to the common possession of the means of production. But the Guild goes one step further.

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[1] "The Guild of St. Matthew: What it is, and who should join it," p. 2 *seq*.

"Christ," they say, "by precept and example forbade idleness, and therefore the receiving of interest, which is the great modern means of getting money without working for it, and has always been condemned by the Church under the name of usury. . . . We do not necessarily condemn a man for receiving interest, as things are at present, if he gives his labour to the community in return. But we say that it would be to his advantage if he could receive his money in the form of wages earned, and that it would remove the temptation to selfishness, pride, and idleness."[1]

The most important form of interest, however, is in rent for land, especially in cities where value is entirely due to the congestion of population, and in no sense to the labour of the landlord. The solution of the problem lies briefly in the acceptance of Henry George's theory of the Single Tax. Mr. Headlam states clearly that the main cause of the misery and poverty which the Church exists to fight is the monopoly by the few of the land. This burden upon the land forces down the wages of the agricultural labourer until he is driven to the towns to seek a living wage, adds to the already congested labour market, and increases the burden of Christian charity. "We appeal to you," says Mr. Headlam, "with reference to the evils of poverty, not that they may be alleviated by Christian charity, but that they may be prevented by Christian justice."[1] And this justice is to work itself out without compensation to the landlords. For from the point of view of the highest Christian morality, it is the landlords who ought to compensate the people. But in the practical working out of the reform, the landlord will merely be taxed out of existence, *i.e.*, the rate of taxation will be slowly raised until the tax exceeds the net income from the property, when the landlord will be very willing to turn his property over to the State. This, then, is the final answer to the problem of present injustice: a thorough-going socialism worked out along the lines of the Single Tax. Nor are the leaders of the Guild content with mere theory. Mr. Headlam and the other members are active in carrying on the work of the English Land Restoration League, some account of whose work will be given later on.

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[1] "The Guild of St. Matthew: What it is, and who should join it," p. 3.

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[1] "The Guild of St. Matthew: An Appeal to Churchmen," p. 13, by Rev. S. D. Headlam.

The Guild was founded in 1877, and for the first few years of its existence the reports of its work are very meagre. By 1884, however, the work was in full swing. During this year the Guild printed a list of twenty-four lecturers with one hundred and thirty subjects, and at the annual meeting it adopted resolutions which unmistakably proclaimed its socialism. Mr. Headlam, as will be seen from the tenor of the resolutions, had already become an enthusiastic convert to Henry Georgism, and he took up with his usual enthusiasm the theory of Land Nationalisation. The resolutions read:

"That whereas the present contrast between the great body of the workers who produce much and consume little, and of those classes who produce little and consume much is contrary to the Christian doctrines of Brotherhood and Justice; this meeting urges on all Churchmen the duty of supporting such measures as will tend (*a*) to restore to the people the value which they gave to the land; (*b*) to bring about a better distribution of the wealth created by labour; (*c*) to give the whole body of the people a voice in their own government; (*d*) to abolish false standards of worth and dignity."

Translated into the later action of the Guild, these four resolutions meant: The nationalisation of land; the State ownership of the means of production; abolition of Church patronage; and the general social arrangements of the socialist state. During the next year, to use their own phrase, "the Gospel was preached" in Abercam, Folkestone, Liverpool, Northampton, Oldham, Plymouth, Preston, and Wellingborough. Conferences were organised and a big meeting held in the new schools at Oxford. The Guild owned a decent and growing library, and was attracting so much attention to itself that articles on it appeared in the *Australian Kapunda Herald.* When we realise that this activity came from a society which numbered one hundred and twenty-six members, only forty of whom were clergymen, we gain some notion of the enthusiasm of the members and the earnestness of their work.

During the next few years a change was passing over England. The bitterness against the Church began to disappear, and the primary principle of endeavouring to get rid of prejudices against her, which the Guild incorporated in the statement of its first object, was no longer the best means of bringing the working classes back to their allegiance to the Church. On the other hand, certain phases of socialism gained a firm hold on the imagination of the more intelligent among the people. The Hyde Park Sunday afternoon orator no longer exposed the geological weaknesses of the first chapters of Genesis. But the questions of State interference and the "Living Wage" taxed his lungs to their uttermost. The warfare against atheism which the Guild was waging had become almost a personal struggle against its two chief exponents, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant. Just at that time, 1891, Mr. Bradlaugh died, and Mrs. Besant gave up everything to devote herself to Theosophy. "And so," said the *Church Reformer*, "Secularism in England loses its two chiefest champions, and the Guild of St. Matthew two generous opponents."[1] The Guild now, therefore, shifted the ground of its attack, and held itself ready to furnish lecturers to any club or society which held lectures for discussion on religious and social questions. The growth of the society began to produce the inevitable weakness which comes from the lack of close personal knowledge between the members, and the plan was adopted of organising local branches to bring the members closer together.

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[1] *Church Reformer*, October, 1891, p. 232. This paper, as long as it continued publication, was the organ of the Guild.

The annual meeting was one of the stormiest in the history of the Guild. The Guild was accustomed to take action on burning questions of the day, and some years before had supported Mr. Bradlaugh in his controversy over the question of his Parliamentary Oath. The school-board elections were just about to take place, and, in accordance with this precedent, Mr. Headlam introduced into the meeting a manifesto in favour of the board schools. Party feeling was running high, and Mr. Headlam's manifesto was certainly an extreme partisan document. He announced the superiority of the Board School system, with its municipal management, to the Voluntary Schools, where arithmetic must be taught under the supervision of the clergy. He pointed out that it was the duty of the Church, as such, not of the secular schools, to teach sound doctrine to the children of the parish, and ended by calling on the parishes to give up their Voluntary Schools into the hands of the school board. His position was perfectly logical; but so was that of the High Churchman who opposed him, and who argued that if religion were the most important thing to be taught, the day school was the place, and that therefore the day school must be under the parish control. One very prominent London clergyman who opposed said in closing: "If you care to press it against the protests of your brethren, you will carry it, of course. But I will venture to predict that you will regret your victory when you see where it leads."[1] Nevertheless, Mr. Headlam insisted on pressing his vote, and forced the Guild to accept his manifesto.

This incident is more or less typical of the greatest element of weakness in the Guild, and explains why the Guild of St. Matthew, which is in a way the expression of a growing English sentiment, has never had a larger membership, and why a new society formed along much the same lines has already far surpassed it in numbers and influence.

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[1] *Church Reformer*, October, 1891, p. 234.

Another mistake which the Guild has made is in allowing itself to be identified with the particular political party to which its leaders happened to belong. At one time the South London group held a meeting to consider the coming London school-board election, and, having decided to support the Progressive candidate, adjourned in a body to the neighbouring hall, where their candidate was holding a public meeting. Such action naturally limits the membership to those who hold the same political creed as well as the same social theories.

The annual report for 1892 showed that most of the activity of the Guild had been spent on the election campaigns. The old struggle against secularism, which had ended with the death of Charles Bradlaugh, seemed to deprive the Guild of its *raison d'etre* as an organisation with a special work of its own to do. As the annual report for this year pointed out, " the principles for which the Guild has contended for fifteen years seemed to be making quiet but steady progress on every hand, and subjects which the Guild had at first stood almost alone in discussing were now a regular part of every Church congress and diocesan conference."

The chief manifesto of the year was on Clerical Appointment and Tenure, followed by a petition to the House of Lords, urging the importance of allowing clerical appointments to be influenced, if not directly controlled, by popular election.

In 1893 a distinct effort was made to increase the membership. The fee had been reduced from 4s. to 1s., and the Council issued suggestions as to the best means of increasing the membership. The result was that the membership list showed a somewhat larger increase than usual (48), but the total was still only 333.

True to its policy of taking definite action on prominent questions, the Bristol branch supported the miners in their strike during 1894, and made distinct corporate efforts to raise funds for them. Following the same policy, two amendments to Object III. of the Guild were offered at the annual meeting. The first amendmement read: "To Promote the Study and Treatment of Social and Political

Questions in the Light of the Incarnation."[1] It was felt that after seventeen years of study, the Guild should be in a position to recommend action as well as to continue study. The other amendment would have made the Object read so as to favour such reforms as should tend to bring about the organisation of the nation on a socialist (or collectivist) basis. It is surprising that the Guild should have preferred the first of these amendments to the more definite declaration in favour of socialism. No doubt the decision was largely influenced by the warden, but it is more or less indicative of the present attitude of this group of Christian Socialists toward economic socialism that so many of them seemed to agree with the warden, who said only a year or two later: "If Socialism aims by gradual drastic legislation at getting the means of production into the hands of the people, with a view to the abolition of monopoly and the offering to all an opportunity to live a full, free life, then we are as we always have been—socialists, and socialists who claim that socialism is Christian. But it is well, I think, that we have never put the name into our rules;

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[1] *Church Reformer*, October, 1893, p. 234.

for the name just at present seems to be misleading and confusing both to friend and foe alike."[1]

Up to 1895 most of the dissatisfied members had withdrawn and identified themselves with the larger Christian Social Union. In this year there was renewed dissatisfaction expressed with the policy of the warden, and another large defection followed. Nevertheless, the annual report for 1895 showed the largest total membership the Guild has ever reached: 364, of whom 99 were in orders. The resignations, however, showed a serious loss in real vitality to the Guild.

During the next three years the activities of the Guild continued along the same lines, with lectures on social and economic questions, which always emphasised the land question as fundamental. The twenty-second annual report, however (1899), complains that "the work of the Guild has suffered somewhat during the past year from general causes, which seem to have already affected all branches of the social movement, the general briskness of trade being certainly one of them. But it has also especially suffered from the fact that Churchmen, to whom it especially appeals, have had their interest largely diverted from social questions by the necessity of defending the Church against attack; and from the serious illness of the Warden during several months of the past year. This, and in a lesser degree the illness of the Secretary in the spring, has greatly diminished the lecturing activities of the last twelve months."[1]

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[1] *Church Reformer*, October, 1895, p. 219.

This year saw a continuance of the struggle against so-called Catholic practices. A few laymen attempted to bring on a crisis by publicly protesting against certain usages in the service which were, they claimed, contrary to the rules of the Church. In the autumn the council called special attention to two resolutions which had been passed at the last two annual meetings. The first affirmed the present attack on the Catholicity of the English Church to be subversive of every true principle of Liberalism; the second deplored the attempt "arbitrarily to deprive the laity of their just rights to full Catholic worship, without giving them a voice in the matter,"[1] and asserted that the manufacturing of the Church crisis tended to divert the attention of the faithful Churchmen from the pressing social reforms.

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[1] "Occasional Paper of the Guild of St. Matthew," No. 15, page 5.

The South African war began soon after the annual meeting in 1899, and the next year showed a decline in the number of lectures and in the membership. The year after (1900-1901) the work suffered from the same cause, but the elections of this year gave the Guild an opportunity again to enter the field of politics. Two manifestoes were issued: one for the general election, and one for the County Council election of 1901. Both manifestoes urged upon the voters the importance of exercising their right to go to the polls; but the one issued for the general election and addressed "To Those who Labour," is quoted in full, for it brings out most clearly the attitude of the Guild towards the questions of the day:

"There are many questions besides the future of South Africa which by your votes you will help to settle. But there is one which, as electors, you should refuse once and for all to touch. You should emphatically say that it is not your business to settle what should be your neighbour's religion, or how he shall conduct his worship. Whether you like his religion or dislike it, or are indifferent about it, you, in accordance with the best traditions of English life, must make up your mind to tolerate it. To call upon Parliament to regulate it in accordance with your own wishes would be not only to waste the time of Parliament, but would violate every Liberal principle. Of course it is within the power of Parliament to legislate as to how you shall worship; but we urge that all such legislation is inexpedient. First, because it will occupy the time which ought to be spent on matters which Parliament can advantageously deal with; second, because such legislation used against one set of men to-day can be used against another to-morrow.

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[1] "Occasional Paper of the Guild of St. Matthew," No. 15, p. 7.

"There are questions of social reform demanding urgent attention: the taxation of land values, better housing, old age pensions, drink monopoly, we single out among many as the most important. There are men who ignore these matters which Parliament can rightly deal with, but who would occupy the time of Parliament with questions of religion and of worship, which can never be satisfactorily settled by law, and force, the agent of law. Religion is not one of those things which can conveniently be socialised."[1]

The twenty-fourth annual report issued in September, 1901, dwelt again on the general apathy and hopelessness among social reforms owing to the distractions of the continued hostilities in South Africa. The membership for the year dropped to 283, of whom 90 were in orders.

It is hardly possible to close the story of this phase of Christian Socialism without giving a brief account of the work of the English Land Restoration League. The League is in no way affiliated with the Guild of St. Matthew, nor do its members, as members of this society, express any belief in Christian Socialism. But its work is the practical expression of what the Guild of St. Matthew has over and over again affirmed as its fundamental society theory, and many of the founders and active members of the League were, and still are, members of the Guild of St. Matthew.

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[1] "Guild of St. Matthew—Occasional Paper," No. 21, February, 1901, p. 4.

The study of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" first led, in 1883, to the formation of the society now known as the English Land Restoration League. Its purpose was to advance in every way Henry George's theory of the Single Tax, or, as Mr. Headlam expressed it, not to kick the landlords out nor to buy them out, but to tax them out. The work of the League was largely confined to London and to the formation of a Scottish branch until 1891, when the first attack was made on the rural districts by means of the "Red Vans." "The rural lectures," says the 1895 Report, "are carried on in large vehicles, painted red, and analogous to those of the travelling circuses. Each spring the Red Vans follow the demonstration of the working-class organisations, which takes place on the first Sunday in May, to Hyde Park. Afterwards they set out into the country to make their tour, which lasts through the whole of the fine season. As soon as one of these vans arrives in a village, the propagandists who are with it announce a meeting round the van for eight o'clock in the evening. During the day they go among the houses, and, guided by printed papers of questions, collect all the information possible about the condition of the peasants. Sometimes they photograph the most wretched of the dwellings. Everywhere they leave the manifestoes of the League, propagandist leaflets, cartoons in which the idea of the single tax is interpreted in a form comprehensive to the simple and unlettered—they distribute them even to the children who are coming out of school. Frequently the landlord or his agent tries to prevent the van from taking up its stand. Altercations and disputes follow which now and then come to a conclusion before the magistrates. Sometimes the opposition is less brutal; it is represented by some members of the Liberty and Property Defence League, which is subsidised by a syndicate of big landlords, and which claims Herbert Spencer for its intellectual patron."[1]

This account of the Red Vans is taken from an account quoted in the 1895 Report, and shows the method by which the League worked to stir up the agricultural labourer to take a hand in working out his own salvation. The lecturers pointed out the great blessings which the single tax would confer on the agricultural community, but the landlord was attacked with pictorial satire of which the cover to the 1895 Report is a fair example. Here the landlord is represented struggling to clasp a very large globe in his arms with the legend attached, "The earth is the (land)lord's and the fulness thereof." For a few years four or five hundred meetings were held each year all over England, but the 1901 Report of the League says the character of the work of the League has changed in the ten years since the vans were established, and that the special funds provided for this work are practically exhausted. It seems probable therefore that most of the work of the League, for the present at least, will be largely confined to the towns where the discussion of the housing problem offers an especial opportunity for the exposition of the primary object of the League —"The Restitution of the Land to the People."

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[1] "English Land Restoration League: Report of the Red Vans for 1895," p. 1.

It is quite impossible to measure the influence of a society like the English Land Restoration

League, which confines its activities largely to propagandist work in the form of leaflets and lectures. Nor is this the proper place for such an estimate. The work is described here because it is the direct practical expression of one of the theories of the Guild of St. Matthew. But the English Land Restoration League, as such, makes no claim to being a part of the Christian Socialist movement, and many of its members would no doubt indignantly repudiate any such association, were an attempt made to fasten it upon them.

CHAPTER V

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION

I

Plan of Organisation—Governing Bodies—Membership —Oxford Branch—London Branch

DEMOCRACY, says De Tocqueville, finds in religion the only check to its craving for material comforts. The passion for equality, common to all democratic communities, tends to satisfy itself first of all with an equality of outward conditions, so that worship of material success arises which is so fatal to higher spiritual development.

It is a commonplace of history that the democratisation of England during the past century has gone on with ever-increasing speed. Nor is the cause far to seek. The growth of industry has developed a new class of moneyed aristocracy which has made itself felt by a vigorous dictation of important legislation for its own interest, and at the same time it has insisted on the social recognition of its material success. The colonists have helped the spread of English commodities. Finally, the labouring classes have shared the general prosperity, and have flocked to the towns, where, even within the past thirty years, Mr. Hobson tells us, the rise in wages has been nearly 40 per cent.

Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that England has been severely threatened with the Mammon-worship, against which Carlyle warned her half a century ago. If the measure of success is to be represented by "cash-nexus," a deep, true spiritual development is impossible, and religion becomes a series of prohibitions, whose highest ideal is summed up in the phrase, "Thou shalt not." Added to this is the fact which the Bishop of Worcester points out, that "the disastrous identification of Church and State"[1] has tended to give people the comfortable feeling that the civil and criminal law represents the full extent of their Christian duties. But Christ's religion is not negative.

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[1] "The Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount," pp. 6 and 16, by Bishop Charles Gore.

It is a positive active force, which insists that men shall be led to right thinking through right acting, and makes a man learn to love his neighbour as himself. We forget that Christ demands not conduct merely, but character, and that "character is formed rather by what we do than by what we refrain from doing."[1] As a result of the conviction on the part of a growing body of men in the English Church that the time had come to claim for Christianity all the activities of life, to set before people this positive form of religion, the Christian Social Union was formed.

Certainly, socialism is in the air, beginning in England at the dawn of the twentieth century—not the economic socialism of the Continent, but an ethical socialism which conforms much more nearly to the theories of Maurice than to those of Karl Marx. Within the Church of England, and especially among a certain group of High Churchmen, this type of socialism has taken an especial hold. But to avoid false impressions, one must know what socialism means to those in the Church of England who talk most about it.

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[1] "The Christian Law," p. 14, by Rev. B. F. Westcott.

There is first of all a small but strong group who accept the State Socialism of the Fabian Society, and attempt to reconcile it with their Christianity. But even the Fabians are less strictly scientific and are much more opportunist than the Social Democracy in Germany. By far the larger part of the members of the Christian Social Union, however, are by no means ready to go so far. For them the definition given by the Bishop of Manchester in his report to the Lambeth Conference of 1888 is more satisfactory. He says: "The conference defines Socialism as any scheme which aims at uniting labour and the instruments of labour (land and capital), whether by means of the State, or of the help of the rich, or of the voluntary co-operation of the poor." This suggests at once Maurice's ideal of self-governing co-operative workshops. The debt to Maurice, however, becomes still more apparent in the definition of socialism given by the Bishop of Durham in his address to the Church Congress at Hull in 1890. Used, apart from its historical associations, to describe a theory of life, he says that "Socialism is the opposite of Individualism, and it is by contrast with Individualism that the true character of Socialism can best be discerned. Individualism and Socialism correspond with opposite views of humanity. Individualism regards humanity as made up of disconnected or warring atoms; Socialism regards it as an organic whole, a vital unity formed by the combination of contributory members mutually interdependent. It follows that Socialism differs from Individualism both in method and aim. The method of Socialism is co-operation; the method of Individualism is competition.[1] This definition, the closing part of which is taken directly from Maurice,[2] is broad enough to take in almost all who are willing to recognise their social responsibility. It has been the policy of the Christian Social Union to avoid hard and fast lines, and to treat all subjects with the greatest breadth; and this is perhaps one reason why it is so successful in uniting members of the different parties in the Church in its membership and making them work harmoniously together.

The Christian Social Union met, too, the demand of a strong body of young clergymen, who, as a result of working among the poor in individual parishes, had waked up to the fact that the Church had a social responsibility, and it was founded at a time when a feeling of dissatisfaction was making itself felt among some of the High Churchmen with the results of their activity, which had tended to expend its force in a multiplicity of church services,[1] and offered a more satisfactory work than they had been engaged in.

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[1] "Socialism," pp. 3, 4, by Rt. Rev. B. F. Westcott. A paper read at the Church Congress in Hull, 1890; published by the Guild of St. Matthew.

[2] "Christian Socialism," p. 4, by Maurice.

Before describing the organisation of the Union, the current criticisms upon it can hardly be passed over in silence, because they occupy so much space and seem to carry weight with an exceptionally large number. The usual form which criticism takes is that the clergy are bound by their ordination vows to be religious experts, and they had much better leave social and economic questions to the social expert. It is hardly worth while discussing whether religion does not include an intelligent interest in this world as well as in the next, for the judgment of the great majority of people nowadays clearly forces these questions within the realms of church work. Entirely aside, however, from the question of the popular judgment, these critics forget for the moment that one of the clergy's ordination vows is obedience to their superiors in the Church. Let us see what the bishops say about interest in the social problem.

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[1] See Bishop Gore, "Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount," p. 30.

In the special report on socialism presented to the Lambeth Conference by the Bishop of Manchester,[1] he says that the Church may do much by requiring some knowledge of economic science from her candidates for orders. . . . "The clergy may enter into friendly relations with socialists, attending, when possible, their club meetings, and trying to understand their aims and methods."

The late Archbishop of Canterbury in much the same vein says in his Encyclical Letter: "No more important problem can well occupy the attention—whether of clergy or laity—than such as are connected with what is popularly called Socialism."[1] In a book which he published in 1886, he speaks still more plainly as to the duty of the clergy to study and to take part in the social movement. Speaking of the suffering populations, he says: "To study, to think out, to keep before the minds of his own people the principles and the agencies by which lasting amelioration, with interim help, may be effected, is becoming a first duty of the clergyman." He goes on to say that "No young man can be considered as fully equipped for ordination until he has some knowledge of these subjects."[2] So far from feeling that these things lie beyond the scope of the clergyman's work, the Primate considered that one great work of the clergy is in "preparing public opinion to suggest and support the best and wisest social measures."[3]

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[1] "Encyclical Letter from the Bishops, with Resolutions and Reports of the Pan-Anglican Conference at Lambeth," 1888, p. 56. Published by S.P.C.K., London, 1888.

It was acting in the spirit of this council that a small group of men in the summer of 1889 formed the Christian Social Union. During Lent, 1889, the Rev. Wilford Richmond gave four lectures at Sion College, London, on "Economic Morals." They were intensely direct, and at the end of the course it was decided to form a society to influence public opinion on matters connected with practical every-day life. A list was started, which was unfortunately lost, but in the summer Rev. Canon Scott-Holland called a few of the most interested together, and the three rules of the society were formulated. These read as follows:

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[1] "Encyclical Letter from the Bishops, with Resolutions and Reports of the Pan-Anglican Conference at Lambeth," 1888, p. 10.

[2] "Christ and His Times," pp. 72, 73, by Archbishop Benson.

[3] "Christ and His Times," p. 79, by Archbishop Benson.

"This Union consists of members of the Church of England who have the following objects at heart:

"1. To claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.

"2. To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.

"3. To present Christ in practical life as the Living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love.

"Members are expected to pray for the well-being of the Union at Holy Communion, more particularly on or about the following days:

"The Feast of Epiphany.
"The Feast of Ascension.
"The Feast of St. Michael and All Angels."

A comparison of these objects with those of the Guild of St. Matthew shows at once the difference between the two societies. The central point of the Guild of St. Matthew is the Church, and the main purpose of the Guild, as seen through its three objects, is to bring outsiders within her influence, and to make those already in more obedient to her authority. The spirit of opposition to the Church, which these rules were meant to overcome, had, however, largely disappeared in 1889, and we find the central object of the Christian Social Union is the application of the Christian teaching to life, and, first of all, a careful study of the problems to be met.

The membership is limited to members of

the Church of England, or any body in full communion with her. It is to some a matter of regret that Dissenters are entirely excluded from a society founded on the principle of the "Christian Law"—on the fundamental notion that the road to right thinking lies through right acting. But the Christian Social Union claims no exclusive right to the ideas it promulgates. It would gladly see similar societies founded in other bodies outside of the Church of England. The reasons for limiting the membership in this way are clearly explained in a paper addressed by the Oxford Branch to the Christian Social Union in the United States of America. Three reasons were advanced: (1) That Churchmen would make a body quite large enough to handle if corporate opinion were ever to be formed; (2) That it was highly undesirable that fundamental theological differences should continually be cropping up in private discussion of ways and means; (3) "But far more impressive was the feeling of loyalty to, and confidence in, the Divine idea of the Church." . . . A society "expressing its faith in the creed of undivided Christendom, and deriving its vitality from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, assured to us through due administration of the Divine Sacraments."

The constitution of the Christian Social Union provides for a central council which shall be the governing body. This council consists of delegates elected annually by the branches in the ratio of one for every twenty-five members. No branch may send more than four delegates, but plurality voting is allowed, so that each set of delegates has one vote for every twenty-five members in the branch. The Executive is the real governing body. This is elected annually by the council, and consists of four officers (chairman, treasurer, librarian, secretary), to retire at the annual meeting; and of fifteen other members, five of whom are to retire at the annual meeting in rotation. All members of the committee are eligible for re-election. The powers of the Executive, as defined by the constitution, are: (1) "To call general meetings of the Union; (2) To issue literature in the name of the Union; (3) To publish statements expressing the general opinion of the Union, or to organise public meetings, provided that two-thirds of the whole Executive approve; and (4) To perform any other duties delegated to it by the council."

The branches represent the working entities of the society, and are independent of the central Executive in all matters concerning their private action. Twenty-five members may form an independent branch, and may have their own rules in regard to subscriptions and methods. They must, however, send an annual report to the central Executive, and are liable to an assessment to meet the general expenses. In matters of public action it has been found necessary to make strict regulations. The leaders of the society constantly emphasise the fact that the main purpose of the Union is for study, and that as the Christian Social Union, "as a whole, has only begun to form a corporate opinion," it would be folly to attempt any definite expression of the sentiment of the society. Nevertheless, it was necessary in 1896 to issue a special circular to warn a few over-zealous members that they were not entitled to use the name of the society in political campaigns, or to express its "corporate opinion" to reporters of the daily press.

The growth of the society has been remarkable

The Oxford Branch was the first formed (November, 1889), and its list of members published in the winter of 1890 showed a total membership of 77. The London Branch was formed in the following year, and its list of members, published in September, 1891, shows a total membership of 124. In this year affiliated branches begin to appear in the lists, and by 1893 the total membership of all the branches was 1,204. The first of January, 1896, the membership was estimated at nearly 3,000. The last annual report showed thirty-five branches with a total membership well over 4,000, and affiliated societies in New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America.

The two main branches are the Oxford University Branch and the London Branch. The Oxford University Branch, sometimes called the "Dilettante Branch," finds its active membership largely among the undergraduates, and, compared with the London Branch, its activity is naturally decidedly limited. It is supposed to be much less socialistic than the London Branch; so much so that the story is told of several members who declined to join the London Branch, but allied themselves with the Oxford end of the Union. Several of the independent branches have also affiliated themselves with the Oxford Branch, because by this means they are entitled to receive the pamphlets and leaflets, which this branch issues from year to year in much larger quantities than any of the other branches. In fact, the Oxford Branch may be roughly described as the thinking part as opposed to the London Branch, which would be more representative of the acting part of the Union. The main work of this Oxford University Branch lies in studying special social subjects. Three meetings are held during the term, at each of which a paper is read, followed by discussion. At the end of the term a four-page leaflet is published, giving a summary of the argument, with books of reference under the several heads as an encouragement to further study. These private meetings are, as a rule, well attended, sometimes seventy or eighty of the undergraduate members being present. They began with an exhaustive study of Schaffle's Quintessence of Socialism, and since then have discussed such subjects as Factories and Workshops, Poor Law Administration, Methods of Promoting Temperance, The Agricultural Labourer, Methods of Dealing with the Unemployed, Shorter Hours for Work, Trades Unions, The Church and Democracy, etc. They have issued several pamphlets, over thirty leaflets, and are now, in 1903, issuing the thirteenth volume of the *Economic Review*, a quarterly of considerable merit, which represents the best thought of the Christian Socialists.

The London Branch is in the midst of the active problems of social life. Several of the prominent members are allied with political bodies, and one of the leaders has been a member of the Executive of the Fabian Society. They began public meetings and the enrolment of names in 1890, but the corporate existence really began in the autumn of 1891. The first annual report emphasised the importance of the study of social and economic questions as the main work of the Union. But the membership soon became so large that there was danger that the personal element might be entirely neglected. Partly to help, therefore, to make this study a reality for so large a body, London was divided into a number of districts, each of which had its local "group." Each group has its own organisation for purposes of study, but the London Branch as a whole holds at stated periods central meetings at which lectures are given, followed by a discussion. Some of the subjects discussed during the past years are: The Poor Law, Old and New, by Mr. Graham Wallas; London School Board Election, by Canon Scott-Holland; Industrial Legislation, by Mrs. H. J. Tennant (late H. M. Superintending Lady Inspector of Factories); The Native Labour Question in South Africa, by Mr. J. A. Hobson; The Public House Trust, by Earl Grey. These central meetings are, too, the official meetings of the branch, and here new members are elected, and private business is transacted.

In addition to the groups and branches, a new rule was passed in 1895 allowing parochial guilds and other local societies to be affiliated to the London Branch on payment of a fee of 2s. 6d. per annum. Such affiliated societies forward a full list of members to the secretary, and pay a fee of 2d. for each member. The secretary, or other official, must be a full member of the Christian Social Union. The object of this regulation was to extend the influence of the Union among parishes whose members could not afford the usual subscription of 2s. 6d.

II.

Thought Basis — Socialism Defined — The Christian Law—Its Application to Life.

The constant assertion of the Christian Social Union that they are not yet ready to express a corporate opinion makes it difficult to give a definite statement of their theories; they have, however, authorised six publications as "officially recognised by the Council on behalf of all the Branches as expressing the general principles of the Christian Social Union."[1] The following statement of their theories is based on these six publications.

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[1] These are: (1) "The Ground of Our Appeal," (published also under the title of "The Christian Social Union,") by Canon H. Scott-Holland; (2) "The Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount," by Right Rev. Charles Gore; (3) "The Christian Social Union," by Right Rev. B. F. Westcott; (4) "Socialism," a paper read at the Church Congress in Hull, 1890, by Right Rev. B. F. Westcott; (5) "The Christian Law," by Right Rev. B. F. Westcott; (6) The main body of

Socialism, as already defined by the Bishop of Durham, is the opposite of Individualism, and is merely a general assertion that "the goal of human endeavour is the common well-being of all alike, sought through conditions which provide for the fullest culture of each man, as opposed to the special development of a race or a class.[1] This, however, is nothing more than the assertion of the widest Christian principle, and even those who quarrel with the right to call this socialism would probably admit the value of the ethical principle. It is, however, in the method of applying this principle to human society that the Christian Social Union finds its distinctive work—a work which it sums up in its fundamental principle "to claim for Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice." But what is Christian Law?

Christ left no code of commandments, and the best summary of his ethical teaching—the Sermon on the Mount—is largely a statement of general principles. He set up an ideal and

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the preface to "Lombard Street in Lent," from p. viii., "The Popular Misconception," etc. . . . to p. xiii., "The Crown of the Past."

[1] "Socialism," page 5.

left the Church, which he promised to guide into all Truth, to settle for each particular age its own casuistry. "The Christian Law, then, is the embodiment of the Truth for action in forms answering to the conditions of society from age to age."[1] This definition makes the error of the Roman Catholic casuistry impossible. For while the embodiment takes place slowly, we can never "rest indolently in the conclusions of the past." Every new problem demands a new answer.

Herein lies its essential differentiation from economic law. "Economic laws are generalisations from the conduct of average men at particular times and places under a particular aspect."[2] They are, in fact, a statement of what is. But Christian Law faces the problem with an ethical standard. It recognises what is, merely to measure it by what ought to be, by what, to the follower of Christ, must be his law.

1. The attempt to apply the Christian Law to the common facts of every-day life first calls the attention of the Christian Socialist

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[1] "Christian Law," p. 3.

[2] "Christian Social Union," p. 7, by B. F. Westcott,

to the truth in that insistence with which the socialist emphasises the influence of surroundings in the development of character. But to the Christian Socialist environment is not a fundamental cause. It is merely one factor in the influences which must be brought to bear on the individual character. The well-being of a nation is measured, not by its material wealth, but by the character of its citizens. "Material advantages, apart from the corresponding intellectual and moral qualifications, are no blessing. They cannot be kept or won, unless men are themselves to match."[1]

But while "we do not believe that the happiest physical environment can regenerate men, we do believe that physical misery tends to imbrute them, and that, even if they escape the degradation, it is contrary to the will of God. The neglect of Lazarus by his rich neighbour was not less condemned because Lazarus was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom."[2] Conversely, it is true that certain physical conditions are favourable to a generous character. We do not trust to legislation, but we recognise that it has its place in social reform. The weakness of legislative method is that people make the mistake of beginning with it. Laws, however, are the embodiment of public opinion, not the guide; and legislation should be the last, not the first, step in the redressing of social evils. It is no doubt true that "Just laws are an elementary lesson in righteousness;"[1] nevertheless, the experience of states which have tried to enforce laws against the sentiment of the community should teach us that to make the lesson effective for the few, the many must already have learned it.

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[1] "Christian Social Union," p. 10, by B. F. Westcott.

[2] "Christian Law," p. 12.

But when we approach the question of reform from the side of character, there is but one way to prepare the hearts of the people, and that is through the religion of Jesus Christ. The old-fashioned Protestantism laid the emphasis on the death of Christ as a sacrifice for our sins. Maurice first pointed out effectively that the Incarnation was the central point of Christian history. The purpose of the Incarnation is to show humanity the possibilities of man. It is a "Revelation of human duties," and, at the same time, of the worth of the individual. Christ has become man. Henceforth humanity can find its goal only in complete union with the Divine. And this is the ideal, not for a chosen few, but for the race, for through our common bond of humanity we all share in the common brotherhood.

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[1] "Christian Law," p. 13.

It is, however, in the means which Christ takes to accomplish this fulfilment of the ideal of humanity that his uniqueness consists. All systems of philosophy and learning are cast aside. He lives absolutely the life of service. When he says to his disciples, "Let him that would be greatest among you serve," he stood before them as an object lesson, and overcame the temptation to rule the kingdoms of the world with a "Get thee behind me, Satan." He had come to teach men the Christian paradox that he that seeketh his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for the sake of Christ and his fellow-men shall find it. He showed us that the one gift we must bring is ourselves. We cannot, like the hero in Sudermann's popular German novel, free ourselves from the cares of this world by the easy process of burning our houses and barns. The follower of Christ cannot avoid the sense of responsibility by shirking his duties. He must meet his responsibilities like a man and fulfil them. Property, friends—even life itself—all are a burden until he comes to regard them as a sacred trust to be administered in God's name for the service of humanity. "The redemption of society is through the sacrifice of self. The Incarnation reveals the ideal of creation"; but "the passion reveals the way in which the ideal must be attained."[1]

2. Herein lies the reconciliation of the strife between individualism and socialism. The individual has true worth in himself, but he can hope to realise his true self only in the service of society. Even as the muscles of the body grow by waste and repair of tissue, so the individual grows by spending himself for others, and finds in the very process that he has, by the strange paradox of Divine law, become stronger by giving of his strength. It is then, in the last resort, the individual which is of supreme

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[1] "Christian Social Union," p. 12.

importance. But for his development proper social conditions are necessary. Each reaches his full stature only when he casts all thought of self aside and works for all. This is the society of which Maurice dreamed: the state where brotherliness reigns and co-operation has succeeded competition.

3. The realisation of this ideal involves the recognition of a double set of obligations: the (A) personal; (B) the public duties. But to feel what these obligations rest on, man must acknowledge the fundamental notion of the Fatherhood of God. The first social principle is that of sonship, for, as Maurice so finely said, "There can be no fraternity without a common Father."

(A) The three great obligations which the Christian must face are:

(*a*) Brotherhood, or, as Maurice called it, co-operation. This is the principle of social interdependence which is the basis of the social scheme of the early Christian Socialists. And the Christian Socialist of to-day is quite ready to accept the principle to the full. The Bishop of Worcester says in one of the official pamphlets of the Union:

"The Church must carry this principle into all its transactions. It must be in the fullest sense of the word spiritually and physically a profit-sharing company."[1]

(*b*) Justice, which is a necessary result of Brotherliness. Justice means not equality of position but equality of opportunity for all. Translated into modern economic conditions, it means a fair living wage and improved social conditions for the working classes. From the Christian point of view, it is not at present even approximately realised in what we call Christian society.

(*c*) Trust in God. In the state where Justice and Brotherliness reign, man can have perfect confidence in God. "God will provide for him as for the birds of the air and the flowers of the field. Now the birds and the plants accumulate to-day the resources which are to serve them hereafter. The birds could not hatch their eggs if they had not in due time previously built their nests. The flowers could not bring forth their bloom if they had not been accumulating their resources long before.

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[1] Gore, "Social Doctrine," etc., p. 25.

But all this takes place without anxiety. Granted the fulfilling of function day by day, God will provide."[1]

(B) But to express these principles in our daily lives involves a clear understanding of our public duties. The Christian Social Union disclaims any attempt as yet to formulate a corporate opinion, but on certain elementary principles it has inevitably spoken already in no uncertain voice. For just as the scholar who never uses his learning loses by-and-by his power of acquisition, so he who never applies his private theories of individual development for the advancement of his brother man loses the power to develop stronger and more helpful ideals. Never was there a time when so many problems clamoured for solution; never was the practical scholar in more demand. And the answer must come from men who live as well as study; for we have at least learned that "New questions cannot be settled by tradition."

(*a*) Education[2] is the first problem that faces us on the threshold of life. The object of

[1] Gore, "Sermon on the Mount," p. 23.

[2] See address by the late Bishop of Durham: "The True Aims and Methods of Education," Bristol, 1896.

education is to train us for life, not for some special occupation. It must, therefore, quicken and arouse the mind, and strive to make knowledge "a growth, and not a vestment." This does not imply a disregard of the splendid inheritance of the past, but it does put a great responsibility on the teacher, for education of this type is a spiritual relationship. "The personal element in it is supreme," and its noblest fruit is character. Now character in its early formative period finds its ideals in other lives, either in personal contact or in literature. "The influence upon our working classes—to go no further—of the highest literature is hardly appreciable." The ideals of the average man to-day tend to reduce all life to a competitive commercial basis. "In some classes competition threatens to invade the nursery, and in others education is habitually regarded simply as a preparation for the individual conflict. The members of the Christian Social Union have a work here, for 'We believe that we live, so far as we truly live, by admiration, hope and love.' If the scope of education is narrowed to a mere industrial training, a disastrous deterioration of public and private spirit must follow. The Union has, then, here a definite educational problem to solve, for once "agreed on the aim of the work, the proper method for attaining it will soon and surely be determined."

(*b*) It is almost unnecessary to say that in the opinion of a religious movement like the New Christian Socialism, the marriage law, as the basis of the family relations, if for no higher reasons, must remain sacred. Those who suspect the Christian Socialists of leaning towards that communal life, which some socialists advocate, should read Canon Scott-Holland's sermon on "Marriage Laws,"[1] where he maintains that a true socialism means the strengthening of the marriage bond.

(*c*) Would Christianity abolish private property? This question is one of the first which is asked of any system which calls itself socialistic. In connection with the Christian Social Union it is rendered especially difficult to deal with, because Mr. Headlam has confused many people by his assertion that Land Nationalisation is a necessary corollary of

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[1] See "Lombard Street in Lent," sermon "Marriage Laws," by Canon H. Scott-Holland.

Christian Socialism. It is useless to discuss what Maurice would have said if he could have read Henry George, and have seen the problem under its present-day conditions. The fact remains that Maurice never questioned the right of private property so long as the owner realised his social responsibility, and the majority of the members of the Christian Social Union would undoubtedly agree with this to-day. The Union has given no official utterance on the subject of property, but a sermon and notes from a lecture on the subject have been printed.[1] From these it seems fair to infer that the Union would sanction the sacredness of property while placing it under stern limitations. "But there is a difference between the rights of property and the absolute rights of property. Christianity believes in the rights of property, but it disbelieves altogether in any absolute right."[2] The good of the individual and the right to use his property must always be limited by the good of society. The answer to any particular question must be met when the question arises, but in general it is fair to infer that any special question would be dealt with on a utilitarian basis with a view to the greatest good of the greatest number.

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[1] See "Lombard Street in Lent," sermon by Rev. R. L. Ottley. "The Ethics of Property"; also "Notes on a Lecture on Christianity and Property," by Bishop of Worcester, in the *Economic Review*, July, 1896, p. 391.

[2] *Economic Review*, July, 1896, p. 395.

(*d*) Industrial conditions have been completely revolutionised during the present century. On the side of production the rise of the great industries has produced a new set of problems, especially in the relation of the employer and the employed. When the factory seldom employed more than two or three hundred men, a direct personal relation between the master and his employees, in the best shops, was the natural result. But with the present enormous growth of industry, where one corporation often employs thousands, this personal relation has become impossible. The trades unions have done much to fill this gap in direct personal oversight, and in the distribution of sick benefit and out-of-work pay. But the present abstract relation of a corporation, probably with the officers in a distant city, dealing with the union as a body instead of with individuals, as in the earlier simpler days, tends to rouse a spirit of antagonism, which calls for a strong application of the spirit of Christian brotherliness to overcome.

On the side of consumption the field of inquiry is almost undeveloped. The responsibility of the individual as a purchaser is just beginning to be realised. Who stops to think what the passion for "bargains" costs in long hours and reduced wages; or who cares what the caprices of fashion means to the labourer in loss of work and uncertainty of pay? The policy of "preferential dealing" is the first step of the Christian Social Union to meet one phase of this problem. By this system lists in each large town are prepared of such employers as are known to observe certain rules as to hours of labour, wages, etc., for their employees. The hope is in this way to encourage by increased patronage such establishments as are known to treat their employees justly. The deeper purpose is to arouse public sentiment to an appreciation of the fact that a definite demand on the part of the consumer for a more Christian treatment of employees must necessarily be met by the employer with improved conditions. In short, if the public really demands better conditions for employees whose hours are unjustly long, or whose wages are inadequate to the service performed, the public has the remedy in its own hands.

(*e*) Finally, the present century has seen political power entrusted for the first time to the hands of the people. Here, if nowhere else, we shall soon feel the corporate unity of the community. What political ideals are to rule? The question comes to each individually. The responsibility for the degradation of political ideals lies at the door of every Christian who fails to take an intelligent, active part in the political life of the community. But it is only by careful study of the problems that we can be ready to play our part in guiding the public conscience aright.

III

Practical Work—Commercial Morality—Fair Lists.

The practical work of the Union is done under the direction of each local branch. The work, however, bears a general similarity of character, so that, with one or two exceptions, the London Branch may be taken as typical of the work of all.

1. True to its principle of education, the London Branch early established lending libraries. The special feature, however, is the formation of sets of twelve of some of the standard books recommended by the Union. These sets are sent to groups or small local branches for the encouragement of the study of some particular question by several people at the same time.

2. The London Branch has also tried to rouse its members to consistent political action, and has in times of particular crises issued manifestoes to them which dealt with the issues in no uncertain tone.

3. The courses of public sermons on the social questions have done most to make known in London the work and teaching of the Christian Social Union. The first series was held during Lent in 1894 in St. Edmund's Church, Lombard Street, in the very heart of the business district. The service, with sermon, was held at twelve o'clock daily, and the church was crowded with business men. The sermons were afterwards published in book form under the title of "Lombard Street in Lent," and the book has run through

several editions. In 1895 services were held in two churches at the same time, St. Edmund's and St. Mary-le-Strand. A selection of these sermons was published under the title, "A Lent in London." In 1896, with a view to still broader influence, services were held in different parts of London for a week in each church. An experiment was also made in 1896 of having special sermons on social subjects preached by leaders in the social movement during the Trades Union Congress. The result was said to be most satisfactory, and at Edinburgh the Trades Union Congress printed the Christian Social Union sermons on their official programme. The annual report for 1898 states that "the need for special courses of the Christian Social Union sermons is much less than it used to be, now that so many of the clergy are supplying genuine Christian teaching on social matters in their ordinary parochial ministrations;" as this has failed, however, to rouse the majority of them to any special effort to rectify their social conduct, "our chief responsibility at the present moment should be the careful consideration of particular problems with a view to practical action."

4. The London Branch has carried on, by means of a Research Committee, an inquiry into London trades which lack adequate legislative protection. This committee has already investigated the conditions of labour, hours of work, and wages of the hand laundries, the manufacture of artificial flowers, fish curing and fruit preserving, lead poisoning in potteries, and the home manufacture of brushes. Its immediate purpose is to provide material for influencing legislation. During 1900 it prepared and circulated a criticism of the proposed factories and workshops bill, and advocated the appointment of more women sanitary inspectors. "Similar work has been done by committees of the Birmingham and Oxford (city) Branches, especially in regard to the housing problem, and reports on insanitary dwellings have been sent to the local authorities."[1]

5. The Cheltenham Branch has undertaken a very interesting social experiment of the most practical character, under the name of "The Cheltenham Society for the Improvement of the Houses of the Poor." It has bought some cottages, introduced the needed improvements,

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[1] "Christian Social Union," Annual Report, 1900.

and rented them at a fair price to working people. The first year they issued £1 debenture bonds, bought ten cottages, and were negotiating for three more. At the completion of their third year (1900), they reported that they had again been able to pay three per cent. to debenture bondholders, and were asking for further applications for bonds, that they might extend their work.

6. To give a centre for all these forms of social work, the London Branch opened a social settlement in 1898 in Hoxton (North London) called Maurice Hostel. During the first year it attracted considerable attention by the investigation it carried on into the housing problem. The results were published under the title of "No Room to Live," by George Haw. The general line of work followed is that of the other settlements in other parts of London. The work has grown rapidly, however, and larger quarters are soon to be built. There are two distinct houses, one for men and the other for women, but both of them are already calling for increased helpers to carry on the work.

7. Two undertakings of more general interest have been conducted under the leadership of

Rev. John Carter, the Honorary Secretary of the Union. The first of these was carried on from Oxford, and was an inquiry into the present standards of honesty in the general conduct of business. Starting with the generally accepted fact of "tipping," the inquiry went up through the whole scale of "illicit commissions," and finally published its findings in a pamphlet under the title of "Commercial Morality."[1] Mr. Carter begins with the principle expressed in the first object of the Co-operative Union—the society founded by the early Christian Socialists.

"This Union is formed to promote the practice of truthfulness, justice and economy in production and exchange.

"By the abolition of all false dealing, either (*a*) direct, by representing any article produced or sold to be other than what is known to the producer or vendor to be; or (*b*) indirect, by concealing from the purchaser any fact known to the vendor, material to be known by the purchaser, to enable him to judge of the value of the article purchased."

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[1] "Commercial Morality," by John Carter (Rivington, Percival & Company, London, 1893).

From this ground, Mr. Carter issued a circular containing seven questions, to a large list of business men, who were presumably representative in different lines of business, and extending from the large manufacturer to the small shopkeeper and to the working man.

The questions were: (1) Do you find it difficult to apply the principles of Christian truth and justice to the conduct of business? The general consensus of opinion seems to be that Christian principle and business are almost impossible to reconcile. A few large and well-known firms answer that they find it possible though demanding distinct sacrifices. The smaller firms, however, and especially the employees of all sorts, answer: "Not only difficult but impossible. For a man is not master of himself. If one would live and avoid the bankruptcy court, one must do business on the same lines as others do, without troubling whether the methods are in harmony with the principles of Christian truth and justice or not."[1] And one employer says bluntly: "Business is based on the gladiatorial theory of existence. If Christian truth and justice is not consistent with this, business is in a bad case. So is nature."

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[1] "Commercial Morality," p. 10.

The next question was: (2) To what extent is honourable trade hampered by unjust competition? Here there is a unanimity of conviction in all the replies, that unjust competition is one of the greatest evils. One man replies: "To a very large extent, if it were possible to do away with competition, the excuse and justification for a large proportion of commercial immorality would be gone. There would then be a chance for a man to trade honestly with a reasonable prospect of success. I believe there are thousands of Christian business men who would be glad of this chance."

The next questions were more specific, and asked: Can the following practices be justified? (3) Misleading advertisements? (4) Deception about the true quality of goods? To these two questions the general reply was a direct negative. Some, however, were inclined to make reservations in regard to very optimistic statements about the quality of the goods offered for sale, and a few thought it was sometimes forced by unjust competition.

(5) Selling at a loss in order to win the market? Most of the replies considered this justifiable under certain conditions as a form of advertising; but the danger was pointed out of using it as a direct means of killing out competition in order to gain a monopoly of the market by wrecking competitors.

(6) Bribing the agents of customers? This seems to prevail to an alarming extent in all branches of trade. In most cases it cannot go on to such an extent without the knowledge of the employers, but they seem willing to allow their clerks to be paid in this indirect way, in spite of the fact that even if not making them directly dishonest, it must at least pervert their judgment. Many of the replies condoned the offence on the ground of custom, and one says frankly: "I would not hesitate to push my business by bribing another man. I might have a very poor opinion of his character . . . but I must sell my goods." Fortunately the law does not sanction this low moral standard. In summing up a recent illegal commission case the Lord Chief Justice said: "I know of no cases more important to the commercial interest of the community than

these cases touching the illegitimate offer or acceptance of commission. Such practices sap commercial morality; they corrupt both employers and employed, and set a great premium on dishonest trade."[1]

7. The last question—as to having more than one price for the same article, at the same time, and in the same place of business, was on the whole condemned, rather on grounds of policy than of principle.

As an example of the standard of commercial morality prevailing in the community at large, Mr. Carter quotes the case of the Select Committee of the House of Lords to consider the question of the supply of foreign meat. "The evidence before the Committee showed that, of the total meat supply of Great Britain and Ireland, one-third is estimated to have come from abroad. But it is curiously difficult to trace where it is sold. For instance, in Southport, a town of about 40,000 inhabitants, with some fifty butchers, it was stated that on one occasion at least only three English animals were slaughtered in a week. What, then, does the Select Committee recommend? Practically that we had better not press the abstract principle of honesty too rigorously, lest the country suffer damage; for this foreign meat, it is confidently declared, is really of a better quality than the English, and therefore, if we force the foreign dealer to declare his goods, the price of home-grown meat will fall."[1]

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[1] *Economic Review*, April, 1896, p. 219.

Taking a broad view of the replies received, it is a striking fact that the small trader and the subordinates are much more tempted than the large employer to indulge in tricks of the trade, or to condescend to petty meanness. That undeniably dishonest practices prevail to an alarming extent is a matter of common knowledge, and it is no answer that the practices are known and tolerated by the employers. "There are substantial reasons for dreading the demoralising effect, in the long run, of such tampering with strict morality." But the question cannot be answered from outside: "any reform must proceed from the men of business themselves, and not from the public."[2] The Christian Social Union has done all it can for the present in making clear the existence of the evil.

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[1] "Present Relations of Morals and Commerce," p. 2.

[2] "Commercial Morality," p. 31.

8. The other work carried on under the leadership of the Honorary Secretary has probably been more successful in its appeal to members. This is the preparation of "fair-lists" in large towns, and the general subject of preferential dealing.[1] First, as to theory. We may gladly assume that the old benumbing theory of *laissez-faire* is at last outgrown. Something can and must be done to direct production and consumption. And first of all, "the producing man is essentially the servant of the consuming man, and the final direction of industry lies with the consumers."[1] This is the key-note to the new point of view; the emphasis has changed from wealth making to wealth using, and the purchasing public is brought face to face with a hitherto unrecognised responsibility of power. "There are," says Professor Smart, "two distinct responsibilities which must not be confused: one is the responsibility for conditions under which goods are made; the other is responsibility for their being made at all. A slight awakening

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[1] See pamphlet issued by the Rev. John Carter, "Preferential Dealings" (Oxford, 1900).

[2] Smart, "Studies in Economics" (Macmillan, London, 1895).

of the public conscience has induced some to ask if it is not possible to demand some guarantee that the goods we buy are made by workers paid decent wages and working under healthy conditions."[1] It is this question which the various "Consumers' Leagues" in different parts of the world have attempted to answer, and the Church of England has brought the subject especially before her children at the Lambeth Conference of 1897. "Christian opinion," say the bishops, "ought to condemn the belief that economic conditions are to be left to the action of material causes and mechanical laws, uncontrolled by any moral responsibility. . . . It can insist that the employer's personal responsibility, as such, is not lost by his membership in a commercial or industrial company. It can press upon retail purchasers the obligation to consider not only the cheapness of the goods supplied to them, but also the probable conditions of their production."

In the practical working out of this theory, the State and many municipal bodies throughout the kingdom have already taken definite action. All Government contracts are now issued in accordance with the Fair Wages Resolution passed by the House of Commons, February 13, 1891, which aims to prevent the abuse from sub-letting, and "to secure the payment of such wages as are generally adopted as current in each trade for competent workmen."[1] In the United Kingdom a group of urban districts, including London, and representing more than fourteen millions, have passed similar resolutions requiring fair wages in their public contracts.

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[1] Smart, "Studies in Economics," p. 268.

The trades unions have long exerted their influence in a similar direction, and have made known to their members and to the public their stamp of approval of the conditions under which certain goods were made by affixing the Union label. But this is of value only as it influences the purchaser in his selection of goods, and leads back again to the theory that the consumer—the purchaser—is the final arbiter of what shall or shall not be produced. Let us see now what results may be obtained by preferential dealing on the part of private persons. There are now five towns—Oxford, Birkenhead, Leeds, Leicester, and Manchester—which have published several lists, comprising a variety of trades, while a number of other towns have lists of particular trades. It may be a cause of some wonder that London has issued no fair lists, but it seemed impossible to get lists out of the trades council, as was done in the smaller towns. The London Secretary therefore, with the sanction of the committee, drew up in 1900 a list of a different kind, called a "Specially Recommended List." "It is," says the 1900 report, "issued in the form of a letter recommending a few firms which, in the writer's opinion, are in some special way deserving of support," and was issued in response to a considerable number of letters which the Secretary received each year. The fair-lists which are drawn up in the large towns are for the guidance of purchasers, and only those firms are placed on the list who have accepted the standard code of rules in regard to the hours and wages of their employees.

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[1] "Preferential Dealing," p. 6.

The chief facts may be summarised as follows: "First, the standard code of rules for a trade represents a mutual agreement between masters and men. Secondly, of the general list of tradesmen, none contain less than a hundred firms, and one, for Manchester, includes over seven hundred firms divided among some forty different trades. Thirdly, after a list has been in circulation for more than a year, it has always been enlarged when published for the second time; and in one instance, after several years' experience, the list has been increased five-fold."[1]

The need for these lists is well illustrated by the case of Oxford. In the printing trades, before the lists were issued, but eight firms observed the standard scale of hours and wages; at the present time the list contains twenty-one firms, which leaves comparatively few printing offices still working on the lower level. The other trades in which exceptional results have been obtained are those of the bakers and confectioners. The men had repeatedly failed to form a union, and were quite unable to help themselves. The code of rules was the direct outcome of action on the part of ordinary consumers. This code fixed the maximum number of hours per week (excluding time for meals), of journeymen 66 hours, of deliverers 78 hours. The minimum wage for journeymen 22s., deliverers 21s. The need of this will be seen when it is stated that this represents a great advance upon the former conditions. At present, only eighteen firms out of nearly fifty have adopted this code. But in speaking of the attempt to induce the general public to trade at these listed shops, Mr. Carter says: "It must be confessed that there are still people who would hesitate to admit that to employ a man for more than 11 hours in the heat of a bakehouse, or for more than 13 hours a day in partly outdoor work, is sweating of a most reprehensible type, and who, perhaps, would be still less inclined to acknowledge that they had no sort of right to profit by the cheapness of articles produced under such shameful conditions."[1] The need of educating the public conscience is emphasised by the curious fact that the printing of parish magazines, and, within recent years, the binding of prayer-books and Bibles, has been done at exceptionally low prices by the introduction of the sweating methods.

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[1] "Preferential Dealing," p. 11.

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[1] "Preferential Dealing," p. 15.

Lest people should fancy that severe hardships of this kind are quite exceptional, one closing instance of a standard code of rules which has recently been framed for dressmakers in a certain town: "Among the regulations there is one which provides that seamstresses, after an apprenticeship of not more than two years, shall receive at least 5s. for a working week of sixty hours." But, in fact, at the present moment there are seamstresses, who, after two years' service without any wage at all, only receive 1s. 6d. or 2s. a week."

It is evident, therefore, that the Christian Social Union has ceased to be a mere students' club for the consideration of social questions. It has already reached out into definite, practical activities. These fall into three groups. First, the educational, in which the lending libraries, political manifestoes, and courses of public sermons train the members in the principles of the Union, and enlarge the membership. Secondly, the more definitely practical. Under this heading would come the "Cheltenham Society for the Improvement of the Houses of the Poor," the London Branch's Social Settlement, Maurice Hostel, and the Research

Committee into London trades which lack adequate protection. These furnish an outlet for the impulse to some practical activity which the study of social problems is almost sure to rouse in every earnest student. The third group consists of the broader economic investigations carried on by the Rev. John Carter. These economic studies, while they have for their primary object the investigation of truth, produce the inevitable practical result of offering some means to check or overcome the evils which the investigation lays bare. They thus play an important part in the work of the Union; for while the narrower study of particular problems and actual contact with them is an essential part of the life of the society, the investigation of these larger problems keeps the members conscious of a broader outlook. Such work prevents that danger of ossification which often threatens when principles are lost sight of in a multiplicity of details. Every broadening of the field of vision makes fresh plans possible, and adds new energy to the execution of the old.

The difficulty of estimating the value of a society whose practical activity is just beginning to take definite shape is obvious. But a glance at the membership list shows how strong a hold it has upon the best of the English clergy. They are shaping the future of its practical work as they have already contributed in the past to formulate its general principles. And it is on the vital force inherent in these principles that the future of the society depends. Are they true, and are they suited to the needs of the age?

Every child begins life as an egoist, but most men who have lived and suffered have learned that the value of each individual life consists largely in its powers for service. This is the lesson which the life of Christ teaches, and, as a matter of fact, all who call themselves Christians must accept this principle, which is the basal teaching of the Christian Social Union. The brotherhood of man is merely another way of stating the principle of unselfishness. It means applied Christianity. But is the theory, as stated, suited to the age in which we live? does it appeal to the particular world-conscience of our day? The answer must be an emphatic *Yes*. This is unquestionably an age of commercialism, but the very increase of material prosperity has tended to rouse a sense of social responsibility. The long possession of wealth may, as in the days of the Roman Empire, tend to luxury and selfishness, but the last fifty years has seen man after man rise from the ranks to great prosperity, and turn to offer a helping hand to those whom he left behind. The sense of social responsibility is in the air, and this the Christian Social Union meets and tries to guide into practical channels. It is intensely a part of the best thought of the day; and yet not a part of it, for it stands above and beyond it, and summons it to fresh endeavour, to larger undertaking. Just in so far as it can make itself felt, its further vitality is assured. It has a firm foothold and a lofty standard. When its usefulness is outgrown, it will be superseded by some stronger force; but when men have passed beyond the need of the lesson of unselfishness, when philanthropy is tempered by wisdom and guided by love, so that all men are as brothers, and the rich have lost their feeling of superiority and the poor their feeling of bitterness, then the millennium will surely have come, and the need for new church guilds will have passed away.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

THE present phase of Christian Socialism is an intensely active force in English thought and life to-day, and we stand much too close to judge it in proper perspective. If, however, we go back to the earlier movement, it cannot be denied that Maurice failed in the two definite forms in which he tried to express the Christian Socialist principle. The productive co-operative workshop from which he hoped so much proved itself a dismal failure; nor, so far as one can judge from an outside point of view, has the effort to bring the working man into the Church been more successful. If the last fifty years have done much to overcome the hostility of the labouring man to the Church, the clergy to-day are confronted with a no less fatal indifference.

But Maurice's failure was apparent rather than real. It was a failure of the means by which he hoped to accomplish his end, while the real principle for which he worked has been growing stronger and wider in its influence from that day to this. Maurice hoped to find in co-operation and in the Church a force which should lift the labouring man out of the brutalising selfishness in which he seemed to be wasting his powers, and bring him into closer touch with his fellows; to make him realise the presence of the power of God in his own heart, and so through the Fatherhood of God bring him to a realisation of the Brotherhood of Man. It was the liberal application of Christ's teaching, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And in the end Maurice's faith in the applicability of this to life has been more than justified. Certainly, since Maurice made his first appeal more than fifty years ago, the world has seen great changes. The working man has learned many lessons of mutual helpfulness, even though he may not yet be ready to forego entirely the principle of competition. The power of brotherhood which his friendly societies, trades unions, and co-operative societies have developed has forced the men to think for and help each other. Whatever may be said as to the economic or financial folly of the sympathetic strike, there is in it, however mixed with evil, a strong principle of unselfishness—of willingness to sacrifice a present personal advantage for a neighbour's gain, which touches an element which the labour men sadly lacked in Maurice's day.

The application of this principle of brotherhood has, too, effected a great change in the relation between the working man and the upper classes. Certainly on the side of the upper classes it has been productive of most definite results. The old spirit of patronage, so ably championed in Disraeli's "Coningsby," has been replaced by the new spirit. The working men's college, which Maurice founded in 1854 with 140 students, has to-day a membership of over 2,000, and it is only one among many institutions in different parts of London where the broadest type of education is offered to the workman. The whole list of university settlements and kindred institutions are the direct result of this new feeling of brotherhood which Maurice taught, and which has found vital expression in practical living. The means of its accomplishment are different from those which Maurice chose. The result, with no less certainty, forces men to live outside of themselves, and enlarges that group of men who have proved the truth of Maurice's teaching by making it a part of their own personal experience.

One practical result of this on the side of the working man has been to lessen very much the old bitterness between employer and employed. The party of revolution has practically disappeared. It is true that strikes will occur with periodic frequency, but they are, after all, a necessary consequence of the principle of "collective bargaining," by which the men sell their labour as a group, and not as individuals. And the principle of arbitration points to a further growth of the amicable spirit which during the last half century has manifested itself with slowly increasing force in labour disputes.

It was the application of the spirit of brotherliness to their daily lives that made Ludlow, Hughes and Neale a power in every movement to which they put their hands. The modern phases of the movement have not missed the importance of this vital force. But the weakness of the Guild of St. Matthew lies in the fact that it insists on dictating the particular form in which the spiritual principle shall manifest itself. It may be that, in attempting to solve the problem with a definite formula, they will fail, just as Maurice failed, to make their particular answer applicable to present conditions.

But the principle of brotherhood as a living power is still taught by the Christian Social Union. They meet each individual case as it arises, but always go back to the first principle to measure every line of conduct. All the affairs of life must, they say, be subject to the supreme test of brotherliness.

Historically, it is noteworthy that each nation has demanded a steadily widening application of the principle of true brotherliness, which means, first of all, equality of opportunity; for each civilisation in turn has raised a larger and larger proportion of its numbers to its highest level, but each has fallen through the unrest of the forgotten masses underneath. A chosen few raised themselves to the highest plane, but then they developed the enervating luxury begotten of selfishness. What would be the effect on the England of to-day if this principle of our common brotherhood were strictly applied to the national life? England has long passed beyond the nightmare of European sovereigns that the masses may raise the standard of revolution and precipitate civil war. But there is much yet to be done in England. Selfishness and indifference are postponing many a reform which would enlarge the opportunity for every man to express the divine that is within him. And might not the broadening of this principle, which should at least leave none without a fair chance in the struggle for existence, do much to make enduring the civilisation of England, or of any nation that could make it a part of her life.

The influence of this principle of brotherhood on the individual, however, is of supreme importance. The struggle of the human heart is for freedom. If we look at the great popular uprisings, we find that all have this demand in common. The type of freedom has differed at different times and places, but the great desire is to be free. In his address to the Chartists in 1848, Kingsley pointed out that they were under a spiritual bondage which, if they could but recognise it, was the true cause of much of their distress. They were seeking for redress in the remedying of outward conditions, but the true remedy lay in readjustment of their own hearts to the life about them. Here is the key-note to all the discord of life. If men would but live the life of freedom, and make themselves worthy, then their bondage would cease. To win this, however, each individual must learn that "unselfishness is freedom." Not a sentimental unselfishness which neglects one's own duties to busy one's self with other people's affairs, but an unselfishness born of the true spirit of brotherhood, which makes a man love his neighbour as himself. It is a new spirit, a new point of view of life, and one way to reach it is through a recognition of the common Fatherhood of God, which is, says Maurice, the true basis of our common brotherhood. In so far as that it is a part of our consciousness, we cannot fail to express the Christian Socialist ideal in our lives. But we cannot help asking to-day with Carlyle: "Is it not the root of all our confusions and bewilderments that we have too much forgotten God?"

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