A study of working class self education in England 1903 - 1939

Tubman, Robert Henry

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A Study of Working Class Self Education in England

1903 - 1939

Robert Henry Tubman

This is a study of the autodidactic tradition in a working class community focusing upon the life history of Ernest Cartwright, a signalman (1883-1945). Using his journals, which have hitherto been unpublished, an attempt has been made to demonstrate the way in which academic sponsors of a liberal education at Oxford University articulated an ideology that was embraced by politically moderate sections of the Labour Movement. Educational developments were inextricably linked to the political domain. Through the machinery of the Workers' Educational Association, working class activists were able to secure an education that would help promote social justice. Eschewing knowledge for its own sake and vocationalism, Cartwright educated himself so as to perform his 'uses and duties' in the world, that is, as an active member of various working class institutions. The positive influence of religion upon the burgeoning Labour Movement is examined. The notion of a 'calling' was particularly important: the individual felt compelled to develop God-given talents for the benefit of others. Moreover, a social reading of the Bible provided a moral basis for a critique of capitalism. Such a critique paved the way for the development of ethical socialism. This shared greater common ground with New Liberalism than with historical materialism. It assumed that the interests of Capital and Labour were complementary and that the State
was a moral agency redistributing resources to the disadvantaged and promoting equality of opportunity. The Christian background of those in the W.E.A./L.P. sought a union of labour and learning so as to promote fellowship. The high water-mark of educational liberalism was the Final Report 1919. The journals indicate the Weltenschauung of a 'Liberal-Labour' man, and how the events of the 1920s and 30s undermined expectations regarding a New Era.
A STUDY OF WORKING CLASS SELF EDUCATION IN ENGLAND

1903 - 1939

Robert Henry Tubman

A thesis presented to the School of Education of the University of Durham for the degree of Master of Education. September 1988.

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I wish to thank Professor G.R. Batho for the encouragement, guidance and advice he has given. Not the least of his qualities as a tutor was his good-humoured paternalism which considerably eased the burdens of part-time study. I am grateful to the Cartwright family for allowing me the opportunity to research the journals. In particular, I would like to thank Mrs. Nancy Baggott (nee Cartwright) and her son David for their co-operation. Mr. Richard Copley, Secretary of the West Mercia District of the W.E.A. gave invaluable assistance in tracking down several pioneers in the field, notably Mrs. Dorothy Tams and Mr. Albert White. Mrs. Tams was particularly helpful in providing material on the North Staffs. area. I would also like to acknowledge the information provided by Mr. John Frood. The editor of Transport Review, Mr. J. Finney, was most helpful in providing access to the Railway Review.

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"We want a non sectarian, broad, non-political education; we want an education for education's sake, without any ulterior motive whatever". (1)

These words, expressed by Joseph Eames, a Gloucester miner, at the Oxford Extension Conference of 1892 testify disillusionment with the way in which the search for the truth was subordinated to the proselytizing activities of theological and socialist teachers. In his search for the whole truth, he looked towards the Universities as being capable of offering an "unprejudiced, unadulterated education". But the words serve to remind us of divisions within the working classes, for the demand for the extension of educational facilities was usually voiced by the better paid and skilled workers. The Marxist analysis of social class tends to blur intra-class variations by virtue of its conceptual emphasis upon property relationships. 'By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern Capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live'. (2)

According to this definition the proletariat constituted an homogeneous bloc whose economic circumstances would perforce generate class conflict. The sociologist, Max Weber (1864-1920), whilst acknowledging that 'property' and 'lack of property' are the basic categories of all class situations noted the market and status differentiation within the working classes. 'In contrast to the purely economically determined 'class situation' we wish to designate as 'status situation' every typical component of the life fate of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honour....In content status honour is normally expressed by the fact that above all else a specific style of life can be expected from all those who wish to belong to the circle. Linked with this expectation are restrictions on 'social intercourse'. (3) Social segregation was a feature of the British and Wesleyan schools examined by the Newcastle Commission appointed in 1858 to 'inquire into the present state of popular education in England'. (4) In his submission, R.W. Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department, stated that in such schools charging 3d to 4d per week "the parents consist to a very great extent of that class which is at the top of the working class or at the bottom of the shop-owning class". (5) John Hurt associates the willingness to pay not to any mistrust of gratuitous instruction,


but to fears that children of the 'residuum' would effect physical and moral pollution. Such fears were intensified after the Elementary Education Act of 1870 began to 'fill the gaps' by bringing the social and educational outcasts of the nation into schools. The position was tightened up by Mundella's Act of 1880 which made the framing of attendance by-law compulsory for all School Boards and School Attendance Committees. The London School Board charged differential fees that allowed the artisan rate-paying father to send his child to school secure in the knowledge that he would not come home harbouring lice from the children of the residuum. Hurt notes that the London School Board, with its 110,000 places at 1d, 180,000 at 2d and 100,000 at 3d and 60,000 at 4d had produced 'a social and scholastic hierarchy capped by higher grade schools'.

It is important to recognise the heterogeneous nature of the propertyless working class in terms of skill level, income, the degree of reliability of earnings, the extent of job control in addition to the pronounced status differences. Eric Hobsbawm has delineated a labour aristocracy composed of certain distinctive upper strata of the working classes, better paid, better treated and generally regarded as more 'respectable' and politically moderate than the mass of the proletariat. The demand for the provision of a free, compulsory and non sectarian education was expressed by skilled working men. Robert Applegarth, secretary of the Society of Carpenters and Joiners, in a speech to the National Education League (13 October 1869) railed against the fecklessness of the unskilled: "There is the careless and indifferent man, who has

6. Hurt, Elem. Schg. p. 71
been so long neglected and degraded that he does not understand
the value of education; and him the other class, the better class
of working men have to carry on their backs. Those men who do not
understand the value of education must be made to understand it". (7)
These social distinctions were noted by contemporary observers such
as Henry Mayhew whose magnum opus London Labour and the London
Poor was published in 1851. The following is a description of
his visit to a museum belonging to a branch of the Woodcarver's
Society - a 'fairly-paid class of mechanics' - 'In the whole
course of my investigations I have never experienced more gratifi­
ication than I did on the evening on my visit to this society. The
members all gave evidence, both in manner and appearance, of the
refining character of their craft: and it was indeed a hearty
relief from the scenes of squalor, misery, dirt, vice, ignorance,
and discontent, with which these inquiries too frequently bring
one into connection, to find one's self surrounded with an
atmosphere of beauty, refinement, comfort, intelligence and
ease'. (8) Even within the cabinet-makers, there existed divisions
between 'society' and 'non-society' men. The former class numbered
between 600 and 700 of the trade whose wages were regulated by
custom rather than determined by the vicissitudes of the market.
The trade societies not only regulated entry into the trade, but
also provided 'friendly' benefits such as support for the sick,
aged and those out of work. Therefore, the term 'labour aristocrat'
is not synonymous with the skilled worker because every trade
contained an elite who could expect to be fully employed. Furthermore,

8. H. Mayhew, Mayhew's London (1851) p. 531
in addition to these intra-occupational variations, there existed divisions between prosperous and deprived trades. Robert Q. Gray's study of Edinburgh (8a) highlights the wide differences in living conditions between the skilled trades by comparing the heights of children from various strata: while the progeny of engineers were 0.93 inches shorter than the average lower middle class child, those of the painters, a depressed skilled trade, were 2.4 inches shorter. Although there is evidence of a narrowing of the wage gap between the skilled and the unskilled, the extent of de-skilling (the sub-division of skilled work and its redistribution amongst the semi-skilled) should not be exaggerated. John Benson has pointed out the continuities between late and mid Victorian England. (9) By 1911, the textile industry employed fewer than 5,000 fully automatic Northrup looms out of a total of 800,000 in weaving. He concludes that the evidence does not support the thesis of a unilateral decline of skill levels and that relatively few workers were confronted by irresistible technological change. Wage differentials remained sharp and status differences pronounced. By 1913, the unskilled worker in coal, cotton, building and engineering trades earned between 34 and 49 per cent less than the skilled man. Restrictions on social intercourse were an expression of status divisions: in Kentish Town, the engine drivers and firemen frequented separate bars in public houses. A further aspect of cultural differentiation lay in residential segregation. Gray quotes a Charity Organisation Report (1904) which found that 50 per cent of engineers lived in houses with three or more rooms compared

with only 15 per cent of the semi-skilled. Mayhew contrasted
'the comfort and well furnished abodes of one, and the squalor
and bare walls of the other' when comparing 'society' and 'non-
society' men. (10) Moreover, the labour aristocracy made claims to
'respectability'. Domestic status markers that were a **sine qua non**
of such a claim included lace curtains, a whitewashed doorstep and a
blackened grate. Public worship demonstrated not only a commitment
to religion but also the healthy state of the family exchequer:
going to church was a public occasion which required the wearing
of a Sunday suit. Elizabeth Roberts suggests that religion continued
to play an important part in working class life with a strong
desire to follow Christian injunctions. Obviously, the salient
ones derive from the Ten Commandments but there is evidence of
the manifestation of Pauline traditions of the suppression of sexuality
and the Methodist claim that 'cleanliness is next to godliness.' (11)
Normatively, their lives were based on a mixture of 'do's and
dont's.' Their children were exhorted to work hard, to exercise
thrift and to be as independent as possible. Meanwhile swearing,
drinking and gambling were viewed with extreme disapprobation. This
explains why such parents went to such great lengths to isolate
their children from the 'roughs': physical proximity would almost
guarantee moral degradation. Standish Meacham argues that although
some members of the 'labour aristocracy' pursued middle class
status through church attendance, teetotalism and opening a Post
Office account, most realised that their wages would never permit

11. Elizabeth Roberts, 'The Family' Chapter 1 in J. Benson,
the realisation of middle-class lifestyle. Rather, the overwhelming devotion to respectability can be ascribed to the desire 'in the face of brutally disheartening economic facts to lead an independent, orderly and less than brutal existence'. (12)

The mid-Victorian superior artisan saw himself 'as in some sense the leader and instructor' of the less favoured working class strata. (13) The leadership reflected the individualistic moral perspective analogous to middle-class reformers. Thus, the position of the less fortunate strata was attributed to their moral failure in not adapting modes of conduct typical of the respectable artisan. Gray quotes the speech (1864) by an Edinburgh joiner, John Borrowman to the St. Cuthbert's Co-operative Association: "if the Co-operatve element were to pervade society more generally than it did at the present time, a vast amount of misery and crime, consequent upon intemperance and improvidence, would be altogether unknown". (14) This echoes the ideology of the liberal reformers such as Kay-Shuttleworth, Secretary of the Committee of the Privy Council for Education, 1839-1849, who had argued that the preservation of internal peace depended upon the education of the working classes. If the 'labour aristocracy' wished to exercise political and

cultural leadership, then it is essential to examine their ideological perspectives. Social historians have tended to view the activities of the labour aristocracy, in diffusing dominant Victorian values, within the context of 'taming and civilising' the masses. The conflict theorist approaches the whole range of activities of power groups as 'exercises in devising mechanisms of social control which conditioned and manipulated the propertyless mass into accepting and operating the forms and functions of behaviour necessary to sustain the social order of an industrial society'. (15) The schools were not the people's institutions, but rather instruments for shaping society according to dominant middle class views. The ideas and standards which had brought them such conspicuous success could do the same for all the people. Samuel Smiles presented in a popular form the social philosophy of the age: 'The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual; and, exhibited in the lives of many, it constitutes the true source of national vigour and strength'. (16) However, the labour aristocracy were not a tabula rasa upon which the middle classes could stamp their mark. The value of self-help coexisted with the solidaristic values of the workplace: it took a collective form. The dominant values were negotiated as working men helped themselves by forming Trade Unions, Friendly and Co-operative Societies. As Parkin has suggested, working class ideology typically 'emphasises various modes of adaptation, rather than either full

16. S. Smiles, Self Help (1910) p. 1
endorsement of, or opposition to, the status quo'. (17) It is important to recognise the ambivalence of working class ideology particularly in the area of adult education, particularly when well-meaning middle class patronage was rejected.

It is perhaps a truism to say that the Victorians had great expectations of the revivifying power of education. Milman, writing in the Quarterly Review expressed his confidence thus: 'What do we entrust to the schoolmaster....the destinies of England, the permanence of our constitution, the safety of our throne; the perpetuity of the church; the security of all our wealth, strength and grandeur'. (18) Industrialisation and urbanisation had created strains within British society. During the 'hungry forties', the ruling class believed, mistakenly as it turned out, that the physical force Chartists had won the day. Those investigators concerned with the social conditions of the working class believed that it was the latter's ignorance that made them easy prey to the intelligent, socialist agitator. Mayhew's investigation of the politics of costermongers suggests that in every district, 'one or two of the body, more intelligent than the others, have great influence over them; and these leading men are all Chartists, and being industrious and not unprosperous persons, their pecuniary and intellectual superiority cause them to be regarded as oracles. One of these men said to me: 'The costers think that working men know best, and so they have confidence in us. I like to make men discontented, and I will make them

17. F. Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (1971) p. 88
18. H.N. Milman, 'The Education of the People', Quarterly Review LXXV (1846) p. 424
discontented while the present system continues, because it's all for the middle and moneyed classes...'. (19)

In addressing ourselves to the motivation of the sponsors of both elementary and adult education, it is as well to bear in mind their desire to maintain the peaceful and preferably contented subordination of those less comfortable than themselves. In their various ways, the sponsors were concerned with social control in the sense of the imposition of opinions and habits by one class upon another. The structure of the Victorian educational system mirrored the stratification system in terms of the type of education that was felt to be appropriate to the different social classes. The Clarendon Commission (1864) endorsed the classical curriculum of the public schools (nine in all) which imbued the British upper class with certain qualities, '...for their capacity to govern others and to control themselves, their aptitude for combining freedom with order, their public spirit, their vigour and manliness of character...'. (20) What habits then were expected of the working class elementary child? Both the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church (1811) and the British and Foreign School Society (1812) sought to maximise their influence over the socialisation of working class youth. Thomas Sutton, a Sheffield Evangelical who undertook a survey of Sheffield's educational needs in 1838 noted that the chief vice of working class children included 'insubordination to all authority'. (21) Two years later

in 1840, the Committee of Council gave the following instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors: 'No plan of education ought to be encouraged in which intellectual instruction is not subordinate to the regulation of the thoughts and habits of the children by the doctrines and precepts of revealed religion.' (22) Since 1833, in offering to pay 50 per cent of the costs of erecting school buildings, Government had set in motion an open-ended subsidy. The subsequent Revised Code of 1862 (payment by results) was not, according to Morris, the institutionalisation of free trade principles. The Newcastle Commission (1858) had wanted to distribute grants to schools on academic grounds alone. Robert Lowe, Vice-President of the Education Department, betrayed paternalism in stating that children should be subject to a total atmosphere conducive to right moral and social discipline. Dennis Smith's study of Sheffield and Birmingham records the contemporary views of the middle classes who were shocked at the moral lacunae evident in working class culture. In 1843 a member of the Visiting and Bettering Society opined that Church schools "would be the best means Government could adopt for the training up of well educated, sober, loyal and obedient subjects." (23) Throughout the nineteenth century, the ruling classes sought the 'safe' enfranchisement of the working classes. The Liberal M.P., A.J. Roebuck had warned in 1833, 'The people will have power. In a short time they will be paramount. I wish them to be enlightened, in order that they may use that power well...'. (24) Enlightenment was synonymous with

23. Smith, Conflict, p. 116
offering 'correct' political information. By the 1850's, the Times drew attention to the fact that the great mass of people were influenced and formed by the very worst possible teachers. Harney's Red Republican published, in 1850, the Communist Manifesto in full. Brian Simon quotes the fears of one contemporary: 'Cheap publications containing the wildest and most anarchical doctrines are scattered broadcast over the land in which religion and morality are perverted and scoffed at...'. (25) The Adult Schools, particularly those under Wesleyan influence, were attempting to engineer the consent of the working classes towards the status quo by adding an economic supplement to the catechism

"What are the laws?"

"Laws are wise institutions to preserve the rich in their possessions and to restrain the vicious poor". (26)

This was more than an attempt to inculcate correct physical and moral habits. J.M. Goldstrom (27) suggests that during the 1830's the consensus of opinion was that the Holy Bible embodied all a child would need to know to equip him or her for life. Under the influence of Benthamite political philosophy, school readers expressed the laws of political economy through the use of parables. Economic conditions were held to be subject to inevitable scientific


26. Quoted in Margaret Hodgen, Worker's Education in England and the United States (1925) p. 60

laws, the free operation of which would create optimum conditions for the individual. One parable described the protest of bodily organs against the apparent greed of the stomach in devouring food. The failure of the subsequent 'strike' by the other organs demonstrated clearly that the stomach is as necessary to the body as a whole as a rich man to society. Schooling under the Revised Code was attacked in a Memorandum (1868) by Kay-Shuttleworth for not opening the minds of working-class children to necessary economic theories: 'Parliament is again warned how much the law needs the support of sound economic opinions and higher moral principles among certain classes of workmen, and how influential a general system of public education might be in rearing a loyal, intelligent and Christian population.' (28)

How did working class parents respond to publicly-funded day schools when, before 1880, attendance was not compulsory nor, until 1891 was instruction free. The parental consumer was sovereign and therefore could 'take it or leave it.' The major constraint upon working class families was the shortage of cash. Quite simply, the education of the child was subordinate to the demands of the family economy. To send a child to school involved a double cost: the payment of fees and to forego the child's earnings. The Newcastle Report (1861) stated that the break-even point at which the child's earning power would equal the cost of his maintenance was eight to ten years of age. At such an age when he was ready to learn the 3 R's, the factory could outbid the school. The following table showing levels of attendance is taken from Smith. (29)

29. Smith, Conflict, p. 121
TABLE 1. **Levels of Attendance by Juveniles: Birmingham and Sheffield**

1851

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Sheffield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Juvenile Population (aged 20 -)</td>
<td>106,020</td>
<td>62,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>21,406</td>
<td>14,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Day School</td>
<td>9,151</td>
<td>6,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Day School</td>
<td>13,032</td>
<td>9,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: 1851 Census

The parental consumer was concerned to secure the essentials for his child in the shortest time possible. They were prepared to pay for a sound education where there was an incentive to achieve literacy. Hurt suggests that the closer families were to the new forces of nineteenth century industrialised society, the readier they were to spend money on their children's education. The offices of the Great Northern and North Western Railways in St. Pancras stimulated a demand for literate and numerate clerical workers. In this sense, education was an investment that paid dividends. The utilitarian demands of working class adults influenced what the London Working Men's College (1854) offered. Whereas the Christian Socialist founders emphasised the Humanities and the enrichment of personality as opposed to increasing one's wages, the students wanted subjects with a vocational relevance (Mathematics, Short-hand and Bookkeeping). There were other motivations for sending children to school. The following quotation from a Sheffield Lancasterian school master demonstrates the perennial 'baby-sitting' role of the
'profession': "...nothing is more common than the following expression which is uttered by the parents when they apply for the admission of their children to the public school. 'Sir, I have brought my boy, if you'll have him; for I thought he might as well come here till he's fit to earn a trifle, as it will keep him from running the streets and getting into mischief, for we don't know what to do wi'him at home". (30) Even where parents could afford the school pence, the key question was whether an education would pay future dividends. Parents in the Black Country, according to Hurt, betrayed little enthusiasm for formal education where a man could become a small-scale capitalist as a result of shrewdness, determination to succeed and luck, but without the 3 R's. People who read and kept books, it was thought, were not necessarily better-off than those who did not. Learning could be a drawback - in the words of a Black Country saying: 'The father went to the pit and made a fortune, his son went to school and lost it'. The Reverend J.S. Winder, Assistant Commissioner for Yorkshire and Lancashire failed to detect any monetary rewards accruing to the educated person: 'As to the common occupations which absorb the mass of operatives - weaving and spinning, hammering, mining and delving, driving coal carts etc....I could hear no proof that the educated workman could either command a preference for employment, or to earn higher wages than an uninstructed man'. (31) Such an instrumental attitude as this did not feature prominently in 1854 when the miners from Durham and Northumberland presented a petition calling for compulsory education upto the age of fourteen. They stated a

30. Smith, Conflict p. 121
31. Roderick and Stephens, Educ. and Ind. p. 16
readiness to pay 2 pence a week on condition that they exercised a measure of control over the appointment of schoolmasters and the allocation of resources. As well as desiring education for its own sake, there was a realisation that future miners' leaders, if they were to fulfil their obligations towards the community effectively, required a sound education. Yet, at rank and file level, where child employment was an economic necessity, parents were prepared to falsify their childrens' ages in order to circumvent the Mines Act of 1842 which proscribed those under the age of ten.

The take-up of education reflected divisions within the working classes. While some led a narrow life in both town and country circumscribed by poverty and illiteracy, others enjoyed a sufficiently high enough standard of living that gave them the option of becoming 'parental consumers.' For many lower working class parents, the choice simply did not exist. Moreover, in many cases, education was required neither in future occupations nor in their leisure pursuits. The Rev. James Fraser's list of desiderata (to read a simple paragraph from a newspaper, to write a simple letter, to check a tradesman's bill and a knowledge of the chief countries of the world) would have seemed quite remote to the large numbers living below the poverty line identified by Charles Booth in 1887 (The Life and Labour of the People of London). Although the report of the Newcastle Commission (1861) concluded that few children escaped the educational net completely, its statistical base was of doubtful validity in that it ignored major industrial areas such as Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield.
After the State intervened in 1870 to fill the gaps, interest for the next two decades centered on the struggle to make elementary education free and compulsory, and when the requisite school places were provided to see that they were filled and that attendance was regular and punctual. Attendance undoubtedly did improve. David Rubinstein has shown that for the London School Board, between 1876 and 1906, actual attendance rates (expressed as a percentage of potential) rose from 76.7 to 88.2. (32) Yet Elizabeth Roberts suggests that 'The majority of working class parents (and consequently their children) did not have a deep attachment to education, or any great confidence in its advantages'. (33) Oral history suggests, if not hostility, then a belief that the only benefits education had to offer were the 3 R's. Towards the closing decades, formal education was less important than family needs. There appears to be little evidence of working class children taking up free places in the grammar school. Although the leaving age was 13 in 1889, part-time exemptions were allowed provided that the child had satisfied academic or attendance criteria. A twelve year old could work half time if he had reached the Code's fifth standard or had attended 300 sessions in the past five years (the 'dunce's' pass). The mill workers of Lancashire and Yorkshire showed little support for either the meritocratic scholarship ladder or the egalitarian broad highway. Figures published by the Board of Education (1906-7) show that 77% of all thirteen year olds were attending school full time. Meacham suggests that with introduction of the Free Places System (1907) the percentage of working class

children staying on did increase, but this was usually children from a skilled background. Lowndes in *The Silent Social Revolution* has calculated that, during the period of 1907 to 1914, the odds against a child from an elementary school gaining a secondary education were 40 to 1.

Given that the function of the elementary school was to give working class children the minimum of mental equipment and that much of its work was social and disciplinary, it is not surprising to find attendance of only 50% in low income areas. Parents had little regard for the socialisation function of the school. Bill Williamson's study of working class culture in Throckley at the turn of the century (34) indicates the reasons why schooling was accorded a low priority. Having cited the centrality of work, he suggests that the saturation of school with the values of patriotism and Empire and the harsh discipline alienated many children. Burnett supports the latter point with respect to his study of working-class autobiographies (1820-1920). Bearing in mind the civilising motives of the sponsors (with their emphasis on discipline, order and obedience) a common theme in the reaction of the autobiographers is a 'dislike of school, punishments and a constant fear of teachers'. (35) The cane, a symbol of office, was reserved for a gamut of 'offences' from disobedience to 'slowness'. The common view of schooling and education seemed to be that 'books were not intended for us'. Burnett notes a difference between the struggles and sacrifices of highly motivated individuals for education and


self improvement in the earlier part of the nineteenth century and the more passive acceptance of the majority when schooling became compulsory in 1876. Although the autobiographies show a greater zeal for education in the towns, in the north and the better-off families, the remainder of the working classes showed little interest in the education of their offspring. Burnett's study implies that the working classes passively accepted what the State and Church had to offer them and the majority accepted the role of the school as the arbiter of values.

F.M.L. Thompson has asserted the need for historians to adequately appreciate the robustness of independent working class cultural development and to be cautious about 'placing the working classes perpetually on the receiving end of outside forces and influences, and portraying them as so much putty in the hands of a masterful and scheming bourgeoisie...It allows little for the possibility that the working classes themselves generated their own values and attitudes suited to the requirements of life in an industrial society, and imposed their own forms on middle class institutions'.

(36) Thompson's 'speculations' are reinforced by David Vincent's study of 142 working class autobiographies. (37) The accounts suggest that although schooling remained subordinate to the demands of the family economy, parents retained a considerable involvement in the education of their children. Furthermore, education was 'far from being a commodity that was forced upon the working class community by outside agencies'. (38) The schooling provided by the

37 D. Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom (1982) p. 102
38 D. Vincent, Bread p. 102
philanthropic societies (the Public Day schools) was questioned and in some cases replaced by 'types of schooling in the form of private day schools and Sunday schools in which the teaching was given by working men and women whose activities were controlled by the community they served'. (39) Using autobiographical and Census material relating to Bristol (1871) Gardner has attempted the recovery of a working class voice by viewing education as an important site of 'class cultural conflict'. (40) The Dame and private venture schools have been closed off as a potential site of worthwhile historical research due to the unquestioning acceptance by historians of the critical comments of nineteenth century observers. Lawson and Silver in A Social History of Education in England quote a report of the Manchester Statistical Society: 'in the most deplorable condition. The greater part of them are kept by females, but some by old men, whose only qualification for this employment seems to be their unfitness for every other'. (41) 'Dame School' is employed as a synonym for the worthlessness of working class private schooling. Such schools existed wherever and whenever there was demand for this type of schooling. They met the working class demand which was to concentrate learning time on basic instrumental skills without the unwelcome and time-consuming element of moral regulation which formed substantial part of the public school curriculum. Schooling was subordinate to the demands of the local community. Parents welcomed the less strict regime and, according to J.G. Fitch's Returns (1870), were prepared to pay

39. Vincent, Bread. p. 103
higher fees to avoid the discipline, regularity and order of the '2d National schools'. (42) Where child labour still played an important role, parents wanted to be free from tiresome enquiries about attendance. It is ironic that the centrality of child labour contributed to the demise of the working-class private school. Mr. Mundella's Act of 1880 allowed a child to leave school at ten years of age on condition that he provided an attendance certificate from a 'certified efficient school'. As private working class schools were excluded from such a category by virtue of supposed organisational deficiencies (notably, the absence of registers), parents were faced with a choice. They could continue to patronise the school, thereby making their children legally unemployable. However, the majority decided to trade the losses in preference, convenience, and cultural consonance against the guaranteed retention of the right to early employment. Gradually, the State engineered indirectly, the destruction of these schools by forbidding the employment of 'unschooled' children.

A salient point concerns the uses of literacy made by working class children. Gardner argues that for some little was achieved owing to irregular attendance, while for others the exigencies of earning a living atrophied any reading skills they possessed. Others took it further and sought light amusement and entertainment in the 'penny serials' ('Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety and Amusement' 1837) and 'penny dreadfuls' which middle class moralists deplored. A minority were launched into the autodidactic tradition which

42. Quoted in Smith, Conflict. p. 123
went beyond such classic examples as Thomas Cooper, the Leicester Chartist who, by the age of twenty four had learned Latin, Hebrew, Greek and French and had committed Paradise Lost and seven Shakespearean plays to memory! J.F.C. Harrison (43) dates the beginning of adult education from the late eighteenth century with the formation of Corresponding Societies. In 1796, the London Corresponding Society issued the following instructions to its travelling delegates:

'You are wrestling with the Enemies of the Human Race, not for yourself merely, for you may not see the full Day of Liberty, but for the Child hanging at the Breast'. (44) The study of Tom Paine's The Rights of Man (1792) by the Corresponding Societies called forth more cheap literature to counteract such radical ideas. The Cheap Repository Tract Society disseminated propaganda calculated to perpetuate ruling class hegemony. The works of Hannah More reinforced the inevitability of the hierarchical social order: 'Beautiful is the order of Society when each, according to his place - pays willing honour to his superiors - when servants are prompt to obey their masters and masters deal kindly with their servants; when high, low, rich and poor.... instead of proudly pushing himself into the chair of his superior, sit down each satisfied with his own place'. (45)

This ideological struggle symbolises for Harrison the ambivalent role of adult education: it has been a movement of protest and yet, at the same time, a means to promote social acceptance and harmony.

45. Hodgen, Worker's Ed. p. 30
This ambivalence reflects the diverse motives of the sponsors of adult education. Harrison is emphatic in drawing attention to the social purposes inhering in particular institutional forms. The Ministry of Reconstruction's Final Report 1919 drew attention to this consideration: '...a significant feature of the whole movement since its inception has been the intimate relationship between adult education and other departments of social effort... It is the expression in one sphere of activity - that concerned with the training of the mind and character - of the interests and ideals which dominate the rest'. (46)

Whereas the middle class sponsors viewed adult education as one method of coping with the moral and social condition of the working classes, the latter viewed it as a useful instrument in the struggle for social and political emancipation. In 1798 Singleton and Fox founded an Adult School in Nottingham in order to familiarise the poor with the Holy Scriptures, as well as to fill in the gaps left by a poor or non existent elementary education. The 1919 Report comments that the 'dominant note of these experiments was a mixture of piety, genuine philanthropy and political apprehension'. (47) Of course, some argued that there were dangers involved in over-educating the people, namely that they would show a disdain for manual work. Once those fears had been assuaged, sponsors could appeal to various interest groups for subscriptions: to Christians anxious for the redemption of souls; reformers shocked at the idle and dissolute habits of the poor and politicians alarmed by the

47 Final Report 1919 Para. 6
growth of political agitation. Dr. Pole appealed to the affluent in Bristol thus: 'Give liberally because adult education will put an end to existing crimes and encourage the principles upon which society depends for its security. The lower classes will not then be so dependent on the more provident members of society as they are now....Industry, frugality and economy will be their possession. They will have learned better to practice meekness, Christian fortitude and resignation. Our poor rate will then be lightened ...'. (48) As well as spiritual enlightenment, Dr. Pole offered the prospects of an erosion of 'welfare dependency'. By the 1830's Adult Schools were on the wane, with the exception of those that extended their curriculum amongst other things. Joseph Sturge, a middle class Chartist, helped to establish the Severn Street Adult School in Birmingham (1845) with a view to working class emancipation. Not only was the curriculum widened to encompass arithmetic, grammar, writing and geography, but he also established savings bank and a sick benefit fund, thereby contributing to the movement for collective self-help.

Although Adult Schools gave strict priority to scriptural authority, a subordinate theme was the 'gentling' of the masses. Equally, the Mechanics Institute gave some consideration to the diffusion of political as well as technical knowledge. By the 1820's, it was becoming apparent that industrialisation required craftsmen who, by virtue of their basic knowledge of the elements of science, would be able to keep abreast of new inventions, new processes and new materials. The object of London's Mechanics Institute,

48. Final Report 1919 Para. 6
inaugurated in 1823, was, 'the instruction of Members in the principles of the Arts they practice and in the various branches of science and useful knowledge'. (49) The Institutes in many cases were supported by industrialists, politicians (Whigs) and Nonconformists for a variety of motives. The employer desired an educated and more industrious (and more profitable) workforce. Politicians such as Lord Brougham (1778-1868) hoped that they would provide a training ground for the working classes in self-government. Philanthropists hoped that they would be instrumental in the alleviation of poverty while others saw in them a means of reinforcing the status quo. The Rev. Higginson of Derby hoped they would establish 'respect for the laws and ready obedience to them; that due subordination of rank on which the well-being of every gradation in society depends; and faithful discharge of all those duties which we owe to the whole community'. (50)

Although the Institutes prohibited the discussion of politics and other controversial topics, it would be mistaken to view them solely as vehicles for the scientific education of tradesmen. The reformers were quite willing to use the M.I. for the inculcation of the 'sound' principles of political economy. On 6 November 1826, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (S.D.U.K.) was formed in an effort to win over the minds of the most intelligent and articulate sections of the working classes to the kind of society the Whig governments were trying to create. It may seem a contradiction to be doing this at the same time as prohibiting

49. T. Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain. Liverpool (1962) p. 121

political discussion. Harrison suggests that the official policy proscribed the free discussion of controversial party politics. The laws of political economy were felt to be above the level of party politics and therefore outside the scope of the ban. The S.D.U.K.'s 'The Penny Magazine' contained useful knowledge on non-controversial topics, such as 'Birds of Paradise,' 'on the Pronunciation of Hard Words,' 'Kenilworth Castle,' 'Mineral Kingdom' and 'Lord Somers.' Occasionally, the editor, Charles Knight, would publish articles that were politically contentious to radical working men. The article 'Councils of Trade' was a description of a court of conciliation 'Given with the hope of making it better known; as we believe that an institution of such a nature, with some few alterations, might lead to a permanent improvement in the morals and happiness of the inhabitants of our manufacturing towns.' (51) If the working classes did not understand the laws, such as the last hour of the factory day is the source of all profit, then they would fall prey to agitators and demagogues.

This kind of material was produced to counter the influence of the radical, unstamped press, such as Hetherington's 'Poor Man's Guardian' whose opening number stated: 'Defiance is our only remedy....we will try, step by step, the power of right against might.' (52) To the politically active members of the working classes, the Whig-inspired magazines were 'that easy issue of Whig benevolence, all that kindly supply of juiceless chaff.' (53)

52. Pauline Gregg, A Social and Economic History of Britain 1760-1872 (1973 p. 272)
53. Harrison, Learning p. 29
was suspect and so they turned elsewhere for guidance. D. Smith quotes one Ebeneezer Eliot of Sheffield who expressed his regret that "Our Mechanics Institute has not on its list one physical force Chartist; no it is among the dog fighters that physical force orators and other hirelings of monopolists find applauders."

(54) Harrison argues that adult education was devitalised when it became directed towards crudely social ends. There appears to be a fear of the 'mob' on the part of certain sponsors. For the Rev. James Acworth, the raison d'être of the Bradford M.I. was not that it would make the working class levellers, but that it would make them respecters of property rights. What shocked Acworth and Eliot was that the working classes regulated their own behaviour - the middle classes were unable to elicit deference. Eliot painted an alarming picture of the unreformed mob: "their brutal, bloated mindless faces appal and amaze the stranger; and in their looks thoughtful men see catastrophe, which is too probably destined to cast the horrors of the First French Revolution utterly into the shade." (55)

What motivated these adult scholars in the first half of the century and how did they react to the seemingly disinterested exertions of the middle classes? Kelly distinguishes two groups of scholars: those who desired self-improvement and those who saw the acquisition of knowledge as a means towards the radical reconstruction of society. 'Self-improvement' as a goal is capable of bearing different meanings; does it mean an intellectual interest in learning for its own sake or a desire to acquire knowledge as an

54. Smith, Conflict p. 54
55. Smith, Conflict p. 55
instrument of personal advancement? Contemporary understanding emphasises the latter citing Samuel Smiles Self Help (1859) as the apostle of material success. Smiles had presented in a popular form the dominant social philosophy of the age: 'The hallmark of Respectability, the duty as well as the means of self-improvement, of rising in the social hierarchy, had become widely suffused throughout the nation'. (56) But he condemned the use of education to 'get on' in life as a low idea. The whole of Smiles' faith was placed in the realisation by every individual of his full potential. Professor Thornton attempts to rescue Smiles from his admirers by quoting passages warning of the dangers of success: 'Even the poor man....though he possesses but little of this world's goods, may, in the enjoyment of a cultivated nature, of opportunities used and not abused, of a life spent to the best of his means and ability, look down, without the slightest feeling of envy, upon the person of the more worldly success, the man of money-bags and acres'. (57) However, such arguments fell on deaf ears when addressed to socially mobile youth from the working or lower middle classes. By 1879, seventy Mechanics Institutes were designated as class centres under the aegis of the Department of Science and Art, and offering pure science subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, magnetism and electricity. However, for the earlier period (1820-1850), both Burnett and Vincent seem to concur in the view that there was a desire to pursue knowledge for its own sake rather than material gain. A minority of the self-taught autobiographers had a long term practical objective in the radical transformation of society.

56. Harrison, Learning p. 211
But most of them pursued a 'polite' education which had little or no relevance to their occupations or daily lives. Vincent finds 'little evidence' that the self-improving working men saw useful knowledge as a means towards industrial success. He quotes the case of James Burn (Autobiography of a Beggar Boy) for whom the term 'useful' knowledge was synonymous with 'book' knowledge. In a practical sense, this was useless in that his reading would not further his career as a hatter. There are very few cases of artisans studying in order to make themselves better workmen.

Innovations in the techniques of production which had taken place by 1850 had yet to substitute 'book learning' for the traditional method of acquiring a trade by practice and example. The period 1820 to 1850 represented a hiatus between the early period of industrial innovation where 'uneducated' artisans did become successful entrepreneurs and the later growth of managerial and white-collar classes which were more closely identified with formal educational qualifications. 'In real terms the opportunities for working men to become upwardly mobile either by an institutional education or by gaining the equivalent by their own efforts, were at a nadir'. (58)

The Mechanics Institute suffered from an exclusive preoccupation with scientific education as the Prospectus of the Manchester M.I. makes clear: 'it is not intended to teach the trade of machine-maker, the dyer, the carpenter, the mason or any other practical business; but there is no art which does not depend more or less on scientific principles, and to search out what these are, and

58. Vincent, Bread p. 148
to point out their practical application, will form the chief objects of this Institution'. (59) The erudite lecture courses in pure science did not appeal to under-educated and over-worked men. Some set out to remedy this by providing elementary instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry and commercial subjects. In assessing the reaction of the working classes, it is necessary to examine the groups who exercised control of the Institutes. In some cases, they were firmly controlled by their middle class sponsors: the 'Rules and Regulations' of the Leeds M.I. stated that only those who had paid a deposit of £2 and paid 10 shillings annually should have effective control. Those subscribers paying less than 5 shillings exercised no right of voting at meetings. Kelly suggests that 'money talked and the result was that the institutes, instead of serving as instruments of political, social and economic emancipation as Robertson and Hodgskin would have wished, became on the whole supporters of the existing social order'. (60) Rowley's (61) examination of Stourbridge M.I. (1847) finds a low rate of working class participation: nineteen mechanics out of a total membership of one hundred and forty seven members. Participation by the intended beneficiaries was low because the threshold of entry was high in terms of finance, preliminary education, demeanour and the acceptance of social relationships based on deference. Of the eight Black Country Institutes still in existence by 1850, only two had a graduated scale of subscriptions falling below ten shillings per annum. The hierarchical

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59. Jepson, Beginnings p. 55

60. Kelly, Hist. Ad. Ed. p. 121

social relationships of the workplace were replicated during the evening: as the lecture room at Wolverhampton Athenaeum filled in 1852, parties in their 'working dress' were obliged to go away. In addition to the many petty restrictions, the sponsors prohibited discussion of politics and controversial theology, issues that were close to the hearts of advanced sections of the working classes. Some workers wanted something in the way of relaxation and a social life, but the early institutes made no concessions to such weaknesses: newspapers were frequently excluded from the reading room and fiction was banned from the library. Kelly concludes that 'the average working man returned to his public house, or his club or his Mutual Improvement Society'. (62)

As artisans failed to flock in, the pendulum swung in favour of the 'intellectual and moral improvement' of all who cared to avail themselves of the facilities offered. The educational programme shifted in emphasis away from serious and systematic lecture courses in science towards single lectures and short courses on a variety of topics. In 1834, Liverpool M.I. offered lectures on Hamlet, The Microscope, Milton, Mechanics, Combustion, Music of Ireland, Production and the Use of Silk, Middle Ages and other topics that afforded an opportunity for the middle classes to acquire a little cultural elegance. Whereas southern institutes were dominated by the middle classes by the 1860's, those in the north and Scotland were 'still substantially working class'. (63) Kelly suggests that the composition was similar to that of

the Workers' Educational Association in the early twentieth century - skilled manual workers with a sprinkling of shopkeepers, shop assistants, business and professional people. Where there was a demand for skilled and educated workmen, the institutes moved in the direction of technical education especially after the introduction of Science and Art Department grants. Roderick and Stephens suggest that the degree of working class representation and technical education may have both been over-estimated. Artisans included not only those who supported themselves by manual labour but also 'small shopkeepers, small tradesmen, village carpenters and policemen; clerks and shopmen who cannot afford the fee of a middle class parent'. (64) Furthermore, the attendance lists for Science and Art Department classes in 1879 show a poor record for applied sciences. The grants were not directed so much at technical education as remedying deficiencies of science education in secondary schools. The high attendance figures for pure sciences may well have reflected the enrolment of teachers and pupil-teachers.

In terms of sponsorship, the Mutual Improvement Societies represented the 'most truly indigenous of all the early attempts at working class adult education'. (65) Acquisition of the 3 R's was a priority, and to this end small groups met in each other's houses devising a programme of classes, reading essays and perhaps creating a small library. Margaret Hodgen claims that the first one was organised in Birmingham (1789) by working men who withdrew from

64. Roderick and Stephens, Educ. and Ind. p. 62
65. Harrison, Learning p. 53
the 'Sunday Society' organised by Sunday School teachers. One member, Thomas Clarke, held meetings in his house for a group known as the 'Cast Iron Philosophers'. Their interests were Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Electricity, Pneumatics and Astronomy. Often, the M.I.S. stemmed from a desire to discuss political and religious subjects. Working men were prepared to pay up to three pence a week on condition that the work was relevant to their needs. Emanuel Shinwell, grandson of a Polish emigre, comments in his autobiography on the desire for knowledge for its own sake: 'he (the grandfather) saw also the effect of the effort to widen the mental horizon of the people who had been torn from their roots in the countryside and had lapsed into a sort of urban savagery. It was ....in 1844 that the Leeds Mutual Improvement Society started in a tumbledown house to teach adults the 3 R's. By mid-century it was teaching Chemistry, French and what was described as 'Discussion' to people who would never gain any monetary advantage from the knowledge but thereby immeasurably widened their mental and spiritual horizon'. (66)

The Mutual Improvement Societies demonstrated the extent to which working people were willing to establish autonomous initiatives when they became convinced of the necessity to do so. Thomas Hodgskin, the Chartist, had declared: 'It would be better for men to be deprived of education than to receive their education from their masters; for education in that sense, is no better than the training of cattle that are broken to the yoke'. (67)

67. Hodgen, Workers Ed. p. 69
'Knowledge Chartists' showed an enthusiasm for knowledge as a means to the right ordering of social life. The French Revolution of 1789 and the transformation of traditional relationships by the Industrial Revolution both brought ordinary men into politics. They were critical of attempts by the S.D.U.K. to uphold the rights of property. In 1836, William Lovett formed the London Working Man's Association with a view to the achievement of equal political and social rights for all classes. 'We wished to establish a political school of self-instruction among them (the working class) in which they should accustom themselves to examine great social and political principles'. (68) The Chartists attempted to give effect to their ideals: in 1840 the 'National Association for promoting the Political and Social Improvement of the People' opened a hall in Holborn where the working classes could meet for lectures, classes and concerts. Despite the ephemeral nature of such institutions, the working classes showed a continued determination to share in political power. In 1850, the Flint Glass Makers' Magazine issued the following rallying cry: 'If you do not wish to stand as you are and suffer more oppression, we say to you get knowledge, and in getting knowledge you get power.....Let us earnestly advise you to educate: get intelligence instead of alcohol - it is sweeter and more lasting.' (69) By the mid-nineteenth century, there appears to be three strands of self-education amongst the working classes: the desire for knowledge for its own sake, the desire to secure personal aggrandizement and the desire to use that knowledge for the reconstruction of

68. Hodgen, Workers Ed. p. 69

69. Jepson, Beginnings p. 49
society. The experience of the Mechanics Institutes and the S.D.U.K. had demonstrated the need for sponsors to take cognisance of the demands of the intended clients.

In 1842 the Rev. Bayley, a Nonconformist Minister, addressed the interests of working people in social and political questions by establishing a 'People's College'. Unlike many M.I.'s which were firmly controlled by middle class elites, Bayley inculcated a democratic atmosphere by drawing on the model of a Nonconformist chapel and the ideal of a college of scholars pursuing understanding. The curriculum was humane rather than technical, treating the individual as a 'citizen' rather than a wage-earning animal. The curriculum included Geography, History, Philosophy, Latin, Greek, Science and Natural History. Students were not to be drilled into suitable moral positions, but encouraged to debate issues arising from the study of history and politics. However, the premium on success was so high that the founder's intentions were gradually subverted. Kelly notes that the College became more vocational as elements of the classical curriculum (Latin and Greek) were displaced in favour of utilitarian subjects such as Chemistry. Similar tendencies were evident in London's Working Men's College established by a group of Christian Socialists (F.D. Maurice, T. Hughes and J.M. Ludlow) in 1854. They were deeply interested in finding a Christian solution to the social problems, regarding Christianity as a matter of deed as well as faith. Having stated unequivocally that they were opposed to excesses of unregulated wealth production, their object was to 'Christianise the socialist and socialise the Christian'. This group of clergymen, teachers, lawyers and architects could only be described as 'socialist' in very general terms. For Maurice, socialism was synonymous with
Co-operation. In contrast to the atheist Marx, he believed that monarchy was not only a divinely instituted form of government, but the only form of which a Christian could approve. Margaret Hodgen suggests that 'on the whole, Christian Socialism was less a system of ideas than a warm, human impulse toward social improvement deriving its inspiration from the Universities and the Church'. (70) The College was seen by its founders as a vehicle for the promotion of their 'Associationist' beliefs. Having ruled out other methods of advance on the grounds of unacceptability or inexpediency, they were convinced that Associationism (the association of workers in an enterprise that was democratically managed and based on profit sharing) could secure radical change without revolution. The primary aim was to provide 'human' studies to adult working men. As Maurice stated in his 'Scheme of a College for Working Men' (1854): 'Our position as members of a society which affirms the operations of trade and industry to be under a moral law - a law concerning the relations of men to each other, obliges us to regard social, political, or to use a more general phrase, human studies, as the primary part of our education'. (71) Was the College successful in attracting working class students possessed of a disinterested search for knowledge? Between 1855 and 1860, manual workers represented no more than fifty per cent of the student intake. J.F.C. Harrison identifies North London as an area that provided fertile ground for such a venture. From the ranks of cabinet-makers, tailors, printers, engravers and

70. Hodgen. Workers Ed. p. 99

watchmakers came self-educated working men who led Owenite, Chartist and Trade Union Movements. Harrison suspects that the desire of the College to remain non partisan in times of social and political tension and to eschew popular movements reduced its credibility with the politically active who suspected them of being 'Laodiceans'. Its desire to perform an educational rather than an agitational role contributed to the relative decline of working class students. Yet even in the educational domain, the pattern of development was not what the founders expected. The weakest division was that of Humanities, in particular History, Politics and Literature. The most numerously attended classes were those offered by Maths, Drawing, Languages and Grammar. Whereas the sponsors anticipated the liberal studies enriching the personality of the student, the clients operated with a more instrumental outlook. While the founders declined any involvement with the Society of Arts, the Suggestions Book contained at least one every year for a class in Shorthand. Working class interest in education according to Harrison, was 'largely utilitarian'. By 1901 working class demands were officially acknowledged by the 'Tansley - Shaw Report on the Enquiry into the Decline of numbers at the Working Men's College': 'The demand amongst working people for mental training as such and for instruction in such subjects as Literature, History and Science (except for technical purposes) has still to be, in large measure, created'. (71a) The College faced stiff competition from the Polytechnics (Regent Street opened its doors in 1880) and the Continuation Schools which enjoyed advantages of professionalism, cost and convenience.

71a. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 128
Harrison concludes that the belief in the desire for education 'for its own sake' amongst the working classes is one that has little substance - 'an illusion of which successive generations of middle class educationists have had to disabuse themselves'. (72) People require some compelling motive for part-time study. The Christian Socialists had seen the College primarily as a vehicle for the promotion of their Associationist ideals. Of greater immediacy to the working man was the need to promote economic well-being, whether by learning the 3 R's in the Preparatory Division or by taking shorthand or book-keeping in the Special Division.

The authors of the Final Report (1919) had clearly not disabused themselves of such illusions when they claimed that the primary motive of the adult student is 'normally an interest in some department of knowledge for its own sake'. (73) This under-estimation of vocational education can be explained by referring not only to the composition of the Committee, but also by its terms of reference. It contained eleven members of the W.E.A., including A. Mansbridge and R.H. Tawney whose educational ideology is evident in the Chairman's (A.L. Smith) covering letter to the Prime Minister. He echoes the sentiments proclaimed by Mansbridge sixteen years previously in an article published in the 'University Extension Journal'. Then, Mansbridge had warned of the parlous condition of democracy brought about by an education system which 'promotes an unthinking absorption of facts and which renders

73. Final Report 1919 para. 92
men 'more susceptible to flights of mere rhetoric'. (74) For A.L. Smith, the goal of education was to fit a man for the duties of citizenship a sine qua non of which was the 'development of an open habit of mind, clear sighted and truth-loving, proof against sophisms, shibboleths, claptrap phrases and cant'. (75) The Committee moreover, were not required to examine the gamut of adult education as is evident from their remit which was 'To consider the provision for, and possibilities of Adult Education (other than technical or vocational) in Great Britain and to make recommendations'. The development of University Extension work in 1873 raised the question of the demand by the working classes for a liberal education, one that was cultural rather than vocational, humanistic rather than technical and one that concentrated upon developing the faculty of thought rather than the power to absorb factual information. The term 'liberal' had its genesis as a term of social distinction, referring to a class of free men (from liber, free). The liberal arts were skills and pursuits appropriate to men of independent means and distinct from other (mechanical) skills and pursuits appropriate to a lower class. At the Cambridge Extension Conference of 1887, Dr. Westcott, Regius Professor of Divinity reaffirmed this position: "It is not the business of the University, pressed by its own urgent duties, either to amuse, or to train craftsmen. Its business is to inspire men; to give them that passion for higher knowledge which enables every form of life. It is not the business of the University

74. A. Mansbridge, The Kingdom of the Mind. Manchester (1946) p. 1
75. Final Report 1919 p. 5
to teach mere bread-winning knowledge, but to communicate that which is, in words familiar to so many, not the source of livelihood but the real inspiration of life". (76) J. Burnett in Destiny Obscure and D. Vincent in Bread, Knowledge and Freedom both indicate that most self-taught autobiographers pursued what was, in effect, a 'polite' education which had little or no relevance to their occupations. However Vincent points out that such a finding is inevitable in his study of 142 autobiographies given the exclusion from his sample of individuals who achieved upward social mobility. Nevertheless, during the first half of the century, there were few economic or social pressures to improve the quality of workmen. The cheapness of U.K. labour was a disincentive to innovation, which in turn, made easier the acquisition of skills. This was reinforced by the ideology of laissez-faire which legitimated legislative quiescence. The conduct of government as cheaply as possible won the support of middle class entrepreneurs. When State intervention emerged through the creation of the Department of Science and Art, the amounts disbursed were miniscule: between 1853 and 1859 grants to Science schools amounted to only £898. After 1870, the Department became involved in funding the Higher Grade Schools, particularly those in the North of England where artisans were willing to pay higher fees for a higher quality education. In 1880, the Nottingham School offered instruction in the following subjects up to Standard eight: Latin, French, German, Mechanics, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Physics. Although having vocational relevance, the schools did not offer

76. Jepson, Beginnings p. 216
technical instruction. Indeed, as Roderick and Stephens point out, the 1889 Technical Instruction Act, which enabled the raising of a penny rate, defined its province as 'instruction in the principles of science and art as applied to industries or employment....but not to teaching the practice of any Trade.' (77) Liverpool's Technical Instruction Committee widened the definition to encompass political economy, teacher training and instruction in cookery. State initiatives were designed to complement private initiatives. In 1877, the Livery companies of London formed a committee to prepare a scheme for a system of technical education. The City and Guilds Institute (1878) encouraged and subsidised evening classes for artisans and held examinations in applied subjects, for example, alkali manufacture. Under its auspices Finsbury Technical College opened its doors in 1883 as a 'model trade school for the instruction of artisans and other persons preparing for intermediate posts in industrial works.' The emphasis was upon applied science with courses on building, engineering and design. Barnard (78) suggests that although the Mechanics Institutes were languishing as general educational and social centres for the lower middle classes, they had acted as 'prototypes' for the pioneering polytechnics, the first of which was opened by Quintin Hogg in Regent Street (1880). It aimed at the 'instruction of artisans and clerks in the principles, and to some extent, the practice of their breadwinning pursuits.' The City Parochial Charities Act (1883) stimulated the work of such institutions by releasing nearly £80,000 per annum for the benefit of more distant parts.

77. Roderick and Stephens, Educ. and Ind. p. 73

of London. Fees were low, and as J.F.C. Harrison notes with respect to the Working Men's College, students eschewed the humane curriculum in favour of vocationally relevant subjects - brick-laying, plumbing, electrical work, watch-making and photography.

The utilitarian nature of working class demand has been documented by W.A. Devereux, in *Adult Education in Inner London*. He examines the work of evening schools which initially catered for older students who had not passed through the elementary school and who needed instruction in the basic subjects. By 1883, the London School Board allowed, at a nominal fee, the use of school buildings to responsible teachers and others who wished to provide classes in more advanced work especially under the regulations of the Department of Science and Art. Devereux notes the demand to study science and modern languages particularly by young London teachers.

The schools were given greater latitude by the Education Act (1890) which declared that section 3 of the 1870 Act (which provided that elementary education should be the principal part of the education given in schools) should not apply to evening schools. Thus Book-keeping, German, Shorthand, Needlework and Laundry-work were added to the grant-earning subjects. The 1890-91 session witnessed an increase of 12,000 students. Devereux notes that a 'good part' of this increase was due to the inclusion of swimming. This point serves to remind us that the parameters of adult education were not fixed in terms of the liberal-vocational debate. The London Trades Council had submitted a memorial requesting recreative and practical subjects - musical drill, singing, drawing, modelling, carving and object lessons illustrated by lanterns. In 1885, the Recreative Evening School Association, a voluntary union of
educationists, 'aimed to give an impetus to class enterprise by introducing into the curricula, at their own cost, such subjects of a semi-recreative character as would effectively appeal to those young people, who suffering from physical exhaustion after a heavy day's labour, either had no inclination for evening study, or having such inclination, desire mental food of an easily digestible nature'. (79) The majority of the working classes were interested in neither a liberal nor a vocational education. The asperities of working class life generated the need for recuperation, a need that was more likely to be satisfied in the ale house than in the Continuation School. Michael Sadler, Secretary of the Oxford Extension Delegacy, believed it was the duty of a national institution to impart serious education: 'the education we wish to diffuse is not to be an education to keep things as they are; we do not propose an education of citizens for any selfish purposes of class concealment....The purpose of our educational movement will, therefore, frankly be to make life happier, to make citizens better....Our greatest task will be to try to raise the general level of interest in noble studies'. (80) A litmus test to gauge the extent of demand for citizenship studies is available with the publication of the 1893 Code for Evening Continuation Schools. One feature of the Code was the introduction of a syllabus on 'Life and the Duties of the Citizen' which informed that 'the object of the teacher should be to proceed from the known to the familiar, such as the policeman, the rate-payer, the Board of


Guardians, and the Town Council, to the history of and reasons for, our local and national institutions, and our responsibilities in connection with them. (80a) Devereux notes that the 'education for citizenship' classes attracted a 'meagre response'. The practical subjects were strongly supported, particularly those with a vocational relevance. The commercial subjects flourished as one would expect in an expanding financial and commercial centre. By 1903, London possessed thirteen commercial schools and entered students for external examinations in the Society of Arts, London Chamber of Commerce and the Civil Service Commission. In 1899, one thousand two hundred students had taken the Society of Arts examinations in French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Book-keeping and Shorthand mainly because their employers valued this evidence of their progress. The following table illustrates the low priority accorded to 'noble studies' and the greater emphasis upon studies of a vocational and recreative character:

TABLE 2.
Inner London: All classes except those held under Division II and IV of the Regulations of the Board of Education, South Kensington (1902-1903)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Number of Pupils Receiving 14 hours + instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>3,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book-keeping</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>8,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>2,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>2,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Citizenship</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>2,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>4,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>10,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Nursing</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Economy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>16,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Carving</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood-Work</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>4,908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: W.A. Devereux, Adult Education in Inner London p. 35

Although Devereux is unable to give precise figures regarding the social class composition of the evening schools, it is quite clear that the popularity of Shorthand was related to the number of clerical workers employed in London. In the fee-paying schools, situated in middle class neighbourhoods, the most popular subjects were Shorthand and Book-keeping. The poorer areas tended to demand Gymnastics, Dressmaking, Wood-Work and the 3 R's. Physical exercise proved to be very popular along with drill. Bearing in
mind the contemporary arguments about the need for national efficiency, the School Board for London welcomed the demand from the poorer quarters. 'The season's work has been very beneficial and in some cases, quite beyond expectation.....The greatest increase in chest measurement was $3\frac{3}{4}$" and in lung increase 57 cubic inches..... The pupils show a much greater carriage of the body, greater strength...' (81) Yet the London County Council, to whom the work of the evening institutes were transferred in 1902, were concerned at the limited view of evening education - seen as repairing the defects of an elementary education or as an aid to employment. Its Educational Committee wanted to offer History, Geography, Art, Music and Government to those who had a love of learning for its own sake. Although it has established by 1913, twelve non-vocational institutes, it felt that the failure of 'humane subjects (especially history) in our opinion is due largely to a carrying over of the day school methods to evening school pupils.' (82) They hoped that, in future, teachers would approach civic affairs not through the text book, but the 'living event.' In several institutes, the W.E.A. helped to fill the gaps. The 1919 Report quotes the senior students of Bath Street Women's Free Institute who formed a class in order to obtain lectures on social history.

Sponsors of liberal studies were concerned at the way in which technical or scientific training could degenerate into sordid materialism. The 1919 Report declared that too great an emphasis


82. 'Education Committee Report. 1913' in W.A. Devereux, Adult Education in Inner London (1982) p. 69
had been laid upon material considerations and too little regard paid to other aspects of life, namely providing the fullest opportunities for personal development by ensuring that the intellectual and spiritual treasures of the Nation should be the heritage of all rather than the possession of the few. The evidence from the Birmingham and Midland Institute, established in 1854, suggests that such an appeal would fall upon the deaf ears of the aspiring working classes. In a spirit of class conciliation, Birmingham's Society of Arts had invited Charles Dickens to attend a meeting where he sanctioned a project for an "Institution where the words 'exclusion' and 'exclusivism' should be quite unknown; where all classes and creeds might assemble in common faith, trust and confidence". (83) The Artisan Committee suggested primary classes in elementary scientific principles that were related to the trades in which they were engaged. The demand for education was demonstrated by the research of Rev. Gover who presented his findings at the first Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (Birmingham, 1857). His research into the educational careers of 1,373 children showed that those who remained at school until the age of thirteen came from 'families of the most respectable artisans anxious to obtain situations of a better kind for their children'. (84) These children supplied the ranks of the pupil-teachers, members of Young Men's Associations and frequenters of lectures and reading rooms. In 1867, they supplied 45% of the Institute's population. The artisans dominated the Industrial Department

83. Smith, Conflict p. 145

particularly the classes in Physics, Chemistry and Physiology. The courses were attractive in financial terms through the operation of subsidies. Subscriptions to the middle class dominated General Department, which offered literary lectures, soirees and conversazioni, were transferred in order to keep the fees as low as £2 per term for the artisan. By 1882, some £20,000 had been transferred. Mindful of the parlous state of elementary education, the Institute began 'Penny Classes' in Elementary Arithmetic and 'Penny Lectures' on Astronomy. The courses of instruction were organised in graduated steps so as to encourage greater accomplishments. In addition to internal examinations and prizes, the Institute submitted students in those organised by the Society of Arts (1859) and the Science and Art Department (1861). Through these national examinations, the Institute scored notable successes: entrants to the civil service, teaching, universities with one working rule maker winning a scholarship to the Royal College of Science. The pursuit of certificates intensified as the benefits of the Northcote - Trevelyan reforms (1854) were made manifest. The Pharmacy Act of 1870 required that all chemists and druggists should qualify by examination. Especially important was the Practical Chemistry class. By 1852, the only science colleges were Owen's College, Manchester and the Anderson Institute in Glasgow. Many leading scientists gained practical laboratory experience in Germany. It was an achievement of some note when three classes were established, two of which were exclusive to artisans at reduced fees of ten shillings per term. The Institute responded to the demands of the clients with the opening, in 1888, of a School of Commerce offering Mercantile
Arithmetic, Commercial Geography, Shorthand, Typewriting, Commercial French, German and Spanish. The language classes were well attended by clerical workers who grasped the importance, regarding Spanish, of the growth of trade in Central and South America. Yet there was agitation against the utilitarian nature of the Institute. George Dawson, who later established an English Literature class in which women were allowed, wrote in a letter to the 'Birmingham Journal': 'there was something egotistical and selfish in merely making people better pattern drawers and better glass manufacturers for an employer, who would no doubt be glad to pay money to an institution which had the effect of exalting his name and fame and so put more money in his pocket'.

(85) Although classes in History and Logic were offered with the former proving very popular, the Institute retained its vocational emphasis. However competition from municipal institutions (primarily the City Technical School, the Municipal School of Commerce and the Board's free evening classes) forced the Institute's attention towards the provision of non-vocational classes. With the passing of the Third Reform Act (1884) and the increasing power of the trade union movement, the Institute responded to the demands of political education. Rachel Waterhouse suggests that by the 1890's, the patrons of the Institute suspected that science alone would not solve the problems of health, wealth and happiness. Whereas in 1872, the emphasis was upon science and technical education as the panacea for all ills, by 1912 the aim was to produce better citizens. Albeit an extreme example, the speech by W.C. Aitken, Vice-President of the Institute, ascribed the

Prussian success on the battlefield to its superior system of technical education: "Whence the success which crowned the Prussian arms? From science training; from masses of steel produced by the metallurgical knowledge of Krupp of Essen - converted into ordnance by industrially-educated engineers and workmen - served on the battlefield by artillerists trained to a perfect knowledge of the laws which guide projectiles in their course". (86) Such a role model was considered less than appropriate by Alfred Hayes, Principal of the Industrial Department (1912), who wanted to develop 'a well informed and enlightened intelligence in the citizens of the rising generation'. (87) By the first decades of the twentieth century, several Colleges and Residential Settlements had been established with a mixture of religious, philanthropic, social and educational purposes (Morley College London, 1885, Ruskin College, Oxford, 1899, Fircroft College, Bourneville, 1909 amongst others). Fircroft College was inspired by the Danish High Schools in its attempts to make better citizens both in an intellectual and a physical sense. The 1919 Report suggests that 'if technical education in England springs ultimately from the Mechanics Institutes, social and civic education, though its history runs for long periods underground, can be traced to the educational idealism which was one side of most working class movements up to the 1850's - of Co-operation, of Chartism and early Trade Unionism'. (88) These movements demonstrated that


88. Final Report 1919 Para. 15
the working classes wanted a share not only in the 'kingdom of the mind' but also political power. The enthusiasm for knowledge needs to be understood as a means to the right ordering of social life. The ideas and disastrous experiments of Robert Owen gave impetus to the idea of education as an end to be deliberately pursued. His view of social order based on brotherhood and not competition recognised the necessity of training the intellect and character for the service of the community. 'Civic education' was conceived as a means of social emancipation. William Lovett, the 'moral force' Chartist, when drafting his scheme for 'National Education' in 1837, clearly underlined the connection between knowledge and power. Calling for voluntary subscriptions, he proclaimed 'It would be industriously employed in politically, intellectually and morally training fathers, mothers and children to know their rights and duties. And with a people so trained exclusive power, corruption and injustice would soon cease to have an existence'. (89) It is important to recognise that from the 1840's, politics and education became inseparable. Motives were of course mixed. For the upwardly mobile artisan in Birmingham during the 1860's, education had a purely vocational relevance. The ten shilling classes in Practical Chemistry would ensure his fitness for his chosen career. On the other hand, J. Burnett quotes the autodidact Thomas Carter whose motivation consisted of 'new sources of mental pleasure and to express my emotions in an intelligent and appropriate manner'. (90)

89. Quoted in Final Report 1919 para. 19
90. Burnett, Destiny p. 137
the 1919 Report considered that Adult Education had developed not 'per saltum, but as the natural concomitant of other educational and social developments'. (91) While acknowledging the demand for vocational education in L.E.A. evening classes and colleges, it suggests that the primary motive is 'normally an interest in some department of knowledge for its own sake'. (92) The suggestion is that the acquisition of knowledge is an end in itself without any consideration of utility. Yet the authors contradict themselves by pointing to the social impulses implicit in the desire for knowledge. Indeed, social movements which desire the creation of a new social order create the 'background of aspiration and endeavour which is the foundation of more directly educational work and suggest the questions for which men and women seek in study to find an answer'. (93) Quite clearly, they were conscious of the uses to which education might be put: to enable men and women to reinterpret the world in which they lived and to find a rational solution for the problems of their practical life. 'Surprise or indignation at social conditions leads them to social history, or political science, or economics'. (94)

For working class organisations, a liberal education was viewed as providing the means for securing social and industrial emancipation. The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers (1844) were not

91. Final Report 1919 Para. 89
92. Final Report 1919 Para. 92
93. Final Report 1919 Para. 88
94. Final Report 1919 Para. 89
merely concerned with inaugurating superior methods of trading. In preparing their rules for registering under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (1852) they inserted a clause devoting 10% of their profits to the cause of education. The Registrar declined to sign them on the grounds that the figure was excessive. Subsequently, the figure was scaled down to 2.5%. The movement's attempt to reorganise society on the basis of mutual service entailed commitment to education. G.F. Holyoake, in his *Self-Help by the People* noted the catholic vision of the pioneers; 'Every member was equal in rights and was allowed to express his opinions on whatever topic he took an interest in. Religion and politics, the terrors of the Mechanics Institutes, were common subjects of discussion.' (95) Unfortunately with expansion, many stores ('The Dark Stores') did not take advantage of the educational provisions. Indeed N.A. Jepson ascribes the failure of James Stuart's plans for a 'complete peripatetic University scheme for Co-operative Societies' in 1871 to the ascendancy of the 'Dark Stores'. In a letter to the 'Co-operative News' he suggested the formation of a joint committee which would engage a group of university teachers to conduct courses at various centres. Although the movement as a whole showed little interest in this peripatetic University scheme, individual Co-operative societies (the 'Sunrise Stores') memorialised Cambridge University in 1872.

University Extension derived from a recognition, first expressed in the Oxford University Commission Report (1852), that universities

95. Quoted in Jepson, *Beginnings* p. 64
were not institutions isolated from society, but an integral part of it charged with responsibilities. The Report criticised the narrow base of recruitment (in 1867, one third of undergraduates were drawn from the Clarendon nine) and its narrow curriculum. By 1870 James Stuart, a lecturer at Cambridge, and Archbishop Temple, a member of the Committee of Council on Education, were canvassing University Extension as a means of widening the base of recruitment. Blyth suggests that 'At the heart of extension work was a belief that ordinary men and women should have the opportunity to reflect upon the great philosophical questions related to life.' (96) It was a missionary movement to spread the idea of liberal education whose object was to 'lead out the faculties of the mind.' Some years later, the Rev. Canon Barnett, founder of Toynbee Hall attempted to distil the essence of liberal education in an article entitled 'What is University Teaching?': 'The student of history, literature and philosophy, rightly taught, is helped to get out of the groove in which he is placed by his relation to his country, class or creed. He will take larger views of life - he will move in a larger past and larger future - he will be human before he is English or foreign, employer or employed, radical or tory. He will by his larger humanity more fully enjoy his existence.' (97) James Stuart was perhaps more forceful in the expression of his views: 'one of the greatest dangers and difficulties in this country...at the present time is the grievous class distinctions which are in it....It seems to me....that nothing could more tend to work against that class distinction than any efforts which

96. J.A. Blyth, English University Adult Education 1908-1958 (1983) p. 4

we may take towards a system in which our rich and poor, our men and women, should be taught by the same individuals.' (98)

Three target groups were envisaged: ladies, young men of the middle classes and artisans.

Despite some notable ventures, such as the aggregate attendance of 1,300 Durham miners on courses in Political Economy (1880), R.D. Roberts, organising Secretary reviewed the first ten years thus: 'The Syndicate in formulating and starting the local lecture scheme had definitely in view the educational needs of the working classes, but although most of the evening audiences have included a sprinkling of artisans, there have been few instances until recently in which the artisan element constituted as large a proportion as was first anticipated.' (99) Although Oxford University attempted to recruit working class people through the Co-operative societies, Jepson argues that the proportion of artisans remained below 25%. (The year 1891-1892 saw an increase to 29.4% as Oxford organised a large number of technical and scientific courses in conjunction with the County Councils). There were several working class centres organised by the Co-operative society (Barnsley, Doncaster, Hebdon Bridge, Sowerby Bridge, Rotherham, Shipley and Todmorden) but most of these proved to be ephemeral.

N.A. Jepson identifies three factors which determined the failure of University Extension amongst the working classes: the extent

98. James Stuart (1871) Quoted by Jepson, Beginnings p. 24

99. Jepson, Beginnings p. 130
to which there existed a demand for a liberal education; the degree of working class representation upon the management committees of local Extension Centres and the question of finance. Regarding the first question, he suggests that there was a divergence of opinion. Hudson Shaw, a Cambridge lecturer, said of Barnsley, 'It is not true, as regards the Northern towns, that the working men will not accept education which is not intended to pay'. (100)

The main obstacle lay in the expense of attending lectures. This view is supported by worker scholars such as R. Halstead of the Hebdon Bridge Fustian Manufacturing Co-operative Society who offered this crie-de-coeur: 'We need contact with men whose great work is to impart knowledge from sources as uncontaminated as anything that is human can be'. (101) These sentiments prove that a demand existed, but do not show how widespread it was.

In a memorandum to the Bryce Commission (1895) from the Trades and Labour Societies, emphasis was laid on the belief that 'the Secondary Education of the working classes must to a large extent be technical and manual'. (102) Further evidence of the limited appeal of liberal studies is contained in the 1919 Report. It is reported that for the session 1913-1914, the Central Education Committee of the Co-operative Union supervised 564 classes containing 21,953 students. Despite the chief aim of the movement being the education of members in the principles and practice of co-operation, the numbers of students enrolling for 'Co-operation' and 'Economics of Co-operation' were surprisingly low, (463 and 14 respectively). The composition of the Local University Extension

100. Quoted by Jepson, Beginnings p. 143
101. Quoted by Jepson, Beginnings p. 144
102. Quoted by Jepson, Beginnings p. 147
Committees was crucial in that it determined the class composition of the audience. R.D. Roberts laid down that the 'most important condition to maintain is that the management be in the hands of artisans. Wherever this is the case we have large attendances of working people'. (103) Cambridge University placed the management of the affairs of the mining districts of Northumberland and Durham in the hands of a General Committee composed of artisans. There appeared to be a genuine desire for knowledge for its own sake with miners enrolling for a wide range of subjects including Political Economy, English History, Chemistry, Physiology and English Literature. Perhaps it was less complex getting together an artisan committee in a small homogeneous town where the working classes were more united. In York, the middle classes initiated the University Society for the Promotion of Higher Education but met with little success in recruiting workers. The Extension Society tried, in vain, a variety of strategies to attract working men: low membership fees (6d); technical education in association with the York Railway Institute and the provision of popular lectures and recreational facilities. Oxford University soon recognised that artisans were most successfully recruited by their fellow workmen, the two most outstanding examples being the Co-operative Societies at Hebdon Bridge and Oldham. The workers of Hebdon Bridge demonstrated a faith in the original co-operative ideal of education. Samuel Fielding and Robert Halstead explained to a conference of Co-operators (December 1893) why they had chosen lectures on Industrial History: "We have to remember that

103. Quoted by Jepson, Beginnings p. 167
we are committed to other matters in our co-operative life than extensive shop-keeping, making of large dividends and accumulating share capital. Co-operation is, in the first place, no doubt, an economic movement....But to grapple with a gigantic competitive system in a broad spirit, and in an efficient manner, we shall require the advantage of a broad minded education....If we are a 'State within a State' we shall have to gain the broad and large outlook of statesmanship on the problems of our great system of social and economic life'. (104) Despite this, the vast majority of Co-operative Societies did not continue University Extension lectures for a prolonged period. Because the Extension Movement was self-supporting, finance proved to be an obstacle. Jepson estimates that for a twelve lecture course with 'average' attendance, the cost would be ten shillings excluding the costs of books and travelling expenses. This obviously discouraged many working men, particularly when there were no public subscriptions. Often, subjects were chosen on the grounds of popularity rather than educational interest in an attempt to reduce fees. Where Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies did subsidise the local Extension centre, it was unlikely to be a permanent state of affairs. The subsidy granted by the Miners Union in Northumberland did not survive the onset of depression in1886 and the strike of the following year. Quite simply, the funds from the Co-operative Movement could not sustain the peripatetic University. J.A.R. Marriott reported to the Co-operative Congress of 1898 that of the 1,800 Societies contacted by the Special Committee enquiring into education, only 402 responded. Of these 269 contributed a

104. From a paper presented by S. Fielding and R. Halstead 'University Extension and the Co-operative Movement' in Jepson, Beginnings p. 171
total of £36,336 towards reading rooms (£11,000), libraries (£5,000), lecture classes (£2,000) and entertainment (£18,000). It seems that the Extension Movement was successful in those centres where there existed a strong nucleus of co-operators with a firm belief in education.

Jepson argues that five lessons were drawn from the unfulfilled promises of University Extension. There was a need to reduce costs to the working man, but that the introduction of subsidisation should not involve middle class control. Thirdly, the establishment of continuity by the appointment of full-time residential lectures of university status. Recruitment had to be placed in the hands of working men themselves if sufficient numbers were to be attracted. Finally, in spite of the efforts of the Co-operative Movement, the co-ordination of higher education for working men should be in the hands of a working class organisation whose primary concern was educational. The Association to Promote the Higher Education of Working Men (1903) can be seen, to some extent, as a vehicle for the promotion of University Extension amongst the working classes.

The moderate leaders of the Trade Union and Co-operative Movements were acutely aware of the need for the higher education of its 'officer class', as well as the rank and file. The Model Unions required men who were not only tactful in negotiations and astute in drawing up agreement but also who could organise insurance, publicity and merchandising. The rigorous administrative duties required not a 'born orator' but keen alert-minded officials who could deploy the skills of a lawyer and accountant. The Reform
Acts of 1867 and 1884 gave working men a higher profile. In 1891 the Bradford Labour Party was formed to further the cause of direct Labour representation on local councils and in Parliament. The effects of the Taff Vale judgement (1901) demonstrated the importance of creating a parliamentary Labour Party that would attempt to redress working class grievances. (In this case, the right to strike without incurring damages in civil action).

A.H.D. Acland, Chairman of the Central Board of the Co-operative Union called for the study of social and economic subjects leaving "as far as possible, all class prejudice and political party spirit aside for the time". (105) The object of education ought not to be prizes or certificates but the cultivation of men of solidity, of calm temper, of even judgement, of modesty and self-reliance. "We can help to make such men, by offering our members opportunities of education of a real kind; by trying to provide them with an outfit in the matter of thought, thought especially on the duties and responsibilities of English men and women as citizens". (106) Albert Mansbridge, founding member of the W.E.A., understood quite clearly that the appeal of the hour to trade unionists and co-operators was to make 'political strokes'. However he believed 'The true appeal is that they lift themselves through higher knowledge and higher works and higher pleasures, which, if responded to will inevitably bring about right and sound action upon municipal, national and imperial affairs'. (107)

Brian Simon contends that his political philosophy consisted


106. A.H.D. Acland in Reeder, E.O.M. p. 211

107Mansbridge, K. OF M. p.?
of the belief that wrongs would inevitably right themselves.
Mansbridge rejected education as a means of 'getting on' and
hoped that individuals would use their education to serve others.
He fervently believed in the need to educate the working classes
as they gained power in the emerging democracy. Whereas
Co-operators and moderate Trade Union leaders looked to Oxford
as the institution best suited for the realisation of their ideals,
others expressed reservations. Mansbridge advocated class
neutrality: in lifting individuals above the 'crowd consciousness'
each one would be independent in both mind and spirit. The W.E.A.
was not to be an instrument of political propaganda: it aimed
to teach students 'how' to think rather than 'what' to think.
Accordingly, the Report 'Oxford and Working Class Education' (1908)
suggested the examination of Marx's Capital as well as the more
orthodox economics of Marshall. (108)

To militant trade unionists and members of the Labour Party, this
new adventure in working class education was a means of strengthening
the Establishment rather than acting as a significant agent of
social change. The W.E.A. appeared as a movement whose teeth had
been drawn. They believed that the W.E.A. would teach workers
to be good citizens and not how to wrest privilege from the
employing classes. To this end of disestablishment, a Labour
College was opened in 1909 offering courses in Political Economy,
Industrial History, English, Formal Logic, Epistemology, Literature,
Elocution and Sociology. Unlike Mansbridge's W.E.A., it sought

pp. 110-116
to enhance class consciousness by the application of the 
materialist conception of history to the diverse areas of study. 
In his submission to the Adult Education Committee, the Sub-Warden 
expressed its philosophy: 'it teaches the workmen to look for 
the causes of social evils and the problems arising therefrom 
in the material foundations of society; that these causes are 
in the last analysis economic; that their elimination involves 
in the first place economic changes of such a character as to lead 
to the eradication of the capitalist economy.....For this reason 
the Labour College lays no claim to being non partisan or non 
political.' (109) In this sense, the Labour College, by virtue 
of its emphasis upon the acquisition of skills and knowledge 
necessary to carry on the class struggle, can be viewed in 
utilitarian terms. Although the W.E.A. did provide the background 
training for Labour Party town councillors and trade union secret-
aries, its sponsors reflected the liberal ideal of knowledge 
for its own sake as the following quote from Mansbridge makes 
clear: 'education has been regarded as the process of development 
of mind and spirit, something more than leading out and infinitely 
more than putting in - a combination of the two by which the 
educated being becomes daily purer in body, mind and spirit, 
able to reach out to the work which God intended that he should 
do.' (110) Despite their ideological differences, both the W.E.A. 
and the Labour College rejected education as a means of 'getting 
on' in life: the individual worker student should not separate 


110. A. Mansbridge, An Adventure in Working Class Education (1920) 
p. XV
himself from his own class. The whole debate was yet one more example of the politicisation of education. How would education affect the workers' experience of the economic inequalities of an industrialising society? Would knowledge lead to acquiescence or revolution? The Labour College believed that the W.E.A. was yet another attempt by the ruling classes to win over the hearts and minds of the working classes by the dissemination of bourgeois ideology: the twentieth century successor to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

What conclusions can be drawn with regards to working class attitudes towards adult education? The 1919 Report offers an inclusive definition of education: '...we mean all the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society or to find opportunities for self-expression'. (111) The Report suggested that those who were interested in adult education were a small, though 'rapidly growing' minority of the whole population. The Committee believed that they were witnessing a renaissance which was evident by the growth of new organisations (Ruskin Hall, 1899, the W.E.A., 1903, the Labour College 1909 and the various Settlements) and the extension of the work of the Universities, the Adult Schools and the Co-operative Movement. 'The movement is neither esoteric nor superficial, neither the foible of a few select individuals nor the evanescent fashion of a moment. It is a natural development

111. Final Report 1919 Para. 53
which has its roots deep in popular needs, and which falls into its place as a logical stage in the development of education in Great Britain'. (112) There was a tendency to overstate their claims, particularly as they were anxious to secure the place of 'Adult Education' in the post-war world of Reconstruction. It would be safe to say that the demand was limited to a small minority who wanted it for vocational, cultural or social reasons. By virtue of its largely W.E.A. composition, the Committee emphasised the 'majority' who sought education 'for the increased happiness which the exercise of mental powers brings with it, or for the light which knowledge may throw upon the problems of their daily life'. (113) It appears that the authors underestimated the demand for the type of education that would enable the worker to 'get on' in life. John Hurt's study of the 'parental consumers' clearly shows that the closer families were to the new forces of nineteenth century industrialised society, the readier they were to spend money on their children's education. Similarly, working class adults were prepared to subvert the humanitarian aims of the London Working Men's College by demanding courses of a frankly utilitarian nature. Devereux's study of Evening Schools is consistent with this pattern: while over 24,000 students enrolled for courses in Shorthand and Book-keeping (1902-1903), only 31 sought enlightenment through studying English Citizenship and Ethics. Even in a movement committed to social ends, as the Co-operative Movement was, the demand for liberal studies was surprisingly low. In its evidence to the Adult Education Committee, the Co-operative Union, for the session 1913-1914, registered

112. Final Report 1919 Para. 57
113. Final Report 1919 Para. 95
only 463 students in classes on 'Co-operation' out of a total of 21,953. It does appear, as J.F.C. Harrison has argued, that the desire for a liberal education 'for its own sake' is no more widespread among the working classes than among other classes. The subversion of the aims of the Working Men's Colleges, the success of the Evening Schools, Polytechnics and Technical Colleges all demonstrate a desire by individuals to obtain a better situation in life.

Yet this does not exhaust the range of motivation of adult scholars. Burnett's study of working class autobiographies (1820-1920) throws up examples of those who sought an education 'for its own sake'. The life of Joseph Wright (1855-1930 From Donkey Boy to Professor) is eloquent testimony to the desire for knowledge without any consideration of its practical applications. His biographer, Elizabeth Mary Wright suggests that it was dissatisfaction with second-hand knowledge that prompted the young Wright:

'During the Franco-Prussian War he used to listen to the men who worked with him reading aloud from newspapers in their dinner-hour vivid accounts of battles and sieges....He was intensely interested. Envy and longing now stirred in the mind of the young Joseph Wright. Why should he be debarred from getting all this first hand? He determined to acquire the art of reading, and so satisfy this newly awakened craving for knowledge'. (114)

The miners of Northumberland and Durham, according to R.D. Roberts (Secretary of the Cambridge Delegacy), demonstrated a genuine desire for knowledge for its own sake in their attendance of

Extension classes in English History, Physiology and English Literature. There are other examples of individuals who joined classes as a result of a pure educational impulse. The demand for liberal studies existed, but as to its strength, a correspondent to the Oxford University Gazette (1893) was closer to the mark when he wrote: 'I am decidedly of the opinion that the workers who toil daily for wages have among their multitude but a very small number who care for, or desire to reach the fruit, even though the branches are bent towards their grasping, by the forces which are manifested in the working of the Extension scheme'. (115)

The nexus between education and social reconstruction was one that was never fully submerged during the nineteenth century. William Lovett, in seeking equal political and social rights for all classes, could do little else but eschew knowledge 'for its own sake'. He wrote 'We wished to establish a political school of self-instruction among them, in which they should accustom themselves to examine the great social and political principles'. (116)

The need for political education became more pressing as the franchise widened: in 1889, two American philanthropists opened Ruskin Hall 'to equip students in such a way as to increase their usefulness to the Labour Movement'. (117) Its links with Oxford University raised the question of the 'independence' of working class education. Matters came to a head in March 1908 when students, already concerned at the inculcation of governing-class ideas,

115. Quoted in Jepson, Beginnings p. 146
116. Quoted in Hogden, Workers Ed. p. 87
117. Final Report 1919 p. 221
struck in protest at the dismissal of Ruskin's socialist Principal, Dennis Hird. The secessionists opened their own Labour College in an attempt to be the 'gravediggers of capitalism'. For all the sound and fury, the numbers participating in the residential Colleges were small. According to the 1919 Report, for the 1913-14 session, Ruskin College consisted of 46 students (12 of whom were foreign), the remaining 34 were manual workers 'except' two clerks, a journalist, a Customs Officer, a shop assistant, a grocer and a Secretary of a Co-operative Society. Meanwhile, the Labour College, for July 1914, reported twelve students in residence, a correspondence tuition of 120 and the membership of local lecture classes consisting of 1,000 students.

Of this small minority who were availing themselves of the opportunities, it appears that the majority were drawn from a lower middle or upper working class background. Joseph Wright tells of his abode, No. 6 Wellington Street 'It had a parlour, two bedrooms, a kitchen and a cellar. The rent was two and ninepence a week, water and rates free. We were select people when we went to live in Wellington Street'. (118) The evidence from the Birmingham and Midland Institute indicates that, even with subsidies, the 'low' £2 termly fees for the Industrial Department would only attract the more prosperous sections of the working classes. Even the Workers' Educational Association was not exclusively reserved for working people (i.e. manual workers). Mansbridge insisted that every branch ought to be a microcosm of English life

118. Elizabeth Mary Wright, The Life of Joseph Wright Vol. 1. (1932) p. 35
consisting of authors, churchmen, educationalists, headmasters, journalists, lawyers, statesmen as well as trade unionists.

His condition that three-quarters of every class should consist of labouring men and women ought to be set against his redefinition of clerks as workers. The largest occupational grouping in the W.E.A.'s University Tutorial Classes (1913-1914 session) was 'Clerks and Telegraphists' (623), followed by 'Teachers' (308), and then 'Textile Workers' (235). Similarly, by 1913, for London's Working Men's College, the percentage of manual workers had shown a significant decline.

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<td>Percentage engaged in Clerical Occupations</td>
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Source: Final Report 1919 p.45

The factory workers and railway servants who undertook such courses, for whatever reason, inhabited a different social world from that of their fellow workers whose educational pilgrimage was simpler and much shorter. After eight years at a free elementary school maintained by an educational Committee of a local County or County Borough Council, most would proceed to 'blind-alley' employment and their curriculum was conditioned by the assumption that they would in fact do so. In his study of English working
class culture (1890-1914) Standish Meacham recognises the assumption of the leadership role by members of the labour aristocracy. They attempted, through political organisations, to counter the fatalistic elements inhering in working class culture: the acquiescent way in which people accepted events as they came (whether it be the hand of God or Fate). The reformers were motivated by visions whether these derived from religion, Christian Socialism or Secular Socialism. But, as Richard Hoggart has argued in *The Uses of Literacy*, it was with reference to the concrete and the personal that most members of the working classes understood their fellow human beings and looked at the world around them. Regarding the question of education for social reconstruction, one needs to consider the cultural as well as financial barriers. As Hoggart writes, 'They are asked to respond to 'the needs of the state' and 'the needs of society', to study 'good citizenship', to have in mind the 'common good'. In most cases, the appeals mean nothing, are so many words'. (119)

Chapter Two

Christian Socialism and Working Class Emancipation

"It must be from the aspiration of the common people that the salvation of the people comes. Nothing that is really good can be imposed upon people by well-wishing superiors. In education, as in everything that concerns the spirit, freedom is the one condition of progress....There is nothing that so much hinders the effective freedom of our people as the fact that they are left without facilities for the whole development of their faculties".

William Temple, Presidential Address to the Educational Science Section of the British Association, September 1916 (1)

Adult education was perceived as an instrument that would not only enhance the quality of individual life, but also make significant contributions to the progressive enlightenment of industrial society. By 1903, a coalition of progressive academics, radical churchmen, Co-operators and Trade Unionists had established a sufficient degree of consensus to be able to strengthen the nexus between 'labour and learning'. William Temple, President of the W.E.A. (1908-1924), was less concerned with preaching personal salvation than with the pursuit of social justice. The academic and religious sponsors focussed upon access to higher education as a prerequisite for social emancipation. In this

1. F.A. Iremonger, William Temple (1948) p. 79
respect, they shared common ground with the moderate elements of the emerging Labour Movement who wanted the best that Oxford could give. The demand for University education, according to the authors of Oxford and Working-class Education (1908), was not so much to enable the children to compete successfully with members of other classes for positions of social dignity and emolument 'as to enable workmen to fulfil with greater efficiency the duties which they owe to their own class, and, as members of their class, to the whole nation'. (2) If their allegiance to Socialism as a doctrine was tenuous, then, at the very least, Christian Socialists could agree with their secular colleagues that too much emphasis had been placed upon Individualism, thereby neglecting collective responsibilities and obligations. In short, their 'Weltenschauung' can be best described as having been informed by radical liberalism rather than by socialism.

This educational coalition requires to be set within the context of apparent working-class indifference to religion. In 1845, Engels had written, without exaggeration: 'All the writers of the bourgeoisie are unanimous on this point, that the workers are not religious, and do not attend church'. (3) The veracity of this judgement was confirmed in 1851 when, for the first and last time, questions about religious worship were asked alongside the ordinary decennial census. The official report said that '...it must be apparent that a sadly formidable portion of the

English people are habitual neglecters of the public ordinances of religion', and '...the masses of our working population..., are never or but seldom seen in our religious congregations'. (4) Even if church attendance is read as an index of religiosity, the picture is certainly not one of unremitting hostility. Hugh McLeod has noted the high levels of attendance in the East Midlands and the South-West, with several of the mining and nailing villages in the Black Country recording well over 60 per cent. The local surveys of 1881 showed a wide variation of working-class attendance ranging from 20 per cent in London and Birmingham to 40 per cent in Bristol. (5) The 20 per cent tended to be drawn from the 'better class' of working men. McLeod's examination of the marriage registers and church membership lists of three Nonconformist denominations in Lewisham and Bethnal Green shows that 'skilled workers appear in the registers much more frequently than the unskilled, and clerical workers more often than business and professional men'. (6) K.S. Inglis, in his study of church responses to working-class irreligion, has taken working-class alienation for granted. The social atmosphere of the church (its reinforcement of the social hierarchy by means of pew rents) and the promulgation of conservative social doctrines by ministers both served to produce indifference rather than hostility. Inglis suggests that where hostility existed, it was directed against the churches rather than Christianity as such. The burden of his

thesis is that the awakening of the Anglican and Nonconformist churches to the importance of addressing themselves to social questions was bound to fail if they remained, as they did, tied to capitalism. The liberal Nonconformist chapels would provide a home for skilled craftsmen and superior mechanics amongst whom would be those active in the world of the Unions, the Benefit Societies and political affairs. However, set against this 'would be greater numbers of active trade unionists critical of all religious bodies, and the masses without any serious social interests, preoccupied with the job of living from day to day, from week to week, and with their sport, drinking, racing and gambling'. (7)

The identification of regional and intra-class variations does not by any means indicate a consensus amongst historians about the extent, role and significance of religion in British working-class life during the nineteenth century. The unreliability of statistical evidence is such as to preclude definite conclusions about the extent of church attendance. For Gilbert (8), working-class involvement in organised religion was highest during the first half of the nineteenth century. Despite the revival of the Church of England during the 1850's, the overall downward trend was buttressed by a combination of factors: the decline of occupations associated with Nonconformity (handloom weaving),

7. Inglis, Churches. p. 328
the rising prosperity of Victorian England which reduced the number of crisis-points in a life-time and the secularisation of social thought (with the separation of poverty and sin came the realisation that most human problems could be solved by natural means). For historians like Whickham (9), it was the latter half of the nineteenth century, at least in Sheffield, that witnessed the religious boom. While he acknowledged the middle-class nature of the congregations, the building of new churches and chapels, particularly by the Primitive Methodists and the Congregationalists, reflected the new habits of 'Superior' working-class people. If the conflicting conclusions about the extent of church-going can be ascribed to the incomplete nature of the statistical base, then the judgements about the role of the churches are based not so much upon empirical certainties as on the political values of the historian. R.F. Wearmouth (10), as a loyal Methodist and member of the Labour Party, sought to document and vindicate the role of the Methodists in the Labour Movement. The chapel was a school for democrats and a source of trade union and political leaders. The qualities of personal discipline and dedication to a 'calling' were transferred from religious to trade union activities. That much, at least, is not disputed by E.P. Thompson whose work has discredited the political activity of Methodists. (11) It served the interests of the

9. E.R. Whickham, Church and People in an Industrial City, (1957)
Bourgeoisie by weakening the poor from within: social deprivation was accepted as a trial of faith and not as a political challenge. Certainly, Robert Moore's study of the Deerness Valley miners (12) confirms how a meeting of minds between colliery owners and miners over religion (Methodism) and political ideology (liberalism) helped to smooth industrial relations, but did not preclude conflict altogether. Cornsay colliery had a record of industrial militancy which found political expression with the formation of a branch of the Independent Labour Party in 1913. Intellectually, the I.L.P. owed nothing to Methodism: for them the 'brotherhood of man' was translated into active levelling. Eric Hobsbawm (13) has noted how many trade union and socialist leaders came from a background of teenage conversion and lay preaching. In the Welsh coalfields, a large working-class membership and middle class lay leadership were wedded to the Liberal Party. In some cases, Socialist activists like A.J. Cook (a Baptist boy preacher and future Miner's leader during the 1926 strike) were excluded. However, McLeod argues that adherence to socialism did not split all of the chapels: even by the 1920's, many of the chapel-goers in Mardy ('Little Moscow') were active in the Labour Party and a few in the Communist Party. (14) With the formation of the I.L.P. in 1893, it is possible to discern a 'steady trickle' of Nonconformist ministers into the socialist camp. Nonetheless, as McLeod argues, on 'the eve of the First World War, Nonconformist

14. McLeod, Rel and Wking. Class. p. 55
ministers generally remained vocal supporters of the Liberal Party, hopeful that working-class interests could be adequately served by a radical Liberal government, combining a progressive welfare policy with concern for old Nonconformist issues such as non-sectarian education and temperance'. (15) Therefore what radicalism existed was usually linked to religious heterodoxy. In Oldham, 1790-1810, two Unitarian chapels had a major role in the early development of working class radicalism. During periods of high political excitement (1838-42 and the early 1890's) there was no increase in support for secularism, but there was the formation of Chartist and Labour Churches, which proved to be rather ephemeral institutions. These hybrid institutions drew upon the humanitarian concerns of both Christians and Socialists. Socialism was an extension of Christianity for individuals like A. Horner (Miners' Secretary, 1946) who said 'I believed in Christianity, but to me it was an empty thing unless linked with practical measures to relieve all these social evils'. (16) The emphasis upon 'practical Christianity' was as evident in the rank and file just as much as the activists. McLeod is critical of the way in which the views of Inglis and Whickham have become part of the conventional wisdom regarding religion and the working class. Religiosity has for too long been associated with church attendance. The working class had their own 'different, but equally valid approach to religion, which was strongly practical, and was concerned especially with mutual aid, and with maintaining standards of 'decent' behaviour. (17) Historians, on

15. McLeod, Rel. and Wking. Class. p. 45
17. McLeod, Rel. and Wking. Class. p. 11
this account, have been guilty of perpetuating middle class definitions of what constitutes religiosity. For many working-class people, church-going was superfluous, having a lower priority than strict honesty and generosity in relations with others and the desire to maintain a 'respectable' life. Of course, for some the churches and chapels were attractive in that they offered support for an orderly and self-respecting way of life. In their conversion, some working-class Christians redefined 'respectability' to include an assertion of the dignity of working-class people. McLeod cites Keir Hardie as a 'good example' who 'adopted a highly practical form of religion that gave a high priority to the achievement of a just and equal society, and who came to believe that labour and socialist organisations were doing more than the churches to bring about the kind of world that they wanted'. (18) Having been converted to Christianity at the age of 22, Hardie kept his faith and became a severe critic of institutionalised religion, railing against the hypocrisy of those who exploited the poor yet claimed to be devout church-members. Hardie represented a working-class Christian Socialism which had its roots, not so much in theology, as in a 'moral humanitarian idealism'. (19) As such, according to Binyon, it owed nothing to the Christian Socialism espoused by the conservative Anglicans during the 1850's.

Inglis suggests that if the churches been more successful securing high rates of attendance, they may have been less

18. McLeod, Rel. and Wking. Class. p. 35

influenced by new currents of secular opinions on social questions. It was prudent of the churches to ally themselves with the currents of reform. The Revolutions of 1848 demonstrated the unstable nature of industrial society which lacked a 'protective crust of tradition.' (20) Contemporary thinkers were acutely aware of the state of 'anomy' (21) in social affairs. The Prospective Review (1851) noted that 'There has never been a time in the history of Europe, when men have been at once so painfully conscious as at present, of wide-spread religious, political, and social disorganisation, and so fruitlessly eager for renovated organic life.' (22) It noted that though England's political institutions stood firm, the Church was being shaken to its foundations. While the Tractarians had been attracted by the 'tenacious organisation' of Rome, others (F.D. Maurice, John Ludlow, Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes) were casting an eager eye on the capabilities of the theories of social co-operation. The 'Christian Socialists' hoped to 'glean from these theories, with requisite modifications, the germ of a new ecclesiastical life; to obtain the means by which the long alienated working-class of England may be re-united to the national church, and her too feeble and courtly life renewed from the fresh strength and vast numbers of the labouring orders.' (23)

20. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 4

21. E. Durkheim, The Division of Labour in Society. (1964) p. 368 'If the division of labour does not produce solidarity in all these cases, it is because the relations of the organs are not regulated, because they are in a state of anomy.'


The first journal entry.

9 February 1909

Acknowledgements to the Cartwright family
Feb. 9th, 1909. This being the 25th anniversary of my birth, I am, in this book, going to commence to write a daily record. It is not going to be necessarily a record of the events of each day, but a few thoughts which may come into my mind on any subject. My reason for doing this is, that I might gain facility in expressing myself in writing.

I have read that Bacon too said somewhere that "reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." I believe this to be true. And as I now do a fair amount of reading, I think I have a few thoughts which may be interesting to read at some future time. I have also a desire to be more accurate in my language, so think this might be a means to obtain that end. I am also hopeful that this practice of writing out my thoughts may tend to make
There was certainly a sea-change in attitudes towards poverty. For most of the nineteenth century, the poor were seen as suffering for their sins, their plight being the result of spiritual ordinances which would be impious to question. Superimposed on this was the belief in immutable economic laws which ruled out the possibility of human intervention. Inglis quotes an S.P.C.K. tract on *Capital and Wages* which was expressing conventional wisdom when it said of the working-classes that 'they might as well try to stop the wind or the tide or to alter the day and night as combine to push up wages'. (24) However, as the extent of working class indifference became clearer, it was felt by those people active in church affairs that it would be prudent to go along with social reform. Inglis suggests that not only were they concerned to recruit worshipers, but also anxious about the mood in which the coming rulers would rule. The victory of the 'masses', post 1867, was regarded as inevitable and Christians had to decide whether their reign would be tempered by religious considerations. A common theme linking the Christian Socialists and the sponsors of the Workers' Educational Association was the need to promote an 'educated democracy'. Their political involvement was an extension of their Christian commitment. 'Politics' was the vehicle through which expression could be given to the Christian law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. The promotion of 'fellowship' necessarily precluded socialistic politics, the aim of which was the enhancement

24. Inglis, *Churches*. p. 256
of class consciousness. In his contribution to the Cambridge Essays on Adult Education, the Rector of St. Mary-le-Bow, London, expressed his concern at the way in which the electorate, uneducated and therefore misinformed, would 'prefer the astuteness of the noisy demagogue to the far-sighted wisdom of the true statesmen'. (25) To those on the left, 'far-sighted wisdom' was merely an euphemism for the taming of socialism. Inglis argues that the attempt by the churches to demonstrate that they were 'for' the common people did not convert Christians from the assumptions of Adam Smith to those of Hyndman, Shaw or Hardie. 'The social concern shown in the name of prudence might be very tentative indeed, involving only a belief that the churches should shake off capitalist associations and stand outside the social conflict as benevolent neutrals'. (26)

The abolition of class domination and the inauguration of an egalitarian society by violent means were expressed unequivocally by Marx and Engels in their Communist Manifesto, published in February 1848. Although it played no part in precipitating the European revolutions of that year, the sentiments expressed therein gave credence to those in the U.K. who believed that the 'physical force' Chartists had won the day. The final paragraph of the Manifesto proclaimed that the ends of the Communists 'can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social


26. Inglis, Churches p. 260
conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win'. (27) John Ludlow, one of the founding members of the Christian Socialist group, had witnessed in France the experiments pioneered by Louis Blanc in 'ateliers sociaux' (social workshops). Blanc had argued that the State must acknowledge and implement the 'right to work' and must in every other way protect the weak and the poor. In a letter to Maurice, Ludlow had written that unless Socialism was Christianised, it would be a tremendous force for evil. F.D. Maurice's route to 'Socialism' was a less secular one. It has been suggested by one of his biographers that he was influenced by the emphasis placed by Coleridge upon the concept of 'ecclesia', meaning the great family of Christ to which all men belonged. (28) The keynote of his religion was 'fellowship' with an emphasis upon service by Christians towards their less fortunate brethren. Whereas the Tractarians emphasised personal piety and exclusive Churchmanship, particularly with regards to the role of baptism, Maurice viewed the latter as a triumphant acceptance by man of the 'sonship offered by God, a testimony to the Church's universal reach'. (29) He had witnessed rural poverty in Warwickshire (1834) and the message had been reinforced whilst ministering to the sick at Guy's Hospital during the 1830's.

29. Florence Higham, Frederick Denison Maurice. (1947) p. 38
The Church as an institution was the expression of permanent fellowship which God had given His creatures. It was the duty of Christians to realise the nature of and work towards building a co-operative society. Yet social harmony could not be effected through mere secular reorganisation; rather it was 'God's purpose to bind men together in one family of which He is the Head'. (30) Inglis suggests that Maurice, who exercised such an influence upon future Christian Socialists including Stewart Headlam (Guild of St. Matthew) and Henry Scott Holland (Christian Social Union), advocated not change but rediscovery. The social order which secular socialists (Owen, Fourier and Blanc) wanted to bring in already existed in institutions such as the family and the Church. 'Once this order was seen, the spirit of competition would be routed, men would be treated as men and not as members of castes, and the spirit of co-operation, which was the spirit of the Bible and the creeds, would reign'. (31) Maurice was cutting loose from evangelical Christianity which viewed destitution as a spiritual condition. It was the sine qua non of Christian social progress that class barriers be dismantled so as to give every person an equal chance of full self-development. The under-privileged could not be denied a share in the beauty and riches of the world which God created. Maurice was debunking conventional wisdom which held that the working class existed purely in a labouring capacity. His plea for the exercise of the inalienable right to education was

30. Florence Higham. Frederick Denison Maurice. (1947) p. 45
31. Inglis, Churches. p. 264
premissed less upon a vision of egalitarian socialism than upon a re-working of the 'brotherhood of man'. Maurice was unequivocal in distancing himself from doctrines which advocated violent conspiracies against the institutions of private property. He told the Principal of King's College (1851): "Our object has been to separate....that Socialism, which Mr. Southey and other eminent Conservatives believed to be the best solution of the practical difficulties of England, from Communism, Red Republicanism, or any anarchical opinion whatsoever'. (32)

The Tracts on Christian Socialism, published in 1850, were addressed to 'unsocial Christians and unChristian Socialists'. The 'unsocial Christians' were the 'good and pious' men who were fully cognizant of the claims of the faith on their private lives, but were blind to its claims on the life of communities. Moreover, it was the duty of the Christian to address himself to the 'professed teacher or disciple of the secular socialist creeds, who unhappily fails to recognise the paramount authority of the Lord and King of all Christians'. (33) According to the Rev. Binyon, the term 'Christian' was not merely a qualifying adjective: the essence of Christian Socialism was a recovery by the Church of its own social theory and practice. In a letter to Ludlow, Maurice outlined his views: 'Christian Socialism is to my mind the assertion of God's order. Every attempt to hide it under a great machinery, call it Organisation of Labour, Control Board, or what you like, I must protest against as

32. Inglis, Churches. p. 264
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 should exhibit its true functions and energies'. (34) Disapproving of State interference, they believed that diffusion of the spirit of fellowship would be sufficient to check the 'war of all against all'. They were dismissive of the prevailing social contract ideology which viewed society as a collection of warring atoms. The principle of justice ought to regulate contract and exchange. This was in stark contrast to free-market utilitarianism with its emphasis upon maximisation of individual self-interest and the 'greatest happiness to the greatest number'. In an attempt to diffuse the principle of co-operation as 'the' practical application of Christianity to the purposes of trade and industry, they formed the Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations (1849). This derived partly from their faith in 'Associationism' which was an attempt to transform the whole of society by means of small-scale experiments. Associations of working craftsmen carried out production in an enterprise based upon participative democracy and profit-sharing. They were to be the very antithesis of competition, selfishness and greed. Binyon argues that it is dubious to call any association 'socialist' if it sells on the open market and makes a profit. Inglis suggests that the Christian Socialist position was 'rather mild' compared with other schemes. Moreover, their definition of socialism could become so homely that it would provoke nobody. Whereas Communists desired the abolition of private property, Christian Socialists

34. Inglis, Churches. p. 268
emphasised 'the duty of the farmer to pay good wages and the duty of the labourers to do their work'. (35) In their task of Christianising Socialism, they were attempting to distance themselves from the ideologies of the Continental Socialists in two fundamental respects. Private property as an institution was sacrosanct: their objective was to repair the system through ameliorative measures rather than to replace it in toto. Secondly, they repudiated violence and confiscation as instruments for the realisation of desired social objectives. 'We wished to show them (the working classes) both by words and deeds that Law and Christianity are the only protectors of all classes from the selfishness which is the destruction of all. So far as we can do this, we are helping to avert those tremendous social convulsions which, as recent experience proves, may be the effect of lawless experiments to preserve property as well as of violent conspiracies against it'. (36)

The high wave of moral idealism upon which the Working Men's Associations were launched was insufficient to ensure economic viability. The Promoters concluded, rather patronizingly, that the workers had to be educated 'before they would be capable of self-restraint, staunchness and obedience which are absolutely necessary in an Association for production'. (37) This culminated in the request to Maurice, by the Committee of Teaching and Publications, to 'frame a plan for the establishment of a People's

35. Inglis, Churches. pp. 268-269
37. From a letter written by T. Hughes (1886) quoted by Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 15
Although Maurice's brand of socialism has been described as 'rather mild', his concern for the underdog and his firm belief in salvation for all sent shock-waves through the Anglican Establishment. Consider the views of William Wilberforce whom Binyon describes as an 'old-fashioned Protestant', in relation to Maurice. Writing in 1817, Wilberforce epitomised the 'unsocial Christians': 'My greatest cause of difference with the democrats is their laying, and causing the people to lay, so great a stress on the concerns of this world as to occupy their whole minds and hearts and leave a few scanty and lukewarm thoughts for the heavenly treasure'. (38) Christian Socialism was denounced as thinly disguised Jacobinism. Calmer counsels prevailed when the Council at King's College, where he held the Chair of Theology, accepted that he was acting in the spirit of genuine Christian philanthropy. Yet, by 1853, his Theological Essays were viewed with disapprobation, as being of a 'dangerous tendency and calculated to unsettle the minds of the students'. (39) The message of the Essays was that theology, not being a world unto itself, implied action, which would, perforce, disturb the status quo. For Maurice, it was axiomatic that God is a God of Love: if Christ died for all men, who could be excluded from grace. The regeneration of the working classes was a matter for Christians. It was important to emphasise that God, as well as Lord Shaftesbury, cared for the outcastes of the race.

H.G. Wood argues that Maurice was fully aware of the likely impact of the *Theological Essays*. In July 1853, he had written to Kingsley: 'I knew when I wrote the sentences about eternal death that I was writing my own sentence at King's College' (40). The Principal (Jelf) connected Maurice's denial that eternal punishment meant endless torment with his championship of Christian Socialism. These unorthodox views, calculated to unsettle the minds of theological students, led to the Council declaring his Chairs vacant on 11 November 1853. He then threw himself into the venture of founding a Working Men's College. In June and July 1854, to arouse interest and raise subscriptions, he delivered six lectures which were published under the title *Learning and Working*.

In view of the prevailing notion that working people were 'hands', to be purchased just like any other factor of production, Maurice's injunction to treat human beings as 'persons' and not 'things' may be described as iconoclastic. He believed that the aspirations and abilities of the working man would enable him to respond to those liberal and humane studies that expressed the highest achievements of the human mind. They ought to be given access to the humanist tradition of the older Universities. In this sense, he was arguing against a narrow, instrumental view of education: '...if we try to give them instruction which

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assumes them only to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, they will prefer to hew their wood and draw their water - I might add, and to drink their gin - without it'. (41) He wanted to nourish the human spirit and enhance human dignity. The idea that universities should play a leading role in the education of the working classes has been expressed by several individuals - James Stuart (University Extension, Cambridge 1873), Bishop Gore, A.L. Smith (Master of Balliol), Archbishop W. Temple and R.H. Tawney. The curriculum of the Working Men's College (1854) comprised Theology, Humanities (Politics, Ethics, English Language and Literature and History) and a Natural Division (Arithmetic, Drawing, Machinery, Music and Physiology). It was not sufficient to give the working man crumbs of knowledge which fell from the rich man's table; rather it was incumbent upon the educated middle classes to share with him 'the deepest and most universal part of your treasures, those which belong not to classes but to men'. (42) It is instructive to compare this with the emphasis of the Mechanics Institutes on 'science for artisans' and Lord Brougham's appeal to the working man exhorting him to acquire knowledge to 'get on' in life. In a lecture entitled 'Learning and Money Worship Incompatible' Maurice railed against the systematic degradation of work '..that brave, noble occupation of men's hands, which is so beneficial is....but a feverish effort to produce quickly that which may look well, and be puffed largely, and be sold at a low rate, to the great loss


42. Styler, Learning. p.102. Lecture III 'Learning and Money Worship Incompatible'.
of the purchaser'. (43) By confining the worker to a 'bread and butter' education, the educational pilgrimage would be conditioned by the assumption that he was a 'thing' and not a 'person'; a slave but not a citizen. It is interesting to note that the pattern of curricular development was not what the Founders had expected. Their desire to see the working classes imbibe the liberal tradition of the Universities led them to an early repudiation of the Society of Arts. Liberal studies were perceived as a vehicle for the enrichment of personality rather than as a means of increasing wages. However, working-class interest in education was largely a utilitarian one: the weakest classes, numerically, were History, Literature and Politics. Gradually, the College accommodated the needs of its clients by offering Shorthand and Book-keeping.

The College would not only provide opportunities for learning but also serve as a model for new concepts of inter-class relationships. In short, the College would promote fellowship: it symbolised 'the spirit of a corporate life....of brotherhood in the deepest Christian sense'. (44) The teachers - and here he emphasised working teachers - and students would form a self-governing and self-supporting organic body. Public subscription lists were to be rejected as a source of finance on the grounds of 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'. In the Circular of 1854, Maurice wrote, 'The name College is an old and venerable

43. Styler, Learning. p. 94 Lecture III
44. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 21
one. It implies a society for fellow work, a Society of which
teachers and learners are equally members, a Society in which men
are not held together by the bond of buying and selling, a Society
in which they meet not as belonging to a class or caste, but as
having a common life which God has given them and which He will
cultivate in them'. (45) Although it was established formally
for 'Manual Workers', it was by no means an exclusive institution.
A narrow definition of the term 'working class' would have been
inappropriate as it would have served to enhance class conscious­
ness rather than dissipate it. The 'union of labour and learning'
denoted the ideal of intercourse between individuals and social
groups of differing tradition and status.

Maurice was at pains to stress the spiritual nature of adult eduction.
He prefigured the social dynamic of the W.E.A. in emphasising the
importance of elevating the working class as a whole rather than
enabling individuals to be socially mobile. In his dedication of
the 'Learning and Working' lectures to J.M. Ludlow, he stressed the
elevation of the working class: 'that we must all sink if that is
not raised'. (46) It may seem a rhetorical question to ask whether
his motivation was religious or socialist. The emphasis surely must
be upon the adjective 'Christian' rather than the substantive noun
'Socialism'. He was well aware that any hopes of nourishing the human
spirit and enhancing human dignity would be without substance if little
action were taken to ameliorate material deprivation. He was first
and foremost a theologian, having been 'sent into the world that

45. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 21
46. Styler, Learning. p. 28
I might persuade men to recognise Christ as the centre of their fellowship with each other, so that they might be united in their families, their countries, as men, not in schools and factions'. (47) Despite his advocacy of co-operative production, Maurice was very much a conservative in terms of ideology. He believed that the Monarchy was a divinely instituted form of government. As such, democracy seemed to be both anti-monarchical and atheistic in that it was attempting to substitute the 'Will of the People' for the 'Will of God'. Beneath the felicitous rhetoric lay a doctrine calculated to induce political quietism: 'I think what working men most want is the feeling of an order in God's government, in their relations to each other, in the world around them, a righteous order and one into which they must enter, which they cannot make for themselves'. (48) Perhaps this comment represented a warning to egalitarians committed to a radical restructuring of society. In delivering a lecture on 'Learning the Minister of Freedom and Order', Maurice declared that although the working classes may be incorrect in some of their notions about the 'nature' of their bondage, they were not wrong about the 'Fact' of it. (49) The freedom of which he spoke was that of spiritual emancipation, which meant treating them as 'Persons' and not 'Things'. He wanted men, having divested themselves of political, religious and social class affiliations, to converge on the common ground of education and to realise their

47. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 53
48. Harrison, Wkg. M. Coll. p. 25
49. Styler, Learning, p. 114 Lecture IV 'Learning the Minister of Freedom and Order.'
Christian fellowship. Writing about the approach to the teaching of music, it was the duty to show the worker that 'the instinct which led them to listen with wonder and delight to musical chords is not merely a sensual one; that it is a witness to the truth of that inward primal harmony in nature and in the fellowship of man, which the ancients represented in their fables, when they spoke of the music of the spheres, and of cities rising at the sound of the lyre'. (50) The sense of order was not merely made manifest in nature. Men had to be made aware of, and understand the meaning, wisdom and justice of ordinances in society. Although the working classes may attempt, through their collective efforts, to 'find an order of which they themselves are a living part', they had to be educated to understand that 'the order of society, like the order of nature, was not created by us for our convenience and cannot shape itself according to our convenience'. (51) It was incumbent upon the university-educated men to disabuse working people of the delusions to which they were prone, namely that polities could be re-created in conformity to the desires of human-kind.

Like J.S. Mill, he was worried about the levelling effects of universal suffrage. The progress of the idea of the sovereignty of the people seemed to Maurice as dangerous as it seemed to Burke. He abhorred the Benthamite notion of the 'greatest happiness for the greatest number': 'I cannot tell what happiness is, or how it is to be distributed amongst the greatest number, or how

50. Styler, Learning. p. 117 Lecture IV
51. Styler, Learning. p. 117 Lecture IV
the greatest number is to be ascertained. If it could be put to the vote of the greatest number what they could have for happiness, I have no security that they will not decide for something profoundly low and swinish'. (52)

Was Maurice concerned with diluting the socialist challenge in an attempt to preserve the capitalist status quo? Against this crude view of social control, it must be pointed out that the Working Men's College was a voluntary, fee-paying institution. He was well aware of the fate of those institutions that served to superimpose the sponsors' ideological beliefs upon unwilling clients. This is not to suggest that he disavowed any religious instruction. His thoughts on secular education are interesting in this respect. Although he was not fully satisfied with offering a wholly secular education he was completely dissatisfied with the position which preferred no instruction to a scheme from which religious education was excluded. However, education had to recognise men as spiritual beings, and subjects studied must be capable of arousing them 'shut up in the dreariest mechanical employment, even sunk in moral debasement, to a feeling of their spiritual existence, to the consciousness of belonging to another economy than that which is conversant with the making or selling of commodities'. (53) He was firm in his conviction in taking working people 'as we find them, not as we would have them be'. (54) Not only was compulsory religious education rejected,


53. Styler, Learning. p. 121 . Lecture IV, 'Learning the Minister of Freedom and Order'.

54. Styler, Learning. p. 123 Lecture IV
but so too was the proposal to 'Christianise' secular subjects as a means of getting religion through the back door. 'It is offensive to the scientific man, because it twists facts to a moral; to the devout man because it treats the laws of God's universe and His Acts as less sacred than our inferences from them; to the working man, because he asks us to see the truth of things and he thinks we are plotting to deceive him'. (55) This prefigures the W.E.A. maxim that the purpose of adult education is to teach students 'how' to think rather than 'what' to think. As such, the W.E.A. inherited the 'educational' rather than the 'agitational' tradition.

The other 'casus belli' was the teaching of politics. Mechanics Institutes had excluded its study on the grounds that it would foster internecine class conflict. The orthodox position suggested restricting the curriculum to subjects like physics where there would be no excitement nor passion: 'Once venture onto other ground and you are in the midst of smoke; a smoke which betokens that there is a fire if it has not yet burst out'. (56) Maurice's reply was that you do not put out a fire by refusing to observe it. Education had therefore to give prominence to a subject which addressed the controversial issues of the day. To those who pleaded for the study of non-controversial issues he replied, 'You say to the most vigorous man - your vigour is in the way; we had rather you were stupid or asleep; and we will try to find some

55. Styler, Learning. p. 123 Lecture IV
part of you which is not alive, that we may address ourselves to
that. It would be better to take any course, even what I should
think the narrowest, than this. Give them your Tory traditions
or your Whig traditions; enforce them by the most passionate
declamations....at least you will kindle some emotions, with
which good will mix as well as evil. You will not leave the man
to the thought which is the worst of all for him and for you: that
there is nothing common between him and you: that you do not care
for the same things, that you are indifferent whether you are
fellow-citizens or deadly foes'. (57) Ideally, the teacher should
employ a non-partisan approach weighing up 'the precious principles
and sins of both parties'. J.F.C. Harrison has argued that this
desire to perform an impartial educational role alienated the
militant working classes who suspected the Founders of being
'Laodiceans'.

Despite his disavowal of any political allegiance, the College
represented a political intervention in the widest sense of the
term. The desire to promote 'fellowship' (in effect, class
reconciliation) represented acceptance of the capitalist mode
of production. The attempt to 'Christianise' Socialism meant that
there could be no working class view of politics. Rather, it was
incumbent upon the teacher to bring 'the experience of history to
remove their prejudices and diminish their asperities'. (58)


58. Styler, Learning. p. 135 Lecture V
This approach was anathema to the militant socialist of the 1890's. Maurice's paternalistic advice to the professional classes to distribute 'the fruits of the education which it has pleased God to bestow upon any of us', (59) was read as an attempt to emasculate socialist ideals. They equated 'impartiality' with a desire to maintain intact the basic structure of capitalism. Maurice was at pains to dispel working class suspicions about ulterior motives. He feared that an education not steeped in the liberal traditions of Oxbridge would necessarily have a partial character. The objective was to persuade men to recognise Christ as the centre of their fellowship with each other. Purely working class ventures would perpetuate social class divisions not only in the area of social intercourse, but also in terms of intellectual understanding. 'I think that we can give them a cultivation which they are not able to give themselves....If they seek that knowledge, it must come in a more irregular and exciting way, not as part of education, but in the form of declamation and controversy. A knowledge so coming will be partial class knowledge.' (60) Yet he recognised the subordination of educational to political goals in earlier ventures which had contributed towards working class suspicion. In the early part of the century, Hannah and Martha Moore were unambiguous about their mission of religious and educational reclamation: '...we said we had a little plan which we hoped would secure their orchards from being robbed, their


60. Styler, Learning. p.p. 154-155 Lecture VI
rabbits from being shot, their game from being stolen and which might lower the poor rates'. (61) Maurice was aware that 'we have played falsely with the facts; we have bent and twisted evidence to the justification of our own school and party and class and to the condemnation of every other. We must pay the penalty for these crimes'. (62) It was essential to establish the confidence of working people by showing that they loved truth more than opinions, and were willing to have 'our theories broken to pieces by facts',

Maurice genuinely believed that the educational work of the College would transcend the political sphere. Christian Socialists hoped to re-moralise the market society by substituting co-operation, altruism and personal service for the existing competition, selfishness and greed. The social order would be modified in accordance with Christian principles. Reconciliation would supplant conflict. They hoped to stand above the class conflict which fuelled adversarial politics: 'For the upper classes to think they can obtain what they consider indispensable to their comfort, at the price of the ignorance and degradation of their fellow workmen, - for the lower classes to think that the manufacturing industry of the country must perish before they can be what God created them to be, - is perilous to England.

61. In Kelly, Hist. Ad. ed. p. 77
62. Styler, Learning. p. 155 Lecture VI
Any plans which tend to foster either of these opinions, must be mischievous'. (63) G.M. Trevelyan has described the movement as 'Christian Radicalism', with some justification.(64) It regarded the institution of private property as sacrosanct. The application of Christianity to social and economic relationships entailed the operation of the principles of 'fair play' and 'justice' upon the processes of production, distribution and exchange. The philosophy of these humanitarians was liberal, not socialist. They wanted social harmony, not social equality.

The political philosophy underpinning such religious work has been attacked by Reinhold Niebuhr who questioned the validity of moralistic approaches to the political order. The central thesis of Moral Man and Immoral Society was that the Liberal Movement was unconscious of the difference between the morality of individuals and the morality of collectives, whether classes, races or nations. The inferiority of the morality of groups to that of individuals 'is merely the revelation of a collective egoism, compounded with the egoistic impulses of individuals, which achieve a more vivid expression and a more cumulative effect when they are united in a common impulse than when they express themselves separately and discreetly'. (65) Though written in 1932, his treatise has a relevance in that it was directed against the moralists, both religious and secular, who imagined that the egoism of individuals was being progressively

63. Styler, Learning. p. 167 Lecture VI
64. G.M. Trevelyan, British History in the Nineteenth Century and After. (1792-1919), Harmondsworth. (1968) p. 277
checked by the development of rationality or the growth of a religiously inspired goodwill and that nothing but the continuance of this process was necessary to establish social harmony. Liberal Christians have over-estimated the degree to which moral capacity alone can progressively bring social relations under the 'law of Christ'. The establishment of just relationships between social classes is a political as much as an ethical question. A recognition of this induces realism concerning the limitations of moral and rational suasion. 'The relations between groups....will be determined by the proportion of power which each group possesses at least as much by any rational and moral appraisal of the comparative needs and claims of each group'. (66) For Niebuhr, collective power, whether in the form of imperialism or class domination, exploits weakness. As such it can never be dislodged unless power is raised against it. 'If conscience and reason can be insinuated into the resulting struggle, they can only qualify but not abolish it'. (67)

The desire to achieve the 'right' social relations between classes was evident in the establishment of Toynbee Hall and other Settlements, which were experiments in religious and social action 'conducted by people who accepted a responsibility as Christians and gentlemen to live for a time among the urban working classes'. (68) Brooke Lambert, vicar of Greenwich, had addressed a gathering

68. Inglis, Churches. p. 143
of undergraduates (Merton College, Oxford, 1881) on plans for a 'colony' of university men who would reside among the poor, bring their knowledge and skills to bear upon local problems and generally bring a leaven of culture and religion to the area. The polite tea parties of Canon Samuel Barnett and his wife in Toynbee Hall which were intended to bridge the social gulf, amounted to 'not so much a bridge as a hurried flight into a foreign world and then back again to the reality of a dirty slum'. (69) They wanted to see a measure of social justice through sanitary reforms, public feeding of school children, garden suburbs and universal old age pensions. Beatrice Webb, in My Autobiography noted a sense of Christian penitence amongst intellectuals quoting Arnold Toynbee (1852-1883) as an examplar: 'We - the middle class, I mean, not merely the very rich - we have neglected you; instead of sympathy we have offered you hard and unreal advice; but I think we are changing'. (70) They wished to raise all men to the level of Christ. Samuel Barnett was disturbed by those who wanted to improve society by manipualting national and municipal government instead of attempting tasks like 'democratising the old Universities or humanising the working man'. (71) George Lansbury, the Labour Party's leader during the 1930's, offered a particularly acid assessment of the Settlements. The 'colonists' were a bunch of careerists who sought experience in the East End of London in order to advance their their prospects as a Member of Parliament, Cabinet

70. Binyon, Christ. Soc. Mov. p. 116
71. Inglis, Churches. p. 173
Ministers and Civil Servants. But his main line of attack concerned the unwillingness of the 'well-meaning' middle class patrons to challenge the inequalities of wealth and income. Indeed, the Settlements presupposed that 'the rich were as necessary as the poor - indeed that nothing must ever be done to hurt the good-hearted rich who keep such places as Toynbee Hall going out of their ill-gotten gains'. (72)

The moral antecedents of the W.E.A. can be traced back to the Christian Socialist movement of 1850. Although its schemes for social reform had come to nought, the seeds sown by Maurice, Ludlow, Kingsley and Hughes 'continued to grow, and an increasing number of churchmen...became persuaded of the need to study the structure and problems of society in the light of their faith, and to criticise both the assumptions on which it was based and its practical results, particularly when these took the form of poverty, sickness, squalor, sweated labour or unemployment'. (73) The academic sponsors of the W.E.A. included several notable figures who belonged to the Christian Socialist tradition: Dr. Charles Gore (Bishop of Oxford 1911-1919), William Temple (Fellow of Queen's College Oxford, 1904-1910 and later Archbishop of Canterbury) and R.H. Tawney (undergraduate at Balliol and Labour Party intellectual). Through the Christian Social Union, formed in 1889, and its magazine Economic Review, the younger dons and undergraduates became familiar with the tradition of

72. George Lansbury, quoted in Inglis, Churches. p. 173
73. J. Oliver, The Church and Social Order. (1968) p. 4
F.D. Maurice via the writings of Ludlow and Hughes. Charles Gore, President of the C.S.U. (1902-1911) chaired the historic Conference of 1907 - 'What Can Oxford Do for Workpeople?'. The Joint Committee of academic and W.E.A. nominees recommended the administrative machinery necessary for the running of the University Tutorial Classes. William Temple, who belonged to the Labour Party until 1925, worked alongside Albert Mansbridge as Joint Secretary of the Tutorial Classes Committee and eventually succeeded him as President from 1908 until 1924. As an undergraduate at Balliol, R.H. Tawney came under the influence of Gore, and after going down from Oxford he spent three years with Canon Barnett at Toynbee Hall. Tawney's Anglican convictions were the foundation of much of his egalitarian philosophy. The W.E.A. grew out of an attempt to prise open the gates of the ancient universities to give to the working people the educational opportunities restricted to the privileged few. Tawney found his 'calling' in the tutorial classes at Longton and Rochdale: here was a fellowship in learning, 'a society of equals untainted by the vulgar irrelevances of class and income'. (74)

Tawney's socialism was rooted in the ideas expressed by a group of bishops and academics during the 1890's. The Christian Social Union was founded on 14 June 1889 by Charles Gore and Henry Scott Holland (Canon of St. Paul's 1884-1911) in an attempt to 'claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice'. (75) Despite the absence of any reference to


75. J. Oliver, Church. Soc. Ord. p. 5
the term, it is clear that they were attempting to deal with
J.M. Ludlow's problem of how to Christianise socialism. Socialism
entails the abolition of private property as an institution. In
1918, the Labour Party adopted a constitution which, according
to Clause IV, committed it to 'secure for workers by hand or
brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable
distribution thereof that may be possible upon the common
ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange..'.
(76) Although the mood at Oxford was in favour of reform, it
was certainly not defined in these terms, as Clement Attlee
(Labour Prime Minister, 1945-1951) has noted in his biography:
'Oxford was at that time (1901) predominantly Conservative
though there was a strong Liberal group, notably at Balliol....
Socialism was hardly spoken of....although there was a great deal
of interest in social reform'. (77) The C.S.U., grounded as it
was in Liberalism could not accept a rigid doctrinaire approach.
They could only describe themselves as socialist in the sense
that they were opposed to unbridled individualism. The whole
world of Christian motivation drew them to socialism: Scott
Holland argued that Socialism spoke their language by virtue
of its emphasis upon 'brotherhood' and not 'competition'. Brooke
Foss Westcott, Bishop of Durham and first President of the C.S.U.,
1889-1901, repudiated the association of the term 'socialism'
with revolutionary schemes. It was, he believed, a term that

77. C.R. Attlee, As It Happened. (1954) p. 23
needed to be claimed for 'nobler uses' - it had no necessary affinity with violence, class selfishness nor financial arrangements. In addressing the Church Congress of 1890, he argued that it described a theory of life and not economics. Socialism was the antithesis of Individualism: 'Individualism regards humanity as made up of discontented or warring atoms; Socialism regards it as an organic whole....The method of Socialism is co-operation, the method of Individualism is competition.... The aim of Socialism is the fulfilment of service, the aim of Individualism is the attainment of some personal advantages, riches'. (78) The statement of principles was contained in the publication of Lux Mundi, a series of essays edited by Charles Gore and Scott Holland. According to Binyon, these essays were as important for the Christian Socialist Movement as the Fabian Essays were for Socialism itself. The contributors did not anticipate the moral regeneration of society by a merely mechanical alteration of the distribution of property. Rather, a 'change of heart' was the only true starting point. Ownership of private property was sanctioned on condition of its recognition as a trust with attendant duties. For the C.S.U., socialism was not a political system that could be voted in, but an 'Ideal towards which they could work and which could come to be realised, step by step, as men advanced spiritually in apprehension of civic obligations, in love for the brotherhood and victory over self'. (79)

78. Binyon, Christ. Soc. Mov. p. 162
79. Binyon, Christ. Soc. Mov. p. 159
The C.S.U. brought a sense of social responsibility to a minority of clergymen. Certainly with a membership of 1,436, it could not be claimed that it stirred up a majority of preachers and members. Binyon puts forward three yardsticks to assess the influence of the C.S.U.: the diffusion of Christian Socialist ideas in general; the exploitation of the Social Teaching of the Bible and the re-interpretation of the Creed and the Sacraments. The extent of its influence may be gauged by the advance in declarations on social matters made by the Bishops at successive Lambeth Conferences. Whereas the first two Conferences (1867 and 1878) made no mention of social or economic questions, the third (1888) made an attempt to reconcile Socialism with Christianity. The subsequent Encyclical stated that the only basis for class reconciliation was the recognition of the true principle of society, namely that property was a trust to be administered for the good of humanity. The definition of socialism was so broad as to encompass 'any scheme of reconstruction which aims at uniting labour and the instruments of labour, whether by means of state, or of the help of the rich, or of the voluntary co-operation of the poor'. (80) The Bishops could not ally themselves with socialists who held atheistic beliefs, justified violence as a necessary means and who maintained that the possession of private property constituted a wrong to the community.

80. Inglis, Churches. p. 283
The Bishops repudiated laissez-faire on the ground that the operation of free market forces was unrestrained by any sense of moral responsibility. In 1907, in a Report of the Joint Committee of the Convocation of Canterbury (entitled Moral Witness of the Church on Economic Subjects), it was recognised that the Church had allowed itself to be 'silenced by the terrors of supposed inexorable laws'. (81) In freeing itself from the spells of political economy, the Church argued the case for a living wage. The reawakening of the Church's social conscience needs to be located within the context of the expanding Labour Movement. After the 1906 Election, the twenty nine Labour Members of Parliament were prepared to accommodate the 'New Liberalism' which offered hope of securing ameliorative measures (viz. 1906 Trades Disputes Act, which restored trade union immunity to civil action; 1906 School Meals Act and, in 1908, legislation securing the eight hour day and old age pensions). Despite this, socialists argued that such concessions represented surface change which failed to address the central question - the private ownership of the means of production. For a time, the Syndicalist movement seemed to provide the answer for class conscious trade unionists. In 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World called for the reorganisation of trade unions on an industrial basis as a step towards mobilising a General Strike in pursuit of socialism. Whereas Christian Socialists preached 'fellowship' and 'class reconciliation', the syndicalists' view was that there existed no common ground. The relationship between Labour

and Capital was asymmetrical: nothing less than revolutionary change could redress the imbalance. The point being made is that Britain was not close to revolution. Rather, that during any period of change and uncertainty, competing social and political philosophies struggle for hegemony. The relative tranquillity of social relations in the period of 'Victorian Prosperity' can be ascribed to the domination of working-class movements by two complementary virtues - 'thrift' and 'self-help'. The nascent Labour Movement, particularly its political wing, could derive inspiration from a bewildering mix of political philosophies - Christian Socialism, Fabianism, Syndicalism, and a variety of Socialisms - Guild Socialism and the particular brands offered by the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party. For those who wanted a decisive break with capitalism, the C.S.U. represented the 'mild and watery' society. Yet, progressive churchmen believed that Socialism was the continuation of Christianity by other means. The Encyclical Letter of 1908 said that 'they should be watchfully responsive to the opportunities of service which the movements of civil society provide; that the democratic movement presented such an opportunity; that underlying it were ideals of brotherhood, liberty, and mutual justice.... we appeal to all Christians to co-operate actively with it'. (82)

The W.E.A. represented 'a movement of civil society' which provided an opportunity to offer service to the weaker members

of society. The procurement of just treatment and the opportunity of living a 'true human life', by the extension of higher educational facilities to working men represented fulfillment of the aims of the C.S.U. Foremost among Christian Social sponsors was William Temple, Fellow of Queen's College, who was present at the first National Conference of the W.E.A., 12 August 1905 where he outlined the deficiencies of his alma mater: "I regret to say that it is perfectly possible to obtain a Double First in Oxford without a sympathetic understanding of what a trade union is: and that seems to me, so far as it goes, a flaw in that system". (83) Essentially, he was calling for the reorientation of traditional institutions to meet the needs of the new democratic age. During this period, he argued that the Gospel taught nothing less than evolutionary socialism. For a time, 1918-1925, he joined the Westminster branch of the Labour Party. More importantly, so far as adult education is concerned, he succeeded Mansbridge as President of the W.E.A. (1908-1924).

In 1908, the C.S.U., in its journal Economic Review, published an article by Temple entitled 'The Church and the Labour Party' in which he urged members of the Church actively to support socialism. 'The alternative stands before us', he wrote, 'socialism or heresy'. (84) He asked members to recognise the justice and 'essential Christianity' of the Labour Movement for 'to stand

84. R. Craig, Social Concern in the Thought of William Temple. (1963) p. 121
aside from it would be to incur the guilt of final and complete apostasy, of renunciation of Christ, and of blasphemy against His Holy Spirit’. (85) The Labour Movement had need of the Church because the chief impediment in secular organs of reform was a lack of 'that embodiment of an ideal for ourselves and standard of personal effort and sacrifice' which the Christian faith could supply. (86) It was important to formulate a doctrine of brotherhood. Socialism was to be the economic realisation of fellowship. However, two arguments frequently raised against socialist ideas had to be addressed. The first one suggested that socialism, however laudable in theory, is essentially naive in that it fails to appreciate that a social system premissed upon altruism will inevitably be undermined by innate selfish desires. As a corollary, a levelling down in terms of economic rewards would remove incentives to hard work and creativity. In defence, Temple wrote, 'Now if that is true, Christ was wrong. His whole Gospel rests on the conviction that love is a deeper and stronger motive than selfishness, and the power of the Cross is inexplicable on any other basis....We may believe in individualism or we may believe in Christ; we cannot consistently believe in both'. (87)

In the following year, he was involved with senior members of the Student Christian Movement in forming the 'Collegium'. Its

85. Craig, Social Concern. p. 121
86. Craig, Social Concern. p. 121
87. Craig, Social Concern. p. 122
Report, *Competition: A Study in Human Motive*, appeared in 1917. What is important in this context is not so much the Report's weighing up of the merits or otherwise of competition, as its view of political intervention. In terms of a programme of action - and here one must be aware of the debate about Reconstruction - the authors examined two possibilities: either the modification of competition by social reform or its replacement by a collectivist or syndicalist order. Piecemeal reform had characterised the Liberal Government of 1906. They felt that this could be extended particularly by the improvement of education and welfare services, measures that would redistribute opportunities as well as enhancing social justice and economic efficiency. It was acknowledged that objectors would view this as cosmetic change. So, rather tentatively, they recommended Guild Socialism as an alternative. The Guild Socialists, according to Pelling, 'believed in workers' control of industry, but unlike the syndicalists they did not attach much importance to the idea of achieving it by 'direct action' on the part of the workers'. (88) Essentially, it was a 'milder' version of Socialism elaborated by journalists and intellectuals, particularly A.R. Orange and S.G. Hobson of the left-wing weekly *New Age*. They conceived of 'Natural Guilds' which were occupational associations whose function was to regulate the economic and social life of the community.

The fulcrum of the London Working Men's College - that of 'fellowship' - is clearly evident in the thoughts and actions of

Temple. Like the Christian Socialists, he maintained that religion was not a purely personal affair. 'The Christian life is a life of membership in a society', he wrote in 1926. (89)

Just as F.D. Maurice had called on Christians to treat Chartist agitators as 'brethren', so did Temple stress social responsibility. He wrote, 'Whatever right you may have to call God your Father belongs also to the unemployed at home, to the refugees suffering from oppression in the Near East, to the 'untouchable' outcasts of India, to the Kaffirs of South Africa'. (90) If we are in fellowship with God, then, ipso facto, we are in fellowship with one another. At a general level, he exhorted Christians to 'love thy neighbour'. Unfortunately, charitable works by the individual penitent were unlikely to provide solutions to structural problems. It was therefore incumbent upon Christians to become involved in civic and political action. He believed that there existed various types of political action. The first kind, which he felt ought not to present insuperable barriers to the activation of the Christian conscience, was aimed at the remedying of particular social evils. Thus, he commended the ratepayers of an un-named London Borough who petitioned for an increase in rates so as to alleviate housing distress. (91)

Throughout the 1920's he condemned mass unemployment not only because of the material deprivation which it engendered but also

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89. W. Temple, Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship. (1926) p. 36
90. Temple, Pers. Rel. p. 38
91. Temple, Pers. Rel. p. 51
because of its violation of the human personality. In a letter to *The Times*, he wrote, 'The greatest evil and bitterest injury to their state is not their animal grievance of hunger and discomfort, nor even the mental grievance of vacuity and boredom; it is the spiritual grievance of being allowed no opportunity of contributing to the general life and welfare of the community'. (92) As a palliative, he called for increased unemployment benefit rather than income tax cuts for those in work. Such a proposal could not be construed as challenging the basic fabric of society. Temple argued, in terms reminiscent of Edmund Burke, the conservative political philosopher, that a Constitution which evolved over the lifetime of a nation was superior to any 'ready made Utopian scheme spun by the brains of theorists'. (93) Did Temple reject radical social change? The social system was un-Christian in that it bred selfishness. Capitalism made a virtue of self-aggrandizement, putting 'Number One first', thereby making its citizens indifferent to justice and fellowship. The aim of a true Christian order was the fullest development of the individual personality in the widest and deepest possible fellowship.

His crusading zeal in politics and his political partisanship gave way to a greater realism during the twenties. Indeed, his biographer noted 'a gradual movement to the Right during his later years'. (94) Although generally sympathetic to the general

93. Temple, Pers. Rel. p. 53
approach of the Labour Party, he did not commit himself unreservedly to specifics. At the Malvern Conference on Social Order (1942) he dissociated himself from Sir Richard Acland's view that the common ownership of the means of production (Clause IV of the Labour Party Constitution) was the expression of fundamental Christian principles. Recognising the Labour sympathies of several churchmen, he counselled 'we must be very careful that we do not give the impression that the Church is an agency for supporting left-wing politics which are often based on pre-suppositions entirely un-Christian'. (95) It was necessary to leaven political life with the Christian spirit rather than to pin one's hopes on god-less materialistic doctrines. Temple was careful to make a significant distinction which, in political terms, suggested adherence to the philosophy of liberalism. The present social system was un-Christian though not fundamentally anti-Christian. The 'Laws of Political Economy' were not immutable; they could be modified according to the dictates of the Christian conscience. He called for a new spirit in economic life where the emphasis would be upon mutual help rather than individual gain. Rather optimistically, he hoped that supporters would charge a 'fair' price rather than one dictated by the free market price mechanism. Moreover, he argued that it was grossly inaccurate to view society as being characterised by endemic conflict. The asperities of laissez-faire capitalism were increasingly being mitigated by the burgeoning welfare state. Spiritual regeneration was the precursor to social regeneration - the establishment of justice between nation and nation, between Capital and Labour and between men and women.

Socialists would describe the welfare measures as merely 'ambulance work' dealing with the symptoms, but leaving untouched the 'real' causes (the economic infrastructure). Temple at least acknowledged the impatience of partisans with the Church's exhortations to 'love one another'; that exhortations to good will in times of conflict, as with the 1926 miners' strike, could be irritating. In a book published during that year, when Temple offered to mediate, he suggested four principles that should guide the Christian in relation to civic and political action. These principles illuminate the motivation of those Churchmen who, at a national level, were prepared to sponsor an association designed to secure higher education for working people. The first principle concerned the sacredness of each individual personality. The French Revolution of 1789 had proclaimed the trinity of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The compatibility of the first two ideals was conditional upon acceptance of the liberal definition of equality. Equality was not defined in the Marxist sense of 'equality of condition'; rather, in terms of equality of opportunity. This had far-reaching implications in the world of education. Children had to be liberated from the strait-jacket of elementary education and be given free access to the broad 'highway' of secondary education. In short, whatever was desirable for the affluent, in terms of resources, curricula and leaving age, was equally desirable for the poor. Christians must remember that we are 'members one of another'. (96) Freedom must not be used to pursue sectional interests: the freedom of one person should

96. Temple, Pers. Rel. p. 67
not be purchased at the expense of another. Legislative measures were required which enabled the unemployed, homeless and the poor to exercise 'choice' in their lives. It was important that Christians be motivated by the duty of service to others (the dispossessed) and not to be preoccupied with personal salvation. Finally, he emphasised the importance of making social progress through sacrifice rather than coercion. The 'Victory of Pride', perhaps referring to the debacle of 1926, brings the bitterness of defeat, waiting its turn for revenge. He called for the 'Victory of Love' which is won by sacrifice over enemies who are, by that sacrifice, converted into friends. This was anathema to the mentality of 'class war'. Rather, Christians ought to be free from the narrowness and bitterness of partisanship and to employ charitable means.

The coalition of churchmen and educationists that was crucial to the formation of the W.E.A. was also evident in the membership of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Fifth Committee of Inquiry which, in 1918, published its Report Christianity and Industrial Problems. The Committee included three C.S.U. bishops - Gore, Kempthorne and Woods - as well as the chairman, the Bishop of Winchester (E.S. Talbot). Among the other members were R.H. Tawney, Albert Mansbridge, George Lansbury and two Conservative M.P.'s, Lord Henry Bentinck and W.C. Bridgeman. The Report lamented the recent witness of the Church which preferred the 'ambulance work' of charity rather than the modification of a social system that was immoral. They called for a living wage, the elimination of blind-alley employment, a housing programme and non profit-making municipal services. The proposals relating to education
simply exude W.E.A. philosophy. Education required not just increased, but extravagant expenditure similar to the medieval expenditure on the great churches. It called for the 'highway' of secondary education for all rather than the scholarship 'ladder' for the few. The W.E.A. was concerned not so much with promoting individual social mobility as with raising the working class as a whole – an egalitarian rather than a meritocratic vision. An expanding system would enable individuals to break out the 'cycle of deprivation'. This tradition of Christian social thought has recently been made manifest in the Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas (Faith in the City. A Call For Action By Church and Nation. 1985). The Commissioners (97) make some use of the Marxist concept of polarisation: 'It is arguable that rich and poor, suburban and inner city, privileged and deprived, have been becoming more sharply separated from each other for many years, and that the impoverished minority has become increasingly cut off from the mainstream of our national life'. (98) Moreover, they suggest that the identification by Karl Marx of evil inhering in social and economic structures may have derived from the Old Testament, where 'there is explicit recognition of the inevitable tendency of the rich to get richer and the

97. The 18 members include Bishops, clergy, teachers, academics, voluntary sector workers, a trade unionist and an industrialist. Professor A.H. Halsey is director of Barnett House and Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford. One of the advisory bodies was The William Temple Foundation.

poor to get poorer unless some constraint is imposed to limit the freedom of individuals to profit without restraint from a market economy'. (99) Slaves were to be manumitted after a set period; a portion of agricultural produce was set aside for the poor and usury was proscribed. Amongst the twenty three recommendations to Government and Nation were the allocation of more resources, via the Rate Support Grant, to the U.P.A.'s; expansion of the Community Programme; raising of universal and means tested benefits and a restructuring of housing finance (mortgage tax relief) to assist those in need. Regarding education, it endorsed the principles of affirmative action (positive discrimination) by means of pre-school intervention. A.H. Halsey has written of this 'A pre-school programme, properly devised, can be a most economical instrument for a government wishing to save money in our schools. And for a government determined to reduce the handicap of those who come from poor families, a pre-school programme discriminating in their favour seems to be one of the crucial weapons in their armoury. In that way education can compensate for society'. (100)

The demand for social change voiced by Social Christians has been reinforced by a Labour Movement which owes as much to Christianity as to Karl Marx. The radical wing of the Labour Movement viewed religion as an instance of 'bourgeois mystification', its 'real' function being to conceal from working people the truth

about capitalist exploitation. Marx had written, 'Religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of a soulless condition. It is the opium of the people'. (101) Religion serves to legitimate the power and class position of the dominant groups: rulers promote the myth that they enjoy a divine right to rule. It hinders the development of revolutionary class consciousness, and a materialistic politics that would demonstrate that the world is produced and reproduced through human labour. It is the 'opium of the people' in that it represents the means by which mankind can escape the suffering and oppression brought about by capitalism. According to this view, 'social' Christianity represents an attempt to emasculate socialism. Socialism and religion are anathema. However, an alternative view suggests that Marxism is one of many sources of inspiration of the Labour Movement, though less influential than Christian Socialism, Fabianism, Owenism, Trade Unionism and Radical Liberalism. Historically, it is true, the Churches have been more concerned with preaching personal salvation than with the social imperatives spelled out in the Bible. A contemporary socialist, T. Benn, has argued that the implications of the Gospels were, and continue to be, revolutionary. Jesus was asked what Commandment should be first of all. St. Mark's Gospel (Chapter 12 v.v. 29-31) records his answer: "The first....

is, Hear O Israel; The Lord our God is one God: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength....The second is....Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these". The injunction to 'love thy neighbour' is capable of bearing contrasting interpretations. For the rich, it meant the expression of their love through paternalism (noblesse oblige) and for the poor to return that love by being patient and submissive. They would find justice in the next world. The Christian Socialists of the 1850's, with their emphasis upon fellowship, interpreted the words of Jesus in a radical way. For them, the call to social action was more important than the call to personal salvation. The concept of fellowship (or brotherhood) has crossed the bridge between Christianity and Secular Humanism. During the English Civil Wars (1642-1648), the Levellers took the Bible as their text claiming divine sanction for their secular goals. The Diggers, or True Levellers, went even further advocating absolute equality and common ownership of land. The Levellers held themselves to be free-born Englishmen entitled to the protection of a natural law of human rights which originated in the will of God, rights vested in the people to whom alone true sovereignty belonged. At a later period, the Chartists derived a degree of religious inspiration in their protest, as their Declaration of 1842 testifies, 'Labour must no longer be the common prey of masters and rulers....He feels that his cottage is empty, his back thinly clad, his children breadless, himself hopeless, his mind harrassed, his body punished. But undue riches and luxury and gorgeous plenty might be heaped in the palaces of the taskmaster
and flooded in the granaries of the oppressors - Nature, God and Reason have condemned this inequality and in the thunder of the people's voice it must perish for ever'. (102)

Binyon suggests that the Socialism of the Anglican Church became less and less identified with the Labour Movement which produced a 'working class Christian Socialism'. The Christianity of the Labour Movement became increasingly involved in political action. The Labour Church Movement, founded by the Rev. John Trevor in 1891, represented a 'short-lived protest against the link which the Nonconformist churches had established with the middle classes, and in particular against the alliance with the Liberal Party'. (103) Despite the zeal for reform on behalf of certain individuals, there was no evidence of consensus. Indeed at the Congregational Union Conference of 1895, a former Chairman, Edward White, said that social Christianity was unnecessary because of the 'self-acting machinery of civilised society, by which capital is compelled to minister to the necessities of labour and poverty, irrespective of good-will. (104) Subsequent Conferences made positive gestures of sympathy (condemning sweated labour and supporting universal pensions ) and even opened a fund in 1893 for the relief of striking miners. However, as with the Anglican Church, it is a moot point as to whether the message filtered through to members. Inglis suggests that as the 'ordinary'

103. Inglis, Churches. p. 227
104. Inglis, Churches. p. 293
Nonconformist worshipper was usually middle class (imbued with the values of self-help) it was unlikely that he would attend to the pastor in his pleas to support efforts to remove social inequalities. As if to compound the problem, Dissenting congregations exercised control of the minister. Radical Nonconformist Ministers complained that their brothers with orthodox social principles could fill sermons with conservative propaganda and never be impeached, while those whose views were of a progressive kind were castigated for mixing religion and politics.

As a protest against these social values and the insignificance of the current of reform, John Trevor seceded from Upper Brook St. Free Church in 1891. He appealed to those who had abandoned religious traditions, but not religion. The principles of the Labour Church were:

1. 'That the Labour Movement is a Religious Movement.
2. That the Religion of the Labour Movement is not a Class Religion, but unites members of all classes in working for the Abolition of Commercial Slavery.
3. That the Religion of the Labour Movement is not Sectarian or Dogmatic but Free Religion...
4. That the Emancipation of Labour can only be realised so far as men learn both the Economic and Moral Laws of God...
5. That the development of Personal Character and the improvement of Social Conditions are both essential to man's emancipation from moral and social bondage'. (105)

105. Inglis, Churches. p.p. 221-222
Although its influence never extended beyond Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire (30 Churches by 1907), it represented the institutional expression of a belief that God was behind the Labour Movement. At the inaugural Conference of the Independent Labour Party (Bradford, 1893) Trevor organised a Labour Church service attended by 5,000. A number of I.L.P. branches were responsible for instituting a Labour Church (Oldham, 1893, Spen Valley, 1894) but most branches, well over 75%, declined to become involved. William Temple had the following to say of the Labour Church in Leicester, 'They are not all Christians (in metaphysics) at that Labour Church, but I have seldom felt so near the real presence of pure religion. Tonight I talk to the Church Socialist League'. (106) The C.S.L. was probably the most socialist of these hybrid institutions committing itself to the collective ownership of land and capital. While Maurice and his colleagues had sought to Christianise Socialism, members of the C.S.L. sought to convert Church people to Socialism. It regarded the majority of the Church of England, despite the efforts of the C.S.U. as being criminally indifferent to the needs of the poor.

What conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact of Christian Socialism upon the W.F.A.? In answering this question, it is important not to think of the W.E.A. as an homogeneous educational body. Rather, it saw itself as a 'co-ordinating Federation of Working Class and Educational Interests' endeavouring to 'promote

the Higher Education of Working Men and Women'. (107) From the first, according to T.W. Price, it enjoyed the 'warm support of many of the members of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge'. (108) The 'early University friends' included many churchmen: Canon Barnett, Professor J.H.B. Masterman (Bishop of Plymouth), the Rev. W. Hudson Shaw as well as William Temple. It is possible not only to chart the theological continuities over a period of fifty years but also to see clearly how their involvement in educational affairs was a direct result of their 'social' reading of the Bible. We find a concern to put into practice the social consequences of the Biblical injunction to 'love thy neighbour'. Essentially, they argued that churchmen had become shut up in the practices of their religion. The reorientation of the churches towards social questions has been interpreted as a cynical exercise to recruit working class worshippers and 'gentle' the masses by 'christianising' socialism. Education was to be the panacea for almost all ills: promoting personal development; furthering the development of the working classes generally; smoothing inter-class relationships and bringing the people back to God.

As President of the W.E.A. (1908-1924) William Temple was anxious to dismantle the social class divisions in education. Equality of opportunity (secondary education for all) would allow individuals to develop as fully as possible their moral, spiritual

107. Mansbridge, Adventure. p. 32

and intellectual capacities. The education system violated the 'sacredness' of personality by treating the individual as a 'thing' and not as a 'person'. Welcoming the 1918 Education Act, he wrote, 'Every citizen until the age of eighteen should be primarily regarded as a subject of education and not primarily a factor in industry.' (109) The content of elementary education had been conditioned by the assumption that the child would enter the labour market at an early age. A crude utilitarian approach was rejected. The working classes had a right to something more than a 'bread and butter' education - an education for life not livelihood. Schooling was not seen as an instrument for securing upward social mobility - the imperative to 'get on' in life was viewed with disapprobation. Rather, the previously disinherited working classes should be given the 'highest and best' that the university education system had to offer. This education would have a use - the elevation of the whole of the working class. The early University Tutorial Class students would use that knowledge to discharge the functions of leadership in trade unions, friendly societies, co-operative stores, municipal and national government. In recognising that 'knowledge is power' the working class students would use that knowledge for the benefit of the people. But this was no exercise in partisanship. The liberal sponsors 'long term goal was reconciliation between the social classes.

109. Craig, Social Concern. p. 142
The first step towards a smooth pattern of inter-class relationships was the abolition of the elementary/secondary school divide. This dual system increased divisions, as Temple noted, 'There is nothing so fatal to the true spirit of fellowship in a community as great differences of educational facilities'.

The common experience of higher education would promote social solidarity. Working men, bankers, dons, peers, clerks and elementary school-teachers could all meet, as social equals (fellows), on the common terrain of education. This spirit of brotherhood was expressed by Charles Lucas in the Maurice Hall of the Working Mens' College in 1913: "Here, my Lord Chancellor, we do 'As adversaries do in law - strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends' ".

The involvement of the universities was not felt to be a political compromise in that the W.E.A. would teach adult students 'how' and not 'what' to think. This view did not go unchallenged. The dynamic of the adult education movement was that of social emancipation. This was the common ground between social Christians and moderate elements within the Labour Movement. The 'gradualists' were favourably disposed to an organisation that, while sympathetic to working class aspirations, would prise open the gates of the universities and give working people access to a liberal education. The common ground between religion and the Labour Movement was expressed by institutions like the Labour Church, the Fellowship of Followers (25 Labour M.P.'s in 1925) and the Church Socialist

110. Temple, Pers. Rel. p. 85
111. Mansbridge, Adventure. p. 56
League whose slogan was 'Christianity is the religion of which Socialism is the practice'. Although the Labour Party was critical of the Anglican Church (the Conservative Party at prayer) it was not unequivocally hostile to Christianity. In his Christmas message of 1897, Keir Hardie demonstrated the source of his fury against capitalism: "When I think of the thousands of white-livered poltroons who take the Christ's name in vain and yet do not see His image being crucified in every child, I cannot think of peace....If the spiritually proud and pride-blinded professors of Christianity could only be made to feel and see that the Christ is here present with us and that they are laying on the stripes and binding of the brow afresh with thorns, and making Him shed tears of blood in a million homes, surely this world would be made more fit for His Kingdom ". (112) Upon the common ground of social emancipation a union of 'labour and learning' became possible.

"The economics which emanate from Oxford are well adapted to meet the requirements and stimulate the minds of those young gentlemen who frequent her colleges, and because they are reduced to a science of social conduct and industrial practice which has made them and keeps them comfortable. But you cannot expect the people to enthuse over a science which promises them no more than a life of toil".

J.M. MacTavish, Labour member of Portsmouth Town Council, speaking at the Oxford Conference of 1907. (1)

In claiming for his class "all the best of all that Oxford has to give", MacTavish was not merely serving notice of working class demands for increased access to institutions of higher education. He was expressing the need for a symmetrical union of 'labour and learning'. Adult classes organised in connection with the universities ought not to be the vehicles for the inculcation of the 'Laws' of Political Economy. The W.E.A. represented a democratically controlled movement whose primary function was to promote the higher education of working class men and women.

1. Quoted in Mansbridge, U.T.C., (1913), Appendix IX, p. 196. MacTavish was one of seven W.E.A. representatives who helped to produce the 1908 Report Oxford and Working Class Education.
In its mission to disseminate the benefits of a liberal education, the W.E.A. stressed its educational role - to teach students 'how', rather than 'what', to think. Yet its profession of rigorous standards of objectivity did not preclude sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the Labour Movement. The aim was not to help the worker student to achieve upward social mobility but to increase his usefulness to his community. The letters and diaries of the 'pioneers' confirm the 'social' use of education - '...most people, in the first place, joined classes because they wanted to learn - again, many were highly intelligent and in later days would have stayed in the educational system. I would say that very few indeed thought of getting on in the world. And the majority of those who later became Adult Scholars, councillors, trade union officials, or M.P.'s etc. - did so because they learned from their classes, became more articulate and discriminative and interested'. (2)
The W.E.A. articulated the needs of a Labour Movement that was essentially 'accommodative' in orientation. Parkin has outlined the existence of three distinct 'meaning systems' in western capitalist economies: the dominant, the subordinate and the radical. (3) The dominant value system is a 'moral framework which promotes the endorsement of existing inequality' which inhibits radical class consciousness by fostering acceptance of mainstream norms and values. This may evoke either an aspirational

2. Personal letter to R.H.T. from Dorothy Tams, (8 Nov. 1987), a teacher who joined her first W.E.A. class (Tunstall Tutorial) in 1929. Later, she became Class and Branch Secretary, and a member of the District Committee.

3. F. Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order, (1971), pp. 81-97
or deferential consciousness among manual workers. The subordinate value system 'could be said to be essentially accommodative, that is to say, its representation of the class structure and inequality emphasises various modes of adaptation, rather than either full endorsement of, or opposition to, the status quo'. The Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, has described this as 'corporate' consciousness: 'A second moment is that in which consciousness is reached of the solidarity of interests among all members of a social class - but still in the purely economic field. Already at this juncture the problem of the State is posed - but only in terms of winning politico-juridicial equality with the ruling groups: the right is claimed to participate in legislation and administration, even to reform these - but within the existing fundamental structures'. (4) Both the trade union and political wings of the Labour Movement addressed themselves to securing reforms within the framework of capitalist society. Despite the Edwardian 'moral panic' about the growth of socialism in 1906 (5), the majority of trade unionists were concerned with securing a favourable legal framework, post Taff Vale, within which they could pursue their rightful activities. Very few were committed to a set of precepts which were fundamentally opposed to those underlying the institutions of capitalism. The pragmatic approach was grounded in a number of factors: the 'traditionalism' of working-

class culture; the adherence of many trade unions to liberalism;
the structural divisions within the working classes; the improve-
ment in standards of living and the 'succession of liberal
strategies to contain and subordinate working class politics'.
(6) These factors determined the nature of British socialism —
one which rejected the 'class war' approach in favour of peaceful
evolution. Unlike the ideologues who would have no truck with
'capitalist' institutions of learning, the W.E.A. welcomed an
alliance that would bring tangible benefits to worker-students.
Its message struck a responsive chord as the following statistics
demonstrate:

Table 4: Growth of the Workers' Educational Association 1906 - 1918 (7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Branches</th>
<th>Affiliated Societies</th>
<th>Individual Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>2,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1,124</td>
<td>5,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1,389</td>
<td>5,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1,541</td>
<td>5,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1,879</td>
<td>7,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>2,164</td>
<td>8,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>2,555</td>
<td>11,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>2,409</td>
<td>11,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>2,336</td>
<td>10,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>2,709</td>
<td>14,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>2,525</td>
<td>17,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trade unions, Trade Councils and Trade union branches were the
largest category of affiliated society numbering 953 (37 per cent
of the total) in 1914.


The absence of 'class feeling' amongst sections of the Edwardian working classes was noted by contemporary writers. Robert Tressell's novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, which concerns the work, leisure and politics of a group of painters and decorators in 'Mugsborough' (Hastings *circa* 1906), emphasises the obsequiousness inherent in working class culture. He carries us into a world where a few devoted socialists strive, with faint success, to enlighten their fellow workers who play the role of willing pawns. The character Owen considered that, *They were the enemy.* Those who not only quietly submitted like so many cattle to the existing state of things, but defended it, and opposed and ridiculed any suggestion to alter it. *They were the real oppressors* — the men who spoke of themselves as 'The likes of us', who, having lived in poverty and degradation all their lives considered that what had been good enough for them was good enough for the children they had been the cause of bringing into existence'. (8) Despite the growth of the 'New Unions', which catered for the semi-skilled, the great mass of urban poor remained impermeable to organisation. The decision to join a trade union involves, *inter alia*, the realisation that only collective action will succeed in securing tangible benefits. This, in turn, depends upon rising expectations. Historians of various times and places have noticed the tendency for overt discontent to be relatively rare in times of stable hardship. C.F.G. Masterman made this very

point in 1909: 'Socialism amongst the working people propagates and triumphs in times of plenty, withers up and vanishes in times of depression. This is exactly the reverse of the accepted belief, which thought that the poor are stung into socialism by suffering, as poets are stung into poetry by wrong.' (9) Poverty may be a guarantee of conservatism if individuals have a limited 'reference group'. The poor, by limiting their reference groups to neighbours and kin, may not experience 'relative deprivation'. W.G. Runciman has defined it thus: 'Relative deprivation should always be understood to mean a sense of deprivation; a person who is 'relatively deprived' need not be 'objectively' deprived in the more usual sense that he is demonstrably lacking something.... means that the sense of deprivation is such as to involve a comparison with the imagined situation of some other person or group'. (10) Socialist agitators induce rising expectations by widening the horizons of the poor who, being intensely parochial, are often ignorant of the world outside the slum. If poverty is associated with fatalism, then it is important to assess the numbers involved. Measurement of the incidence of poverty is predicated on establishing the nature of poverty. Is it to be defined in absolute or relative terms? The danger is that too generous a definition of poverty will inflate the resultant figures. Seebohm Rowntree's study of York (11) in 1899 was based

upon the most stringent definition of poverty: that is, those whose income was so low that, even with the greatest conceivable efficiency in budgeting, sheer physical efficiency could not be sustained. In view of his running battle with the exponents of the moralistic view about the causes (fecklessness and reckless expenditure) and cure of poverty (self-help), his evidence had to be unquestionable. His study demonstrated that 15 per cent of York's population were in 'primary' poverty. If account is taken of those in 'secondary poverty', whose income was so little above the line of primary poverty that physiological needs could not be met if the family spent any of its income on non-essentials or if there were any inefficiency in budgeting, then the figure rises to 27 per cent. Rowntree went further than listing causes, chief of which was inadequate wages of earners in regular employment (51.96 per cent). (12) He described what he called the 'cycle of poverty' whereby an individual may drift in and out of poverty several times during his life span. Poverty does not act as the trigger for social change; rather it produces a sub-culture prone to acquiescence. A more recent study of poverty in the St. Ann's area of Nottingham by two sociologists (Coates and Silburn, Poverty: The Forgotten Englishmen) shows the continuing alienation of the poor from the mainstream activities of the Labour Movement. Only 18.4 per cent of the breadwinners in the area belonged to unions, compared to a national figure of roughly 50 per cent of the male working population. Richard Hoggart argues that when people feel that they cannot do much about the

main elements in their situation, they adopt attitudes towards that situation which allow them to have a 'liveable life under its shadow, a life without a constant and pressing sense of the larger situation.... At the lowest is acceptance of life as hard, with nothing to be done about it: put up with it and don't aggravate the situation: 'what is to be, will be'....'. (13) The permeation of such fatalistic attitudes inhibited the development of trade union consciousness.

In assessing the political temper of the Labour Movement, account must be taken of the 'traditional' nature of working class culture in general. The traditionalism was evident in patterns of voting behaviour: even after the attainment of universal suffrage, the Conservative Party has derived about 50 per cent of its vote from manual workers, about a third of whom cast their votes for that party. In his examination of ideological formations during the period 1880 to 1918, A.J. Lee (14) eschews electoral analysis on the grounds that levels of enfranchisement were particularly low in working class constituencies (20.5 per cent and 39.3 per cent in Whitechapel and Everton respectively). This makes it difficult to discover whether the minority who voted were representative of the majority who did not. His central thesis is that the structures of family, education, religion and work


'have made traditionalism a significant factor in the formation of working class ideology'. (15) 'Traditional behaviour' has been defined by Max Weber as lying 'very close to the borderline of what can be justifiably be called meaningfully orientated action, and indeed often on the other side. For it is very often a matter of almost automatic reaction to habitual stimuli which guide behaviour in a course which has been repeatedly followed. The great bulk of everyday action to which people have become habitually accustomed approaches this type'. (16) The Victorian family with its authoritarian social relations, exacerbated within the working classes by economic insecurity, tended towards introverted, isolated and perhaps even privatised values and behaviour. Even 'radical' families were susceptible. David Kirkwood recalled that his father often spoke of 'winning through', which meant 'surviving, not being starved, not being homeless, not being in debt'. (17) The quiescent political outlook of working class children was reinforced by the schools and burgeoning youth organisations whose values were deferential, authoritarian and nationalistic. However, Lee does acknowledge that the efficacy of such institutions of control was mitigated by the early leaving age and the countervailing power of the adolescent sub-culture. While the working class generally was indifferent to organised religion, there were notable exceptions. In Lancashire, up to 1910, the Tory Party could draw upon a militant Protestantism that was enmeshed with

15. Lee, 'Con.' in Martin and Rubinstein, _Ideology_, p. 95
16. Quoted by Lee, 'Con.' in Martin and Rubinstein, _Ideology_, p. 89
17. Quoted by Lee, 'Con.' in Martin and Rubinstein, _Ideology_ p. 90
anti-Irishism. For those who did attend church, he suggests that the following injunction was more typical of the working man's religious diet than the progressive sermons of the Christian Socialists: 'Nothing is lost in the kingdom of nature....Nothing is lost in Providence....Nothing is more unlike God than waste.... Let nothing be lost....No money, no time, no talent, no opportunity of good-doing or good-getting, no chapter of the Bible, no sermon, no sacrament, no affliction, no success! Make profit, and only profit, from them all.' (18) The implication of Lee's thesis is that such values acted as a brake upon the development of a mass socialist consciousness. The radical value system emphasises constant recognition of the division of society into inevitably conflicting social classes and an unequivocal commitment to eliminating the capitalist reward structure. Very few trade unionists were committed to this value system. Rather, support for the political parties, including Labour, has been 'economistic' in nature, not the attempt to secure 'the whole produce of labour', but to obtain 'a fair day's wage for a fair day's work'. Lee concludes that '....it is true that ouvriesme was not the hallmark of the British labour movement; epater le bourgeois was not for them'.

The 'economistic' approach of the trade unions was reinforced by improvements in working class standards of living. Although by the end of the century, the U.K.'s pre-eminence as 'workshop of the world' was fading (19), the weakness of export performance

18. Lee, 'Con' in Martin and Rubinstein, Ideology, p. 91

19. In 1870, the U.K.'s share of world industrial production was 30 per cent. By 1913, the share had fallen to 15 per cent.
was compensated by an increase in invisible earnings from the capital account. Moreover, by using the Empire as a captive market for the sale of textiles, iron and steel and railway rolling stock, the U.K. was able to continue with the manufacturing base of the first Industrial Revolution, thereby evading the necessity to modernise. The growth of foreign competition undermined middle class faith in the sacred cow of mid-Victorian Liberalism ('Free Trade'). As prices fell and markets, particularly the American, became increasingly protected, the economy suffered periodic slumps (the late 1870's and mid 1880's). Despite this, working class living standards improved. The 'Great Depression' of the late 1870's precipitated a fall not only in money wages, but also in prices. The repeal of the Corn Laws (1846) helped to ensure that cheap corn would counteract a decrease in money income. G.D.H. Cole suggests that between the late 1880's and 1900 'real' wages increased by 20 per cent. Wage increases were not evenly distributed with the cotton workers, being the lowest paid, almost doubling their wages. Such trends were reinforced by changes in the occupational structure. The proportion of workers employed in agriculture declined between 1871 and 1901 from 15 to 7.5 per cent. The 'shake out' transferred them to sectors like transport and mining - from worse paid to better paid jobs. During the 1880's the main features of 'traditional' working class culture were created: a more settled existence based on the extended family; mass spectator sport such as Association Football; cheap railway excursions and commercialised leisure (the Music Hall and later the cinema). This culture embodied real gains such as the shorter working week (56-57 hours per week compared with 60-72 hours in mid-Victorian times). Apart from the 'bottom dogs' material
deprivation has eased considerably.

The 'traditionalism' of working class culture is evident in the kind of trade unionism that became dominant after the demise of Chartism in 1848. The 'New Model' unions, such as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers founded in January 1851, offered friendly benefits (sickness, superannuation, unemployment, tramping and funeral) in return for high subscriptions. Their faith in conciliation procedures was reinforced by a growing disinclination to strike. Pauline Gregg notes the gradual adjustment of the workman to the system and his acceptance of its values: 'Stonemasons warned their members to keep from strikes as from " a ferocious animal that you know would destroy you". London compositors turned instead to"the irresistible weapons of truth and reason". ' (20) The acceptable face of trade unionism was sullied by the 'Sheffield outrages' of October 1866 when acts of violence were perpetrated against non-unionists. Moreover, in the case of Hornby v. Close (21) the Lord Chief Justice and three other judges declared that trade unions were illegal organisations, although not criminal, owing to their tendency to act 'in restraint of trade'. Activity was directed towards securing legal status. In order to engage in legitimate trade union practices, it became necessary to embrace 'policical' activity. The two were


21. 'This was a case in which the Boilermakers Society sued the treasurer of its Bradford branch, in order to recover £24 which he owed to the society. The Boilermakers' officials...had thought that the Friendly Societies Act of 1855 would provide protection for their funds...But...trade unions were outside the scope of the measure'. H. Pelling, A History of British Trade Unionism, Harmondsworth, (1979), p. 67
clearly not mutually exclusive. In addition to clarification of the Friendly Societies Act of 1855, unionists called for the repeal of the Master and Servant Act of 1824 which deemed it a criminal offence for a workman to be in breach of his employment contract. The London Trades Council (the 'Junta') formed in 1860 and composed of moderate trade union leaders, became the central Cabinet for the trade union movement as a whole. In its evidence to the Royal Commission (1867) established in the aftermath of the 'Sheffield outrages', the Junta presented a deliberately misleading picture of union activities in order to secure legal recognition. They stressed the 'friendly' activities and their faith in conciliation machinery and played down the dysfunctional elements of restrictive practices and strikes: 'a picture of the unions as sober insurance societies whose affairs were business-like and entirely respectable'. (22) Hinton suggests that they wished to win for themselves 'a recognised and secure position within the existing social order'. (23) The effort to distance themselves from other sections of the working classes is evident in the demands for the extension of the franchise. In 1865, the National Reform League, a coalition of middle class Radicals and labour aristocrats, demanded the enfranchisement of the 'registered and residential' which excluded the rural working class and the urban poor. The Second Reform Act of 1867 gave the vote to all registered male householders in the towns and


to the £12 ratepayers in the country. Hinton comments, 'Respectable working men sought recognition as earnest and morally responsible citizens; they did not seek to enter electoral politics at the head of an avenging army of the dispossessed'. (24)

In 1848, Marx and Engels had proclaimed: 'The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They had a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!' (25) The labour aristocracy were far from being the 'gravediggers' of capitalism; rather, they had acquired a stake in society. Through their 'Model Unions' the skilled worker increased wages by restricting apprenticeships, carved out areas of job autonomy and controlled the distribution of labour through tramping and removal benefits. As late as 1913, in the coal, cotton, building and engineering industries, semi-skilled workers earned between 12 and 29 per cent less than the skilled, whilst for the unskilled the gap was between 34 and 39 per cent. Despite the erosion of wage differentials, the labour aristocratic elite were still a force to be reckoned with by 1900.

In the expanding occupations, the status divisions were less extreme than in the craft sectors. The viability of the craft unions was prolonged by the backward nature of U.K. technology. They were concerned with maintaining wage differentials. Robert Knight of the Boilermakers (1893) expressed the 'aristocratic' privilege thus: "The helper ought to be subservient and do as the mechanic


tells him". (26) Through the manipulation of market forces, the financial expectations of the privileged strata were not frustrated sufficiently to drive them into a revolutionary alliance with the poor. Not only did the aristocracy enjoy superior 'market capacity', but also they sought to erect barriers of social demarcation. Residential segregation represents an index of the attempt to maintain social distance. R. Gray quotes a Charity Organisation Survey (1904) which showed that 50 per cent of engineers lived in 'superior' houses compared with 15 per cent of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers. (27) In terms of cultural pursuits, certain voluntary organisations appealed to the superior artisan - the Co-operative Store, the Mechanics Institute, the Temperance Hall and the Chapel. Hinton interprets this as demonstration of their wish to distance themselves from the culture of the poor: '....they used the financial walls of the Co-operative store (no credit, no cheap adulterated food) and the friendly society, and the spiritual walls of the chapel to mark themselves off from the drunkards, the pigeon flyers and the dog runners'. (28) The first Conference of the Trades Union Congress (T.U.C.) which met on 2 June 1868 at the Mechanics Institute was intended, according to Griggs 'as merely a vehicle of debate'. (29) William Dronfield, architect of the United Kingdom Alliance of Organised Trades, being concerned at the exclusion of trade union matters

27. Gray, 'Lab. Arist.' in Parkin, _Class Structure_, p. 23
from the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, proposed that '....papers, previously carefully prepared, shall be laid before the Congress on the various subjects which at the present time affect Trades Societies'. (30) The invitations sent out by the Typographical Society to a minority of skilled workers met with a meagre response - thirty three delegates in all, with the 'Junta' declining the invitation. Griggs points out that with all the poor publicity surrounding trade union activity, delegates could hardly restrict their meetings to a discussion of papers. The necessity of taking 'political' action was soon to be realised, but only within the framework of the system. 'It supported the monarch, imperialism, and the Liberal Party until almost 1900, voted against an extension of the franchise in 1876 and in general accepted many of the values of Victorian society, including a desire for respectability.' (31) The T.U.C. could never claim to represent the workforce in full. Even though 80 per cent of trade unionists were affiliated to the T.U.C., the rate of unionisation was low. Between 1900 and 1914, the number of unionists increased from 1,972,000 to 4,145,000, representing approximately 25 per cent of the labour force. Although government statistics were not collected until 1886, estimates by historians, principally the Webbs and G.D.H. Cole, suggest a figure of approximately 500,000 during the 1870's. Although the T.U.C. never represented the majority, it spoke for those groups of workers who were more likely to be enfranchised. The political parties could not afford to ignore them completely.

30. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 6
31. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 3
Under the secretaryship of Broadhurst, Howell and Fenwick (1871-1893) Griggs argues that the T.U.C. leaned towards the Liberal Party, eschewing support for independent labour representation. Despite the various religious and political affiliations of the delegates 'the over-riding philosophy to be detected throughout the history of the Congress...was one of pragmatism'. (32) The Liberal administration, 1868-74, felt that it could come to terms with the idea of trade unionism exemplified by the 'Junta', which sent a delegation to the second T.U.C. Conference of 1869. The government took the 'Junta' at its word: if they really functioned principally as friendly societies, their funds would be legally protected. However, the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1871) contained severe penal clauses against 'molestation', 'obstruction' and 'intimidation' - according to Cole, 'the Government quite logically set out to legalise the trade unions on condition of their acting up to the pious professions of Applegarth and his friends'. (33) The Act was implemented to the spirit and letter of the law: seven women were imprisoned for saying "bah" to blacklegs. The necessity of formulating a political response was recognised by the establishment of the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. (P.C.T.U.C.) which acted as an executive committee. Its function, in addition to preparing agenda for future Conferences, was to lobby Parliament (in effect sympathetic Liberal M.P.'s) so as to secure the repeal of the offending clauses. Furthermore,

32. Griggs, T.U.C., p.4

it sought the adoption of its candidates by the Liberal Party: out of 15 candidates sponsored by the P.C.T.U.C. during the 1874 election, two miners' leaders (T. Burt and A. MacDonald) were returned for Morpeth and Stafford respectively. The moderate political stance of the T.U.C. was not shaken by the growth of New Unionism during the late 1880's. Whereas Applegarth had preached conciliation, Ben Tillett (Tea-porters' and General Labourers' Union) urged confrontation. As unemployment fell during the late 1880's, trade unionism took a more militant turn with the Match Girls' strike of 1888 and the Dock strike of 1889. The latter, in pursuance of the 'dockers tanner' and union recognition, is noteworthy in two respects. It demonstrated that groups hitherto believed to be resistant to organisation could be persuaded to engage in lengthy industrial action (five weeks in all) to achieve collective goals. Furthermore, socialist agitators like Tom Mann and John Burn (Social Democratic Federation) sought to politicise industrial disputes. Pauline Gregg has summed up the mood of the unskilled thus: 'In the kind of language they were beginning to use, they were prosperous when capitalism was expanding and the margin of concession was high, but they were the first to be sacrificed when capitalism contracted and the margin of concession was low. The logical outcome of this reasoning was a questioning of the policy of conciliation in both the political and industrial field, together with a more profound questioning of the whole relationship of capital and labour and of the basis of capitalist society...'. (34) In 1886, Tom Mann, of the Amalgamated Engineers, had published a pamphlet entitled What a Compulsory

Eight Hour Working Day Means to the Workers in which he lambasted the conciliatory policy of the older unionists: 'The true Unionist policy of aggression seems entirely lost sight of; in fact the average unionist of today is a man with a fossilised intellect, either hopelessly apathetic, or supporting a policy that plays directly into the hands of the capitalist exploiter'. (35)

Despite the rhetoric and the spectacular gains, Hinton argues that the doubling of membership to 1,500,000 between 1888 and 1892 was largely due to the expansion amongst older unions (the Miners Federation of Great Britain, the Associated Society of Railway Servants and various craft unions) rather than the development of new ones. Moreover, the concessions wrested from the employers by the unskilled were dependent upon fortuitous circumstances: full employment, police toleration of picketing and the absence of concerted opposition from the employers. These conditions were not favourable for long. In 1893, the National Free Labour Association was formed with the object of supplying 'free' labour to take the place of unionists on strike. The Association's role was important in defeating the Amalgamated Engineers during the six month 'lock-out' of 1897. The Engineers' demand for an eight hour day had to be withdrawn. Although an earlier T.U.C. Conference had endorsed a Parliamentary Bill to promote a statutory eight hour day, it still remained the citadel of 'Lib-Labism'. Albeit by a small majority (23 votes) the 1893 Conference refused to establish an independent working class party. The trade union

establishment was so concerned about the increase in left-wing representation that in 1894 the Parliamentary Committee was instructed to revise Standing Orders. The Trades Councils, the power base of socialist activists, were expelled on the grounds of 'dual representation' (they already enjoyed representation through the unions to which they belonged). The success of this manoeuvre was demonstrated at the Conferences of 1897 and 1898 when motions to establish a political levy were defeated.

The continuing allegiance of the mainstream of the T.U.C. to 'Lib-Lab' politics needs to be located in terms of the 'New Liberal' strategy of forging a class alliance – a strategy which underpinned the W.E.A.'s union of 'labour and learning'. Hinton suggests that the 'political articulation of the emergent working class movement took place in the context of a succession of liberal strategies to contain and subordinate working class politics'. (36) The widening of the franchise in 1884 and the Home Rule Crisis of 1885, which split the Liberal Party and ushered in twenty years of Conservative hegemony, demonstrated the need to appeal to the working class voter. The enduring basis of middle class support were the sectional causes of Nonconformist conscience expressed by bodies such as the National Education League which favoured non-denominational education. But, hatred of publicans and parsons was insufficient to win national elections.

The battle for the hearts and minds of the registered working class voter would be fought on the ground of the Party's commitment to social reform. Regarding the question of State intervention, classical Liberalism had applied the test of 'expediency': 'self-regarding actions' were not injurious to the health of others and therefore could be left alone. British economists believed that 'households and business firms in their domestic and foreign transactions of resources and products, each pursuing his material self-interest as buyer or seller in competitive markets, produced an optimum, an equilibrium, a maximum'. (37) William Gladstone, P.M. 1892-94, was loathe to increase the burden of taxation, believing that money should be left to 'fructify' in the pockets of the people. The radical wing of the Liberal Party sought to broaden its electoral base and, at the same time, protect private property from the socialist menace (Joseph Chamberlain's 'ransom') by advocating measures of amelioration. The 'New Liberals' were able to persuade working class activists that their real interests lay in a policy of conciliation rather than class conflict. However much they distanced themselves from the self-help wing of the Party, these progressives were far from being socialist. According to the ideologues of New Liberalism (Professor L.T. Hobhouse of the London School of Economics, C.P. Scott, editor of the Manchester Guardian and the historian C.F.G. Masterman) socialism would undermine enterprise, curb the freedom of the individual and level downwards by pauperising the wealthy. They set out to produce an alternative to socialism. Matthew suggests that it was an attempt to justify the free

market system by making it work 'fairly'; it attempted a rationalisation of capitalism, not its replacement'. (38) According to Hinton, the New Liberal activists were drawn from the intermediate strata of society — professionals, journalists and civil servants. Perhaps in the case of the W.E.A. we may add young dons and theologians. During the 1880's, their consciences directed them towards the East End of London where they became involved in missionary work. Toynbee Hall was established as a 'settlement' in Whitechapel (1884) to 'provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment for the people of the poorer districts ....; to enquire into the conditions of the poor and to consider and advance plans calculated to promote their welfare'. (39) The reformers' impressions were substantiated by the social surveys of Booth and Rowntree which clearly demonstrated that poverty had little to do with individual fecklessness and a good deal more to do with economic circumstances. The old Liberal goals of self-help seemed inadequate in the face of crushing deprivation. It was recognised that the 'hidden hand' of the market would not facilitate, by itself, optimum resource allocation and that the state's role was more than a residual one. The 'collectivist' outlook of the New liberals was evident in the reform packages of the post 1906 administrations: free school meals (1907); old age pensions (1908); Lloyd George's budget (1909) which introduced a 'super-tax' on the incomes of the very rich, thereby precipitating a constitutional crisis and the National Insurance Bill (1911) giving compulsory insurance to certain groups for sickness and unemployment benefits. Charles Booth called this


a 'limited socialism...which would leave untouched the forces of individualism and sources of wealth'. (40) These legislative milestones of the modern Welfare State were based on the rejection of the Victorian principle that thrift and diligence would ensure modest prosperity. The reforms accepted that capitalism was wasteful, inefficient and punishing to individuals. But, as Matthew points out, 'they were none the less the reforms of free traders who believed that marginal adjustments to the system could phase out the injustices of capitalism and make it fair'. (41)

The mainstream of the British working class movement was committed to reformism, whether this was expressed by the Liberals or an independent Labour Party. The moderate political orientation was an expression of the 'political culture' of British society. The term refers to 'specifically political orientations toward the political system'. (42) It is perhaps a sociological truism to note that common cultural values and norms are the basis of social order, but one of the perspectives derived from this is the study of the political culture as a source of ideas and propositions about the functioning of the political system. The Marxist historian Tom Nairn argues that the English working class was 'made' in the image of the bourgeois class so that 'after the 1840's it quickly turned into an apparently docile class. It embraced one species of reformism after another, became a consciously subordinate part of bourgeois society, and has remained wedded

40. Quoted in Hinton, Lab Soc., p. 36
42. Robert E. Dowse and J.A. Hughes, Political Sociology, (1972), p. 227
to the narrowest and greyest of bourgeois ideologies in its principal movements'. (43) Continental Marxism had arrived too late in 1884 when the Social Democratic Federation formulated its socialist programme of nationalisation, universal free education, public provision of work for the unemployed and progressive direct taxation. This marginal grouping, consisting of 400 members initially, was not free from sectional wranglings. The Party split over the issue of the viability of contesting Parliamentary elections. The 'malcontents' led by William Morris opined that a course of action based on the ballot box would be futile until the electorate had been primed with socialist propaganda. His prognosis was vindicated by the results of the 1885 Election in which three S.D.F. candidates polled a total of 657 votes. Although not without influence in the education debates of the T.U.C., the extreme Marxism of the S.D.F. made negligible impact upon the Labour Movement.

The foundation Conference of the Independent Labour Party, January 1893, inaugurated a type of socialism that was alien to Continental models. The object of the I.L.P. was 'to secure the collective ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange'. Despite the utopianism of such a goal, the I.L.P. displayed pragmatism in its programme of immediate demands: the eight hour day, state provision for the sick, disabled and aged, extension of the franchise and reform of taxation. The

priority was to secure the election of an independent Labour Party to Parliament. To this end, a proposal to have the description 'Socialist' in their title was rejected: political expediency once again triumphed over political principle. Keir Hardie recognised the electoral consequences of antagonising the 'Lib-Lab' sympathies of many trade unionists. Despite the manoeuvring, all 28 I.L.P. candidates, including Hardie, were defeated in the Election of 1885. Their socialism was, in the words of G.D.H. Cole, 'a socialism sui generis - a peculiarly British product'.

(44) The I.L.P. was influenced by the Fabian Society - a small group of intellectuals - who believed that socialism would be best achieved by reform rather than by revolution. Their injunction to labour activists was to permeate existing institutions rather than to 'smash' the State. The Fabians, so named after the Roman general, Fabius Maximus the 'Delayer', argued that the S.D.F. scared away trade unions by its talk of revolution and its unintelligible Marxist jargon which was devoid of any propagandist appeal. Greater emphasis was placed upon the ethical and fraternal forms of socialism. It implied a crusade rather than class conflict - a deepening of fellowship rather than an intensification of class consciousness. If it sought a reconstruction of the social system, it was strongly disinclined to accept class struggle as the motor force of change. G.D.H. Cole argued that the I.L.P. sought to make socialism a broad human movement 'on behalf of

44. Cole, British Wking. Class, Vol. 3, p. 21
the bottom dog'. It was not Marxist in orientation; rather 'it was Radicalism adopting a socialist policy as a means to a more equal distribution of wealth and happiness', (45) After the disastrous performance in the 1895 Election, the I.L.P. looked towards municipal government to secure 'gas and water' socialism. They hoped to persuade local authorities to implement permissive legislation in the areas of housing, sanitation and relief for the unemployed. In Bradford, not only were educational developments pioneered, particularly in the area of nursery education, but also the protection of workers by the insertion of a 'fair wage' clause in local authority contracts. Although the clause represented a challenge to the orthodoxy regarding the immutability of market forces, it could by no means be described as quintessentially socialist. The 1891 Act 'to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen' was placed on the Statute book by a Conservative administration. The achievements in educational policy were essentially liberal - to secure the equalisation of opportunities. By removing the barriers to access, policy makers hoped to utilise the latent talent inhering in the 'lower orders'. This related less to socialism than to the demand for 'national efficiency'; a slogan which suggested a willingness to use government power to organise and legislate for an 'Imperial race' fit to meet the challenges of the world. 'National efficiency'

as a slogan was a far cry from the socialism of 'from each according to his work; to each according to his needs'. The politics of the I.L.P. coincided with the non socialist reformism of New Liberalism. Despite the modest membership, Morgan suggests that it was 'easily the most important movement of the day'. (46) It was a leading propagandist organisation, providing not only exemplars of 'municipal socialism' but also most of the major figures in the Labour Movement (K. Hardie, P. Snowdon, R. MacDonald, H. Morrisson, Nye Bevan, C. Attlee were amongst its luminaries). It did not wish to follow the path of the S.D.F. into the political wilderness. Rather, it sought to create a 'labour alliance' between socialist organisations and the trade unions by endorsing piecemeal social reform as the means towards the end ('the inevitability of gradualness').

The first steps towards establishing an independent political party were rather modest. After having rejected proposals to establish a political levy both in 1897 and 1898, T.U.C. delegates finally accepted a motion proposed by the Associated Society of Railway Servants calling for a special convention of co-operative, socialist and trade union organisations 'to devise ways and means for securing the return of an increased number of labour members to the next Parliament'. (47) The delegates displayed their moderate political credentials when they rejected an attempt

47. Quoted in Hinton, Lab. Soc., p. 71
by the S.D.F. to impose its definition of what constituted working class politics. Their proposal for the creation of a 'distinct party - separate from the capitalist parties, based upon recognition of the Class War, and having for its ultimate object the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange', was too strong for many of the trade union delegates. The inaugural Conference of the Labour Representation Committee (1900) was prepared to endorse Keir Hardie's compromise motion to establish a Labour Group (not a Party) pledged to 'co-operate with any party which for the time being may be engaged in promoting legislation in the direct interests of Labour'. (48) At the election of 1900, two candidates (K. Hardie and R. Bell for Merthyr and Derby respectively) were returned. Although support by the unions was initially lukewarm with the Miners' Federation of Great Britain withholding affiliation until 1909, the Taff Vale judgement of 1901 concentrated minds wonderfully. The effectiveness of trade unions to secure economic gains for their members was severely curtailed by a judgement which enabled employers to sue striking workers for breach of contract. Hinton suggests that they did not want a long term alternative to Liberalism, but to return sufficient members so as to establish a strong bargaining position. Their motivation was not grounded in egalitarian hopes; rather to achieve statutory protection of what were felt to be legitimate activities. This was confirmed at the L.R.C. Conference held in Newcastle (1903) when a socialist resolution to allow candidates

to refer to themselves as 'Labour and Socialist' was decisively rejected.

David Martin has described members of the L.R.C. (renamed the Labour Party in 1906) as 'humanitarian socialists' who 'hated capitalism, but....looked for a Pauline conversion (a word applicable to both religion and socialism) from their opponents ....so that social classes might be reconciled in that earthly Jerusalem of which they dreamed; in the biblical language of the day 'the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb'.'). (49)

Biographical research into the 30 Labour Members returned in 1906 shows that in terms of religious background, reading habits and group affiliations, they gave the impression of 'sober artisans in chapel'. Far from being violent revolutionaries, they were in the mould of Good Samaritans with vague good intentions to help the aged, unemployed and the sick. Compared to the doctrinaire S.D.F., the Labour Party was reformist, pragmatic and 'labourist'. It was prepared to negotiate deals with the Liberal Party so as to secure reversal of the Taff Vale decision. The 1906 Trades Disputes Act, conceded by the Liberal administration restored the status quo ante by giving trade unions immunity from civil action 'in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute'. Although welcomed by the unions, the legislation should not be viewed as being in any sense radical: the right to strike did not become enshrined in English law. Employers enjoyed the right

to dismiss striking employees for breach of contract. Hinton argues that the Labour Party passively supported many of the early twentieth century reforms which, despite their ameliorative character, embodied a 'counter attack on democratic and working class institutions (50) The National Insurance Act (1911) served to underline the limited view of socialism held by the Labour Party. Although welcomed by many trade unions, the principle of contributory insurance to cover health and unemployment was denounced by socialists. They had supported the Right to Work Bill (1907) which laid down the duty of the State to provide employment, or, failing that, to provide adequate maintenance. Despite the vaunted collectivism of the New Liberals, it was axiomatic that each man's life was his own responsibility and not that of the State. The National Insurance Act embodied the principle of compulsory self-help with additional support from employers and the State. To many artisans, it embodied the spirit of class reconciliation - the epitome of tripartite consensus. Although socialists could dismiss the reforms as mere palliatives, they did embody real, if modest, gains for the working classes. School meals in particular and a preoccupation with child welfare more generally were promoted by the I.L.P. In 1906 an Education (Provision of Meals) Act enabled, but did not compel, local authorities to provide school meals out of rates. David Martin concludes: 'It articulated the need for economic and social reform

50. Hinton, Lab. Soc. p. 76
and the rising expectations of the working class. As an instrument of the people, the Labour Party was neither a torrent nor a battering ram; it was closer to being a respectful but compelling petition'. (51) The modest demands of the trade unions were berated by J.R. Clynes, M.P. for Manchester N.E. at the L.P. Conference of 1909. Why did they content themselves with a share of society's wealth ('a fair day's pay for a fair day's work') instead of claiming the full product? In reply, unionists could argue that they had more immediate problems to deal with. In 1909, the Osborne Judgement declared that trade union sponsorship of the Labour Party was 'ultra vires'. Much of their political work was geared to reversing the crippling effects of this judgement. Their work paid dividends when, in 1913, the Trade Union Act allowed, subject to a ballot and the right of individuals to 'contract out', the establishment of separate political funds. It is interesting to note that 40 per cent of the nine largest unions opposed the political levy. A substantial minority of the organised working class felt no allegiance to their 'natural' political ally, despite its modest aims.

The modest aims of the Labour Party are recognised by Morgan (52) who suggests that two versions of socialism (political and industrial) struggled to achieve hegemony during Edwardian England. The former, as espoused by the I.L.P., emphasising

51. D.E. Martin, 'The Instruments of the People?' in Martin and Rubinstein, Ideology, p. 143

constitutional, parliamentary reform achieved ascendancy, over the alternative version (syndicalism) which called for 'direct action', (a euphemism for political strikes). In 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World (the 'Wobblies') was launched in Chicago with the aim of breaking down the sectional craft-based character of trade unionism by reorganisation upon industrial lines. This stimulated rank and file movements to use direct action as a means of fighting capitalism. The syndicalists held that both conciliation in industry and reformism in politics had left untouched the root cause of injustice - the private ownership of the means of production. During a period of widespread industrial unrest (1912) the Unofficial Reform Committee challenged the Miners Federation of Great Britain by publishing The Miners' Next Step. Its message to the proletariat was that their interests could only be advanced by industrial sabotage.

Morgan suggests that by 1914 the pamphlet was 'half-forgotten'. Although the new ideas had a degree of impact on the pace of trade union amalgamation, the theorists 'who sought to give the movement form and direction never really captured the great mass of the working class'. (53) For syndicalists, education was a subversive activity. It is no accident that the authors of the Next Step (Noah Ablett and Frank Hodges) were active in the strike by Ruskin College students against the 'bourgeois' nature of mainstream economics teaching at Oxford University. They were

instrumental in establishing the Central Labour College (1909-1929) which sought to provide the working classes with 'the educational tools and weapons....for their work as sappers and miners among the foundations of capitalism'. (54) They would have no truck with 'capitalist' educational institutions preferring to create schools and colleges that would enable the proletariat to fulfil its historical destiny. Very few trade unionists subscribed to this philosophy. The C.L.C. managed to gain the affiliation of two trade unions (the N.U.R. and M.F.G.B.). The majority of socialists were committed to a belief system that countenanced a degree of co-operation with 'capitalist' institutions.

The W.E.A. represented the educational wing of the Labour Movement inspired by the Fabian shibboleths of 'permeation' and 'Fellowship'. Academic sponsors viewed the extra-mural work as a means of forging a common culture which might have helped to heal the growing divisions and conflict between the classes. In his contribution to the Cambridge Essays on Adult Education (1920), the Secretary of the Cambridge University Local Lectures drew parallels between family and national society in emphasising the value of fellowship: 'What a difference there is in the home if all the members of a family are engaged in various studies, bringing the experiences into the common stock, and widening the sympathies of all! In greater or lesser degree the same is true of any community united by common work and still more by

54. Quoted in Hodgen, Workers' Ed., p. 144
common tastes. An association of students drawn from every class creed and party is one of the best solvents of bitterness and misunderstanding'. (55) Had these sentiments represented a vision of 'W.E.A. as social engineering,' it is difficult to explain the presence of members of the S.D.F. in the early University Tutorial Classes. It is difficult to sustain the charge of the W.E.A. as an instrument of social control - a means of engineering consensus in an otherwise class divided society. A difficult charge, that is, unless one views actors as cultural dupes. The classes spawned by the W.E.A. epitomised a negotiated order: the negotiation of cultural space within existing institutions. The universities could not offer higher education on a 'take it or leave it' basis. Although they were not willing to subordinate the requirements of academic study to the demands of political expediency, they acknowledged the needs peculiar to the worker students. The W.E.A. represented a democratically controlled movement whose primary function was to promote the higher education of working men and women. According to R.H. Tawney (the first U.T.C. tutor) it was a revolutionary organisation because it subverted the received wisdom that 'there is a class of masters whose right it is to enter at manhood on the knowledge which is the inheritance of the race, and a class of servants whose hands should be on the furrow which is watered with their sweat, whose virtue is contentment, and whose ignorance is the safety of the gay powers

by whom their iron world is ruled'. (56)

The question of access to the world of higher education was central. Trade unionists, being acutely conscious of their restricted educational pilgrimage ('learning to labour'), went to great lengths to make up the deficit. Tom Mann, of the Amalgamated Engineers, supplemented his meagre education in the following ways: 'Three evenings a week for five years I attended classes in connection with the Science and Art Department, South Kensington. In addition I attended a Bible class one evening a week, and found it very helpful. Also I went on one evening a week to the meeting of a temperance society....Every Sunday evening....I attended a church religious service....This left one evening out of seven for ordinary purposes during the winter months'. (57) The W.E.A. was able to tap a rich vein of working-class self-improvement which had made itself manifest in the field of University Extension. Albert Mansbridge acknowledged that some students joined a U.T.C. as a result of a 'pure educational impulse'. Thomas Kelly's examination of Manchester University shows that the early students were men and women who were making up for a deficient elementary education. This would explain the prodigious amount of written work at a centre like Sandbach (Cheshire) with 31 students producing 160 essays (1921-1922 session). The Final Report 1919 considered the educational


effects of the work on the students. The joys of intellectual enlightenment were expressed by one 'middle-aged student': "I never knew what education was until I came here. For twenty years I have walked in the darkness, and now I can see the light. I bitterly regret that no such opportunity came my way twenty years ago".(58) T.W. Price, in his account of the W.E.A.'s first twenty one years, gives us an insight into the motivation of the pioneer worker students: 'Working class students rarely seek to get knowledge for its own sake, and this is quite healthy. The working man is usually drawn to study by his interest in the working class movement - that is to say, in the efforts that are being made so to modify and transform social and economic conditions as to afford opportunities for a fuller life for himself and his fellows - and at the back of his mind is the idea that knowledge he gains will be of use to him in the movement'. (59)

The idea of service to the working class movement was one that did not entirely approximate to the views held by the liberal sponsors of the W.E.A. A dominant theme to be found in their writings was the need to develop an educated - intelligent - discerning electorate. The extension of the franchise made it incumbent upon the traditional governing class to imbue the new voters with precisely those civic qualities that would enable them to discriminate between rational and irrational politics. The W.E.A. appealed

59. Price, Story of the W.E.A., p. 81
to those who were anxious that working people play a 'responsible' role in civic affairs. In canvassing support for the idea of an educational alliance, Albert Mansbridge played upon middle class anxieties. When he published 'A Plan for Action' in March 1903, political considerations were uppermost in his mind. He suggested that the strike by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, which precipitated the Taff Vale judgement (1901) would not have occurred had the rank and file been more 'thoughtful' and 'responsible' in their selection of the union's executive committee. A 'wise' education would render members less susceptible to the seductive allurements of orators. Such a 'corrective' influence would make it possible for working men to bear their 'legitimate' burdens in municipal, national and imperial affairs. Although he eschewed overt party political identification, there can be no doubt about the political nature of this educational intervention - the promotion of class reconciliation. Such a view represented mainstream W.E.A. thinking. Mansbridge's goal of an educational alliance was given the seal of approval by the Oxford Report (1908). This was not surprising given the equal status accorded to the W.E.A. nominees, including Mansbridge, upon the Committee. The Report noted the 'revival of a belief in the possibilities of political action' (60) which created the background of aspiration for higher education. It was incumbent upon Oxford to extend its scope in a modern society: 'The Trade Union secretary and the 'Labour member' need an Oxford education as much, and will

60. Oxford Report para. 8
use it to as good ends, as the civil servant or barrister'. (61)

Working people required a liberal education that was concerned with life and not earning a livelihood. The new governing class should have the opportunity of obtaining a wide outlook on the historical development and economic conditions of the whole community: to view matters in the 'national' interest and not from the vantage point of one's own class position. They played upon ruling class fears about the menace of socialism in order to mobilise support for their cause: 'Changes in the structure of English society are throwing more and more responsibility on the shoulders of men who have had no opportunity of obtaining the synoptic mind which, as Plato says, is desirable in governors'. (62)

The language may have been more subtle than that used by Robert Lowe, but the message was the same: that working men should be rendered intellectually fit to exercise their right to vote.

The socialist reaction to Oxford's gesture was predictable. Ramsay MacDonald, Secretary of the Labour Party, wrote, 'Oxford is a poison....I want my people to feel a sense of self-respect so strong and so proud as to be protected by its own inner merit from fawning before dons, deans or anybody else....You cannot recreate Oxford by an infusion of working men....Oxford will assimilate them, not they Oxford.' (63)

University Tutorial classes

61. Oxford Report para. 8
63. H.P. Smith, Labour and Learning, Oxford, p. 76
were another instrument by which the Bourgeoisie could manipulate the hearts and minds of the Proletariat. To perceive the W.E.A. as yet one more reactionary plot by a guileful ruling class would be to overstate the motivations of the sponsors and to under-estimate the intellectual capacities of the clients.

Mansbridge was one to learn lessons from history: if the W.E.A. was to reproduce the crass social engineering of the Mechanics Institutes, it would drive worker students elsewhere. He wanted, above all else, a democratic movement: 'We didn't want a great list of patrons....nothing of the sort. Our aim was to go about England and get working people to start branches of the association on a small scale, simply providing them with the idea and giving them some notion how to set about it'. (64) That this was not mere rhetoric is demonstrated by the composition of the first U.T.C. conducted by R.H. Tawney. It included members of the Marxist S.D.F. whose presence, according to Price, 'gave piquancy to the discussion hour'. (65) Price was one of the original 30 students in the Rochdale class. He acknowledged the validity of the socialist criticism of the universities: that they sought to train the working classes to believe orthodox social and economic doctrines. But, to believe that U.T.C.'s were a means of disseminating bourgeois ideology was evidence of a failure to understand the philosophy and machinery of the W.E.A. The possibility of any

64. Quoted by Smith, Labour, p. 77
65. Price, Story of W.E.A., p. 34
reactionary bias in university teaching could be guarded against... by the element of working class representation on the Joint Committees responsible for such classes. Education was not conceived as a social anodyne. Moreover, worker students were not tabula rasa upon which could be written the conventional wisdom of the day. The 'School Text Book Controversy' of 1879 demonstrated the extent to which T.U.C. delegates were mindful of the dangers of ideological indoctrination. The bete noire of the 1879 Congress was the National Society's Standard V Reading Book which was condemned for its poisonous effects on the minds of children. Much of the text was based on the work of Archbishop Richard Whateley, Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, who, in 1833, had published political tracts for the S.P.C.K. His view of trade unions as pernicious institutions was reflected in the Standard V reading Book: 'There will generally be found among the workmen some able and ill-disposed persons who feel envy, and endeavour to excite others against everyone who earns more than the usual wages. In this way they often persuade a great number of their fellow workers to form themselves into a combination and appoint these agitators under the title of committee men. The business of these committee men is to make laws for the government of the combination, and to punish all who break them'. (66) As to how far this influenced the views of the children, it is difficult to assess. In his overview of 'Social Control in Victorian Britain', F.M.L. Thompson suggests that the clients were astutely discriminating in their response to schooling 'rejecting the moral and

66. Quoted in Griggs, T.U.C., p.93
controlling purposes by simply allowing the attempts at indoctrination in the ideology of submission to pass over their heads or run like water off a duck's back. (67) The T.U.C., being rather more convinced about the efficacy of such a text, campaigned with success for the withdrawal from sale. For Griggs, the paradox of the T.U.C. was that despite its conservative values (support for, inter alia, the monarch, imperialism and the Liberal Party) it had developed by the late 1890's a detailed education programme as radical as that of the S.D.F. He suggests that the educational deprivation suffered by many delegates made them willing 'to support educational and welfare proposals.... as radical as any of the smaller socialist parties, such as the S.D.F. and the I.L.P. (68) In 1895 two delegates from the Gasworkers' Union, W. Thorne (S.D.F.) and J.R. Clynes (I.L.P.) called for the democratic control of education to secure the principle of equality of opportunity'. (69) It was not clear whether 'secondary education for all' was being advocated or some form of academic selection. But, at a time when the structure of the education system mirrored the social hierarchy, equality of opportunity was a revolutionary idea. Griggs examined the educational background of 69 delegates of whom 51 served on the P.C.T.U.C. He concluded that 'due to a variety of social circumstances well down until the 1890's, regular schooling was impossible for many working class children. Hence

68. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 223
69. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 247
they were rarely able to obtain anything more than the basic rudiments of literacy'. (70) Tom Mann related this account of his educational 'career': 'I must explain that I only had a very short time at school as a boy, less than three years all told; about a year and a half at Foleshill Old Church Day School and about a year at Little Heath School, Foleshill. As by this time I was nine years of age and considered old enough to start work'. (71) The following resolutions, moved and accepted at the 1905 Conference illustrates the concerns of the delegates:

T.U.C. Conference 1905: Education Resolution (72)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Subject Matter of Resolution</th>
<th>Proposer/Seconder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All grades of education to be free and state maintained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance in primary and secondary schools to be compulsory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All children to stay at school until 15.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision to continue education of able students through university courses.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Due to findings of inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration Demands:</td>
<td>Thorne W. (Gasworkers) O'Grady J. (Furnishing Trades)</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. One free school meal per day.</td>
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<td>b. Free medical inspection and advice for all children</td>
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70. Griggs, T.U.C. p. 223
71. Quoted in Griggs, T.U.C. p. 217
Such reforms may have been dismissed by ideologues on the left as mere palliatives, but for the pragmatists half a loaf was better than none at all. Griggs defends the record of the T.U.C.: 'one good meal at lunch time for a hungry child, some physical ailment cured by early medical inspection, the opportunity for just a minority of working class children to gain more than a basic elementary education can all be rated as positive achievements'.

(73)

Adult education remained conspicuous by its absence as far as Conference agendas were concerned. As late as 1921, the General Council was instructed to co-operate with the Trade Union Education Inquiry Committee with a view to administering existing Trade Union Colleges (Ruskin and the Central Labour College). Given the constraints facing the trade union movement, the exclusion of it as a major area of debate is hardly surprising. The early years of the century were preoccupied with the fight to preserve their legal status. Moreover, delegates were primarily concerned with removing the obstacles to a decent education for working class children. The P.C.T.U.C. became involved in the work of the W.E.A. although at no time did they seek a mandate from Congress to seek approval of their actions. By 1905, the P.C.T.U.C. had appointed two of their members (Shackleton and Bell) to represent them on the Advisory Committee of the W.E.A. According to Griggs, the basis of the relationship was that 'well meaning people were asking them to co-operate in developing education for working class adults. (74)

73. Griggs, T.U.C. p. 233
74. Griggs, T.U.C. p. 184
The P.C.T.U.C. continued to keep Congress informed about their relationship with the W.E.A. which appeared to be a cordial one. The W.E.A. showed itself to be in full sympathy with the Labour Movement. Its pamphlet *What Labour Wants from Education* (1916) which endorsed R.O.S.L.A. to 16 and part time continued education until the age of 18 was endorsed by the P.C.T.U.C. Despite some notable exceptions, such as the Municipal Strike of 1913 in Leeds when some of the University members of the W.E.A. condoned black-legging, the W.E.A. enjoyed a good relationship with many trade unions at local level. Clinton writes, 'The Reading branch of the W.E.A....had a Trades Council representative on its board from the time of its foundation. The Belfast Branch was set up when the Trades Council approached the University jointly with the Co-operative Society and the Trades Councils at Leicester, Northampton, Derby and Blackpool convened the meetings that started the local branches in these towns. The Glasgow Trades Council also began the W.E.A. in Scotland'. (75) There is evidence to suggest a high level of political awareness among such trade union branches. The Barry branch of the A.S.R.S. resolved that it 'is inexpedient for the working classes to cultivate a closer relationship with Oxford....until the teachings of the universities are radically altered, so that a truer view of social questions may be taught'. (76) Members of the Plebs League, a socialist organisation, believed that the ancient universities were not amenable to reform. Alternative institutions were established to

75. Quoted by Griggs, *T.U.C.* p. 185. (From A. Clinton, Ph.D. London. p. 86)

76. Quoted by Smith, *Labour*, p. 54
provide independent working class education, unsullied by bourgeois doctrines.

The mainstream of the Labour Movement sought an accommodative stance emphasising 'various modes of adaptation, rather than either full endorsement of, or opposition to, the status quo'. (77) The W.E.A. would provide real education by utilising the resources of the universities, and, at the same time service the needs of the working classes. The aim was less knowledge for its own sake than knowledge as a means of social emancipation - to build 'Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land'. In establishing formal links with the Universities, the W.E.A. was careful to write in checks and balances so as to buttress academic freedom. This was evident in the 1908 Report *Oxford and Working Class Education* which was produced by a Committee of fourteen (seven academics and seven nominated by the W.E.A.). The W.E.A. nominees which included C.W. Bowerman (M.P., Secretary of the P.C.T.U.C. and Chairman of the Ruskin College Executive Council) and D.J. Shackleton (M.P., Chairman of the P.C.T.U.C. and ex-chairman of the Labour Party) represented orthodox Labour views. The Report endorsed the view that the correct use of education was not to enhance one's career prospects, but to use 'his education in the service of his fellows'. (78) The worker students would not only discharge their duties more efficiently as workmen or trade union administrators, but

77. F. Parkin, *Class Inequality and Political Order*, pp. 81-97
78. *Oxford report 1908*, para. 138
would also become teachers of the tutorial classes - 'the future teachers and leaders, the philosophers and economists, of the working classes'. (79) It was essential that the worker students have the benefits of impartial study if they were to offer 'theoretical enlightenment or practical advice' to their peers. The catholic nature of study materials was evident in the suggestions of 'Courses of Study' (appendix VII) drawn up by the Sub-Committee on Curricula. There appears to be no elements of proscription. Indeed, the suggestions for the study of economic theory included the following: 'If many members of the class have socialistic views, it would be well to preface this part of the subject by reading Marx's *Capital* (4/-). The first nine chapters of Book I contain the essence of the whole. The style is rather difficult, but a simplified statement is to be found in Hyndman's *Economics of Socialism*. (80) In view of this advice it is difficult to sustain the view of the W.E.A. as an instrument of bourgeois propaganda. Rather, its educational integrity and social commitment attracted a politically diverse constituency from within the Labour Movement. Members of the S.D.F. could enrol in an U.T.C. secure in the knowledge that the tutor would educate without fear or favour. Dorothy Tams, a student in 1929, confirms the 'non party, non sectarian' nature of W.E.A. classes: 'The W.E.A. did indeed teach people 'how' and not 'what' to think - and it still does. A tutor would never omit Marx, or anyone else from reading lists,

79. *Oxford report 1908*, para. 144
because of his own views. He was interested in Education, not indoctrination - and students were all free to express their own views - which were discussed by Tutors and class'. (81) If 'knowledge is power', then students could use their education to benefit their class of origin. The social dynamic of the W.E.A. shines through the testimony of the pioneers. Thomas Kelly found this evident in the extra-mural work at Manchester University. A member of the Salford tutorial class (1911-14) said that, 'no one came into a W.E.A. class without realising that he was destined for some public duty: that this was a training ground and there was no time to be lost'. (82)

81. Personal letter to R.H.T. from Dorothy Tams, (8 Nov. 1987)
82. T. Kelly, Outside The Walls, Manchester, (1950) p. 66
Chapter Four

The Workers' Educational Association

The aims and methods of the W.E.A. must be viewed within the context of the social environment at the turn of the century. Part of this context was the political philosophy of Liberalism. Raphael Samuel has summarised it: 'In philosophy, it takes the side of reason, rather than the passions. In economics, it assumes ideal market conditions in which needs are satisfied by freedom of choice. It conceives justice as a form of equity, protecting the individual from arbitrary authority and guaranteeing the lowliest the right of redress. In politics, it champions the virtues of moderation and compromise, conceiving society as a co-operative venture undertaken for mutual advantage, a natural harmony reconciling individual interest with the pursuit of the common good.' (1) Although Mansbridge, the founding father, had no overt political affiliation (2), he was willing to pass judgement on highly controversial issues. In March 1903, with respect to the Taff Vale judgement he admonished the rank and file members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for their 'irresponsible' behaviour in electing a committee that was 'not the most thoughtful,' but 'who had become popular through the exercise of their oratorial powers.' (3) For him, education

2. 'I am not a socialist - not a political socialist, although my best friends are often the extremist of socialists. To do my work I am compelled to stand clean outside politics.' In H.P. Smith, Labour and Learning, Oxford (1956) p. 27
3. Mansbridge, K. of M., p. 3
was the panacea for all social ills; which would inter alia restore rational thought to the rank and file trade unionist. This seems to be at the heart of the sponsors' philosophy - to educate the democracy. However, this did not exhaust sponsor motives. There was an emphasis upon personal development; that the amount of human happiness could be augmented by sharing the great heritage of human culture. W.E.A. biographers comment upon the missionary zeal on behalf of culture and learning displayed by sponsors and clients. It is difficult to nominate any one particular writer as being the exemplar of W.E.A. philosophy. In the first instance, though there was a good deal of common ground between sponsors and clients, worker students tended to be more pragmatic in their approach - asking how institutions of higher education would service the needs of the Labour Movement. Academics tended to emphasise the spiritual benefits: it was held to be a self-evident truth that education would engender fellowship. Moreover, the W.E.A. was not a static institution but an expanding social organism responding to internally generated needs, and external constraints. T.W. Price, in his early study of the W.E.A. (1903 to 1924) noted the 'period of high adventure' of the first period (1903 to 1908) to be followed by one of consolidation and self examination. By 1915, the W.E.A. had won the confidence of the Universities (epitomised by the 1908 Report Oxford and Working Class Education). It then became imperative to consolidate its position within the Labour Movement. The works of Albert Mansbridge and R.H. Tawney need to be viewed within that context. Writing in 1903, Mansbridge had to play down the political aspects of the W.E.A. to assuage the fears of academics about the revolutionary potential of the proletariat. Rather than
expounding, or trying to reconstruct, a coherent W.E.A. philosophy, it does more justice to outline a number of themes which were expressed, to a greater or lesser degree by sponsors and clients.

The spirit of the W.E.A. owed much to the Christian Socialists who, half a century earlier, had striven to work out a Christian solution to the social problems of the time. They regarded Christianity as a matter of deed as well as faith. The objects of their endeavour were the excesses of unregulated wealth production. However just as they rejected the utilitarian doctrines of a free market economy so too did they reject as ungodly the precepts of socialism. This latter doctrine had to be tamed, diluted or 'Christianised.' As they put it euphemistically, their task was to 'Christianise the socialist and socialise the Christian.' The upper social groupings ought to exercise a sense of moral responsibility towards the lower orders. The Victorian middle classes were held to be guilty of sacrificing human need on the altar of profit. This was both amoral and socially divisive. If they could learn lessons from history, exercise noblesse oblige, then social unity could be recovered. Margaret Hodgen has called Christian Socialism 'less a system of ideas than a warm human impulse towards social improvement deriving its inspiration from University and Church.' (4) Social change was to be brought about by evolution rather than revolution. They anticipated the substitution of the ethic of co-operation for the amoral individualism of laissez-faire capitalism. Unfortunately, their experience of abortive attempts at co-operative production led them to emphasise the deficient moral training given to the working classes. This was a congenial doctrine in that it harmonised with upper class notions about the

depravity of the poor. It represented a sanitised version of socialism.

A major theme in the works of Mansbridge is the personal development of the individual. He conceived it as a Christian duty that every man and woman should develop to the full all the faculties - bodily, mental and spiritual - endowed by God. It was to be a liberal rather than a vocational one: education for life, not livelihood. It was an education that would open up to all the great heritage of human culture. In keeping with the conventional wisdom of the day, he believed that working class apathy towards learning had been conditioned by a harsh environment and a blunted sensitivity.

The 'culture of poverty', one based upon values of immediate gratification, could not be eliminated simply by measures of social amelioration. Increased wages would simply increase the profits of the breweries. Welfare reforms would be counter-productive if they did little to counter ignorance and the weakness of moral principle. This explains why education became the linchpin of the moral and social elevation of the working classes. When addressing an academic audience in 'An Association', Mansbridge quoted with approbation a passage from Haldane's book *Education and Empire*: 'Educate your people and you have reduced to comparatively insignificant dimensions the problems of temperance, of housing and of raising the conditions of your masses.' (5) It may be that he sincerely held these values. Perhaps a more cynical interpretation would be that Mansbridge,

5. Mansbridge, *K. of M.*, p. 6
recognising the difficult task of winning over conservatives at Oxford, judged it expedient to harmonise the proposals with the conventional wisdom of the day. He even offered an imperial justification for extending a 'wise and free' education: 'Education creates and sustains that empire of which it is the inner defence.' (6) At this point it becomes clear as to why socialists objected to the paternalism inherent in such an adventure. What were to be the constituent parts of a 'wise' education? In light of the imperial justification, this was tantamount to offering knowledge supportive of the status quo. At Ruskin College, a residential college for worker students established in 1899, the normative aspects of the 'science' of economics, which seemed to justify free market capitalism, were held to be anathema to the interests of the Labour Movement. Moreover, questions were asked regarding the extent to which over-worked, under-paid men and women, subject to the vicissitudes of the labour market could respond to the educational message. Educational reforms were viewed as merely tinkering with the system which left the root problem (the private ownership of the means of production) untouched.

If the sole function of the W.E.A. was the distribution of cultural largesse, then it is difficult to understand why it was so warmly welcomed by working class organisations. This is not to deny the desire for culture by adult scholars. Kelly quotes from a letter written by an early tutorial class student: 'I think that in the main the atmosphere was one of great urgency for culture and learning.

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6. Mansbridge, K. of M., p. 6
To us the problem of production appeared to be solved. It was now mainly a matter of distribution, of levelling up, and the making of equality in opportunity for everybody; and to the W.E.A. the credit can be given that it carried Trade Union practice to academic levels and brought art and culture to thousands of dead souls'. (7) Notwithstanding the desire for knowledge for its own sake, the pioneering students undertook part-time study in order to enhance their usefulness to the Labour Movement. In R.H. Welch's Salford tutorial class in Industrial History and Economics (1911-14), the majority of students viewed their involvement in terms of a training ground for the exercise of public duty. Kelly noted the pervasive belief in the arrival of a millenium which was expressed in the words of a song written by a Rochdale student:

'Comrades! On, your hope untiring,  
Victory must crown your strife.  
This the vision, faith-inspiring,  
Freedom, fellowship and life!  
Comrades, march towards the light!  
Seek the truth and speed the right!' (8)

The emphasis upon social service (whether it be to 'society' or to the organisations of which he was a member) and not personal gain was one that could be subscribed to by working class activists whatever their political persuasion. Personal development as a means of serving one's fellows formed the basis of the educational alliance. This explains the anti-vocational emphasis of much of W.E.A. thinking, which underpinned the major post-war document on

7. T. Kelly, Outside the Walls, Manchester, (1950), p. 66
8. Kelly, Walls, p. 66
adult education — the Final Report 1919. The Committee recognised that the movement had developed not per saltum, but as the natural concomitant of other social developments. Recognition was given to the role of the W.E.A. and other agencies in making the humane subjects accessible to adult students. In addition to the increased happiness and intellectual enlightenment which a liberal education could offer they noted the background of social aspirations and endeavours: '...a wider diffusion of knowledge will be a power working for the good of society, and the ideal which it places before its students and members is less individual success or even personal culture than personal culture as a means to social improvement.' (9) Both sponsors and clients eschewed the notion that education exists merely as an avenue of social mobility. The form and content of education were required to be socially useful. However, the idea of social service was such an embracing category as to be capable of bearing diverse interpretations. The idea of an 'educated democracy' appears to loom large in the mental universe of the pioneers. Many hoped that it would promote tolerance and advance fellowship — in short to heal the class divisions generated by an industrial society. The conventional wisdom of the day prescribed a modicum of elementary education for the masses. Mansbridge conceived it as incumbent upon every Christian to ensure that every person should be given the opportunity to develop to the full potential all the faculties endowed by God. Education was further held to be an instrument of social change. Mansbridge and other 'advanced' Liberals wished to recover the social unity of the nation. They wanted to preside over the evolution of an unjust, class ridden society into a more equitable

and moral order. The W.E.A. was not simply a ruling class conspiracy to pull the wool over the workers' eyes. According to Reeder, they had 'a passionate faith in human reason and the possibility of changing behaviour through rational educative powers.' (10) This was at the heart of the liberal credo. They looked to the revivifying power of education. Education did not exist in a social vacuum. They sought measures of social amelioration that would enable individuals to develop their potentialities for the common good.

The drive towards moral and intellectual elevation was at the heart of a paper delivered by A.H.D. Acland entitled 'The Education of Citizens' (1883). Acland was representative of mainstream Co-operative thinking and was an influential figure having been Chairman of the Central Board of the Co-operative Union and Secretary of Oxford University Extension Society. Acland believed that the Co-operative movement had been educational in the wider sense of the term in that it had nurtured the virtues of thrift, self-reliance and independence. If the rank and file had demonstrated their readiness to embrace these Victorian values, so too had their leaders. Moreover, they had learned to exercise self-restraint and tolerance, in respect of being more tolerant of others' opinions. The object of education was to effect change in men's consciousness - to promote different ways of thinking. 'We offer you systematic education, the object of which is not to obtain for you prizes or certificates, but to help make you think - and think reasonably and sensibly and thoroughly.' (11) The goal of education was not

10. Reeder, E.O.M., p. 1

material self-improvement but to 'strengthen your minds to give yourselves... a good outfit for the great work which lies before us all, of trying to leave the world, if we can, in our own little tiny place on this big earth, a little better, as far as our work goes, and not a little worse than when we found it.' (12) He wished to spread 'sober and responsible' thought leaving aside all class prejudice and partisanship on matters appertaining to citizenship (viz. the Labour and Capital question, health, education and the Poor Law). The kind of classes he had in mind would appeal to the earnest student who would attend a series of lectures and classes in order to work rather than be entertained. Acland hoped that the emphasis on discussion would encourage thinking rather than the passive assimilation of facts. The work had to be student-centered in that the subjects related directly to their life experiences. Furthermore, teachers should be capable men who would want to 'teach' and not preach their particular 'doxy.' The scheme did not envisage prizes which was felt as the prostitution of education for ignoble ends. The aim should 'not make us rise out of our surroundings... but must bring with it increased strength, power and wisdom which must add force to individual men.' (13) That 'wisdom' would enable them to participate in government at all levels of society. The prerequisite of social progress was the reform of the individual through education. The new society would be premised upon the new person: '.... it is equally true that we do not want wind-bags or wordy demagogues to do it. We want men of solidity, of calm temper, of even judgement, men of modesty and

13. Acland in Reeder, E.O.M., p. 208
self-reliance.' Social change was to be slow, patient and gradual just as the Fabians anticipated. Education, through the inculcation of rationality, was to be the instrument of change. If the new society was achieved through violent means, it would only substitute one form of tyranny for another. 'What we have to do is to propose, for the approval of the nation, an order of things which we believe to be superior to that now existing and educate men by every possible means to develop it and act in accordance with it.' (14) In terms of subjects to be studied, Acland believed it was essential to study those that were central to their lives as citizens, namely Sociology, Economics, Literature and History. This paper foreshadowed many elements in W.E.A. thinking: education for personal development rather than prizes; an emphasis upon teaching students 'how' to think and the belief that education would promote social integration.

It has been said of Albert Mansbridge that he 'exuded a liberal, even spiritual reverence for education'. (15) His paean of praise to the glory of education provided a form of words that enabled bridges to be built. By playing down vocationalism, he could appeal to cautious academics and influential figures like Robert Morant, Secretary to the Board of Education. Moreover, by rejecting conventional wisdom which restricted the majority to a modicum of elementary education, he was able to appeal to the sympathies of the Labour Movement. He was born in Gloucester in 1876, being the son of a carpenter. At the age of 3, he attended a Dame School for the privilege of which

he paid the fee of a pot of jam. In the following year, he attended a Church School, but this was short-lived as his family moved to London. At the age of 10, he reached the VI Standard and gained a scholarship to Sir Walter St. John's Middle School. But his promising educational career was truncated when at the age of 14, he left Battersea Grammar School to take up the position of office boy for a firm of guano merchants. One year later, he was employed in a government department as a boy copyist. He found intellectual and cultural outlets in museums, galleries, churches, Bible study and political meetings. Mary Stocks, the official W.E.A. biographer, is anxious to assuage the reader that '....at no point does he appear to have drawn the conclusion that sedulous cultivation of these liberating influences might lead to his emergence from the proletarian rut, into some stratosphere of individual eminence. His interest lay in the elimination of the rut.' (16) Contrary to the moral imperative to 'get on' he seemed to be saying that what he had found to be good, others must have. The deprived should not be robbed of their share of the 'kingdom of the mind.' It may have been this idealism which drew him towards the Co-operative Movement. At the age of 20, he entered the movement as a clerk in the tea department of a C.W.S. warehouse in Whitechapel. He was drawn to the educational work and by 1898 was giving instruction in Typewriting and Social History in an evening commercial school. Already his thoughts were turning towards the idea of an alliance between the Universities and working class organisations. At the Co-operative Congress held in Peterborough (1898) he proposed a

a demarcation of educational responsibilities - an educational
division of labour. The Co-operative Movement ought to specialise in
those activities which would bring tangible benefits to its
functionaries (co-operative book-keeping for example). However, in
addressing itself to the question of an educated democracy,
the Movement would find it judicious to co-operate with University
Extension, thereby tapping a rich academic vein. As a result of this
proposal, he was invited to read a paper on 'Co-operation and
Education in Citizenship' at the Oxford University Extension Summer
Meeting of 1899. Reactions were mixed. Conservatives within the
Movement argued that things were as well as could be expected. Others
raised the issue of client control, by asserting that it was not
enough for working class organisations to provide ready made
audiences for university lecturers. Although Mansbridge's scheme,
whereby Co-operative teachers were to be recognised by the Extension
Delegacy, proved to be 'largely ineffective,' the reform process
did not stall completely. If the response of the Co-operative
Movement was, initially at least, less than encouraging, then that
of the academic world was decidedly more sanguine. John Holland
Rose, editor of the University Extension Journal, invited Mansbridge
to air his views. In January 1903, he published 'The Veneer' in
which he traced the nexus between education and politics and demon­
strated its beneficience in terms of lifting trade unionists and
co-operators up to 'higher works and higher pleasures.'

Mansbridge expressed an unwarranted confidence in the ability of
education to promote social order. Liberals conceived a rational
politics as being concerned with promoting the 'common good,' a transcendent social objective that was over and above the interests of particular social groupings. Rational politics could only be promoted by developing rational citizens, who would voluntarily lay aside particular claims to national resources (whether it be wages or profits) in order to promote the 'national interest.' He claimed that: 'Democracy is suffering from a hard veneer which elementary education, misused, has laid upon it. True education induces thought which permeates the whole of society and is the direct opposite of veneer. An education which merely promotes an unthinking absorption of facts, however numerous, places men more at the opinion of the hour, however irresponsible and renders them more susceptible to flights of mere rhetoric. Democracy is in this parlous condition.' (17) Appealing to the conservative instincts of his academic audience, Mansbridge emphasised the politicisation of an increasingly confident working class whose Mecca was Parliament. The theme of the article seemed to be that if the workers were one day to run the country, then they must be made fit to govern. The question of Labour representation was a 'highly desirable state of affairs if it be the result of a normal evaluation preconditioned by wise education, but at present it bears no such evidence.' (18) The precondition of effective representation was the exercise of 'thinking power' in the rank and file. He wished that trade unionists and co-operators would cease making 'political strokes' and '.... to lift themselves up to higher works and higher pleasures which,

17. Mansbridge, 'The Veneer' in K.O.M., p. 1
Extract from the Railway Review:

'Mrs. Bridges Adams at Battersea,'
reflecting socialist criticism of the W.E.A.

Acknowledgements to the National Union of Railwaymen
and the Transport Review
MRS. BRIDGES ADAMS AT BATTERSEA.

At the branch meeting on Friday last Mrs. M. Bridges Adams gave an interesting lecture upon "The Universities and Working Class Education," during which she stated that all broad side educationalists realised that the great difficulty was ignorance, which caused apathy and indifference. The privileged classes are extremely anxious to keep a tight grip on education to enable them to keep the workers in subjection. But the workers had just begun to know enough to realise their own ignorance, and appear to have made up their minds to at any rate give their children a better education than they had been able to get for themselves. So at present we had the working classes craving for education, and the whole of the privileged classes striving to keep a tight hold, and only allow the workers to have it in small doses. The Workers' Educational Association started from Toynbee Hall, which had been called the Tammany Hall of the Universities, and which name they richly deserved. The same methods had been pursued at Ruskin College, and now, when apparently too late, they had made a feeble attempt to straighten things out. The lecturer stated she was a whole-hearted supporter of the educational programme as adopted by the Trade Union Congresses, and nothing short of that would satisfy her. Large schools and universities had been taken by the rich which had been left for the poor, and they had not only stolen these schools and endowments, but were utilising the education they got from them to still further crush the workers. Several questions were asked and answered. She stood by the principle of popular control. She looked upon the recent conference re Ruskin College with a certain amount of suspicion, but if the reforms suggested were carried out it would be an improvement. If the universities were earnest in their desires to assist the workers they could unconditionally hand over a few thousands of the endowments held by them and which belonged to the workers.
if responded to, will inevitably bring about right and sound action upon municipal, national and imperial affairs; action brought about without conscious effort - the only effectual action. It will be promoted by wise and free education and sustained by it.' (19) The assumption seemed to be that if people jettisoned 'politics', then, almost magically, wrongs would somehow be righted. At times Mansbridge was mystical in his analysis, which was perhaps why he held out education as the panacea for all social ills - 'should lead to the beautiful and the true, where alone citizenship can be realised.' (20) At that abstract level of argumentation, it was still not clear as to the precise nature of the problem. This ambiguity was resolved in the second article, 'A Plan of Action', in which he gave an example of the educational shortcomings of the Labour Movement. Members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (A.S.R.S.) had 'not been sufficiently careful in the selection of the executive committee' who were 'irresponsible' and 'not the most thoughtful', but who 'became popular through the exercise of their oratorial powers.' (21) He quoted with approval the report compiled by Richard Bell, General Secretary of the A.S.R.S. who attributed the responsibility for the adverse judicial decision and damage to the union's finances and prestige onto these factors. Mansbridge seemed to be developing Robert Lowe's theme regarding the absolute necessity to 'compel our future masters to learn their letters.' Democracy could be entrusted to the masses on condition that they showed

19. Mansbridge, 'The Veneer' in K.O.M., p. 2
20. Mansbridge, 'The Veneer' in K.O.M., p. 3
'responsibility' in casting their votes. Liberals believed that man ought to be guided by reason and not passion. If men remained under-educated, they would be rendered susceptible to the emotional rhetoric exercised by extremists. The notion that education would act as a bulwark against manipulation was central to W.E.A. endeavours. This explains why it is difficult to disentangle the 'personal' from the 'political.' By cultivating 'correct thought' it was assumed that adult education would contribute to the solution of various domestic problems. In view of the W.E.A.'s later tussle with the left, it was perhaps unwise for him to quote the Taff Vale case as the exemplar of trade union irresponsibility. It has to be remembered that this cause celebre arose from the strike over the alleged victimisation of a signalman who had led a movement for a pay rise. Through the agency of the National Free Labour Association, the company had arranged the importation of blackleg labour, which the A.S.R.S. attempted to picket out. If Mansbridge had intended 'education' to be the antidote to irresponsible strike action then the charge of right-wing bias was justified. But, it is clear that Mansbridge did not see the W.E.A. as a vehicle for disseminating propaganda. The initiative for the new venture would have to lie with the University Extension authorities in alliance with the Co-operative Movement and trade unions. It was essential that the Universities place in the hands of working men a statement of their attitude towards the education of the working classes. This would allay the fears and 'unpardonable suspicion' of the universities. At the apex of the proposed organisational structure would be a Joint Committee of University Extensionists and representatives from the working class bodies. The idea was to secure greater affiliation
to local Extension centres particularly by appointing Co-operators and trade unionists as local secretaries. The degree of working class representation would mitigate the dangers of indoctrination. Anyway, Mansbridge continually insisted that he was interested in 'real' education and not propaganda. What did seem capricious was his view that 'real' education would usher in a new basis of social relationships. The true liberal vision of the future society emerges in the following quotation from 'A Plan of Action.' The suggestion is that an unfortunate coincidence of a limited education and 'blind alley employment' has the effect of guiding individuals along the rut of self-interest. He believed that education would effect a cultural, moral and intellectual renaissance: 'The deep draughts of knowledge drunk by those within the currents of correct thought will provide that power and strength which, in spite of stressful and baneful days, will divert the strong movements of the people from the narrow paths of immediate interests to the broadway of that rightly ordered social life of which only glimpses have yet been seen even by the greatest of the world's seers.' (22)

Education was a force enabling people to develop their full potential, which was not only morally desirable but also socially effective: 'All the time the Association was confident that every true cause, particularly that of justice for the labourer, would benefit in proportion to the increase in the number of those who had made themselves into finer and purer men.' (23) Great emphasis was placed

22. Mansbridge, 'A Plan of Action' in K.O.M., p. 6
23. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 54
upon University Tutorial Classes (U.T.C.) as the fulcrum of the alliance between Labour and Learning. The worker students were felt to inhabit an intellectual as much as an occupational rut. This explains the vehemence with which Mansbridge denounced the socialist colleges: by subordinating education to ideological objectives the socialists were perpetuating a disservice to the individual and society. By intensifying class consciousness, they were merely reinforcing the mental categories derived from everyday experience. Not only was this inhibiting in a personal sense; it was socially divisive. It would offer intellectual credence to a dichotomous view of society. It was axiomatic to the W.E.A. that education unites, not divides. 'The educated man can do no harm to the community.' (24) The U.T.C.'s would promote fellowship and tolerance - to accept the idea that 'all sorts of ideas and types are necessary to make a world.' (25) When the Final Report assessed the temper of the students, it claimed that they fostered the best 'academic spirit' which they defined as 'a willingness to face facts, to discard cherished theories when fuller evidence no longer makes them tenable, to suspend judgement upon matters upon which certainty is unobtainable, to welcome criticisms and to hear differences of opinion with tolerance.' (26) Through this intellectual process, Mansbridge sought the metamorphosis of individuals into citizens. Again, it must be emphasised that he was not engaged in any kind of academic legerdemain by which he

25. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 54
26. Final Report 1919, para. 110
sought to 'dupe' the working classes. The U.T.C.'s consisted of 31 students and 31 teachers who were less concerned with the passing of resolutions than with the examination and scrutiny of all relevant facts and arguments. He acknowledged the radical views held by many of the students, some of whom belonged to the S.D.F. There had been no change in their political conviction, but they had appreciated that there can be two sides to any question. It was essential, in view of the desire to foster social integration, that the U.T.C.'s were inclusive in terms of social representation. H.P. Smith quoted the words of Reuben George (formerly a member of the S.D.F. and later the Labour Mayor of Swindon) as typifying the spirit of the pioneers: 'Perhaps one of the greatest influences was the comradeship I got from the W.E.A. For a man like me, to find himself in a place like Oxford with a lot of other working men, listening to lectures and talking over the lecture together afterwards, why, this means hope and encouragement and happiness. Everything in my life dates from that experience. I became a real student.' (27)

The idea of social service was central to the work of the W.E.A. Both sponsors and clients were agreed in rejecting adult education as a means of 'getting on'. Those who utilised education as an avenue of upward mobility were condemned as 'class traitors' by socialists. Although Mansbridge sympathised with students who wanted regular employment at reasonable wages, he hoped that the U.T.C. would not be a springboard for 'careerists'. The worker students represented the elite, perhaps future rather than present,

27. Smith, Labour, p. 70
of the Labour Movement. However, if the U.T.C. were an adult equivalent of the scholarship ladder whereby a bright working class youth could climb from the gutter to the university then it would merely reproduce the prevailing wisdom which condemned the multitude to an elementary education. Whereas Mansbridge emphasised service to the community in general, others demanded that the W.E.A. served the interests of the working classes. While he advocated justice for the labourer, Mansbridge was concerned to promote the common good, over and above particular interest groups. 'Tutorial classes are less than nothing if they concern themselves merely with the acquisition or dissemination of knowledge. They are in reality concerned with the complete development of those who compose them and indeed of the common life.' (28)

By 1903 Mansbridge had canvassed support for his idea of an alliance between scholars and workers and gained the sympathy of several individuals in the academic world. Dr. Holland Rose, editor of the Universal Extension Journal, had arranged for the publication of three articles by Mansbridge and had offered the help of University Extension in future work. Despite the concern of Canon Barnett over the prohibitive costs of such a venture, somewhere in the region of £50,000 the Association to Promote the Higher Education of Working Men was inaugurated in 1903. It consisted of two members, Albert and Frances Mansbridge, with operating capital of 2 shillings and sixpence. Supported by his wife, Albert Mansbridge was elected

28. Mansbridge, U.T.C., pp. 8-9
Honorary Secretary (pro tem). On 14 July a Provisional Committee consisting entirely of Co-operators and Trade Unionists met in Toynbee Hall. The first organisation to affiliate was the Annfield Plain Co-operative Society. (William Rae, of Annfield, was Chairman of the Central Education Council of the Co-operative Union). The Provisional Committee agreed that the determination of the constitution and election of officials should take place on the last Saturday of the Extension Summer Meeting (22 August 1903).

The August Conference marked the inaugural meeting of the Association. It received public recognition from representatives of 'nearly all' the universities and a 'large number' of labour organisations. The opening speech by Robert Halstead, Secretary of the Co-operative Productive Federation, was recorded by Mansbridge in Adventure, his account of the early stages of the growth of the Association. Halstead expressed dissatisfaction with existing provision of higher education for the working classes. Although University Extension had achieved a degree of success in certain areas, particularly where agencies of the Labour Movement were involved in sponsorship, the overall impression seemed to be that it catered for the needs of the middle classes. Although working class organisations had promoted educational courses, they were not able to devote the resources necessary to complete the work. Their primary function lay in defending the economic interests of their members. The higher education of the working classes required a 'special organisation' which would 'frame special objects of propaganda and appoint a properly equipped staff to carry out its purpose.' (29) A representative Committee was

29. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 13
appointed to develop the work. Mansbridge wrote later that 'Labour had made a definite move on her own account to reach out for the best education the country could offer or develop and she had made the move deliberately in alliance with scholarship.' (30)

The relationship between the W.E.A. and T.U.C. at national level requires clarification. Two representatives from the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. attended the August Conference. However, according to Griggs (31) the P.C.T.U.C. at no time sought a mandate from Congress to gain approval for their actions. Rather, 'the Committee acted on their own initiative....well meaning people were asking them to co-operate in developing education for working class adults.' (32) The P.C.T.U.C. continued to keep Congress informed about their relationship with the W.E.A., for example, the work of their representatives (Bowerman and Shackleton) in drawing up the Oxford Report 1908. In February 1914, an application for the P.C.T.U.C. to receive a delegation from the W.E.A. was acceded to and the resulting request for financial aid subsequently granted. The limited resourcing was evident when the P.C.T.U.C. granted them £50 in 1915. It seemed that the P.C.T.U.C. was not able to commit itself unequivocally to the W.E.A. Its subvention of five guineas in 1916 was to be regarded as a grant and not an affiliation fee. Part of the explanation may lie in the ideological split between Ruskin and the Central Labour College, both of whom claimed to be the educational wing of the Labour Movement. This row threatened to spill over into the area of non-residential adult education.

30. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 14
32. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 184
Bearing in mind the existing divisions within the trade union movement, perhaps the P.C.T.U.C. judged it politic to keep the W.E.A. at arm's length (to support it sufficiently without alienating the socialists at Congress). Griggs judges that, with some notable exceptions, the W.E.A. enjoyed a 'good relationship' with many trade unions at local level. In November 1911, a small group met in the Educational Committee Room of the Lincoln Co-op with a view to forming the Lincoln and District W.E.A. 'non-sectarian, and non-political, aimed at rousing interest in, and providing facilities for, higher education for everyone.' (33) The organising committee consisted of 'members representing Toolmakers, Ironfounders, the Liberal Women's Association, the Gas and Labourers' Union, Carpenters and Joiners, and the Bracebridge Women's Co-op Guild.' (34)

By March 1905, four branches (Reading, Derby, Rochdale and Ilford) and three district committees (North West, South West and Midlands) had come into being. The first step in the organisation of a W.E.A. branch was to convene a meeting of interested parties so as to explain the aims of the movement. Mansbridge underlined the principle of participatory democracy with the burden of his address: "Discover your own needs, organise in your own way, study as you wish to study." (35) A resolution would be moved authorising the formation of a provisional committee representative of interested parties. Occasionally, the resolution would be defeated as in Poplar, East London, in 1910, where the Labour delegates had been 'instructed'

33. Fancy a Man From Pond Street Knowing His A B C, Lincoln, (1986), p. 3
34. Pond Street, p. 3
35. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 23
to vote against. When opposition was based upon class conscious
grounds it gave Mansbridge cause for anxiety. Fortunately, such
an obstructive spirit was absent in Reading which provided an
institutional role model to other areas. Fellowship was the keynote
- whereas economic factors split humanity into warring factions,
education would allow individuals to express their common humanity.
The concept of common humanity implied that 'all man qua men belong
to a common species and possess, or are in principle capable of
possessing, a cluster of distinctively physical, intellectual and
moral capacities....' (36) The ideal branch could not be the
educational expression of particular class ideologies and interests.
The Reading branch represented a microcosm of English society
drawing from a range of occupations including an author, churchmen,
Co-operators, a headmaster, journalists, lawyers, nonconformist
scholars, statesmen and trade unionists. In Adventure Mansbridge
stated that the first condition of W.E.A. activity was that 'three
quarters' of the students should be labouring men and women who
desired a 'liberal against a bread and butter education.' The need
to incorporate a wider social base explains the decision, taken at
a meeting in Birmingham (13 October 1905), to change the cumbersome
name of the Association. Henceforth it was to be the Workers'
Educational Association. The former title was perhaps inimical
to the interests of women and non-manual male workers. Mansbridge
later explained that he believed that the term 'working men' was
equivalent to 'bretheren' but it was not always possible to explain
this. What did become clear was that the definition of 'worker' was
so wide so as to include clerks. Writing in 1907, he suggested that

the term 'working men' included 'not only artisans and those who worked for an hourly wage, but also desk clerks and those who work for a salary; not only those whose skill alone is their necessary qualification, but those who when changing employment, require written references.' (37) In view of the differences in terms of status and work situation, if not income, between the clerk and the artisan, it was perhaps unwarranted to classify them together. Despite inhabiting a different social world, they were to be classed as 'workers'. In his account of Extension work at Manchester University, Kelly noted with some pride the way in which the evolution of W.E.A. classes was not accompanied by vastly diminished working class representation. Whereas the 1913-14 session involved a 'working class element' of 86%, by 1933-34 it had fallen to 70%, seemingly a remarkably high figure. (38) However, the 'working class element' consisted of manual workers, clerical workers, shopkeepers and shop assistants. Moreover, the 86% figure depends upon exclusion from the calculations of unclassified students as well as those engaged in nursing or domestic duties. Moreover the 'slight decline' in working class representation could be accounted for by the rise in the social status of teachers; whereas in the early years 'clerks and teachers' formed a single category, after the war, they were regrouped with the professional middle classes. Lies, damned lies and W.E.A. education statistics. Of course, Kelly was demonstrating how the W.E.A. set out to provide education for 'workers' and succeeded in doing so. Fortunately he provided a more meaningful classification:

37. Mansbridge, 'Working Men and Continuation Schools' in K.O.M., p. 10
38. Kelly, Walls, Appendix V. p. 73
TABLE 5.

**Occupation of Students - Tutorial and Sessional Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1913-14</th>
<th>1923-24</th>
<th>1933-34</th>
<th>1943-44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manual Workers</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks, Bookeepers and Typists</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Reclassified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Kelly, Walls, pp. 110-111).

Writing in 1913, Mansbridge gave a list of the 2,382 students taking part in tutorial classes. (39) He acknowledged the complaints concerning the large proportion of clerical workers in London and Manchester. Overall, they were the largest occupational category representing 20% of all students. The fourth largest group, at 7% were teachers. His 'defence' was that not only had clerks been denied educational opportunities but also many were from working class backgrounds. Therefore, the W.E.A. was never intended to be an organisation for workers, defined in the narrow sense of the term.

What were its objects? According to the 1903 Constitution, the Association existed 'To Promote the Higher Education of Working Men primarily by the Extension of University Teaching, also (a) by the assistance of all working class efforts of a specifically educational character (b) by the development of an efficient School Continuation System.' (40) The immediate objective was the promotion of adult education. However, a flourishing system of

40. Mansbridge, *Adventure*, p. 31
higher education required a wider conception of primary education. The first steps were hesitant. On 22 November 1905 Morant, President of the Board of Education, received a deputation from the W.E.A. which urged upon him the necessity of enacting legislation requiring compulsory attendance at Evening Schools. Mansbridge felt that it was the function of the W.E.A. to disseminate 'wise and careful propaganda' amongst the rank and file of the trade unions. It was, he believed, the duty of every artisan to educate himself to the utmost of his capacity in order to be of greater service to his community. The education ought to consist of a judicious mixture of vocational and liberal - at a commercial evening school as well as Book-keeping, the 'boys' should study Economics and Citizenship. However, such reforms would not have penetrated the heart of the problem, which was the social class divide between elementary and secondary education. The 1907 free place system did offer a ladder of opportunity to a few working class students, many of whom were destined to become elementary school teachers. Not all 'free places' were allocated to the poor. Lawson and Silver state that of the holders of scholarships in London in 1905, '24 per cent were described as having parents of lower middle class status, 49 per cent skilled working and 25 per cent unskilled working.' (41) The areas in which fewest children attended grammar schools tended also to be those with greatest poverty, overcrowding and infant mortality. Education for working class children was to be training in followership rather than leadership. For Mansbridge, such things were dangerous to the community. What he desired was increased access

to secondary education - a 'Highway' rather than a ladder. By 1922 the concept of the broad highway was a central demand of the Labour Movement and the National Union of Teachers. A major policy document of the Labour Party, entitled Secondary Education for All, edited by R.H. Tawney, proposed that 'secondary education' should mean 'the education of the adolescent' (which was embodied by the Hadow Report of 1926). The W.E.A. had been assiduous in promoting this idea, although it envisaged a selective rather than a comprehensive system. Mansbridge dated the genesis of the metaphor of 'Highway' - the term was first used at the North of England Education Conference (Sheffield 1907). He commented, 'It has been customary in England to visualise the method of approach to the University constructed for the children of the poor as an 'Educational Ladder', but the citizen condemns such narrow possibilities. He does not altogether approve of the 'Educational Corridor' suggested by the President of the N.U.T., but he is working to construct a free and open highway upon which the only tolls are to be mental equipment and high character....the diverse sections of society will cease to construct or to maintain Primary and Secondary schools in accordance with class conscious principles.' (42)

Although one can safely say that the W.E.A. was committed to equality of opportunity, it would be unwise to argue that all districts and branches were homogeneous in their outlook. J.F.C. Harrison examined the work of the Leeds branch in his Learning and Living, entering the caveat that extended generalisation may be

42. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 31
unprofitable. The branches interpreted the social and educational ideals of the movement in terms of local needs. The first District Secretary, George H. Thompson rejected the Mansbridge ideal of de-classing students and of promoting class reconciliation. Although Thompson rejected the purist strategy of the socialist movement, the National Council of Labour Colleges (N.C.L.C.), he was sympathetic to their ideology. The N.C.L.C. was an out and out propaganda organisation whose doctrinal position was summed up in many aphorisms like the following: 'The man who doesn't know WHY he is a trade unionist is a potential blackleg.' (43) In defence of the W.E.A. against its left wing critics, district autonomy was written into its Constitution from an early stage. Under the first Constitution, (1903) the Executive Committee consisted of, in addition to eight directly elected members, one representative from each of the following: the Co-operative Union, Association of Directors of Education, the National Home Reading Union, Working Mens' Club and Institute Union, Ruskin College, National Union of Teachers, the Social and Political Education League and the London Working Mens' College. Branches were to be self-governing, but were required to report quarterly to the Executive. Each branch included the following: two representatives from the Local University Extension Centre; two from the Co-operative Society; one from each 'working class organisation of standing in the locality' and two directly elected members. T.W. Price, in The Story of the W.E.A., commented upon the anomalous position which allowed 47 branches and 3 districts only 8 members on the Executive Committee. (1907). The revised Constitution of 1907 created a new Central Council which increased

43. Harrison, Learning, p. 296
the degree of district representation and allowed a great deal of local autonomy. The decision-making body of the whole movement was the Annual General Meeting, consisting of representatives of branches and local affiliated societies, which elected the President and Treasurer. (At Birmingham, October 1908, William Temple was elected President. The General Secretary, appointed by the Central Council, was none other than Albert Mansbridge, who fulfilled the role until 1915).

By 1908, there were 50 branches in existence which were engaged in more or less traditional activities: forming clubs, discussion groups and reading circles, and rounding up audiences for University Extension courses. When Mansbridge urged the audience to 'Discover your own needs,' this was no rhetoric. Classes were developed by asking affiliated bodies to nominate a subject of interest. To the delight of the W.E.A. representative in one particular area, a member of the Carters' and Lorrymen's Trade Union said, after much thought, "We're always behind the horse. We don't know much about him. Let us have a class on the horse." (44) However, Mansbridge subscribed to the principle of guided autonomy. After addressing a group of casual labourers in Canning Town, one man asked, "Can't we have a class, Guv'ner?" With his intuitive grasp of the 'real' educational needs of the working classes, a class in Industrial History was proposed. He believed that the W.E.A. ought to be more than the provider of ready-made audiences for University Extension. This would have been a narrow conception of the W.E.A. mission, which was to promote class reconciliation. The welfare of England, no less,

44. Mansbridge, Adventure, p. 24
depended upon unity of action in the pursuit of education between manual and brain workers. The educational system was socially divisive in terms of different curricula, length of school life, attendance rates and social objectives. Elementary education was concerned with promoting an orderly, civil and obedient population. Elementary and secondary schools promoted different ways of thinking and speaking. Language, an emblem of social class, served to divide individuals instead of promoting a common culture. However, the 'walls of glass' could be smashed by a union of scholars and workpeople. Mansbridge drew inspiration from the example of a working man who had considered members of the Church of England to be rogues or very foolish until he encountered them in the W.E.A. The University Tutorial Class (U.T.C.) had the potential to unify the peer's son and the miner's son. It has been said of Mansbridge that the ground of his hopes was spiritual, not political nor economic. Education was the great panacea for contemporary social ills. His views made the W.E.A. acceptable to the social reformers at Oxford. It was a sine qua non of the 'adventure' that the movement be unpartisan, unsectarian and democratically controlled. The eloquence and sincerity of the man won many admirers: 'The pursuit of education has made men forget the lesser differences and realise their common humanity - not consciously, because to set out to realise it would be priggishness - but as a natural and inevitable result. Men and women opposed to one another in the affairs of the municipality, or State, or in the affairs of the Church, have realised friendship on the platform of the Association. Education unites and does not divide.' Yet, even while courting the university vote, considerations of power were not excluded. At the 1910 A.G.M. the Bishop of Birmingham, C. Gore, invoked the traditional nexus between knowledge
and power: "All this passion for justice will accomplish nothing, believe me, unless you get knowledge. You may become strong and clamorous, you may win a victory, you may effect a revolution, but you will be trodden down again under the feet of knowledge unless you get it for yourselves; even if you win that victory, you will be trodden down again under the feet of knowledge if you leave knowledge in the hands of privilege because knowledge will always win over ignorance." (45) The suspicion amongst socialists was that knowledge, far from ushering in the 'new society', would merely reinforce the status quo.

The impetus for continuous and systematic instruction seems to have come from the W.E.A. branch in Rochdale - 'The Rochdale Education Guild'. According to T.W. Price, one of the original 20 students belonging to the Saturday afternoon U.T.C., there was a 'mass of quasi-educational effort' waiting to be co-ordinated. (46) It enjoyed a flourishing Extension Centre which, in addition to the university connection, organised classes in connection with the Correspondence Department at Ruskin College. On 16 March 1905, interested parties called a Conference with a view to forming a branch. Price reiterated the usual complaint about University Extension: it had to be self-financing. Therefore, minority interests could only be accommodated by charging high fees. This debarred many working class people. The usual solution was to make the lecture attractive to a wide audience by appealing to the lowest common denominator. Unfortunately, the educational content was rather low.

45. Smith, Labour, p. 59
In the first year, the Guild organised lectures on literary subjects attracting a wide audience. However, in the following session, 1906-07, it offered lectures on 'Social and Economic Problems'. The audience fell from an average of 600 to 150, the majority of which (80 per cent) were working class. This was not only financially disastrous; it was educationally unsound. Students wanted 'real' education and that meant the opportunity to discuss problems. The Central Association of the W.F.A., sensing this wave of educational enthusiasm, asked 30 students if they would pledge themselves to attend twenty four two hourly classes over a period of three years, with essay work being submitted fortnightly. The subsequent meeting attracted fifty six people who chose a Saturday afternoon as the ideal meeting time, it being sacred from the ravages of overtime. In August 1907, a deputation from the Guild was received by the Dean of Christ Church Oxford who was also Chairman of the University Extension Delegacy. The deputation said that they were hungry for education to such an extent that if only the Dean realised how hungry they were, he would immediately melt down the College plate. After such an eloquent plea, he is reputed to have said, "You shall have your tutor." Under the auspices of the University Extension Delegacy, R.H. Tawney, assistant lecturer in Economics at Glasgow University, was appointed the first U.T.C. tutor. Although Rochdale provided the impetus, the first class was held in Longton (Staffordshire) on a Friday evening (January 1908) to be followed by the Rochdale one on a Saturday afternoon. Tawney was not only a proven scholar and teacher, but also enjoyed contacts with the Labour Movement. In terms of non adult education, he called for 'secondary education for all' rather than the elitist conception of special cultivation for the few. There
ought to be as wide as possible provision of higher education in order to foster 'intelligent citizenship.' In his introduction to T.W. Price's book, Tawney did not mouth platitudes concerning 'fellowship' and 'reconciliation.' Rather, he noted the desire of the rank and file to use education as an instrument of social emancipation. If the working classes were to create a new social order, then it had to attend to the education of its members. For him the W.E.A. 'enabled them to serve their fellows more effectively in the movements which claim their allegiance.' (47)

The spirit of reform at Oxbridge was expressed by the organisation of the Conference held on 10 August 1907: 'What Oxford Can Do for Workpeople.' A minority of dons were keen to promote extra-mural liberal education, being convinced that Oxford had a mission in national life. It seems as if their motives were a mixture of idealism and calculation. Jowett, the Master of Balliol, conceived the university as being a bridge which might unite the different classes of society. In 1872, he urged Balliol to establish an Extension centre in Bristol. Many others including the philosopher, T.H. Green, and the historian A. Toynbee wanted to reach out beyond the ivory tower and use their resources for the benefit of the community. They were animated by a strong social conscience to such an extent that great personal sacrifices were made. Others recognised the political inspiration of workers' education and sought to incorporate it into college life. Alfred Zimmern, Fellow of New College, commented on the nature of their inspiration (24 October

47. Tawney, 'Introduction' in Price, Story of W.E.A., p. 9
1907): 'For them as for the Athenians, politics are the gate to all the arts and to all the sciences. Socialism is ... a coat of many colours and that alone would serve to make it an inexhaustible topic of conversation. It includes within its scope every subject ... from metaphysics at one end to economics at the other. And these subjects as the Athenians discovered (and Socrates, after all, was a working man) are best discussed in conversation, and in places like college gardens.' (48) If the goal was to be one of class reconciliation, then it was essential that the architects and engineers of the bridge building be neutral in political terms. Unfortunately, there were suspicions expressed by working class activists about the transforming effects of university life. When Lord Curzon, the Chancellor of Oxford, published Principles and Methods of University Reform in 1909, he was keenly aware of the nexus between politics and education. He felt that Ruskin College ought to forge closer links with Oxford: 'There is always a danger that a working men's college outside the university, and subject neither to its influence nor its discipline, may develop into a club dominated by the narrow views of particular political or economic schools, recruiting itself solely from one party and out of touch with many of the best elements in academic life.' Curzon hoped to extend a powerful influence on the governing classes of the future. The possible 'beneficial' effects of a university education may have been to neutralise support for socialism. Curzon wrote, 'It is well that, when the problems of labour and capital are being debated, or when a future parliament is presented with a socialist programme, some at least of the working

48. Zimmern, quoted by Smith in Labour, p. 43
men's representatives speak with the advantage of a university training.' (49) Despite assurances to the contrary, activists were convinced that the 'university connection' represented a means by which the socialist challenge could be tamed.

At the Oxford Summer Conference of 1907, there existed no consensus as to the next step forward. Indeed, the Barry branch of the A.S.R.S. after having considered the report from its representative, forwarded the following report to Mansbridge: 'That it is inexpedient for the Working Classes to cultivate a closer relationship with Oxford by University Extension Lectures,...until the teaching of the Universities are radically altered, so that a truer view of social questions may be taught, and that it is inadvisable to send working-men students to colleges unless the curriculum is made suitable for the training of Labour Leaders.' (50) By 1908, the dispute at Ruskin College, where students were suspicious of Oxford tuning her pulpits, was having reverberations throughout the Labour Movement. However, the universities were willing to acknowledge that 'workpeople feel, and feel with justice that there are certain departments of knowledge in which something more than the best academic training is needed for the attainment of comprehensive and impartial views; and they are sometimes inclined to suspect teachers of displaying in these subjects an unconscious class bias.' (51)

Both sponsors and clients emphasised the importance of a liberal education that would prepare them for life and not livelihood. But

49. Curzon, quoted by Smith in Labour, p. 53
50. Oxford Report 1908, para. 90
51. Oxford report 1908, para. 90
there was tension between competing definitions of the situation. These were evident not only in the Conference but also in the subsequent Report. The academic sponsors wanted to produce 'good citizens' who could play a 'reasonable' part in the affairs of the world. The good citizen would be imbued with the civic qualities that would enable him to judge 'wisely' on national matters. Many clients, such as the Barry branch of the A.S.R.S. desired an education that would increase their usefulness to the working class movement. The socialist education movement achieved this by subordinating education to political expediency. Oxford was not prepared to tune her pulpits to meet the views of any one class. But, there was a recognition that higher education could not be imposed upon the working classes from above. The demands of the working classes could not be an afterthought. The machinery of decision-making could be none other than democratic. The principle of equal status was embodied in Mr. Walter Nield's resolution to the 1907 Conference: "That this National Conference....affirming the growing desire on the part of workpeople for Higher Education, and anxious for the further co-operation of Oxford in the systematic teaching of historical, economic and other liberal subjects, approves the formation of a Committee of seven persons nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and seven persons nominated by the Executive of the Workers' Educational Association with instructions to report ....as to the best means of carrying into effect the suggestions made in the two papers read before the Conference." (52) According to Mansbridge, the Secretary of the Extension Delegacy struck the right

note when he claimed that barriers of creed and class had been thrown down. Oxford would in future, be a national institution, inclusive of the poor. Dr. C. Gore, the Chairman, restated the traditional function of the university - to educate the governing class. With the widening of the franchise, it was incumbent upon the university to supply "thorough, systematic, regular and steady teaching to small classes!" (53) Robert Morant, Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education, indicated a willingness to provide financial assistance: "In particular, we believe it is to small classes of solid, earnest work that we can give increasingly of the golden stream." (54) Despite these reassurances, the Conference was restive until MacTavish, a Labour member of Portsmouth Council, arraigned the Universities in terms of burning eloquence. It is interesting to note that though Mansbridge disapproved of its content, the spirit of the speech compelled his admiration. Mansbridge's posture of neutrality was not a token one: he reproduced the MacTavish speech in Appendix IX of University Tutorial Classes.

In a thinly veiled threat, the Portsmouth shipwright suggested that Democracy would realise itself with or without the assistance of Oxford, and that she would be remembered 'for what she has been.' The majority of workmen wanted absolutely nothing from Oxford as they were engaged in the struggle for bread (for which Oxford was, to an extent, culpable). In this struggle, they had become stolid and stunted. MacTavish viewed the minority of educated workers as missionaries who would be inspired by the ideal of social service.

53. Quoted by Mansbridge, _U.T.C._, p. 24
54. Quoted by Mansbridge, _U.T.C._, p. 25
"We want to send them back to us as doctors whose business will be health-giving, not wealth-getting; we want her to send them back to us as lawyers whose business will be justice and not fees; we want her to send them back to us as living teachers, not mechanical manipulators of child-life. We want her to inspire them, not with the idea of getting on, but with the idea of social service." (55) But MacTavish did not accept an Oxford education as a benign force working for the good of his class. Rather the dominant schools of thought were supportive of the status quo, an academic reworking of a popular Victorian prayer with the following message to the people:

'God bless the squire and his relations
And keep us in our proper stations.'

Oxford had to understand what the working classes wanted: a 'new' economics based upon social utility not on acquisition, and a new history - the history of the people. In support of this, he quoted, presumably from personal experience, a University Extension lecturer, 'middle class in outlook', who, in examining the French Revolution (1789), ignored the response of the people to the rallying cry of 'liberty, equality and fraternity.' "His lectures were the records of a few great men." (56) In the discussion that followed, Hudson Shaw expressed criticism of the idea that the working classes should dictate what should be offered. It was left to the Committee of fourteen to square the sponsors' aim of offering an impartial education with the clients' demand for a 'useful' one.

55. MacTavish, quoted by Mansbridge, U.T.C., Appendix IX, p. 197
56. MacTavish, quoted by Mansbridge, U.T.C., Appendix IX, p. 196
In considering why 'workpeople' had turned their attention to higher education, the Committee noted 'the revival of a belief in the possibilities of political action.' (57) This had inspired trade unionists to study those subjects that would help them in acquiring knowledge 'essential to intelligent citizenship.' (58), namely Political Economy, History of Political Institutions, Local Government and Sociology. The Committee were firm in their conviction that these subjects could be taught in a way that was value-free. Despite the exemplary work of Ruskin College, it was felt that, at least until the formation of the W.E.A., there existed no machinery to enable universities to ascertain working class needs. There had been little organised effort to 'claim the Universities as a common national possession.' In Chapter 2 of the Report, the Committee examined the distribution of endowments, particularly in relation to 'poor scholars'. The University of Oxford, founded in 1167 with the migration of English students from Paris, was essentially a 'body constituted for the preservation and advancement of learning'. (59) According to the College Statutes, provision was made for the 'poor and indigent'. Oxford, according to Dr. Rashdall, was an avenue of mobility leading to the Church but over the centuries became less accessible. Out of a total of £50,000 available for scholarships and exhibitions, £16,200 was set aside for poor men. But the majority of these had ceased to be eleemosynary. Oxford, by the end of the nineteenth century, had been monopolised by the aristocracy, both old

57. Oxford Report 1908, para. 8

58. Oxford Report 1908, para. 9

and new. The working class view was that 'Oxford holds her endowments in a fiduciary capacity, and as the trustee, not of a class, but of a whole community.' (60)

In his account of the Central Labour College, W.W. Craik dismissed the activities of the W.E.A. as a ruling class conspiracy to dupe the workers. Sentences are taken out of context to support his hypothesis of social control. He argues, with some reason, that Oxford was motivated by external forces, namely the growth of Labour representation. The Report noted the appeal for access to university education particularly in view of the 'changes which are taking place in the constitution of English society and in the distribution of political power.' (61) Further on, the Report gave credence to socialist critics when it suggested that it was 'incumbent upon Universities to watch carefully every sign that a new class is ready to receive their guidance, in order that the seed of University culture may be deposited wherever it has suitable material on which to work.' (62) J.P.M. Millar, in his account of the Labour College Movement (63) concluded that the U.T.C. was merely an instrument for the dissemination of orthodox economic theory. But the authors of the Report were not liberal academics who saw their role as frustrating the historical destiny of the proletariat. The Curricula sub-committee consisted of members of the Labour Movement who expressed the desire not only for increased access, but also an element of democratic control. Indeed the Report noted a T.U.C.

60. Oxford Report 1908, para. 38
61. Oxford Report 1908, para. 77
resolution which demanded 'a national system of education under full popular control, free and secular, from the primary school to the University.' (64) It was essential that the 'consumers' of University education co-operate with the University itself in determining the policy and development. The Report called for not only the establishment of tutorial classes, but also the machinery for ensuring that a proportion of working class students would pass easily to Oxford 'to study in the University itself, and to share the benefits of collegiate life.' (65) The first proposal was that 'in certain selected industrial towns classes should be established, of not more than thirty students; that these classes should pursue a plan of study drawn up by workpeople and representatives of the University in consultation.' (66) The local management of the classes ought to be in the hands of a representative of a working class organisation, preferably the W.E.A. which would make itself responsible for the regular attendance of its members, appoint a correspondence secretary, fix the terms of membership of the class, have a voice in selecting the teachers offered by Oxford and bear much of the administrative burdens. It was essential to meet the needs of workpeople. They acknowledged working class fears about the 'unconscious class bias' displayed by certain teachers. The solution was not for Oxford to 'tune her pulpits' to meet the ideological views of any one class. Rather, the W.E.A. ought to be given a 'controlling voice in the selection of a teacher.' Furthermore instead of providing, without consultation, what the University thinks they ought to want, they

64. Oxford Report 1908, para. 83
65. Oxford Report 1908, para. 85
66. Oxford Report 1908, para. 90
proposed to 'co-operate with them in their efforts to obtain what they want.' (67) While the management and organisation of the class should be in the hands of workpeople, the selection of curricula and guidance in reading had to be the duty of the University 'acting in co-operation with workpeople.' It recognised that higher education appealed to the working classes not primarily as a method of personal culture or distinction, but as a means of serving their class. The Report averred that those subjects which would commend themselves to workpeople would be those connected with the study of society, namely, Economics, History, Political Science. In Appendix VII specimen courses of study were drawn up to indicate the general lines upon which the class would proceed. The socialist critics of the W.E.A. were myopic in their lambasting of the W.E.A. The course 'Recent English History Since 1815' contained a study of 'The Labour-Socialist Movement in England since 1880': 'This movement may be traced more immediately to the influence of Henry George's Progress and Poverty (1879) and his lecturing visits to England and Ireland in 1881, 1883 and 1884, combined with the contact of Karl Marx (through Mr. Hyndman and others) with English radical thought...'

(68) As to the methods employed, the Report offered the Rochdale class as an exemplary model. (69) The class consisted of forty-three students, made up of three teachers and clerks, four ladies with the remainder being artisans and labourers. (The Committee felt that, in view of the tutorial work, a class ought not to exceed thirty students). It met every Saturday afternoon from 2.30 to 4.30 (the

67. Oxford Report 1908, para. 90
68. Oxford Report 1908, App. VII. Courses of Study. p. 128
subject being Industrial History), an hour being given to the lecture and an hour to discussion and questions by class members. Essays were submitted every fortnight with the students being given, as far as time permitted, individual attention and supervision.

Concerning 'The Duties, Qualifications and Status of the Teacher', the Committee felt that the tutor should 'act as far as possible, the part of an Oxford tutor who is dealing with honour students in such a subject as History or Philosophy'. (70) Academic status was a necessary, though not sufficient condition for appointment as a class tutor. The ability to empathise with his audience was to be the crucial attribute of the tutor: '....he should also have sufficient knowledge of working class life and habits of thought to be able to understand the lines along which students have reached their conclusions, and see the unstated assumptions from which their questions start.' (71) The experience gained would be of invaluable service in broadening their teaching at Oxford. Acknowledging the criticisms voiced by trade unionists, it was considered 'eminently desirable that all points of view should be represented in the economic school of a University, that of the working classes among others.' (72)

The Committee were concerned with breaking the mould that condemned the sons of manual workers to a technical education. Not that they were necessarily anti-vocational. Rather, they believed that technical and general education (liberal) ought not to be distinguished on the ground that they were fit for different social classes,

70. Oxford Report 1908, para. 100
71. Oxford Report 1908, para. 101
but because they stimulate different sides of the same individual.
In order to acquire civic qualities, the worker required a share in
liberal education, because it concerned life, not livelihood. The
education was desired for its own sake and not because it increased
the wage-earning capacity. 'By the avenues of Art, Literature and
History, it gives access to the thoughts and ideals of the ages; its
outward mark is a broad reasoned view of things and a sane measure
of social values; in a word, it stands for culture in its highest
and truest sense.' (73) As to the uses of education, the Committee
underlined the notion of 'service': 'to enable workmen to fulfil
with greater efficiency the duties which they owe to their own class,
and, as members of their class, to the whole nation.' (74) It would
enable workmen to represent their class whether in the capacity of
district secretary of the trade union or Labour member of the House
of Commons: '....the development which is now taking place in the
number and complexity of municipal and other services makes it
increasingly important that persons elected onto public bodies should
have had a training in the principles of political and economic
science.' (75)

The Report was passed through Convocation of the University on 27
October 1908, the relevant Statute empowering the Extension Delegacy
to form a Committee consisting of working class representatives in
equal numbers with members of the Delegacy. By 1909, tutorial classes
were being held at the following places: Chesterfield, Glossop,

73. Oxford Report 1908, para. 82
74. Oxford Report 1908, para. 137
75. Oxford Report 1908, para. 140 (Chapter VII. The After Career
of Working Class Students. pp. 82-86). See Appendix 2.
Littleborough, Longton, Oldham, Rochdale, Swindon and Wrexham. It seems as if the ideas expressed in the Oxford Report were, in many cases but not all, translated into action at local level. There was an explicit mobilising of knowledge in order to promote social change or to equip people for the exercise of civic rights and responsibilities. The Lincoln branch, formed in November 1911, supported the idea of an educated democracy. Its first class was in Industrial History. Writing in the Echo (February 1919) the branch secretary, Harry Jex, quoted the aims 'to help in building better men, better citizens and better social life.' He recognised the immense importance of an educated and enlightened democracy and claimed it was with 'mental poverty, and poverty of the spirit, that the W.E.A. seeks to do battle.' (76) T.W. Price, a member of the first Rochdale class, argued that workers were not interested in knowledge for its own sake. They were drawn to study by their interest in the working class movement which was making an effort to transform social and economic conditions so as to afford opportunities for a fuller life for himself and his fellows. J.F.C. Harrison's study of the Leeds branch in his Learning and Living reinforces the impression of the W.E.A. as the educational expression of the Labour Movement. By 1935, the branch had 'supplied' seventeen members of Leeds City Council and five of the Urban District Council. Although it never catered exclusively for manual workers, the first statistical returns for 1933-34 showing a figure of forty one per cent, it was never anything other than a workers' organisation. The hard core of

76. Fancy a Man From Pond Street Knowing his A.B.C., Lincoln. (1986) p.13
class provision consisted of economics and the social sciences. Through these subjects, the branch sought to provide the 'personnel of a political governing class.' (77) The hegemony of these subjects has been noted by Kelly in his study of Manchester University. The historic mission of the W.E.A. was to the educationally under-privileged. The early classes attracted men and women who were making up for an inadequate elementary education. For the 1913-14 session, Economics accounted for fifty six per cent of subjects taught. (78) By 1939, in a different social environment, the percentage of manual workers and social science subjects had both fallen. The new demand was for less exacting courses, such as literature, psychology, music, local history, elocution and folk dancing. Kelly suggests that as the educational highway broadened, the educational background of the students improved. They were no longer men and women who missed education and attended a W.E.A. class to secure it. Rather, they came to supplement a modest education. Despite the widening of interests and the 'intrusion' of the middle classes, it was the idea of social emancipation of the working classes which made the W.E.A. 'tick'. Harrison argues that the W.E.A., like the Labour Party, drew heavily upon the tradition of Radical Nonconformism. In the Calder Valley of Yorkshire and in Bradford, the main recruiting grounds for students in the first tutorial classes were the Mutual Improvement Societies attached to churches and chapels. Cecil Scrimgeour makes a similar point in his observation on the Tunstall Tutorial Class, North Staffs. (1913): 'The membership had its roots deeply planted in the Methodist

77. Harrison, Learning, p. 291
78. Kelly, Wallis, Appendix IV. p. 109
chapels and the labour and trade union movement of the North end of the Potteries and the succession of studies which they undertook over the next twenty years reflects their dual concern - to attain a finer perception of religious truth and to bring the weapons of knowledge into fight against the deep-seated poverty which they and their neighbours endured.' (79) When Dorothy Tams, a teacher, joined the Tunstall Tutorial Class in 1929, the original dynamic of the movement was still evident. The motivation of the adult students was clear: '....most people, in the first place, joined classes because they wanted to learn....I would say that very few indeed thought of getting on in the world. And the majority who later became adult scholars, councillors, trade union officials or M.P.'s etc. - did so because they learned from their classes....Many of us became branch or class secretaries and officials, and voluntary workers in other social organisations. Of those who gained Adult Scholarships, many became tutors themselves in voluntary or paid work....I did a lot of this work myself in the thirties and took some 12 week paid terminal classes in Social Service and Co-operative Workers' groups, in the forties. I also manned a Citizens Advice Bureau at the outbreak of war.' The work of the class was 'non party, non sectarian', despite criticism from outside the movement, during the 1920's, that it was left-wing. Dorothy Tams observes, 'Many did have 'Labour views' - even Communist views - but these were usually incorporated into class work, if they applied. There were only a few communists who tried to bring their views into all subjects, but they were gently

handled, and not allowed to dominate, by tutors. One of our most skillful tutors was a communist himself - but he never allowed this to mar his work. No-one who did not know him would have known his political views from his teaching.' (80) The work of such a branch would have been recognised as fulfilling the objects of the pioneers. The primary aim was not to open up careers to talent but to enable men and women to 'co-operate as students with Oxford in order that, with minds enlarged by impartial study, they in their turn may become the future teachers and leaders, the philosophers and economists, of the working classes.' (81)

80. Personal letter to R.H.T. from Dorothy Tams 8.11.87.

81. Oxford report 1908, para. 144
Chapter Five

Citizenship or Class Struggle: Rival Conceptions
of Adult Education 1899 - 1939

'We shall take men who have been merely condemning our institutions, and will teach them how, instead, to transform these institutions so that in place of talking against the world, they will begin methodically and scientifically to possess the world, to refashion it, and to co-operate with the power behind evolution in making it the joyous abode of if not a perfected humanity, at least a humanity earnestly and rationally striving towards perfection.'

W. Vrooman, co-founder of Ruskin Hall (1)

'To provide independent working class education in order to help the workers to develop their capacities and to equip them for their trade union, Labour and co-operative activities in the work of bringing an end to the system of capitalism and enabling the workers to achieve their social and industrial emancipation.'

1925 Constitution of the National Council of Labour Colleges (2)

If education is the continuation of politics by other means, then Ruskin College and the National Colleges (N.C.L.C.) represent the liberal and radical wings of the Labour Movement respectively. It may appear to be a gross over-simplification to portray them in terms

1. Quoted by Hodgen, Worker's Ed. p. 122
2. Millar, College, p.53
of antitheses of 'citizenship' or 'class struggle'. There was certainly an area of common ground: both eschewed the idea of knowledge 'for its own sake'. The dynamic inherent in all movements for adult education in the early part of the century was that of 'education for social purpose', a vague goal that was sufficiently elastic so as to encompass divergent political philosophies. The liberal sponsors of Ruskin College and the W.E.A. were concerned with rendering individuals fit for the duties of 'citizenship'. The Final Report 1919 represented the high water-mark of this philosophy when, referring to the educational requirements of the rank and file, it called for 'the development of an open habit of mind, clear sighted and truth-loving, proof against sophisms, shibboleths, claptrap phrases and cant.' (3) Radicals suspected that the latent purpose of such a movement was the emasculation of the Labour Movement. For them, 'social purpose' was synonymous with 'class struggle' and the abolition of 'wage slavery' in a capitalist society. This debate necessarily had ramifications for their respective views on the existing education system. The W.E.A. believed that institutions of higher education were amenable to organisational and curricular reform. Their energies were devoted to ensuring that the working classes enjoyed equal opportunities to take advantage of the liberal education that the universities were singularly able to offer. Not only would they produce able and 'cultivated' human beings but also they would effect reconciliation between Capital and Labour. The University Tutorial Class epitomised a union of labour and learning, an arena in which mutual suspicions dissipated and where 'fellowship' superseded class antagonism. Socialists viewed such efforts with deep suspicion, sensing that the partnership was an asymmetrical one with labour being assigned the

subordinate role. According to Marxist analysis, universities represented the means by which the Ruling Classes would incorporate the Labour Movement on an ideological level. Consequently, they favoured the establishment of Labour Colleges that would offer 'independent' working class education as a means of intensifying the class struggle. The spirit of independence was expressed in a poem by Henri de Mar:

'We Labour strikes, it says to its Master
I shall no longer work at your command,
When Labour organises a party of its own it says
I shall no longer vote at your command.
When Labour creates its own schools it says
I shall no longer think at your command.' (4)

The whole question of Labour creating 'its own schools' derived from a series of controversies that culminated in the Ruskin College strike of 1909.

The question of access to higher education by worker students was broached in 1899 by the establishment of Ruskin Hall (5) in premises leased from Balliol College by wealthy American philanthropists, Walter Vrooman and Charles Beard. It offered support for the idea that it was possible to be informed by a strong sense of social purpose while holding firmly to the idea of a disinterested search for the truth. In the true liberal tradition, they believed that education was a trust for the good of others rather than a means of personal advancement. In offering a two year course in social science subjects, namely Economics, History, Politics and Sociology, the patrons hoped that the

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4. In Hodgen, Worker's Ed., p. 128
5. Renamed Ruskin College in 1907
students would transcend narrow trade union interests and equip themselves for statesmanship - to 'possess' the world and 'refashion' it. Initially, the emphasis seemed to be on political and civic enlightenment rather than the inculcation of technical expertise. Professor S.G. Raybould (6), has noted that trade union education in England differed considerably from that provided in Germany and the United States. The twin characteristics of trade union education were the indirect provision, by voluntary bodies, of essentially a liberal education. In Germany, the trade unions provided a technical education directly to their members. Despite the political differences between the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C., which tended to be exaggerated in the heat of the battle, they both were concerned to promote understanding. According to the Final Report, the aim of Ruskin College was 'to equip the students in such a way as to increase their usefulness to the Labour Movement in general, and to the Societies who sent them to the College in particular'. (7) In its evidence to the Adult Education Sub-Committee, the College Council suggested the requirements of every student: a good knowledge of the political, constitutional and industrial history of his own country; understanding of the workings of political institutions; a grasp of economic science; knowledge of the history, methods and objects of working class organisations; the ability to express ideas clearly both on paper and in speech and the 'clear vision of the better world-wide society, for the realisation of which he is hoping to work'. (8) The subjects studied were almost


entirely of a non-utilitarian character:

RUSKIN COLLEGE (1913-14)

A. FIRST YEAR'S COURSE
   1. INDUSTRIAL HISTORY
   2. ELEMENTARY ECONOMICS
   3. THE HISTORY OF BRITISH POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS
   4. THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF CO-OPERATION
   5. CO-OPERATIVE BOOK-KEEPING
   6. THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF TRADE UNIONISM
   7. TRADE UNION LAW
   8. ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (OPTIONAL FOR SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS)

B. SECOND YEAR'S COURSE
   1. SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES
   2. ADVANCED ECONOMICS
   3. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE CONSTITUTION
   4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

C. OPTIONAL COURSES
   1. THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF SOCIALISM
   2. CURRENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS
   3. CLASS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING
   4. BOOK-KEEPING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TRADE UNION REQUIREMENTS
   5. CLASSES IN FRENCH AND GERMAN

Despite its professed sympathies for the Labour Movement, Ruskin College was, according to Clive Griggs, 'a college for trade unionists but not one of trade unionists.' (10) The P.C.T.U.C. appointed three

trustees (C.W. Bowerman, F. Chandler and A. Wilkie) to Ruskin on condition that there would be no monetary responsibility. The role of the P.C.T.U.C. was to call upon affiliated unions to support the College. It gave open approval to the aims of the College, thereby securing the support of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, London Society of Compositors and the British Steel Smelters, Mill and Tin Plate Workers' Association. Yet, at no time did the P.C.T.U.C. seek a mandate from Congress to gain approval for their actions. But, as the presumption of value neutrality came under intense scrutiny, delegates at the 1913 Congress expressed reservations at what appeared to be a special relationship. According to the official account, The Story of Ruskin College, the College established its socialist credentials at an early stage of development. After all, the British sociologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) refused to send copies of his books because of a 'profound aversion to the teachings of Mr. Ruskin, to Socialism and to free libraries.' (11) However, it would seem that the educational politics of this period owed more to liberal collectivism than to socialism. The Labour Party during the period 1906-1914 was, according to Barker, little more than a 'tick carried along on the Asquithian sheep.' (12) The lines between liberalism and socialism were not firmly drawn. The Labour Party sought to redress trade union grievances, such as the Taff Vale decision of 1901 and to support measures of amelioration that would improve the lot of the poor, such as the feeding of necessitous school children. Socialism meant 'a sensible development of liberal and progressive politics: an attempt to redress the social balance in favour

11. The Story of Ruskin College, (1968), p. 3
12. R. Barker, Education and Politics, (1972)p. 8
of the working classes by an increase in direct public responsibility.'

(13) If Vrooman was a socialist, it was a socialism grounded in Fabian gradualism rather than S.D.F. millenarianism - 'fairness' rather than 'revolution'. As events unfolded at Ruskin College, it appeared to those on the left that the teaching was far from being subversive of the status quo.

W.W. Craik's partisan account of this period (14) suggests that during the first two years, Vrooman was able to call the tunes. The curriculum vitae of the Principal, Dennis Hird, did not endear him to Establishment figures at Oxford. In 1878, he had entered the ministry of the Church of England and appeared to be the epitome of Victorian orthodoxy when, in 1887, he became Secretary of the Church's Temperance Society. However, his decision to join the S.D.F. (1893) and deliver a series of lectures on 'Jesus the Socialist' proved to be a severe embarrassment to the Church. By 1896, he had renounced his Orders. At Ruskin, he taught Sociology, a discipline which enjoyed little academic respectability. With obvious relish, W.W. Craik noted Hird's reliance upon Lester F. Ward's major work Dynamic Sociology which was destroyed in Russia by order of the Ministerial Council. With the support of a fellow lecturer, Alfred Hacking, Hird provided education from a socialist point of view to help future leaders of the Labour Movement in their struggles within a capitalist society. However, the majority of the staff did not share such a philosophy. The College Constitution from the beginning had proscribed the teaching of 'party politics'. The Vice-Principal, H. B. Lees-Smith upheld the liberal tradition of 'not taking sides.'

13. Barker, Education, p. 6

pointed out that while it was a Labour College, this did not imply that it was socialist: 'All the teaching is carefully impartial, and its tutors are not socialists.' (15) Despite the professed stance of value neutrality, objections were raised by the students regarding the anti-Marxist views of the lecturers. Craik and other militant students were hostile to those whose lectures seemed to uphold the Poor Law principle of "less eligibility" rather than the minimum wage. These lecturers increasingly came into conflict with active trade unionist students who were less concerned with establishing their academic credentials than with searching for prescriptions for radical social change. H.S. Furniss, a member of the Gladstonian Liberal League, admitted in his biography that the lecturers had been too academic in their approach: 'We did not give them nearly enough information about the Socialist and Labour Movement....' (16) The drift towards academic respectability was reinforced by the need to solicit the assistance of wealthy patrons in default of trade union support. The private subscription list was one of the means of ensuring financial viability. It soon became clear that strings would be attached to the benefactions, a notable example being the refusal of Lord Roseberry to help a student when he found out he was a socialist. W.W. Craik quoted an extract from a letter to a potential subscriber: 'It was founded eight years ago with the object of giving workmen a sound practical knowledge of subjects which concern them as citizens, thus enabling them to view questions sanely and without unworthy class bias.' (17) The letter then presented the case

15. Quoted by Griggs, T.U.C., p. 179
17. Craik, C.L.C., p. 59
of an exemplary role model, a Justice of the Peace, an ex-miner who was 'a great power for good among his workmen.' In his account of the Central Labour College, Craik argues that Ruskin College, in the tradition of the Christian Socialists, was concerned with producing good citizens rather than wresting privileges from the Ruling Classes. The sense of a Ruling Class conspiracy was given credence by the intemperate remarks of the Vice Principal (1907-1909) Charles Sydney Buxton. Writing in the Cornhill Magazine, he suggested that the role of Ruskin was to civilise the working class barbarians. Not only did he express open hostility to socialism, but also made disparaging remarks about the students themselves. Of the function of the College, he wrote, 'The necessary bond is education in citizenship and it is this which Ruskin tries to give - conscious that it is only a new patch on an old garment, an idealist experiment in facce Romuli....They come into close contact with Oxford tutors, and, as one of them expressed it, their natures get 'sandpapered'. The College is rapidly becoming part of University life, in the sense that it is sought out by all those who take an interest in the problems of the future democracy. Such easy intercourse helps to throw down the barriers of class ignorance and prejudice.' (18)

The apparent drift towards the right was reinforced by the desire to gain academic respectability. This, in effect, meant strengthening the ties with Oxford University. Radical students suspected that after the return of 29 Labour M.P.'s in 1906, it was too late in the day to believe that Labour was not fit to govern. With the soothing balm of

18. Quoted by Craik, C.L.C., pp. 58-59
a university education, it was, according to Arthur Balfour, Conservative Party leader, time to take the "minds of the workers into the custody of the Establishment." (19) An academically respectable 'Labour' College would hardly alienate wealthy philanthropists. The relationship became clearer with the establishment, in August 1907, of the Joint Committee of University and W.E.A. representatives which examined and resolved what Oxford could do for 'Working People.' The W.E.A. representatives included three men who were involved in the management of Ruskin College - W.H. Berry, C.W. Bowerman and D.J. Shackleton. The Oxford Report 1908 has been acknowledged for giving its imprimatur to University Tutorial Classes. In addition, it proposed to offer Ruskin students the opportunity to study for a Diploma in Economics or Political Science. With such a window of opportunity opening up, the staff were under pressure to distance themselves from heterodoxy. Control of the curriculum was vested in a House Committee of three, thereby diminishing the authority of Hird. Craik has argued that the Ruskin authorities were accommodating with a sub-committee recommending the cessation of Sociology lectures in November 1907. It suggested that Hird should confine himself to Temperance and Literature. One can only speculate about their reasoning. Did Hird's brand of sociology share common assumptions with socialist theory? Was Temperance a more amenable discipline in that poverty was attributed to individual culpability (the demon drink, gambling and other moral deficiencies)? The solution was therefore to change the individual rather than society. Ruskin's aspirations were clarified even further when, in 1908, Revision Papers were used to assess students' eligibility for University scholarships. Critics began to doubt whether

19. Quoted by Craik, C.L.C., p. 46
a non-partisan College largely controlled by university men could supply the kind of economic teaching required as a theoretical basis for a militant Labour Movement. J.P.M. Millar (editor of Plebs and General Secretary of the N.C.L.C.) has described the tutorial classes as agencies for the dissemination of 'orthodox economic theories' (20), while W.W. Craik entitled Chapter Three of his book 'The University Take-Over Bid for Adult Working-Class Education.' The whole affair smacked of a Ruling Class conspiracy - an exercise in ideological incorporation. It was as if the students at Ruskin 'had been already brought to the mountain to undergo the prescribed operative treatment.' (21)

In an act calculated to undermine the efficacy of the putative conspiracy, the radical students established in October 1908 'The Plebs League' whose object was 'to bring about a definite and more satisfactory connection between Ruskin College and the Labour Movement.' (22) The tone of their first pamphlet, The Burning Question of Education was almost messianic: 'We neither want your crumbs nor your condescension, your guidance nor your glamour, your tuition nor your tradition. We have our own historic way to follow, our own Salvation to achieve and by this sign we shall conquer.' (23) Their immediate goal was to reform Ruskin so as to equip the worker to 'serve as a good soldier in the great army of Labour.' (24) The first issue of its magazine Plebs

20. Millar, College, p. 6
21. Craik, C.L.C., p. 47
22. Craik, C.L.C., p. 64. See Plate 5 for Plebs League Political Propaganda
23. Millar, College, p.11
24. Craik, C.L.C., p. 67
(February 1909) sought to dispel any obfuscation concerning the true function of Ruskin College as it was then constituted: 'Beware of the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal of ruling class professed sympathies for Labour. All history justifies us in sounding this warning note. Inability to recognise the class cleavage was responsible for the downfall of the Plebs of old Rome. Let the Plebs of the twentieth century be not so deluded.' (25) The ideological positions of the participants became clear. Whereas liberals and those of a moderate Labour persuasion viewed education in terms of preparation of students for the responsibilities of citizenship, Marxists viewed it as a means of intensifying the class struggle. Craik suspected that it was Dennis Hird's sympathy with the socialist cause, rather than his inability to 'maintain discipline' that lay behind his dismissal by the Governing Council on 31 March 1909. The subsequent one week strike against Council's decision resulted in the secession of ten students out of a total of fifty four. Having failed to realise the objective of reform, the dissidents inaugurated the Central Labour College at the annual meeting of the Plebs League (2 August 1909). The Provisional Committee held it axiomatic that the future Board of Management ought to be dominated by Labour organisations. In his submission to the Adult Education Sub-Committee, the Sub-Warden expounded the philosophy of the C.L.C.: 'it teaches the workmen to look for the causes of social evils and the problems arising therefrom in the material foundations of society; that these causes are in the last analysis economic; that their elimination involves in the first place changes of such a character as to lead to the eradication of capitalist economy..... For

25. Craik, C.L.C., p. 64
this reason the Labour college lays no claim to being non partisan
or non political.' (26) It is interesting to note the explicit contrast
with Ruskin College. After the withdrawal of several trade union
scholarships, the Governing Council was reconstituted so as to
strengthen the degree of working class representation. However, a
move to include representatives of the Labour Party was defeated by
twenty-seven votes to four. It adhered rigidly to its 'non political'
stance. Craik suggested that Ruskin College had changed the form of
government but not the content of its education. Griggs' study of the
involvement of the T.U.C. reached similar conclusions: 'It is difficult
to avoid the view that Ruskin College was governed and staffed for
much of the period considered by those who largely wished for little
more than the status quo in society.' (27) The C.L.C. was an evangelical
organisation that sought to bring political enlightenment (the word
was Marx) to the Proletariat. It aimed to educate and train trade
unionists in social science subjects so as to help win the class war.
The sponsors had neither the financial resources nor the political
inclination to support the tenets of 'knowledge for its own sake' or
the 'perfection of individual culture'. Craik argued that they gave
the working classes not what they wanted, but what they needed. The
C.L.C. eschewed trade union bread and butter subjects in favour of
historical materialism. By 1914, the twelve male students in residence
and two non resident women were following a liberal curriculum: Political
Economy, Industrial History, General History, the History of Social
Movements, English, Formal Logic, Theory of Knowledge, Literature and
Sociology. In addition, the C.L.C. organised correspondence tuition

27. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 201
(one hundred and twenty students) and established local lecture classes with a total of one thousand members. The College was supported by the 'Plebs League' which in addition to its propagandist function undertook the formation of local classes under the auspices of unions and trades councils. Despite its high profile, the 'Plebs League' did not exercise a controlling interest upon the Board of Governors. Rather, it was vested in the two trade unions (the South Wales Miners' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen) who were the sole sources of finance. Despite its short-lived existence and minority appeal, the C.L.C. played a significant role. Ex-C.L.C. students not only played the role of radical evangelists by establishing classes in South Wales, Lancashire, the North East and the West Riding of Yorkshire, but also became actively involved in the political and industrial wings of the Labour Movement. Its alumni included such luminaries as Aneurin Bevan, Ness Edwards, James Griffiths (three members of the Cabinet of the third Labour Government, 1945-51), A.J. Cook (General Secretary of the Miners' Federation) and numerous M.P.'s and councillors.

By 1914, there appeared to exist two competing views concerning the relationships of the Labour Movement to institutions of higher education. The mainstream view focussed upon the question of access - the education system was admired and they rarely questioned the goals, ethos and the curriculum offered. Socialists, on the other hand, saw the education system as an obstacle to real reform. They emphasised the dangers of assimilation. Marx had warned, 'The more the ruling class succeeds in assimilating members of the ruled class, the more formidable and dangerous its rule.' (28) Craik compared the efforts of the Ruskin

28. Quoted by Craik, C.L.C., pp. 58-59
secessionists to those of the so-called 'education mad' party (Henry Brougham, Dr. Birkbeck and Francis Place) who had formed a joint-stock company under the name of the Proprietors of the University of London (incorporated in 1836). The rising middle classes were scathing about the medieval teaching of Oxbridge which served less to meet the industrial and commercial needs of the age than to preserve the aristocratic *status quo*. Just as the Radicals had established the University of London, so too had socialists established their own College which offered an education suited to the needs of their class. According to Griggs, the P.C.T.U.C. were 'far more in political sympathy with the views of this College (Ruskin) preaching gradual social reform than they were with the ideas expressed by the Socialist and Marxist Central Labour College.' (29) C.W. Bowerman, Secretary of the P.C.T.U.C. and Chairman of the Ruskin College Executive Council moved a resolution at the 1913 Congress not only expressing satisfaction with the democratic control of the College but also requesting unions to sponsor students. To the surprise of the P.C.T.U.C. the resolution was lost on a show of hands. In 1915 the T.U.C. promised equal treatment to both colleges. However, after the war, although the rivalry continued to exist, much fiercer arguments developed between the organisations offering part-time education, the W.E.A./W.E.T.U.C. and the N.C.L.C.

According to T.W. Price, 1915 was an important year for the W.E.A. It had secured the affiliation of nine hundred and two trades unions, councils and branches, had been granted £50 by the P.C.T.U.C. and

appointed the former Labour councillor, J.M. MacTavish as General Secretary. Corfield argues that the industrial wing of the Labour Movement concurred with the idea of giving the workers the best of what was available. The spirit was expressed by R.H. Tawney at the 1953 Jubilee Conference: "Trade unionists are human beings before they are trade unionists; and, the wider their outlook as human beings, the better trade unionists they will be. Trade unionists, like other students, have a right to the best....Our business is to ensure that it is made accessible to them." (30) Corfield argues that before 1914 the shop steward had yet to make his mark and workshop representation hardly existed. The early trade union leaders gained technical expertise, whether in the intricacies of book-keeping or the art of self-presentation through evening classes. For example, Ernest Bevin, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union attended the Bristol Adult School. 'Education for citizenship' did bring tangible benefits. It provided an apprenticeship for service in local and national government. To that extent, it provided a 'useful' education, but only in the sense of serving the Labour Movement as a whole. The W.E.A. was not concerned with the technical training of the personnel of trade union organisations. Although Mansbridge was keen to stress the benefits of a liberal education ('educated' trade unionists would be at a distinct advantage in wage negotiations by virtue of their informed understanding of economic arguments), the major emphasis appeared to be that of political and civic enlightenment. The 1912 Labour Party Conference called for 'a generous measure of

educational reform in the direction of providing facilities for a liberal, as distinct from a technical education, thus laying the basis of the national life in an educated democracy.' (31) The resolution was moved by J.M. MacTavish, indicating the overlap in membership between the W.E.A. and the Labour Party. In view of the Labour Party's intellectual debt to liberalism, it is of little surprise that it shared, to a large extent, the W.E.A. philosophy regarding an educated democracy. Education promoted unity and not conflict: it could provide a common meeting place for children and adults of diverse social origins and hence a common basis for an integrated social life. Barker suggests that official Labour Party views on citizenship were hardly distinguishable from those on Conservative benches. The Party held on to its liberal inheritance except upon two occasions when challenges were mounted against militarism and political bias in schools.

In educational terms, the high watermark of this type of thinking was the Final Report 1919. The W.E.A. enjoyed a fair degree of representation supplying the chairman, A.L. Smith (Master of Balliol) as well as the secretaries, A. Greenwood (General Secretary of the Labour Party's advisory committee) and E.S. Cartwright (Organising Secretary to the Oxford University Tutorial Classes Committee). It is difficult to overstate the mood of optimism underpinning the Report. It was as if British society was entering a new era (Reconstruction) in which Labour, duly educated, would be ready and willing to play its part. Socialists were afraid that the hidden agenda was to put Labour firmly

31. Quoted by Barker, Education, p. 139
in its place. The terms of reference of the Committee were 'To consider the provision for, and possibilities of, Adult education (other than technical or vocational) in Great Britain and make recommendations.' (32) The Final Report argued that the expansion of adult education required a partnership between institutional and voluntary agencies. In addition to the consolidation of the gains won by the W.E.A. and its tutorial classes, the Committee proposed that: 'The provision of a liberal education for adult students should be regarded by universities as a normal and necessary part of their functions....We recommend that there should be established at each university a department of extra-mural adult education with an academic head.' (33) The Chairman of the Adult Education Committee, A.L. Smith, appended a covering letter to the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, in which he argued the paramount need for the provision of an education that was both universal and lifelong. The sub-text of the citizenship theme concerned the 'problem of Labour'. In 1908, against a background of industrial unrest and electoral gains, Oxford, according to Marriott, 'found it both dignified and expedient to have the university acknowledge the just educational claims and aspirations of labour.' (34) By 1918, the Labour Party enjoyed twenty two per cent of the vote and the trade unions a membership of six million. In addition, the post-war boom, 1919-21, had heightened trade union expectations regarding future possibilities. A.L. Smith directed Lloyd George's attention to various 'home problems, which hardly waited even till peace was in sight to burst upon us....Is it not manifest that a democracy which has to

32. Final report 1919, p. 1
33. Final report 1919, para. 333 a) and f)
34. S. Marriott, Extramural Empires, Nottingham, (1984) p. 77
solve these questions must be an educated democracy? And what of the new form of society that is trying to build itself under the hands of Labour, Labour which has been awakened by the war to a new sense of unity and power and a new reading of social justice? Is "Labour Unrest" likely to turn into industrial harmony between employers and employed at the mere twanging of a harp?" (35) The Committee proposed that the 'main purpose of education is to fit a man for life, and therefore in a civilised community to fit him for his place as a member of that community.' (36) The goal of all education had to be citizenship, that is the rights and duties of each individual as a member of the community required the citizen to learn ' (a) what his nation is, and what it stands for in past history and literature...., (b) what are his duties to it, from the elementary duties of sharing in its defence and submitting to its laws....(37) The rank and file ought not only to possess elementary information concerning domestic problems, but also should be able to weigh up the issues in an even-handed way. The quest for truth ought not to be sullied by the intrusion of partisanship. The Committee's First Interim Report (March 1918) endorsed various measures of social reform - adequate wages and housing, security of employment and a reduction in working hours. These measures constituted a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for a sound Reconstruction. Just as Mansbridge had warned that the working classes 'are all afire to act politically' (38) so too did A.L. Smith warn

35. Final report 1919, p. 2, para. (v)
36. Final Report 1919, p. 4, para. (xi)
37. Final report 1919, p. 5, para. (xi)
38. Mansbridge, 'The Veneer' in K.O.M., p. 1
Lloyd George of the heightened expectations of Labour: 'They demand "industrial control" on the ground that industrial democracy is as essential to individual freedom as is political democracy.' (39) It was incumbent upon the government to ensure that the rank and file would exercise their responsibilities in a 'proper' way. Education (universal and lifelong) could alone ensure a far wider body of intelligent public opinion. The University Tutorial Class Movement was noted with approbation particularly for its social effects: it enabled students 'to rise above their original prejudices and limitations, to see that there are two sides to every question, to have an open mind and a sense of the paramount duty of truth; that is, they are educated.' (40) Through a process of intellectual renaissance, liberals hoped not only to nurture tolerance at an interpersonal level but also to restructure social class relationships. Smith gave a clear warning upon this matter: 'A new era has come upon us. We cannot stand still. We cannot return to the old ways, the old abuses, the old stupidities. As with our international relations, so with the relations of classes and individuals inside our own nation; if they do not henceforth get better they must needs get worse, and that means moving towards an abyss.' (41) Socialists argued that the notion of a 'community of interests' was a spurious one. Rather, society was stratified in terms of wealth, status and power. The relationship between the social classes was not one of functional interdependence but of exploitation. The economically dominant class (Capital) by virtue of its ownership and

39. Final report 1919, p. 6, para. (xii)
40. Final Report 1919, p. 4, para. (ix)
41. Final Report 1919, p. 6, para. (xii)
control of the means of production was essentially a 'ruling class.' The State was but an 'executive committee' of the Capitalist class whose primary function was the provision of a suitable social, economic and legal framework necessary for the continuation of bourgeois hegemony. Liberals viewed the State as an impartial agency whose primary function was to act as arbiter of the national interest. In the post laissez-faire world, it was viewed as a 'caring agency' giving a helping hand to the under-privileged through the equitable redistribution of resources. Citizens required an education that would inculcate rationality into their behaviour; a rationality that would ensure that they would work with the State and not against it. Power was a social resource held in trust and directed by those in authority for the benefit of all. The politics of adult education was of central importance in the post-war world. By May 1921, with an official unemployment rate of twenty three per cent, liberal hopes of an age of enlightenment had been firmly dashed. Many of the expected measures of social reform connected with education (particularly the Day Continuation Schools associated with the 1918 Act) which were to inaugurate the new area were shelved with implementation of the economy cuts of 1921 (the 'Geddes axe'). The educational idealism was to be sacrificed on the alter of financial expediency.

The political arguments were reflected in the educational wing of the Labour Movement. In October 1919, the W.E.A. secured its anchor in the trade union movement: in co-operation with the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (I.S.T.C.) it established the Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee (W.E.T.U.C.). By 1921, a rival organisation, the National Council of Labour Colleges (N.C.L.C.), claiming to offer
independent working class education had established itself as a competitor in the struggle for scarce resources. A.J. Corfield (42) has argued that through its choice of leaders and its policy statements the W.E.A. established itself as a bone fide workers' organisation. Moreover, that due to the financial support of L.E.A.'s and central Government both the quantity and quality of W.E.A. work was more than a match for other organisations. By 1920, it enjoyed an individual membership of 20,000 belonging to 277 branches with an affiliation of 2,760 trade union branches. The I.S.T.C. felt that trade unions needed to be vitalised by 'intelligent, loyal members' otherwise 'the deadweight of an inert, indifferent membership will continue to clog their efforts in both political and industrial activities.' (43) The Constitution noted that education for trade unionists was more comprehensive than education for citizenship. The statement needs to be understood in terms of the context of employment trends and ideological predisposition. An acute labour shortage enhanced the leverage of the trade unions who were willing to embrace more than their traditional economistic functions. The primary object was to develop 'efficient, intelligent loyalty' towards the trade union movement whose activities were industrial and political, and whose responsibilities were local, national and international. Secondly W.E.T.U.C. sought to bring within reach of members the widest possible range of knowledge and to maintain a high educational standard with a view to fitting the wage earners to answer the questions and solve the problems that arise from and are due to

42. Corfield, Epoch pp. 28-33

social and industrial conditions.' (44) The I.S.T.C. expected not only a general education of its rank and file, such as would facilitate their understanding of price movements on the world market, but also one that would assist their members for political duties as well as posts of responsibility within the Labour Movement. Although the emphasis was upon a general education, by providing a general understanding of the existing industrial and social order, the W.E.A. acknowledged (45) that it may have to respond to specific needs by developing courses that would enhance administrative efficiency of the unions. The I.S.T.C. welcomed the W.E.A. as the 'educational expression of the working class movement.' (46) During the First World War, the W.E.A. was the only body to voice a researched opinion upon education matters. In 1916 it had published What Labour wants from Education followed by a nationwide campaign culminating in a National Conference (3 May 1917). There were other reasons for welcoming the W.E.A. The organisational network covered England, Wales and Scotland, it utilised the services of trained tutors, and it claimed grant aid. At the same time, co-operation did not entail subservience. The I.S.T.C. enjoyed majority representation upon the Central Joint Committee which exercised control over finance, policy and the type of education provided. Despite the subsequent criticism from the 'Plebs League', the I.S.T.C. did not show anxiety about the dangers of ideological indoctrination. Corfield has quoted from a letter by a worker student: 'In keeping with the W.E.A. method, an equal portion of time was given

44. Corfield, Epoch. Appendix VI. p. 243
45. Corfield, Epoch. Appendix I. Memorandum on Scheme of Educational Facilities for Trade Unionists by Co-operation between Contributing Trade Unions and the W.E.A. pp. 194-208
46. Corfield, Epoch. Appendix VI. p. 244
to discussion, and as students representing every phase of progressive thought from Liberalism and Marxianism, the conflict of opinion was illuminating and instructive, animated but fair, and invariably good humoured.' (47)

By 1921 W.E.T.U.C. had secured the affiliation of the Union of Post Office Workers, the Railway Clerks' Association and the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen. W.E.T.U.C. attracted fewer students than expected. Between 1920 and 1921, six hundred and fifty members of the I.S.T.C. qualified for remission of fees as U.T.C. students. By 1921-1922, this had fallen forty four per cent to three hundred and sixty four students. Fortunately, they were supplemented by three hundred and forty nine students from the U.P.O.W. Both Corfield and Barker ascribe the low level of participation to the lack of funds and the remote character of the subject matter. Unemployment affected not only the motivation of the students ('Men and women cannot be expected to show marked enthusiasm for education if they do not know where their next good meal is to come from.') (48) but also the ability of the unions to sponsor students in the first place. In 1929, the I.S.T.C. could afford only £213 on residential courses. Moreover, by 1925, trade unionists wanted schemes that would bring immediate benefits - training rather than the emancipatory goals of the W.E.A. Corfield suggests that the movement for workers' control lost significance during the recession. In April 1921 (Black Friday), the unions had witnessed the collapse of the Triple Alliance. The

47. Corfield, Epoch, p. 241
48. MacTavish, quoted by Corfield, Epoch, p. 58
return of the Gold Standard in 1925 inaugurated the attack upon the
structures of national collective bargaining as a means of reducing
wages. In the light of these developments, the subject-matter of
Week-end schools (1924-1925) seemed remote: of the twenty one subjects
listed in the W.E.A.'s magazine Highway five concerned Worker's
Control, three on Trade Unions and three on Nationalisation. There
were none concerned with economic policy and only one on wages. Did
this reflect the inability of the Labour Movement's leadership to
provide a positive policy or university teaching that concerned
itself with the broad principles rather than particular problems?
Whatever the reasons, the curriculum became increasingly functional
post - 1926.

W.E.T.U.C. was premissed upon the question of accessibility: it sought
to distribute the benefits of the existing educational system. The
N.C.I.C., which held its first convention in October 1921, set out
to establish alternative institutions that would 'provide independent
working-class education in order to help the workers to develop their
capacities and equip them for their Trade Union and Labour and
Co-operative activities in the work of bringing an end to the system
of Capitalism and enabling the workers to achieve their social and
industrial emancipation.' (49) These views reflected the opinions of
only a minority of 'Labour' people. The trade union movement was shaken
by the events of 1926 and the subsequent legal clamp-down. The 1927
Trades Disputes and Trade Union Act not only declared illegal any
sympathetic strike action but also introduced a 'contracting-in' system

for the payment of the political levy to the Labour Party. The new realism evident in the T.U.C., epitomised by the Mond-Turner talks of 1928-1929, was apparent in the field of union education. It did not represent a departure, rather a reinforcement of the fundamental tradition of labourism. At the Labour Party Conference of 1926, delegates rejected a motion calling for support of the N.C.L.C. The attitude of trade unionists was epitomised, according to Barker, by J.W. Bowen (member of the General Council of the T.U.C.) when he declared: "It may be that the education to be given should lead up to control by the workers, but do not deny them at least the opportunities which the employing classes are securing for themselves." (50)

In order to secure trade union affiliation, the N.C.L.C. had to temper its strident attitudes and adversarial style.

The N.C.L.C. enjoyed the advocacy of the 'Plebs League' which had been sniping away at the W.E.A. for several years. Their motto was 'Agitate, Educate, Organise' and their message was summed up in a number of memorable, biting, aphorisms:

'What peace is there between the hyena and the dog;
and what peace between the rich man and the poor?'

'What is the use of having a trade union ticket in your pocket if the boss has your head in his?'

'He will be a smart policeman who can arrest the spread of ideas, but apathetic members of the Working-Class Movement do it daily.'

50. Quoted by Barker, Education, p. 157
By 1925-1926 the N.C.L.C. enjoyed the affiliation of 28 trade unions, conducted 1,234 classes with 31,635 students. In addition, 2,700 students were enrolled upon correspondence courses. In order to attract trade union sponsorship, it had to carve out a distinct educational identity vis-a-vis W.E.T.U.C. As expressed by the Final Report 1919, the W.E.A. sought to educate the Democracy, replace a competitive approach with dialogue and bring about a union of labour and learning. The ethos was one of class neutrality - to lift individuals above 'crowd consciousness' by making each one independent in both mind and spirit. There was not just an emphasis upon personal development. The working classes required facilities for understanding the general character and problems of social life and citizenship, and for equipping them to share in the most effective way in the activities of the various organisations of which they were members. The W.E.A. was not in business to be a propagandist organisation. What most condemned the W.E.A./W.E.T.U.C. in the eyes of the 'Plebs League' was that they welcomed grants from the capitalist State. Millar, Secretary of the N.C.L.C., has argued that the 'crime' was compounded when the W.E.A. achieved charitable status (unlike the N.C.L.C.) which gave exemption from income tax. The W.E.A. was part of a capitalist conspiracy to render the Proletariat impervious to revolutionary doctrines. Geoff Brown has analysed the case against the W.E.A. with reference to developments at local level. (51) The case appears to rest upon guilt by association. 'The Plebs League' made two important assumptions, both of which may have been unwarranted. They implied a

'reductionist' view of the State in that they assumed that it was purely a Ruling Class organisation. This would exclude the possibility that the Labour Movement could extract concessions (Marx had argued that the success of the Ten Hours Bill represented success of the Political Economy of Labour over that of Capital). Moreover, they assumed that because it received money, it thereby acted as an instrument of ruling class control. In 1924, the W.E.A. was designated a 'Responsible Body' by the first Labour Government. Although the State kept files on the 'Political bias of the W.E.A.' Brown has argued that this compromised neither what nor how it taught. The Pleb's argument entirely missed the point about district autonomy and self-government. The charge of 'social control' cannot be sustained by merely examining head office pronouncements. Although the works of Mansbridge and other key liberal thinkers have been treated with doctrinal reverence by socialist critics in order to support conspiratorial theories, they did not impose rigid orthodox practices upon the W.E.A. as it evolved to meet local needs. J.F.C. Harrison has examined the Leeds branch to judge whether it was actuated by the Mansbridge ideal. The branch was inaugurated in April 1907 by D.J. Shackleton, Labour Party M.P., who stated its intentions: 'to arouse among workers an interest in higher education and to direct their attention to the facilities for studies of interest to workers which may hitherto have been overlooked.' (52) It sought to help the Labour Movement through providing for the worker as an individual citizen and through schemes such as those organised by W.E.T.U.C. For George H. Thompson, District Secretary, the W.E.A. existed to provide the personnel of political governing class. He sympathised ideologically

52. Quoted by Harrison, Learning, p. 278
with the N.C.L.C. but felt that their 'purist' attitude in eschewing university help was inexpedient. Thompson wanted to provide diverse opportunities for learning for people earning their living by manual labour. Like the 'Plebs' he wanted individuals to rise with their class not out of it - not to declass students, but to deepen solidarity. He wrote, 'A good deal of tosh is written about education. Haldane's view, for example, that it is a bridge from one class to another, is rot. We don't want our children to be removed from one class to another. We want them to stay where they are.' (53) Was this a rejection of Mansbridge's hopes of education as a means of social class reconciliation? The Yorkshire District was stimulated by socialism rather than by vague good intentions. Not all subjects were of equal value. Greater emphasis was placed upon Economics and Social Theory in the firm belief that they would make greater contributions towards social emancipation. Brown has quoted the case of a Conservative L.E.A. (East Riding) which in 1923, threatened to withhold its annual grant of £75 unless the Organising Tutor, who held socialist views, was dismissed. The W.E.A. refused to comply. In 1932, Sheffield City Council, under a Conservative administration stripped the W.E.A. of its grant which suggested that the students were politically progressive. The central pedagogic device of discussion ensured that the organisation was far from being a vehicle for the dissemination of ruling class knowledge. As H.M.I. Headlam and Professor Hobhouse noted in their 1911 Report, discussion periods were combative occasions where controversial subjects were pursued with 'considerable vigour

53. Quoted by Harrison, Learning, p. 297
and plainness of expression.' (54) Mansbridge had to ensure that the educational alliance would not be hijacked by particular interest groups. The exclusivist approach would alienate the intended clients. He was at pains to stress that no tutorial class could afford to ignore Marshall or Marx. The 'Tutors Bulletin' of November 1922 suggested that any class which disregarded the materialist conception of history was, ipso facto, a failure. Brown has pointed out a notable irony regarding the Labour Colleges: that although the lesson was heterodox, their teaching methods were quite orthodox with exposition been given a central place. One ex-Labour College student succinctly described the dogmatism of the tutors: 'History is just to emphasise the obvious fact that the 'haves' some time ago diddled the 'have nots.' (55) In some cases, Labour College tutors did not feel constrained to put forward more than one point of view as they felt that the working-class student, in the words of the 'Plebs League', 'has no time to listen to elaborate apologies made on behalf of the oppressing class.' (56) The Labour College attacks forced the W.E.A. to define its purpose and restate its commitment to the working class movement. G.D.H. Cole argued that while the W.E.A. and the Labour College embraced different functions, education and propaganda respectively, they ought to be seen as legitimate, complementary activities. The W.E.A., it was claimed, taught students how and not what to think. The students were encouraged to make up their own minds after weighing up conflicting evidence and interpretations. But Cole could not accept the notion of impartiality, as he explained in a

54. Quoted by Brown, 'Ind.' in Thompson, Change, pp. 117-118
55. Quoted by Brown, 'Ind.' in Thompson, Change, p. 122
56. Quoted by Brown, 'Ind.' in Thompson, Change, p. 122
Students' Bulletin (April 1925): 'Every teacher is bound to teach the facts by the light of his interpretation of them. Nor can a good teacher honestly suppress his own interpretation, or keep it in the background. If he does that, he submits coloured facts—facts coloured by his own interpretation—without confessing the colour. He deceives his students—which is dishonest. Let us be as partial as we like to our own views, provided we expound as faithfully as we can the views of others.' (57)

During the 1920's, the W.E.A. sought to accommodate itself to the needs of the Labour Movement. In terms of its choice of leaders, its formal links with the trade union movement through W.E.T.U.C. and its policy statements, the W.E.A. offered a stark contrast to the caricature portrayed by Plebs. The strategy of accommodation was pursued to the extent that observers felt that the W.E.A. had abrogated its non-political status. The publication, in January 1925, of Education for Trade Unionists—a call for action drew not only the disaffiliation of several branches but also the censure of the media. The Morning Post claimed that it represented 'a vast subsidised machinery for the indoctrination of youth with a certain dogma and point of view and for the equipment of street-corner orators with an armoury of phrases, catchwords, maxims and impressive passages from the works of Karl Marx and other socialist oracles.' (58) By 1925, the W.E.A. was offering more than the vague cry of education for citizenship; it was calling for 'the creation of a new and juster social order.' Just

57. Quoted by Brown, 'Ind.' in Thompson, Change, p. 124
58. Quoted by Stocks, W.E.A., p. 88
as the W.E.A. was forced to redefine its work in order to secure trade union support, so too did the N.C.L.C. shift its position to accommodate itself to a pragmatic and politically moderate Labour Movement.

Although the 1925 Constitution committed the N.C.L.C. to the eradication of capitalism, there remained doubts concerning the extent to which its trade union affiliates were prepared to condone such objectives. The Amalgamated Engineering Union, which affiliated in 1924, endorsed the principle of independent working class education. But its National Executive Committee defeated an amendment, by 23 votes to 20, that called for education that would render students fit for the class struggle. The N.C.L.C. was competing with W.E.T.U.C. for sponsorship and was under pressure to dilute their black and white class analysis. In 1926, the General and Municipal Workers' Union apportioned their annual grant of £200 on a ratio of three to one, decisively weighted in favour of W.E.T.U.C. Significantly, the G.M.W.U. increased its payments to the N.C.L.C. in 1930 with Conference sanctioning the payment on condition that the union had satisfied itself that the influence of Communists was negligible. In his autobiography, the Secretary of the N.C.L.C., J.P.M. Millar, argued that it never advertised itself as a Marxist organisation, nor even a Socialist organisation. By 1949, the Constitution offered only one objective: 'To provide independent working-class education.' The work of the N.C.L.C., in its early stages, was concerned with the teaching of social science subjects to men and women who would use that knowledge for class advancement. The content was dictated not by a love of knowledge for its own sake; neither was it prescribed by a desire on the part of the working classes to secure personal aggrand-
izement. For the N.C.L.C. there could be no value neutrality in the
teaching of social science subjects. The premise seemed to be that
wisdom and understanding were synonymous with the study of Marx.

Education was a political activity geared towards emancipatory goals.

If the content destabilised the capitalist status quo, then, ipso facto,
it was both ideologically and epistemologically correct. J.F. Horrabin,
editor of Plebs, suggested that there were two rival interpretations
of working class education: 'One school means the extension of the
benefits of culture, in the general sense of the term, to the class,
which by reason of its lack of means and leisure, has been debarred
from a full share of those benefits hitherto....this school regards
culture as something altogether apart from, and unaffected by, the
class divisions of society. The other school means by working class
education a particular kind of education, aiming at meeting the
specific needs of the worker as a class and undertaken by the worker
independently of, and even in opposition to, the ordinary existing
channels. The second school takes the view that all human culture.....
has been coloured by the outlook and prejudices of successive ruling
classes....will add to that culture, not merely a new 'note' of its
own, but will eventually revalue all culture by the standards of its
own ideals and purposes.' (59) This seemed to be a mechanistic applica-
tion of Marx's dictum that the ruling ideas of any age are the ideas
of the ruling classes. Universities were smeared as 'capitalist'
institutions. But to neglect the thinking of universities in this way
was really an inverted form of McCarthyism. The educational heritage
of universities has been characterised by diversity. The materialist

59. Quoted by Millar, College, p. 60
conception of history owes considerable intellectual debt to the Hegelian concept of the 'dialectic' which was reworked at the University of Berlin. (60) J.P.M. Millar has noted the supply problems associated with the N.C.L.C.'s uncompromising attitude towards University teachers. Undoubtedly there existed a shortage of adequate tutors. Letters of complaint, albeit rare, appeared in Plebs: one complained that lectures were repetitive and cliche-ridden, 'a series of denunciatory tirades against some monstrosity called capitalism.' (61)

Whereas the N.C.L.C. was clear about the political nature of its work, there was a degree of ambivalence concerning the position of the W.E.A. If it had been a 'straightforward' educational body, then the N.C.L.C. would have found little justification for the ideological warfare. However, through W.E.T.U.C., it claimed to be a provider for the distinctive educational needs of the trade unions. In that respect, there were grounds for conflict; particularly as the W.E.A. expressed the politically moderate aspirations of the Labour Movement. When addressing an international conference on workers' education, MacTavish said that it was necessary to equip the working classes for the class struggle but whereas the N.C.L.C. tried 'to develop the war mind, the British Labour Movement in general wished to carry on the struggle by constitutional means.' (62) These competing philosophies were bound to obstruct measures of co-ordination. According to

60. R. Tucker, Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx, (1967), Chapters 4-6
61. Quoted by Millar, College, p. 191
62. Quoted by Millar, College, p. 59
Corfield, W.E.T.U.C. was designed to be a framework for a completely co-ordinated system of trade union education hoping to draw all educational bodies into the fold. To this end, at a conference of trade unionists held on 16 October 1920, under the auspices of W.E.T.U.C., the Trade Unions' Education Enquiry Committee was established. Its report, published in May 1921, argued that existing trade union support was perfunctory considering the pressing educational needs of the time. In view of the depletion of union funds consequent upon the 1921 recession, it was felt that the financial burden of an independent scheme would be intolerable. Therefore, any scheme would be dependent upon state aid. In order to satisfy the criteria for access to public funds, the scheme would have to embody 'sound educational principles.' Arthur Pugh, Chairman of T.U.E.E.C. and General Secretary of the I.S.T.C. felt that working class interests would not necessarily be compromised by requesting state aid: 'Millions per year are granted from the Treasury to equip the experts who run capitalist industries. While granting the necessity of this we claim that the trade union movement also requires its trained expert advocates, administrators and leaders and, what is equally important, an educated membership.' (63) The whole report was underpinned by an optimism that was to be shaken by the 1926 General Strike. The Report noted that whereas a century ago, unions were the 'pariahs' of society, today they were 'rapidly making history' with their horizons encompassing the democratic control of industry. The next step was to be the direct participation of the trade union movement in the management of industry. Although the importance of an educated membership was

63. From the 1921 Report in Corfield, Epoch, Appendix II. p. 210
stressed, it is clear that the mood was a pragmatic one, emphasising the technical education of the trade union cadre. They should have 'a wide range of knowledge germane to economic and political problems and such trained capacity as will enable them not only to understand the immediate results of decisions but also to foresee possible ultimate results.' (64) Trade unions required not so much the 'born orator' as the skilled negotiator whose mental alertness and trained mind could secure gains either around a conference table or before an arbitration court. At a more mundane level, lay officials required an understanding of the National Health Insurance and Unemployment Acts. Increasing the efficiency of administration related to the 'economistic' objectives of trade unions, that is, to secure the best possible conditions for wage earners under the existing system. But the Report sanctioned the use of public funds to help unions effect a revolution in a constitutional way. This was a legitimate aim for the trade union movement. However, it rejected the right of the State to interfere with the social outlook of the classes, the books or authorities consulted, or the opinions held by the students. In reaffirming the principle of democratic control, the report recommended inter alia the levying of 2d per member and the co-ordination of existing schemes without prejudicing their independence.

Between 1921 and 1926, the T.U.C. Conferences made a series of abortive moves towards co-ordination. In September 1921, the General Council was instructed to co-operate with the T.U.E.E.C. as to the best means of giving effect to the aims and objects of the inquiry

64. Corfield, Epoch, Appendix II, p. 211
including the taking over of the existing residential establishments including the C.L.C. and Ruskin College. The C.L.C. wanted a quick agreement on condition that its educational policy remained unchanged. It enjoyed the precarious sponsorship of two trade unions and the T.U.C. nexus seemed to offer a lifeline. Craik expressed the view that the T.U.C. must be catholic. Although ideological differences did play a part in obstructing a deal, they were not insurmountable. The 1923 Congress agreed to set up an educational fund of £1,000 which represented approximately one per cent of T.U.C. annual income. However an impasse was reached with regard to objectives. Ruskin College and the W.E.A. made a brief statement which included the view that education should 'assist the working class in its efforts for social and industrial emancipation.' (65) The N.C.L.C. countered with a radical statement: 'to educate them for the purpose of bringing to an end the system of Capitalism.' (66) However, a compromise was reached omitting any reference to capitalism. By the summer of 1925, the take-over of Ruskin College and the C.L.C. by the T.U.C. 'seemed inevitable' according to Griggs. However the General Council declared that it could only carry out Congress' instructions on condition that financial support was forthcoming. The omens were not auspicious. At the 1922 Conference, A.J. Cook had called for the take-over of two colleges. But, in the previous two years the trade union movement had lost one and a half million members. In response to Cook's resolution, the T.U.C. made a token gesture of £250 each to Ruskin and the C.L.C. In times of financial need, education became somewhat of a luxury. In

65. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 195
66. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 195
November 1925, the Countess of Warwick made a gift of her country house (Easton Lodge in Essex) to the T.U.C. The scheme required a sum of £50,000 for alterations and refurbishment in addition to a levy of 1d per member for three successive years. Following the General Strike in May, delegates balked at the prospect of undertaking such capital expenditure in addition to their other commitments. On a card vote Congress decided to refer back the motion by 2,441,000: 1,481,000. Within two years, the C.L.C. had closed. Delegates questioned whether the benefits of residential education would outweigh the costs. The Labour M.P. for West Ham, J. Jones painted a picture of 'workmen who have gone up to Ruskin College dressed as workmen, who have come back with halos, dressed in plus fours, and immediately wanting to be general secretary of their union....if we are going to subsidise education, let us subsidise it in industrial centres where workers will go to evening schools.' (67) In a 'zero sum' game where one group's gain was another's loss, the N.C.L.C. felt that it was gaining better value for money. Perhaps quantitative indicators are crude, but in 1925-1926, the N.C.L.C. taught 30,398 worker students. In defence of the C.L.C., W. Craik has argued that it was mistaken to count heads because of the qualitative differences. There was a contrast of function: the C.L.C. was a socialist teachers' training college. Even if this view is accepted, it is not difficult to see why the N.U.R. and the S.W.M.F. withdrew their support of £8,000 per annum. Craik has argued that the C.L.C. offered not 'bread and butter' subjects but those that would help win the class war. In offering political enlightenment it was giving the working classes not what they wanted but what

67. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 201
... they needed. Trade unions wanted schemes that would have immediate, tangible benefits. By 1926, the N.U.R. questioned the benefits of a C.L.C. education particularly when fourteen out of twenty nine students no longer worked on the railways. Griggs has summed up the mood of 1926: 'When industrial disputes pressed hard upon the financial resources of a worker and his family, many saw full-time education at least as an expensive luxury. The struggle to persuade the organised working class to support their own political party, their own Co-operative Movement, their own newspaper and their own education movement was to be a never ending struggle.' (68)

In his study of the politics of educational decision-making, Barker suggests that post-1926, the keynote was education for trade union efficiency. In 1929 the T.U.C. sponsored a summer school at Ruskin College concerned with law, compensation, health and unemployment insurance, wage fixing, conciliation and arbitration procedures. The objectives became defined in narrow terms: 'The aim primarily in mind is to secure by this means, not the advantage of extended training to individuals, but specialised training to secure for the Movement generally a supply of young people with the necessary equipment to enable them to be of value in the tasks of confronting Labour today.' (69) By October 1945, the T.U.C. was proposing to sponsor students for one year courses at the London School of Economics to study industrial history, applied economics, statistics, social administration, industrial and trade union law and accountancy. Even the N.C.L.C.

68. Griggs, T.U.C., p. 203
was forced to modify its anti-capitalist viewpoint in order to 'engender a constructive socialist outlook' and to provide, 'a training necessary to the intelligent grappling of the vast and complex problems confronting this country and the world.' (70) The proportion of classes dealing with Marxist theory decreased as trade union members attained positions of responsibility within the movement. Political enlightenment, the raising of political consciousness could no longer be the all-embracing goal of the N.C.L.C. The subjects were increasingly selected on the basis of their functional importance.

The N.C.L.C. witnessed a decline in its share of the educational market - from 30,398 in 1925-1926 to 13,274 in 1937-1938. The slump of the 1930's reduced the financial support of the trade unions, while the closure of the C.L.C. reduced the supply of organisers. The N.C.L.C. had to attract non-Marxist trade unionists. The Annual report of 1936 mentioned three areas of competition: the W.E.A., technical training courses and cinemas ('the comfort of the luxurious picture houses.'). The Prospectus for Postal Courses in 1936 shows the wide range of courses:

- Chairmanship
- Economics - Orthodox and Marxian
- Economic Geography and Imperial Power
- English Grammar - Elementary
- English - Intermediate
- Esperanto - Elementary
- Esperanto - Advanced
- Finance
- History of the British Working Class
- Industrial History of Modern Europe
- Local Government
- Public Speaking
- Scientific Way of Thinking
- Social History
- Socialism

(71)

70. Millar, College, p.132

71. Millar, College, p. 220
It may have offered more courses, but critics argued that they were of poor quality. By employing non-university trained teachers on the basis of their political credentials, the N.C.L.C. was reinforcing the prejudices of the ordinary trade unionist. In defence, Millar argued that orthodox curricula and teaching methods did not have a great impact on the working class population. Ernest Green's Adult Education: Why This Apathy? showed that for 1933 manual workers constituted only 34.25 per cent of W.E.A. students. In comparison, the percentage of manual workers in N.C.L.C. classes was much higher. (72)

The N.C.L.C. related its programme to the felt needs of trade unionists, as it concentrated 'singlemindedly on equipping workers with the special knowledge and skills required not only to combat social and industrial exploitation but to help them bring about a new social order.' (73) It ought to be borne in mind that both the N.C.L.C. and W.E.T.U.C. were competing for a small, if influential, clientele. There was no real enthusiasm from the rank and file. B.W. Pashley has estimated the number of trade unionists who claimed remission of class fees through W.E.T.U.C.: 1,426 (1925-1926); 1,877 (1935-1936) and 2,081 (1937-1938). Autobiographies tend to be littered with names of the 'great and the good'; for example, Millar quotes the words of Ellen Wilkinson (Labour member for Jarrow) at the N.C.L.C. annual meeting in Stockton: "Although I had taken a degree in History at Manchester University I was astonished to discover when I came into contact with the Labour College how little real history I had been taught." (74)

72. Comparable figures exist for the session June 1948-May 1949. N.C.L.C. = 86.37 per cent. W.E.A. = 20.5 per cent in Millar, College, p. 253

73. Millar, College, p. 249

74. Quoted by Millar, College, p. 264
'Education for social purpose' is a phrase that seems applicable to the developments of this period. Roy Shaw has argued that it is rather a vague goal which covers vastly different aims, from those of the Marxist socialist to orthodox religionists like Cardinal Newman who wanted to train good members of society. Although one can discern in W.E.A. thinking the desire to create good citizens (one who pays his rates without grumbling) this assumed a lower priority as it sought to mobilise the trade unions in the cause of education. By 1925, it had published *Education for Trade Unionists* - a call for action which offered a challenge to the capitalist status quo: 'Trade unionism stands not merely for an improvement in the conditions of the workers within the limits of the existing system, but for the creation of a new and juster social and industrial order... Their emancipation depends, in short, upon their being intellectually awake. It is the business of education to assist that awakening. Knowledge is power, and it is the knowledge which will bring more power to the trade union movement that the W.E.A. and W.E.T.U.C. are providing.' (75) Garfield has argued that the subject-matter of classes particularly during the mid 1920's was remote from economic realities. During the 1930's pride of place was given to the U.T.C. with its emphasis upon enlightenment, whether political or cultural. In 1932, G.D.H. Cole published *On Getting To Know* in which he pointed out the existence of W.E.T.U.C. which catered for students who wanted to know about the Gold Standard, science, music, literature or almost anything. Despite its proclaimed trade union sympathies, the W.E.A. defined itself as

75. Quoted by Corfield, *Epoch*, Appendix IV. pp. 236-240
a provider of general culture. Perhaps this would explain the post-1945 'moral panic' surrounding its increasing middle class image. The N.C.L.C. could not be found guilty of being concerned with general cultural matters. Millar was emphatic on that point: 'A knowledge of economics can be of considerable help in training trade unionists to deal with employers, whereas a knowledge of how to play the violin would be of no assistance.' (76) The N.C.L.C. was unambivalent about its role - to enable the workers to achieve their social and industrial emancipation. The W.E.A. was ambivalent: was it a straightforward educational body or was it providing for the distinctive educational needs of trade unionism? For Mansbridge, education was an end in itself, culturally enriching and spiritually ennobling. Through the W.E.A., access to institutions of higher learning would be opened up thereby cementing an alliance of the 'responsible' leaders of the middle and working classes. By 1925, A.D. Lindsay (Master of Balliol) was trying to defend the W.E.A. against charges of being a capitalist organisation. The W.E.A. favoured an 'independent' (i.e. impartial) education, but, that it would 'take sides' in social struggles, as had been demonstrated in the campaign against the Economy Cuts of 1921. The working classes ought to understand things as they are and not as his party would like them to be. In that way, he would be enabled to take sides more effectively.

76. Millar, College, p. 250
Ernest Cartwright 1883 – 1913

'I must by my influence and example try to get my fellow workmen to take a more intelligent and active interest in doing away with existing evils. I must try to arouse them from the apathy which is the curse of the working classes. To do this I need far greater patience and perseverance than I have at present and to secure these I must cultivate self-control.' (1)

Ernest Cartwright was born on 9 February 1883 in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent just three years after the Mundella Act introduced the principle of compulsory schooling by requiring all School Boards and School Attendance committees to frame attendance by-laws. The life pattern of his mother seemed to be typical of working class women in general. She was the tenth or eleventh child of a family of thirteen. Unfortunately, by the age of nine she had lost both of her parents. Her father was coachman to Michael Bass, the father of the first Lord Burton. The loss of adult bread winners necessitated the early work of his mother. While in her teens, she was working in service with a family in London. However, she was forced to quit this work on account of her poor health. She returned not to her town of origin, Newborough, Staffordshire but to the Potteries where in 1867, at the age of nineteen, she married William Cartwright. The journals offer

few details concerning Cartwright's father other than the fact that he worked as a railway crossing keeper in Elton, near Ellesmere Port (Cheshire). The work involved a degree of geographical mobility with the family moving from Newcastle-under-Lyme, to Elworth (near Sandbach) and finally to Elton where his father died in 1901. The completed family size was nine children with Ernest being the youngest of five boys.

It has been argued that religion continued to play an important part in working class life during the final quarter of the nineteenth century. Particularly amongst the 'respectable' sections, there was overwhelming devotion to the social tenets to be derived from a reading of the Bible: from the Ten Commandments to the Pauline tradition of the suppression of sexuality. In practice, respectability meant a commitment to the work ethic, cleanliness, sobriety and a generally abstemious life-style. Respectable parents not only conditioned their children into the early habit of obedience but also ensured that they were subject to correct moral training. Indeed 'child obedience' was a kind of 'status marker' demarcating unambiguously the respectable from the 'rough' working class. According to these moral criteria, Ernest Cartwright can certainly be located within the 'respectable' section of the wage-earning classes. He was baptised, confirmed and brought up as an adherent of the Church of England. It seems as if he was subjected to a stern moralistic upbringing, based upon crude, Victorian psychology of 'spare the rod and spoil the child.' Writing in 1912 on the tendency of people to indulge in nostalgic reminiscence, he commented,
'I can now even think kindly of the thrashings I received when I was a boy and that hurt so much at the time that I thought I should never forgive the person who administered them.' (2)

His parents exercised strict control over the use of his leisure time, so as to ensure correct moral training:

'When I was a boy my parents, in common with the majority of folk went once or twice to church and would not allow us children to play any games and particularly not out of doors. They insisted on us going to a Sunday school twice and to the church. The rest of the day we could devote to reading or rambling.' (3)

From an early age, there was nurtured a love of learning which was not atrophied by his experience of institutionalised education. But, he eschewed the idea of learning for its own sake. His religious upbringing seems to have had a two-fold impact. In his adult life, he employed a strong, disciplined code of personal ethics. His daughter, Nancy (b. 1914) has commented, 'Divorce was never mentioned in those days, and he abhorred drink and cards. They were never in our home.' (4) He expressed regret at the laxity of the morality of the modern world. The decline of morality was a self-evident social fact having its roots in the abdication of moral responsibility by parents, teachers and the Church itself. But moral conservatism was not the only product of Cartwright's religious upbringing. His religious experiences provided the motivation for his political commitment. The Church provided a

2. Journal 4. p. 35
staging post for his transition to ethical socialism. 'Love thy neighbour' represented a moral imperative which underpinned his faith in collectivist legislation as a means of redressing social grievances. At a personal level, he felt he ought to respond to his calling in life, which was to develop his talents for service to others. In 1913, he confessed that as a youth, David Livingstone, the missionary-explorer, was his hero. That he provided a role-model for the young Cartwright was not extraordinary. Livingstone was a social hybrid to the extent that his life represented a judicious admixture of Smilesian virtue and selfless devotion.

'As a man, as explorer, and as missionary, he is alike worthy of honour. Without the advantages of wealth, influence or position, he achieved greatness. Character and energy were the means by which he wrote his name on the annals of history. He was the type of man that is sadly lacking in these materialistic days. With a scientific enquiring mind he blended a fervent and devotional spirit and an intense love of humanity.....

'Born of humble parents at Blantyre in Scotland, he commenced work at the early age of ten in the cotton mills. After 14 hours of labour there, he spent 4 more in study. Out of his first wages he bought a Latin grammar. And so he went on, until at the end of his college life he was able to say, "I never received a farthing from anyone." By his own exertions and his own cost, he was able to take his degree in medicine. This self-denial and self-reliance he exhibited to the end of his life.....

'For years my greatest ambition (I am almost ashamed to confess it now) was to be a missionary and I could not conceive a greater than he (sic) ....I sometimes wish, even now, that I could be even a humble follower in his steps. But today we are so materialistic that it is sometimes hard to confess a belief in God. My lot is cast in a different sphere
than Livingstone's was, but with his spirit and faith it would be more useful to God and man.' (5)

Whereas Livingstone sought to bring light into the heart of 'darkest' Africa, Cartwright, in his moments of high idealism, hoped to effect a transformation, on a more modest scale, of his fellow working men. This provided the raison d'être of his desire for self-improvement. Despite his religious background and his institutional affiliations, he was not uncritical of the religious instruction which he received at school. It has been argued, not without justification, that the development of mass education owed its impetus not only to the technical requirements of industry, but also to the desire for social control. R. Colls has questioned the motives of North-Eastern colliery owners in sponsoring elementary schools: 'It (his article) is about education only in so far as education was presented by the men who financed and pioneered it as an agent of social control. The coalfield schools, which first shuffled into existence during the 1850's....were squat lieutenants to the colliery winding-gear which stood above them.' (6) According to J.M. Goldstrom, the National Society promoted the use of readers which extolled the virtues of the 'laws' of political economy. (7) The effect of such proselytism upon the minds of children is often unstated. Cartwright attended a small village Church of England school, in Elworth, Sandbach until the age of thirteen. The 1870 Act had instituted

5. Journal 5. pp. 44-47

6. R. Colls, 'Oh Happy English Children! Coal, Class and Education in the North-East' in Past and Present, No. 73. pp. 75-76

the Dual System whereby School Boards were empowered to levy a rate in order to fill in the educational gaps left by the voluntary system. The Church schools were able to offer, without rate aid, a denominational education. Such an education explicitly performed a political function in that it was supportive of the status quo. What impact did the following prayer have?

'God bless the master
and his relations
and keep us in
our proper stations.'

Did it mould irrevocably the minds of the young? Cartwright commented,

'Like most of my class, I left school and started to do something to earn mine own living at the early age of 13. I had the average elementary school training, amongst which was that awful part of the established Church's teachings which bids us to submit ourselves lowly and reverently towards our betters and make ourselves contented in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call us.' (8)

It is interesting to note his use of the word 'training' rather than 'education'. The term connotes the idea of bringing to a state of proficiency by prolonged instruction and practice. In 1858, the Newcastle Commission had been appointed to 'inquire into the present state of popular education in England, and to consider and report what measures, if any, are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary education.' Although the Commission has been remembered for giving its imprimatur to 'payment by results' it is necessary to give some idea of what was meant by a 'sound' education. The Reverend James Fraser, Assistant Commissioner and later Bishop of Manchester (1870-1885), outlined the desiderata of the working class child: it

8. Journal 3. pp. 79-80
consisted of an ability to spell common words and read a simple paragraph from a newspaper, write a simple letter, check a tradesman's bill and have a knowledge of the chief countries of the world. In addition, the pupil ought to have sufficient knowledge of the Bible to understand a simple sermon and enough of the Catechism to understand his duties to God and his neighbour.

These sentiments seemed to have cast long shadows well into the penultimate decade of the century. In April 1911, Cartwright reflected upon the question of

'how is it that so few of the working classes become thinkers. When we consider how many facilities for obtaining education we possess at the present time, it is really surprising at first sight that so few are able to do any original thinking. But when we come to look more closely at the type of education that is given in our elementary schools.....it becomes no longer a matter of surprise.'

'Take for example, the education that was given in the elementary schools in my day, and we must remember that it is only in these schools that the working class receive any systematic instruction with any effective supervision. What we were there learnt (sic) was the mere rudiments of knowledge, and that sometimes in the most useless and disagreeable form. We were learnt the three R's and little geography and less history, but no attempt was made to develop the individual mind of the child. What was done was to encumber the mind by a large number of facts and figures without teaching how to reason spontaneously from them. It was rather a training of memory than training of mind. Such a course is bound sooner (or) later to result in mental indigestion. There was no teaching how to learn facts from our surroundings and to reason about these facts, although today I believe some attempt is being made to do this. Take for example one of the few studies that were really educative (anyhow that could have been made educative) viz-essay-writing. This is the course that was pursued: we were given a
card with an essay on, say "The Manufacture of Glass" printed thereon and told we were to have it for about 15 minutes and then were expected to write an essay on that subject. Could anything be more uneducative. The child tried to learn it off by heart, at any rate portions of it. No attempt was made to draw out what the child already knew on the subject.' (9)

The young Cartwright was subjected to the full rigours of the Revised Code, a summative form of assessment which related the school grant to the child's performance in the 3 R's. The result was a narrow, sterile curriculum with a premium on rote-learning. Although the severity of the Code was mitigated by the introduction of 'specific' and 'class subjects', the icy chill of the examination continued until 1897, the year after Cartwright had left school. The result of all this cramming, so he believed, was that when the child left school his mind would be packed in water tight compartments with knowledge that would have little relevance. But this was more than a question of being educationally unsound; it was politically dangerous.

'Here we have the young person, who now is most likely engaged in some occupation that tends to destroy initiative and originality, his mental vision broadening as he reads and feels of things he has had no knowledge of previously. Papers and books are crowded upon him and he is told by his elders that consumption of the contents is "getting on." It is not surprising that such an one is not able to do any original thinking and that he takes his view of politics etc. from his favourite paper and is not able to judge if it agrees with what he sees about him? What he reads and what he sees are to him completely divorced, and he is at the mercy of the first quack that combines them.' (10)

10. Journal 3. p. 17
This echoed Albert Mansbridge's warnings regarding the parlous state of British democracy. The liberal fear was that of an untutored democracy which would be in thrall to external, malevolent forces, be they a partisan popular press or a fiery socialist demagogue. Working men, having been conditioned into an unthinking absorption of facts, would be rendered susceptible to the flights of rhetoric employed by divers interest groups. Cartwright believed that pedagogical methods employed in the elementary schools failed to sharpen up the critical faculties, which were to be the **sine qua non** of a rational, informed citizenry.

If the latent function of elementary schooling was to produce a functionally literate but politically docile labour force, then the emphasis had to be on a 'minimum' concept of schooling. The Rev. Fraser had declared that: 'We must make up our minds to see the last of him as far as the day school is concerned, at ten or eleven.' (11) This 'minimum' concept was congruent with the demands made upon the education system by representatives of Capital. According to conflict theorists, the elementary school inculcated desirable qualities in the future proletariat: obedience, punctuality, deference and a commitment to the Protestant work ethic. For E.P. Thompson, the Marxist historian, the role of the Victorian schoolmaster was to adjust the work patterns of a largely pre-industrial culture ('St. Monday') to the requirements of industrial discipline. Even G.A.N. Lowndes, in *The Silent Social Revolution 1895-1965* conceded that the elementary school was but a

'waiting room for life' with many children marking time in their final year. The demand for early leaving by many working class parents was evident by the use of part-time exemptions. Elizabeth Roberts has suggested that, during the period 1875 to 1914, 'the majority of working class parents (and consequently their children) did not have a deep attachment to education, or any great confidence in its advantages.' (12) In the textile areas, particularly Lancashire, families were prepared to forego the dubious benefits of an elementary education in order to supplement family income. Working class children had very little choice as to their occupational destiny. Cartwright's father worked as a railway crossing keeper for the North Staffordshire Railway Company. Ernest's occupational destiny was ascribed rather than achieved. Nancy, his daughter, has commented on the question of education and occupation: 'He educated himself later by good reading. He was put on the railway on leaving school, his father being a railwayman, but never wanted that. All his life he wanted to get out of it, but conditions in those days were such that men could not give up their jobs.' (13) By 1907, the Free Places Regulations offered a ladder of escape for the bright working class child. But scarcity of resources was still the major constraint in working class families. Recognising the 'great advance' in the facilities offered to the working classes, he commented,

'....But it must be remembered that it is not solely a question of the open road, it is also a question of £ : s : d. The average working man who begins life with thew and sinew as his only capital, cannot afford

to keep his children at school until they are sixteen years of age, it is as much as he can manage, and sometimes more, it (sic) keep them there until they are fourteen. But, it may be said, look at the advantages provided in the way of scholarships, evening and continuation schools and such like. Yes, but it must be borne in mind that after a boy or girl has done a day's work his or her mind is not so receptive of form as if it was fresh....The child is more or less tired and it redounds to their credit that so many do try to receive benefit from these institutions or try to improve their minds at home. They are more likely to seek for relaxation in some less trying way and this is where the way to moral degradation is opened.' (14)

Driven by a Calvinist predilection for hard work and self-improvement, he was disinclined to show tolerance to those who could not reach those exacting standards. His daughter commented upon this: 'My father was what we would call a "loner" today with only a few special friends, but I think that he was well thought of among railwaymen and the N.U.R.' (15) I want to suggest that Ernest Cartwright was a 'reader'. David Vincent's study of 142 working class autobiographies, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, shows that 'readers' could be distinguished from their peers by their attachment to the values of rational enquiry and moral improvement. William Lovett, Chartist, Co-operator and educator, epitomised the ideology of self-improvement. For Vincent, the 1829 petition requesting the Sunday opening of the British Museum was one of the clearest statements of this ideology: "Your petitioners suggest to your Honourable House....that if useful knowledge was extensively disseminated among the industrious classes, if they were encouraged to admire the beauties of nature, to cultivate a taste for the arts and

14. Journal 3. pp. 3-4
15. Personal letter to R.H.T. from Nancy Baggott
sciences, to seek for rational instruction and amusement, it would soon be found that their vicious habits would yield to more rational pursuits; man would become the friend and lover of his species, his mind would be strengthened and fortified against the allurements of vice; he would become a better citizen in the world, and be better qualified to enjoy happiness in any future state of existence.' (16) 
Readers, the most egregious being Thomas Cooper the Leicester Chartist, ultimately sought the emancipation of the working classes. Rational citizens would be freed from the influence of non-rational beliefs and behaviour. Often, the working classes were rebuked for their 'unthinking' behaviour (drinking, gambling and the like) as well as their 'uninstructed' political opinions. Education was seen as the panacea for all social ills, offering the basis for a more peaceable pattern of social relations.

He commenced writing the journals on 9 February 1909, the year of Lloyd George's 'People's Budget'. They were not intended to be a record of daily events, rather a 'few thoughts which may come into my mind on any subject':

'`My reasons for doing this are that I might gain facility in expressing myself in writing. I have read that Bacon has said somewhere that 'reading maketh a full man.' And as I now do a fair amount of reading, I think I have a few thoughts which may be interesting to read at some future time....

'I am at present trying to educate myself a little by reading and doing a few lessons in English and Arithmetic. I have also commenced to study

16. Vincent, _Bread_, p. 156
some of the works of John Ruskin. What little spare time I have at my disposal I want to use for my self-improvement.' (17)

By October of that year, he had drawn up a personal timetable of study; a regime that would be adhered to during the winter months, while working night duty in the signal box:

'October 5th Tuesday
During the past four or five years I have been in the habit, during the winter months, when I have been working 'o nights, of devoting my spare time to the pursuit of a few studies. I have pursued no subject to any particular length, but have given myself, I am inclined to believe, a good grounding in elementary knowledge which I had largely forgotten since my school days.

'....Owing to having contracted this habit of desultory reading it will be rather monotonous to me to tie myself down to a few stated subjects. But it will be good mental training if I make myself stick to the subjects I am putting on my plan. Of course I do not mean that I must not on any account read or think of any subject that do not bear on the particular studies I intend to pursue. I mean that I must not let such reading encroach on the time I ought to devote to other subjects.

'....I am placing several subjects together for two of them to be chosen therefrom. My time-table is only arranged for when I am on night duty. When I am on day duty, I intend to make it a rule that I must devote some part of each day to at least one subject. Here is my timetable with the subjects to be studied.

11 to 12. English
1 to 2 and 4 to 5. Temperance Prob. and Social ref. or Music or Arithmetic.

17. Journal 1. pp. 1-3 See Plate 2
The course of English History that I am taking, is the Supplementary Course 5 of the N.H.R.U. (National Home Reading Union). In my study of English I am pursuing a little further last winter's study. In this is included Grammar Composition and the study of words....

I believe these studies will be of great moral as well as mental benefit to me. They will train my mind to take a more logical view of things, give me an insight into the why and the wherefore of facts and help to keep my mind pure, an object which I particularly need and desire.' (18)

The intense self-discipline brings to mind the Calvinist attitudes described by Max Weber in his pioneering study of the sociology of religion, _The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism_. Calvinism, which was seen as the 'ideal-type' of Protestantism, prescribed strict compliance with the Commandments as a means not only of 'earning' salvation but also creating within the individual the conviction that he had already been chosen. This self-discipline was applied to the economic sphere of work. A man's occupation was something to which he had been 'called' by God; he was, therefore, obliged to pursue its responsibilities with the same scrupulousness that he applied to the other duties which God had placed upon him. Cartwright felt that he had a calling in life.

'....I want to become a strong and noble man in my better moments. I wish I was a better Christian so that I could, with greater faith, believe God would keep me.....I want to live to His glory, and not disgrace the name of Christian. I opened my Bible just now - the one my mother gave me on my 14th birthday, - and these words that I have marked some time ago caught my eye; "Every one that is called by my

18. Journal 1. pp. 48-51
name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him." I am called a Christian; God has created me for His glory. God help me to strive daily to live to His glory!' (19)

The desire to study - to remedy the defects of his elementary education - was not inspired by the need to 'get on' in life. Rather, his calling in life was to cultivate God-given talents for the service of others. By November 1909, the activities of the W.E.A. were being discussed in the correspondence columns of the Railway Review (the weekly paper sponsored by the A.S.R.S.). The impetus for the debate was an article reporting a lecture by the highly critical Mrs. Bridges Adams. Questioning the bona fides, she argued that 'universities had been taken by the rich which had been left for the poor, and they had not only stolen these schools and endowments, but were utilising the education they got from them to still further crush the workers.' (20) This brought a riposte from George Alcock, a trustee of the N.U.R. and a member of the Provisional Committee of the W.E.A., who argued that there existed no conflict of interests between the W.E.A. and the Trade Union movement. This debate prompted Cartwright to get in touch with the W.E.A.

'This last week or so I have been in correspondence with the secretary of the Workers' Educational Association in reference to taking up some study under their wing. About a fortnight ago I wrote to the secretary telling him I had read of the W.E.A. in the Railway Review and that from what I could gather, the Association catered for fellows who were placed as I am, unable to take advantage of any


facilities there might be for higher education of working men, owing to working shift duty and being situated in the country. I asked him if the W.E.A. could help me in such studies as English Literature and Composition, Logic, Economics and Sociology and if so to kindly send me particulars. In reply I received a very kind encouraging letter telling me that I was right and that the Association hoped to do a great work by catering for isolated working men like myself.' (21)

As to the 'uses' of education, Cartwright was ambiguous. Certainly, one could not discount personal advancement. He quoted Shakespeare with obvious approbation: 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.' At this stage, the thought of promotion was not uppermost in his mind although he expressed regret at the absence of a career structure based upon meritocratic principles. In February 1910, he clarified the ideal towards which he was striving:

'I think my ideal of what I should like to become cannot be better expressed than in John Ruskin's definition of an educated man. "An educated man," he says, "is one who has understanding of his own uses and duties in the world, and, therefore, of the general nature of things done and existing in the world; and who has trained himself, or been so trained, as to turn the most courteous accounts whatever faculties or knowledge he has.'

'This expresses better than any words of mine could do the aim and object of my life. It clearly declares that it is no man's right to live to himself alone, but that he should manfully bear his part in the affairs of men and things. He points out that the first object of education should not be to give one a better standing in society; nor yet the development and training of his own intellect, high though

this object may be; but to give one an understanding of his own uses and duties in the world, and to fit him to use whatever faculties or knowledge he may possess to the performance of those uses and duties.' (22)

Through his involvement with the W.E.A., he hoped that he would find enlightenment that would help him to redress social injustice. His involvement represented a sublimation of his early desire to be a missionary, except that the orientation was a secular one: to educate the Democracy. The target of his service was to be the working class. The culture of Democracy required an intellectual leaven. To this extent, Cartwright shared the liberal perspective of the movement's sponsors.

'I must, by my influence and example, try to get my fellow workmen to take a more intelligent and active interest in doing away with existing evils. I must try to arouse them from that apathy which is the curse of the working classes.' (23)

It is evident from the first journal that Cartwright belonged to that respectable section of the working classes. He later confessed to neither having watched a football match nor frequented public houses. His pleasures were more wholesome and improving, perhaps spending a day cycling with the Sandbach Christian Band. He was a member of St. Mary Magdaleine's choir and the Alsager and District Philharmonic Society. He must have earned a local reputation as a 'reader' for he was invited to deliver a paper on 'Books' to the Young People's Guild, at the Congregational Chapel, Alsager (March 22. Journal 2. pp. 12-13.

23. Journal 2. p. 15
1909). Unfortunately, it was a 'ghastly failure', the scope of the lecture being too general, the content being too pithy and the audience too learned. Despite his insulation from profane cultural activities, Cartwright was committed to the industrial wing of the Labour Movement.

In July 1909, the North Staffordshire pits were idle for a week due to a strike by the 'pit lads' who were resisting the reduction of their 'snapping time'. Cartwright felt that the railwaymen could learn one or two lessons from this:

'August 6th Friday.

I am just going to make a few comments on the usefulness to Labour of its solidarity. This subject has been brought before the notice of the public largely during the past few weeks. It is only about a fortnight ago since the 'pit-lads' strike in their locality shewed that a well organised body of workmen with the determination to get their needs fulfilled cannot be ignored. Since then it has been brought to our notice by the prospect of a general colliers' strike all over England, Scotland and Wales. This was only averted at the eleventh hour by Mr. Churchill, the President of the Board of Trade, acting as mediator. It came about in this way. The Scottish coal owners had, upon the coming into force of the Eight Hours Act, decided to reduce their colliers' wages below the minimum of 6 shillings per day and had posted notices to that effect. The men refused to accept the reduction and handed their notices in preparation to coming on strike. This was not done by a bare majority of men but by the magnificent numbers of over 10 to 1. The Miners' Federation of Great Britain decided to support them and to take a vote of all their members in Great Britain to see if they were in favour of striking in sympathy with their Scottish brothers. The result of this vote was that by over 8 to 1, the miners of England and Wales were in favour of going to extremes ....Faced with a general colliers' strike, the English coal-owners have added their support and pressed the Scottish Masters to forego their claim - Won without a single blow being struck. Their 6 shillings
minimum remains intact. May it long continue to do so! Well done colliers!

'I would that all the railwaymen of Gt. Britain could grasp the significance of it all. When will they wake up and sink all their minor differences and organise. Last year we had no less than 15,000 secessions. How long, O Lord, How Long!' (24)

Working class interests could only be advanced on the basis of organisation. He was under no illusions about the power of Capital. Commenting, in November 1909, on the failure of the Swedish general strike, he wrote,

'.....Even now, after about four months of semi-starvation, 15,000 men and their dependents are doomed to continue the hopeless struggle. But what must the workmen do? Must they for ever humbly lick the boots of their task masters and be content to take what scraps they have a mind to throw them? No. The very spirit of man rebels at the thought. A better way must be found to equalise matters. The workman must not forsake his organisation or he will be little better than a slave. A way must be found through arbitration and the influencing of legislation and this can only be successfully accomplished by having a complete and strong organisation. Railwaymen of England, please note.' (25)

The major political stroke of 1909 aimed at remedying injustice was the 'People's Budget' which alienated the upper classes because it proposed new Land Taxes. On 18 November, Cartwright was speculating as to whether the Lords would reject the Budget, and, if so, whether it would be constitutional:

'...Any legislation for the good of the common people that is brought in by a Liberal Government seems to fall a prey to the selfishness of the Lords.

'The budget in question is undoubtedly the greatest and best budget that has been introduced in this country for a generation..... The chief taxes that will not suit the Lords will be the land and liquor taxes and the increased death duties. The budget passed the third reading in the House of Commons by a majority of 203.....I do not profess to know what will be the effect of rejection on the finances of the country, but the authorities seem to agree that it will mean chaos and disturbance in trade. That the country will quietly accept such unconstitutional practice I do not for one moment believe. The budget has stirred the feelings of the people as no other legislation has done in my memory.' (26)

By December the Budget had been rejected by the Lords on the basis of an amendment which declared that the Asquith government ought to seek a specific mandate from the electorate.

'The attitude of the Bishops is worthy of notice. The archbishop of Canterbury speaking for the large majority said they would take no part in the division as it would be taken upon party lines and they stand apart from all party matters. But the bishops of Hereford and Birmingham boldly took their stand on the side of the people and the budget and voted against the amendment. I believe it was the bishop of Hereford who said that inequalities of riches should be rectified as far as possible by the incidence of taxation.....Then on the last day of the debate Dr. Cosmo Lang, the archbishop of York made his maiden speech.....He said the amendment was tantamount to rejection, and this was only justified if the Budget was unconstitutional in method or revolutionary in its proposals, neither of which could be said of the present Bill.' (27)

Cartwright, as a democratic, was of the opinion that the voice of the people as expressed by their representatives in the Commons must prevail. One can infer from the following that he supported Asquith:

'Personally I hope the Liberals will be returned to power with a good working majority, and a good sprinkling of Labour members to urge them on with their social reform....Those three cornered contests are, in my opinion, much to be deplored at this time when the issues are so great and vital to our liberties as a democracy. Here we have the Labour Party, to whom the curtailment of the powers of the House of Lords means so much, contesting Liberal seats and thereby splitting the votes and letting in a supporter of the Peers. It is nothing but a waste of money and trifling with a splendid opportunity of advancing democracy.' (28)

By March 1910, Asquith had introduced legislation to abolish outright the Lords' veto on Money Bills and to implement a time limit, two years, on their capacity to veto non-Money Bills. Cartwright hoped that the working classes would be as sensitive as the Lords to their material self-interest. The following extract expressed not only satisfaction with the advance of Democracy but also frustration at the torpor of the working classes:

'....After being passed by the Commons they are to be sent up to the House of Lords and later Bills are to be submitted to carry out their object. Upon the Government's sincerity in the matter is staked the future of Liberalism during this generation. We want no more mere paper resolutions dealing with the House of Landlords. We want something done to curb its autocratical powers. If we can get these Bills on the Statute Book, something will be done to make us a real

28. Journal 2. pp. 4-7
self-governing country. How slow is progress. It has taken four years since the last resolution threatening the House of Lords to get it even thus far. Slow though this progress has been, there are yet thousands of people who do not see the necessity of checking the oligarchy called the House of Lords. Oh for an earthquake or something that would rouse the people from their apathy. A people must be indeed dead when they are not awakened by anyone putting the hand in the pocket. Yet I believe the people of England would not resist if they were taxed up to a third of their income. Not so the Peers. Touch their pockets and they howl themselves hoarse and make their way to Westminster to protest even at the cost of a breach of the constitution. Notice the effect of the 1909-10 Budget on them. Oh working men of England, up and do likewise. Rise in your might and insist on your rights. Come, follow Asquith and Lloyd George lead the way.' (29)

If British society was making progress towards a higher state of affairs, this process was a halting one. In October 1910 the House of Lords declared in the case of Osborne v. A.S.R.S. that the raising of a political levy for the purposes of contributing to the funds of the Labour Party was ultra vires. Cartwright believed that Members of Parliament ought to be paid from the Exchequer by virtue of the national work they undertook. He also considered it fair to make a trade unionist pay towards the upkeep of a party with whose policy he disagreed. As a democrat, he considered that when

'...... a member joins a trade union it may be taken for granted that he acquiesces in its objects and rules. It is a rule that the majority shall rule and govern the society in all its matters. It may reasonably be supposed that most members, at some time or other, find themselves in the minority. They are for that particular time paying for something to which they object.

'Then take the matter of taxation. There is some law or other to which we object, do we for this reason refuse to pay taxes? Certainly not. If the majority rule is good for a nation, why is it not good for a Trade Union?' (30)

It was ironic, particularly in view of the supposed apathy of the working classes, that 1910 was marked by industrial militancy. To a large extent, the rise in the cost of living fuelled grievances:

'Let me give very briefly the case as it appears to me from personal observation. It cannot be denied that the cost of commodities has increased very much within the last few years. I remember the time when a four pound loaf cost 3½d and 4d and bacon was 7d or 8d per lb. and fresh butter at 11d and 1 shilling. Now a 4lb loaf cost sixpence and bacon is 1/- and butter 1/4d. These are not the only commodities whose price has increased others have gone up in proportion. Then there is the continual increase in rent and rates and national taxation. There seems no end to the height these two latter will go. As a set off against the increase in the cost of living there has been no corresponding increase in wages on the railway at any rate. The wages remain the same as when living was cheaper. The wages of 3rd class signalmen are still 22/- per week and goods porters 18/- and plate-layers 18/- to 21/-.

'Another factor in the unrest is the continued disappointment amounting almost to despair in their attempt to better their condition. The workmen see capital massing and organising itself on all hands and making use of every advance in science or invention to do away with labour, and thus throwing more men out of employment and at the same time they see every attempt they make to find a way out results in a cul-de-sac. They find that conciliation means conciliation, or rather concession, on one side only, and arbitration does not bring in the

fruit they expected, and now even the path of political activity is blocked by the Osborne judgement. So being thrown back on their only other weapon, the strike, they find even then they are no match for organised capital with the resources of the State to uphold it.' (31)

Perhaps he had in mind the strike by the South Wales miners who refused to accept the new wage rates offered to them by a Conciliation Board. The ten month abortive strike was marked by rioting, the dispatch of police reinforcements from London, troop movements and one fatality at Tonypandy. Although Cartwright offered a Marxist analysis of the State, his aspirations were firmly cast in the liberal mould. In view of the concentration of capital, strikes were politically expedient. But Cartwright anticipated political discourse dominated not by self-interested pressure groups indulging in political chicanery but by citizens taking a wider conception of public issues. When Parliament was dissolved in November 1910, he considered the question of how the citizen ought to cast his vote:

'It seems to be generally accepted that a person should vote for the party who will do most to advance his interests regardless of how it affects (sic) the country or other people. I happened to mention this to a rather well-to-do man during the last election and he replied that he always did vote so and everyone else should do the same..... Then again, I said to a farmer the other day "I could not see how 'Tariff Reform' was going to benefit the working man" he replied that at any rate he (the farmer) would stand a better chance of getting a better price for his produce if a tax was placed on foreign corn, therefore he should vote in favour of it. This, by the same reasoning, gives a conclusive argument why the consumer should not vote for it,

and the consumers outnumbering the producers we should stand a small chance of obtaining such reform even if it was for the good of the community. I think it must be admitted that this is the controlling reason why the majority of voters vote for their particular candidate. Whether they judge correctly what is to their advantage is another question altogether.

'To me this seems very little (if any) better than selling their votes and shows a lamentable lack of the true idea of citizenship. This attitude....seems to be encouraged by all parties. The Tory Party, which is largely composed of wealthy men, are more concerned about the security of property than all the ills resulting from unemployment and pauperism. Even in their scheme for the Reform of the House of Lords they are making it certain that they will always have a majority there. The Liberal Party are very little better, they do not seem to have what I think is a true perspective of poverty and property, but it seems the best of the lot. The Labour Party openly says it is out for the benefit, first, foremost and lastly, for the benefit of the working classes, whilst the Irish Party admittedly are "all for Ireland."

At this point, Cartwright summed up his ideological perspective which owed more to liberalism than to socialism. He eschewed the Marxist doctrine of 'from each according to his work; to each according to his needs,' in favour of equality of opportunity. This latter principle means very little if it precludes the right to be unequal. He anticipated the restructuring of work and income hierarchies, not their abolition. Furthermore, material deprivation would be considerably eased by progressive taxation and various welfare measures:

'How then should a citizen use his vote? In my opinion he should use it as if it were the casting vote in Parliament. He should try to form a true conception of the issues before the country as they effect (sic) the whole community taking care not to impose any harsh treatment
on any section for the benefit of another section, but where individual rights clash with the needs of the public, individual rights should be sacrificed with as little injustice as possible. All people should have equal rights and justice, and the basis of representation should be heads not property. Give all equality of opportunity and if any are to be distinguished let him be distinguished because of his ability and not by his abundance of goods. Ease the burden where it is heaviest and place it where it is best to be borne.' (32)

Cartwright placed great faith in the ability of the political process to redress social injustice. At the beginning of 1911, he noted the 'increasing organisation and awakening of power amongst the workers.' New ideas were in the air regarding the political importance of industrial action. This was crystallised in the growth of syndicalism. In 1905 the Industrial Workers of the World was founded at Chicago with the intention of reorganising trade unions by industry instead of craft by craft and of conducting a much more militant struggle on the principle that Capital and Labour have nothing in common. In England, Tom Mann engaged in propaganda work by establishing 'Amalgamation Committees' in various industries. In November 1910, dockers and seamen united to form the National Transport Workers Federation.

'.....It is said by some that seeing that capital is so well organised and more mobile than labour, it is not possible for any one trade, however well organised of itself, to enter into a fight with any great hopes of success, and it is suggested that the proper way of organisation is to break away from the present method of organisation by trades and to organise by districts and these districts to be linked together by a national committee, and each country in turn to be affiliated to an international committee, and this organisation to

32. Journal 2. pp. 64–67
go under the name of Industrial Workers of the World. By means of this organisation it is claimed that workers would have power not only to dictate terms to the capitalists, but also be able to put an end to international war. The opponents of this organisation pin their faith to political action and this seems to me to be the more likely of success, both immediate and ultimate, as being in accordance with, at least, an Englishman's love of peaceful progress. The former would be more liable to develop into sheer anarchy and be unwieldly through its size.' (33)

A vindication of his faith in piecemeal evolution was provided by the introduction on 4 May 1911 of the Insurance Bill. Under its provisions, certain trades were to be covered by compulsory insurance against sickness, invalidity and unemployment:

'Altogether it is the most wide and statesmanlike scheme for improvement of the people that has been submitted to Parliament in modern times. It has been welcomed by men of all parties and its author now finds himself in the unusual position of receiving congratulations from all classes. Its most frequent opposers I have found are among the working classes, and their objection will, I think, vanish as the provisions of the scheme become better known.' (34)

Even though he pinned his faith in political action, he recognised the importance of using the collective muscle of the trade union movement. In August 1911, railwaymen, frustrated with the work of the Conciliation Boards and mindful of the concessions wrested from employers by seamen and dockers, undertook unofficial industrial action. Cartwright questioned the legality, even morality of such action:

34. Journal 3. p. 25
Extract from the Railway Review:

'The Workers' Educational Association.'

The 'man' referred to by E.J. Hookway
was Ernest Cartwright.

Acknowledgements to the National Union of Railwaymen
and the Transport Review
THE WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Sir,—We receive letters frequently from railwaymen who work shift turns of duty, and sometimes from those who live in country villages. We pledge ourselves to give them help upon their own terms. They have always been a disinherited class, and they need not a routine correspondence system, but help adapted to their own special difficulties and needs.

This morning we have received a letter from a man who says: "I have not been able to take advantage of any facilities there might be for the higher education of working men, but from what I have read of the Workers' Educational Association I gather that it caters for such people as myself. This gives me fresh hope and encouragement, for I thought I must struggle to the light as best I could, unaided. If your organisation can assist me in the study of such subjects as English literature and composition, history, logic, and sociology, I shall esteem it a favour if you will send me any particulars you can. I might say in closing that I am a member of a small branch of the A.S.R.S."

Needless to say we are going to satisfy this man with some of the best help England can give. Will any others who are treading a lonely path let us know.—Yours, etc.,

F. J. HOOKWAY, Assistant Secretary.

18, Adam Street, Strand, W.C. December 18th.
'Today the Executive Committee of the A.S.R.S. meet at Liverpool to decide whether they shall give the strike their official support or not. To me, it seems impossible to do so, unless they are prepared to tear up the 1907 settlement and forego their pledge. They are bound to this hand and foot. This settlement states that it shall continue in force unless twelve months notice be given by either side to terminate the same and no such notice to be given within six years of signing. It also takes away the right to strike on the question of hours and wages and erects Conciliation Boards to deal with these questions. There seems to me only one loop-hole through which they may escape and that is by recognising the strike not as a strike for hours or wages but for recognition of the men's union through the Boards and this loop-hole seems a very fine one.' (35)

As it turned out, the two-day national strike was suspended with the appointment of a Royal Commission whose brief it was to examine the question of recognition. The Report, published in October, was a compromise: while it did not formally accede to the vexed question of union recognition, it endorsed the retention of sectional Conciliation Boards upon which the men were to be allowed to elect a secretary from whatever source they pleased (usually a union official). The members were to be balloted on the Report. The Joint Executives of the four trade unions were willing to draw up a scheme based upon the Report without even calling a ballot. However, the companies' refusal to discuss the matter forced their hand.

'The Joint Executives, after three days deliberation, decided to take a ballot of the men on the double question of (1) whether they were prepared to accept the findings of the Royal Commission or not, and (2) whether they were prepared to withdraw their labour in favour of

the recognition of the Trade Unions.....

For my own part the Commission's report contains some proposals worth accepting and some which can only be looked upon as reactionary. Among this latter class are the proposals for a 25 per cent petition before any scheme can come up for consideration by the conciliation boards. This proposal we managed to dispose of on the N.S.R. in 1907 and we do not wish for its return as it leads to victimisation and favouritism. I shall vote for the latter alternative and against the first.' (36)

Before the ballot result was announced, the leaders had signed an agreement with the companies on 11 December. Cartwright expressed reservations:

".....They should remember they are only placed there to carry out the wishes of the men and not to dictate to them. There is such a thing as loyalty to the rank and file.....

'As the harm is done, it behoves railwaymen to loyally abide by the agreement and strive to get the most out of the new scheme. It is much in advance of the 1907 scheme and is well worthy of a trial.' (37)

Although he was hopeful about the advance of economic prospects in particular, and democracy in general, a sense of social malaise pervades the journals. It was as if the nation was traumatised, the result of a shocking moral decline. Having passed through a time of unprecedented industrial warfare and seemingly passing through a crime wave, he was moved to ask:

36. Journal 3. pp. 54-55
'Now what is the cause of all this crime and bloodshed? Is it possible to find a general reason for all this rebellion against authority? I think it is.

Taking this country alone as typical. There seems today to be a general laxity in morals and the restraining influence of the Church seems to be practically nil. The Church seems to be getting more and more out of touch with the people and their needs, and the people are consequently giving it the cold shoulder. Whilst the people are crying out for light and leading in the matter of present day problems the Churches are squabbling over such things as the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales.....' (38)

Moreover he believed that the government was guilty of contributing to class warfare, by virtue of its autocratic tendencies. Cartwright seemed to be preoccupied with the problem of order, or, rather the causes and symptoms of disorder. He was optimistic about the process of evolution to a higher level of civilisation, but that this could only be effected by a moral revolution on behalf of the people.

These were lofty thoughts for a person who was employed as a Second Class Signalman for the North Staffordshire Railway Company. But they appear exceptional only because the working man has been stereotyped as a beer swilling gambler. Ernest Cartwright was part of what Richard Hoggart has called the 'earnest minority' who had an influence on their group out of all proportion to their numbers - people who undertook voluntary trade union activity and who sought adult education through the W.E.A. The pre-war years were dominated by political issues: industrial warfare, votes for women and the Irish question.

38. Journal 3. p. 58. See Appendix 5
As a typical working man, Cartwright was preoccupied with the question of wages. Between 1909 and 1913, the cost of living rose by nine per cent. However, in his eight years (1904-1912) as a signalman his wage had increased from 24 to 25 shillings per week, almost certainly representing a real cut in income. What were his thoughts on this matter?:

'In addition to the above pay, of course bonuses are given half yearly which are the same today as in 1905 with the exception of the special first class men, who sacrificed £1 per annum to receive 1/- extra weekly in wages. This question of bonuses is one with which I am not satisfied with the present position. (sic). I look upon them as deferred payment which the Companies have seized upon as a means of getting round the Truck Act so that they may fine the men without coming under the law.

.....In fact the lowest paid classes have remained quite stationary, and these are the men who feel the pinch of the high cost of living the sharpest. In addition to this, I may say that owing to the general speeding-up of work on the railways, a signalman's life is not such a picnic as it once may have been. Now what is the reason for this stagnation in wages and what prospects are there for an improvement?

In regard to the first question I think that the reason may be found in the lack of organisation amongst the men and the feeling of distrust and jealousy between the various classes, together with the fear of displeasing their inspector in whose hands lie their chances of promotion.

With regard to the second question, I think that if the men will only combine and do away with petty bickerings, their chances of an improvement are not bad.' (39)

As well as exhorting his peers to organise, he was interested in the establishment of fairer methods of promotion. The two were not mutually exclusive. Indeed, as Mansbridge had foreshadowed, he used his education for the benefit of others. On 28 April 1912, he attended a trade union meeting in Stoke Town Hall:

'.....It is typical of signalmen that they do not attend meetings, particularly those meetings called together by Trade Unions. They are far too timid. Yesterday there were 41 present and this is out of a number of over 300....Of course a number of the men would be on duty and a number prevented by the inadequate train service, but still I think that 1 in 8 is a far too low a number who might be expected to put forth an effort once in a while to advance their position. They seem to be content to merely grumble. Owing to this paucity of number, the deputation, of whom I am one, enter upon their task, greatly weakened.' (40)

The pessimism was unwarranted as the Board of Directors conceded significant wage increases. Cartwright was ready to point to the moral of the whole affair:

'This is the biggest improvement that has ever taken place in the wages of the signalmen in our lives, and it is noteworthy that it was only made possible by the railway strike of August last.' (41)

However, he was anxious to give moral guidance as to how the working man should allocate these extra resources. The following extract is taken from an entry concerned with the forward march of Democracy:

40. Journal 3. pp. 115-116
41. Journal 4. p. 16
'Thanks to the labour upheaval of the last year or so, most workmen have already reaped the benefit in increased wages, or are about to do so. It is to be hoped they will show they intend to benefit by them by raising the standard of comfort and culture amongst themselves, and not, as has so often happened before, by an increase in drunkeness and crime. Of this I have little doubt.' (42)

But this emphasis upon personal regeneration did not preclude a commitment to collective action. In October 1912, he proposed a new scheme to promote more united action between the various branches of the A.S.R.S. He felt that in case of victimisation, the men could present a united front to management. The labour regime upon the railways was tough. In July 1909, for the second year in succession, the Inspector cancelled Cartwright's holidays at the last moment. He felt that he had been treated very shabbily. In his comments on the case of Driver Knox, it is clear that Cartwright was not willing to sanction interference in men's private lives:

'The cause of the trouble is that driver Knox, who was convicted a few weeks ago on very conflicting evidence on a charge of drunkeness, has been reduced to pilot driver with a reduction in his wages of about 9 shillings per week. He was off duty at the time of the offence, but the company hold that a man who takes drink to excess must not be in charge of a train. They admit he has up to this proved himself a steady and efficient workman, and that the evidence upon which he was convicted was not conclusive.

'So we are to be saints as well as good and efficient workmen. When we enter the employ of a railway company we are to hand over to them not only our whole time, but also eat and drink as much as they desire us to do. We are to be their very slaves in everything but name.....

42. Journal 4. pp. 18-19
'Only a year or two ago my company disposed of a man's services after about 20 years servitude, for a moral offence committed off duty. True, they again reinstated the man after a protest and learning that the offence was not clearly proved. There, there was no question of possibly endangering anyone's life, but it shows that it is not that which is the true reason for interfering with the men's private affairs. It seems more as if the underlying object is to break the men's spirit. These common working men have been showing too much of that lately and daring to interfere in things they should leave to their masters.' (43)

His commitment to trade unionism was as radical as it was uncompromising. In the following extract, he defended the right of trade unions to exist on the grounds that in a market economy, the working classes required an institutional force that would provide a countervailing power:

'December 10th Tuesday.

Now what really are the trade unions; and in how far is their work good and useful; and to what length should they be allowed unregulated liberty?

'To my mind, they are the expression of the feelings and desires of a class, which before their existence, had no adequate voice. C.F.G. Masterman in his book on the "Condition of England", refers to this class as to a giant sleeping or mute. This giant, which constitutes about four-fifths of the population of this country, is now awakening and is beginning to find a voice for itself.

'In the past, all the expressions of public opinion really only represented the opinion of the bourgeoisie, and the mute giant was said or taken to have said the same as they did.....This was true

in so far as their opinions were put into the minds of the sleeping giant, who understood just as much about the subject as he was told. Now this sleeping giant is showing signs of awakening, and for the last half dozen years has shocked his erstwhile representatives by expressing his true opinions.

Primarily the trade unions were created by the workers to break the force of the iron law of supply and demand. They were a sort of blind attempt to show their desires. Soon they found that their organisation must be broader and more far reaching. Then they found that they must have their representatives at the law-making machine and in its administration as well.' (44)

However, his unequivocal support for the principle of trade union organisation did not extend to sympathy strikes. According to Henry Pelling, the most important industrial dispute of 1913 took place in Ireland - the struggle of the Irish Transport Workers Union against the Dublin employers. (45) The syndicalist Jim Larkin called for the support of the British trade union movement. Pelling argues that while a vocal minority supported him, most of the British union officials fought shy of sympathetic action. The journals indicate that the leaders were not out of tune with grass-roots feelings:

'The trouble has spread from there to Liverpool, Manchester, Crewe, Birmingham and other centres in this country where railwaymen and dockers are on strike. This came about through the suspension of a few men at each centre refusing to unload "tainted" traffic. Altogether about 15,000 railwaymen are on strike in this country.

'The men have struck against the advice of their leaders. Only at the beginning of this week Mr. Thomas M.P. warned the men against the policy of the sympathetic strike.....

44. Journal 4. pp. 70-71
'This policy of the sympathetic strike, although arising from a realisation of the solidarity of labour, is altogether averse to the best interests of railwaymen. Spread all over the country and touching every trade and industry railwaymen would be liable to be implicated in every strike in this or any other country. They would never be at peace. The strain on their finances would be greater than they would bear. Neither would public opinion tolerate a railway system constantly in a state of chaos. It would so undermine their strength that if ever it became necessary to declare a strike for their own interests, they would not have public opinion on their side nor yet have sufficient funds to carry it to a successful conclusion. Money and public opinion are as equally necessary to success as solidarity among members.

'...No! Our Executive must not bow the knee to this lawless Syndicalism. We must build up our organisation on the lines of the Miners. We must not be led in a panic. If we make an agreement we must keep it. Let our word be our bond. Trust our leaders. Criticise them as much as you like but do not repudiate them. No man worth having will be a leader of men who will not follow him. If we want the best we must trust them. Our present ones have proved themselves to be wise and far seeing in the past so let us follow their lead in this matter also.' (46)

Cartwright was a great believer in moderate, constitutional trade unionism, arguing that an employee deserved a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. Although he abjured lawless syndicalism, he fully supported the demands (a minimum wage) and methods (a national strike) of the miners in March 1912. The strike demonstrated not only the efficacy of a disciplined trade union organisation but also the need for an effective Labour voice in Parliament:

46. Journal 5. pp. 101-104
February 24th

.....The irony of the situation lies in the fact that in some districts practically a minimum wage has been in operation for some time, whilst in other districts, the owners say to grant the same would ruin them. This argument of not being able to afford it is always the cry in every industry whenever the workers make a united demand for increased wages or improved conditions, so it is as well to take it with a good pinch of salt. In this case it must be remembered the men are not asking for any increase in the standard pay, but for a minimum wage which in any well managed mine it should be well within the means of the men to earn.....(47)

March 4th

.....On Friday last the Prime Minister made an epoch-making speech to the miners' delegates at the Foreign Office. He said that over 60 per cent of the owners had agreed to accept the principle of the minimum wage, and also the Government had become convinced of the justice of such a measure, and would, if necessary, use their power to see the principle established by statute. This is a big stride forward and the miners are to be congratulated on having won it. (48)

March 16th

.....The progress of these negotiations has shown that the Tory and Liberal press are not to be trusted as advisers to the working man. They both have been unanimous in asking that the men should give way on point after point.....(49)

March 30th

.....Some of the lessons of the strike are that the miners and the workers generally are peaceable folk, provided that they are not

47. Journal 3. pp. 87-88
48. Journal 3. p. 91
49. Journal 3. p. 101
goaded by the military. We can also see that trade unionism is far from being played out especially when it is supported by a cohesive Labour Party in Parliament. What is most required now is a Labour press.' (50)

In July of that year, at a by-election in the Crewe constituency, he was able to register a party political preference for the first time. Although committed to Labour in electoral terms, this did not signify allegiance to Socialism. The journals give an insight into the evolution of the Labour voter:

'.....Mr. Craig (unionist) was giving his vote at the same time as I was recording mine for Mr. Holmes (Labour). This is the first time that I have been able to vote, at the last election I was disfranchised by one month. This time it is as lodger I vote, next I hope it will be as occupier.....

'I will record a few of my political reminiscences, they may be interesting to read sometime later. My earliest recollection of politics is of the time when Mr. Gladstone was appealing to the country on the Home Rule bill which had been rejected by the Lords I think. I was quite a little boy at the time, but I distinctly remember that my father voted against Home Rule..... I dimly remember Lord Salisbury leading the Unionists to victory in , I think it was, 1896. I plainly remember Mr. Balfour succeeding him on his retirement, and, later his death. My next recollection is of the outbreak of the Boer war and the "khaki" election of 1900. I was now at work and plainly remember taking a great interest in the war and the general election. I was then a strong conservative.

'From that time forward my recollections are more clear, and, in some cases, vivid. As it is now modern history it is useless going

50. Journal 3. p. 105
over the ground. It was during the election of 1906, when the great
democratic majority was returned that I believe I was finally
converted to Liberalism. Today I am not a Socialist, although I have
voted for the Socialist candidate. I am what some people would call
a Liberal-Labour man. My vote was influenced by my trade union
principles and it was a protest at the Government's attitude last
August and their attitude to the London Dockers' today that I voted
as I did.' (51)

During the pre-war period, for all the sound and fury of social,
political and industrial agitation, he believed that progress was
being made. In March 1912, he wrote:

'This last week has furnished evidence of the rapidity in which we
are evolving from one state of civilisation to another. The stupend­
ous coal war which is raging in this country and slowly strangling
all the enormous industry of this country, has called forth the
unanimous decision of the Government of the day that the coal miners
of this country must have ensured to them a minimum wage.....and
shows the direction in which we are tending in our attitude towards
the workers of the country.

'By the way, I noticed in a newspaper today that Bury Urban District
Council has adopted the principle of a 25 shilling per week minimum
wage for its employees. Remember also the saying that "what Lancash­
ire does today, England does tomorrow."

'I will give it as a sign of the times that the militant advocates
of women suffrage have adopted the tactics of indiscriminate smashing
of the windows of shops as an aid in their propaganda.

'In political affairs, the fact that the programme for the present
session includes Home Rule for Ireland, Welsh Disestablishment, and

Franchise Reform, speaks for itself. These reforms, following on the passing of the Parliament and Insurance Acts, are a revolution in themselves.’ (52)

The National Insurance Act (1912) represented the fruits of the emerging democracy: a piece of legislation that embodied the spirit of collectivism. The following extract encapsulates a number of liberal themes: the subordination of sectional interests (be it Capital or Labour) to that of the community; concern for the 'underdog' and the possibility of an enlightened capitalism. It also indicates the necessity of a moral revolution - the tempering of free market forces with a concern for fundamental human values.

'Today Mr. Lloyd George's National Insurance Act comes into operation. It is an Act fraught with possibilities of good for the working classes of this country, and so for the whole nation. It brings in a new era in which Labour and Capital are joined together for the good of the people. It is a great step towards the time when it shall be looked upon as a disgrace to the whole nation that one single individual shall be forced to starve or seek charity through no fault of his own.....

'The way some employers are taking advantage of it to worsen the condition of their employees is shameful. I know one gentleman who has threatened to stop the cost of the contributions from his employees; and I know of another wealthy tobacco firm who are withdrawing the annual holidays from theirs.

'But, thank God, all employers are not like these. Some are intending to pay the workers' and their own contributions out of their own pockets. Then there are some, like Fodens of Sandbach and the Earl

52. Journal 3. pp. 94-96
of Crewe, who are voluntarily increasing their employees' wages by 1/- per week to recoup them for the cost of the insurance. All honour to these! (53)

The emphasis upon a moral revolution - a new and better spirit between employer and employed - was evident in his discussion of the arguments surrounding compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes. He realised that this moral revolution would be 'long in coming'. However, this desire for industrial peace did not betoken an acquiescent attitude. Under the capitalist system as then constituted, the working class could not renounce the strike weapon:

'It is argued that large strikes and lockouts are wasteful and injure non-combatants equally as much as the combatants, therefore they ought to be prevented. That they are injurious to all, combatant and non-combatant alike, I admit, but that does not say that an injustice should be continued because the removal would inconvenience others. To take away the right to strike would be a greater evil, for it is tantamount to making men mere slaves. The right to strike must be left, but its use should be curtailed as far as possible.' (54)

Social reform would not, indeed, be a path of roses. Though he was optimistic in terms of possibilities, he despaired at the a-moral nature of capitalism. In November 1913, he considered whether England could be spoken of as a Christian country. The litmus test would be the extent to which its statutes were informed by Christian morality:

'Now what would an unbiased inquirer expect to find amongst the chief and most prominent features of a really Christian country. I think he

53. Journal 4. pp. 8-9
would expect to find its rulers not only nominal Christians, but those who openly profess and show by their life and conduct that they are Christians at heart. He would expect to find them making laws by which it would protect the weak against the strong, making it impossible for the poor to be downtrodden by the rich, forbidding usury, and giving equality to all, giving the benefit of the doubt to the weak or poor.' (55)

As a 'Liberal-Labour' man, Cartwright was not endorsing egalitarianism in the sense of levelling up wealth and income. Rather, he was talking about equality of opportunity.

"After leaving an elementary school, a child should have a free option of attending a secondary school with maintenance until he or she is 18. Then the steps to the University should be made more easy so that the best brains of the people should be able to benefit there.' (56)

He condemned the educational methods ('merely mental drill') which merely made the working man a more efficient producer of wealth for the already rich. In addition to maintenance grants, he called for improvements in the quality of instruction:

"Classes of 25 and upwards are out of the question.....

"All this I know would cost an enormous sum annually, but in this rich country, where a few million extra every year have to be found for Dreadnoughts, a daring Chancellor ought to be found to top its vast reservoirs for a work of construction like this.' (57)

55. Journal 4. pp. 60-61. See Appendix 7
57. Journal 5. p. 17
But the call for increased expenditure was not only an expression of a desire to see a meritocratic society. Education, as the avenue of social mobility, the route to the top, was conceived of in terms that would have received the approbation of Samuel Smiles. However, co-existing with individualism was the maxim 'Knowledge is Power.' Cartwright added a collectivist view:

'The working classes I believe are getting more and more awake to the heritage of education that ought to be theirs. They learn that no matter how strongly they organise and strike, they will always be beaten in the long run for want of education. Organisations like the Workers Educational Association and the Central Labour College are growing as a result of this knowledge.' (58)

Education was perceived as the linchpin of social change. The emphasis by the W.E.A. upon a liberal education - to fit a person for life and not livelihood - was instrumental in helping the Labour Movement to redress the iniquities of capitalism. It echoed liberal beliefs in that it was considered axiomatic that capitalism was susceptible to social reform. Initially, the W.E.A. mission was targetted upon the cadre; ultimately the message would filter through to the rank and file of the Labour Movement. Cartwright endorsed the emancipatory goals of the movement. Writing in May 1912, he argued that one of the 'great needs' of the time was a 'better distribution of wealth'. During the preceding months of industrial unrest, he believed that a sea-change had taken place in men's attitudes. Education had raised expectations to such an extent that were they to be frustrated, a great upheaval would ensue. He hoped that far-sighted statesmen would

58. Journal 5. p. 17
grasp the nettle and head down the path of reform. The following extract highlights the collective use of education:

'The attitude of mind of the working classes is somewhat the same as that of the French working people just before the Revolution, but with this difference; many of them have a more or less extensive knowledge of economics and history. They have the same vague notion as had the woman whom Arthur Young met, that something will be done to alleviate their lot. What that something is, they have little or no idea.

'There is another difference to the French parallel. There are existing today numerous organisations of the workers which voice their opinions and state their wants, such as the Trade Unions and Friendly Societies, and it is through these that those who have some knowledge of economics are able to awaken the apathetic and uplift the rank and file to a desire for more leisure and a greater opportunity of enjoying the good things of this life.

'We have also to thank those other means of education which the workers have taken advantage of, such as University Extension Lectures, the Workers Educational Association and the National Home Reading Union, for the awakening of the people. The knowledge that they have inbibed through these channels is now becoming seen in their demand for a fuller life, and it now depends upon statesmen and privileged persons to recognise this demand and allow it scope to realise itself, or it will expand itself in some gigantic upheaval. They must realise that this is not a passing phase which would subside by the shutting of the mouths of a few agitators, but is the natural corollary of the spread of education.....

'To the workers I would say that they should leave nothing to that vague person "somebody" to do for them, but to build their hopes only upon their own wisdom and organisation.' (59)

59. Journal 3. pp. 119-121
Although the W.E.A. emphasised service for others, it was not unreasonable for a working person to expect a degree of social advancement. Was the desire to get on in life a contradiction of the allegiance to collective goals? Cartwright railed against middle-class moralists who bemoaned the lack of ambition amongst the working classes who seemed to find more time and money for football and drink than for self-improvement. Citing himself as an 'average working man', he wrote,

'Whatever ambition I may have had to get on is on a fair way to being killed, not through any known fault of my own, but from the sheer uselessness of it under the present social scheme.....

'I had the misfortune to become the employee of a railway company and although I had tried my level best to cultivate my mind and fit myself for a better position in life, I find myself at the age of 29, a 2nd class railway signalman with small hopes of raising myself to any higher position.

If I remain in the service of the railway company, promotion is barred, for it is only by the system of favouritism that promotion takes place in my department.....(60)

He was able to cite cases where the railway company had rewarded 'loyalists' (those who had worked during the 1911 strike) and punished militants:

'The Stoke branch secretary of the A.S.R.S. was nominated for a candidate for the elections of the Stoke Borough Council, but was forced to withdraw his candidature on the ground that his whole time

60. Journal 3. pp. 79-80
must be placed at the service of the Company. The Trades Council passed a resolution asking the Labour Party in Parliament to block a N.S. Bill until such a time as they would allow their servants to sit upon public bodies. The seconder was unfortunately a railwayman. The Company replied by forcing him to take a job which entailed him being always on night duty. A characteristic reply.' (61)

Being motivated by a sense of fair-play, he desired a system of promotion based upon merit rather than sycophancy. A victory of sorts was gained when the company commenced the advertising of vacant posts:

'It was about 1908 or 1909 that I determined to do my best to alter it. I knew I could not do much, but I determined to use my influence to destroy the present system. I wrote several letters to the "Railway Review" which appeared in that paper, but nothing happened. They no doubt came to the eyes of the powers but were passed over, most likely as the ravages of a disappointed man. I also tried to rouse the spirit of the men to protest, but with equal success.

'After the railway strike in August 1911, there were some most flagrant unjust promotions made. As it happened, I was placed on the deputation to present the men's terms to the directors, so I made up my mind to broach the subject, in soite of my fellow-delegates warning. I was not able to get the matter discussed by the directors, but managed to make my protest to T. Trim, the assistant manager who said he had to do with promotion, but seemed to know nothing about the unjust manner in which they were dealt out.

'Directly after this, there was one or two more unjust promotions made, no doubt, to show us his - the Inspector's - displeasure. I then wrote to Mr. Loraine the Union organiser and secretary to the

61.Journal 3. pp. 84-85
Conciliation Board, about them. At last I appear to have made some impression, for since the beginning of this year, the Company have taken to advertising vacancies..... (62)

His chances of promotion appeared to be doomed not only by his trade union involvement, but also by two unfortunate incidents which occurred in 1913. In March of that year a Midlands goods guard (Guard Richardson) had been dismissed for disobeying a verbal order that conflicted with a written instruction. The life of a railwayman was constrained by rules and regulations, 281 in all with 13 appendices issued by the Board of Trade. Cartwright did not endear himself with the 'powers':

'I will give an instance that occurred with me in my duty as signalman. No one has dared to say I did wrong and I disobeyed the verbal instructions of the general manager with the directors, and obeyed my printed rules.

'A directors' special wished to proceed into a blocked section past my box to allow some directors to catch a connection at the next box. I refused to let it go. The G.M. cursed and swore and told me to let it go, but still I refused. The directors missed their connection, but I have heared nothing of it since.' (63)

Furthermore, in September he was reprimanded for closing his box thirty five minutes early and for poor time-keeping. Paradoxically, he was promoted, one month later, to the position of First Class Signalman at Harecastle Junction. The other affair of note in his private life was his marriage to Jeanette Wakefield, sister of his

62. Journal 5. pp. 76-78
63. Journal 5. p. 41
school friend, Ernest in April 1913.

However, his optimism regarding the evolution to a higher state of civilisation in the public domain seemed to be misplaced. The liberal hopes seemed to founder on the rocks of militant Suffragettes, industrial unrest and Home Rule. The tactics of the Women's Social and Political Union - smashing windows, tying themselves to railings - not only discredited the cause they were espousing but also drew an authoritarian response from the government:

'Yesterday the Government proceeded yet further with their new methods. They raided the offices of the Union, confiscated the funds and literature and arrested the officers of the union on a warrant for inciting and publishing incitements under the Malicious Damage to Property Act, 1861. During the police court proceedings the Public Prosecutor made it known that further powers would be used. He said that if any person made a speech encouraging militant tactics, that person would be immediately proceeded against.....

'All this seems fairly thorough and crushing, but will the women submit? That I think is very unlikely. Repressive tactics are rarely successful for long. They merely force agitation underground, and, consequently, cause it to become more dangerous. For the time being, the Government is on top, but how long will they occupy that position is doubtful. Where frenzied women are concerned, who dare prophesy?' (64)

The drift towards repression was underlined in September when the police were used against strikers in both Cornwall and Dublin:

64. Journal 5. pp. 66-67
'....The brutality they used was awful. They struck peaceful citizens walking quietly along the street, as well as strikers. They spared neither man, woman nor child. Six of the brutes beat one man, Nolan, to death with their batons. They broke into the homes of the people, smashing them up, and assaulted the people in such a way as I thought could only be done in Russia.' (65)

Ireland entered the public consciousness not only through the Transport Workers' strike but also through the Home Rule Bill. By placating the Nationalists, the Liberal Government stirred up the Orangemen to such an extent that civil war was threatened. The Government's toleration of the seditious activities of Carson confirmed his suspicions about the anti-working class bias of the Liberal Party:

'Jim Larkin, the leader of the Dublin strikers was sentenced to six months imprisonment for sedition. The seditious words complained of were that he satirised the words 'God Save the King'. That a Government, and a Liberal Government at that, should ignore the flagrant sedition of Sir Edward Carson and other unionist leaders, and prosecute Larkin should certainly show any doubters that little real good may be expected from either Liberal or Tory. The workers must learn that their point of view can be seen by neither of the old parties, but that they must support a party of their own to give expression to it.' (66)

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65. Journal 5. pp. 93-95
By January 1914, Ernest Cartwright, now married and recently promoted to the post of First Class Signalman, was decidedly of the opinion that he was living in difficult times. The Women's Social and Political Union had launched their 'mad' campaign which seemed to alienate sympathisers to the cause and draw an authoritarian response from government in the form of the so-called 'Cat and Mouse Act' (1913). Rank and file trade unionists, against the measured advice of their leaders, appeared to be in thrall of an anarchic syndicalism. The spectre of extra-parliamentary action appeared to be gaining the upper hand. That sense of social disorganisation was further reinforced when the Ulster Unionists threatened violent opposition to the third Home Rule Bill. In March 1914, Northern Irish officers serving the British army at the Curragh base resigned rather than march into Ulster to enforce Home Rule. By May, the country appeared to be on the brink of civil war. Yet, during the summer of 1914, there was no reference in the journals to the developing crisis in the Balkan States. This cannot be attributed to some deep-seated parochialism. Indeed, a propos the First Balkan War, October 1912, in which Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria sought to break up the Ottoman Empire, he warned:

'.....The Balkan Allies have surprised the civilised world by their rapid and complete victory over Turkey. One would naturally think that the victory being theirs, theirs also would be the spoils. But it seems that that is not to be without drawing Europe into a gigantic war. Servia claims that she intends to provide herself with an outlet
on the Adriatic Sea, but here is where the crux of the question is. Austria says she is not to have it and claims for herself the port of Salonika which the Allies now occupy. Austria is backed by the Triple Alliance and Servia by....the Triple Entente.' (1)

It is evident that neither the murder of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo (28 June) nor the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia (23 July) made much of an impact upon British public opinion. For Cartwright, the only event of note in July 1914 was the death of Joseph Chamberlain, the Liberal-Unionist who had split the Liberal Party in 1886. The war clouds burst unexpectedly:

'Saturday August 1st 1914.

Since I last wrote in these pages, a great transformation has come over the political firmament. Whereas we were squabbling over domestic politics and threatening civil war, we now stand on the brink of the greatest European war for over 100 years.

'The King just over a week ago called a conference of the two great parties of Ulstermen and Nationalists to try to settle their differences. This they were unable to do, and we were face to face with the same problem as before. Then suddenly, Austria went to war with Servia, and the whole scene changed. Russia has great sympathy with Servia, and started mobilising her army on the Austrian and German frontiers.

'At home all parties decided to postpone all their differences so as to present a united front to the world. This was rendered necessary because if Russia attacked Austria, the triple alliance would draw both Germany and Italy to assist the latter, and this in turn would force France to the assistance of Russia.

'Great restraint and a desire for peace was shown by the Kaiser. But at last he was forced by the continual mobilisation of Russia to send a 12 hours ultimatum to Russia and France. This expires at noon today.

'The unknown factor is the attitude of England. As far as alliances go she is not embroiled, but there is a war party which says that we must go to war to assist France and Russia. This I think is arrant folly. We have no quarrel with any party and we have all to lose and nothing to gain, so why should we put upon ourselves the burdens and sacrifices of war for nothing?.....

'Tonight the country is full of anxiety but calm. It may only be the calm before the storm, but we pray today with greater fervour and deeper meaning than ever before; 'Give peace in our time, O Lord.'

(2)

The neutralist feeling, which was very strong at the end of July, evaporated rapidly with the German invasion of Belgium. By late August, the German nation was judged to be beyond the pale of civilised values:

'August 22nd 1914 Saturday

One of the most noticeable and regrettable is the manner in which the Germans are violating every agreement and convention and placing themselves outside the category of civilised nations. I have already referred to the violation of the neutrality of Luxembourg and Belgium, and now it seems they are trying to force that of Holland.

'But more serious even than this is the violation of the Red Cross. During the fighting at Mulhausen the other day, it is alleged that the Germans.....entered houses and buildings over which the Red Cross

flew, and under cover of this, poured a devastating fire into the French....(3)

The barbarism of the 'German hordes' was contrasted with the gallantry and self-sacrifice of the Belgians who had forestalled the war machine for a 'whole fortnight whilst Europe prepared to meet and crush the invader.' Whilst the actions of the German armed forces embodied 'Teutonic militarism', the subsequent refugee problem called forth:

'.....the best traits of mankind in all nations. Every country vies with each other to welcome and succour the refugees.....Her terrible condition has been the best recruiting agent in the land; it awakened the innate chivalry in our manhood, and fired them with zeal to thrash the bully that has caused it.' (4)

By April 1915, shock at the war of attrition had displaced such crude jingoism and prompted thoughts regarding justification for slaughter:

'The lay mind is staggered by the devilish ingenuity that is exercised for the slaughtering of men in this war. Barbed wire entanglements placed in front of the trenches to hold up the enemy whilst he is shot down by magazine rifles, and dozens of machine guns each rapping out 500 bullets per minute; trench mortars throwing bombs; hand grenades, mines; bomb dropping.....to say nothing of such illegal devices used by the Germans as, pumps for throwing out a fiery liquid into the enemies trenches, and the firing of shells filled with poisonous fumes.....

'Such thoughts as these will come into our minds when we think of the

desolation caused by this awful war, but we banish them immediately we begin to consider why we are at war. This, with us at least, is an unselfish, if a defensive war. We are fighting for the sacredness of a contract. Unless a promise can be depended upon it is nothing but empty words, or a "scrap of paper" as the German Chancellor terms it. With us is a bond on our honour to be redeemed only with the last drop of our blood, unless it is given back by the other party.

'It is for this view, I take it, that we are willing to brave all the most terrible horrors of civilised warfare.....' (5)

Such a narrow, legalistic justification for war gradually gave way to other legitimations. The secular aims were buttressed by divine sanctions - a 'righteous war' in effect. January 1916 commenced with a day of intercession whereon God was asked to bless the aims and vindicate the right. Cartwright hoped that out of the evil God would bring good for his people:

'.....When Dr. Clifford was asked, "Where is Christianity?", he replied, "At the front," and that I firmly believe. Our motives in this war are unselfish. We seek no self-aggrandisement. We are fighting for the weak against the strong; for the rights of small nationalities against the aggression of large and brutal neighbours....

'Believing then that our aim is pure and that we are engaged in a righteous war it remains for us to pursue it with all our might.' (6)

The year 1916 saw much slaughter but no real change upon the Western Front. The belief grew that the powers were engaged in Armageddon.

In the following journal entry, Cartwright added further justification in that the Great War was held to be the catalyst for democracy, the demise of militarism and the construction of a new international order. This would be premised upon a spiritual revolution - a realisation of the Christian maxim that 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

'What of the Future?

'When all the wrongdoings as to the cause of the war are over, we are thrown back on the conviction that it is the clash of two opposing ideals; and there being no authority finally to settle between them they are left to decide it by force. Two such ideals as are now contending for victory are bound sooner or later to come into conflict. Postpone the evil day as long as we can there must ultimately come a time when one must be supreme. The reign of Thor and the gospel of love will no more mix than oil and water.

'It has been left for our time and generation to sustain this war of unexampled ferocity, size and destructive power. Why, we know not, but we must bear the burden manfully and strive for the victory and see that it is worth the cost. And what do we expect and hope for as the outcome of it all? Such a price as we are paying today must obtain a victory commensurate with it. It is not that we may enjoy a peace for another generation and then leave it to our children's children to pay the price again.....No! The only victory that is worth the cost is that nevermore must man be led to slay his brother to decide between two courses. Trial by combat must come to an end with this war. It is for this that the democracies of Europe today are fighting and we must see that they obtain the fruits of victory. We must obtain such a victory not only over German militarism, but over militarism all the world over, that it will never raise its head as long as the world stands.

'Pious resolutions on settlement by arbitration; Hague tribunals and peace palaces are all very good so far as they go, but the trouble is
they don't go far enough. We must have some means to enforce their decisions. We must have an international policeman who shall see that the treaties are not "scraps of paper" but bonds to be enforced. He must keep the peace all over the world. Any nation or people who imperil peace shall be treated as an offender against the whole world.

'And who is to have control of this gigantic power it may be asked? Are the great of the Earth to have this power. Are the autocrats or the plutocrats to wield it? Neither; but those who are paying the price in their flesh and blood - the democracies of the world. They are to be the masters of their own fate. They pay the price and they must call the tune. Democracy must be the saviour of the world....

'This is the new internationalism that must arise out of the present chaos. Each country must become more and more democratic. And as each attains its freedom it must surrender it for the good of all. No rival force must be set up in opposition to the new international force or we shall only widen and intensify any future dispute. Government shall really be by consent; and equal rights and equal opportunities and equal justice be given to all.' (7)

The new world order would be predicated upon an international 'social contract' whereby nations would cede the use of physical force to a supra-national body. Politically, this appeared to be the embodiment of the Hobbesian view of secular authority outlined in his treatise Leviathan. The 'international policeman' would draw its moral authority from its adherence to democratic values. Cartwright felt that the British Government had shown a marked disinclination to be specific about its war aims. The War Aims Committee, he felt, had not gone far beyond Asquith's phrase of "restitution, reparation and guarantees." The Labour Party represented a model in this respect:

'The Labour Party have now definitely declared the war aims they are out to obtain. It is a clear statement that puts government of the people by the people in the forefront. It refuses to recognise the right of any nation to territory without the full consent of the inhabitants. Even the desire of France to Alsace and Lorraine and Italy to the Trentino and elsewhere are subject to this rule..... The African colonies of the belligerents it proposes to be put under a Commission appointed by the League of Nations. It altogether discountenances an economic war after peace. Now let our rulers state their aims.' (8)

Although there was a cautious optimism about the birth of a new era, Cartwright could not be accused of naivete regarding the realities of power. Considering the Irish question, in the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rising, he was fully aware of the forces of reaction:

'An Irish Convention

'The one weak spot in Britain's fight for freedom has been Ireland. For nearly three years we have been proclaiming before the world that we are fighting for the rights of small nations; for democracy against despotism; for the right of peoples to decide what kind of government shall govern them. Meanwhile at our very doors we have been "governing" a nation, distinct in race and creed, against their wish. Since Easter of last year, the policy of repression has been applied to Ireland.....Now the Russians have removed the stain of despotism from our cause, and with the ringing words of President Wilson, our Ally, in our ears, we could not much longer contrive out fight for freedom for other peoples and deny it to our own.

'The present Government, which includes the chief representative of the oppressive minority in Ireland, has governed Ireland with such

success that it is rapidly converting a loyal people striving by constitutional methods to obtain self government within the Empire into a revolutionary separatist disloyal people....' (9)

The great hope lay in the moral elevation of human nature. He believed that human nature was inherently evil and that bestial passions could only be sublimated by moral reconstruction:

'Move upward, working out the beast
And let the ape and tiger die.' (10)

This process of civilisation would be a long revolution. In December 1914, on Boxing Day, he was moved by the paradox of celebrating the coming of the Prince of Peace whilst engaging in bloody war:

'Are we to believe that this catastrophe which has overtaken civilisation is proof of the failure of Christianity? I think not. Rather it is proof that mankind has failed to assimilate Christianity, but clings tenaciously to pagan ideals. The elevation of the moral nature of the human race is a long process. Scientists tell us that it takes many generations to alter the human frame, but it is a question if it does not take even longer time to raise the moral nature. Practical Christianity is still a long way in advance, but I cannot think that it will not be attained at some period, though perhaps not in our lifetime. Progress is slow, but sure. There may be set-backs but it is coming through for a' that.

'Thousands of homes have been saddened this Christmas by this war, but if we cling fast to the Christian ideal we may yet come out a finer and better race; more unselfish and with a greater horror of war and all violence. God grant that Christmas will come but once in the war.' (11)

Cartwright was able to speak with greater authority when assessing more mundane matters, principally, the effects of the Great War. As a working man, he was concerned at the erosion of his standard of living by price increases. In October 1914, he penned a few words on the effects:

'This generation in England had never known what it was to be involved in a great European war so it is not surprising that in the early days of the war that many should commence buying up great stocks of food and withdrawing money out of banks and selling their stocks and shares. But the panic soon passed after the Government had shown that it was worse than useless and only assisted the enemy. The Government handled the situation with calmness and yet with firmness. They decided to fix maximum prices for necessities and if any foodstuffs were unnecessarily withheld from sale to commandeer them and sell them at fair prices. Some shopkeepers did certainly try to take advantage of the panic, but they soon met their just fate. On shopkeeper in Alsager raised the price of his bread from 6d to 7½d per 4 lb. loaf. His customers left him and in a week he was delivering his bread at 5d per loaf.

'.....Appropos of this recruiting business the tactics of some employers have been reprehensible. Some private employers have been dismissing their single men who are eligible for enlistment and thus instituting hunger conscription which is conscription of the worst kind.' (12)

His hopes of an interventionist governmental approach were not realised, at least not in the short-term. By February 1915, it became evident that suppliers were able to manipulate market forces to their own advantage. In this respect, the war exercised a radicalising effect, confirming the Labour Party as the only party capable of protecting

the interests of the disadvantaged:

'.....We have had, and are having now, a still more heartless game played; that of charging enormous prices for food-stuffs and coal although there is no real scarcity. As much as 2/6 per cwt. was recently asked for coal in the East end of London.

'When the war first commenced the Government gave out they would not tolerate any unnatural forcing up of prices, and were prepared.....to fix maximum prices and even to take over the articles and sell them themselves at a fair price. For this they received peons of praise from all parties. Lately this attitude has not been maintained, or has not been extended far enough to cover coal and flour and such like.

'The Labour Party, magnificently assisted by the "The Daily Citizen", has raised this question in no uncertain manner. They have focussed public opinion on the subject, and compelled the Government to appoint a Cabinet Committee on the subject. But more must be done. We want action to be taken and that quickly. The poor people, who before the war could hardly make both ends meet, are now living in a state of semi-starvation. Some trade unions have been successful in raising their members wages to cope with the increased cost of living. The colliers and railwaymen are engaged in trying to do the same. It is the only means they have of coping with the situation. But there are other people, and these the poorest, who have no powerful union to secure an advanced wage for them. It is chiefly in their interest that the Government must take action.' (13)

It was ironic that the Asquith administration adopted a 'hands-off' approach towards price control while becoming heavily involved in the industrial relations arena. The official trade union leadership,

according to Henry Pelling, were in general 'anxious' to do whatever necessary to help the Government. On 24 August 1914, the following conciliatory resolution was issued by the Joint Board: 'That an immediate effort be made to terminate all existing disputes, whether strikes or lock-outs, and whenever new points of difficulty arise during the war period a serious attempt should be made by all concerned to reach an amicable settlement before resorting to a strike or lock-out.' (14) However, the strike by some 8,000-10,000 engineers on the Clyde in February 1915 demonstrated the recalcitrance of the rank and file. The strike was led by an unofficial committee of shop stewards in pursuit of a wage claim to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living. By July 1915, the Coalition Government, which included a Labour member of the Cabinet, had armed itself with enormous powers over the munitions industry. The Munitions of War Act authorised the compulsory arbitration of disputes and the suspension of trade practices. As a quid pro quo, the profits of the firms concerned were limited to one-fifth in excess of the pre-war rate.

For Cartwright, the Act spelled out the demise of laissez-faire. In the following entry, he noted the 'infinite significance' of two events: the creation of the Office of Munitions and the flotation of a War Loan. The latter provided an opportunity to exercise the virtues of thrift and self-help as well as selfless devotion to the country:

'Silver Bullets and Iron and Shells.

'The past week has seen two great advances made by the Government in

14. Pelling, Unionism. p. 150
the task of organising the resources of the country. Both are of infinite significance and moment to the working classes of this country. One is the construction of the Office for Munitions, and the powers granted to it; and the other is the flotation of the largest loan in history.

'.....Amongst other things it makes provision for compulsory arbitration for all engaged on war-work; it gives the Government power to appropriate excess profits made by firms out of Government contracts; it abolishes for the period of the war, all trade union rules which tend to restrict production or employment; it puts all engaged upon war work under strict discipline, and takes away from them the power to leave their work when they like..... There is to be no imprisonment for offences, but a system of drastic fines for both employer and employee is arranged.

'Could anything be of greater moment to the working classes of this country? and yet they have lately lost their sole means of expression in the Press! (15)

'..... With regard to the new war loan. It is for an unlimited amount, but it is expected to reach close on 900 millions..... Stock can be bought for as low as 5/- through the Post Office, trade unions, friendly societies or employers..... This gives the working classes their first opportunity of investing their small savings in a large loan, and many, I daresay most of them, will seize the opportunity of helping the Government to kill Kaiserism, and at the same time help themselves.

15. The Daily Citizen represented the official voice of the trade union movement. The financial support of the paper by the unions was declared to be ultra vires. It published its last issue on 6 June 1915. Cartwright wrote: 'It will be to the everlasting discredit of the working classes of this country that with over 3,000,000 trade unionists they were unable to support a single daily paper of their own.' Journal 8. p. 15
'I have already invested 10/- in 5/- vouchers, and shall invest as much more as I can scrape together before it closes. Economy and saving is greatly to be desired by all today, and particularly among working men.' (16)

At one level, these words can be taken to embody the Smilesian doctrine of self-help, a message concerning the moral regeneration of the working classes. Such words imply the notion of class reconciliation, with the whole nation working together to defeat the common enemy. Cartwright was less sanguine about the emergence of the new spirit of co-operation. In the following extract, he appears to endorse a Marxist view of social class relationships. Drawing upon his personal experience, he underlines the need for collective self-help:

'The Class War

'It has often been said that one result of the war would be that a new spirit would arise and shower its beneficence on the relations existing between the classes, and between master and man. There would be a greater appreciation of each others difficulties and a more tolerant attitude taken with regard to each others shortcomings. The lion and the lamb would lie down together, and a little child should lead them.

'All this is very beautiful and very desirable but so far as I can see I do not obtain a glimpse of this spirit appearing. I know that in relations existing between the railway companies and their men, there is the same severe attitude taken with any shortcomings or lack of efficiency..... There is the same determination to obtain their full pound of flesh, and magnify any difficulties in granting

the men what they think is only just and right. This is all in the
good old way. Only recently a man was discharged because he had been
unable to pay his rates. The man's wages amounted to 18/- and 21/-
per week alternatively. Then what on earth had that to do with the
railway company?

'..... We have also seen that in other industries the same applies.
Only recently we had a serious colliers' strike in South Wales because
they could not obtain what they though was their due.....

'The same thing applies in other directions. We have seen that traders
and manufacturers have not scrupled to push up their prices to the
highest possible limit. The Government have been far from blameless
in this matter. Their care for the manufacturers has far exceeded
their care for the poor. Whenever they have moved for their betterment
it has only been in the most timorous fashion, and after the plunder­
ing had gone on for some time.

'No! I cannot see that the working classes can rely on the appearance
of the promised new spirit. If they want any improvement of their
condition or even to retain what little liberty they have, they must
trust to their own exertions as of old. Their trade unions have risked
much for their country's good during this war, but strenuous days lie
ahead so they should keep their armour bright.' (17)

The failure of the working classes to invest significant amounts in
the war loan provided a further opportunity to comment upon the
economic constraints inherent in working class life. That failure was
not due to misallocation of resources but to scarcity; a point not
appreciated by middle class moralists ready to press home the perennial
message regarding the fecklessness of the working man:

17. Journal 8. pp. 69-72
'Our Standard of Life.

'There seems a lot of penslingling and some mudslinging in the papers today because the vouchers for the small amounts.....haven't realised anything like what they imagined they would do.....the working classes are now being castigated for all the ungrateful wasteful and extravagant people it is possible to find.

'. ..... It is, I admit, deplorable that the working class have not subscribed to the last War Loan to a greater extent..... It would have given them a stake in the country and made them feel that they benefit by the country's successes and lose by their country's failures.

'But to talk of extravagance, improvidence and wastefulness as a cause is to talk wild. It shows an ignorance of their circumstances. The fact is that the majority of the working class do not receive sufficient to be very extravagant with.....

'No, the reason the working classes have not subscribed to any great extent is because of their inability. There may be cases where the income has increased largely since the war but they are not cases that have come to my observation. The increase in the cost of living has more than swallowed up any increase in income. The average working man of my experience is not able to save 5/- weekly..... The standard of life is gradually being reduced by high prices and heavy taxation.'

(18)

Cartwright suspected that not only were unequal sacrifices being called for, but that Labour's defensive barriers were being dismantled incrementally. The "compulsionists" (those in favour of compulsory saving) wanted greater State intervention, particularly in the light of the much vaunted war bonuses. As ever, Cartwright was more realistic in his appraisal:

'The whole question of saving by the working class is an open one. The paltry amount it is possible for them to save by much self-denial is hardly worth the trouble. They have very little variety and much drudgery in their lives, and it is questionable if this small amount would not be better spent in bringing a little more pleasure into their lives.

'.....As for the much-talked-of workers whose wages are said to reach fabulous heights I very much doubt if they exist in any great numbers; and even in these cases their earnings are obtained only by their working extra-ordinary long hours which cannot help but undermine their constitution. Only last week I read of a girl munition worker whose employers admitted that if she worked 63½ hours she might be able to obtain 13/6.

'To taunt such people as these with threats of compulsory loans or greatly increased taxation, is passing cruel. It is enlightening to know that only after 18 months of war it has dawned upon the War Savings Committee to suggest to the owners of pleasure motors and motor cycles to forego their use during the war.

'There is much needless waste going on even today I know, but it will not be found amongst the class from which footmen spring, but amongst those who employ them.' (19)

Legislation such as the Munitions Act was placed in the context of inter-class relationships which were likely to be fractious:

'It is deplorable that it is Labour who is hit hardest, as always, by the restrictions. At the end of the war Labour will need all the help it can get and all the weapons it can forge. It is surrendering almost daily some of its cherished barriers against aggression by the Capitalists, and if it loses its Press too, it will indeed be in straits at the end of the war.' (20)


Labour unrest was attributed by Cartwright to the unrelenting rise in the price of basic commodities. It was felt that the laws of the market-place were being manipulated to the advantage of profiteers:

'The present state of affairs is directly opposed to humanity and the nation's cause. It has recently brought us to the verge of a labour upheaval and distracts us from pursuing the common aim with the intentness we should have. Labour is willing to make the necessary sacrifices for the nation's good, but it strongly objects to making sacrifices to make the unscrupulous rich richer.' (21)

The appointment of a Food Controller and the formation of a Second Coalition (December 1916) which incorporated Labour M.P.'s and trade union officials did little to quell industrial unrest. With the incorporation of full-time trade union officials into the machinery of government, initiative soon passed to the rank and file. In 1917 the Government appointed a number of Commissions of Enquiry into Industrial Unrest for different regions of the country, and the reports enumerated a wide range of grievances. In July 1917, Cartwright offered his view:

'What is the Matter with Labour?'

'I give a few extracts from the papers without comment in answer to the above question.

Mr. B. Law said in the House yesterday (3 July 1917)

"He held investments in 15 different shipping concerns under the management of seven different owners.....The sum of money he had

invested was £8,110, and at 5 per cent interest that would produce £405 a year. For the year 1915, instead of £405, he received £3,674 and in 1916 he received £3,847. That was not the whole story.....

'The following table shows how the price of the 4lb loaf has risen during the war:

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The task of summarising the reports fell to a Labour Minister, George Barnes, the former secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers and Minister of Pensions. His comments regarding the causes of unrest were not dissimilar to those made by Cartwright. Barnes enumerated a series of 'psychological conditions' making for unrest which included 'the feeling that there had been inequality of sacrifice, that the government has broken solemn pledges, that the trade union officials are no longer to be relied upon and that there is a woeful uncertainty as to the industrial future.' (23) The feeling of cynicism became most profound during the later stages of the war. By January 1918, the Press was discussing the loss of morale amongst the population. In the following extracts, Cartwright not only reiterated the point regarding inequality of sacrifice, in which he felt the government was culpable, but also showed how the government's propaganda bulletins were stretching the credulity of the population:

23. Quoted by Pelling, Unionism, p. 156
'Our Morale

'..... First among the things which tend to lower our morale is the belief that one section of the public are being exploited for the benefit of another. Profiteering in the early years of the war was rife and even now is not extinct. It should have been crushed with a heavy hand at first, but was not. Conscription of life did not go hand in hand with the conscription of wealth. Whilst the people are being urged to practise economy and lend to the State, the Government has practiced lavish extravagance. Next, the people have not been treated as reasonable citizens, but children by the Government. If our armies had made a success, it was a great success pregnant with far-reaching possibilities; if they were driven back or forced to retreat, it was of no importance. We have won every battle and the enemy been defeated every time even if our Allies had to retreat hundreds of miles. Such treatment as this have led the people to put little faith in Government bulletins.....

'The Food Shortage

'I will now supplement briefly what I said in a previous page on this subject, by a few facts from my own experience. I then said that suspicion existed that the shortage was not felt alike by all classes; and although it is urged by the Press and the Ministry of Food that the manual workers should be the last ones to be called upon to tighten their belts, it is precisely these, if not only them that now have to do so.

'My own household have been entirely without flesh meat, other than tinned meat and butter or margarine for a fortnight, with the exception of a little from the amount supplied to my wife's parents. I know colliers and other mine workers who have been, and are, in the same position, and have been reduced to take only bread and turnips for food with them.

'On the other hand, the butcher never fails to send his supplies to those people higher in the social scale. We see large supplies marked "sold" laid aside for them.....
'The Food Controller is diligent in making orders, but not so diligent in seeing that they are carried out. I know middle class people who regularly buy fresh butter at over the fixed price, in pre-war quantities; and the irony of it is that some of them are on the Food Control Committees, or busy themselves in advising economy for other people.....

'Can one be surprised that disorders and strikes occur, or that those who work hard should be rapidly losing patience when their wives have to stand the most of the days in queues to get a little?' (24)

The behaviour of the middle classes must have caused anguish to a person who had seen in their values and attitudes exemplary standards to the other social groupings. Writing in October 1912 about the tendency for the nation to become more selfish, materialistic and God-less:

'.....The search after pleasure is not confined to any one class in the community, but it is more easily seen in the upper and lower classes. The upper must have their shooting parties and long week-ends, and the lower their football and cinemas. I think that the middle classes are proving in this matter as they have done in the past, that they are the back-bone of the nation.' (25)

If the middle classes had fallen from grace, who would take their place? It is not surprising to find that full honours were to be bestowed upon the working man, particularly the railwaymen:

'The Railwaymen.

'If there is a class of men at home who deserve well of their country

25. Journal 4. pp. 36-37
for their patriotic devotion to duty, it is the railwaymen. Theirs is not a work which has the glory and glamour of the battlefield upon it, but is equally as important to the life and prosperity of the nation as the soldiers' or the sailors'.

'In normal times the railways are not over-staffed and not overpaid. Quite the reverse. I don't think there is another class of men in the country doing work as dangerous and so responsible that are paid so badly or in some cases at any rate, work such long consecutive hours.' (26)

Although Cartwright enlisted on 10 December 1915, and received his call-up papers the following June, the General Manager of the N.S.R. refused to release him. For the duration of the war, he remained a First Class signalman at the Harecastle Junction. The question of wages became paramount particularly after the birth of his daughter in November 1914. He now had a family to support. His domestic obligations were cited as one of the reasons for not enlisting during the early stage of the war:

'As a voluntarist I am pleased at this response, and I do not think there is need for half the bullying and sneering at those eligibles who do not enlist that is being done by a section of the Press and some individuals. There are many who are in the same position as myself. I do not enlist because I think there are enough single men enlisting to keep the war going; (2) because I do not want to break up my home and risk placing my wife and child upon charity; (3) because even if I offered myself it is quite likely that I should not be allowed to join by the railway company.....

'I quite realise that I, with others, am reaping the protection of our soldiers and sailors, and I can conceive circumstances in which

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I should think I ought to enlist.' (27)

He held particularly strong feelings about the question of conscientious objectors:

'...Another unpleasant aspect of this recruiting problem is revealed in the tribunals which are considering the claim for exemption. One is compelled to believe that the average "conscientious objector" is a most despicable person. It is hard to believe they are Englishmen. (They certainly disgrace their nationality). One said that if he had the means to prevent a torpedo from being fired at a Lusitania he would not do so;...and another said that if he saw his mother about to be assaulted by a German soldier he would turn away, if he could not prevent him by remonstrating. Such talk is enough to fire any man's blood. It makes one ashamed for them. I am glad to learn that a new corps has been formed for such worms. It is called the non-combatant Corps. They are to do such work as erecting barbed-wire entanglements, digging trenches and such like work, but they are to carry no weapons. Such work is good enough for them.' (28)

If military duty was beyond his patriotic reach, what other forms of service did he undertake? Between September 1917 and March 1918, he undertook the following:

Chairman Alsager branch N.U.R.
Delegate North Midlands District Council N.U.R.
Trustee North Midlands District Council N.U.R.
Vice President Butt Lane and District W.E.A.
Occasional contributor to "Railway Review".

'The above are some of the duties I have undertaken during the period

this book covers. They are not very onerous, nor, perhaps, very elevated, but I have tried to perform them to the best of my ability, and have tried there to put into action the opinions I have expressed in these pages. My chief aim has been to elevate my class. It is not my desire to rise above it nor to hide any of its failings, but to do all in my power to give it a fuller expression.....' (29)

In view of his panegyric to railwaymen, and his strictures to the government regarding inflation, it is not surprising to find that several journal entries relate to the 'war bonus'. The first bonus, paid upon 15 February 1915, was welcomed to the extent that it favoured the "bottom dogs". But he felt that it was insufficient to recoup the increased cost of living. By October 1915, all grades received a flat rate increase of 5 shillings. Perhaps of greater import, in view of agitation elsewhere, an industrial truce was declared. Cartwright quoted the Memorandum of Agreement verbatim:

'5. The National Union of Railwaymen and the Associated Society of L.E. and F. undertake that during the pendency of this agreement they will not present to the railway companies any fresh demands.....
6. It is agreed that the truce entered into at the meeting between the parties hereto on October 1st 1914, shall continue in force until the agreement now made is determined.....' (30)

By September 1916, railwaymen were requesting a 10 shillings per week advance. This appeared to break an understanding given that no further advances would be requested for the duration of the war. Cartwright, ever mindful of the sanctity of contract ('the scrap of paper'), presented the railwaymen as oppressed patriots:

'The Railwaymen's Case

'....Railwaymen are not Prussians and do not believe in breaking agreements because they stand in their way; but they do hold, as business people, that if an agreement proves oppressive owing to unforeseen circumstances over which they have no control it ought to be reviewed in the light of those circumstances. That such unforeseen circumstances have arisen, and that the agreement as it stands is oppressive, no one with knowledge of the circumstances can deny.

'The railwaymen have proved as patriotic as any other class of the community; and it has been no 5 per cent patriotism either....the railwayman earning 25/- per week with bonus is not in a position to invest in war savings certificates, nor even to provide his family with the necessaries of life. That is why he asks for the agreement to be reviewed.' (31)

With government funding a disproportionate share of the costs, the bonus was increased to 10 shillings per week. However, it appears that this did not keep pace with the cost of living. Cartwright believed that the pressure for a fourth revised bonus emanated from the rank and file who felt that inflated prices were lining the pockets of profiteers. There is a sense of government culpability, of not 'playing fair' by neglecting to fix maximum prices. The Government had not acted in the best interest of the 'people': it had elevated sectional interests above the community interest. There was evidence of partiality, in that the Government had refused to adopt the suggestion of the Workers' War Emergency Committee to introduce rationing and fixed prices:

31. Journal 11 pp. 6-9
'.....Then we do not forget that this bonus does not go into our pockets. We are only the medium through whom it filters to the profiteers. Actually and relatively we are not better, but worse off than before the war, for the bonus does not cover the amount of increase which is ever increasing..... We do not ask for comforts but the necessaries of life we must have.' (32)

The ability of entrepreneurs to capitalise on the situation, with the tacit support of government, was a phenomenon which confirmed his Labour views, particularly regarding the role of the State. The State could no longer be trusted to be the guarantor of the interests of the people:

'The Food Profiteers

'If ever a scandal existed, there has been one in connection with the food of the people during this war. At a time when the very existence of the nation is jeopardised (sic), and men are sacrificing all they previously held dear.....to preserve it and the liberties of the world; their brave women and children have been exploited and often brought to the very verge of starvation to heap up profits of vampires in human form. It is to the everlasting disgrace of modern statesmanship that it has proved itself incapable of suppressing these hogs. Their feeble attempts in this direction have been laughed at and evaded in the most glaring manner. Lord Davenport, who was appointed Food Controller on the formation of the Lloyd George Government, has been rewarded for his ghastly failure with a Viscountcy.....

'Then they wonder what is the matter with Labour. When the Engineers, or any other class of men, show signs of discontent when they are asked to surrender the last remnants of the trade privileges they have

32. Journal 13 p. 49
secured by generations of struggling to get on with the war, amazement is shown and repression hinted at. The men look on sullenly and wonder who is to benefit by the war now or after it is over. They see shipping firms paying 65 per cent on their capital and even Mr. B. Law stating in the House that he received 47½ per cent on his shipping shares.....

'If the Government desire the wholehearted co-operation of the working class in the prosecution of the war, they must be rid of the spirit of tender solicitude for those who are heaping up riches at the expense of the agony of the nations. No one should be allowed to profit by the war; they must be prepared to accept and act upon the advice of those who work; they must cease to show the mean niggardly economy towards those who have suffered and come back maimed. This last stinks in the nostrils of the people.' (33)

The vexed question of the food profiteers had two important ramifications. It confirmed his support for Labour as the political voice of the working class movement. By April 1918, he had organised a Labour meeting at Alsager for the purpose of appointing a polling area committee in readiness for a future election. The subsequent attendance of five persons, at the cost of 25 shillings, did not augur well for the future. Despite this local disappointment, Cartwright was cautiously optimistic about the emergence of a new social order. Working people had sacrificed much for their country. Perhaps it was timely to ask the rich to bear their rightful burden. Writing on the possibility of conscripting wealth, he commented:

'This idea seems to be to make one or two large raids on capital through the income and supertaxes when the war is over, and so reduce the amount of the debt. This is not a very pleasant anticipation for

33. Journal 12. pp. 90-93
a wealthy Chancellor. He will need above the average courage and disinterestedness. Perhaps it will be reserved for the first Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer's first Budget.' (34)

At the beginning of the war, Cartwright felt moved to defend the 'working man' against the diatribes from certain sections of the community. He sympathised to an extent with the argument that working class people were less likely to embrace a war to defend 'their' country by virtue of their alienation and estrangement:

'On the other hand, too many of the working class have absorbed the idea that they personally have nothing to fight for. That is an erroneous idea of which they ought to disabuse their minds. Yet this idea springs from the fact that they have been kept out of their heritage for so long. They look upon themselves too much as strangers and sojourners in their own native land. Now is the time for them to claim its liberties and privileges for themselves, and at the same time claim the right to fight, and if need be, to die for them.' (35)

As a quid pro quo for their sacrifice, the working class were entitled to full citizenship rights: not only political and civil rights, but also social rights - the right to a minimum standard of living, decent housing, decent education and equal opportunities. Cartwright was not naive regarding future possibilities. He was well aware of the manipulative power and aspirations of entrenched interest groups, and very sceptical about the 'new spirit' of reconciliation:

'An Unique Deputation.

'We have often heard of deputations waiting upon Cabinet Ministers'

34. Journal 13. p. 49

35. Journal 9. p. 58. See Appendix 9
to urge why certain taxation should not be imposed, but I do not think we have ever had a deputation before bent on such an errand as that which waited on the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday. It was composed of City men - bankers and such-like - and urges greater national economy and asked for the imposition of new taxes to meet a part of the increased expenditure caused by the war.

'.....The deputation evidently considered that the present wave of patriotism that is sweeping over the country afforded a splendid opportunity to increase the taxation borne by the working classes. Their chief recommendation lay in an increase of indirect taxation and extending the income tax downwards to include the wage-earning classes.

'This I suppose, is what we might expect from them. Their patriotism evidently was not intense enough to ask for any increase to be put upon the supertax payer. The new spirit which we are told is to be one of the fruits of the war has not reached those heights yet.....'(36)

The subsequent interim Budget of McKenna, the Chancellor, on 21 September 1915, did not satisfy City expectations in that supertax was increased. But the duties placed upon imported food meant that:

'.....the poorest of the poor will feel the pinch the sharpest. With them the margin from starvation is never great, and this means decreasing it a trifle more. That is why the taxation of food is so cruel. A single tax upon income seems to me to be a more equitable method of raising money.' (37)

In addition to income tax related to the ability to pay, he supported the idea of a statutory minimum wage. The exigencies of war had shattered forever laissez-faire. One event, in particular, was of

36. Journal 8. pp. 49-52
37. Journal 9. p. 8
'first class' importance - the establishment of a minimum wage for agricultural labourers in 1917:

'...The reservoir of under-paid labour on the land has been the means of keeping down wages in the past. As long as farm labour was paid such starvation wages and remained practically serfs tied to the land, others found they could not hope to gain their fair share of profits.

'...Then with 25/- the minimum wage in the country, it must be at least 30/- in the town. This tallies with the long-expressed demand of the railwaymen and the Labour Party. It is not, and never has been, an extravagant demand; it will not encourage the banker or the stockbroker or the director to throw up their occupation to obtain it; but it will do as a starting point from which the work may be carried on of making the workman something more than a machine.....' (38)

The Final Report 1919 asked the question: 'And what of the new form of society that is trying to build itself under the hands of Labour, Labour which has been awakened by the war to a new sense of unity and power and a new reading of social justice? (39) Although Cartwright shared a good deal of common ground with the authors of this Report regarding the importance of an 'educated democracy', he was uncertain as to whether the 'new form of society' would be realised. His view of the ideal society was encapsulated in the following journal entry:

'Citizenship

'Citizenship is the relation of the individual to the State..... We are born citizens of some country and, as such, are born with certain responsibilities and duties devolving upon us; and the right to enjoy

all the privileges of our national land.....

'The democratic view of citizenship, which is the only one to which I refer, is best seen in some new colony. The colonists soon found it necessary to appoint certain representatives.....who shall make rules and laws by which they must govern their conduct so that no individual shall interfere with the liberty of another; to see that equal justice is enjoyed by all; and later, to provide for the community those things which the individuals separately could not provide.....

'He must subordinate his private interests to the interest of the community; he owes it obedience to its laws; he has no right to transgress any law he considers unjust for he has equal responsibility in the making of laws. He should obey it until he can persuade his compatriots to alter it.....

'I am far from believing that the constitution of this country is so democratic as this, but I believe that the effect of the present war will be to remove many of the obstacles that remain. For instance, the men who are fighting our battles today should have the right to a say in the making of the laws.....I said that it is the duty of the community to provide that which the individuals separately cannot provide; equality of opportunity to the best education and the provision of houses for the people are of this kind.' (40)

The war seemed to demonstrate the partial nature of the State in the sense that greater restrictions were placed upon working class organisations. Writing in the aftermath of the February 1917 Revolution, with its demand for a general peace with no annexations and no indemnities', supported by 'Socialists of the MacDonald and Snowden type', he posed the question:

40. Journal 11. pp. 36-39
'Quo Vadis

'To return to this country and the query at the head hereof. Whither are we tending; some say towards revolution, and others towards repression. A policy of repression to any large body of Englishmen is a dangerous policy at the best of times; and today when the cry of revolution is strong in the air, it is particularly dangerous to the repressors. As to revolution, we desire most of all revolutions, a revolution in Germany. Here in this country a sudden and violent change of government, such as would be necessary to establish a Republic, is not likely nor desirable. Working men and the people generally have cause for complaint, and even fundamental wrongs to right; but they do not seriously consider a revolution as the means of adjusting them. What they would like to see is a Government that would not always put property before life, and did not always lean to the bourgeoisie. The working classes have feelings and rights that do not seem to enter into the comprehension of our rulers.....' (41)

Educational reform was to be the litmus test of the 'new spirit'. As early as October 1916, he considered whether there would be 'great alterations' after the war. The impetus for reform, he believed, was being held in check by residual attitudes deriving from an earlier age:

'.....the spirit which looked upon them only as "hands" and not human beings having a right to their fullest development, is not yet extinct.

'The writer of the article was in entire agreement with a chairman of a county educational committee who had said that it were wiser in the interests of the individual and the state to teach the child to hoe turnips well rather than to play the piano badly.' (42)

42. Journal 11. pp. 28-31. See Appendix 10
He felt that such 'vicious' opinions were too widely held to allow them to pass without comment. He condemned this narrow vocationalism which prescribed a modicum of training to fit the working class child for his future work role. Rather:

'The few years that such a child attends school should not be devoted to teaching it the work it will have to perform in after life. That will come soon enough. It should be taught the rudiments of knowledge and given a glimpse of the great world outside and how to use those rudiments to its own enjoyment and the nation's advantage.....Every child, town or country, should have the right to be put on the track of reaching the highest development of its whole being possible.' (43)

By 1916, the Ministry of Reconstruction had been constituted to plan the transition to peace-time, with education given a high profile. As further evidence of good faith, Lloyd George secured the services of H.A.L. Fisher (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield) as President of the Board of Education. Recognising the opportune moment, the W.E.A. amended its constitution, so as to allow it to campaign for the development of a national system of education. In 1916, a committee of the W.E.A. set out to draft an educational programme. It found, through a series of conferences and lectures, a consensus of opinion on two major points: raising of the school-leaving age to fifteen and compulsory part-time education to eighteen. These reforms were welcomed:

'Fruits of Victory

'.....But what I am more interested in is the concrete results that

43. Journal 11. pp. 30-31
are to accrue to the working man from the democratic victory. What is to be his share; is he to return from the battlefield to return once again to his groove? I know not. He will return with a greater and more awakened sense of his national importance. He has not sacrificed, suffered and died in his thousands to return to be a mere wage-slave with little hope either for himself or his children. He has saved his Country and Empire, and he will expect something more than to return to the status quo ante.

'First of all, he must have a greater share in the government of his country. Then he must share (not by charity, but by right of citizenship) the best education with the wealthiest. The housing problem must be solved and public health further secured. All his years must not be given to mind-destroying toil. His childhood days must not cease prematurely to enable him to become a wage earner at the expense of his full education; and his old age must be more secured from the spectre of want and charity. During his working years he must receive sufficient from his labour to ensure him living a full and useful life. The plea of poverty will not again put him off. A nation that can spend six millions a day on destroying life can surely find the money to secure its own happiness. For instance, one week's expenditure on the war will go a long way to provide a sufficiency of houses, sanitary and spacious.

'.....With regard to education, really the most important item I have mentioned, it is to be feared that the working man himself will be his own hindrance. Not having been "educated" himself, in the true sense of the word, he does not see the necessity of it for his children. He looks upon it too much as a penalty period during which the child ought to be earning something towards helping to keep himself. For instance in Lancashire and Yorkshire the parents are against the withdrawal of "half-timers". Largely the problem is an economic one, for the parents can ill afford to keep their children at school as long as they ought to do. There much can be done by improving the teaching given. Too often a niggardly economy has prevented the best and sufficient teachers being employed; and too often the whole education question has been a battleground for the sects and the
interests of the child received but second place. Now, at last, it begins to appear we have a true educationist at the Board of Education; and thanks to the W.E.A. and other friends of education public opinion is awakening to its importance. The coming democracy must be an educated one.' (44)

Fisher's Bill was given its first reading in August 1917. It is interesting to note the two arguments adduced by Cartwright to support the Bill. The first related to the question of 'national efficiency': to ensure that the workforce was educated sufficiently to meet the demands of a modern industrial society. The second argument appeared to be a political one: without 'real' education, citizens would be incapable of participation in the affairs of the body politic:

'Educational

'Of the many varied problems which the period of Reconstruction will bring for solution, the problem of Education is by no means the least important..... The antagony displayed today in arms will find its outlet in trade and commerce with this difference; the nations that today are our Allies will also then to a large extent be our rivals. It will be the best equipped and most efficient nation who will most quickly recover from their prostration. Added to this, the reign of democracy which we expect peace to usher in will demand that our masters shall be educated sufficiently to perform their duties.

'.....It will no more pay us to starve and cramp our educational system than it does today to starve our fighting services. But in this, if properly directed, we shall find we are not placing our money where it will be a dead loss, but is a good paying investment. War dissipates the fruits of years of energy, but education will increase our earning power.'

44. Journal 12. pp. 44-47
'This problem of education is one that can be foreseen and prepared for, so we shall be wise not to let peace find us unprepared. A beginning has been made by the introduction in Parliament of Mr. Fisher's Bill...... It is a real education Bill by an educationist and wisely does not touch the old sectarian questions which has wrecked so many education bills before. It is not faultless, but it is a good beginning. Its author is capable and should receive our best support.

'The Bill provides for every child the best education it is capable of receiving up to the age of 16. No child is to leave school until after the end of term following its fourteenth birthday and thereafter must receive instruction for 320 hours in the day time until it is eighteen. It also abolishes the half-timer. This is evidently a step towards raising the compulsory leaving age to 16. A step, however desirable, for which the people are not ripe. The abolition of the half-timer does away with the present scandal of employing children of 8 or 9 years in the mills. The provision will receive most opposition in Lancashire and Yorkshire where the displacement of labour will be most felt. But even there the best employers and operatives will give it their support. Surely the industry can afford to pay such wages that will prevent the degradation of its young life.....

'The provisions for children from 14 to 18 in continuation schools is 320 hours per annum or four hours per day for 80 weeks (sic). The education given there should be partly vocational and directed to keeping the child from blind alley employment, and giving it a real intelligent interest in its occupation. Partly, too, it should be of a moral nature. It is the age of greatest danger, and should receive the best and wisest direction.....

'One outcome of the Bill will be the large increase of teachers needed. Here we see the short-sightedness of the recruiting authorities in denuding our schools of even the number of teachers needed before the war. The best teachers are not made in a day, and only the best will do..... We must encourage the best minds to undertake this duty by paying them well. Even then it will take time..... Until then the old
bad expedient of large classes will have to rule, but not one day longer than is absolutely necessary.' (45)

The Bill encountered opposition, as expected, from industrial interests. Their main stated argument was that, in the light of the likely post-war competition, it would be unwise to deprive industry of a section of its labour force. Despite the Labour Party endorsement of free secondary education for all up to the age of sixteen, many Labour Members and not a few trade unionists were lukewarm about the proposal to abolish the half timer. Fisher had also contemplated the centralisation of powers so that reluctant L.E.A.'s could be coerced into implementing the Act. The concession of a 50 per cent grant not only failed to assuage L.E.A. fears but also provoked ratepayers outraged at the prospect of 'extravagant expenditure'. In the following entry, Cartwright passed comment on not only the amendments and omissions of the second Bill (1918) but also the class based nature of the British educational system. His views lent support to R.H. Tawney's idea of a 'broad highway' of secondary education, along which all children would travel:

'Educational Matters

'The (no. 2.) Bill resembles the first Bill but leaves out some of the debatable clauses, notably those that tended against decentralisation. These were contested by the Local Education Authorities and were among the least desirable clauses of the Bill.....

'The half-timer is still to be abolished. Mr. Fisher, it is said, has not converted Lancashire. Perhaps not. I can quite believe he has not converted the Lancashire cotton spinners. They have a kind of vested

45. Journal 13. pp. 6-9
interest in child labour. The Lancashire operative is not wholly against abolition, perhaps not even a majority of them. But even if they were, I do not think they should be allowed to deny their children the advantages the Bill offers. The child should not be allowed to be sacrificed even to the parents' convenience and luxury.

'The cotton employers also object to the provision for giving continued education to young people of from 14 to 18 years in the daytime. Here too the objection seems to arise from the inconvenience it will cause. Surely these so-called "captains of industry" are not incapable of overcoming such obstacles as this. It will not do to prejudice these young peoples future for their convenience. Education given to them after 10 or 12 hours exhausting work would be no education..... Industry was made for man, and not man for industry. The operative is of much more consequence than the machine and must have the first consideration.

'There is a future that this Education Bill perpetuates which is a blot on any democratic country; that is the dual education provided for the rich and poor classes..... We must not rest until every child has the right to its fullest possible development for good and usefulness.' (46)

Although Fisher refused to amend clause 8 (R.O.S.L.A. to 14), many of the provisions remained permissive; it would be left to each L.E.A. to make its own decisions and those who wished to put these clauses into operation would be recompensed by adequate grants. However, an amendment was moved to provide that the obligation to attend continuation schools should not come into force until seven years from the 'appointed day'. Most L.E.A.'s could not afford to introduce this scheme in the post-war adverse economic conditions. By December 1920, the Board had given approval to schemes for continuation schools in Birmingham, Stratford, Rugby, West Ham, Southend and Kent. By 1932

only Rugby was providing classes. Equal opportunity for all seemed a distant goal.

Equality of opportunity was more than a human right, allowing for the fullest development possible of the individual personality. It would promote social justice in that talent would be allowed to find its true level in society. The establishment of a meritocracy would contribute to the stabilisation and harmonisation of social class relationships. Cartwright hoped that:

'..... we can never return to the pre-war class warfare..... Unless the workman is looked upon as a human being, as an equal in fact, having desires and aspirations to be gratified, we shall not progress. On the other hand, the workman must realise that by performing his work in a conscientious ungrudging manner he is doing the highest duty of a citizen.

'Ruskin will come into his own. He rightly taught that "there is no wealth but life" and that any "man who performs a useful task deserves the thanks of the community." The war will teach us the value of children and the dignity of labour if we let it." (47)

As part of the re-evaluation of the role of labour was expressed the demand for 'workers' control'. The whole country had been fighting to destroy autocracy in foreign parts. How could the working man be expected to tolerate industrial despotism? Industrial democracy seemed a logical progression of political democracy. Wartime conditions had accustomed the nation to greater state control:

'....."Laissez-faire" has now gone into the limbo of the past. In its

47. Journal 12. pp. 102-105
place we wish to see arise a system of control in the interests of capital, labour and the community. Industry in the future must exist not to create profits for a few, but to supply a need. The workers, the industrials, must not be looked upon as the lowest and least important class in the country, but as the co-equals of all, performing functions essential to the life and progress of the nation and considered and treated as such.

'The workers desire a share the control of industry (sic) because they feel that the oppression and the indignity of the present system is incompatible with the idea of the dignity of labour. They have a right as one of the prime elements in industry to a say in the affairs that determine their own life. They have outgrown the time when they can be treated as "hands" and have reached the time when they demand to exercise the full franchise of free men.' (48)

Like other moderate working men, Cartwright placed some faith in the recommendations of the Whitley Committee on the Relations of Employers and Employed, which issued its Report in 1917. It was hoped that the atmosphere of industrial relations after the war would be transformed by the existence of Whitley Councils. The idea was, according to Pelling, 'that the popular demand for 'workers control' might be met if such committees, constituted in each industry both at the national level and at the local and even workshop level, were to discuss not only wages and conditions but also general problems of industrial efficiency and management.' (49) It would appear then that Whitley Councils were a sop offered by a nervous coalition anxious to satisfy the heightened expectations induced by the war. Cartwright felt that the power of these Councils, in view of their momentous task, ought to be executive rather than advisory. But he recognised that Capital

49. Pelling, Unionism, p. 160
would have to relinquish a long established right, namely the prerogative of management. His vision of the future regarding the scope and function of trade unions was sanguine:

'The Future of Trade Unionism

'Not so long ago a Trade Union was an association of wage-earners having for its object the maintaining and improving of their wages and conditions of employment. Within recent years it has found it necessary to considerably widen its objects. It now has its representatives upon all governing bodies, local and national. It is the backbone of a political party that avowedly aims to become the government of the country. It also has quite recently extended its objects in its economic sphere, by putting forward a claim to the "control" of industry.

'The problems of Reconstruction will touch every corner of our corporate life and government, and in all these the Trade Unions, through these representatives, must have a hand. The problems of Industry are essentially those to which its chief attention must be turned. Its past policy of State or municipal ownership is likely to be put largely into operation here. When not possible or opportune control must be advocated. The relation of master to man must be altered too. The Whitley Report should be accepted and worked to the best advantage. This might be put into operation at once. At least the machine should be got ready to be put into action as quickly as possible. The Councils there advocated should be formed and held a preliminary meeting or two to settle its scope and procedure.....

'The future is in the womb of the present. Are the Trade Unions preparing to meet the demands that will be made on them in the future?

'The great need will be for leaders who are broadminded and possessing foresight. The thousands of Trade Union branches up and down the country possess leaders that are not known outside their immediate locality. This will be their opportunity. Their education has not been received in public schools, but in the branch rooms and often by the
sacrifice of sleep and amusement.' (50)

The struggle for democracy came to be defined as the justification of the war. By 1916 the outcome of the war was as uncertain as at the beginning of 1915. Thoughts inevitably turned to the future, particularly after President Woodrow Wilson had asked the Allies and the Central Powers to define their war aims. Both sides appeared to endorse the idea of League of Nations:

'It is this proposal which is now occupying our thoughts. All the chief Powers have accepted the principle, but when or how it is to be applied there seems great differences of opinion.

'The Allies say this is our war, and the proposal can only be put into action after the close of this war.....

'The proposal has been put into clearer form by the speech made by President Wilson on Monday last to his Senate. In that speech he outlined the kind of peace he wishes the League to enforce. The one thing he did not make quite clear is if he desires it to apply to the settlement of this war.

'He stated that the peace the League was to enforce must be a peace worth enforcing. Territory was to be settled according to the desires of its inhabitants and must not be handed about from potentate to potentate like property; no difference is to be made between large nations and small;.....the "freedom of the seas" must be a sine qua non of the peace. He mentioned that the League must have control over an overwhelming armaments, military and naval and hoped for a great reduction of all armaments among the nations.....

'It is a grand proposal provided all countries had the same desire to preserve peace and would always have it. Many of the terms must be more
closely defined before it will be accepted. For instance, what is exactly meant by the "freedom of the seas". The seas have always been free in peace and if we are to surrender our control of the seas in wartime, we shall need surer guarantees than paper ones so that we shall not suffer thereby. Our Navy today is the only "sure shield" of our existence and to surrender it is like a man giving up his life-belt whilst plunging in the seas. Then what is to prevent nations secretly arming as Germany did, and treating all treaties as "scraps of paper". The unscrupulous nation is the great problem.' (51)

Cartwright welcomed the entry of the U.S.A. into the war, particularly for the idealistic way in which Woodrow Wilson had stated peace aims - a way in which none of the European belligerents had so far attempted to state them. The journal entry 'America at War' (4 April 1917) quotes Wilson with much approbation:

"we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest to our hearts - for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.' (52)

Just as his expectations regarding social class justice were tempered by a realisation that the government policy was often too partisan (particularly over the question of food prices) so too were his hopes for a new world order qualified by an understanding of the Realpolitik of international relationships. In May 1917, he considered the question of Ireland in relation to war aims: how could Britain be

51. Journal 12. pp. 4-7
52. Journal 12. pp. 48-51
claiming to be fighting for the freedom of other peoples while denying it to the Irish? By March 1917, news had filtered through regarding the February Revolution, in which the Tsar abdicated and the fourth Duma supported a provisional government of liberal nobles and middle-class intellectuals headed by Prince Lvov. Cartwright wrote:

'The Russian Revolution is perhaps the most momentous event the war has produced. The quickness and completeness of it has been amazing. In a single week that great country has rid itself of an autocracy which was as cruel as it was unenlightened. Today the Russian people stand by the side of the Allies free and firm in its determination to rid the world once and for all of government without consent.' (53)

However by November 1917, this liberal regime had been overthrown by the Bolsheviks who wanted to disentangle Russia from Europe in order to consolidate the revolution and press on with the programme of collectivisation. On 3 March, the Treaty of Brest - Litovsk ended the war between Russia and Germany. Adherents of the old regime, formed into 'White' armies, held out against the Communists in certain provinces and were helped by western governments anxious to bring Russia back into the war. Cartwright was suspicious not only of the motives of the Allies, but also of the way in which the Press seemed to be the willing instrument of government. This did not augur well for the future:

'August 2nd Friday.

'The Allies have definitely decided on intervention in Russia. One hopes that this decision has not been arrived at with any idea of

overthrowing the revolution and replacing the monarchy or landlordism and capitalism or anything of that kind. Neither should it be persisted in further than the consent of the people warrant. We are told that the Soviets do not represent the people, but then we know that for nine months they have upheld their authority in most parts of that vast country and that could hardly have been the case if the people were bitterly hostile to it....' (54)

'November 20th.

'While everyone must sincerely condemn the excesses of which the Bolsheviks in Russia are guilty, one is sometime forced to believe that they are often purposely.....misrepresented in the Press for ulterior purposes. It appears that the Bolsheviks are out for working class government of a socialist type as distinct from the bourgeois capitalist system in this country. Of course excesses are not an essential part of Bolshevik Government, as the situation in Germany shows, yet our Press would lead one to assume it. This shows the mistake we make in allowing the Press to be controlled by a few unscrupulous syndicates. Yesterday Lord (illegible) said that we ought to check Bolshevik propaganda in this country until peace is declared, as it was the conscious or unconscious tools of Germany.' (55)

It is difficult to overstate the sense in which individuals believed in the emergence of a new social order. The Ministry of Reconstruction embodied liberal aspirations in its various Reports. The Adult Education Committee's First Interim Report, on the subject of industrial and social conditions, seemed almost boundless in its estimation of possibilities. Regarding the obstacles to progress, it urged: 'The first step must be to deal with the conditions which at present stand in the way; such as excessive hours, fatigue - whether due to monotony or to unduly exhausting work - insecurity of employment, lack of

54. Journal 14. p. 25
55. Journal 15. p. 27
holidays..... The social conditions also stand in the way. Inadequate housing (nearly half the population living more than one to a room), squalid surroundings, low wages..... - all these create a vicious circle to which women are tied down even more than the men. These conditions call for reform on moral and social grounds..... A new era has come upon us. We cannot stand still. We cannot return to the old ways, the old abuses, the old stupidities. As with our international relations, so with the relations of classes and individuals inside our own nation; if they do not henceforth get better they must needs get worse, and that means moving towards an abyss.' (56) Cartwright certainly endorsed these sentiments, particularly in terms of the expectation that class warfare would be diminished. But he was under very few illusions as to the nature of the social system - a 'bourgeois capitalist system', as he described it in relation to the British government's counter-revolutionary expedition. His scepticism undoubtedly derived from personal experience: the unequal treatment of Labour vis-a-vis Capital by the State, as exemplified by the problem of food profiteers. The task of Reconstruction must have appeared daunting, almost insuperable, to working people. On 23 November 1919, Cartwright endorsed the Interim Report:

'I have been reading the Interim Report of the Committee appointed by the Ministry of Reconstruction to consider the facilities and possibilities of non-vocational education. To those of us who had some experience of the difficulties to be met with in its pursuit by the working classes it is pleasing to know that they have considered the effect of the Industrial and Social conditions in relation to the subject. The working class live so near the bare subsistence level that they are forced to view everything from a bread and butter

56. Final Report 1919, p. 6. para. xii
standard. They get the impression that they must be always working, working, working. No time is left to think, consequently they lose the ability to think.' (57)

Mellifluous words were insufficient for the task ahead. The litmus test for the new spirit lay in practical measures of reconstruction: equality of opportunity in education; better housing; increased wages; nationalisation; redistribution of income and an enlarged role for responsible trade unionism. At an international level as well, the spirit of the brotherhood of man ought to supersede the 'war of all against all'. This was to find its institutional expression in the League of Nations. But, even in this sphere, Cartwright was no dewy-eyed idealist:

'..... One thing is certain, it must be The League of Nations and not A League as it is more often called in the Press, and must have the willing support of the people composing it.' (58)

57. Journal 15. p. 23
58. Journal 15. p. 8
Chapter Eight

Ernest Cartwright 1918 - 1935

NIL DESPERANDUM

A man sat in a signal box
Alert and keen of mind,
Brooding, thinking, sighing,
Passing away the time.

The shades of night had fallen,
And over all the land,
Silence, darkness, stillness,
Held supreme command.

His thoughts ran on in this wise:
"Oh, why am I so poor,
Cramped, cabined, thwarted,
Luckless as a Moor?

"The years are passing swiftly,
My number soon be run,
Swifter, ever swifter,
Swifter, everyone.

"And all my days I've struggled,
And my nights as well,
Studied, worked, endeavoured,
Almost till I fell."

His job he knows from A to Z,
The next man's as well;
Cool and calm, collected,
E'en though things pell-mell.
His workmates think him clever,
And enlightened too;
Trusty, learned, steady -
Not a bit a fool.

The faith which he espouses
He doth steadily support;
Warmly, bravely, earnestly,
With heart and voice and thought.

And now he views his prospects dim.
And fears what they will be;
Knowing what he's lacking
Is opportunity.  (1)

The Great War had induced great expectations regarding the shape,
direction and depth of social reform. The anticipated 'Reconstruction' would provide a country fit for heroes. Moderate working men such as Cartwright placed considerable faith in the possibility of co-operation between Capital and Labour. A new spirit of 'inter-class friendliness' would pervade the sphere of industrial relations. The old internecine class conflict would give way to an ordered system in which reason and argument would displace force. Not that economically based interest groups would disappear; rather that arbitration would supplant those anachronistic rituals of class conflict, the strike and the lock-out. Trade unionists would learn to work with Capital rather than against it. As part of the new spirit of reciprocity, Labour would receive its just renumeration: a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. The new social contract would recognise the dignity of labour: the right to be treated as human beings rather than as

1. 'Nil Desperandum' appeared in Railway Review 21 Oct. 1927
factors of production. Reconstruction had to be predicated upon a
spiritual revival - a form of practical Christianity. The Ten
Commandments were not to be restricted to the sphere of inter-personal
relations. The injunction to 'love thy neighbour' provided a moral
imperative for the State to redress social grievances by measures of
wealth distribution. Although Cartwright has been described by his
daughter as a Socialist, it is more accurate to describe his political
philosophy as an expression of 'New Liberalism.' The Labour Party was
the intellectual heir of this tradition. Writing one month before the
General Election of 1918, he suggested how a future Labour government
would tackle the social problem of millionaires:

'November 22nd.

'Mr. A.D. Worthington, a member of the noted brewing family and a
director of the North Staffordshire Railway who died recently, left
£1,356,975 and of this left £2,850 to charitable and theological
institutions. It was my fortune to meet this gentleman once, when I
formed one of a deputation of signalmen to ask for an advance of
wages of 2/- per week. All I can say of him is that he impressed me
as typical of his name and his will. But this system which creates
millionaires like him at one end of the scale and extreme indigence
at the other is self-condemned. No doubt the death duties will benefit
handsomely by his death, but not so handsomely as they ought to do.
So far as I have seen neither the Liberals nor the Coalition have any
idea of bringing about a system that will ensure a juster distribution
of wealth.' (2)

The evolution towards a higher state of affairs would be achieved
constitutionally by a Labour Party that would provide the full
entitlements of citizenship: the right to a 'decent' standard of

2. Journal 15. p. 29
living, adequate housing, equal educational opportunities and other 'social' rights that would complement access to legal and political citizenship. Commenting upon the censure motion by the A.G.M. of the N.U.R. upon its General Secretary J.H. Thomas, who was castigated by militants for betraying the Miners on 'Black Friday' (21 April 1921), Cartwright outlined the true path of social change:

'The Two Paths.

'.....It is the old struggle between those who are extreme in their views and wish for a change in social and industrial conditions even if it necessitates a violent insurrection, and those who desire for the change to be brought about by peaceful and constitutional methods. Mr. Thomas is the representative of the moderate man, and his refusal to agree to a Triple Alliance strike after the Miner's Executive had thrown over their secretary incensed the extremists to such a degree that they now seek to remove him from his office. Since the strike the same condition is reflected in the Miner's Federation.....

'.....the British working man is for constitutional reform and will not seriously entertain the idea of a violent revolution.' (3)

If 'constitutional reform' was the means, what, then, was the ultimate goal? The classical definition of the higher phase of communist society was provided by Marx: 'when the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly - only then will it be possible completely to transcend the narrow outlook of the bourgeois right, and only then will society be able to inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!' (4)

Cartwright adhered to a more limited definition of equality— that of equality of opportunity, rather than equality of condition. According to this view, the logic of industrialisation was sweeping away the final vestiges of ascribed status. The reform of education would eliminate the major inequalities in the distribution of opportunities for occupational attainment. But the situation of equality of opportunity could not prevail where the class system inhibited the chances of individuals attaining positions commensurate with their abilities. Writing in 1893, Durkheim coined the term the forced division of labour to describe the situation: 'If one class of society is obliged, in order to live, to take any price for its services, while another is absolved from such a necessity— thanks to the resources which it possesses, but which are not intrinsically expressive of any social superiority— the latter is able unjustly to force the former to submit to its dictates. In other words, there must be unjust contracts as long as there are rich and poor at birth.' (5) Durkheim envisaged a society in which access to material rewards would be governed by the distribution of natural inequalities. Writing in 1921, Cartwright endorsed such a view though he was much less sanguine regarding the possibility of advancement of the railways:

'Equality.

'Equality had for generations been a principle long sought for, and even fought for, by the working classes. It has been a strong motive in many a revolution and many a movement.....

'The fact is it not absolute equality in all matters that is desirable but equality of opportunity. Every man and woman born into the world

S. A. Giddens, *Emile Durkheim*, (1972), p. 11
should have an equal opportunity of reaching their highest development of mind, soul and body and of reaching the highest posts in the path of life they choose as their career. There will always be varying degrees of character and ability amongst individuals, and these should be the only distinctions in advancement without the interruption of birth, rank or favouritism.

'That is the ideal for which we should strive, and no mean ideal it is. To reach it we should need to revolutionise our present system of politics, economics, education and housing. No child would be born and bred in a slum, for no slums would exist; our elementary school children would proceed through the higher grades towards the universities undeterred by the bar of birth or means; the private could become a field marshal and the day wage man a captain of industry.' (6)

But this state of affairs was still in the realm of possibility rather than reality. At the end of the Great War, Cartwright was a railway signalman (first class), a weekly waged man who was 'cursed' with ambition. His own life-experience constituted a litmus test of the extent to which post-war Britain experienced fundamental reconstruction.

Although Cartwright perceived himself as an 'ordinary working man', able to articulate the feelings and aspirations of the dispossessed, it is evident that he and his family belonged to the 'respectable' stratum of the working classes. His two children, Nancy and John, benefitted from their father's aspirations. Nancy has commented, 'Money was scarce but my parents were keen that my brother and I should have as good an education as possible and there is a remark somewhere in the journal that no expense would be spared to this end. We both attended the Crewe County Secondary School, as it was then,  

6. Journal 18, pp. 78-81. See Appendix 13
from 11 to School Certificate at 15. Neither of us received a scholarship so that the fees had to be paid, about £3 a term I think.' (7) Certainly it required considerable financial discipline to secure the advantages of a secondary education. By 1921, Cartwright was earning 71 shillings per week. Fortunately, his wife was able to support that income through domestic work. 'Our standard of living was good for the time and we never wanted for anything. Both parents' families were decent middle class folk; my mother's father was a master-joiner with Foden's, and he and her brothers contributed to the furniture of our home. Though money was scarce they were always well dressed, clean and neat. My mother's dressmaking and tailoring abilities helped to clothe us. She contributed to the family finances through her dressmaking business which was very high class.' (8) His wife's contributions enabled Nancy to train at a secretarial college at the same time as John entered the secondary school. Nancy has acknowledged the influence of her father's values and aspirations: 'My brother and I benefitted greatly from our parent's ambitions for us. I was trained as a Secretary and worked for a music degree in my spare time. My brother was a railwayman too, starting as a Booking clerk, but ended in a position of management at York on his retirement. Our families, with the advantages of another generation, have all attended University or College, and it is amazing how my father's various interests have developed in his four grandchildren whom he never knew.' (9)

The journals do not record the contribution of Cartwright's wife,
Jeanette, to the domestic exchequer. The conjugal roles were demarcated without ambiguity: the woman's place was in the home. This 'natural' division had been suspended for the duration of the war – a temporary expedient. Writing in July 1918, Cartwright declared the patriotic duty of women:

'.....Some employers are refusing to re-employ men whom they promised to replace when they enlisted in the army now that they are discharged from military service. There is no question of the men being able to perform their old duties, but some employers say plainly that the women who have replaced these men are quite equal to the work and they do not require further assistance. Seeing that the demand for female labour is as great as ever in the Land Army.....it does not speak much for the patriotism of the employers or the women that they should retain the occupations of war-worn veterans.' (10)

Regarding those unpatriotic women who chose to work full time outside the home, Cartwright was of the opinion that they did not deserve equal pay:

'.....This question of equal pay for equal work is not quite so simple as many working men seem to think. In many cases it is not exactly "equal work", for more women are employed than there would be men to do the same work. Again often women are not able to do some of the work that the man would have to do, and this frequently has to be done by other men in addition to their own work.' (11)

Women's subordinate position in the labour market could be justified with reference to their biological make-up. But, it was more than just a question of physical strength. Women were almost a race apart

from men imbued with differing feelings, aspirations and outlook. In the following extract (12 May 1932), he castigated women for their lack of "the Friendly Society spirit":

'State Insured Women

'The inclusion of women in the State Insurance Schemes for Health and Unemployment has brought many difficulties in its train. This was to be expected, for, after all has been said about sex equality and such like, the fact remains that the natural place for women is the home, and it is only economic pressure that brings them into Industry. Women, so forced out of their natural sphere, look upon their industrial life as a transitory one and not as men do, as their life work.

'Generally speaking, too, women have never developed that sense which we call "the Friendly Society spirit." With them it is natural to regard such schemes as a bargain which they expect to make pay them. They value them not as an Insurance, only to be drawn upon in case of necessity, but as a loss if never called upon.

'.....In a representative group of (FRIENDLY) Societies the sickness and disablement claims rose in the period under review (1923-1930) by 29 per cent and 54 per cent among unmarried women, and by 42 per cent 87 per cent among married women respectively.

'These are enormous figures and if they represented the actual state of health among industrial women they could only be regarded as calamitous. For want of corroborative evidence the alternative solution, that the Health Insurance Funds have been used to replace unemployment pay when that ran out, is evident.' (12)

The traditional view was reinforced by the conviction that God 'created woman as a help-meet for man.' Women were a race apart imbued with

12. Journal 32. p. 28
biologically given characteristics. Despite the urge for a return to patriarchal stability, Cartwright was acutely conscious of the shifting boundaries in public life. He sensed that once eternal verities had been questioned in the sphere of sexual relations, the pace of emancipation could threaten the social fabric. Women's emancipation could even dilute the moral code:

'When Mrs. Pankhurst and her friends were making themselves a general nuisance in the effort to obtain the vote for women did they foresee that their policy of "emancipation" would introduce short skirts and cobweb stockings, bare backs and bare chests, promiscuous smoking and flaunting sexuality.....

'......and looming darkly in the future is the claim of the feminists to the right for women to bear children irrespective of the marriage tie.' (13)

There was a sense that the sexual revolution had transgressed the 'natural' limits: liberty had degenerated into licence. The normative contours of society appeared to be undergoing radical transformation:

'The Post-War Feminine

'In the first place then, the post-war woman is quite a different creature than the pre-war type, and yet appropriately enough she is the same..... Whereas the pre-war woman was athletic and pretended to be self-assertive, she at heart was a little bit ashamed of it, and took more pride in the arts and graces which have always been associated with her sex. Today she is athletic and self-assertive and that without any tinge of shame. In fact she glories in it, or takes it as quite the natural thing. She will not only play a round of

golf with her husband or his friend, but will do so on level terms, and even perhaps challenge him as to who can play the best game of football. Yes, we have heaps of ladies football teams in this country today.....and some can play a really scientific game too.' (14)

Although he approved of the legal emancipation of women, he felt that the feminists would go beyond challenging social etiquette by striking at the heart of sacred institutions such as marriage and family. His perennial complaints about the 'laxity in morals' would seem to indicate a firm belief in a Golden Age. This was consistent with the belief that Man had fallen from grace. Not that Cartwright excluded notions of moral progress. Rather, that the prerequisite of the 'civilising' process was the existence of a stable family unit in which women fulfilled their biologically determined and/or divinely ordained roles. His was a pessimistic reading of human nature, almost Hobbesian in his view of man as inherently evil. The Christian Fathers, as represented by Augustine (City of God) had argued that civil government was rendered necessary by the 'Fall' from Eden, as a remedy for the crimes and vices of mankind. It could not be argued, however, that he adhered to the rather negative social doctrines of the Fathers, principally that the poor were part of the divine order to promote the spiritual welfare of almsgivers. (15) Cartwright was more in tune with the social doctrines of Jesus with the exhortations to brotherly love, human service and the recognition of human brotherhood. This was to provide the spiritual bedrock of his political commitment. Unfortunately, his life experiences led him to believe that Christianity was unable to seize the imagination and heart of mankind, because of


'.....the innate selfish, and at bottom, anti-social instincts that lie deep in our human nature. These are the inveterate enemies of Christianity, and they have to be fought afresh in every individual in every succeeding generation until they atrophy, and our animal-born nature again wears the imprint of the Divine.' (16)

Although he was baptised, confirmed and brought up Church of England, his individualistic temperament rebelled against the constraints of institutionalised religion. I want to suggest that Cartwright's adherence to socialism was rooted in his 'social' reading of the Bible. Religion was not synonymous with the act of church attendance nor even with subscription to credal formula. He confessed that one of the reasons for leaving the Church of England in 1923 was his inability to subscribe to all the articles in the three Creeds (the Nicene, Apostles and the Athanasian). However, a sense of alienation from the irreducible tenets of the Church was not the only factor in his decision to leave the fold. His experience of education in a Church elementary school seemed to confirm the social control function of religion:

'I had the average elementary school training, amongst which was that awful part of the established Church's teaching which bids us to submit ourselves lowly and reverently towards our betters and make ourselves contented in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call us.' (17)

If working class children were fed on such a diet of crude propaganda, it was hardly surprising that they looked elsewhere for their salvation. Moreover that sense of estrangement was reinforced by the adherence of the Church to social practices that seemed to reinforce

16. Journal 34. p. 17
17. Journal 3. pp. 78-81
the socio-economic status quo. Working class people expected more than the ambulance work of charity which did little to redress fundamental social injustices. Writing in 1911, Cartwright was reviewing the position of the working classes:

'What hold have the churches upon the working class? This is a question hard to solve. In my opinion during the more impressionable years of life the churches have a great hold over them. But later it is not so great. The Church of England has largely lost her hold upon them and seems to devote too much attention to ritual and pomp and too little to the difficulties of the working classes, and when they do help the latter, it stinks too much of charity to do much good.' (18)

It was the perceived failure of the Churches to denounce social injustice that angered 'practical' Christians such as himself. Mankind ought to realise its common humanity not merely in a spiritual sense. Regarding the famine in post-revolutionary Russia, he questioned the morality of huge armaments expenditure:

'.....What a Christ-like act it would be if a great nation was to decide to abandon all its expenditure on war purposes and devote it to the recuperation of stricken famine-ridden Russia.' (19)

The churches had displayed negligence in the exercise of their spiritual duties:

'..... O you dull preachers in our temples who claim the Fatherhood of God for mankind, why do you not thunder forth from your high pulpits


that the same fact implies the brotherhood of man to man, and daily, nay, hourly insist that it is our bounden duty to help our brethren in their dire need;.....' (20)

Being acutely conscious of the process of secularisation, he was careful to distinguish between the message of the Scriptures and institutionalised religion. Church attendance is but one index of religiosity, one that is most visible in everyday life. Throughout the journals, one finds diverse references to the perennial theme of mankind's failure to assimilate Christianity. He believed that society was drifting towards pure materialism,

'.....forsaking altogether those things which do not directly add to their worldly wealth for the enjoyment of the senses and material gain.' (21)

Throughout, one finds condemnation of the 'get rich quick society'. Writing on 'The love of Money' in March 1932, Cartwright denounced the morality of capitalism in no uncertain terms:

'We often hear it said by people that they do not desire great wealth, but a sufficiency for their needs, but the trouble is that their needs - or rather their wants - grow with the ability to gratify them. No one seems to have a sufficiency, everyone wants just a little more. Even Henry Ford still hankers after a profit. The wealthiest man is not the one with the most money but the one with fewest wants.

'What a farce the whole thing is! The one thing money does not seem to command - contentment - is the least sought after. The chink of coin and the glitter of diamonds have no lure for the man who can truthfully

An example of party political propaganda from The Plebs League.

Acknowledgements to the Museum of Labour.
SACRIFICE?

THE MAN AT THE TOP:—
"Equality of Sacrifice—that's the big idea, friends! Let's all step down one rung!"

From "PLEBS" (the Organ of the N.C.L.C.)

VOTE LABOUR
say, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." That is a philosophy the money grabbers cannot attain to, nor even understand. To them it savours of hypocrisy or lese majeste. It is contempt of their god.' (22)

The condemnation of capitalism as irreligious was central to the social philosophy of the Christian Socialists. Indeed, the conclusion of R.H. Tawney's Religion and the Rise of Capitalism was not dissimilar: 'But the quality in modern societies, which is most sharply opposed to the teaching ascribed to the Founder of the Christian Faith lies deeper than the exceptional failures and abnormal follies against which criticism is most commonly directed. It consists in the assumption, accepted by most reformers with hardly less naivete than by the defenders of the established order, that the attainment of material riches is the supreme object of human endeavour and the final criterion of human success.' (23) Acquisitive individualism appeared to be an incontrovertible 'fact' of human nature. But, it was essentially unchristian. Cartwright was not just engaged in documenting a theological critique of capitalism. He was anxious to live up to his interpretation of the Bible:

'The Archbishop of Canterbury has broadcast in his New Years's message an appeal for mutual service and self-sacrifice. These are hard things to do and appeal but very little to the spirit of our age. Service and sacrifice may sound very nice words from a pulpit but put into concrete practice they require grit and fortitude as well as an absence of selfishness, which latter is not a distinguishing feature of present-day life. Yet if the problems which face us today are to reach a solution I make bold to say that it will only be by

22. Journal 32. p. 41
greater sacrifice and forbearance, in fact by the absence of selfishness by all classes that they will be solved. It seems to me that we have reached a time when mankind can only go forward by making himself more in accord with the teaching of Christ.' (24)

What exactly were the teachings of Christ? Cartwright singled out the two most important Commandments:

'Christ summed up his teaching into the two commandments Love God, and thy neighbour as thyself. It is a strange love that so soon as it requires us to make a sacrifice for it we repudiate it. That is not acceptance. We want the best of both worlds. It may be possible to get it, but it is certainly not possible by attempting to unite God and Mammon.' (25)

The teachings of Christ were accorded such importance that in June 1924 he began his 'self-appointed task', writing an account of the life and teachings of Jesus:

'.....I desire to know more of the greatness of Jesus, and to learn for myself so far as I am able just what his teaching was. It is written not because I am becoming more religious, but because I recognise that his life is one of the most significant in history.' (26)

The Sermon on the Mount represented the high watermark towards which humanity was striving, or should be striving:

'.....What would be the result of applying such principles as these wholeheartedly and sincerely? "Give to every man that asketh of thee;

24. Journal 24. pp. 72-75. See Appendix 14
and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you." ...."Love one another," "as ye would that men should do you, do ye also to them likewise."

'Here is a mode of life suggested higher and nobler than had ever been conceived of before nor exceeded since. It appeals to the highest in man requiring the most strenuous use of those virtues animalistic man condemns such as, self control, unselfishness, meekness and a forgiving spirit. It points to the apex of man's humanity aiming at the destruction of the ape and tiger in him and the supremacy of the angel.' (27)

The emphasis upon personal regeneration as a microcosm of a moral revolution was evident in Methodist communities in the North-East of England. Robert Moore's study of mining communities, Pit Men, Preachers and Politics, shows that the effect of Methodism was to inhibit the development of class consciousness. During the period 1874–1923, leading officials of the Durham Miners' Association preferred the resolution of industrial conflict by arbitration to the strike weapon. Their orientation towards the institution of private property illustrated the gulf that separated them from full-blooded socialists. They questioned the irresponsible use of private property rather than calling for its demise. The April edition of The Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review contained this message to the newly elected Liberal Government of 1906 - 'The new government and new Parliament have before them enormous areas of social reform to make up..... Nothing worse could happen to our country than the outbreak of class wars between the 'have nots' and the 'haves'. Such wars can only be prevented by the government and Parliament seeing to it that the 'haves' shall not use the power of their millions to grind down the

27. Journal 25. p. 15. The Sermon on the Mount. See Appendix 15
'have nots' to starvation level..... and by seeing to it that the 'have nots' who are honest, thrifty and willing to work should have the chance to earn enough.' (28) Moore suggests that there was an 'elective affinity' between Methodism and Liberalism, in that the interests of individuals and social classes were held to be complementary. However, it was incumbent upon the employers and the State to exercise *bourgeois oblige* and temper the excesses of the free market system with judicious measures of social reform. Methodists were wont to eulogise the virtues of paternalistic capitalism which displaced what Marx had called the callous 'cash nexus'. If masters did not neglect their duties in providing housing, schools and other non-wage benefits, then they could assure themselves that a steady settled workforce would voluntarily enter into a partnership for the pursuit of common goals. Paternalism was felt to be a form of practical Christianity - the institutionalisation of 'love thy neighbour.' Cartwright eschewed the nomenclature of class warfare believing that it was possible for social classes to achieve some form of *modus vivendi*. Writing in April 1933, he saw a glimpse of the possibilities:

'Sir Ernest was a modest and distinguished gentleman in the best meaning of those terms.....

'He was not a man of great wealth although he was a Welsh coal-owner and had business connections in South America. His benefactions were numerous and never trumpeted abroad. His kindly disposition and his tall curly-haired figure made him a favourite in any company, yet his modesty and his obvious sincerity forbade any thought of playing to the gallery.

'He was a real Christian gentleman of a type that is all too scarce. If there were more like him class distinctions would not be as bitterly resented as they are in these days.' (29)

In addition, there was an emphasis upon personal regeneration. Methodists believed that their 'calling' in life, a product of 'inner-worldly asceticism', was to cultivate God-given talents for the service of others. The fundamental thrust of their argument was to establish the 'correct' social environment so that man could be more Christ-like. The parable of the talents demonstrated to the believer that he was the steward of divinely ordained gifts to be used to fulfil His mission. They saw themselves as active instruments of God in the world saving sinners from damnation. Rescuing others meant the inculcation of ethical habits - meekness, punctuality, exactness, thrift and cleanliness. The inalienable dignity and worth of every individual, in the sense of the right to full development, was recognised. The social structure had to be built upon Christian foundations. Christianity, through its individual and institutional bearers, had to address contemporary issues. In an early diary entry, Cartwright offered a glimpse of the ideal Christian state:

'.....He would expect to find them making laws by which it would protect the weak against the strong, making it impossible for the poor to be downtrodden by the rich, forbidding usury, and giving equality to all, and, in cases of doubt, giving the benefit of the doubt to the weak or the poor.

'One reform is necessary; that is, making all; rich and poor, man and woman, equal, not nominally, but really able to secure the same benefits.' (30)

29. Journal 33. p. 35

Although nominally Church of England, he expressed his sympathy with the Nonconformist tradition by attaching himself to the Congregational Church in Alsager:

'For a long time I had felt that the mere act of church-going had little virtue in it when the prayers and hymns had become a mere mechanical practise. The only spontaneous religious exercise left in the service was that derived from the sermon. Too often this had entirely no bearing upon present-day life and often embodied a theology at which my intelligence rebelled..... I was not certain, and am not certain today that any organised church embodies all my religious beliefs.

'.....The slump in religious observance which followed the war finally persuaded me that it was the duty of all men who believed in the foundation truths of Christianity to attach themselves to some church that they might assist in keeping alive the faith left to them by their fathers for the good of posterity. Hence my attachment to a Church whose organisation and minister most nearly approximate to my particular views.' (31)

The antecedents of the Congregational Union, formed in 1832, can be traced back to the Brownist and Barrowist sects of the sixteenth century. In 1580 Robert Brown established a congregational society at Norwich rejecting Episcopacy and holding the connection between church and state unscriptural. Worship was non-ritualistic and both pastor and congregation derived their authority from God. The Barrowists, a Puritan sect in the reign of Elizabeth I, held similar views. Henry Barrow, their leader, had been executed for writing 'sundry seditious books, tending to the slander of the queen and state.' (32) Cartwright was conscious of this struggle for civil and religious liberty.


Writing in 1927, the Jubilee year of the Alsager church, he wondered whether parlous financial state and meagre congregation merited celebration:

'Having said so much to show how low the place has fallen, it might with justice be asked why trouble to celebrate the Jubilee of such a poor place? Does not its very decadence show it to be a superfluous?'

'We do not think so. It is the outward and visible sign of an idea of church belief and government that is far from being played out. The idea has a proud history behind it reaching back to the sixteenth century. During that history men have endured much hardship and persecution for conscience sake which has now brought a reward of religious liberty and freedom of conscience that was wanted aforetime. It has also done much to make this country what it is and played a great part in opening up a New World across the Atlantic. It is an idea worth celebrating.' (33)

This extract reveals the historical consciousness of an individual who was able to locate his actions and beliefs within the context of a particular 'tradition'. This tradition was a continuing one in that the idea of respect for the individual was the cornerstone of democracy. Political equality (the extension of the franchise) and social equality (the social rights of citizenship embodied in social reform legislation) were predicated upon the bedrock notion of fraternity. 'Respect for individual conscience' and 'fraternity' were perhaps central in shaping the political allegiance of Nonconformists. The following extract gives an indication as to why religion provided a route into the Labour Party:

33. Journal 27. p. 33
'Congregationalism

'It is but natural that Congregationalism (C.) should appeal strongly to democratic working people with religious leanings. In a practical way it makes them feel that their opinions are as good as any one else's. That the services are their services and that they each and all are equal before their maker. Even the minister is but one of themselves, and if Congregationalism is true to itself, should be as little as possible distinguished from one of his flock.

'Another reason why the appeal of Congregationalism is so strong is the Christian fellowship that should exist amongst its members. This is too often thought of but lightly, yet it is a very real thing giving beauty and strength to all. It forbids all jealousy, envy and malice among the members. Each feels for the others "rejoicing with those that so rejoice and weeping with those that weep." Loving sympathy for each pervades all.' (34)

It was essential for the Church to reassert the 'social' elements of the gospel if it was to halt the drift towards a 'pagan' society. In a society where wealth, power and status were the mainsprings of human behaviour and individualism was endemic, it was incumbent upon Christians to offer an alternative message. The laws of Britain encouraged the rich to 'grind the faces of the poor'. Christian laws would stress the inalienable dignity and worth of every individual and the absolute equality of all before God. The duty to 'remember the poor' was not to be restricted to the ambulance work of charity. Rather, it entailed a radical reconstruction of society as as to facilitate the full and free development of every individual. D.J. Manning in his study of Liberalism, has emphasised the centrality of respect for the individual: 'The evil that liberals have perceived

34. Journal 33. p. 66
in slavery, child labour, assembly line production, lack of educational opportunity and the exploitation of colonial people is one which originates in treating human beings as means to an end rather than as ends in themselves.' (35) Cartwright certainly believed that the Great War was but a manifestation of the birth-throes of a new era. Working class people, by virtue of their sacrifice on behalf of Democracy, had earned their entitlements to full citizenship status. It was time for government to institutionalise the Christian injunction to treat the poor as brethren:

'If it is to be a world purified and made better by the war, mutual help and forbearance must be shown between country and country and class and class. The gospel of self-help, which too often is only another word for selfishness, must be mitigated by co-operation, and enmity replaced by trust. In our domestic affairs the spirit of distrust must be replaced by confidence and the feeling that each is indeed his brother's keeper. There must be an acknowledgement by the possessing class that their possessions are only a trust that may be closed or superseded and the non-possessors must recognise other rights than their own.' (36)

Cartwright was no 'class warrior' seeking the appropriation of the means of production. Rather, he sought the rationalisation of capitalism, not its replacement. Although he was conscious of the need to strengthen the collective organisation of the working classes, this did not rule out constructive engagement with Capital for the purpose of achieving common goals. He delivered several lectures to the London, Midland and Scottish Literary and Debating Society in the firm belief

that it was the duty of every worker to advance his technical efficiency. After the delivery of one such lecture (11 April 1923), he wrote:

'It has been my desire and objective for some time now to obtain some other employment than that I am now engaged in, a place where there is scope for ability and where disinterested service would meet with more chance of its reward. I have tried hard to use what influence I possess to persuade my fellow trade unionists that there is nothing antagonistic between their principles and those expressed above. I have shown them that having for the time being reached a plane in the industrial world more nearly in accord with their true place it is up to them to show that they are fit for a large share in the control of their industry. With that end in view they should co-operate with Capital to make the railways an efficient means of transport. This means that they themselves should welcome everything that increases their efficiency.' (37)

If working people were to work with rather than against the grain, they required assurances that a 'new era' had indeed commenced. Cartwright believed that there were several litmus tests available to divine the existence of a new spirit. The role of the State in promoting measures that would heal the fractures caused by capitalist exploitation was one such test. In 1910, Cartwright had expressed doubts regarding the neutrality of the State: organised Capital appeared to enjoy favourable treatment. Would the same be true in a society imbued with the spirit of Reconstruction? Moreover, would working class children be given equal educational opportunities to develop their talents to the full or would their individual needs be subordinated to the demands of industry, as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'? McKibbin has

37. Journal 23. pp. 54-60
argued that 'By 1914 the British working class was, prima facie at least, highly conditioned by inherited ideologies which emphasised a common citizenship, the rules of the game and the class-neutrality of the major institutions of the state.' (38) This certainly represented the aspirations of politically moderate workers. The reality was different. Within a short period of time, the status of Reconstruction as rhetoric became all too obvious. The problem of excess profits raised questions regarding State neutrality:

'Profits

'It is not altogether surprising, perhaps, that it has been under the "business" government of Mr. Lloyd George that the most amazing profits of modern times have been made and the wildest speculations rampant. One does not like to hint that only a House of Commons where only businessmen are thought fit to legislate, would allow profits to be made that are nothing less than a scandal in these days, with at least the tacit consent of the Government, or would allow these profiteers and others during the war period to escape their fair share of taxation; but the fact give occasion for such cynicism.' (39)

Suspicions developed that the government was far from being even-handed in its treatment of Labour. During the Great War, both the mines and the railways had been subject to 'control' which brought the government into the sphere of industrial relations. On 16 October 1920 when the Miners struck for an increase in wages, the Railwaymen and Transport Workers (the two other partners in the Triple Alliance) threatened to follow suit. When the government conceded a temporary six-month wage increase it merely postponed the inevitable crisis.


With the mines making such a loss the government decided to 'decontrol' the industry on 31 March 1921. The coal owners could see no alternative to heavy cuts in wages, which the Miners refused to accept. The appointed day of decontrol was marked by a lock-out and the invoking of the Triple Alliance to begin on 16 April. Cartwright was not sanguine about the prospects:

'Industrial War

'We are once again in the midst of an industrial war which has overshadowed every other issue for the time being.....

'The struggle alluded to is a national lock-out of miners brought about through the hasty decontrol of their industry at a time of industrial depression when it is not paying its way..... Negotiations failed because the owners insisted upon district rates being fixed and the Union was equally determined upon continuing the war-time national settlements. The owners declared the pits would be open after the date specified with wages down to an average of 40 per cent over pre-war and that while the cost of living was up 141 pre-war! The union took the only course they could and allowed the notices to expire and withdrew all labour, including that of the "safety" men.

'They called the Triple Alliance together..... The N.U.R. and Transport workers are in little better circumstances. A large proportion of their members are on out-of-work pay, and those working are not at all enamoured of a strike policy being pursued. On the other hand, they perfectly understand that the miners' fight is their fight; if the miners lose, their front line of defence is gone. All three partners in the Alliance recognise that wages must come down and that industry must be self-supporting; but such a drop as is foreshadowed by the coal owners' proposals is out of all reason.....

'The debate in Parliament on this coal dispute has resulted in the reopening of negotiations, but the news tonight is that a complete deadlock has resulted. This is not surprising when the stipulations
of the Government are practically those which preclude any settlement other than complete acceptance of the owners' terms. These are: no subsidy; no further control; and no pooling of profits.

'.....If the Triple Alliance is beaten as seems quite possible, there will be no peace worth calling peace in the industrial world for many years to come. The longed-for time when co-operation between Capital and Labour shall usher in the New Era will have receded yet further into the background. This land which a short time ago was to be made fit for heroes will become a land of sullen defeated men working grudgingly for an arrogant and triumphant minority of profiteering plutocrats.....

'All talk of a fight to a finish is unwise and will only tend to stiffen the backs of the other side..... It is a wise counsel to think the matter out rather than fight it out.' (40)

The Triple Alliance was not beaten; rather it collapsed when the Railwaymen and Transport workers withdrew their support on 15 April (thereafter known as 'Black Friday'):

'The relief that was felt throughout the country when the news became known that the strike was cancelled has not often been exceeded. The dangers of a Triple Alliance strike to the public peace could hardly be exaggerated.....

'Coming more home, it is certain that the decision to cancel the strike was heartily welcomed by the majority of railwaymen.' (41)

The strike served to heighten political consciousness regarding the role of the state. Cartwright felt that his interpretation was unduly cynical. Others may have argued that his was an informed understanding

40. Journal 18. pp. 2-7
41. Journal 18. pp. 14-17
of the latent function of the State in capitalist society:

'The Coal Dispute

'This fundamental dispute still drags on. Today the ninth week of the stoppage begins...... Certainly no one is benefiting by it, and that fact has at last soaked into the mind of the Government, for have they not asked the disputants to meet them once again. Why this step has been taken now and not a month ago it is difficult to say...... One effect of the delay at least is to convince many working men that it is the intention of the Government to cripple all trade unions by bleeding them through this prolonged dispute..... If Mr. Lloyd George does not wish this opinion to crystallise in the minds of working people, he will have to think, and think hard, in what way he can show that the opinion of his Government is not that of the mine-owners issuing from another channel.' (42)

The journal entries for 1921 are marked by a deep pessimism regarding progress. The world did not seem to act in accordance with his liberal expectations. A socialist would have expressed little surprise at the economic behaviour of unscrupulous businessmen. Cartwright was shocked:

'O Great Man!

'The following is a quotation in a Lancashire paper of today's date (20.10.21) from Sir C.W. Macara's new book, "Recollections", in reference to the Ancoat's strike in which the author took a leading part.

'When the strikers were beaten, "They appointed a deputation to come and interview me. They made no mystery of their defeat, and asked me if I would take them back on my own terms. I said: 'No, now that you

42. Journal 18. pp. 46-49
are out, you shall stay out.' I did not begin to dispute..... In a fortnight they came again to ask if I would take half their number back. I refused; and they grew so dejected that at last they asked if I would take five of them back. Even that request I refused."

'What a glorious statement to be able to make! Little wonder he calls himself a "Great Man". Could even Nero have done more. Just picture it. Hundreds of men workless, their wives and families starving, all dependent on "My" will. Destitution, degradation and death, perhaps, staring them in the face, and a word from "Me" would remove it all. Could the gods desire more?

'Truly a great man indeed! Yet can it be wondered at that such great men as this should have produced the class bitterness and hatred we have seen in recent years. And then they have the audacity to call the Socialists, selfish, vain - glorious! I would rather that fewer "great" men came into the world. A world of smaller, but more humane, men would be a much happier place and more Christian.' (43)

Unscrupulous employers were not the only index of the social malaise. The number of unemployed ex-servicemen confirmed the absence of a new spirit:

"'The Quick and the Dead"

'We have just been celebrating the third signing of the armistice.....

'There were many instances too of cynicism and regret displayed by unemployed ex-servicemen..... The police in London had to censor some of the inscriptions on their banners and wreaths.

'That the unemployed had reason for their action can hardly be denied. They had fought as hard and sacrificed as much..... as those whom the ceremonies honoured; yet what had been their recompense. Homeless and

without honourable means of subsistence they were treated with scant respect, bordering, at times, almost on insolence. It is then small wonder that they showed the desperate cynicism such as that displayed upon some of their banners and wreaths.

'One banner had this inscription:

1914 Star
1921 Star - vation

and one of the wreaths this:
"To the memory of those who died in the interests of rent, interest and profit, from the survivors of the peace who are suffering more than death for the same unholy Trinity."

'If these celebrations but make us take a firmer grip of our ideals and urge us to a more thoughtful selflessness, they will not have been held in vain; then we may hope to make this land a better place to live in, and of living.' (44)

Cartwright's suspicions that 'Reconstruction' represented a short-term expedient were confirmed with the publication of the Geddes Report in February 1922. The ad hoc committee recommended expenditure cuts of £18 million. What of the hopes engendered by the 1918 Education Act and the Final Report 1919?:

'Education Not a Luxury

'.....However these hopes were only raised to be dashed to the ground. They were, perhaps, never intended to be realised by us. At the time they were made we had just come through a great war which had unsettled men's ideas of the sacredness of kings and thrones; five million men who had faced hell were being demobilised; and the wind from Russia was blowing pretty strong. It was necessary then for the powers-that-be to walk warily if they were to tide over this difficult

44. Journal 19. pp. 16-17
time. It was time for consolatory promises, and truly the Government performed it well. A new heaven and a new earth was promised. Houses were to be built fit for heroes, pensions for those who had suffered, their children should be educated as no children of the past had been, disease and death should lose their terrors by provision being made for their dependents, they and the women who had helped Lloyd George and Co. to win the war should have the vote, the employed lamb should lie down comfortably with his lion employer, sure of a fairer recompense for his labour. Yes, it was undoubtedly laid on thickly, very thickly.' (45)

By June 1921, with two million (one in seven of the working population) out of work, Labour was in a relatively weak position. Cartwright felt that it was unwise as well as immoral for the employers to exploit this situation to the full:

'Preparing Trouble

'Our ruling classes appear to be incapable of learning, or even to profit by the most obvious warnings. Were they even psychologists equal to the average person they would know that they would reap what they sow.

'The most obvious fact about present-day industrialism is the weakness of trade-unionism.

'The employees have been ground down so fine that they are in a much worse plight than has existed for a generation. Men with families are going home with less than £1 for their week's work - or 3 or 4 day's work for much short time is being worked, and that at a time when the cost of living is 80 per cent higher than in July 1914.

'Trade is certain to revive sooner or later, and then we are sure to see a repetition of industrial warfare aimed at winning back all that

45. Journal 19. pp. 52-55. See Appendix 16
has been lost. It will lose nothing in bitterness for the present grinding that the men are undergoing and for the base betrayal of all the promises made during the war.... Repression begets revolt; and, revolt will come no matter how we flatter or promise.' (46)

Further attacks upon working class standards of living were made in the aftermath of the Conservative government's re-adoption of the Gold Standard in 1925. With the consequent reduction in exports, owners demanded wage cuts and increased working hours. The Miners' Federation, supported by the General Council of the T.U.C., forced a concession from the Baldwin government in the form of a temporary subsidy in order to maintain miners' wages and hours at their existing levels while a Royal Commission under Sir Herbert Samuel drew up a scheme for the future of the industry. When it reported in early 1926 it recommended wage cuts as a precondition for profitability. The Miners' Federation, under the secretary-ship of A.J. Cook ('Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day!') rejected the Samuel Report and prepared for a lock-out on 1 May when the temporary subsidy ran out. On 4 May the so-called General Strike began. The strike lasted only nine days and directly involved less than two million workers. It was called by the T.U.C. to defend the living standards of one section of the trade union movement, the miners. To this extent, it was a failure. But, for historians such as John Foster, the strike was of 'irreplaceable importance' for the working class movement: 'At no time since has the capitalist nature of the British State been so thoroughly exposed. For a few days in 1926 working people saw every organ of local and central government, employers and fascists united

as one instrument against the labour movement.' (47) The following extract is noteworthy in two respects. The strike was not viewed as a seditious conspiracy against the State; the syndicalist view was a minority one. The Baldwin government failed in its attempt to smear the action as 'revolutionary' or 'unconstitutional'. Moreover, Cartwright demonstrated a healthy scepticism regarding the validity of the 'news':

'How The Strike was Met

'We English are said to be an amazing people and at times like this we show it. A General Strike of about 4 million people which paralyses the whole transport of the country and throwing out of work another million caused as little apparent consternation as a Bank Holiday. Throughout the whole length and breadth of the land no disturbance of any consequence took place. It was as if the workers had unanimously decided to take a holiday and had put their hands in their pockets and waited for the talkers to finish their job.

'The Government at once called for volunteers to perform work of national importance and set about enrolling a force of special constabulary....

'The Prime Minister broadcast a message to the people on the night he forced the issue as follows: "Keep steady; Remember that peace on earth comes to men of goodwill." This advice was strictly followed both by the strikers and public generally. The workers struck solidly and quietly and so falsified Mr. B's contention that it was a revolutionary strike, and the public bore the disturbance and annoyance resulting from it with Spartan quietness....

'The stopping of railway and road transport was a great general inconvenience but what perhaps was most missed by the general public

was the absence of papers and periodicals caused by the strike of printers. This suspension of the Press was stigmatised by the Premier as an attempt by the Revolutionary Committee (the T.U.C.) to prevent the people from realising their revolutionary tendencies. This of course was sheer bunkum but it is doubtful if the suspension was or could have been any assistance either to the miners or even the General Strike. It prevented discussion by which means a settlement had to be made eventually. To meet this strike the Government started a daily paper called the "British Gazette" and about a week later the T.U.C. issued one called "The British Worker". The "Gazette" was an official organ setting forth the Government point of view solely and showed that their experience learned during the war had not been forgotten. Victories were recorded all along the line every day and it was only later and by deduction that we found they generally led us to the rear. The "Worker" of course put the opposite side and found all its work ready made to combat the untruths and half truths by the "Gazette" and the B.B.C.

"...Nothing was allowed to be broadcast that the Government did not sanction. Thus when the Archbishop and heads of the Free Churches had been in communication together with the view of expressing the Christian view on the question of the hour, the Government refused to sanction them to broadcast their message. Presumably it did not compliment them upon their conduct or attitude.

'This broadcasting of coloured news by the B.B.C. has not increased their popularity even though they were only helpless intermediaries.' (48)

Pelling suggests that the 'revolutionary' slur was precisely the difficulty under which members of the General Council laboured: 'having no revolutionary purposes in mind, they were as much afraid of a state of political chaos as the Government was; and as the days went by and the Government continued to ensure the movement of essential supplies,

they could see no solution except through the resumption of negotiations.' (49) On 12 May, the Council cancelled the strike without securing any definite commitments either from the Government or mineowners. The miners were left to fight alone, until near-starvation forced them to return to work, on the owners' terms, six months later. Cartwright lost £13 in wages as a result of his sympathetic action. He seemed to bear this with equanimity. What rankled him was the favouritism showed to company loyalists:

'Strike Reverberations

'.....there are many minor officials who seem determined to apply the settlements in the narrowest possible way to the detriment and annoyance of the men. Two other conditions laid down which are causing the men much heart-burning and bitterness are (1) that short-time shall not apply to those who remained loyal to the Companies (blacklegs) .....' (50)

Could his 'disloyalty' to the Company have been the prime reason for his failure to achieve promotion to a supervisory position?

What lessons could be drawn from the strike? Cartwright believed that its failure demonstrated the 'common-sense' and 'moderation' of the British working classes who could be trusted to play the 'rules of the game':

'Learning Our Lessons

'.....If the general strike is to be used as a political weapon, many

49. Pelling, Unionism, p. 176
adherents of trade unionism who are moderate in their opinions will not give it support. Mr. Cramp still believes it can be used against war. To my mind it can never be used successfully except under most exceptional and sympathetic circumstances. It is an unwieldy weapon that only cranks and wild men would ever think of using.

'Failing the use of the general strike as an industrial weapon we are thrown back upon constitutional political action and education. This is less sensational but much more sane if lengthier method. No government, no class can in the long run legislate or act beyond what the people are ready for. It should be the works of Trade Unions and other democratic associations to educate the people and prepare them for a better and humane system of society. Their attention should be turned both to the education of the people and to representation on public bodies as much as to disputes. Conciliation and open discussion will in the end achieve more than active warfare..... Construction should be the aim rather than destruction.' (51)

David Martin has outlined two fundamental assumptions of liberalism which seemed to lie at the core of Cartwright's political thinking:
'The first is that truth and goodness only require correct exposition in order to be accepted. Thus the primary initiative is assigned to ideas and the central problem located in knowledge and education. The second assumption is that the interests of individuals and classes and nations are fundamentally complementary.' (52) Cartwright placed great faith in the possibilities of a spiritual revival. What was required was a change of attitude rather than a fundamental change in the economic structure of capitalism:

'Friendliness

'John Galsworthy tells us that, "The great thing about life is the

'And how much the world needs this "going out of friendliness" today! ..... We badly need more of it between nation and nation, between class and class as well as between individuals.....

'Whether we call it living for others, selflessness, or the going out of friendliness from being to being, matters not; what does matter is to get men and women to accept it as the great thing about life. To put it into practice and thus discover its truth for themselves is the difficulty. It is only by experience that its truth can be proved, because it is above reason itself. Moreover it is by practising it and exemplifying it in ourselves that we can get people to believe in it.

'Herein is the prescription for all who wish to bring into the world more sweetness, light and warmth, and the true spirit of brotherhood itself.' (53)

How far did the Conservative administration live up to these ideals? Writing in July 1926, the eleventh week of the lock-out, he showed concern at the partiality of the government:

'Woeful Want

'The Government for their part have not been altogether idle. The position might have been more helpful if they had been. Their contribution has been to pass the Eight Hour Day Act in spite of the strenuous opposition of Labour both in the Commons and the Lords. By that act they have gone contrary to the recommendations of the Commission's Report and ranged themselves alongside the mine-owners. This act together with the fact that has been disclosed in the House that the P.M. is himself to some extent a mine-owner, has prejudiced

him in the minds of working class opinion as an unbiased mediator.'

(54)

The partiality of the government reinforced his general disillusionment regarding social affairs. So much had been promised and so little achieved:

'A War Anniversary

'When we remember that twelve years have elapsed since that great decision was made and how our whole existence physical moral and mental was shaken to their foundations, we can be but amazed that they have made so little permanent impression on our national life and outlook. It is with something akin to shame for instance that we should be in the throes of an industrial war wherein some of the war veterans are being starved into an acceptance of a lower standard of living than they had in pre-war days..... A new era was being born in which the workmen would be something more than a cog in a machine. He was to have a larger share of the good things of life; more leisure, greater opportunities and a stake in the country. Today all that seems to be forgotten. We are back in a reactionary time.....

'So far from the war having deepened our religious life there seems to be less religious observance now than there was immediately before the war. On the contrary the pursuit of pleasure and the amount of crime and coarseness and looseness of sexual affairs seems to point to the fact that the Church has lost its grip on the people. Even since the war ended there has been a boom for dancing among all classes. That fact in itself does not denote religion, but taken with the other facts quoted..... it does indicate that modesty and fine feeling are not increased. (55)

The behaviour of the Baldwin government forced Cartwright to re-examine

55. Journal 26. pp. 61-64
some of his assumptions regarding the role of the State and even to question the 'non-political' role of the W.E.A. Writing in September 1926 on the Baldwin initiative:

'..... Briefly it is this:

1. Following district settlements and a resumption of work an Act of Parliament to be passed setting up a National Arbitration Tribunal.

2. This Tribunal to be the appeal Court against the settlements and in fact to do the work formerly done by the Federation.

3. The Tribunal's decisions on hours and wages to have the force of the law.

'Speaking candidly and in all seriousness such proposals, and especially the action of the Government, fills one with contempt and shame. Such terms as are here proposed are not only for unconditional surrender but include also a demand for their consent to the total destruction of their organisation.

'Having had recently some controversy with working men about the bias of Labour Colleges and supporting in preference the pure impartiality of the W.E.A. and Ruskin College, I feel sorely tempted to disclaim my opinions by the exhibition of partiality given by the Government in this coal business. However biassed the Labour Colleges might be against the present system of Industry, it fades into insignificance in comparison with the attitude of Mr. Baldwin. When the doctrine of class-consciousness is supported so openly by the British Premier I begin to fear for the future. (56)

Whereas the W.E.A. was strictly 'non-sectarian and non-political' in its approach, the N.C.L.C. propagated Marxist economics. It endorsed the notion of 'class war' which it believed to exist in the realm of

ideas as much as in the economic infrastructure. The General Strike seemed to have persuaded Cartwright that the interests of Capital and Labour were not necessarily complementary:

'Twas a Glorious Victory!

'At last after 29 weeks of barbaric semi-starvation the miners have had to surrender to force majeure. Twenty-nine weeks in which entrenched Capital ably assisted by a Government dead to real statesmanship, but as prejudiced against even the most just of the men's claims as the most rabid mineowners could desire, wobbled and twisted its unholy way to the present climax. It is a phase of English history to which all decent and justice loving people will turn with loathing.' (57)

The Government pressed home its victory with a Trades Disputes Act (1927) which not only proscribed sympathetic strikes but also weakened the financial base of the Labour Party by requiring trade unionists to 'contract-in' their political levy. The Act seemed:

'.....on the face of it a measure inspired by revenge.' (58)

A mixture of legal constraints and falling membership (T.U.C. affiliation declined by half a million between 1925 and 1929) induced a mood of 'realism' amongst trade union leaders. This was epitomised by the Mond-Turner talks of 1928-29. Sir Alfred Mond, Chairman of Imperial Chemical Industries, suggested to Ben Turner, Chairman of the T.U.C., that there would be mutual advantage to both employers and union officials if they were to engage in a frank discussion of

57. Journal 26. p. 93
58. Journal 27. p. 24
their points of difference. Cartwright welcomed the spirit of co-operation, as this account of the 1927 Annual Conference of the N.U.R. suggests:

'The N.U.R. annual conference which has just been held is noteworthy for its acceptance of the policy of co-operation with the railway Companies which has been so strongly preached by Mr. Thomas. It is a policy, which in some respects at least, reverses that previously pursued. Noticeably have the speeches of the fire-eaters died down and those of the peace lovers and the peaceful penetrationists grown in conviction.

'This should not be construed as an effect of last years folly or of the Government's Trades Disputes Act. Rather it is the natural growth of a saner spirit which has always existed in the Union, a growth no doubt strengthened by the proved folly of the fireaters' policy.

'That co-operation should be the normal and best method of progress is certain, for are not Capital and Labour not interdependent? They are both in the same boat and sink or swim together. As partners each willing to do their best for the business they can do more for themselves and the public than if continuously at war over the division of the spoil.' (59)

Cartwright's 'team-model' of industrial relations was put to the test in the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash (October 1929). Structural unemployment caused by the decline of older industries such as cotton, coal and shipbuilding meant a long and painful process of adjustment. However, the slump in international trade was exacerbated by not only protectionist measures (Import Duties Act, 1932) but also by the 'balanced budget' approach of various administrations. Between

59. Journal 27. p. 39
1929 and 1931, British exports halved in value while unemployment reached three million (Twenty per cent of the working population). In this parlous economic situation, it became evident that the interests of Capital and Labour were not identical:

'Rationalisation

'One of the ways in which businessmen have tried to recover success has received the name given in the heading hereto. Briefly, rationalisation means the amputation of all waste in production, distribution and exchange. So far, so good, for by eliminating waste, production is cheapened and goods can be offered at keener competitive prices. Difficulties arise however when we come to consider the social effects of the process, for here we may find that what is good for a particular trade is not necessarily good for the whole people. For instance, by following the principle it might be considered that a business is best served by young people and that to employ people in middle or older life is wasteful....

'Another implication of Rationalisation is the elimination of wasteful competition. This leads eventually to bigger businesses, what used to be called Trusts, under which employees become mere pawns and the public interest is a minor consideration. Rationalisation requires the most up-to-date machinery which automatically produces further unemployment. How we are to burst this vicious circle the economists have not yet told us.' (60)

Employers were forced to reduce costs of production. In labour-intensive concerns, wages were an obvious target. Cartwright increasingly perceived industrial relations in terms of 'winners' and 'losers':

60. Journal 30. p. 28
'Adjustment or Attack

'Once again railwaymen are in one of those upsetting periods which seem inevitable under the Capitalistic system of Industry. It is one of those periods which trade unionists call an attack on wages and conditions, using the nomenclature of warfare viewing it as they do as an episode in the Class War. The "other side" speak of it as an adjustment of labour costs to meet the requirements of business to economic conditions, ignoring altogether the idea of war. However he may view it the effect on the workman is the same.' (61)

Although Cartwright eschewed the nomenclature of class warfare, his analysis of the ills of society was socialist. Human needs could not be satisfied by an economic system whose sole purpose was profit-making. Writing in August 1932, he quoted a speech by the Prince of Wales:

'A Royal Reformer

'..... "If all the employable labour were employed for a reasonable number of hours per week the world would have at its disposal commodities and services that would enable the population to live on a higher level of comfort and well-being than has ever been contemplated in the rosiest terms of the social reformer."

'That is putting into diplomatic language a fact some of us have been hammering in for a long time. It is the acceptance of that fact and the belief that it is one of the chief aims that makes the Labour Party so popular with thinking working men and women.

'Accepting the result referred to by the Prince as one devoutly to be wished and earnestly striven for we inquire what is the nature of the preliminary "if". What is the preventing factor? Is it not that

61. Journal 31. p. 9
source of many of the ills of the body politic, namely, profit.

'Goods - commodities and services - are not made primarily to be used but to be sold, and unless in the selling everybody who has anything at all to do with them can make a profit out of them they are counted as useless. Raw materials and labour the world has in plenty; it is the bugbear "Profit" that denies us the "well being" they could give.' (62)

The class nature of the State was made evident by the disintegration of the second Labour Government over the question of an 'economy drive.' With the apparently inexorable rise in unemployment, the budget could not be made to balance. Early in 1931, a Committee on National Expenditure was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir George May:

'..... The Report of the Economic Committee again urges that the Fund should be self supporting. With over two million people unemployed this would mean drastic reductions in all benefits; reductions that would place millions of people below the limit of subsistence. In a word it would mean semi-starvation for millions.' (63)

The crisis was precipitated by the actions of foreign investors who withdrew their deposits in gold from the London money market. The Labour government was forced to take measures to restore the confidence of the financial markets:

'The May Economy Report.....seems to have made greater impression abroad than it did at home. The result was that the impression got abroad.....that British finances were in queer street and that her

62. Journal 32. p. 51
63. Journal 31. p. 61
Budget would not and could not be made to balance. This brought about a great drain of gold from England and made the short credits of the Government became more difficult to negotiate. (sic)

'The proposed measures included besides heavier taxation, cuts in the pay of the Navy, Civil Servants, Police and teachers and in Unemployment Pay. It was on this last item that the Labour Party led by Mr. Henderson refused to follow its leaders. They decided to oppose the National Government and those of the party who supported it were summarily ejected.' (64)

As part of the economy drive, the newly elected National Government cut benefits for the insured by ten per cent and introduced a means test for the long-term unemployed:

'The Government's Progress

'..... The present Government has instituted alterations in the right to claim the "dole" by the unemployed. One of these has been the application of a means test after 26 continuous unemployment. It is often proving a mean test. Disability pensions received on account of war wounds, and even the incomes of children, are taken into account, e.g. my own brother a man of 60, whose chance of finding employment is almost negligible, has been struck off the dole and receives only 3/6 per week for himself and wife and one child because another daughter receives 30/- per week in wages. It amounts to a decree of semi-starvation for those unfortunate people.' (65)

It was evident by 1932 that the 'new era' wherein each person had the right to a 'share of the products of civilisation' had been still-born. The following extract reveals the bitterness felt by Cartwright

64. Journal 32. p. 1

65. Journal 32. p. 13
Regarding the ability of government to manipulate the electorate. It underlined the need for an 'educated democracy' in which citizens could approach issues with an informed understanding and examine arguments in a critical manner. He was of the opinion that the working classes were too easily 'gulled':

'After the Election

'.....Meanwhile there is a veritable boomlet in the trade of the country. Those who have claimed a monopoly in patriotism are endeavouring to persuade the people that it is a result from the change from a Labour Government. It is strange what fables people will believe in these enlightened (!) days. For instance, we hear again the age-old tale that now moneyed people are in power there will be plenty of work. How obviously silly it all is. The truth is, of course, that the fall in the exchange value of the £ has given the foreigner his chance to buy British goods.' (66)

'Twelve Months Later

'.....Now that the first year of its life is over we may calmly ask what sort of a bantling it is that the crisis, if it was a crisis, gave us. Is it a real national one, or a sham one, namely partisan? Is its second name 'Equality of sacrifice' as they told us it would be? Has it brought Peace, Plenty and Prosperity. In a word is it the Government the nation deserved.

'The crisis it was formed to avert did not come upon us. Not understanding very clearly where and how it was to come, let us give the Government credit for steering us past it. We give it the benefit of the doubt. That doubtful plume it should wear anyhow.

'Next, we were told harrowing things would assail us if the £ collapsed. We must keep it on the gold standard at all costs. When the

66. Journal 32. p. 9
Government was but a few weeks' old the gold standard was let fall. Now we are told that was a good thing, yet we paid many millions to France and U.S.A. to keep it up. Perhaps these frightened away the harrowing things that were to come. Perhaps.

'We were all to make sacrifices. Not to the gods but to the gold-standard. The gold standard went, but the sacrifices continue. Wages have fallen heavily and are still falling. A cotton strike is in progress as I write, an attempt to stay further reductions and the "National" Government heed it not.....

'Unemployment. Has that improved? No. The numbers are greater each month. They now are over three millions in spite of the fact that many thousands more have to seek public assistance and many more receive no relief at all - Thanks to the meanest test.

'Food taxes have been imposed and more are yet to come..... The "national" bantling is a Tory after all.' (67)

If individuals possessed an 'innate right' to share in the 'products of civilisation', then it was immoral, as well as inexpedient, to deny them a share of their educational birthright. In 1921, the Committee on National Expenditure, under Sir Eric Geddes, proposed inter alia raising of the school entry age, abolition of maximum class sizes and the reduction of teachers' salaries. The Report was published in February 1922. In the following entry, Cartwright offered not only his own justification for educational reform but also demonstrated that his views were not fully shared by his own social class:

67. Journal 32. p. 63
'The Desire for Education

'Education today is under a cloud. The enthusiasm for it in 1918 has evaporated....; amateur sociologists are demonstrating, to their own satisfaction anyhow, that the brains of the workers' children will not benefit after the age of 12 or 13; and worst of all, the workers themselves are apathetic, and regard education as a luxury of no pecuniary advantage to themselves, something that gives their children a distaste for work and prevents them from relieving the family exchequer and contributing something towards their own upkeep. Thus are the Government enabled and encouraged to save money on this most vital and greatest potential asset, the while its champions taunt the workers by saying they are unfit to govern.

'Sir James Barrie recently made a most remarkable speech upon his election as Rector of St. Andrews. It was remarkable in many ways but chiefly because he asked youth to claim partnership with age in affairs of moment.(sic) How I wish they would claim their right in this matter of education! The school-boy notoriously hates school because of the restraint he has to endure there and his lessons because of the unpalatable way they are given. A year or two after leaving school, however, when his mind is beginning to unfold itself he makes strenuous efforts.....to gain knowledge. The successful appeal of night-schools, correspondence colleges and such like are evidence of this; yet how many young people even these facilities are not accessible to who yet have an earnest desire for education. Such a one indeed was I myself, and no one knows the long tedious hours I spent toiling at night while my companions slept.

'Youth then, had he the right Sir James would have him claim, would demand, and insistently demand, that he must not be robbed of his educational birthright. He would claim the right to the fullest possible development of his brains, not only that he might compete for posts now reserved for those born of more wealthy parents, but also that he may intelligently understand so much he sees around him and which meets him in every paper or book he picks up; that he might enjoy the beauties of Art and Literature both of present and past.
ages; that he may think coherently and not be at the mercy of any
who might be slightly more educated than himself; that in short he
might live his life fully, be himself the Captain of his soul and
the master of his fate. Age, however, has no intention of giving it
to him.' (68)

The journals offer diverse rationale for the extension of education.
Writing in December 1920 at a time when the clauses of Fisher's Act
were under the threat of 'economy':

'.....education and housing....are a good paying investment. Such
firms as Cadburys and Levers have proved that up to the hilt. Would
there were more firms like unto these, we should then hear less of
Bolshevism perhaps. Good housing and sound education are necessary
ingredients in the making of a contented nation as well as being only
justice to the working population. To economise on these is as
foolish as a manufacturer economising by refusing to buy raw material
for his works.' (69)

Equality of opportunity, in the sense of allowing individuals the
chance to obtain occupational positions commensurate with their
abilities, was viewed as the social anodyne. To give working class
children the opportunity to 'compete for posts now reserved for those
born of more wealthy parents' would function as a social safety-valve
reducing the pressure created by a manifestly unfair system. Cartwright
quoted with approval the words of Lord Haldane, Chancellor of Bristol
University (1920):

'Haldane on Education

' "I have come to the opinion," he said, "after a good deal of study,
that the chief cause of the sense of separation between rich and poor

68. Journal 20. pp. 28-31
69. Journal 17. pp. 116-119
arises, not over questions of hours and wages and social surroundings, as over chances of education. The man who feels that he has it in him to have made a fuller use of the faculties that have been bestowed on him is embittered if he thinks that he has been denied the chance of doing so by being shut out from the training that has been lavished on many whom he sees to be by nature inferior to himself." (70)

However much education could do to promote social stability, this was not the main justification for reform. Cartwright went on to say:

'.....But it is upon the higher ground of the right of every individual to the fullest possible life that I would claim the right to the best education.' (71)

This accords with a fundamental assumption of liberal philosophy with respect to the centrality of the individual. John Hall, in Liberalism: Politics, Ideology and the Market, writes: 'Liberalism considers individuals, seen as the seat of moral value, as of equal worth; it is held to follow from this that the individual should be free to choose his or her own ends in life.' (71) For Cartwright it meant that the individual being 'Captain of his soul and the master of his fate.' Education ought to be geared towards the needs of the individual:

'The Value of Education

'Education is a much misused word. Much that passes for education is 

70. Journal 17. pp. 58-61
mere training for a specified object, such as vocational work. This has done harm to true education by turning some of the people against it as they consider that public money should not be spent in training workers to increase private profit.

'In its true sense education is the rationalisation of the individual for the development of personality. It is drawing out of the abilities of mind, body and spirit. It is not a "putting in" but an expansion or making use of what is already there. The use to which the powers are to be put is really irrelevant to education.

'The advantages to be derived from education are many and various. First of all is that it gives the individual greater enjoyment in life. It increases the number and amount of his pleasures.....(73)

When the minority Labour Government was formed in January 1924 he believed that the 'Great Hope' lay in a child-centred curriculum:

'I can and do believe that the present method of teaching in our elementary schools differs very largely from that practised in my school days, but I am not convinced that the awakening of the mind and the training of its powers receives greater attention than the absorption of a great mass of undigested facts.....

'Two of the most necessary preliminary conditions in the direction of achieving this desirable end are a less insistence on curricula and a greater measure of individual attention. The demand of every faddist that his pet subject shall be taught in elementary schools has led to a swollen curricula at the expense of the child's mind. A certain minimum of learning, including the three R's and music, must be taught but even these elements could be used towards the unfolding of the pupil's mind and not taught, as they were at least in my day, by a process of cram. The child should be encouraged to ask why such and such things are done in the way they are and even more encouraged to find out the reason himself. This not in a hurried

73. Journal 31. p. 29
way in which he placed in unenviable competition with quicker witted children. That merely defeats the end desired.' (74)

Although Cartwright maintained that the 'uses' of education were irrelevant to the educator, it is clear that the child-centred approach would promote active citizenship. Elementary education promoted an unthinking absorption of facts: passive uncritical students became passive uncritical citizens susceptible to manipulation by Machiavellian forces. Echoing the words of Mansbridge, Cartwright believed that the working classes remained 'undeveloped':

'The Workers and Education

'It is unfortunately too apparent to any observer that the working class do not value education as they ought to do. They regard it as a mere frill or embellishment of life that is not worth either the time, trouble or expense required in obtaining it. The advantage it offers are if not despised at least regarded as incommensurate with the trouble of acquiring it. The prefer cheaper pleasures. This is why they throng to football matches, dances and cinemas and shun the more intellectual delights of science, art and literature. It is not that they are more depraved than other classes or have less capacity for intellectual pursuits so much as they remain undeveloped. Their whole upbringing and training has been to seek quick returns. They live more from hand to mouth. The pleasures of the senses are immediate; those of the intellect deferred. A humorous situation is more quickly grasped than a paradox. Their lives are so ordered that they have little time or opportunity to seek out and enjoy the deeper pleasures of life.

'This is much regretted by those who have the interests of this class at heart or whose desire is to see an educated democracy; self-

governed, self-controlled, unselfish, broadminded and true to the highest in man.' (75)

If individuals were to be masters of their own fate, then they required the intellectual resources to resist the influence of 'opinion formers' whether they be a partisan press or noisy demagogues. In the aftermath of the General Strike, Cartwright wondered whether the rank and file had blindly followed their leaders:

'......Each one of us must reconsider how far our allegiance is going to carry us. Under what conditions and in what circumstances are we going to refuse to follow our leaders if at all? It is a question which many trade unionists have never yet considered, but which they will consider now. They are becoming aware that in leaving their trade union to decide for them in all conflicts they are surrendering their right to think for themselves.' (76)

Even though he subscribed to the non-political nature of the W.E.A., he believed that education would naturally reinforce the principle of co-operation, as if this was above the messy world of party politics. This was in line with the W.E.A. dictum that education consisted of the development of individual faculties not to 'get on' in life but to serve one's fellow men. The working out of the principle of co-operation could be seen in the modus operandi of philanthropic capitalism where Labour was more than a factor of production. It could be seen in the moral activities of a state committed to wise measures of social amelioration. The principle of co-operation underpinned the industrial and political activities of

75. Journal 23. pp. 50-53
the Labour Movement. Industrially, working men asked for a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' rather than expropriation of the means of production. Politically, the Labour Party was committed to gradual, piecemeal reform and not Class War. This was the ideal state:

'Co-operation

'Sufficient time has elapsed since the railway Companies adopted the principle of Co-operation with the employees in the working of the railways to allow us to estimate in some measure at least its advantages and disadvantages.

'In theory at least there can be no doubt that co-operation in industry, or elsewhere, is much more preferable than either competition or antagonism....

'It almost seems that it will only be after many years of persistent education that a real co-operative spirit will emerge. Those who have lived and worked under the old system do not seem able to adapt themselves to the new. They cannot alter their outlook any more than the leopard can change his spots.' (77)

The gap between the ideal situation and reality was perhaps nowhere clearer than in the area of education. In 1922 the Labour Party had published Secondary Education for All which called for the establishment of a system of 'free and universal Secondary Education'. The policy document argued that all children, irrespective of social class, should be transferred at the age of eleven plus from the primary school to one type or another of secondary school and remain

77. Journal 29. p. 43
in the latter until sixteen. The Hadow Report 1926, accepting the rationale of different types of pupil and therefore the need for selection, argued that there should be parity of resources between the differing types of post-primary schools. Although Cartwright never mentioned these documents, he quoted, with obvious approval, from a speech by F. Mander, President of the National Union of Teachers (1927):

'Equality of Opportunity

"Children are not born equal, nor can they be made equal and the claim for equality of opportunity does not mean a demand for similar instruction for every child, but that the State has no right to discriminate in its gifts to children of similar bodily and mental fitness, and that a child's right to education of this and that kind, so long as it is provided by the State, shall stand or fall on its own ability to learn, and no other ground, such as its parents' ability to earn. The nation must be brought to realise that it is a sound business proposition to make a systematic effort, on a national basis, to work all its seams of intellectual fuel, and not, as at present, a few selected seams, and those not always the richest and best."' (78)

The second Labour Government (1929-31), which did not secure an overall majority in the Commons, attempted to quicken the pace of reform by introducing legislation to raise the school leaving age. The third Bill, which proposed maintenance allowances at a flat rate of five shillings per head, was rejected by the Lords (168:32) on the grounds of expense. The £7 million economy cuts demanded by the May Report forestalled any further measures of reform. Capital expenditure between 1931 and 1932 fell from £13 to £2.5 millions. By 1938, seventy eight per cent of the children in rural areas were

78. Journal 27. p. 20
still in 'all-age' schools. The 'deadening hand' of the National Government was all too obvious:

'As an example of the inadequacy of elementary schools, Alsager can be quoted. Here one old church school had to serve an area three miles across. Some children have to travel two miles to and from school and are unable to get home for a mid-day meal. There is no facility at or near the school for a warm meal to be obtained. The whole building is out of date, its lavatory conveniences are insanitary and even the playgrounds are of trodden earth and often waterlogged.' (79)

The 1920s had witnessed a growing demand for secondary places from the middle and skilled working classes who saw secondary education as a pathway to secure jobs in the new industrial and white-collar sectors. When Ernest Cartwright had completed his schooling in 1896, the scholarship ladder barely existed; working class children were destined to labour. His own children, Nancy and John, enjoyed the benefits of a secondary education, costly though this was to their thrifty parents. After the Great War, Cartwright believed that the 'old divisions of caste would be done away with,' and every child would receive his or her educational birthright. However, it appeared as if social class divisions were intensifying rather than dissipating. The General Strike had demonstrated the class nature of the British state; the so-called National Government no more than a Tory one and determined to put the clock back. On 15 September 1932, Circular 1421 was published:

79. Journal 33. p. 39. See Appendix 17
'Taxing Brains

'The notorious Circular 1421 issued by the Board of Education shows how far we have receded from the attitude popularised by H.A. Fisher when he was Minister of Education. In those early days after the war when Reconstruction was the watch-word, Mr. Fisher introduced and pilotted through the House the most advanced and farseeing Education Bill of our time. It recognised that the brains of the young were the raw material from which a prosperous State was to spring.

'Today some few benefits remain from that Act, but the attitudes of the Authorities has so changed as to nullify many of the advantages it provides. Many of its provisions have never been made effective in some districts, for the Act was partly adoptive, but some more advanced have made full use of the measure. In these secondary education, with which Circular 1421 deals, has been made entirely free to all those who deserve it and are able to benefit from it. In others the number of free places have been largely increased.

'The blighting hand of this Economy Government through this Circular, which becomes operative in the New Year, abolishes "free places" instituting in their stead "special places" by a means test for the parents of all who occupy them. Their number is also to be greatly reduced. In addition the fees for secondary education are to be increased. Many parents who have struggled strenuously to give their children an education that they might have a better chance in the world than they themselves had, will either have to further stint themselves or give up the attempt altogether. Thus the poverty of the parent is made a greater handicap to the brains of his child.'

(80)

80. Journal 33. p. 13
Chapter Nine

'Birth's Invidious Bar'

'I have gone through an exhibition of Japanese art, got up for the poor of Whitechapel with the idea of elevating them, of begetting in them yearnings for the Beautiful and True and Good. Granting (what is not so) that the poor folk are thus taught to know and yearn after the Beautiful and True and Good, the foul facts of their existence and the social law that dooms one in three to a public - charity death, demonstrate that this knowledge and yearning will be only so much of an added curse to them.' (1) These words were written by Jack London after passing as an American sailor stranded in London's East End during 1902. His comments were directed towards those symbols of well meaning middle class patronage, the residential settlements. Toynbee Hall had been established by those liberal elements of the professional middle class, steeped in a tradition of public service, who sought to broaden the concept of citizenship beyond the acquisition of formal rights (equality before the law and such like): 'To provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment for the people of the poorer districts of London and other great cities; to enquire into the conditions of the poor and to consider and advance plans calculated to promote their welfare.' (2) The enterprising spirit of New Liberalism promised an era of social class reconciliation. The Church of England had nurtured individuals whose conception of the social order began with the morality of the New Testament.

The Archbishop of York, Cosmo Gordon Lang, an advocate of 'enlightened capitalism', summed up the spirit of the sponsors when he spoke in the Queen's Hall in 1911: 'The nineteenth century.....was concerned with the creation of wealth: the twentieth century will be concerned with its distribution..... We cannot but be appalled by the contrast of increasing prosperity and great wealth and of great poverty, of increasing luxury and and of great squalor..... Our best self in the contemplation of this inequality says that these things ought not to be.' (3) The Church of England nurtured men like R.H. Tawney and Archbishop Temple who, according to A.H. Halsey 'saw capitalism not simply as un-Christian, but anti-Christian in that it converted economic means into overriding ends and thus introduced the worship of false gods.' (4)

The work of the W.E.A. needs to be understood as an expression of New Liberalism; an attempt to restore social equilibrium. The elementary schools had expressed this in a crude form. The Catechism of the Anglican Prayer Book, to which Ernest Cartwright was accustomed, left the child in no doubt regarding his station: 'To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters.' (5) On 20 January 1906, the Prince of Wales expressed his fears to Edward VII in no uncertain terms: 'I see that a great number of Labour Members have been returned which is rather a dangerous sign, but I hope that

5. Halsey,  _Change_, p. 49
they are not all Socialists.' (6) Such alarms were evident in the
moves which gave rise to the W.E.A.. Albert Mansbridge had warned the
academic establishment at Oxbridge that the working classes were
'afire to act politically.' Such fears were out of all proportion
to the alleged 'menace'. Historians of the Labour Movement concur in
their view that the British Labour Party was reformist, pragmatic and
gradualist in orientation, eschewing the pure milk of Marxist
doctrine in favour of piecemeal reform. The academic sponsors of the
W.E.A. (such as Temple, Gore, Smith and Ball) embodied New Liberalism
rather than Socialism. A litmus test of the New Liberal position was
the attitude displayed towards the class system. The socialist
egalitarian critique of the class system, according to Parkin, 'raises
objections to the wide disparities of reward accruing to different
positions.' The meritocratic critique, he goes on to say, 'is less
concerned' about inequalities of reward accruing to different positions
than about the process of recruitment to these positions. The prime
objection raised is against present restrictions on the opportunities
for talented but lowly born people to improve their personal lot.
Seen from this angle, social justice entails not so much the equal-
isation of rewards as the equalisation of opportunities to compete
for the most privileged positions.' (7) In a speech at Swansea (1
October 1908) David Lloyd George presented the case for the approach
of New Liberalism to social reform: "The same observations apply to
the question of civil equality. We have not yet attained to it in
this country - far from it. You will not have established it in this
land until the child of the poorest parent shall have the same

6. Quoted by D.E. Martin, 'The Instruments of the People', in Martin
and Rubinstein, Ideology, p. 125

opportunity for receiving the best education as the child of the richest." (8) The Welfare State, according to this view, professes to offer all citizens without distinctions of class or status a defined range of services.

Exponents of New Liberalism were able to convince working class activists such as Ernest Cartwright that their interests lay in co-operating with 'the new breed of Liberal in a drive to abolish poverty via legislative intervention of the State.' (9) The work of the settlements and the W.E.A. needs to be located in terms of the rise of 'class politics' at the end of the nineteenth century. A.H. Halsey has argued that the damaging potential of class conflict has been mitigated by the development of citizenship through civil, political and social rights. The enfranchisement of the proletariat meant that 'Class and status began a long retreat from direct control over organised politics.' (10) However, far from securing hegemony in the political domain, the Labour Movement remained subordinate. The Marxist historian, James Hinton, argues that the Labour Movement remained wedded to capitalism because the 'political articulation of the emergent working class movement took place in the context of a succession of liberal strategies to contain and subordinate working class politics.' (11) The New Liberals believed they could offer a collectivist route to social harmony. Various reforms were spoken of as ending the class war: conciliation boards would end the era of

10. A.H. Halsey, Change, p. 54
the strike and lock-out while trade boards would end 'sweated labour'. Social class was believed to be an evolutionary hangover from a barbaric age. It was incumbent upon the Liberal Party to represent the 'grand classlessness of all progressive forces.' (12) In 1904 Lloyd George had expressed it thus: "I think it is better that you should have a Party which combines every section and shade of opinion, taken from all classes of the community, rather than a party which represents one shade of opinion alone and one class of the community alone.' (13) For Howkins, the policy of 'progressivism' - embodied in class-less social reform for the good of all - was chimera. His examination of the liberal-sponsored Eastern Counties Agricultural Labourers' and Small Holders' Union shows the degree to which it embodied free market ideology regarding the determination of wages. The strike by farm labourers in Norfolk (April 1910 - January 1911) was condemned by Liberal leaders of the union who felt that they could not alienate middle class and gentry support. Despite the shallow nature of progressivism, it provided an impetus for the development of the W.E.A.. Education, so it was claimed, would produce new citizens, enlightened and rational in both belief and practice, who would live together in fellowship. Underlying this was an assumption that educational activity could transcend and subordinate class divisions generated by the labour and capital markets. In other words national regeneration could only be achieved by the regeneration of individuals. Writing in 1913, Mansbridge outlined the raison d'etre of the University Tutorial Class: 'Tutorial classes are less than nothing if they concern themselves merely with the acquisition or

13. A. Howkins, 'Edwardian Liberalism and Industrial Unrest' in History Workshop No. 4, p. 156
dissemination of knowledge. They are in reality concerned with the complete development of those who compose them, and indeed of the common life.' (14) Mindful of the increasing interest of trade unions in political action, the authors of the 1908 Report were anxious that the new governors display 'foresight in their choice of political means.' (15) D.H.S. Cranage, Secretary of Cambridge University Local Lectures, expressed the conservative instincts of the educators:

'Our priceless heritage in religion, in civilisation, in accumulated experience would seem at times to be at the mercy of an uninstructed popular vote.' (16) He believed that the British people possessed sufficient common sense to preserve institutions they did not fully understand. Yet it was as well, he believed, that preservation of the status quo depended upon knowledge as well as racial conservatism.

However, even knowledge was secondary to that greatest of all values - fellowship. J.H.B. Masterman, Rector of St. Mary-le-Bow, focussed upon the evil of exaggerated class consciousness: class distinctions were economic in origin, but were accentuated by an education system which disinherited the majority of the people. Through unity of action in pursuit of education between manual and brain workers, epitomised by the U.T.C., class consciousness would melt away:

'.....a common desire for knowledge can bridge gulfs of class and creed and awaken a sense of comradeship and mutual affection among students and teachers of the most diverse social and political antecedents.' (17) Although the Ruskin strike (1908) demonstrated

14. Mansbridge, U.T.C., pp. 8-7
15. Oxford Report 1908, para. 77
the limits to 'fellowship', the W.E.A., by virtue of district autonomy, the overtly non political stance and its commitment to service, did attract working class men and women whose goal was social emancipation. The idea that the working man had a right to more than a bread and butter education that would make him a more efficient producer of wealth was one that struck a responsive chord in a number of autodidacts. The Oxford Report acknowledged the just demands of the working classes for a liberal education that would prepare them for life and not livelihood. In an age when working men were 'afire to act politically' they responded to the following message: 'Each child should be taught that the aim of Education is not material self-advancement - that he should get on and rise out of his class, but that he may be enabled to take his part in the uplifting of his class and the community in general.' (18)

This message appealed to Nonconformists such as Ernest Cartwright. As J.F.C. Harrison has argued, the W.E.A. imbibed its peculiar strength from the radical Nonconformist provinces - 'the strength of working class self-improvement, of nonconformist moral earnestness, of a radical concern for social justice.' (19) Religion played a crucial role in the educational and political work of working class radicals. In its secular effect, organised religion has been seen as an apparatus of social control. But, as A.H. Halsey has acknowledged, 'In industrial Britain, the non-conformist chapels were the bearers not only of religiosity but also of a radicalism which

18. Oxford Report 1908, para. 81
schooled more than one generation of activists. Even the Church of England nurtured its socialists.....whose conception of the the social order began with the morality of the New Testament..... At all events, the religiously moulded inheritance of native radicalism of the early years of this century was responsible and respectable. It was a radicalism that accepted many traditional and middle class values, not a radicalism of class warfare..... It gave working class leaders to the twentieth century who, though tenaciously defensive of union interests in dealing with owners and managers, were anti-Marxist, non-revolutionary, pragmatic and piecemeal in their reformist intentions.' (20) Was Ernest Cartwright a typical radical Nonconformist? If social science aims at a nomothetic generalizable goal, then methodological objections can be raised regarding the value of describing one case. In what one historian has called the 'ante-Gallup dark age' the problem of reliability rears its head - of knowing the larger sample of which the case is representative. How do we know that Ernest Cartwright's involvement in the W.E.A. was typical of other working class people? In terms of the strict canons of social scientific method, involving statistical validation, we cannot know the typicality. However, there is prima facie evidence to suggest that the diaries represent more than idiosyncrasy. In addition to the letters (21) and a wealth of autobiographical recollections (22) there are local studies which attempt to 'explain the coherence of religious, economic and political beliefs.'(23)

20. Halsey, Change, pp. 68-69

21. Several are quoted by T. Kelly in Walls in his study of University Extension at Manchester University 1886-1946

22. T.W. Price, The Story of the W.E.A. Price was one of the original 30 students in Tawney's Rochdale U.T.C.

There is justification for investigating the life of a single individual, if the goal of social science is that of understanding behaviour rather than quantifying, classifying or dissecting behavioural patterns. Bill Williamson in his biographical study of social change in a mining community in Throckley (24) has argued that within the discipline of sociology the logic of number and generalisation (the positivist, nomothetic approach) has displaced that which is concerned with the interpretive understanding of social action (the idiographic approach). His own study, drawing upon the work of the German historian Dilthey, gives the individual a central place. Dilthey saw the autobiography as the highest and most instructive form of the understanding of life and the study of how individuals reflect on their own lives is what makes historical insight possible. For Williamson such reflections 'are the foundations of historical vision which enables us to give new life to the bloodless shadows of the past.' (25) David Vincent's study of 49 autobiographies (26) gives a central place to personal testimony unmediated by the voices of outside observers. The 'accuracy' of autobiographical accounts was not a relevant factor in Vincent's research. What concerned him was the 'state of knowledge amongst individuals and groups' - to build up a picture of society that a working man holds, and to examine its consequences for the individual and his social class. The Cartwright diaries certainly give the reader insight into the motivation, attitudes, values and

the state of knowledge of an individual working man over a period
of twenty six years (1909-1935). Unlike autobiographies, they have
the quality of immediacy which enable the reader to chart the
continuities and changes over a period of time. With an autobiography,
there is a tendency to revise the past in light of present circumsta-
nces, perhaps understating those aspects of biography that do not
accord with present self-conceptions.

What were Ernest Cartwright's reasons for keeping a diary? Initially,
it seems that it was but one expression of his desire for self-
 improvement. By February 1909, he had begun to study 'some of the
works of John Ruskin,' an indication of his radical beliefs. The
main reasons were:

'.....that I might gain facility in expressing myself in writing.....
And as I now do a fair amount of reading, I think I have a few
thoughts which may be interesting to read at some future time.' (27)

By January 1914, it was clear that the 'few thoughts' were directed
towards current affairs:

'These writings were intended when I first decided to write them
to have for one of their objects to give a glimpse of the times in
which we live and to bring to remembrance at some future date my
opinions on current events.' (28)

The act of keeping a diary was an intensely private affair. Cartwright

27. Journal 1. p. 1
felt that 'prying eyes' would be an inhibiting factor. His daughter has commented, 'We were not really aware of his involvement with the W.E.A. and never really knew of his writings. They were presumably mainly done at night.' (29) Were they ever intended for public consumption? In the following extract (21 January 1921) Cartwright showed an awareness of the possible uses of his diaries. It seems that he was attempting to rescue the working man from the pejorative judgements of his 'betters'. Although fully supportive of the values of self-help and thrift, the middle classes, he felt, were not appreciative of the adverse economic circumstances under which working class people laboured - circumstances that made a mockery of the injunction to 'stand on your own two feet.' Furthermore, he wished to correct the stereotype of working men as driven by immediate gratification and a love of gambling, drink and horse-racing:

'Another object of these writings, probably an unconscious one, has been that perhaps in some future day when I as an individual have been forgotten, they might be found among the rubbish of some of my children or my children's children. If such a fate should await them and that at present unborn individual should happen to be of an enquiring turn of mind, he would be able to form some more intimate opinion of what kind of working man lived in this day and the circumstances under which we live than he otherwise would do. To read of some contemporary writings one might form the opinion that working men have little interest apart from football and the public house. Those I know do interest many, but for me they have little interest. I have never seen a first class football match nor have I ever - so far as I can recollect - had a drink in a public house.' (30)

30. Journal 17. pp. 140-144
A future reader:

'.....might be tempted to construct the story of a life from the material here found.' (31)

His comments on football and public houses remind us that Cartwright did not share the leisure pursuits of his work-mates. Clearly he can be identified as a part of the 'respectable' working class. Respectability entailed public worship; commitment to the work ethic; proscription of swearing, gambling and drink; an emphasis upon independence - thrift and self-help; attachment to the value of education and a respect for other people and their property. At times this respectability could degenerate into self-righteousness. The following extract (5 April 1910) expressed his disdain for the moral incompetents amongst the working classes:

'Man is a sociable animal and it is this inborn desire of congenial comradeship which some of us find so hard to satisfy. Some people more easily find a companion to suit their tastes than others because their tastes are more common. Take the loafer. Anyone who can loaf about and not take too great an interest in anything, except, perhaps horse racing and drinking, will suit him for a companion. But when one happens to be of a serious thoughtful nature, and naturally abhors all kinds of filthy talk, and takes no interest in paper footballing or horse racing and is not fond of stupefying one's senses with drink, then one cannot be so easily satisfied, for the species are rarer.' (32)

A surface reading of the diaries would seemingly indicate a stratum of the working classes imbued with traditional middle class values and

32. Journal 2. pp. 27-29
attitudes: a commitment to self-improvement, 'getting on', thrift, and despair at the moral lacunae evident in the lumpenproletariat. Writing in September 1923 about a proposal to legalise betting agents:

'Although I do not believe I am a "killjoy" I do not think that the extension of this gambling fever is a good thing for the nation. Behind it is desire to obtain something for nothing. We are all I know naturally desirous of obtaining as much as possible for the least possible outlay, but that we should be encouraged to expect that something can be got for nothing is not a good thing. We know that the prizes all have to be obtained from those contributing and that all share an equal chance of obtaining them, but the idea is that not worth, skill or any creative ability is necessary to the acquirement of a small fortune but sheer blind luck or chance. The encouragement of this belief is fatal to all effort and the dogged perseverance which is said to be the outstanding characteristic of British character.' (33)

The growth of gambling was to be deplored not only because it undermined the work ethic, but also because it reinforced the ethos of the 'get-rich-quick' society. Self-improvement was not synonymous with the acquisition of material wealth. Indeed the desire for riches indicated to Cartwright the extent to which the search for spiritual values had been atrophied. Writing at the end of the Great War, he considered that the experience, far from fostering a belief in the Divine had the effect of a

'...loosening of spiritual sanctions. The organised churches seem to be unable to regain their hold upon the people whose expression of the religious rather finds an outlet through such systems as

33. Journal 24. pp. 30-32. See Appendix 18
spiritualism. But by far the greater number have drifted towards materialism, forsaking altogether those things which do not directly add to their worldly wealth for the enjoyment of the senses and material gain.' (34)

The self-help was not directed towards material goals. Rather, his involvement in the W.E.A. was the direct outcome of his religious beliefs. That is, he felt that it was incumbent upon Christians to develop their talents to the full for the service of others. Religion provided the foundation for his involvement in secular institutions (the W.E.A., N.U.R., the L.M.S. Friendly Society and the Labour Party).

The espousal of the doctrine of self-help by working people did not betoken their 'embourgeoisment'. It became redefined as collective self-help. As James Hinton has argued, the meaning of the term became 'coloured' by the social context. The respectable elements remained an elite within the working classes: self-help was acted upon as members of the collective. This was the basis of the 'mutualism of the trade union ethic.' (35) Combination was a 'negotiated' form of self-help, and a far cry from the platitudes of Samuel Smiles.

'Up From Serfdom

'The common people, by which is meant those usually called the working classes, have a history as interesting and as inspiring as any. It is distinct from that of the people generally because they were led by a class who possessed educational advantages which the generality of the people did not have.

'It is the history of those who have been the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for those who possessed more of the good things of

34. Journal 16. p. 43
35. Hinton, Lab. Soc., p. 9
life which is referred to. They are the rank and file of the people whose very lives as well as their liberties were considered of little account until well in the nineteenth century.

'Sometimes their advantage lay in the same direction of the people as a whole as at the signing of Magna Carta, but always they were the cannon fodder for the prime movers whether they were the landed aristocracy, the squirearchy or merely the wealthy industrialists.

'This history shows that among these could be found high idealists who gladly sacrificed themselves for their beliefs; and men of great intellectual capacity even though that capacity did not fully fructify by reason of birth's invidious bar.

'Perhaps the greatest benefits as well as the greatest means of raising the class has been obtained by combination. When this fact that "unity is strength" has been fully grasped progress has been most rapid. Another striking fact in this history is that those organisations which have brought them the best benefits have come by their own exertions. Self-help has been their best friend.' (36)

Far from embodying middle class values, collective self-help stemmed from the 'low relations of trust' in British industry. Within the railway industry, wages not only remained virtually static during the period 1905-1912 but also the workers were faced with military style discipline. In January 1912, Cartwright noted the increase in money income during a period of rapid inflation:

'Seven years ago, Relief signalmen were earning 32/- weekly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Weekly Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special first class</td>
<td>30/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First class</td>
<td>28/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second class</td>
<td>24/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third class</td>
<td>22/-</td>
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36. Journal 29. p. 6
'Today they are earning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Salary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relief Signalmen</td>
<td>about 34/-</td>
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<td>Special first class</td>
<td>32/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>First class</td>
<td>from 28/- to 30/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second class</td>
<td>25/-</td>
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<td>Third class</td>
<td>22/-</td>
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Not only had the 'Third class' remained static but also there had been a general speeding up of work. In addition the life of the railwaymen was constrained by a mass of regulations. For instance, the Taff Vale Railway Company proscribed the following: 'Not an instance of intoxication, singing, whistling or levity, while on duty, will be overlooked and besides being dismissed the offender will be liable to punishment.' (38) A.H. Halsey suggests that relations in the work place reflected liberal doctrines of the market, defining labour as a commodity. Employers attempted to extract the maximum surplus value from their workforce who reacted accordingly. Summing up the 'feel' of industrial relations, Alan Fox has commented: 'So far as work relations were concerned, the classes existed alongside each other, self-contained and independent; mutually alienated; the one seeking to protect itself against the superior power of the other by means of low-trust bargaining.' (39) Fox argues that the working class independence that expressed itself through Trade Unionism was conceded legal status because it limited itself to 'relatively marginal' challenges of a bread and butter kind. Although committed to a sub-culture which celebrated solidarity and collectivism, Cartwright eschewed the conception of the class war in the Marxist sense. The following extract highlights his commitment to

37. Journal 3, pp. 70-74
38. Quoted by Hinton in Lab. Soc., p. 19
39. Quoted by Halsey in Change, p. 69
achieving a fair deal. It was written in the aftermath of a nine-day national strike in September 1919:

'It was written in the aftermath of a nine-day national strike in September 1919:

'It's cause was an attack on the standard of life of the workers, organised by the supermen of the Government, viz. the Bros. Geddes. ....After being urged by the N.U.R., a "definitive" offer was made for the other grades which meant a reduction of wages to the lower paid grades of from 2/- to 14/- per week when the cost of living had dropped or remained for 3 months at 110 per cent above that of August 1914. This meant a return to the pre-war standard for some and to others a reduction below that level. This the men would most certainly not accept nor the N.U.R. either, unless they wished to see the Union destroyed, and further negotiations failed and a strike was declared....

'My part in the strike was as a member of the strike committee at Alsager. 99 per cent of our men were out and we needed no pickets. Greatly daring, I ventured to send a short article to the "D.A." giving my personal point of view but it was not accepted. As all strikes are to ardent trade unionists this was no playtime to me. I put in about 12 hours every day.' (40)

In terms of values, Cartwright had much in common with the first cohort of Labour Party Members of Parliament, described by Martin as 'sober artisans in chapel'. (41) They adhered to Smilesian values of persistence and self-denial. In a sense their advance depended upon such virtues. Many had been half-timers at school and were schooled in the 'university of life': they had made their way into national politics by trade union and municipal work. They were committed to Temperance with Hardie, MacDonald, Shackleton, Crooks and Henderson taking an active part in the Trades Union and Labour Officials'


41. Martin, 'The Instruments of the People' in Martin and Rubinstein, Ideology, p. 130
Temperance Fellowship. This reflected the preponderance of Nonconformism having its roots in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Lancashire and South Wales. Martin suggests that there was a gap between the L.P. and the working classes, certainly in terms of values. He quotes the words of G.K. Chesterton: 'They are the instruments of the people.....men of a definite and even pedantic class; men whose austere and lucid tone, whose elaborate economic explanations smack of something very different from the actual streets of London.' (42) Although their values, intellectual horizons and cultural activities separated them from the 'ordinary' working classes, this did not lessen their political commitment. Nor, in the case of Cartwright, did it signify an elevation to middle class status. Reading one of the many panegyrics to the virtue of 'thrift', one could be forgiven for thinking that this represented an individualistic view of society: that is, by virtue of hard work, abstemiousness and moral rectitude the successful had engineered their elevation. What the captains of Industry had done today, others could do tomorrow:

'On Saving Money

'Thrift, considered academically, is a desirable virtue. It implies self restraint, perseverance and forethought. These are traits of a fine character whether it be that of an individual or a nation. Thrift accompanied by industry and ambition is capable of achieving great things as has been exemplified many times in our history, and more particularly in the early days of industry. Many of the captains of Industry have to thank this early practise of this virtue for the success they have attained.....

42. Martin, 'The Instruments of the People', in Martin and Rubinstein, Ideology, p. 130
'The practice of thrift is incumbent upon all classes although it may not appeal to all with the same force or for the same ends. The poor man would be thrifty so that he and his dependants might be placed a little further from destitution and penury, and that he may have a little more store to draw upon when the proverbial rainy day comes or when old age overtakes him. The wealthy man should be thrifty however so that he might be able to extend his business and that he may not waste his patrimony but hand down to his heirs the wealth of which he has stewardship during his lifetime, unimpoverished and secured.' (43)

These comments should be understood in terms of the acerbities of working class life. Standish Meacham, in his study of the working class (1890-1914) has argued that though some of the labour aristocracy pursued middle class status, through church attendance, teetotalism or opening a Post Office account, most realised that their market situation would never permit this. He suggests that the exercise of thrift should be seen as an expression of the desire 'in the face of brutally disheartening economic facts, to lead an independent, orderly and less than brutal existence.' (44) Writing in December 1921, Cartwright reminded the future reader that thrift could not survive adverse economic circumstances:

'.....we must first remember that unemployment has been increasing throughout the year. Trade seemed to come almost to a standstill last Christmas and has gone from bad to worse ever since. There is more poverty from this cause alone in the country than at any time I can remember..... What a tragedy that is to hard-working thrifty people, to see their hard-earned, carefully hoarded little store eaten up and leaving them penniless in a workless spiritless world.' (45)

44. S.Meacham, A Life Apart, (1977) p. 29
The fear of poverty became a reality for Cartwright in 1933 when his health began to fail. He had spent some time previously in a convalescent home and was convinced that:

'The signs and portents multiply which tend to show the best of my life is over and that a ripe old age is improbable. I am now in the fateful fifties and if they are to bring my dismissal - so be it.' (46)

Greater than the fear of losing his sight was the 'mental fear of poverty.' He felt that the treatment of the poor was a great indictment against the unchristian nature of British society. In the following extract, Cartwright exhibited a characteristic of the respectable worker, that of 'independence'. Meacham argues that the Liberal reforms of the Edwardian era, such as The Education (Provisions of Meals) Act of 1906, alienated sections of the respectable working class. The feeding of 'necessitous' schoolchildren entailed a means test and, in areas such as Bristol, complex procedures of registration and investigation. Working class mothers felt that they would 'lose caste' if they availed their children of this benefit. Cartwright had similar thoughts regarding charity:

'The agonising thought that his misfortune may prevent him following his work and leave him a dependent on charity is a thought that sears his soul. He can hardly support the thought that his wife and children will not be able to enjoy the benefits and privileges he has struggled so long to provide for them. That is the hardest part of his burden.' (47)

46. Journal 33. p. 57

47. Journal 33. p. 67
That Cartwright identified himself as a member of the working classes is in no doubt. Though he may have distanced himself from his peers in terms of values, attitudes and practices, the centrality of work made him typical. He left school at thirteen having learnt his 3 R's and to know his place in the divinely ordained social structure. The educational ladder was virtually non-existent during the final quarter of the century. The working class child was destined to labour and the elementary school taught a curriculum that was appropriate to their station in life. His experiences at work reinforced his 'working class consciousness.' Michael Mann has identified four aspects of working class consciousness: 'Firstly, we can separate class identity - the definition of oneself as working-class, as playing a distinctive role in common with other workers in the productive process. Secondly comes class opposition - the perception that the capitalist and his agents constitute an enduring opponent to oneself..... Thirdly is class totality - the acceptance of the two previous elements as the defining characteristics of (a) one's total social situation and (b) the whole society in which one lives. Finally comes the conception of an alternative society, a goal towards which one moves through the struggle with the opponent.' (48) True revolutionary consciousness is a combination of all four. It is possible to divine the four aspects - identity, opposition, totality and alternative - without accepting the implication of revolutionary consciousness. The activity of self-improvement was constrained by the number of hours he worked. Writing in November 1918 he was able to comment upon the reality of adult education:

'That long hours of labour are not only an hindrance to the development of the workers but also are uneconomic from the employers point of view is becoming more recognised. This is emphasised both in the Report on Adult Education and the Report on the Health of Munition Workers. This matter of hours is the most important to the workers, yet they do not recognise it. There are still many men who are content to work excessive hours because of the additional wages they receive. They value everything on a money basis. This is accentuated by want of time and opportunity to develop any other interest. Thus a vicious circle is created. Some years ago I had my share of long hours but for the past 5 years have had a 48 or 56 hour week. Now I am working 72 hours and feel its dulling effect.' (49)

There were may complaints: the length of the working year (346 days in 1921); the timing of annual holidays (at the convenience of the company); night work and the discipline exercised by management. The logic of capitalism dictated the treatment of workers as 'profit-making machines'. The following extract shows his feelings at the tightening of discipline by the newly-formed London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company (1921):

'L.M.S. Regime

'.....One of the most striking changes in the reorganisation of the line is the minuteness and tightness of the organisation. Everything is marked, docketed.....and placed under authority. Standardisation is aimed at in everything, sometimes even to the sacrifice of beauty or even utility. Initiative is curtailed in the many and made the prerogative of the few. Under such a scheme it is small wonder that the employees become little more than a number and that each must come up to a required standard in every particular or be at once rejected.....

49. Journal 15. p. 33
'Even the welfare schemes that have been initiated fail to impart the personal touch. They all give the same impression of being instituted for some ulterior purpose. Take the L.M.S. magazine for instance, for we even boast a magazine. We are given photos and short accounts of the careers of some of the big-wigs... and elementary (very) educational articles.... Everything of a debatable nature or that would point to shortcomings in the system is rigidly excluded from its pages....

'Then take the lectures and classes which have been formed. These plainly are for the purpose of coaching the clerical grades in the work of the other departments. They all have the great defect of not being intended to enable any man to raise himself to a higher grade. They seem to be intended merely to get men to make themselves more efficient in time not paid for it, or to be able to blackleg others in times of labour troubles.' (50)

This seems to exemplify the point made regarding the 'low trust' evident in industrial relations. Cartwright appears to fulfil the criteria of class identity and opposition. The extent to which he corresponded to Mann's third criteria - that of totality - may be gauged from the following written in 1931:

'Limited Opportunities

'These are the lot of Labour and might well have been added..... in the poem on the previous page.

'Take my own case, not because it is exceptional, but typical; although there are many thousands in these islands whose opportunities of advancement..... are much smaller.

'Entering industry at the age of 13 I have been continuously employed ever since. Working six days each week and sometimes seven, fifty-one weeks a year..... My daily hours were nominally twelve, then ten

and later eight. Nominally, I say, for these were the minimum and often were much exceeded, often without extra pay.

'What leisure had such as I, even if the means and opportunity had been available, for travel, culture or even amusement? Shift work, the curse of railwaymen, is a great handicap, sometimes an effective barrier to any continuous association with one's fellows.' (51)

Although he held visions of a 'new era', this was not to be achieved through revolutionary violence. Indeed he disclaimed the nomenclature of 'class warfare':

'.....It may be that this misconception of Labour is due to the fact that the nomenclature of warfare is used in their propaganda. It speaks of the class war, of fighting for the rights of the proletariat, of attacks on wages or conditions and of a truce when a wage agreement is reached. All this given an erroneous idea to the aim of Labour which is peaceful progress rather than armed conquest.' (52)

Although Cartwright had rejected the Liberal Party as the articulation of working class interests, fundamental tenets of liberalism - the notion that the interests of individuals, classes and nations were complementary - proved to be more durable. As David Martin has observed, regarding the early Labour Party M.P.'s, hatred of capitalists was confined to members of the secular Social and Democratic Federation. The key to understanding Cartwright and his involvement in trade unions, W.E.A. and the Labour Party is to probe his religious beliefs. Two thirds of the 1906 cohort claimed Nonconformist beliefs. Martin suggests that in terms of prayer and reading habits (only two

51. Journal 31. p. 50
52. Journal 31. p. 34
claimed to have read Marx) they gave the impression of being 'Good Samaritans' who, through legislative action, would assist the poor, sick and aged. They were not determined to 'smash' the State. Rather, they looked for a Pauline conversion from their opponents - a reconciliation of the social classes in that earthly Jerusalem. Robert Moore's study of the Methodist miners in Co. Durham demonstrates the way in which religion affected men's adjustment to the world of socio-economic affairs.

The miners of Co. Durham during the period studied, 1874-1923, showed an affinity to *laissez-faire* liberalism. His thesis is that 'the effect of Methodism on a working class community was to inhibit the development of class consciousness and reduce class conflict.' (53) Moore attempts to demonstrate the 'elective affinity' between Methodism and the Manchester School. Protestantism encouraged individualism with the individual standing alone before God and market forces. Moreover, liberal ideas of the market and the functional harmony of society fit with the view, derived from St. Paul, that Christians are members of one body each with their calling to perform. According to the Wesleyan Conference of 1894 'our great work is to save the soul from sin and if we can accomplish this, all other evils will naturally disappear. It is through the individual we must work on society.' (54) It was incumbent upon individual Methodists to rescue others from sin. Moore's analysis of 435 sermons (1874-1923) shows that there were 'undeveloped' hints that social conditions required changing. The emphasis seemed to be upon personal regeneration

54. Quoted by Moore, in *P.P.P.*, p. 50
- to inculcate the habits of meekness, punctuality, thrift and pure thinking. What distinguished Cartwright was his belief that the State had a positive role in alleviating social distress. (Of course welfare legislation may have been seen as the precondition for personal regeneration). This role was premissed upon the central notion of fellowship. Capitalism was un-Christian in that the poor and the homeless were excluded from the 'brotherhood of Man.' The Congregational Church may have been attractive because it asserted the rights of humanity over that of property. R.J. Campbell, author of The New Theology was an exponent of Immanentalism, a belief that God was in every man and could be discovered and expressed in every one of one's fellow men. He believed that the task of the Church was to overcome the 'other-worldliness' of Christianity and commence its work of social reconstruction. But they looked for change through conversion - the diffusion of a new spirit which would dissolve the 'iron bitterness' between master and man. E. White, Chairman of the Congregational Union (1895) summed up the optimism of the 'New Liberalism': "Let the working man and the capitalist be taught that they are 'members of one another' and let the relation between them be based on brotherly consideration of the common needs of life, and there will then be no cause to invite the rich man to 'howl' or the poor man to conspire and confiscate, under the pretence of 'Social Equality'. (55) Writing in the aftermath of the 1926 Strike, he was hopeful about the emergence of a 'new spirit' on the railways:

'Co-operation in Industry

'That the prolonged and severe trade depression has engendered the
spirit of Co-operation in Industry between the Trade Unions and Employers is a fact.....

'It must be admitted that the average trade unionist has in the past been prone rather to make for himself a safer, easier and more profitable occupation and has given little thought to the welfare of his employer's business. His attitude was to grouse about any small injustice, fancied or real, that adversely affected himself and to use his organisation as a means to get them remedied. That is the spirit the ordinary Trade Unionist was taught to foster. That he believed was why the union existed.

'To change this outlook into one which had first of all the good of his employer's business in mind is not an easy or rapid process....'

(56)

Cartwright did not indulge in wanton strikes. He believed that the working classes ought to work with Capital, but that, as a quid pro quo, market forces ought to be tempered with notions of justice (a fair day's wage for a fair day's pay). He believed that in both the industrial and political spheres, the dominant rules ought to be moral. In 1931, he confessed that his religion was the Christianity of Abou Ben Adhem. The poem by James Henry Leigh Hunt was a celebration of fellowship:

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight of his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" - the vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."

56. Journal 28. p. 3
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so."
Replied the angel, Abou spoke more low
But cheerly still, and said, "I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow men."

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Fellowship was translated into political discourse as fraternity.
Halsey has argued that political fraternity is synonymous with citizenship. But this embodies more than a wider franchise. Working class people expected minimum standards of health, education, housing and standards of living. R.H. Tawney in *Equality* demanded that social institutions be planned, as far as possible, to emphasise and strengthen 'not the class differences which divide, but the common humanity which unites them.' (57) The emphasis was upon fairness rather than revolution. Indeed, Cartwright was hopeful of Labour's progress in municipal elections (1934) given that it had shed 'any real or fancied taint of Communism.' Rather, he looked towards Labour to redress the imbalances generated by capitalism:

'The Municipal Elections

'The outstanding fact in the municipal elections just concluded is the overwhelming success of the Labour nominees.....

'In some places it is probable that what might be called "pump" politics affected the result, but the landslide is so widespread that there must be a feeling of general dissatisfaction with the present,

now past, administration to account for it. The chief trait of that administration was its tight-fistedness and particularly so in dealing with the unfortunates of the industrial depression....

'Now that a Labour majority is in power they have every opportunity to use the many Acts of social amelioration that have never been put into operation or only indifferently so. Slum clearance, adequate sanitation and water supply, the feeding of necessitous schoolchildren......are some of the ways in which a more vigorous administration might show itself. Wise spending however must not degenerate into spendthriftness.' (58)

Religion provided the basis for his support for an ethical, fraternal socialism which rejected 'class war' in favour of peaceful evolution. It also provided the impetus for his self-education. He was concerned to cultivate God-given talents for the benefit of others. According to the German sociologist, Max Weber, the centrality of a 'calling' derives from an 'inner world asceticism': that is, the believer sees himself as an instrument of God, doing His work. Robert Moore has applied this concept to the Durham miners and tries to find a positive role for Methodism. He is concerned with the expression of the idea of a calling or vocation and the ways in which these notions were expressed in activity in the mundane affairs of the community. Whereas Marxists such as E.P. Thompson have tended to denigrate Methodism, by claiming that its leaders fostered the bourgeois work ethic (59), Moore accentuates the positive: 'The Methodist was able to carry into political activity......a sense of earnestness, of dedication and of a calling that was to be important for the organisations he so led.' (60)

What was to be the use of education? The

58. Journal 34. p. 65
60. Moore, P.P.P., p.9
'official' W.E.A. line, as expressed in the Oxford Report 1908 was that the individual ought to cultivate his talents for the good of his class. Cartwright embodied such a view when he speculated about his possible 'uses and duties' in the world. The tangible elements of service relate to his involvement with the N.U.R., W.E.A., Labour Party and the L.M.S. Friendly Society. In 1927, he became a member of the Management Committee of the latter. The experience seems to have confirmed his views regarding the 'loafer':

'Friendly Society Business

'.....One can quite easily understand that to be in office needs more measured and restrained language than is necessary when in opposition. Responsibility brings caution, and greater knowledge deeper wisdom. One sees motives at work among individuals which previously were never even suspected. Individuals who were before thought to be unimpeachable are found to be guilty of acts almost fraudulent. In this way one gets a deeper knowledge of human nature.

'In the past I have criticised the amount spent on special visitation and special examinations. Now that more facts are available I am not too sure. In 1926 220 of the sick members were notified to appear for special exams. Of these 150 immediately resumed work and thus evaded examination. A suggestive fact.' (61)

This dismay was consistent with his belief that individuals, so far as circumstances allow, ought to exhibit independence. Certainly there was an element of moral rescue in his scheme of things. The failure of certain sections of the working classes to value education indicated their 'undeveloped' state:

61. Journal 27. p. 22
"Ungrasped Opportunities

The working class have within the last 25 years come into a shorter working day and a shorter working life. The greater leisure so obtained has enabled them not only to indulge in more amusement but also to develop their individual tastes.

".....Literature, Art and even Science are no longer the prerogative of the wealthy and leisured, but can be enjoyed by the poorest in the land if they so wished.

'But can it be said.....that the working class in any appreciable number wish to use them? Are the pleasures of the mind enjoyed as much as those of the senses? The experience of those who try to cater for the higher pleasures do not warrant an affirmative answer. While it is common for tens of thousands to attend a football match, it is rare for a hundred to attend a lecture on literature, art or science.

'Perhaps we are unfortunate in our generation in that the great war's effects are still felt, but the fact remains the young people of today do not seize with avidity the advantages their parents did not possess.' (62)

Expressions of disdain at the low-brow cultural activities of the working class and their concern with immediate gratification of the senses point to a rather negative aspect of the culture of self-improvement, that sense of self-righteousness. Cartwright's isolation from the non-work culture of his fellows signified his attachment to a tradition stretching back to the late eighteenth century. Cartwright was a 'reader', an individual who could be clearly distinguished from other men by his outlook and behaviour. According to David Vincent, readers were attached to the values of rational enquiry, moral

62. Journal 29. p. 57
improvement and the emancipation of the working class. His stated goal was to arouse his fellow men from a state of apathy

'to take a more intelligent and active interest in doing away with existing evils.' (63)

When Cartwright spoke of an 'educated democracy', he did not conceive of education as a means of defending the status quo. Rather, democracy was in the making and the future could not be anticipated. Citizenship has essentially three dimensions: civil, political and social. The sociologist T.H. Marshall, in Citizenship and Social Class, attempted to explain the stability of British capitalism with reference to citizenship rights. The life experiences of Cartwright need to be understood in the wider context of the slow development of citizenship through civil rights during the period from the revolution of 1688 to the First Reform Act of 1832 - including Habeas Corpus, the abolition of press censorship and Catholic emancipation. The conquest of politics by citizenship remained incomplete during his life-time. In the early years of this century the registered electorate was only 60 per cent of all British men, and those left out were mostly working-class. The enfranchisement of women was not complete until 1928, and dual voting for businessmen and graduates was not ended finally until 1948. The development of social rights of citizenship belonged to the twentieth century. But it would be a mistake to view the development of citizenship rights as one of uninterrupted progress. Acquisition of rights depended upon organisation whether in the field of industrial relations or politics. The rejection of Lloyd George's 'People's Budget' demonstrated the nature

63. Journal 2. p. 15
of vested interests in the Second Chamber; interests that were willing to subordinate the good of the community to their private concern. The working classes had been compared with a 'sleeping giant' oblivious to their real interests. Cartwright hoped that the workers would follow the precedent established by the Lords and claim their rights. Education would revivify the working classes by promoting 'thinking power.' He believed that an elementary education had produced a population that was at the mercy of the 'opinion of the hour.' Thus, writing in 1931, he was dismayed at the way in which a partisan press could persuade the people that a Labour Government was unfit to govern:

'It is strange what fables people will believe even in these enlightened (1!) days.' (64)

This echoed Albert Mansbridge's warning regarding the parlous state of Democracy. Writing some thirty years later, Cartwright continued in a pessimistic vein. The following entry was based upon a speech by the President of the 1932 Co-operative Congress:

"The multiples, sham co-ops, servile Press; these "were quite impotent if every unit in our ranks were genuine and intelligently earnest. If the members were convinced co-operators. It is that 'if' that keeps us from our continent of success."

"We have been, and are still, too humble, too obsequious, too distrustful of ourselves, too respectful, too susceptible to inferiority complex."

64. Journal 32. p.9
'It is evident from these extracts that the Movement has the faults of the class to which it belongs.' (65)

The attraction of the W.E.A. was that it taught the student how rather than what to think. But as the following entry shows, Cartwright was disappointed with the extent of worker participation:

'The W.E.A.

'The Workers' Educational Association is an association of educationists and workers formed to make available to the latter the best the former can give. It aims at overcoming the disability of poverty in so far as educational advancement goes by providing as freely as possible the best teachers where a sufficient number interested in any subject can get together.

'...Even if a student is isolated in a country district, an educational disadvantage I have personal experience of, the W.E.A. comes to his aid by putting him into touch with a good teacher through the post, and assisting him to obtain the needful books for his study.

'So much for the organisation. It is one of the finest objects any purely secular body can have. It is a great pity that the workers whom it aims to assist do not make greater use of it, for it must be confessed that too often the manual worker allows himself to be ousted of the advantages it offers by the black-coated gentry who are better able to pay for the pearls it offers so freely.

'I have been associated with the W.E.A. from its inception and in a way even before that for I was a member of the N.H.R.U. which became fused with it at its formation. My interest in it has continued up to the present time.' (66)

65. Journal 32. p. 31
66. Journal 31. p. 45
The moral condemnation of football, picture houses, drink and gambling should be read as despair at the way in which the working classes were being diverted from their 'true' interests. An educated democracy would demand a fuller life. Of course the urban working working classes, through their Friendly Societies, Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies, had established fraternal and democratic networks to protect the interests of the individual in a capitalist society. A.H. Halsey suggests that the formation of the Labour Party represented the political organisation of the working class on the national stage: '.....the Labour movement set out to nationalize democracy and welfare; to translate fraternity, equality, and liberty from the local community to the national State.' (67) Writing in May 1912, during a period of unprecedented industrial warfare, the sense of a 'new era' is indicated:

'There is every prospect that just as the nineteenth century saw a great advance in the production of wealth, so this twentieth century will see a great advance in the better distribution of wealth.....

'.....They must realise that this is not a passing phase which would subside by the shutting of the mouths of a few agitators, but is the natural corollary of the spread of education.

'To the workers I would say that they should leave nothing to that vague person 'somebody' to do for them, but to build their hopes upon their own wisdom and organisation.' (68)

The Oxford Report 1908 had anticipated the possible role of worker students in their own communities: 'Today, in their striving for a

67. Halsey, Change, p. 84
68. Journal 3. pp. 118-121
fuller life, they ask that men of their own class should co-operate as students with Oxford in order that, with minds enlarged by impartial study, they in their turn may become the future teachers and leaders, the philosophers and economists, of the working classes.

(69) Cartwright's organisational commitments were the product of his belief in service to his community. Although he was a minor local figure, the extent of his concern was national. He was able to use the pages of the Railway Review to evangelise. Several articles, letters and poems were published. Writing in April 1922, under the pseudonym 'K', he urged signalmen to organise:

'You signalmen, whose collective mind is so hard to read, get off your stilts. Your aloofness is costing you dear. Are you so wrapt up in the technical intricacies of your profession and the importance of your particular place in it that you do not observe how you are being isolated to your own disadvantage?

'There are those amongst us who believe that the basic rates are indestructable, and that with these in being the future is assured and may safely be left to look after itself. Be not deceived. What man has made man can destroy. Cast your eyes round the Labour world to-day and ask yourself what has become of all the glowing promises the war period produced with such profusion. Think you there is anything more substantial behind these rates when the power to enforce them has departed? The signs are that a greater cohesion and a firmer hold on the Trade Union faith will be required to hold them. Finally, friends, let me commend to your earnest consideration the following truth, plucked from a "Review" leading article a few weeks ago:-

' "If there is anything of an unchanging character (in our productive system), it is the trend of wages in capitalism towards the lowest

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69. Oxford Report 1908, para. 144
possible level, and only the eternal vigilance of intelligently applied organisation can prevent its extreme operation." 

The desire for self-improvement as a means of securing social justice (education for social purpose as it has been called) was evident in the radical Nonconformist provinces. Mansbridge, writing in University Tutorial Classes, though not unsympathetic towards students who sought regular employment at reasonable wages, was wary of the W.E.A. attracting an 'undesirable' type of student, one who having secured a place in the sun, ceases to be interested in the welfare of his own people. The W.E.A. ought not to be a school for careerists. Cartwright hoped that his education would lead to promotion, perhaps to the post of Inspector. Whereas in 1910, he had made a general comment about education leading on to 'fortune', in October 1921 he deliberately set out to achieve promotion. Not that it would be an easy task:

'So far as success in my work goes I feel I have not had a fair chance. I still occupy the same post I had in 1913 but further (?) promotion to my benefit is stopped. I see men who I know and feel to be my inferiors occupying supervisory posts merely because they are either more assertive or lucky. At the best it is only possible for a man in the uniform grades to reach the lower supervisory positions. The higher posts are a caste apart..... I feel I could do more important work but cannot get the opportunity.' (71)

It may be argued that Cartwright held an inflated view of his capabilities. Yet, on two occasions, he was asked to deliver papers

70. Railway Review, (14 April 1922). p. 10. See Plate 6 for an article on the N.S.R. Friendly Society. 14 April 1922
71. Journal 16. p. 47
to the Company's Literary and Debating Society, both concerned with technical aspects of the work:

'The "Opportunity" Seized

'I am just back from giving my paper on the interpretation of the Rules at Stoke. It was without doubt an unqualified success. I was congratulated warmly by both officers and men upon it and this I am sure was no conventional congratulation.....

'The whole experience was quite new to me. I have never before undertaken such a task in such company. To sit among the officials and then to address about 200 of your fellow workers in their company and with about a score of other officials present upon technical matters relating to their work is an ordeal not to be lightly undertaken.

'When I accepted the task of reading a paper I was afraid that it would be misunderstood among my fellow workers. But in this I evidently misjudged them. In only a few cases have I found that my object has been misunderstood, but among the few I am surprised that my old branch of the N.U.R. is the greatest offender.....

'The outcome of the meeting as far as myself is concerned is that the assistant-superintendent asked me to give them another paper next winter. Meanwhile I am wondering if there is anything behind his earlier remark that it (the paper) might do much for me.' (72)

Unfortunately, he never gained the promotion he so assiduously worked for during the 1920's. This left a bitter taste:

'Humbug and Cant

'Practise very often gives the lie to copybook moralisations. We have seen men who have failed completely to successfully perform their work, elevated over the heads of those who have proved themselves efficient in whatever they undertook.' (73)

The realisation came that 'Smiles' platitudes' were out of date. One can only speculate as to why he never gained promotion. Cartwright suspected that promotion was never given to those who demonstrated an 'independent' spirit. Perhaps the reason was more prosaic - by 1929, he was 46 years of age and there were signs of failing health. It would be unwarranted to view his cynicism as the product of frustrated careerism. His desire for promotion was consistent with his belief in equality of opportunity. His was a meritocratic and not an egalitarian critique of the class system. He was less concerned with inequalities of reward, though these should be compressed, than about the process of recruitment to these positions. Occupational positions ought to be filled by individuals in accordance with their talents and capabilities. Emile Durkheim argued that the fundamental moral ideal of modern society was that of moral individualism. (74)

The values and beliefs of moral individualism, stressing as they do the dignity and worth of the human individual, emphasise that each man should develop his talents and capacities to their fullest extent. The desire for promotion did not entail abrogation of his collective duties. In November 1919, he had been a member of the Alsager strike committee. Moreover, during the General Strike, he showed solidarity

73. Journal 29. p. 51

74. See A. Giddens (ed.) Emile Durkheim. Selected Writings, Cambridge, (1972), pp. 5-12 for a discussion of this concept.
with the M.F.G.B. to the extent of losing £13 in wages. Cartwright was no Company man. However, he did believe that it was possible for Labour and Capital to co-operate to realise common goals. The following extract, written in December 1922, indicated the possibilities:

'The New Spirit on the Railway

'The railway lectures to which reference has been made previously in these pages are a continuation and development of those which were started at the beginning of the year. Their aim evidently is to inculcate a greater and wider knowledge of railway work among the employees.....

'Many wholehearted trade-unionists look askance at this new development. They believe it to be but another method of applying the screw to them, and that those who avail themselves of the facilities they afford as promotion mongers.

'This is an entirely erroneous attitude to take up and to my mind against their best interests. If we as an organised body of men engaged in an industry lay claim to a share in the control of that industry we must not in any way countenance an attitude that tends to keep down the efficiency of that industry, but endeavour in every possible way to increase its efficiency and to understand its working and its problems.' (75)

Just as the spirit of Reconstruction seemed to evaporate during the post-war slump, so too did the notion of 'workers' control', an evolutionary hangover from the pre-war syndicalists. Bitter industrial struggles scarred the 1920's. By August 1926, the mood was one of deep pessimism:

75. Journal 23. pp. 22-25
'A new era was being born in which the workman would be something more than a cog in a machine. He was to have a larger share of the good things of life; more leisure, greater opportunities and a stake in the country. Today all that seems to be forgotten. We are back in a reactionary time.' (76)

The prospects for change in the political sphere were no more favourable. The second Labour administration, constrained by economic factors, collapsed over a proposal to means test unemployment benefit. Halsey has described the situation thus: 'British radical politics centred on the Labour Party.....but the rise of the Labour Party after the First World War to replace the Liberal Party was its incorporation into the politics of consensus..... Then the slump of the early 1930's temporarily overlaid the politics of belief in progress with hopelessness, fatalism and fragmentation - a deadening and defeatist interpretation of the events was universally shared. (77) The 'politics of belief in progress' provided the dynamic for the W.E.A. Although perhaps J.F.C. Harrison was overstating the case somewhat when he called the W.E.A. 'the movement of the left', it is certainly true that 'its appeal has been to the reformers , the progressives, the supporters of all good causes in the community.' (78) The idea of social emancipation of the working classes made the W.E.A. 'tick'. The struggle for social justice was an end which persuaded men like Cartwright to sacrifice much in the way of effort, time and money for the pursuit of learning. But the underlying philosophy of liberalism did not accord with the central

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76. Journal 26. pp. 61-64
77. Halsey, Change, p. 156
features of British capitalism. David Martin has outlined a major assumption of liberalism: 'truth and goodness only require correct exposition to be accepted. Thus the primary initiative is assigned to ideas and the central problem located in knowledge and education.'

(79) Cartwright hoped to witness the diffusion of a new spirit in society; one wherein individuals would live in accordance with Christian values of love, service and sacrifice. Employers would treat employees as human beings and not a profit-making machines. Employees would strive to enhance the efficiency of their company in which they would have a stake. The State would ensure that all citizens were guaranteed a decent standard of life. It would represent the interests of the community, and defend the weak against the strong. The General Strike disabused Cartwright of this notion:

'.....When the doctrine of class-consciousness is supported so openly by the British premier I begin to fear for the future.' (80)

The national and international scene, notably the spread of Fascism, seemed to negate the aspirations of those who had looked forward to a new order based upon Christianity. Writing in March 1935,

'Rolling back to Barbarism

'The terror that is Fascism, or Nazism, is nothing less than a return to the Middle Ages. Its brutalities and tortures, of which there is ample evidence, are comparable only with that time. Its insistence on uniformity of opinion and belief is reminiscent of Tudor and Stuart days here. The rack and the pillory are replaced by rubber truncheons and other devices and the dungeon by the concentration


camp. But their aim and methods are the same.' (81)

'The Spread of Paganism

'Evidence is continually crowding upon us showing that sheer paganism is spreading all over Europe including these Islands. The pace at which it spreads is alarming to those who believe that civilisation is doomed if it becomes severed from Christian ethics and belief....

'Here in Britain it is sheer neglect and indifference that imperils Christianity. Large numbers of children and young people are completely ignorant of Christianity or its most elementary teaching.' (82)

The final extract in Journal 34 was written on 31 March 1935. Although declaring the personal nature of the diaries, as a means of correcting a deficiency in the writer's elementary education, their value to posterity was declared:

'it is apparent that they do form a sort of scrappy sketch book of the interests of an obscure working man through something like a quarter of a century.' (83)

As an 'obscure working man' Cartwright was a member of what Richard Hoggart has called the 'earnest minority' who undertook voluntary activity to serve their fellow man. He writes, 'In the last century people such as this actively and often at great sacrifice supported Trade Unionism when it had its way to make, they worked for Labour representation in Parliament, they were connected with the Co-operative Movement and were pillars of local chapels.' (84) It would be

81. Journal 34. p. 93
82. Journal 34. p.111
83. Journal 34. p. 122
difficult to make claims regarding the typicality of Cartwright as an early worker-student. However, he is easily recognisable as W.E.A. material, by virtue of his moral earnestness, commitment to self-improvement and concern for social justice. As a lover of poetry and literature, it is fitting to conclude with a poem, written by G.D.H. Cole, the sentiments of which Cartwright undoubtedly endorsed.

Labour

'Labour. It is a small and easy word, yet meaneth much
To those who give it thought
To those, who, with racking toil have bought
Experience, it spells - a life-time!
A mean existence, and endless pitiful striving
With Poverty as a bedfellow, and Age in ambush
At the end. That is what life means to such.

'And yet this toil, this Labour hath a dignity that is divine
Despite all taunts and sneers, It has a grand
And solemn majesty. And all who take their stand
In its defence can glory in the thought
And more, those that wear out life amidst its wheel
Deserve a just return, the means to live for which they pine.

'There is the Brain that schemes and thinks and plans,
There are executing members, those of action,
Hands,
And the mediator 'Twixt the Brain and Hands
Must be - Justice! '

85. Journal 31. p. 49. The poem was published in the Railway Review (5 June 1931)
During the late 1930's his wife suffered an illness from which she never recovered. She died in July 1939. By June 1940, Cartwright married Winnie Tate. Soon after, they moved from Newcastle-under-Lyme to somewhere 'into the country.' Ernest Cartwright died on 21 June 1945, aged 62 and was buried in the grounds of Christ Church, Alsager.
PLATE 6

Extract from the Railway Review:

'The N.S.R. Friendly Society' by 'K.'

'K' was a pseudonym used by Cartwright.

The N.S.R. was known colloquially as

'Old Knotty.'

Acknowledgements to the National Union of Railwaymen

and the Transport Review
THE N. S. R. FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

BY "K."

Once again the annual report and balance sheet of the above society is in our hands, and a few appropriate remarks, explanatory and otherwise, may be appreciated.

First of all, let it be understood that this society is not one of those employers' societies which seek to entice our members from their allegiance to their Trade Union approved society. It is not an approved society under the National Insurance Acts for the good and sufficient reason that it has never sought approval at that source. However, membership is accepted on the condition that all the wages staff above 16 years of age. It is managed by a chairman and a committee of twelve chosen by the members, of whom one-third retire annually.

The directors of the company contribute £2,000 per annum on condition that they appoint the treasurer, the treasurers, the auditors, and the general secretary. A fairly valuable consideration this, some might think. The remainder of the funds come from the contributions of its members, which are stopped each week through the pay-sheets.

Turning to the annual report we find that there has been 1,311 members on the books during the year, and that of those 33 have died and 141 others have left the society. Mostly these latter have been discharged from the employ of the company owing to trade depression. Evidently these 141 accepted a sum proportionate to their contributives and the benefits they had received, for we find the sum of £129 at 10s. 4d. deducted in the balance sheet for withdrawal. Therefore, these 141 unfortunate men who were dismissed received an average of £1 5s. 9d. per head as a settlement of their claims on the society. The number on the books at the end of the year is stated to be 1,107. That may quite legitimately be taken to be the number of permanent employees over 16 years of age on the wages list of the N. S. R., which we find to be 25 less than at the end of the year previous. We wonder how these figures compare with those recorded at H.O. as members of the N. U. R.?

Turning to the management fund of the society, we find that of the sum of £211 12s. 1d. received from contributions and dues, £19 12s. was donated to convalescent homes and specialist hospitals, and £3 12s. to paying expenses of members at convalescent homes. In this connection it should be noted that a vote is to be taken on the proposal to endow a child's cot at the local hospital, which will absorb £300 of the £1,305 now standing to this account. There is little doubt that the proposal will be unanimously carried.

We notice an increase in the auditors' fees of £3 6s., and cannot understand why it should be made. Perhaps some member of the committee will enlighten us on this, and also on the kind of "special services" which absorbs such a large and increasing amount every year.

Seeing that the value per member is now £10 6s. 4d., as compared with £9 2s. 7d. at the end of the year previous, and £7 9s. 10d. at the end of 1919, it is evident that the society is in a very thriving condition. It is to be regretted that no mention is made in the report of the number of old members who are in receipt of the reduced benefit. If the committee will see that this information is given in the next report we shall then be able to judge as to how far it is possible to augment the sum, and so enable our old and retired comrades to spend their declining days in something more nearly approaching comfort.
APPENDIX 1

ROCHDALE UNIVERSITY TUTORIAL CLASS

PROVISIONAL REPORT

The course of twelve lectures on the Economic History of the Seventeenth Century should have closed on April 11, 1906, but the illness of the lecturer rendered it necessary to postpone the last lecture until Saturday, May 2.

At the commencement, forty-three (Including four ladies) students were enrolled, but of these, three have withdrawn; one on account of duties of employment, one by doctor's orders, and the other by changed circumstances, preventing attendance, thus leaving forty. The average attendance was thirty-nine. All the students, except one, have qualified for the Board of Education grant.

There has been no absence from the class but what has been accounted for, as illness or as an unavoidable cause. Some of the attendances have not been counted, because of the students having to leave before the end of the two hours' lesson. The attendance, therefore, may be considered for all practical purposes 100 per cent.

The papers written - and it is expected that every student will write each essay - have been of great excellence. There have been several visitors to the class, and all, like Mr. A.E. Zimmern, of
New College, were impressed by the high level of the discussion and the remarkable acumen displayed in the asking of questions.

It may also be added that these classes have been run by the students in connection with the Tutorial Class, and the same satisfactory feature in the attendance characterizes these cases also.

The lecturer won the affection and confidence of his class from the outset, and has retained it all along. Mr. Zimmern states that 'his method of exposition was academic in the best sense of the term'.

As was intended at the outset, the class consists almost exclusively of artisans. It is a satisfactory feature that there are among the students those who are most active in the work of their organisations, political and otherwise, or are officials of their Trade Unions.

Several of the students will, aided by scholarships, attend the Cambridge Summer Meeting of Extension Students, 1908.

No further suggestions can be offered; except that the number of students, forty, makes too much work for the lecturer. The difficulty of individual attention has been surmounted to some extent by the lecturer, because of his willingness to stay in the locality, and to visit the students in their homes. The formation of a club for purely educational purposes has also made it possible for the teacher to meet students, and has added something of a collegiate spirit to the class work.
The connexion will be maintained by the students who, it will be remembered, have pledged attendance for two years, right through the summer, and a full course of twenty-six lectures will be arranged in accordance with the original plan. It is, however, probable that it will be necessary to seek the establishment of a second class for first year students.

Note. The services of the local Secretaries, who are not mentioned above, should be specially acknowledged. The success of the class at Rochdale has been due in great measure to the organising skill and devotion of Mr. I.V. Gill, and a similar debt of gratitude is due in connection with the Longton class to Mr. E.S. Cartwright. The Scholarships referred to above were duly used for the Summer Meeting at Cambridge, which was attended this year by a number of workpeople.

It should also be mentioned that the Rochdale Education Guild has started a Club where its members can meet for discussion, and has formed the nucleus of a library.
It will be naturally asked: 'To what will the education which we wish Oxford to offer workpeople lead, and what career will they follow after leaving the University?' We have already expressed an opinion that the demand for University education made by workpeople, is not so much for facilities to enable their children to compete successfully with members of other classes for positions of social dignity and emolument, as to enable workmen to fulfil with greater efficiency the duties which they owe to their own class, and, as members of their class, to the whole nation. There can therefore be no doubt that, with some exceptions, the working-class students who go to Oxford will at the end of their two years of study return to the towns from which they came, and continue to work at their trades, as before, as has hitherto been done by all the students educated at Ruskin College. To those who do this their education will be a means, not only of developing their own powers of enjoyment, but of enabling them to exercise an influence for good in the social life of their factory and town.

At the same time there is a large and rapidly increasing number of positions of great responsibility which are held by workpeople, and for the most efficient discharge of which it is essential that they should have a means of obtaining the best education which the country can offer. The working-class demand that higher education should not
separate the student from his own people must not be taken to imply that it is desired that he should necessarily return to the bench or the machine at which he worked before going to Oxford, but that he should in one capacity or another use his education in the service of his fellows.

We may perhaps indicate a few of the duties which an Oxford education will enable workmen to perform, and in the more efficient fulfilment of which they would enlist their class on the side of higher education. (i) There are in Great Britain 1,153 Trade Unions (some of them with several hundred branches), 237 Trades Councils, 3 Parliamentary Committees appointed by Trade Union Congresses, 209 Conciliation and Arbitration Boards, 389 Friendly Societies, and 2,646 Workmen's Cooperative Societies. (1) Most of these organisations employ paid officers, men who are daily discharging duties of the utmost responsibility and delicacy, and which make demands on their judgement of men and knowledge of economic and political principles as great as, or greater than, those made on the Civil Servant in India or this country. The district secretary of the engineers or boiler-makers who is met by economic arguments which he sometimes cannot easily answer, but which yet in the face of his daily experience he cannot accept; the textile operative who is required to gauge the results of foreign competition and its bearing on hours and wages; every official who has at once to convince educated opponents of the justice of his contentions, and to persuade large bodies of men to postpone immediate

1. These figures are taken from the Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom in 1907 published by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade.
gains to the higher good of the community, knows that he and his class are hampered in their decisions by their lack of knowledge of economic science, and of the experience of other countries and other ages. The education which Oxford can give, by broadening his knowledge and strengthening his judgement, would make him at once a more efficient servant of his own society, and a more potent influence on the side of industrial peace. The working classes are quick to recognise the advantage of being officered by men of education, as is shown by the support which they have given to Ruskin College; and we have no doubt that many of the students who are trained at Oxford would be offered positions of importance in the service of their Trade Unions. What is said above with regard to Trade Unions applies to almost the same extent to Co-operative Societies.

(ii) The growth of the movement in favour of the direct representation of Labour in the House of Commons and on other public bodies is creating a demand for a class of educated men to act as Labour representatives. At the present day, in many parts of England, Labour Organisations find great difficulty in getting suitable men to represent them, and they will continue to do so until workpeople are brought into close contact with the Universities. At the same time, the development which is now taking place in the number and complexity of municipal and other services makes it increasingly important that persons elected onto public bodies should have had a training in the principles of political and economic science. We think that a certain number of the working-class students educated at Oxford will find a useful career in service on municipal bodies of all kinds. It is not necessary to add the hope that by doing so they would raise the whole tone of public life.
(iii) Some of the students educated at Oxford will naturally become teachers of the tutorial classes organised under the new Standing Committee of the University Extension Delegacy. This would, in our opinion, be a most important and desirable development. It is at present extremely hard to find teachers who possess both sound academic qualifications and the requisite knowledge of working-class life and habits of thought. We strongly hope, therefore, that when the arrangements for bringing working-class students to Oxford have been in operation for a few years, Oxford will be training a new class of teachers to spread its influence in the industrial towns of the country - men with the sympathies of work-people and the breadth of view given by a University education.

These are a few of the positions of influence and responsibility which we think an Oxford education would fit working-class students to fill with honour to themselves and advantage not only to the manual workers of their own trades and their own class, but to the whole community, which rests upon their labour, which suffers for their ignorance and which will be strengthened by their increasing wisdom. But they are only a few; for our proposals are but a small beginning of what we hope will be a new step towards the development of a democratic education and of an educated democracy.

If at the end of this report we may venture to state our anticipations of the future development of University education among the mass of people, we are inclined to say that there are two ideals which the State and the Universities should keep before their eyes, neither of which can be neglected without grave loss to the spirit and intellect of the nation. On the one hand, a career must be opened to talent.
There must be that free movement from one class to another that alone can ensure that the manual and intellectual work of the nation is performed by those best fitted to perform it, and that fresh streams of ability are continually drawn from every quarter of society. There must be more scholarships from the elementary to the secondary schools, and from public secondary schools to the University. A larger number of Oxford scholarships must be reserved for poor men, and must be given in subjects such as history and modern languages, in order that the youth educated at schools where classics predominate may not have an unfair advantage over the boy from schools where the future of most of the students causes classics to be crowded out by other subjects. The expenses of a University education must be reduced to a minimum by action on the part of the University, and if necessary by grants from public sources, and a far larger number of those who are destined to teach the rising generation must receive the broad mental culture which Universities can give. By these and similar steps the movement of the sons of poor parents into the intellectual professions would be facilitated, and Oxford would be enriched by men from every school and every social class.

But this is only one side, and for our purpose not the most important side, of the ideal at which Universities must aim. It it is necessary that talent should flow freely between different classes, that channels should be dug and ladders should be raised along which it can move, it must, nevertheless, never be forgotten that the boys who can take advantage of these must always be an infinitesimal proportion of the whole population, and that the great mass of the working classes gain little by any system which merely transfers to other positions the brightest and most zealous among them. The nation needs
the services not only of the professor, the lawyer, the doctor, and the civil servant, but of the miner, the bricklayer, the engineer, and an un-numbered army of labourers. The eleven millions who weave our clothes, build our houses, and carry us safely on our journeys, demand University education in order that they may face with wisdom the unsolved problems of their present position, not in order that they may escape to another. Hitherto that education has lain far beyond their reach. They have read the teachings of political economists and political philosophers belonging to other classes, but they have not always profited by their reading. For economists and philosophers have often seemed to them too ignorant of the position of the wage-earner, and too unsympathetic towards his difficulties, to be guides in whom they could trust for theoretical enlightenment or practical advice. To-day, in their striving for a fuller life, they ask that men of their own class should co-operate as students with Oxford in order that, with minds enlarged by impartial study, they in their turn may become the future teachers and leaders, the philosophers and economists, of the working classes. Such a movement is fraught with incalculable possibilities. For it seems to us that the task of educationalists in the future must not be merely to make smooth the way for those who wish to rise to positions usually considered higher than that of the manual worker, but to ennoble the status of every class by supplying it, whatever its work and social conditions, with the form of culture appropriate to its needs.

We present this report in the hope that it may call attention to the urgent importance of this problem, and that it may make some small contribution to its solution.
February 10th Thursday

It is now a year ago since I first commenced to express some of my thoughts in these books, and it is this fact, together with the fact that I am now commencing another year of my life, which makes this a most appropriate time to bring into review a few of my ideals and to see if I am making any progress towards their realisation.

I think my ideal of what I should like to become cannot be better expressed than in John Ruskin's definition of an educated man. "An educated man", he says. "is one who has understanding of his own uses and duties in the world, and, therefore, of the general nature of things done and existing in the world; and who has trained himself, or been so trained, as to turn to the most courteous accounts whatever faculties or knowledge he has".

This expresses better than any words of mine could do the aim and object of my life. It clearly declares that it is no man's right that he should live to himself alone, but that he should manfully bear his part in the affairs of men and things. He points out that the first object of education should not be to give one a better standing in society; nor yet the development and training of his own intellect, high though this object may be; but to give one an understanding of his own uses and duties in the world, and to fit him to use whatever faculties or knowledge he may possess to the performance of those uses and duties.
Further, he states in this definition, that before any man can truly call himself an educated man, he must discover what are his own uses and duties in the world. This is a thing which every man must find out for himself. No parent and no teacher can do it for him. They can only suggest, by seeing his qualifications and inclinations, in what direction his "uses and Duties" are likely to be. But to be certain that the man is on the right track lies with the man himself. When he has once found out his work, he must keep straight on, turning neither to the right nor to the left, and with conscience as his guide, he need not be daunted though hosts of Phillistines encamp around him. Not only success, but happiness, I verily believe, lies straight ahead for such as me.

Included in this definition is the demand from every educated man to take an interest in what is passing on in the world. He must have, it says, "an understanding of the general nature of things done and existing in the world". He must not shut himself up amongst his books or his study, like an hermit or a monk in a monastery. He must come out into the world and find out what needs alteration or advancement and manfully bear his part against ignorance or wrong wherever it may be.

Now what am I doing to fulfil this definition so that I may be one of Ruskin's educated men? Well, up to the present I must confess I have done very little to deserve such a title. But I think I can truthfully say that so far as I have been able I have tried to deserve it. At present I am trying to gain a better understanding of the nature of things done and existing in the world by
taking lessons on history through the Worker's Educational Association. These, I think, will help me better to understand the present position of the people, and by learning the lessons of the past, will enable me, by applying them to the present, to understand and help to heal the wounds of the present. I must, by my influence and example, try to get my fellow workmen to take a more intelligent and active interest in doing away with existing evils. I must try to arouse them from that apathy which is the curse of the working classes. To do this I need far greater patience and perseverance than I have at present; and to secure these I must cultivate self-control.
This last week or so, I have been in correspondence with the secretory of the Worker's Educational Association, in reference to taking up some study or other under their wing. About a fortnight ago I wrote to the secretary telling him I had read of the W.E.A. in the 'Railway Review', and that, from what I could gather, the Association catered for fellows who were placed as I am, unable to take advantage of any facilities there might be for higher education of working men, owing to working shift turns of duty, and being situated in the country. I asked him if the W.E.A. could help me in such studies as English literature and composition, Logic, Economics and Sociology and if so to kindly send me particulars. In reply I received a very kind encouraging letter telling me that I was right, and that the association hoped to do a great work by catering for isolated working men like myself. He instanced two railwaymen the association is helping. One, a platelayer, who is studying Greek under a University professor, and another, a fireman who is studying History by keeping up a monthly correspondence with a deputy professor of history at, I believe he said, London University. He asked me if I was hungry for any particular subject and if I had been studying it by correspondence or in private. He said, given this hunger and a determination to stick to it, he would see me through. I replied that I was hungry for every subject I tackled, but that I felt
my ignorance greatest in History and I had an earnest desire to become better acquainted with it. I also said I should like to take Logic but did not know if I could find time for both. I asked what would be the fees expecting to find them almost prohibitive. I was astounded on receiving his reply when he said there would be no fees, and if I wanted any books they would try to get them to me. He said the teacher he hoped to put me in communication with in a few days, would be thoroughly sympathetic and quite capable of directing my general educational advancement, and he asked me to give him a pledge that if my teacher did not understand my difficulties not to give up, but let him know at once. This of course I shall do. I shall also become a member of the W.E.A. and take in their magazine. I could not do less without being open to the charge of ingratitude. It seems just the thing I have been wanting for so many years, that to throw away this opportunity of acquiring the best education would be the height of folly. Shakespeare is quoted as saying, "there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune". Who knows but that this opportunity may not be the making of me; body, mind, and spirit. I mean to reap what advantages I can from it by hard work and patient study. God give me greater patience and more perseverance than I have had hitherto!

I have just seen in this weeks issue of the Review, a letter from the assistant secretary of the W.E.A., E.J. Hookway. He quotes my letter to the Association, and says they intend to satisfy me by giving me some of the best help England can give. He asks for others who are similarly placed to write the Association. May they do so and be similarly satisfied.
APPENDIX 5

October 20th  Friday

The chief thing that would impress the mind of an unbiassed visitor to this country from another planet would be the amount of unrest and bloodshed which is now rife all over the world.

We have just recently passed through a time of almost unexampled industrial warfare in this country, and now we seem to be passing through a time of great crime. Within one week there were no less than four triple murders and several single ones, and one cannot pick up a news-paper without seeing that some fresh murder or suicide has occurred. The motives for these vary, but by far the most frequent is that of robbery.

Another phase of the lawlessness that at present exists, is shown by the amount of work our divorce court is doing, but it is noteworthy as a sign of the times that this only caters for the so-called upper classes as it is practically impossible for a poor person to take proceedings there. The most noteworthy suit at the present time is one between some of the highest people in artistic circles.

The wave of unrest and bloodshed is not confined to this country nor to individuals. China is in the throes of a revolution by which it seems she has at last awakened from her long intellectual sleep of 2,000 years. Its object is to displace
the Manchu dynasty for a republic. Italy and Turkey are at
war with each other over a question of land-grabbing in Africa.
Portugal is finding itself work by an attempted counter-revolution
to the one of last year.

Now what is the cause of all this crime and bloodshed? Is it
possible to find a general reason for all this rebellion
against authority? I think it is.

Taking this country alone as typical. There seems today to be
a general laxity in morals and the restraining influence of
the Church seems to be practically nil. The Church seems to
be getting more and more out of touch with the people and their
needs, and the people are consequently giving it the cold
shoulder. None of the churches of this land are filled as they
ought to be, and by far the greatest number of those who attend
are women. Whilst the people are crying out for light and
leading in the matter of present day problems, the Churches
are squabbling amongst themselves over such things as the
Disestablishment of the Church in Wales, or the Education Act
of 1902, or as to whether a black man should be allowed to
box a white in this country.

Not only have the Churches got out of sympathy with the needs
of the people, but Parliament itself, or at any rate the
Government, seem to be unable to grasp the chief aims of the
people. It is becoming more autocratic and repressive year
by year, and fails to see that the aim of the democracy is
towards a better standard of living and a higher and freer
life. It seems to be in fact helping on the growing tendency to class warfare.

Whilst we have on the one hand a desire for a higher and freer life consequent upon the spread of education, we find that the economic tendency today is to make the poor poorer and the rich richer. We seem to be heading straight towards a great social and economic upheaval.
The question of compulsory arbitration has again been brought to the front this week, by it being discussed both at the meetings of the British Association and the Trades Union Congress. The first mentioned, as might be expected from their outlook and point of view, was more or less in favour of the principle, whilst the latter declared against it.

It is urged that large strikes and lockouts are wasteful and injure the non-combatants equally as much as the combatants, therefore they ought to be prevented. That they are injurious to all, combatant and non-combatant alike, I admit, but that does not say that an injustice should be continued because the removal would inconvenience others. To take away the right to strike would be a greater evil, for it is tantamount to making men mere slaves. The right to strike must be left, but its use should be curtailed as far as possible.

Compulsory arbitration implies an arbitrator, and no arbitrator can know and feel the cause in dispute like those involved. Conciliation would be a preferable way of settling disputes, but from experience it is proved to open the way to victimisation by a malicious employer, or his officers. To get working men to accept conciliation, not only must wages, hours, and conditions of service be able to be discussed, but everything that affects
the workman. With the ruling out of matters able to be discussed, of matters relating to management and discipline in the railwaymens' conciliation scheme, has led to many matters coming under these headings causing much unrest.

There is another side to the question. If the unions are to be compelled to keep their men in hand and keep agreements, it is common justice to expect that employers are compelled to keep theirs. The transport strike of this summer was caused by employers who were outside the Federation breaking away. This must be prevented in the future. How! That is the question. Much has been said of the injustice of compelling working men to join their unions, are we also to have the injustice of compelling employers to join their Federation?

Then again; if the right to strike has got to be left, we must leave the men unfettered by giving them a sporting chance of winning, and this might involve the calling out of kindred trades who are under agreement to keep the peace. Thus we are ever in a vicious circle. That agreements once made should be kept is admitted, but how are they to be kept if kindred trades in dispute can call them out?

Before working men accept compulsory arbitration they should think long and deeply. They must be careful that they do not sell what little economic freedom they have for a mess of pottage. It has been too hardly won to be lightly lost. A way out must be found, but it must not be by adding greater disabilities to those already most heavily fettered.
What is urgently needed is a new and better spirit between employer and employed, but this implies a moral revolution and will be long in coming. All that tends in this direction is worthy of thought and trial. Give every man a stake in the country through his occupation, and make it possible for him to better himself within limits. That way lies lasting peace.
November 29th Thursday

England is often spoken of as a Christian country, but when we come to examine the grounds for this statement, we meet a great many reasons why it should be called anything but a Christian nation. True it is that the national religion, in name at any rate, is Christian, but when one comes to probe the average Christian's christianity, it is found to be little more than a lazy belief.

Now what would an unbiased inquirer expect to find amongst the chief and most prominent features of a really Christian Country. I think he would expect to find its rulers not only nominal Christians, but those who openly profess and show by their life and conduct that they are Christians at heart. He would expect to find them making laws by which it would protect the weak against the strong, making it impossible for the poor to be downtrodden by the rich, forbidding usury, and giving equality to all, and, in cases of doubt, giving the benefit of the doubt to the weak or poor. He would expect to find the Churches not striving amongst themselves but going as far as possible in pushing forward the above objects. He would expect to find the Master's precepts followed in all our national affairs, and to find those most prominent in Church or State pushing forward His teachings in counsel and practice. Wars and tumults he would not expect to find, but avoided like the
plague; leaving it to the Divine hand to say who shall prosper and who shall fall.

Now can any man say this is what would be found in England today? After allowing for the inherent evilness of human nature, and the need for government and order, I think the answer would be in the negative. Wealth and power are the mainsprings and ambition of this country today as much as ever it was in the past. True every man is allowed to practice his religion in his own way, but he is forced to live often in an unchristian way. Honest and willing men and women cannot be sure of finding sustenance for their bodily needs even after a hard day's work. Human life has little or no sacredness. The rich are allowed and encouraged by our laws to grind the faces of the poor.

In the reports of the Royal Commission on Divorce we have another choice as to which kind of country we shall be in fact. We shall have to decide again as to whether we shall follow Christ's teachings in this respect, or shall we make yet another concession in our laws to the weakness of the flesh.

If the majority report is carried into law we cannot logically say that marriage is a christian institution, but only a method for legalising lust and making the fathers responsible. Home-life will have received its deathblow and free love be brought appreciably nearer.

One reform is necessary; that is, making all; rich and poor,
man and woman, equal, not nominally, but really able to secure the same benefits.
January 22nd  Wednesday

The Liberal Party having, as it is said in some quarters, been warned off any further attack on the land monopoly by the plutocrats in their organisation, are contemplating a revision of the Education laws. This was made known by Lord Haldane in a speech he made a little over a week ago. The few concrete proposals he made, and the official modifications since made by the Government, do not point to any great and radical changes being made to the advantage of the working class. The proposals may be briefly summarised as: a raising of the learning age of children in elementary schools; abolition of half-time in 14; more free places in secondary schools; more democratic government of the Universities; and an increase in the salary of the Minister of Education.

Now I have little to say against most of the proposals, except that they do not go far enough. How raising the already large salary of a Cabinet Minister is going to benefit the democracy I cannot say. As regards the other proposals they do not touch the great need of the people. The common people have as great a right to enjoy the benefits to be derived from a good education as the children of the wealthier classes. Why should the child of a working man be only given an education that will only make him a more efficient producer of wealth for the already rich? That should not be the sole aim of education; it should also enable
one to enjoy life more fully.

Now what is the great need of the working class in regard to education, and is there any possibility of that need being supplied? If we grant that the children of the people have a right to the best education, how are they going to obtain it? I do not mean that every child should necessarily have a University education, for there will always be a variety in the quality of brains, and many will no doubt prefer an immediate return in the form of wages to any benefit possibly to be derived from a further degree of education. Neither is it desirable that we should be a nation of scholars in preference to a nation of workers. What I ask for, is for a more easy access for a child of the people to obtain a better education if it is fitted to receive it, and that the child's parents should not be penalised by having to provide for their child while he is receiving said better education. Many a child, to my knowledge, who would have benefited by more education, has had to be taken from school, sometimes before the age of 13, because his parents were in need of the few shillings his labour would bring into the family exchequer. If the school age is to be increased, then maintenance must be given to the child during that time, and that without the degrading necessity of proving destitution.

After leaving an elementary school, a child should have a free option of attending a secondary school with maintenance until he or she is 18. Then the steps to the University should be made more easy so that the best brains of the people should be able
to benefit there.

All this would free the labour market from under paid child-labour. But even this is not enough. There may be many who would have to leave before the age of 18. For these, continuation schools should be provided, with compulsion upto that age. Employers should be made to release them to attend during the day, as after a day's work the child is in no mood to receive instruction.

Then with regard to the quality of the instruction. It should not be, as is so often the case nowadays, merely mental drill, but real education. For this, more teachers are necessary, and better teachers. Classes of 25 and upwards are out of the question. The child cannot there receive any individual instruction. It might certainly get knowledge there, but rarely would it learn how to apply it.

All this, I know, would cost an enormous sum annually, but in this rich country, where a few million extra every year have to be found for Dreadnoughts, a daring Chancellor ought to be found to tap its vast reservoirs for a work of construction like this.

The working classes I believe are getting more and more awake to the heritage of education that ought to be theirs. They are learning that no matter how strongly they organise and strike, they will always be beaten in the long run for want of education. Organisations like the Workers Educational Association and the Central Labour College are growing as a result of this knowledge.
The Working-man's Outlook

The working man has so long been the butt of a certain section of the community's diatribes, that it is difficult for that section to realize that the British workman is not unpatriotic. They believe they know the working man better than he knows himself, and better than his leaders know him. This is the class that is always crying out for compulsion to make the working man perform what to them seems an obvious duty. They believe it is useless to try to get him to do anything for himself or for his country without compulsion, and that he never does do anything with a high and unselfish motive.

I, who am a working man myself, know this to be as untrue to life as is the opposite extreme. The working man is no saint nor paragon of all the virtues, yet neither is he a devil or something worse as they would have us believe. By the way, has it ever struck these people how many saints and heroes were working men? Do they remember that the Apostles were working men and also some whom the world has delighted to honour?

But I did not intend this time to white-wash the working-man but to explain his outlook. That it needs explanation one has only to pick up any newspaper to see. We are either portrayed as cruel, morose, unpatriotic and the rest, or lauded as an example to the rest of the community. Of course we are neither
one nor the other. We are plain unvarnished men whose outlook has been cramped by the monotonous daily round of grind, and a constant need to make the most of everything engendered by long living from hand to mouth. In a word, we are the children of our circumstances.

Yet for all the drabness of our lives, it would surprise some of our mentors if they could know how many of us had enlisted from high and pure motives; and how many others had made great sacrifices for their country and friends. And let them remember that their stake is as much smaller than that of those who lecture them as the difference in their means.

Yet I do not mean to say that all are of this calibre. No class is. There are degrees of virtue and vice in every class. But the working class is no worse than the others. They may not rise so easily to noble ideas as other classes, but that is more the fault of their environment.

On the other hand, too many of the working class have absorbed the idea that they personally have nothing to fight for. That is an erroneous idea of which they ought to disabuse their minds. Yet this idea springs from the fact that they have been kept out of their heritage for so long. They look upon themselves too much as strangers and sojourners in their own native land. Now is the time for them to claim its liberties and privileges for themselves, and at the same time claim the right to fight, and if need be, to die for them.

Nov. 24. 1915
Agriculture and Rural Education

I have just been reading an article in the daily papers on the above subject, which betrays that if we are to have great alterations after the war they will not all be to the advantage of the working class; and also that the spirit which looked up them only as "hands" and not as human beings having a right to their fullest development, is not yet extinct.

The writer of the article was in entire agreement with a chairman of a county educational committee who had said that it were wiser in the interests of the individual and the state to teach the country child to hoe turnips well rather than to play the piano badly. He went on to slander the whole class of working class boys and girls, but put forward no evidence in support. He asserted that they were prigs and snobs who turned up their noses at work on the land and aspired to an office stool and a boiled shirt as his highest aim, or aped "the lofty realm of the flapper". He even has a dig at their morality and says "They both (boys and girls) get into mischief, or are counted lucky if they do not". He goes on to say that the scheme for settling ex-service men on the land only touches the fringe of the subject, and even terms these "town sick men", and "what we have to do", he says, "is to get hold of these youngsters of the village", who at present he terms "peasant prigs", "products of a misapplied education".
Such an article would not be worth noting except as it expresses opinions which are too widely held, and being so, it is necessary to attack them. I am in entire disagreement with the whole article. The tone is vicious; and it makes wholesale charges without a scrap of evidence being produced in support of them.

The writer appears to think that it is the first object of a country child's education to fit it for work on the land. The development of the child's mind to fit it to take its place as a thinking unit in the State, is a secondary consideration. The few years that such a child attends a school should not be devoted to teaching it the work it will have to perform in after life. That will come soon enough. It should be taught the rudiments of knowledge and given a glimpse of the great world outside and how to use those rudiments to its own enjoyment and the nation's advantage. It should be educated in the true sense of the term. It is not the State's duty to teach a child the first lessons of any trade or calling. That is the employers duty. Every child, town or country, should have the right to be put on the track of reaching the highest development of its whole being possible.

What the writer did not mention and what he should have done is why work on the land has been looked down upon and shunned. It is because it was impossible to obtain a competence by such work and the lack of scope for ambition.

Oct 17th 1916.
APPENDIX 11

The Control of Industry

The control of industry is a phrase which, even if it has not been coined during the war, at any rate expresses a principle that has been brought much nearer in that time. It expresses the desire of the workers towards the economic freedom and independence they wish to realise. Industry in the past has been a despotic autocratic state, in the future we wish to see it democratised, humanised and revivified. Self interest has proved an insufficient and unstable motive for the building up of a stable industrial state. "Laissez faire" has now gone into the limbo of the past. In its place we wish to see arise a system of control in the interests of capital, labour and the community. Industry in the future must exist not to create profits for a few, but to supply a need. The workers, and industrials, must not be looked upon as the lowest and the least important class in the country, but as the co-equals of all, performing functions essential to the life and progress of the nation and considered and treated as such.

The workers desire a share the control of industry because they feel that the oppression and the indignity of the present system is incompatible with the idea of the dignity of labour. They have a right as one of the prime elements in industry to a say in the affairs that determine their own life. They have outgrown the time when they can be treated as "hands" and have reached the time when they demand to exercise the full franchise of free men.
They have felt the iniquity of a system that is not always just, a system that gives promotion to one man and the sack to another without any other reason than favouritism being apparent; a system in which the biggest bullies get the promotion, and the best workmen the order of the bag.

The consumer too desires to see some control of industry continued after the war. He has felt the squeeze of the profiteer, and does not wish to see his return even if he takes as his ally the employee. For three years of war he has been bled to provide fortunes for the few, and now when prices are at last being checked in their upward flight, he does not desire the return of unlimited prices. Some control of raw materials must accompany the control of industry.

The State whose duty it is to protect the consumer can no longer stand aside. It must even be prepared to enter the arena of industry. Railways, transport of all kinds, and coal mines are fit subjects not for State control only, but for State ownership. The municipalities must receive power to buy and sell and to engage more fully in industry. Then they can set the example by admitting the workers into joint control and eventually, perhaps, full control of the industries they operate.

In the Whitley report we have the first official attempt to give industry a constitution. It is not perfect and all can hardly expect it to be, but it is an honest attempt to liberate Labour from autocracy. If it is accepted as such and worked by both sides as such, further possibilities will be revealed by the
experience gained. But let it be understood that Labour wants something from it that it has not got in the past, and if it is to be the success we wish it to be, Capital must be prepared to relinquish some things they have looked upon in the past as their "rights". Discipline and management are essentially matters for the industrial councils which the Report proposes should be set up. The councils must not be advisory but executive. At first, perhaps, Labour will be subordinate in management until it gains experience; but eventually it will exercise its full rights there.

Labour has fought and sacrificed itself wholeheartedly to destroy autocracy in government abroad, and has thereby gained the right to demand that autocracy shall disappear in the industrial world at home.

Nov. 26 1917.
APPENDIX 12

The two Paths

There has this week been a question raised at the A.G.M. of the N.U.R. which is very significant not only it may be to the N.U.R. but to the whole trade-union movement and through that to the future of the working classes. The decision given to this question quite admittedly shows the trend of working class opinion today and the direction it is being led to take.

The question alluded to is one motion by the M.C. requesting the A.G.M. to remove Mr. Thomas from the leadership of the industrial side of the Union's work. That is that his whole duty to the Union should be confined strictly to the Parliamentary side and that he should no longer be the chief spokesman of the Union in any negotiations either with the railway Co.'s or with other trade unions.

It is the old struggle between those who are extreme in their views and wish for a change in social and industrial conditions even if it necessitates a violent insurrection, and those who desire for the change to be brought about by peaceful and constitutional methods. Mr. Thomas is the representative of the moderate man, and his refusal to agree to a triple alliance strike after the Miner's Executive had thrown over their secretary incensed the extremists to such a degree that they now seek to remove him from his office. Since the strike
same condition is reflected in the Miner's Fed. Mr. Hodges has plainly told his extremists that their extremism caused the miners to lose the tide for splendid wages in their industry. He said a better bargain than they now have could have been secured after his speech to the members of the House.

It is the result of the motion that is most significant. The motion to remove Mr. Thomas was lost by 57 votes to 17. Those figures quite easily represent the opinion of the rank and file and show that even now, after all the provocation they have and are receiving, the British working man is for constitutional reform and will not seriously entertain the idea of violent revolution. As Mr. Thomas truly says, what the railwaymen want today is not a strike or even the threat of a strike, but peace. They were quite willing to support the miners in the circumstances they found themselves, but when it became evident that ulterior motives other than wages prompted the strike they would have none of it. So Mr. Thomas finds himself once again "top-dog" and his moderate constitutional views vindicated.

It has generally been found that w. class action makes use of the industrial and parliamentary methods alternately. Of course, logically they should both be used simultaneously and consistently, but man is an illogical creature. Now that the strike weapon has become somewhat worn - the miners settlement made to last at least 15 months, and theirs and other unions funds much-depleted - it is quite probable that we shall now see a time when the ballot box will be used in an attempt to redress the
balance. There have already been signs that this time has already begun, for Labour have won a series of remarkable triumphs. Now we have Coalition organs forecasting the result of the next general election and acknowledging Labour victories to come.

9 July 1921
Equality

Equality has for generations been a principle long sought for, and even fought for, by the working classes. It has been a strong motive in many a revolution and the aim of many a movement. The trade-union and socialist movements of today accept it as a principle and have their ideas how it is to be brought about.

Yet it is the fact that equality has not, and probably will not, become the fashion. Nay, there is a doubt if it is possible or even desirable. Of course, in some things, such as before the law and in the vote by ballot, there is quite rightly a semblance of equality. Yet absolute equality between individuals there cannot be. We must have officers and men in our Army and Navy and in our industries. The judge cannot be on an equality with the criminal.

The fact is it not absolute equality in all matters that is so desirable but equality of opportunity. Every man and woman born into the world should have an equal opportunity of reaching their highest development of mind, soul and body and of reaching the highest posts in the path of life they choose as their career. There will always be varying degrees of character and ability amongst individuals, and these should be the only distinctions in advancement without the interruption of birth, rank, or favouritism.
That is the ideal for which we should strive, and no mean ideal it is. To reach it we should need to revolutionise our present system of politics, economics, education and housing. No child would be born and bred in a slum, for no slums would exist; our elementary school children would proceed through the higher grades towards the universities undeterred by the bar of birth or means; the private could become a field marshal and the day wage man a captain of industry.

Some of these possibilities are realities today, for we have field marshals who once were privates, and captains of industry who once were day wage men. But just as one swallow does not make a summer so one such case does not make a rule. The scales are still heavily weighed against the man without birth, influence or means. In some industries and especially on the railways, to possess ambition if you are a wage man is madness. Merit is not a means to advancement, yet demerit meets with punishment. It is true we have on some railways men who have reached high positions from a low degree but these will be found to have belong to the salaried staff. That is in itself a hope of promotion. Those unfortunate beings who are weekly wage men on our railway and who are cursed with ambition should abandon all hope be they however well educated, earnest, conscientious, and efficient. This is an inequality that ought to be abolished, and must be abolished if the railway Co.'s desire to retain their best men and wish for efficiency.

It would be wrong to supersede this present system by one giving promotion by seniority, as the T.U. desires. Promotion by merit
on well known lines by men most capable is the best and most efficient way. Other classes find in their occupation sufficient interest and scope for their abilities, and, incidentally, find a proportionate recompense to their interest and ability, in their business. The working man, on the other hand is not called upon to exercise his mind and his abilities to the same degree, and again incidentally does not obtain the same recompense in doing so as the more favourably placed. Let me give an example from my own experience.

As a railway signalman (1st class) I find all promotion blocked. There is absolutely no incentive for one so placed to make himself more efficient or to take a greater interest in his work. To transfer to other depts can only be done at a pecuniary sacrifice. There is no such thing as a career on this line for a uniformed man.

28.7.21
The Opening Year

1924 lies before us with all its possibilities untried, all its opportunities hidden, and its joys and sorrows untasted. As yet its tale is untold. The book lies before us; the pen is in our hand; what shall we write in it? While it is yet barren of regrets, might have been, and remorse let us ponder awhile what kind of tale we would have it tell. We will not indulge in idle wishes, vain daydreams, nor make the good resolutions that are so prolific at this time of the year; but we try to say something that will give us faith and courage in the days that are to come.

The new year is heir to many problems of all kinds, personal, local, national and international. Some there are that demand a solution to be found rapidly or evils greater than those we have will grow out of them; and some there be that justice and prudence cry aloud against. These and many others will also require all the courage and faith we can muster if we are to solve them. The political situation itself calls for more disinterested service from all parties than it has done for years. In fact the whole social world requires a stronger faith and courage to meet its problems if we are to bring it more into line with our religious beliefs and aspirations.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has broadcasted in his New Years
message an appeal for mutual service and self-sacrifice. These are hard things to do and appeal but very little to the spirit of our age. Service and sacrifice may sound very nice words from a pulpit but put into concrete practice they require grit and fortitude as well as an absence of selfishness, which latter is not a distinguishing feature of present-day life. Yet if the problems which face us today are to reach a solution I make bold to say that it will only be by greater sacrifice and forbearance, in fact by the absence of selfishness by all classes that they will be solved. It seems to me that we have reached a time when mankind can only go forward by making himself more in accord with the teaching of Christ. We have learnt theoretically the beauty of sacrifice and admired it in others perhaps but we have failed to practice it ourselves. The time is rapidly coming when we must adopt it as our own or succumb to the forces of evil. Our whole civilisation we are told hangs by a thread, and if that thread is to be strengthened and our civilisation not to become as that of Nineveh and Tyre it will only be because we are willing to sacrifice our personal and sectional interests to those of the whole.

When we have rightly learned the lessons of the Cross which are love, service and sacrifice we shall find that they are the only means by which we can progress. Then all our problems including those of class and international will solve themselves. He that would save his life must lose it. Through seeming defeat comes victory. It is one more step by which the Divine image is made manifest in man.

1.1.24.
The Sermon on the Mount

This sermon on the mount, or perhaps more correctly the series of sermons which go under this title, are the high watermark towards which humanity has ever striven or perhaps will ever strive and rarely if ever reach. As Signor Papini has said in his "Life of Christ" that it is perhaps the only thing to which humanity can point as an excuse for his existence on the earth. It marks the highest point of human endeavour and is entirely free from the selfishness and self-glorification which unties other evidence of man's strivings.

This sermon is an appeal for a purity and unselfishness as has never before been conceived and which has never been exceeded and rarely attained. It asks a self immolation such as few of us are capable of, and a purity of thought requiring the most limpid soul and most complete self mastery.

How strange a doctrine and how impossible of attainment this must have seemed to those rude, and even to our standards, lusty people who were privileged to hear those gracious words. The Scribes and Pharisees who were looked up to as being at the very apex of morality not only fell far short of this standard, but were even pointed to as possessing a righteousness which must be exceeded by all who wished to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Such perfectness as this must surely earn their hate.
and eventually bring him no good.

There are some principles or rather some sayings in the sermon which we do not understand properly, and there are some which appear to conflict sharply with not only common practice but also with what we look upon as applied Christianity. As an example of the former consider the first beatitude "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of God". What exactly does it mean to be "poor in spirit"? St. Luke's rendering of this beatitude is "Blessed are the poor". This only succeeds in further confusing us for it makes poverty, a state which may arise from many causes, a means of itself of entrance into the kingdom of God. We know from other sayings of Jesus as well as by his actions that the poor were especially dear to him and that he believed they were more easily entered into his kingdom. He once said that it was more easy for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom. A saying which seems to make it an impossible thing.

If we accept St. Mathew's version as the correct one and take the meaning of the words to be just what they say it seems to make "poor in spirit" to mean the antithesis of what is commonly known as high-spirited, i.e. one who is quick to resent and avenge injury to oneself. This interpretation too finds support other sayings of his as when he instructed his disciples to "resist not evil" and if struck on one cheek to offer the other also.
Whichever is the correct version and it is possible, nay even probable, that both are correct, it finds support not only in his sayings but in his life also. Jesus was undoubtedly poor. He was the son of a Carpenter, and he said once that although foxes had holes and birds of the air had nests he had not where to lay his head. Surely if any man was poor in worldly goods it was him. Similarly he was as assuredly poor in spirit and practiced his doctrines of resisting not evil so far as he was concerned himself. When he was reviled he reviled not again.

It is quite probable I say that both versions are correct for it must be remembered the Gospels were written many years after these words were spoken. They record what the writers and eyewitnesses remember to have occurred or been said, it is likely that these knowing the drift of the words and the life that Jesus lived may have differed about the exact words he used at a particular time and yet agree as to what he intended to teach.

As a practical system of life man has not, and probably will not have for many generations, faith enough to apply it. When he has reached that state his stay on the Earth will probably not be prolonged. Can we conceive even today, our national life conducted upon the principles of the sermon on the mount, but we are tending slowly but surely. It will only be by long education and faith in this Divine message that we shall eventually attain to anything like it. Yet who of us can say without any having had the courage to try it that it is impossible.
If nations cannot or may not yet be able to live this higher life, individuals can and should attempt to bring the day when it is possible much nearer by living more and more close to it. This is no easy task and would probably even today meet with the condemnation of organised and unorganised bodies. What would be the result of applying such principles as these wholeheartedly and sincerely? "Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again". "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you". Yet it is towards that ideal we must press following the golden rule which we here encountered for the first time.

"Love one another", "as ye would that men should do you, do ye also to them likewise". Be merciful and judge not. "Give and it shall be given unto you". What faith is required to believe this! Anger, lustful thoughts are condemned and an accommodating spirit to all but evil is enjoined. Such are the light of the world, but it must be a light not hid but seen of all.

Here is a mode of life suggested higher and nobler than had ever been conceived of before nor exceeded since. It appeals to the highest in man requiring the most strenuous use of those virtues animalistic man condemns such as, self control, unselfishness, meekness, and a forgiving spirit. It points to the apex of man's humanity aiming at the destruction of the ape and tiger in him and the supremacy of the angel.

That a simple Galilean carpenter of no education as we should say in these days should propound a Gospel such as this and at
a period of history when the opposite principles were in the 
ascendant, is in itself little short of a miracle. It is 
perhaps a greater miracle still that he himself lived to the 
fullest extent the life which he here taught. Apart altogether 
from any supernatural explanation how can we find a sufficient 
and convincing explanation? Whence did he derive those high 
elevating thoughts and sentiments which are put in so short 
and simple yet beautiful sentences and parables? What was 
there about his person that drew all men unto him for it was 
not only because of his miraculous healing powers that attracted 
them, great as they were, but his charm and gracious words also. 
The common people we read heard him gladly.
Education not a Luxury

When we remember the glad reception that was given to Mr. Fisher's Education Bill in 1917, we cannot help contrasting the promise which that measure made with the educational outlook of today. Loudest among the general acclamations that Bill received was perhaps that given by the most enlightened of the workers. The trade unions unanimously supported its provisions, and the Workers Educational Association hoped for great things. Few indeed were the voices we heared against it, and those mostly arose from those who had a very imperfect idea of what was intended.

At last it seemed a great step was to be taken forward towards securing to every child its educational birthright. Even if the blinkers were not to be completely taken from the eyes of the workers children they were at least to be allowed a little more light and a little more knowledge. There was a prospect of education replacing mental drill in the schools, and in a generation or two of a real educated democracy in control.

However these hopes were only raised to be dashed to the ground. They were, perhaps, never intended to be realised by us. At the time they were made we had just come through a great war which had unsettled men's ideas of the sacredness of kings and thrones; five million men who had faced hell were being demobilised; and the wind from Russia was blowing pretty
strong. It was necessary then for the powers-that-be to walk warily if they were to tide over this difficult time. It was a time for consolatory promises, and truly the Government performed it well. A new heaven and a new earth was promised. Houses were to be built fit for heroes, pensions for those who had suffered, their children should be educated as no children of the past had been, disease and death should lose their terrors by provision being made for their dependants, they and the women who had helped Lloyd George and Co. to win the war should have the vote, the employed lamb should lie down comfortably with his lion employer, sure of a fairer recompense for his labour. Yes, it was undoubtedly laid on thickly, very thickly.

But now that anxious time is past what a different tale there is to tell. These promises have gone to join those others of like kin, such as, hang the Kaiser and make Germany pay. First wages had to come down, now the country cannot afford all those other luxuries that were promised. To be sure it must afford to pay its 6 per cent to those who were generous enough to lend their money and to make ample presents to those who bravely fought behind the lines. Not to do so would be to acknowledge bankruptcy.

No we must cut down our expenses where we can says the Government. Children must not be allowed at school until they attain the age of 6. Teachers must have their salaries cut down and teach more children in their classes. Higher educational
facilities must be rigorously curtailed and the continuation schools must not be opened.

22.2.22.
Deplorable Economy

The deadening hand of this Economy Government has been placed with ill-timed severity upon Education. Teachers' salaries have been reduced and their numbers too, classes have increased in size, school buildings neglected and new buildings stopped completely; fees have been increased and free places much reduced in number.

As an example of the inadequacy of elementary schools, Alsager can be quoted. Here one old church school has to serve an area three miles across. Some children have to travel two miles to and from school and are unable to get home for a mid-day meal. There is no facility at or near the school for a warm meal to be obtained. The whole building is out-of-date, its lavatory conveniences are insanitary and even the playgrounds are of trodden earth and often water-logged.

In the days of the Labour Government steps were being taken to build another school, larger and more up-to-date, to act as a Central School for Alsager and other similar parishes near. The advent of this Government, quickly put an end to the proposal, so that there is now no early prospect of any change being made.

While the Government is looking to the ends of the earth to
find means of improving the means of trade, it is ignoring the most obvious evils at home. It is false economy that neglects the education of the young. In a very few years the children of today will be the electors and controllers of the country. Great as the need for economy in public expenditure may be, a country like ours is disgraced by the fact that it spends only 5.4 per cent of the national income on Education against 29.6 spent by Switzerland.

2.5.33.
The Growth of Gambling

One of the most striking things about present day life is the growth of the gambling spirit. Sweepstakes are being organised for every conceivable object, religious, humanitarian, benevolent, political and any other cause requiring money. The police make but a spasmodic and half-hearted attempt to prevent them, an attempt which only makes the law look more ridiculous than ever.

But it is not only sweepstakes that are on the increase but gambling in any and every form. Horse racing, football, cricket and every other conceivable sport is tainted by it. Coupon betting on football matches is particularly rife. The most suggestive fact is that it is indulged in not only by the male sex but by a good proportion of the female sex also. There is reason to believe that the craze is indulged in by young people to a growing extent.

These are facts which should be considered by everyone who has the interests of the people at heart. The Government for their part have appointed a Committee to consider the question of the legalising of betting agents and the taxing of their profits; a procedure which if adopted would have the reverse effect to restricting betting.
Although I do not believe I am a "killjoy" I do not think that the extension of this gambling fever is a good thing for the nation. Behind it is desire to obtain something for nothing. We are all I know naturally desirous of obtaining as much as possible for the least possible outlay, but that we should be encouraged to expect that something can be got for nothing is not a good thing. We know that the prizes all have to be obtained from those contributing and that all share an equal chance of obtaining them, but the idea is that not worth, skill or any creative ability is necessary to the acquirement of a small fortune but sheer blind luck or chance. The encouragement of this belief is fatal to all effort and to the dogged perseverance which is said to be the outstanding characteristic of the British character.

It is of course grossly unfair and unjust that it is possible and easy for the wealthy person to risk his pounds in this way, and difficult and illegal for the poor man to gamble with his shillings. That is an inequality which ought to be corrected. What is bad for one is bad for both. But what I am concerned about here is not so much as to the right or wrong of gambling but as to its significance as a sign of the times.

The extension of this gambling craze is but another development of that desire to get-rich-quick which is so marked a trait of present-day civilisation. This desire is no new thing, but what is new is the exploitation of it for objects which in themselves are good and praiseworthy. That funds are urgently needed for these objects and that they are obtainable in this way is not
or should not be the only considered points before risking the undermining of the national character to obtain that end. It seems to be perilously near performing that debatable feat known as doing evil that good may come.

1.9.23.
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