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SELF-GOVERNMENT
AND THE
BREAD PROBLEM

The facts and suggestions put forward in these lectures are dealt with at greater length in books by the author, and in lectures reprinted for the various Indian Education Departments and for Calcutta University obtainable :—

IN LONDON. from Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Museum Street, Bloomsbury, W. C., and from the Hon. Sec., Educational Colonies Association, C/o the East Indian Association, 3, Victoria Street, Westminster, S. W.

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OPINIONS OF LEADING MEN.

The late Lord Roberts wrote, "It appears to me an honest attempt at the solution of problems of the greatest moment to the State."

Sir Horace Plunkett wrote, "Your essay on the co-operation of the future is intensely interesting and well thought out I assure you you have the deepest sympathy of a fellow worker."

Professor T. N. Carver of Harvard University, the prominent economist of America, writes, "I read your book with great interest." "Your suggestions seem to me entirely worthy and practical."

Professor Charles Gide, Professor of Co-operation of the University of Paris, the prominent economist of Europe, in a lengthy review of the French edition concludes by saying "There is no doubt that events are leading us towards the realisation of what the author foresees."

Professor Todd, Illinois University, writes, "My students unite with me in endorsing your plan for Educational Colonies as one of the most hopeful signs of a coming solution of the problem of unemployment."

Professor Richard (Bordeaux University) "No better book has been written on its subject. Contains novel and scientifically true ideas."

Professor Louis Wuarin (Professor of Social Economics of the University of Geneva), says, "Captain Petavel shows in his studies a knowledge and earnestness together with remarkable ingenuity which have very soon gained him the confidence of his readers"

Professor Walker (in Chamber's Journal) says, "the most original, the most fascinating and the most hope-inspiring books I have ever read on the social question," "I shall see that all my students leave imbued with their teachings"

Lord Crewe, Lord Milner, the Education Ministers of the Union of South Africa and the Dominion of Canada and the late High Commissioner for Australia are among those who have asked to be kept acquainted with the progress of the Association's work.

AMONG THE LEADING PUBLICATIONS OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES :—

The Hibbert Journal (in a special article by Professor Walker, entitled "Are the Brains Behind the Labour Revolt Wrong") says "He develops a fascinating programme of reform which is quite free from the taint of class warfare, and far more promising than that which begins by war."

The Times. "The chief value of the theories so earnestly pressed lies in relating them to the economic obstacle to general education."

The Journal de Geneve (in a leading article) says, "Shows strong common sense and that characteristically English faculty for presenting abstract problems in a practical light."

The Berlin Tagezeitung (in a leading article) says "They (these suggestions) form a welcome contrast with other suggestions for reform."

The Survey (New York) "Well worth careful study."

The Wednesday Review (India) says, "written with such ability, originality, tolerance and earnestness that we can recommend it to every Social Reformer, Christian, Hindoo or Mahomedan,"

SELF-GOVERNMENT

AND THE

BREAD PROBLEM

A SERIES OF LECTURES

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INTRODUCTION.

Some questions that have been asked by readers of the first edition of these lectures have shown that it was a good plan to summarise, in an introduction, the vitally important economic facts it is desired specially to call attention to.

We are not proceeding quite in the ordinary way, and that is because we are not living in ordinary times and hence the need of special emphasis on some points.

Generally, of course, in a practical sociological study, we deal with some definite proposals, and the economic facts, which are well known, come in, so to speak, incidentally. Here, on the contrary, certain basic facts will be the main thing, and the proposals for application will be rather by way of illustration; and this is for a clear and very interesting reason.

The tremendous conflict that has just terminated, and has made unprecedented demands on our economic resources, has shown us all, as we had never been shown before, what enormous power industrial progress has given to organised labour, and what immense use it has enabled us to make of even the most unskilled workers; and now we are called upon to explore these possibilities for their social applications.

Thus, some splendid new hopes of social betterment, some immense possibilities *to be explored*, are our

main concern now ; in exploring them plans and details will be settled ; but to attempt to do it at the present stage would be premature.

In the lectures, nevertheless, we shall be dealing with concrete examples. Really, of course, the war has *popularised* knowledge of these economic facts, not revealed them and, at least by the capitalist along his particular line, and in some other directions also, these possibilities have already been explored very thoroughly. We are able, therefore, to show instances of things that have been done, and to draw conclusions from them as to the most hopeful lines of advance into the still unexplored social possibilities that have now been shown to us by the events of the war as a flash of lightning shows us the landscape in the night. But it is necessary to guard against any tendency to forget that the examples are given mainly for illustration, and it is hoped that this introduction will be helpful in emphasising that principles, not details, are our main concern.

Now first as regards a modern view of the present movement in India for self-government, what concerns us is the fact that "non-co-operation" may be entirely good, or fraught with evil, according to whether it is strong or weak, and we can now see how it might be made, in the best sense, strong.

If people under a foreign government, feeling the anomaly of their position, resolve upon developing and strengthening all kinds of national organisations and institutions, so as to become independent economically and otherwise of the foreigners, and draw their fellow countrymen to

these national institutions by their own merits, and, therefore, without having any need to agitate, the movement will be not only legitimate, but of great value to the cause of progress; carried out in that way, it may raise them at once from their position of dependence to one of leading, and of great service to mankind. If they aim at making the foreign government ultimately impossible in that manner, they will be choosing what is evidently the best of all ways of putting an end to the anomaly of foreign rule.

Whether agitating also is legitimate or not is altogether outside our present sphere.

What concerns us is only that, for every reason, we must exert ourselves to our very utmost to make a movement like the present one as strong as possible in the sense of being as constructive as possible; and that a study of these economic facts show us what extraordinary opportunities we have now to make it constructive.

For about eight years a propaganda has been carried on in India, with the support of many of the most prominent men in the country, to draw attention to the fact that modern industrial progress has rendered it possible to organise co-operative production in ways that would enable India to develop national institutions, and even to revive many of her old institutions, in new and economically much better forms, and to go forward to freedom in that way—by the very road the non-co-operators propose, and by the very same steps, but entirely constructive ones.¹

¹ See p. 37 and Appendix I.

Hitherto, however, the interest in this plan has not been general, and that is, after all, easy to explain, since the economic facts on which it is based were, we might almost say, known only to economists. Now this should no longer be the case, and we must exert ourselves to the utmost to make the present movement constructive, with greatly enhanced prospects of attaining at least some extremely useful practical results.

This is of world-wide interest and importance. It is a deplorable fact that, at present, people have nowhere much idea of working constructively to gain their political, or even sociological objects. A political movement can hardly be popular in any country unless it is essentially a movement against something or other; in Europe as much as in India the particle "non" or some equivalent of it must appear prominently before the masses can understand it. Socialism and land reform could both be carried out as purely constructive measures, which all would approve,¹ but they are understood popularly as anti-capitalist and anti-landlord movements respectively; the Indian movement, similarly, had to be slyed anti-foreign or at least anti-government before it could become popular.

It would, of course be grossly unjust to its leader to say that he has intentionally made it either negative or anti-foreign. He gave it the most constructive, and at the same time the broadest of religious foundations. But as many people fail to understand it in that way it is unfortunately

¹ See p. 65, last para. p. 73, and foot-note (2), p. xvi.

true that in actual practice the movement panders still to the general negative mentality of the masses.

Now this dangerous state of the popular mind, so strongly illustrated in Europe also by the Bolshevik tendencies, *imposes upon people of education to-day the most urgent, the most elementary and the clearest duty that has ever been imposed upon any set of people at any time in the world's history.* Modern conditions demand entirely positive and constructive action.¹ Obvious, however, as that fact is, in this age of immense undeveloped and unused productive power—and therefore immense constructive opportunities—the popular mind has never been so negative as it is now. In Europe the great popular idol, state socialism, that had something constructive in it, has fallen²; co-operation, working on antiquated ideas, is accomplishing little,³ so negative movements are arising. Hopeful solutions of all our problems, in India and elsewhere, are to be found to-day entirely in the direction of construction, but the swings of the pendulum that carry the popular mind from side to side by slow motions, happen just now to have made it more intensely negative, perhaps, than it has ever been.

What is wanted is, of course, clear: people of good will must lose no time about getting to work on constructive measures; for in that way only will they be able to turn the masses from staring into vacancy, and getting evil and dangerous ideas from it.

¹ P. 6, last para., p. 36, para. 3, and p. 81

² P. 78, para. 2.

³ P. 83, para. 2.

Arguing is obviously useless, however strong and clear the arguments may be ; practical examples of things accomplished only will save the situation, and *knowledge of these great economic facts shows us ways in which we may hope to give the much needed striking practical examples.* That, then, is what we must study.

For over a century now, the most sincere and thoughtful people in every country have been insisting, and without contradiction, that if only we would unite and establish great co-operative organisations, we should be able to solve our social problems and transform our whole civilisation. Despite, however, all exhortations, the progress of co-operation, though steady, has been very slow, and people have been discouraged. The war has shown us new possibilities to be explored in this direction, opening up new hopes of great constructive work¹ and to explore them thoroughly is now the duty of all who can realise the dangers of the present age of negativeness. India's duty in the matter has been recognised by her most prominent men, and indeed as we shall see in every way, she might now win the profound gratitude of the world by giving the lead.

The fundamental fact dealt with in these lectures is, first, that industrial progress having rendered it possible to make very great use of unskilled labour, we might lay the foundations of a co-operative productive organisation with the young to their own immense advantage. This at once opens up a

¹ P. 83, para. to p. 85.

vast field for-constructive activity, showing how we might, as a first step, do wonderful things for education, in the poorest countries as well as in the richest.

It will be clear, as we go along, why we are concentrating our attention mainly upon this possibility. We can actually create, with the young, a new social system and the organisation which we can form, whilst benefiting education enormously, would be also the best foundation, both material and educational, of a better social system for all. In India it will be of the very greatest political, or, as one might say, national, importance. In advanced countries it will be salvation to the children, saving them from the artificial conditions of life that are fatal in their effects on the young and training them to be *versatile* as all children should be in these days of excessive specialisation in their after life.¹

A common excuse for inaction is that everything is so uncertain in the domain of economics. The answer, in this case, however, is perfectly plain. *For the very reason that everything else is uncertain, one thing is absolutely certain, namely, that when we are in danger we must not argue but try every way*; we must certainly try everything in connection with education and co-operation, and this is a plan, which leading authorities now agree is fraught with hope.

It is obviously true also that modern industrial progress has given us facilities for carrying out co-operative production in ways that give much better promise of success than those that were opened to the early co-operators and were tried by them; and that

¹ P. 59.

as far as we can see, co-operative production needs only a start now—such as this educationally useful application would give it better perhaps than it could be given in any other way—and it might go rapidly forward.

The educationalist, thus can give the required practical examples by which alone we may save the situation.

For reasons that are, after all, only too clear, the popular mind tends fatally to the negative side: there are always too many different opinions and uncertainties about the details of any constructive scheme for people to be able ordinarily to unite with enthusiasm. It is, moreover, only very few who will ever get a sufficient grasp of any constructive scheme.

Thus it is that the deplorable fact arises that, generally, the only thing the masses can unite about, is their protest against some institution which they wish to overthrow, in a more or less blind hope that something better will arise in its place. Knowledge of these economic facts, however, shows that thoughtful people have now something better to do. The facilities we have to-day for educational constructive work are, without exaggeration, as superior to any plans that the early co-operators had as the steamship is superior to the sailing vessel. Our attention has been drawn away to political action, and the co-operative movement has gone off in a direction of its own¹; but none of the political schemes have given any solution for our problems, so let us come back to the old one of practical constructive work, that the most

¹ P. 84, para. 4.

thoughtful people have always put their hope in—to constructive “direct action.”

Now that a great national movement has been started in the right way for popularity, and has swept the country, let India at all events lead.

What people of education have to do is absolutely plain; for the agitator is simply *opening up the way for them to do constructive work*. Negative non-co-operation is telling youths not to continue their studies and people not to take employment under government, and those who have employment to give it up; we can tell them what they can do instead of giving merely negative advice. Negative non-co-operators are telling people not to support the government that is now keeping order in the country. We can tell them that if they do that they can, and therefore must, get to work and construct, in the form of a national education system, the nucleus of a co-operative organisation; and that, fully developed, it could be a bulwark against disorder, and against want in the country, if the present government were weakened. Simply negative action involves dangers of dire calamity, which none can overlook; without arguing with the non-co-operators we must show them their duty to work on the constructive side, and tell them that all will help them there.

That is not being partisans, it is important to understand, it is being philanthropists and patriots, pure and simple. In practice it means simply doubling our efforts to improve education and establish and promote co-operation, which is entirely good and is the duty of every humane person at any time

apart from the question of how it affects non-co-operation and the problems that arise in connection with it.

This movement to work constructively for Indian emancipation has been in existence in an organised shape for eight years now, long before the negative form arose, so we have some records to go upon.

It is well known now that many of India's most eminent leaders have expressed the opinion that the co-operative plan seems to be that to which we must look at all events for the solution of her great problem of popular education.

The publicity that has been given to the matter, the utterances of public men, show that, during these few years that the idea has been kept before the public, confidence in it has been growing steadily,¹ at least from that important point of view. But now it will be asked why its supporters have hitherto given their blessings, but nothing more. The best answer to that question is a brief statement of the reception of the educational idea in Bengal.

Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, who has been a supporter from the beginning, was obliged, at first, to recognise the fatal difficulty which prevented the plan from being practical politics: the difficulty, namely, that it is not possible to give a demonstration of it on a small scale—which is what everybody wants with anything new—since *it is only by operating on a*

¹ See an article in the "Modern Review" (Calcutta) February, 1920, summing up Bulletin No. I of the Mysore State Department of Commerce and Industry, dealing with the subject. This Bulletin was subsequently printed for distribution by Calcutta University and by the Education Departments of Bengal and Madras.

sufficiently large scale that we can use the industrial methods on which co-operative production depends entirely for general success.

Nothing therefore short of some kind of national movement, could give us real hopes of seeing a useful experiment carried out—that is what we have now, but had not at first.

Meanwhile, however, on his initiative, a department and lectureship were established in Calcutta University for the study of the economics of this co-operative educational scheme, and to pave the way to its realisation by educating public opinion. Lectures were printed and sent out to every university in the Empire, and many foreign ones, and criticism invited. Many of the most eminent economists in the world wrote at great length and in entire approval; one, of the greatest eminence in connection with co-operation, has sent a subscription for wide propaganda of this idea. I may mention in this connection, as a witness to the extent to which the propaganda has been carried out by the British and Indian organisations, that two Royal Personages have written expressing in different ways their appreciation.

So far, then, on the academic side.

Now passing to the practical side we may say, in the first place, that the economic lessons of the war gave us a demonstration on a gigantic scale of all the economic facts on which this constructive plan is based; that and the advent of the required national movement has created a new situation, and fortunately we are being led in the most hopeful

direction ; in that of a beginning for vocational education.

People are now asking for schools in which boys will learn practical work. There is a widespread tendency to criticise educational leaders of the country for not having foreseen that this want would arise, and provided for it. But, as all who have any claim to be educational leaders know only too well, there have been numerous unsuccessful attempts to establish schools with industries attached to them to give practical education ; in fact one feels inclined to say that the country is strewn with wrecks of attempts of that kind. There have been successful ones, and notably in America, because labour has long been highly paid in that country, but the failures have far outnumbered the successes.

In presence of this fact the question presents itself to us in this practical way : Are we to make more attempts of the kind that have so often led to failure, or, in these times when any kind of constructive work would be of such infinite value, are we to strive to solve the problem by a co-ordinated effort, carried out in a way which has been approved now by so many of the most eminent economists and educationalists of the world and criticised by none and which all agree might lead to such great results ?

Sir Asutosh Mookerjee addressing the Conference of Head Masters in Bengal held on May, the 7th, 1921, as Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, said that the time had now come for these steps which, until this moment, he had not regarded as practical

politics. I have therefore asked him to have these lectures printed and sent to the Head Masters of schools recognised by the University, hoping that they will be successful in making them see the great duty, the great opportunities and the great future that lie before their profession to-day. They have now to work for nothing less than the solution of the poverty problem, which, as people are at last beginning to realise, is not an insoluble one; and for the solution of every one of the great problems of their country.¹

It is quite legitimate to emphasise the fact that the improvements that are now possible would result in immediate improvements in the status of school teachers; that is not a mere sordid question of pay, it is a question, as every Head Master realises, of efficiency.

It is from the educational point of view that people really can understand the hopefulness of these economic facts and, as one cannot insist too much, the educational start seems for every reason the most hopeful one. *The educationalist, thus, finds himself in a position of having unique opportunities; for if he solves his problem well, if he meets well the demand for practical education and vocational training, he may be the pioneer of emancipation, and of the better era we all hope that co-operation may give us.*

These economic facts if they can be made evident to all will leave no room for the doctrines to which

¹ See p. 33.

the word Bolshevism is applied as a kind of generic term, and which under some name or other, are threatening every country in the world. We have good reason now to know that, under modern conditions national wealth and well-being depend upon social organisation, but organisation is very difficult indeed to establish, because of the diversity of ideas and opinions that have to be met, and the prejudices that have to be encountered, and thus that any sudden upsetting of an old social order can hardly lead to anything but disaster.

Once these economic facts are understood, all will see there is no need for sudden changes, because then it becomes clear that we can graft co-operation, and even socialism if we wish, on to our present system¹ and India can advance peacefully to emancipation; these possibilities, then, must have at the present time, not only earnest attention, but practical demonstration; and we can give a demonstration, if only we have the will, by an educational application.

There is a form that negativeness takes in India to which we must give special attention: namely the advocacy of a return to primitive conditions. The danger of it in this form is that it appears on the surface to be constructive, moral and in many ways good, whereas, as a matter of fact, it is impossible.

It is of course true that India lived practically under conditions of rural simplicity until the advent of the British; and that the more complicated civilisation they brought with them cannot be said to have done the

¹ First para. p. 65, para 3 and italics, p. 85.

masses of the people any real good and certainly appears to be demoralising in many ways; it is therefore natural for Indian patriots to speak of throwing off these Western ideas and going back to the old conditions.

It is certainly to be hoped that India will learn the lesson Western experience has taught, and go forward with her industrial development on entirely different lines, but for a densely populated country there is only one generally practicable way of preventing starvation, and that is by industrial development of some kind, that will enable the land to be divided into farms of suitable size to allow of the use of good methods which secure a high yield from the soil.¹

The primitive Aryans were able to live under conditions of rural simplicity because they took land when they needed it from the aboriginal tribes, driving them back to the remoter parts of the country. If the aborigines were at all numerous, the beautiful picture of idyllic life that might charm us now had a hideous background of starving and decimated first inhabitants of the country. Simple rural conditions persisted of course after those early times, but then there was war, pestilence and famine, to keep population down; despite however those rough agencies of readjustment of population to land, there was much poverty and a landless class reduced to a condition approximating to slavery.

The old life, in a word, cannot be without the old horrors, excepting on one condition, that of

¹ P. 34, para. 3 and p. 88 para. 2.

celibacy and suppression of worldly ambitions. We have nothing to say about the monastic life, let those who believe in it follow it, and win adherents to it by their example, but the social reformer cannot plan social conditions suitable for nations of monastics.

From the moral point of view, finally, it is a fact that the growth of the soul has been defined as the extension of the sympathies beyond self, beyond the family, beyond the village, and ultimately beyond the nation. To the ordinary man, as apart from the saint and the seer, the rural life is a limited life, whereas the state of society to which we are distinctly evolving,¹ and in which we shall see, as a fundamental principle, the organisation of various units to work together for the greatest advantage of all, represents a higher ideal. When an antiquated land system no longer cramps and deforms our towns,² when they are well planned rows of houses with gardens and small holdings, arranged along lines of good and rapid communication, we shall have, with industrial development, the conditions combining contact with nature and intercourse with our fellow-men; conditions we know, as a fact, from the careful study of sociologists, to be those under which the average man attains by far his best all-round development.

¹ See pp. 73 & 74.

² The idea of constructive land reform may sound impossible; yet, of all reforms, this is the one that can the most clearly be carried out constructively; see *A Coming Revolution: Britain's Towns and Country of the Future*, which was reviewed favourably in publications representing landed interests.

What we have to do therefore is perfectly clear. We have not to attempt the impossible by trying to "put the clock back," it is going forward in the way it is required to go, all that is wanted is to *combat the negative mentality that is clogging the wheels*, but if educated people will take the trouble to understand the position, it is now as clear as the noonday sun that they could soon correct this negativeness and we should have progress. India must progress too, because she also is densely populated. She must be a member of the human family, giving to the world what she has to give, and taking from it what she needs under present conditions; not imitating but assimilating and nationalising new things to her own best use, just as a living organism takes materials from around it and assimilates them; *or if it does not, dies*. At all events, to add in any way to the prevailing negativeness at the present time is a crime in any person of education.

Finally as to the international aspect of this question, the Association mentioned was formed ten years ago, consisting of many well known men, and commended by the late Lord Roberts, and the late Head Master of Eton, for the propagation of these ideas in Great Britain, and in the British Empire generally¹; the Committee expressed its hope that India would give a lead that would be of use to other countries; to quote the words of its letter:—"And the Committee are very hopeful that these ideas may take root in Bengal and be an example to this country."

¹ See foot note, p. 9.

India has, indeed, done much in response to this appeal, since then strongly endorsed by leading men of other countries. Not only has Calcutta University founded the department and lectureship, but her great philanthropic nobleman the Maharajah of Cossimbazar, with the help now of the Government of Bengal and the Corporation of Calcutta, has established a school which, at all events, has done a great deal towards popularising the idea, and which, if it obtains the support it deserves, may do something towards giving a practical demonstration.

As this question is of interest to all, we in our turn, can now address ourselves to people of other countries and ask for their vigorous moral and intellectual support of these efforts to help us to follow up what has already been done, till we have been able to carry out an experiment of real value. The plan has now received considerable notice in educational papers in England; in the *Times Educational Supplement* of January 15th, 1920, there was a long notice, and in that of the 7th of April last (1921) is a long letter showing how a co-operative educational establishment could solve two problems of vital importance at the present time to Great Britain: the one of enabling people who have not good prospects at home to emigrate, and the other of opening secondary and technical education to a class to which it is not always now attainable.¹ The *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1913, had an article on the scheme under the title of "Are The 'Brains

¹ Pp. 50, and page 86, para. 2.

Behind the Labour Revolt,' Wrong," and most educational publications have made references to it.

It must be evident to every one that leading publications would not give so much space to these suggestions if people were as yet totally unprepared to understand this constructive scheme. From this indication, therefore, and from the worldwide notice taken of the activities of Calcutta University in this direction, it may be fairly inferred that if a determined effort were made, other countries would be able to show some progress in the study of these *extraordinarily hopeful possibilities that have been fully opened up by comparatively recent industrial progress*.

Nothing could be more obvious than the need now to do something great and striking towards improving the conditions of the working classes, to turn their minds away from vague and destructive ideas towards positive and constructive ones. Here is something we can do at once. An educational plan does not need to be popularly understood, it is enough that a few people should understand and give the lead, and then it will be popularised by success; that it is the chance of people of education in all lands, and their duty in the present crisis.¹

The general position to-day obviously demands that something should be done promptly.

We have developed immense productive power, the power to produce everything we require in abundance and with little labour; instead, however, of using that power to enable all to live in

¹ See footnote 1, p. 9, and again, p. 59,

comfort and security, we have, so far, used it conspicuously to multiply luxuries, often in a very senseless and wanton manner, for a small privileged class, and now to create machinery of destruction in fabulous quantities to destroy men and the fruits of their labour wholesale ! We may justly blame the workers for this unspeakable failure, as their incapacity to agree on any plan is the fundamental cause of it. But recriminations are useless, we must do something to remove such an unbearable reproach, and we have now every reason to believe that we can do at once something great by using this power to give the young a thoroughly good *training* and education ; evidently we must grasp this golden hope. The organisation for them would be a socialistic state within the state, so a first step towards endless possibilities. India's intellectuals appreciate now the fact that it is her best and surest way to freedom ; her efforts in that direction are clearly of the greatest and most vital interest to the whole world, and all should help her for their own sakes as much as for hers and that above all, is what we hope to make clear.

The call is absolutely clear, the appeal needs only to be made in the proper way and there will be response as surely as there is sense of duty among us, I have done my best in these lectures to show this in the hope that I shall lead others to do better.

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE BREAD PROBLEM

LECTURE I

THE TWO ASPECTS OF NON-CO-OPERATION

It is not altogether astonishing that, taken aback as we were by the suddenness with which the non-co-operation movement burst upon us, we looked upon it as an entirely new method of political action, the possible effects of which we could not calculate, some building great hopes upon it, and others fearing dire calamities; but now that matters have settled down a little, it is time that we should realise that it is a repetition, though, of course, on a different scale and under different conditions, of a movement that took place in Europe about a century ago, and moreover, that there is very reason to believe that it will go to an important extent along the same lines as that movement.

Briefly, then, with the advent of machinery, a new power arose in Europe, the power that is now called capitalism, that brought into existence the great middle classes, and placed the masses under a new domination.

About a century ago, the workers rose in revolt against that new power ; they realised that it was to be attacked, not by violence or even by political agitation, but by withholding co-operation from it, and so the first organised movement of "non-violent non-cooperation" was started. But its extremists are now almost a forgotten faction, and few remember that their plan, in organising the workers to produce the main necessities of life for themselves, was to be able effectively to boycott capitalism and bring about its downfall, and, with that, to transfer the whole political power to the democracy. But with this movement the constructive side was in itself an end worth striving for, so many people joined for its sake alone ; many, that is to say, who did not want to destroy the capitalist system, but only to supplement it by the co-operative one. The plan of many co-operators was to establish industries that would produce some of the principal necessities of life for themselves and be supported by the workers in capitalist employment buying some produce from them to provide them with the money to purchase what they could not produce themselves. It was hoped in that way to prevent unemployment, also unfair exploitation of labour, by giving the workers an alternative to employment under the capitalist, the result of which would be to give them independence. From this the movement went on to what we might call still more moderate forms ; to the various co-operative organisations we are acquainted with, that fight the capitalist system only in the way in which most organisations fight others, namely,

by competing with them. The militants, generally, left the movement and allied themselves with the socialists; the co-operative movement has continued, however, supported by people of moderate views, and has remained to this day a force of emancipation, though not active enough to fulfil the purpose for which it was originally conceived.

Now, we are certainly not going to attempt any general comparison between the European movement of a century ago and the Indian one of to-day; through they are similar fundamentally. People in league to "non-co-operate" with any institution are, of course, bound to co-operate among themselves. The more closely they co-operate on the one side, the more effectively they will be able to "non-co-operate" on the other. Starting a movement of that kind, in fact, is like beating a sheet of metal into a dome shape, which is as convex on one side as we make it concave on the other; the European movement naturally took the positive name, since, with a movement directed against capitalism, the constructive side is of essential importance; the Indian one as naturally took the negative one, in its fight against imperialism; but both must have both sides; the Indian extremists also must think of the employment question for those they induce to give up their careers. With the Indian movement, as with the European one, if we act intelligently we shall all help on the constructive side, and, if we know anything of modern economics, we see that there will be great developments on that side; and the aim of all thoughtful people should be to take the fullest possible advantage

of the situation to solve the bread problem and the political problem together.

Now, in this lecture I shall confine myself to the two most obvious aspects of this question of the two sides of a movement of this kind.

The greatest weaknesses of the Indian movement at present lies in the fact that the question of good employment for those who are to give up their careers has not received much attention yet, because people have not yet realised what they can do for its solution. On the surface it seems impossible to solve it satisfactorily, because employment of any kind is just one of the problems that perplex us the most. But there is an eminently satisfactory solution. As the European pioneers pointed out there is employment *and* employment. It is one thing to find a place-hunter a suitable billet, and another thing to find people work of national utility, when the *employers* and *employees* are both willing to make some sacrifice.

It has always been known that great things might be done in the way of developing industrial organisations working more co-operatively, and utilising our ever-increasing productive power more for the general good, if only some self-sacrificing people would come forward and do the pioneering work, which must always present difficulties. Great new possibilities have been opened up by progress in the direction of co-operative production, and we must utilise in this direction the patriotic enthusiasm now awakened. In connection with co-operation, abundant work can be given now that would at least be very instructive,

so that those who took it up would be at least qualifying themselves to earn well should they find it necessary to do so at some future time.

Moderate reformers see that there is internal work to be done to prepare India for freedom and specially in the direction of giving its people good education. It happens, that, of all the things we may do by means of co-operation, one of the most hopeful is to solve the problem of popular education so all will unite here.

A paper was read to the XIII Indian Industrial Conference showing that, if India would adopt an industrial system which, without attempting to attain the idealism of the purely co-operative system, would produce for use on the co-operative plan, she might develop industrially very rapidly indeed, and in a manner that would avoid the evils that mar Western civilisation. It was suggested that such a plan is one altogether in accordance with Indian ideas and traditions. It could, in fact, be called the socialism of the Indian village carried out in the manner suitable to modern methods. With it there could be a localisation and centralisation which would correspond remarkably with the essentially Indian political conception. In connection with this industrial system there would also be an educational organisation that would be a kind of modern revival of the *Gurukula* system.

It is well known, of course, that, with the immense productive power we now possess, a co-ordinated industrial system could be so strong economically that a poor country adopting it might

soon be as well off as the richest are now ; that is what is taught by the whole school of economics described as socialistic. Co-ordination with modern methods means power ; co-ordination in profit-making concerns has produced the colossal fortunes of to-day, and Germany's rapid recovery after the war is attributed to co-ordination among her industries.

But, as the pioneers of the European movement pointed out a century ago, in order to make its industrial development benefit the mass of the people, we must go a step further in co-ordination than capitalists have gone, and have co-ordinated industries supplying the principal necessities of life. Such industries would always be busy as long as their own workers had wants to be supplied. With that system nobody wanting anything would remain unemployed, but would get to work to produce it, in an organised way, with labour properly subdivided among the workers. With an industrial organisation of that kind, properly developed, there would be no such thing as unmerited poverty with the immense productive power we now possess.

Now, the thing of fundamental importance to understand, the economic fact that above all should engage our attention to-day, is that the failure of the early co-operators to establish such industries successfully does not concern us now, because industrial progress has altered the position radically.

I shall have more to say about this later, but, briefly, it is as follows : If we take ten to represent the average productive power of a man's labour a century ago, we may, for illustration, take fifty to represent

it now. But the fifty, however, represents, not what productive power actually is, but what it would be if we made full use of modern methods. Not even the most advanced country has developed so much as twenty-five out of the potential fifty. What, then, we have to seek to do to-day by co-operation is to develop more power. Thus, whilst the early co-operators were *fighting against* the capitalists, to get for the workers a bigger share of the fruits of a productive power represented by ten, used nearly to the full, what we want to do now is to *co-operate with* the capitalist to utilise more than twenty-five out of a potential fifty, which of course, is an entirely different proposition *and alters the whole problem*. These figures again are only to illustrate the state of affairs that exists in all "advanced" countries, and are not intended to show the exact conditions in any one. There is no agreement about the figures, but any one can see that even in the most advanced countries, only a small proportion of the workers are employed, helped by the best organisation and machinery, doing work of real social value, so productive power is not *nearly* used to the full. It will soon appear, it is wholly in the interest of *the workers* to develop productive power more by co-ordinated industries and there are strong reasons for India to give the lead in this "neo-co-operation."

It was pointed out in the paper read to the Industrial Conference that, with the productive power we now possess, we might start, industries of that kind supplying necessities for their workers and useful articles for those who provided the

capital, as their interest, and leaving a substantial balance over for extension; and that therefore, once started, such industries might spread over the country like seeding plants over suitable land, with a rapidity that is not possible with industries that produce for sale entirely, and are therefore, always limited by the uncertainties of the market. Such industries would be, in an organised way, customers for each other. The management, it was also pointed out, would be reduced, by the virtual elimination of the commercial element, to the greatest possible simplicity.¹

But the difficulty remaining, of course, is that capitalists will carry out co-ordination as far only as actual experience has shown them that it will pay them. The conservativeness that is characteristic of practical people is not simply a stupid side of their character, as it is sometimes represented to be, but based on knowledge that any plan, however sound it may be in theory, and even if certain to be ultimately successful, may fail to give satisfactory results for a long time in practice, until experience in its practical application has been more or less slowly won.

It is for this reason that new departures that would be nationally useful must be pioneered by devoted and self-sacrificing people. Now we have an opportunity for such.

The educational application of the plan was noticed as being not only of great value and

¹ For more detail see *Man and Machine Power*, Calcutta University, obtainable from Messrs. Cambray & Sons, Re. 1.

hopefulness in itself, but also probably, for many reasons, the right way to begin. An organization formed in Great Britain¹ to advocate this plan with the double object, educational and economic, made a special appeal to India to lead the way in its practical application. Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, prompt to see the possibilities opened up for the solution of the problems both of popular education and middle class unemployment, placed the scheme before the Calcutta University Commission² and the President declared his hope to see it tried practically. The Maharaja of Cossimbazar, meanwhile, had established a school to train boys in such a way as to make them useful in such an organisation, should it ever be started. Sir Asutosh Mookerjee had a series of lectures on the plan printed and sent out to Professors of economics of all the Universities in the Empire and a good many others, for criticism. Though, as is of course well known, the failure of the co-operators to carry out their original plan, and the unpopularity of the socialists' suggestions for the state to do it, have given rise to extraordinary prejudice and scepticism, towards any suggestion for "integral production," no discouraging criticism was received from any quarter as regards the suggestion for its Indian application, but, on the contrary, a very strong encouragement was given by eminent authorities in all parts of the world. In India itself, Sir Dorab Tata, asked for his opinion, said that, if it was

¹ The Educational Colonies Association; Hon. Sec., J. B. Pennington, Esq., I.C.S., c/o East India Association, 3, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S. W.

² See the published Report, Vol. VII, p. 18.

carried out in the way that had been suggested to him, the plan was worth a trial, and made some interesting suggestions for a start on the estate of the Tata Steel and Iron Works at Jamshedpur. Sir Dorab contributed generously to a fund for the propaganda, as did also the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Horace Plunkett, the Gokhale of Ireland, Dr. Starr Jordan, the eminent American scholar, and friend of India, and a large number of leading business men in Bombay and Calcutta, including, conspicuously, Sir Dinshaw Wacha, Rajah Rishikesh Law, Sir Daniel Hamilton and other prominent European merchants and, with great generosity, Mr. Khee Za Rhee of Calcutta. Following on this entirely satisfactory result of the study of the subject and the enquiries made in every part of the world by the Calcutta University, a company has now been floated by Mr. Haridas Chatterjee, a well-known Vakil, to take some first steps towards carrying out this idea, combined with the exploitation of some of India's neglected resources.

Co-operation is still the hope of the most thoughtful people in all countries. A century has passed now since the pioneers of the movement set out to solve on that plan—only as it has proved, by a too idealistic application of it—the problem of utilising our immense productive power to put an end to unmerited poverty, many others have been suggested since; but, after all, the hope of reformers still centres in the ultimate realisation in some form or other of the co-operator's plan; though, modern progress would suggest that it should work with

individualistic system instead of displacing it as the early co-operators conceived.

The pioneers of the co-operative movement planned to build up, brick by brick, the edifice of co-operation, establishing at first small industries aiming at being as self-contained as possible—microcosms which uniting would form the macrocosm of co-operative production. But they were at war with capitalism, and consequently would not take capitalist help. Lacking thus capital to make a proper start, and lacking any effective control of the workers, want of money and of discipline made success impossible; in some cases and their “colonies” broke up; in other cases they managed to work together, but there was nothing to make them keep to their plan, and they gave up their ideal to take a short cut to getting rich by turning their enterprises into commercial concerns pure and simple.

The suggestion made in the paper to the XIII Indian Industrial Conference was that Indian patriots, not being at war with capitalism, wishing only to see their country develop industrially, should carry out the co-operative system of production with capitalist help and management, as modern progress allows us to do it, and as the industrial development particularly suitable to India. It was shown how general industrial development would result. If a beginning were made with industries producing necessities mainly for their own workers, they would grow and establish their workshops, then co-operating together, they would have larger central workshops for work that the separate establishments could

not do themselves, and those workshops would be able, gradually, to add different kinds of manufacturing to their activities. By a system of manufacturing different parts of an article in different localities, the most complicated kinds of manufacturing might be undertaken.

But the immense difficulty of introducing a new idea into the commercial world cannot be ignored. With our increased productive power, it would obviously be possible to carry out the plan with capitalist help and management, paying dividends in kind, and neither the laws against remuneration or dividends in kind would be any hindrance to the plan honestly carried out.

A plan of this sort, however, is still a "no man's child."

The enthusiasts for co-operation have always retained the original suspicion of the capitalists, sufficiently, it would appear, to make them think that co-ordinated production financed by them would strengthen rather than weaken their power over the workers. The simple answer, of course, is that such organisations would enormously increase the demand for labour, that they would increase wages, and keep profits down to the level of fair remuneration for capital invested ; the result of which would be to break down very rapidly the barrier between capitalist classes and workers, enabling workers to become capitalists by saving, so the industries gradually to become co-operative. That however, is not the plan originally conceived by the co-operators, and to alter the fundamental ideas of the followers of a movement

is proverbially one of the most difficult things to do.

Great stress was, therefore, laid in that paper on the importance of the fact that we can begin with educational establishments, and of appealing to educationalists as such.

In the domain of economics accomplished facts are of the greatest importance, so special attention was given to what has already been done in Europe on these lines. The most notable example, from the economic point of view, is an establishment that has been in existence, for about twenty years, now in Switzerland, to reform people who are useless and worthless in ordinary employment, and which organised on that plan is self-supporting. Now, it follows at once that if tramps can be made self-supporting in that way, if we were to establish similar organisations, employing instead good boys anxious for education and industrial training, the boys ought to be able easily to earn their maintenance by part of a day's work and have the remainder of their time for education and training.

This Swiss establishment has, of course, been studied by sociologists from all parts of the world. It has been criticised on the grounds that, as it employs a considerable number of normal workers among the below-normal ones, it cannot be said with certainty that it makes the latter self-supporting, as they may be maintained by the surplus product of the labour of the former. From a purely practical point of view, however, that does not matter, and all that concerns us is that the Swiss example is an

illuminating practical illustration of the success of the early co operators' plan when carried out under business-like management. It has been certified by commercial actuaries that it has paid for twenty years, although burdened by having the most worthless people of the country as the bulk of the labourers. Its success is no mystery, however, to those who understand the enormous productive power we can develop with the help of modern methods, and the way in which, by sub-dividing labour, and substituting mechanical process for manual skill and muscular strength, modern methods allow a very large proportion of unskilled workers to be employed with a comparatively few experienced ones, and it evidently opens up the most extensive and hopeful educational possibilities.

By establishing self-supporting schools and industrial training establishments on this plan we should also form the first microcosms that, uniting, would ultimately give us an industrial system on the co-ordinated plan.

I shall now describe briefly, and referring to other publications of the University for details, the plan that was approved by the prominent business men mentioned above as one of the hopeful ones for a start in India.

There are at all times, and specially at the present time, a very large number of young men with a little capital at their command, who would be willing to take to some kind of industrial work if they knew how they could do it without undue risk of losing their money, and with fair prospects of a useful and

reasonably remunerative career. If such young men would establish their industries together in some suitable locality, where arrangements could be made for them to have competent help and advice, where also they would produce co-operatively for their own use as far as it was found to be advantageous, where arrangements would be made for the most profitable disposal of what they had to sell, with a reasonable amount of ability and energy a certain degree of success should be insured to them. Many valuable advantages, social as well as economic, could be given to them; including, to a rapidly increasing extent as the organisation grew, the immense advantage of producing things for their own use and consumption, and being able to obtain capital by borrowing, because, under those conditions, money could be lent to them up to certain amounts with first-class security, which it could not if they were acting separately.

Now, on the other hand, owing to the great rise in the cost of living of late years there are a large number of people in receipt of small pensions whose position is very difficult indeed. Many of these people have knowledge and experience that would be useful in various ways in connection with industrial enterprise. Joining such industrial settlements, they might, for a very few hours of work daily, earn a little remuneration, which could be in kind, and which, in addition to their pensions, would make them quite well off. The pensioners could form a resident committee of control and, to some extent, of experts, and they might be supplemented

by visiting experts for the benefit both of the industries and of the pupils.

Such industrial-agricultural organisations would also be technical schools of the best kind, in which arrangements might be made for young men to work productively for some hours daily and study some hours.

It was also suggested that an undeveloped locality should be chosen, and arrangements be made to secure to the enterprise the increment values of the land, which would be a very important item, as there is every reason to anticipate that, with the proper selection of locality, many people would be led to join. It was suggested that a general agency should be formed first,¹ that would serve many useful purposes, including that of finding markets for the produce these organisations had for sale; and, with that help and proper management such a plan should be a financial success.

Therefore in the opinion of experts (and the most eminent have been consulted) starting an organisation of this kind is not a matter of collecting subscriptions, but of getting people together under really competent direction, to co-operate for their own advantage which they might gladly do if we could first get an organisation of people to support them by their custom.

The plan differs little from a great many that have been conceived with similar objects. But what is wanted for success is to make a start, not with idealists and enthusiasts for a particular economic

¹ See Appendix I.

conception, not with enthusiasts for co-operation, impatient to attain the fullest possible realisation of their ideals, but with people wishing to follow the most practical plan. Then it would be possible to have people in charge who inspire confidence, and start under proper conditions to draw people with capital, pensioners with knowledge, and others wishing to increase a small income. In most cases indeed pensioners would find entirely good and congenial occupation carrying on small industries. Acting separately, however, the worries and risks would be too great, but combining, where they would have every assistance and technical help, they would certainly succeed, and employ a large number of youths for training and for education in the "industrial colonies"; so that is clearly one way in which we might make an immediately useful step towards the establishment of a co-ordinated industrial system.

As regards the merely educational applications, that may prove to be of the greatest importance economically as well as educationally, ample literature has been issued by the Calcutta University, and a brief outline will be found in the Report of the Calcutta University Commission already referred to, so it will suffice merely to mention here the plan suggested in the 1920 Annual Report of the Maharajah of Cossimbazar's School.

The strength of industrial organisations producing articles for the use of their own workers lies in the fact that the ordinary necessities of life can often be produced with good methods, for half, and in many cases less than half, of what it costs to buy them

retail, and this applies to a great proportion of the commonly used food-stuffs. If, then, town boys went, either daily or for some days in the week, to schools outside the town, where there would be land on which vegetables would be cultivated, and where workshops would be established for their instruction, they would be able to do something towards self-support simply by bringing some produce home with them. Self-supporting education, as we can hardly insist too much, does not depend upon the boys' labour having any value, but on the modern economic fact mentioned above. If the gardens were cultivated, and the workshops worked, entirely by hired labour, and if thus the whole of the actual production were paid for in full, the boys could still be earners by taking the produce to their homes where it would be worth the retail price; or else consuming it themselves at this school, by having some meals there; schools, therefore, should become co-operative distributing, as well as producing, centres.¹

But it would be necessary that the boys should be instructed practically in the work, and should take an intelligent part in it, in a systematic way, and in that manner, supervision of the hired labourers would be insured. In this connection, however, the important thing to bear in mind is that, for effective supervision, it would be sufficient if only a very small percentage of the senior boys and teachers attained a competent knowledge of the different kinds of work, so that with the help of others

¹ See again Appendix I.

having some knowledge, they would be able, with the greatest educational benefit to themselves, to render valuable assistance in connection with supervision.

But although we need not count on the value of the boys' labour for economic success, it certainly would have value. In many branches of cultivation extra labour at certain moments, when some important work has to be done quickly, is of the greatest possible value.

Now, taking advantage of the same economic principle, establishments of this kind, giving an essentially vocational training for young men after school years could do a great deal at once to relieve the poverty of the middle classes. Those young men could spend their whole day at the "technical" work as paid apprentices, paid in kind, and should be able easily, in a good organisation producing the main necessities of life, to have, as their share, articles that would cost thirty rupees a month or more to buy in the market, whilst receiving practical training that would enable them by and by to command good salaries. Many who, though poor, would not go to work in ordinary industries, would readily work in the educational ones on those terms, first, because they would be among their social equals, and, secondly, because they would be systematically employed in ways that would train them, and give them prospects; because, in a word they would be apprentices and not manual workers pure and simple.

There are many other highly useful ways in which a beginning might be made, but in these lectures we are not concerned with advocating any

particular plan, but with insisting on the fact that industrial progress has opened up wonderful possibilities, that the difficulty is to make the experimental start, but that we have extraordinary opportunities now, with the demand for vocational education, for employment, and with the patriotic fervour now aroused which might otherwise become misguided enthusiasms. Work on these lines, once more, has actually been started and under the advice of all those whose opinion carries the greatest weight; but it must be carried out on a large scale before it can give us any idea as to its capabilities from a national point of view, and therefore those efforts must be adequately supported by all people of good will or they will be vain.

I conclude by insisting strongly on the fact that we must bear in mind the fundamental principles, and not lose ourselves in the details of particular schemes and suggestions. The important thing is that if India wants freedom she must work for it in every way, and there is none more important and more hopeful than the economic one. Industrial progress has opened up immense possibilities; suggestions for various plans have been studied by the Calcutta University.

It remains now for those who are in earnest to put these suggestions to the test of practice; and there is a call to the educationalist, and to the enthusiastic youth of the country that is of extraordinary hopefulness; they may be the pioneers of organisations that may lead to freedom for themselves and for their country. The educational start must be of

special interest because it is psychologically right to begin the new system with the young, and it is now also economically correct ; in that fact, perhaps, is the best hope of speedy relief from our social and political ills.

LECTURE II

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMANCIPATION

As we mentioned in the last lecture, co-operation makes a wide and general appeal, raising us above party considerations; the British movement soon received its support from workers for progress of all classes, and in the same way a strong constructive side of the Indian movement would be the rallying point for all people of good will, and an extraordinarily hopeful one at this moment. When those who speak with the greatest authority on the subject agree that everything is ripe for a great advance of co-operation, if only devoted pioneers can be found.

But, we must understand also that co-operation is an immense militant force on the side of emancipation.

On the surface, economic co-operation, which proceeds by measures of immediate utility and beneficence to build up a better system, seems to belong to a totally different order of things from a boycott movement like that which, with the ruthlessness of war, is now disturbing the social order.

But an economic organisation to give people employment is the strong thick edge of the sword, of which a boycott movement is the cutting edge. And if constructive work tending to give people

economic independence can only be half as successful as the most eminent authorities now say it might be, it will make that sword a weapon that nothing will be able to resist. The most important thing, therefore, that the militants, as such, have to do is to consider the constructive side, and help in putting this statement about its fighting value to a practical test.

But those who have studied the subject carefully see that this view, although no doubt the right one to present to the militant patriot, fails entirely to do justice to co-operation as an emancipating force. By solving the bread-problem, it would make economic domination once and for all impossible, so that the sword would not be needed, and from the moment that it had succeeded even in its educational application, it would have altered the whole political situation, by making all the educated classes absolutely independent of Government Service.

But we must take the present movement just as we find it, and we find its militants divided into two sections : one, holding that foreign rule must be got rid of rapidly, and favouring a simple and drastic boycott movement, and another, not believing in the possibility of attaining victory suddenly, prepared to use every means that might be helpful in a more prolonged fight for freedom.

Co-operation appeals equally to both. When, therefore, we say that constructive work unites all parties, we do not mean necessarily that all who understand its importance will sink their party views to strive for it, but that it is important from every

particular point of view, as well as from the general and obvious one.

Those who hope for a rapid change hold that constructive work generally must be left for the future. But the economic constructive work cannot be put off. We all know the danger there is, at least from the urban and landless part of the population, in any sudden change that inevitably disturbs normal employment. What is necessary, above all, if change really is coming quickly is to be ready with a suitable plan of employment, whatever else we may put off till afterwards.

The more sanguine people base themselves generally on the idea that the change will come about with a strong religious movement that will cause the critical time to be passed through safely. But, in any case, truly religious people would be the very last to neglect any good and reasonable precautions, especially those necessary to be prepared to feed the masses who would lose their employment ; or indeed, to neglect at any time any opportunity to work for the solution of the bread problem.

In a matter of such gravity as this, involving the lives and happiness of hundreds of millions, it is criminal to be imprudent, and it should be possible, to appeal to all, whatever their opinion may be, to remember Cromwell's famous words, "for God's sake admit the possibility that you may be mistaken." If they decide the work by militant methods, at least they must remember the terrible dangers involved, and work on the constructive side also by doing which they can do what seems at the

same time the best thing to give safety and to make their militant efforts effective.

Some patriots condemn agitation, saying that it is to society what an earthquake is to a building, loosening the cement that holds it together, and is folly in a country like India, whose weakness lies in her varied population, and that it is specially inopportune at this moment, when the one important thing is to make her internally strong. Some say also that, to India's original weakness a new one has been added, as grave as the original one under modern conditions : namely, her backwardness as compared with other countries in industrial development. This, they insist, would make her incapable of defending herself from aggressions from without under modern conditions of warfare. They argue thus that sudden cessation of co-operation with the Western world would from that point of view also be the worst thing that could happen.

People will act in these matters according to their convictions ; those who are impatient to see their country free will naturally want to use every means, constructive and destructive, by which they think the attainment of their object may be hastened, and will tend to take optimistic views ; but every consideration of common sense bids us regard the fundamental precepts taught by the leader of the present movement, who insists, as strongly as any one has ever insisted, that a country wishing to be free must give its first thoughts to making itself strong internally. As a religious man he insists on religion. But there is so much materialism in the world that

the spiritual factor remains an uncertain one, as all great religious teachers have clearly recognised. We have had proof in some outbursts of violence that have already occurred in connection with the movement that the highest ideals do not influence every one. No one, therefore, who has a conscience will neglect to do everything possible to make the movement strong in the matter of economic constructive work, which means simply directing the awakened energies at once towards the solution of the bread-problem, and must therefore appeal to every humane person.

The less sanguine of the militants who do not believe immediate victory to be possible, must look upon the constructive work as the most hopeful part of their fighting programme.

Not only is the constructive work the thick edge of the weapon they have chosen, but evidently some kind of useful work is absolutely essential if there will be any resistance to encounter. People will adhere for a time to a negative programme under the influence of enthusiasm, facing the sacrifices, but man does not live by sacrifice alone; and, as the well known words say, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. If, however, there is, as a solid basis, some useful and hopeful work leading clearly to the goal, all will be kept heartened and encouraged, and any militant action taken as well will then be more effective and at the same time far less dangerous to the country.

But party politics, though they must exist are, after all, only egotism; under their influence we lose sight of the true object to be striven for, and attach

an exaggerated importance to some stepping-stone on the way to it that our particular party has chosen to elevate to the foremost place. The constructive work gives us a door of escape from the shortsightedness of party views, which all who are in earnest will welcome.

The importance of constructive work is, of course, singularly evident in India's case.

India is not a small country under the domination of a powerful neighbour, but a very great country under the domination of a very small one, and one so distant, moreover, that it can bring to bear on her only a fraction of its small man-power, so that her dependent condition is due primarily to internal weakness, and her problem of emancipation cannot be treated as though it were simply a matter of breaking fetters that hold her.

The Dutch flooded their country to get rid of their Spanish conquerors, and their action was patriotic and heroic. Dealing with a numerically superior enemy they had to resort to desperate means to free themselves and they did it.

But India's case is the opposite to that of that small country. Overwhelming numbers are on her side, so that when she is united and ready for freedom her conquerors will have to go, as the non-co-operators tell us; the true patriot, therefore, will join in all efforts to make her strong by the powerful means of economic constructive work.

Those who advocate drastic measures seem to be heroic in the same way that the Dutch were, and to transcend, for the time, material considerations.

Ardent patriots say that India's fundamental weakness was a lack of national spirit, but that it has been remedied now, as she now has patriotism, but her position to-day is that she is disarmed in the grip of Great Britain now developed into a mighty Empire. This, however, would not alter the fact that, in any case the economic constructive work must be taken in hand before the change comes, and that is also the best and most infallible way of flooding the British out.

In an extraordinarily complete way the establishment of co-operative production would lead to the solution of all the problems that must be solved to remedy India's internal weakness. It offers first a solution for the problem of popular education, which is the best hope of bridging the gulf between castes, creeds and races; secondly, co-operation—in the broad sense in which we are now using the term—gives the best hope India has of an industrial development suitable to her; and that means being safe from aggression from without when she has her freedom. As the co-ordinated system is the socialistic system of the Indian village, in the form it should take with modern methods and transport facilities, it is not to be regarded as exotic but, quite on the contrary, as the way in which India ought naturally to be leading towards a better application of modern methods.

Many different views are taken about questions like that before India now, but as regards the economic constructive work all is simple, and summed up by saying, first, that—as again, the non-co-operation movement recognises as fully as any movement ever

has—a nation has two things to do to gain freedom : the one, which the liberals specially give their attention to, is to strengthen itself so that the fetters will no longer be able to hold it, and the others to attack the fetters themselves, the thing the extremists aim at specially ; and by constructive work in the direction of giving people economic independence, we do both things together, so on that point there is no occasion for differences of opinion ; then, secondly, that all the lessons of history show us that, whatever other constructive work we may put off till after the crisis, the economic constructive work must be started before it, or, for aught we know, generations might pass before normal prosperity, or ever internal order were restored, and reaction would be quite a likely sequel to the effort for advance.

One cannot insist too much that economic progress has now made the way clear. Industrial progress has rendered it quite possible economically to establish the small co-operative producing organisations, which, in accordance with the original idea of the co-operators, would unite and form a great organisation of co-operative production and give economic independence ; eminent economists agree that a bright hope of carrying out this plan has arisen at last by the fact that this same progress has rendered possible the utilisation of a very large proportion of inexperienced workers, the result of which is that *we can begin with boys, for educational purposes.*

The whole difficulty with a co-operative productive organisation is in the first start ; every attempt to make the start with adults has failed for psychological,

not economic, reasons. Those difficulties do not exist when starting with boys, and there is every reason to hope that, if we gave it this foundation, co-operative production would spread and do its work of emancipation.

Union is strength, divisions are always the cause of weakness and of failure of our efforts. The clear duty of people of education in the present crisis is to get to understand, and make known widely this infinitely hopeful fact that there is a rallying point for us whatever our political views may be, namely, the constructive work of educational reform as a first step towards co-operative production ; and then that, owing to industrial progress, the prospects of successfully establishing co-operation in the widest sense of the word will now be very bright.

To people of education, moreover, history is an open book, and whatever their impatience for self-government, they will not easily fall into the fatal error of imagining that economic constructive work can safely be put off till the crisis comes.

But now, let us consider things from the highest plane of all, the moral plane, where we see the morals of the nation to be of the first importance, the plane on which the ethics of the means used are of greater importance than the speedy attainment of the end. Here men of education see again a great duty. They must get to understand and make known the economic facts that show how the fight for emancipation can be carried out on the higher ethical principles.

The truly moral way of attacking evil, or of bringing about the downfall of an institution containing evil, is by bringing into existence greater good, by the side of which the evil will not be able to continue. The constructive work, in connection with a movement of this kind, conforms, therefore, to the highest moral standard whilst the negative, the militant, does not, and cannot, avoid being immoral, whatever intentions people may have, since political agitation is never free from falsehood, and involves violence and the evils that accompany it; moreover one cannot make a destructive attack upon existing institutions without involving many people, both innocent and guilty, in dire calamity.

There is but one method that is guiltless, and that is the purely constructive one.

Unity is the reward of those who choose the guiltless path. People are divided in their views about agitation and attacks upon existing institutions, because of the evils they contain, but the entirely moral constructive action unites all.

Once more, we are not concerned at present with discussing when the less ethical methods may be regarded as inevitable, and whether or not they will have to be resorted to in this case. We are concerned in this connection only with the fact that the most eminent economists have told Indian patriots that, with the enormously increased productive facilities progress has given us, they could attempt, with the best prospects of success, to work entirely constructively.

The matter can be finally decided only by people who are sufficiently in earnest to try, but there is every reason to try when it means applying ourselves to solving the bread-problem and the problem of popular education; it is for men of education to insist on this, and to make people recognise that they will fail morally as well as in intelligence, if they do not try their utmost. The non-co-operative movement has been in one important respect constructive, in the most important indeed, since it has been religious, but the militants of the European movement tried to carry out their plan to destroy capitalism and class-government by the entirely moral method, appealing only to people's best feelings and to their intelligence, calling upon them to work together in fellowship to create a better social system that would make it impossible for the old one to continue. Once more we can make only very general comparisons between the Indian movement and the European one; to the latter, the constructive was the obvious and natural course, but as the Indian patriots are now called upon by those whose opinion carries the greatest weight, to try to work in that way, from every point of view, we see the same thing: namely, that whatever else people may consider it necessary to do to emancipate India, there could be no greater failure of patriotic foresight, of duty, *and of regard for moral principles* than if the educated classes neglected to do everything that can be done to bring about the change constructively *vid* economic emancipation.

But looking at things from the higher plane, our outlook on the question changes fundamentally.

We must take a popular movement as we find it, and appeal to people in ways they can understand; *Swaraj* is the popular cry and therefore we have to show the importance of constructive work in connection with a plan to change the government. Really, however, the important thing is to gain economic emancipation, which is the sure means of having liberty, and self-government as a matter of course—whereas a change of government might give liberty or might not. Liberty is, first and foremost, a matter of national character; co-operation is well recognised to be the means by which, acting on the material plane, we can produce a morally up-lifting effect upon the people. The co-operative movement belongs as much to the moral world as to the material. This, and the fact that it can solve the problem of popular education, gives it an importance that is unique.

Secondly, liberty is a matter of economic independence. Historians tell us how the old Indian villages used to enjoy a great measure of liberty under the most autocratic forms of central government, because of their economic independence, the result of which was to make them separate units; and a co-ordinated industrial system, once more, would be the restoration, in a modern form, of the economic principle the Indian village worked on.

There is no excuse for people in India being ignorant of the fact that, on its economic side, co-operation is a powerful means of making a nation free.

A dispassionate consideration of the facts makes us look upon co-operation, not as a means to help

to gain a political end, but as the true end in itself, and upon the present movement as one to be utilised to help it forward.

Our moral sense and sense of humanity lead us to go straight to the aid of the poor, and not put the work off to be done when our political objects have been gained. No forms of government, can put an end to poverty ; independence has never improved the material conditions of a country. A better industrial system only can solve the poverty problem. The un-co-ordinated system gives the workers sometimes such high wages that they are demoralised by them, and at other times leaves them in want. The primitive system cannot give well-being to a densely populated country. Owing to a sparse population, and to war, pestilence and famine keeping population down, primitive countries have enjoyed periods of relative well-being ; but even these agents cannot give it to them permanently.¹ Poverty can be prevented permanently only by sound industrial development, giving people employment, and thus leaving the land to be cultivated in farms of suitable size for the use of the methods progress has given us, and is constantly improving, so that the soil may be made to yield more and more as population gets denser and denser. With the best methods known to us already, there is no country in the world, according to Kropotkin, not even England, that could not feed its population quite well. All, however, should have a small plot of land on which to produce for the family

the many articles that can economically be produced on a small plot, then very short hours only would be required at the industrial work, and we should have the conditions that are known to sociologists as being the best socially as well as economically. On this vitally important subject we shall have more to say in the next lecture.¹

As regards the question of fighting malaria in rural districts, we know only of one financially possible way, and that is by establishing industries in every part of the country, so that we should be able to concentrate the population on certain spots, which, by proper measures, could then be made healthy ; leaving the rest of the land to be cultivated by machinery, involving very little labour, and that of well-paid, and consequently well-fed men. There is no way known to us of bringing about such industrial development except on the co-ordinated system; that is to say, in a word, by industries so organised as to be customers to each other.

As the constructive side raises us first out of party views, then above politics altogether, it leads us finally to think, not of our nation alone but of all mankind, and then we see that India, in doing what is best for herself, will be doing her duty to the other members of the human family.

The brotherhood of man has always been the ideal of people of goodwill, but now that modern developments have brought distant parts of the earth in close contact with each other, human solidarity is more than an ideal, it is a matter of practical necessity ;

¹ See also Introduction.

common sense demands now that we shall all work for the good of all. Capitalism and imperialism have just brought about an appalling calamity, for which the whole world has suffered, and we live now in fear of the same causes bringing about still greater and perhaps still more widespread disaster unless the world-wide dissatisfaction of the working classes is removed. The greatest anxiety of all people of good will should be to help to remove the causes of this dissatisfaction, and to do anything rather than to add to the discord. Indian patriots could help by working for emancipation on the constructive side, and could render priceless service, as we cannot insist too much.

The present movement in India has unsparingly denounced the civilisation of the West, and all thoughtful people in the West know that, whilst the condemnation is only too well deserved, India might now not merely denounce, but get to understand what is needed to remedy its evils, and lead the way to something better.

Co-operation is the best means of pacification, the best hope of putting an end to the greatest evils of our civilisation, of remedying unemployment, and the monstrously unjust and haphazard distribution of earnings, which now poisons our whole commercial system, making it also remarkable for its dishonesty. A co-operative system by the side of the individualistic, would give it order, and it is its disorder that makes our present system also immoral.

The co-operators conceived the idea of a league of people of goodwill working for the emancipation of all subject races and subject classes; and if

co-operative production could be established, there is no doubt that the dream would be realised. There is entire agreement that India has very special facilities for being the pioneer in this direction and that, on the straight line of her own emancipation, developing an educational organisation on this plan, she might do this great thing for mankind generally.

All this is not a dream of yesterday. About ten years ago an association was formed in Great Britain to establish co-operative production, commencing with educational establishments. It received the support of many thoughtful people, but many, again, in Western countries have been so discouraged by the failure of all the attempts made by the co-operators to establish co-operative production for use, and by the unpopularity of the suggestions made by the socialists for its establishment, that the supporters remained few in number.

The poet Rabindranath Tagore, whilst in London came in contact with the workers of this movement, and strongly encouraged them in the idea of choosing India as the most suitable country to start in. His opinion found an echo in the country, culminating in the establishment of the study of the subject in the Calcutta University and by the University Commission, in the practical efforts of the Maharajah of Cossimbazar, and the attempt lately, started by Mr. Haridas Chatterji.

Calcutta University has studied the ways now open to us to develop co-operative production and if people will give adequate support to the practical workers they may do the most valuable "research

work" that has ever been done, in the truest interest of all mankind, and earn profound gratitude if they gain any measure of success.

The plan was recognised by the poet, and from the very first was received in India, as being, not merely a scheme of education, or an economic scheme, but a plan of liberation. Articles were published on the subject under the title of "India's Open Road to Freedom." by Sir Surendranath Banerjee, and by Mr. Natesan under the title of "The Dawn of Liberty ; India's Hope."—The "Amrita Bazar Patrika" and nationalist papers supported that view strongly.

It was realised that an organisation of that kind would give an unlimited amount of employment—as any co-ordinated industrial system can do, and would thus be what the co-operators always dreamt,—*a state within the state*. This constructive scheme goes, line for line, and step for step, along the path marked out by the non-co-operation movement, its idea being, first to create a system of national education which will be industrial as well as literary, and secondly, to provide work that will save people from the necessity of serving any government they are out of sympathy with, thus making *Swaraj* in the true sense sure. It is nothing more nor less than a plan to do, *via* economic co-operation everything the non-co-operation movement proposes, building up all along, pushing aside the old by a new organisation arising to take its place. Economic co-operation in the most striking manner gives to all the opportunity to work together for peace

and progress. It is the radical's way of being constructive, and the conservative's way of being revolutionary, because it is in the domain of politics what the flywheel is in that of mechanics; the steadying influence preventing violent forces from being dangerous, and able to turn their violence into good purposes.

Once more, as I mentioned in the first lecture, the pioneers are now in the field calling helpers to join them in their constructive work,¹ and if, despite the assurance of eminent economists that those pioneers are on the right lines, people withhold their help, and persist in the policy of barren agitation, adding to the unrest of the world, without trying every way of working constructively, they will deserve ill of mankind, and their professions as to the morality of their motives will appear as hypocrisy, and their patriotism shallow.

¹ The Indian Polytechnic Association described in Appendix I gives to all the opportunity to help.

LECTURE III

INDIA'S PROBLEM AND THE PROBLEM OF THE WORLD'S INDUSTRIAL CLASSES

As we had occasion to mention in the last lecture, now that the different parts of the world have been brought so close to each other by our improved means of communication, it has become not only unethical, but foolish to consider the different human groups as being separate ; India in working for her own interest will be working for the greatest good of the labouring classes of the world, and must do it consciously.

Many will object to a constructive programme that it includes industrial development and industrialism has resulted in great evils in Western countries, and will say that, in any case, India has not enough capital for great and rapid industrial progress, and could acquire it only slowly. We have answered both these objections incidentally in the preceding lectures, but in the present one we shall go into the matter in more detail.

We shall take the question of capital first, because it is very soon answered.

To those who, from life-long habit, think of things in terms of our competitive individualistic system, it is sometimes difficult to realise how entirely

different capitalisation would be with a co-ordinated system. In a previous series of lectures published by the University under the title of "Man and Machine Power," I have compared the two, so referring to them for the comparative study of the question, I shall limit myself here to a simple statement of the facts relating to capitalisation of co-ordinated industries.

One can hardly repeat too often that in questions of practical economics we must go from hand to mouth, not imagining things that should be, or foreseeing how they may perhaps be in the future, but taking them as we actually find them now.

In India, as labour conditions are at present, a large modern organisation producing most of the necessaries of life for its own workers with the help of good methods, would need no more than about a quarter of its productive power to satisfy the workers' wants, another quarter would be enough to allow for interest on capital, depreciation, salaries of managers; leaving, on that basis, one half for extension. Therefore, as we briefly expressed it in the previous lectures, co-ordinated industries, once started, might go on multiplying themselves like a seeding plant over suitable soil—which individualistic industries cannot do in the same simple manner. Thus the co-ordinated system, once it is established, will be a great equaliser among nations. At present those that possess capital are powerful and, in different ways, can command both produce and labour in the poorer countries. Co-ordinated production will put an end to this domination also, to the

immense good, as we soon see, of the now *dominating* nations.

An important question arises as to how we should be able to insure that capitalists would spend a portion of the surplus on extending. But at present it is sufficient to say that the first steps would be taken by people working with a patriotic object.

When they had given a practical demonstration, and shown how these industries may extend, the problem of making promoters spend part of their profits on extension would be solved somehow or other.

Looking at the future, we have also to take into account the fact that the workers would demand an ever-increasing share of the produce. But a modern industrial organisation, as it grows, makes the labour of the workers it employs more and more productive ; so that, without diminishing its surplus, it might increase the wages it paid very rapidly. This is another principle that applies simply and directly in the case of co-ordinated, but not in that of the individualistic industries. The question both of capitalisation and of management are in fact entirely different with the two systems, their whole economics are different and once more, we only confuse a simple issue by trying to make comparisons between them.

But now let us turn to the other great question, which we might call that of the social desirability of introducing modern methods of production.

Especially after the appalling catastrophe of the war, followed by constant industrial unrest, the people of the East have come to regard modern

methods as productive of very much more evil than good. First the East is still religious, and our modern industrial system shows a tendency to make the workers godless. A religious people feels that man should work in contact with nature, through which God speaks to him in his toil; whereas modern industrialism severs the workers more and more from nature. It is at all events certain that modern industrialism involves labour conditions that are bad from the point of view of morality as well as that of health.

On the surface everything appears to condemn modern industrialism. Character and happiness alike, as regards the outward and visible forces that determine them, depend on two things: on the natural affections, and on the discipline and influence of natural and wholesome work. Our industrial system, as it is now, undermines both those foundations. As regards the first, the conditions of life of industrial workers tend to disintegrate most of the natural and morally wholesome human relationships, and even of the home itself, whilst they deprive the workers of the great elevating influence of contact with, and love of, nature. The surroundings of the industrial town have indeed something in them to which the word 'satanic' is properly applied.

But it is as regards the other influence, that of wholesome work, that our industrial system, as it is now, is principally condemned. Man needs before all things work that he is doing for himself, as a free agent, that he is therefore applying himself to with his entire will and earnestness, strengthening thus the

very foundations of his character. It must be varied, making demands upon his different faculties, on his bodily strength, his intelligence, his initiative, his foresight, and then it will be his main joy as well as his best discipline. But industrial progress, as it advances, seems more and more to deprive the worker of all this ; its whole tendency is to make him work, not for himself, but for a master, substituting at once a mercenary spirit for the natural motives. More and more, it makes the work monotonous and mechanical and deprives it of all that gives it human value in any way ; more and more it severs people from nature and natural and wholesome conditions of life.

As it is now, industrialism is accompanied also by terrible injustice in the distribution of gains that is a fatal cause of demoralisation, introducing dishonesty that makes it a corrupting influence, producing, with inordinate greed for gain, lust for power that is quite naturally blamed for that greatest, and, in its details, one of the foulest crimes that have been ever committed : namely, the last war.

It is not surprising, then, that the people of the East have come to look upon this kind of civilisation as evil : and to consider the Western nations to consist of people tormenting themselves with their unnatural conditions of life and tormenting others with the lust for dominion that results from it. They are able to say, and only too truly, that nature has stamped the unnatural system with the terrible brand of her condemnation, for in countries advanced in modern civilisation there is an amount of

physical deterioration that a Commission, recently appointed in Great Britain to investigate the matter, has described as "appalling"; whilst everywhere there is a rapid falling off of the birth-rate. The races, that have adopted modern methods, in a word, seem to be on the way to physical ruin and extinction.

But, again, if instead of simply condemning progress, we apply ourselves to understanding how it has been made evil, we learn a great deal that is of fundamental importance, and see once more that India's true vocation is, by solving her own problems in the best way, to save others also.

Modern methods, after all, are methods we have evolved of doing any part we desire of our work with extremely little labour. Rationally used, therefore, their effect would be *precisely the opposite* to what it has been in Western countries; for they make it possible for us to spend our time at the kinds of work that are wholesome and improving, and to do very expeditiously, with the help of machinery, the parts that are uninteresting and unimproving. More than that, they can give an important educative value to the less improving kinds of work. People doing such work in large organisations that are, after all, the expression of intelligence applied to practical affairs, develop a social and co-operative side of their character that is also of fundamental importance.

Our object, therefore, must be, not to make a vain attempt to oppose the use of better industrial methods, to "put the clock back," but to regulate their use to be good instead of evil. Moreover,

ideal primitive conditions do not seem ever to have existed outside the "golden ages" of legend; and if industrialism is demoralising in its way, so also is the ignorance that accompanies the poverty of countries having no industrial development. It is man's nature to progress, only under depressing conditions does he stagnate industrially or in any other way.

But now the question is, how we shall ever be able to prevent people from using those methods to avoid labour of all kinds, to their own moral harm, and secure their rational utilisation.

The answer, is simple. Nature has decreed in a remarkable manner that man shall not escape the most morally valuable of all kinds of work, namely, the cultivation of the soil. Domination makes it possible for him to break its law; and then degeneracy in some form or other is the result.

When there is not domination and supremacy, the people in countries advanced in civilisation find themselves compelled by "the law of diminishing returns" to work harder and harder for their food as their population increases. Industrial progress, thus, does not appear as a means of emancipation from toil, but of saving an advanced people from want when peace, order and good sanitation cause population to increase rapidly.

Under normal conditions not even the industrial workers would be severed from the land, for we have the wonderful *exception to the law of advantageous subdivision of labour, occurring just where it is required to prevent that*. Economically, the correct

thing is for all workers to produce for themselves the very considerable portion of food-stuffs that are perishable. It happens that this class of food-stuffs is, for every reason, much more advantageously produced in a garden adjoining the house—or at least bought from a neighbouring garden—than obtained in any other way. In the first place, nature produces these things, and men's contribution to their production is a comparatively small item. It is generally considered that less labour is involved in producing such articles on a plot of land adjoining the home than in going to market to buy them—having regard to the trouble alone, and not to the money. The principal raw-material in their production is the household refuse, which is valuable used in that way, but otherwise is a nuisance, costing labour to remove. Whilst the labour of production of these things is inconsiderable, their commercial distribution is, on the contrary, laborious. They are bulky and heavy in proportion to their value, and, owing to this fact, and the fact of being perishable, they are the very worst things to handle commercially. Finally, on account of their perishable nature, many of them are never quite good, except when taken fresh from the garden. Thus, from the economic point of view, apart from any other, all industrial workers ought to spend a part of their day in the very best of all forms of natural work, namely, the cultivation of a piece of land, and if they did that, the whole of our industrialism would be different.

Thus, when all countries advance industrially, so that the workers of the now more advanced ones will no

longer be able to buy everything, instead of producing for themselves, they will be compelled to use improved industrial methods rightly and not wrongly, and be brought under the discipline of healthy kinds of toil, which they have temporarily escaped. The countries that are now backward must advance, and, in doing so will be working for the salvation of the masses in all countries.

I shall not stop to enlarge on the various aspects of all this, as regards the Nemesis of domination, because it is too obvious to need comment, and I shall confine myself to the economic facts.

Modern means of transport render it quite unnecessary for people who work in a factory to live in its vicinity,¹ all might live in touch with nature. It is a common thing, in fact, in advanced countries, for workers to live as far as ten miles away from the place where they work; whereas with proper arrangements less than a quarter of that distance would suffice amply to enable all to have enough land.

The "garden city" and "garden suburb" movements, which have become so conspicuous now in all Western countries, are the practical expression of the tardy recognition among all thoughtful people, that our civilisation has gone the wrong way and must retrace its steps. *Industrial supremacy has led us to make our whole civilisation evil by disregarding that natural exception that occurs in the law of subdivision of labour, at the very point where it is needed to*

¹ See Appendix I about railway transport.

make our progress do good instead of harm. With cultivation of the land certain arts and crafts go naturally and give scope to people of different tastes and capacities.

Rationally applied, our industrial system would tend to make the factory do the unimproving work and each man do for himself and his neighbours, work that is natural and good.

As we mentioned in the last lecture, wherever the workers combine work in the factory with the cultivation of a small piece of land, they show a marked superiority, moral, intellectual and general, over either the rustic pure and simple, or the town industrial worker. That it should be so is, of course, quite natural, and it shows, clearly where lies the real fault of our modern civilisation.

But people will always try to get their living in the way that demands the minimum of thought and effort, regardless of the moral consequences to themselves. Moreover, the industrial workers in Western countries have now acquired such unnatural tastes that they will not easily return to natural conditions of life and labour, often preferring the mechanical work of the factory and shunning what they would call the dirty work of the land. They must be brought under the discipline of necessity and India will help by becoming economically independent, and ceasing gradually to be a customer for European countries, so that the workers of the West, finding their foreign markets diminishing and knowing that they will continue to diminish, will be

compelled to solve their bread problem in the natural and healthy way.

But in a still more direct way, the lead India could give might be of the very greatest value to the now so much demoralised industrial population of Western countries.

It must appeal strongly to everyone to save at all events the children. Those who have become used to unnatural conditions are in many cases beyond saving, because they have no longer the wish for anything better. All, however, will agree that the young ought, by any means that are possible, to be saved from following on the wrong lines. It is well understood that if the workers want to live under natural conditions, there is nothing now to prevent their doing so. The one thing necessary, is to bring up the rising generation with the taste for a natural mode of life.

Now, from every point of view, it is most urgent to introduce into Great Britain the system of education we described in the first lecture under the name of Self-supporting Education, which would bring up all children in a healthy way.

Under that system town-children could be taken in regular rotation to schools in the country, where they could enjoy healthy country air and abundance of healthy food, learning to help in the cultivation of the land by good methods. There would then be no town-bred weaklings, for if the children could spend only one half of their time in the country establishments, that would be enough to give every normal child a chance of growing up healthy and

strong ; and all might, of course, spend more than half of their time in the country schools.

At present, however, the working classes in Western countries are prejudiced against any industrial educational system, thinking that it would deprive their children of their share of literary education and thus accentuate class distinctions ; so this simple plan that would be the salvation of a nation of town-dwellers is, for the time being, impossible. The prejudice is entirely wrong, for, on the contrary, this system would make higher education accessible to all. But people do not realise this, because they do not understand what would be the economic strength of a co-operative educational organisation. The fundamental principle, once more, is that a child, being only a member of a family, among money-earning members, can make his or her contribution in kind, and, therefore, can earn it by a fraction of a day's work. For this reason, under that plan, any youth, however poor his parents, would be able to continue his education or training *as long as he consented to be paid in kind, instead of in cash which, in the vast majority of cases, would depend only on himself.*

But it is practically impossible to get these economic facts popularly understood, simple as they are ; only practical examples will convince people ; and India seems to be very clearly called upon to give the practical examples by doing which she might give a lead the result of which would be to put Europe on the way to a better era.

India's most eminent authorities on education

have advised her to seek in that plan the solution of her problem of popular education. Sir Asutosh Mookerjee and Dr. Brajendranath Seal, the Vice-Chancellors of Calcutta and Mysore Universities, and on the practical side, Sir Dorab Tata and Sir Dinshaw Wacha have given their opinions in no uncertain way ; the Maharajah of Cossimbazar has spent money generously on a pioneer effort. If she would follow the advice of all those most competent to advise, she would give the required lead, immediately doing great and far-reaching good.

Western civilisation has been compared to a powerful engine ingenious people have created but have not learnt to control, so that it is running away with them, and the comparison is correct. It has taken a fatal direction ; we see now how it might be changed, but in vain, because everywhere some prejudice has come into existence to make it impossible to do what is wanted. Salvation, it seems, must come from without. Here is an obvious way in which India might help. It seems correct to say, whilst the West with its particular genius has created the machine, the particular genius of the East is wanted to bring it under control ; for co-operation is India's system.

But now let us turn to the consideration, from a political point of view, of the way in which countries of the West have managed to make their increased productive power do them so little real good and, in the case of some at least, such enormous harm ; the lesson we learn in connection with this is of fundamental importance to us to-day when such

great hopes are being raised by the idea of self-determination and self-government.

It is only recently that people have come to realise that industry is creating fatally bad labour conditions, and that the remedy is combination of cultivation and industrial work. It has long been understood, however, that for the sake of health, towns should be properly planned, with at least a small garden to every house, and ample space; why, then has it not been done? There is no fundamental difficulty and it ought to have been done at least from the very beginning of the industrial revolution; that is to say from the time when people began to migrate from the country to the town. The costliness of land in towns is really no fatal obstacle to the provision of ample space. If we keep a site open, we do not destroy its value, but merely transfer it elsewhere. To enable towns to be perfectly well-planned, we need properly neither go to any expense, nor do any violence to any one's rights, but merely make an arrangement which would enable us to recover values that, in the process of planning towns, including keeping spaces open, are transferred from one place to the other. This could be effected by merely valuing all the land at its commercial value,—the price, that is to say, for which the owner might sell it, including the “speculative” value—fixing it at that valuation and then starting on town improvements. Sites, then, would be marked to be kept open in the towns, and in consequence other sites would immediately acquire an additional value above that assigned to them by the valuation; this

additional value would then not belong to the owner ; he would not be allowed to increase his rent above the valuation rent, but the increase would be added to the land-tax thus providing automatically the compensation to the owner of the sites marked to be kept open.

A simple reform of this kind would make it possible immediately for people to have allotments and houses with gardens conveniently situated.

There is nothing more astonishing than the simplicity of the measure that is required to enable towns to be made healthy, and to prevent our whole industrial civilisation having the fearfully disastrous results it has had to the population of Great Britain. Whenever the subject has been discussed in detail, this fact has always been maintained without contradiction. Both prominent people and leading publications, representing the interest of the propertied classes have recognised the practical desirability of a simple measure of that kind ; though that, after all, is a detail, because, easy or difficult, a nation of town dwellers should have a land system that will render it possible to make towns healthy.¹

Now why have we not made the necessary reform in our land system, when the result of neglecting it has been to cause towns to grow up unplanned, unhealthy and to make our whole industrial system so evil that it has resulted in physical deterioration ?

¹ In a correspondence that went on in the *Westminster Gazette* for six weeks it was maintained that a simple measure of that kind would make it possible to rebuild the towns at a profit ; this, however, was before the War.

The answer to this question is in the very highest degree instructive at the present moment. The matter, instead of having been treated as it should have been, as one of fundamental national importance, has been dragged into the mire of party politics, from which no efforts, either of patriots, philanthropists or of religious people—who have recognised that it is a question affecting the moral health of the masses—have been able to rescue it.

The facts are briefly as follows:—

In a primitive country, where the value of the land depends to some extent at least on the energy and industry of its owner in improving it, private land ownership arises naturally enough. In an advanced country, however, where the value of the land ceases to all practical intents and purposes to be made by individuals, and immense value is given to it by the public, private ownership of land-values becomes anomalous and conspicuously unjust. Therefore, in the strife between the *haves* and the *have-nots*, which mainly constitutes politics in democratic countries, this land question has given the *have-nots* their strongest case, against the *haves*; the reform required to enable towns to be made healthy would remove the most unjust and anomalous feature from land ownership without striking any blow at the propertied classes, and thus spoil the *have-nots*' best "plank." As politicians will express it only plans like land nationalization are now "practical politics," but against them there is still immense opposition.

That is self-government! Government of the

people by the people for the people ! A great nation advancing into an age of urbanised development with a land-system of a primitive rural age, and with an unspeakably crude defect in it the consequence of which is to make it impossible to make towns healthy, or to make the industrial system in any sense a good one ; condemning a great part of the nation to such evil conditions of life that physical deterioration has followed ! It is useless to waste words commenting on a failure so appalling as this ; the conclusion is inevitable : if our faith in democracy rested on hopes of democratic governments we might well despair on this evidence alone.

But now let us turn to another thing.

The human mind is so constituted, that it can get used to anything, and we have got used to the fact that, although industrial progress has enabled people by a day's work to produce at least four times as much as they were able to a century ago, there is still poverty ; but it is, of course, an anomaly not one whit less astonishing than the one we have just been considering.

Now how does it occur ? This also can be quite simply explained. Under our system the workers are compelled to give their labour for the wage that internal and international competition fixes, and tends to keep down somewhere in the neighbourhood of the amount needed to purchase what custom makes people regard as the necessities of life for a worker's family ; and remuneration, generally, is fixed on an arbitrary plan.

“ With large and increasing productive power and

excessive competition for work and customers this haphazard way of fixing remuneration may of course give a total demand below total power to supply ; it does so now, and hence poverty owing to there being too little work.

In the past, when productive power was no greater than was required to produce necessities for all, and some luxuries for the privileged classes, this "competition wage" system was, in its rough way, a workable one.

Now, however, that productive power has increased enormously, it is obviously not workable and the results of the competition wage system are to produce poverty in a new way, not only despite enormous productive power, but actually because of it.

As the socialists tell us, with *large* and *increasing* productive power, the only scientifically correct system would be one under which the State would make it its business to equip every one to use the best methods and fix remuneration at a level that would give a total demand equal to the total supply ; substituting a share wage, as we might express it, properly adjusted, for the haphazard competition wage. But the socialists have not yet put their suggestion in a form to be generally acceptable.

We can see very simply how trouble arises under our present system. Taking the figures I gave in the first lecture for illustration, if we represent by ten what a man's labour was able to produce in the best organisation a century ago, we might represent it by fifty now, or even, many people will say, by a hundred. But despite that fact, despite also labour organisations

and trades-unions, "*real wages*" have hardly, on an average, doubled even—whilst productive power has more than quadrupled. There is an enormous discrepancy between what the average worker *might* produce and the average income. With productive power fifty, demand is barely twenty-five.¹

Now what are the results of partly developed productive power? If the average demand, including all classes, is represented by twenty-five, labour will, of course, be organised and equipped to be able to produce twenty-five and not the possible fifty. In commercial language there will not be more first-class and well-equipped industries than the existing demand can absorb the produce of; a large portion of the population will be employed in various unproductive work making a living somehow, and many people will not be equipped in the best way for their work.

Another result is that we live constantly on the brink of the precipice of "over-production" and unemployment.

In times of good trade, productive power may be developed to between twenty-five and thirty, and, when trade slackens, demand may fall between twenty and twenty-five, and we have unemployment, cut-throat competition and all the ills we are so familiar with.

In a word, then, we have still the competition-wages system, and productive power developed to twenty-five, when fifty would be possible with the

¹ See again p. 7.

methods and machinery we know of and poverty still exists, caused by this anomalous state of affairs.

People say that the workers generally demand more than the national wealth can give. They are often right in so far as they mean the national wealth-producing power as actually developed, also as regards the power of foreign markets to take manufactures, but not as regards the wages a nation, fully organised, with everyone fully employed, would be able to pay. This has been illustrated in the coal dispute. The miners demand that mining should be better organised, when, they say, they would be able to have more pay. But what is wanted is that all at once, and in every country, should demand more pay.

The evils that have made our progress really a failure as regards the working classes are due, thus, to the combination of two things : first, to our having advanced into an age of towns with the land system of a primitive rural age ; which, besides rendering it impossible to make towns healthy, has severed the workers from the land and made them helpless when industrial employment fails them ; and, secondly, to our having advanced into an age of great *and rapidly increasing* productive power with a wage-system belonging to an age of small *and slowly increasing* power, owing to which industrial employment is very apt to fail. The reason for the anomalies not being remedied is in both cases the same : namely, that these questions have been dragged into party politics, into the fight between the *haves* and the *have-nots*.

No doubt also some individuals are interested in this state of economic disorder, because some get

much larger shares of the national wealth than they would ever be able to under any rational system of working. There is, therefore, no enthusiasm among the rich for reform. On the other hand the masses tend always to look more to the wealth they regard to have been unjustly appropriated by the few, than to the really important question of reforming the *system* quickly on some plan that might be accepted; so that, in a sordid squabble between selfish and short-sighted interests, a deadlock occurs.

The co-operators indicated the hopeful solution a century ago: namely, to get people understanding the situation to form themselves into an organisation having a rational system of remuneration; a share wage instead of a competition wage; an organisation, that is to say, always using its productive power to the full, and dividing the produce among all, in proportion to their labour, so that, when productive power stood at fifty, it would remunerate its workers with fifty on an average—with necessary deductions only. It would then set the pace in the matter of wages, and so make the individualistic system work normally too. A co-operative system, thus, it is important to note, would not destroy individualism but stabilise it.

Now if only we set ourselves to deal effectively with the problem of unemployment we should be led direct to this rational solution.

Let us consider for a moment what is the rational way of dealing with unemployment apart from the question whether we shall ever solve it rationally.

The unemployed want the various products of labour, so what is required is to set them to work to produce them. When there is unemployment there is also machinery standing idle and organising power unused and *those who are capable* should use it.

All this could be done by ordering from various producers and merchants everything they required, paying, not with ordinary currency, but with a special exchange currency issued for the purpose, and which the merchants, manufacturers and others would use to pay the "unemployed" producing, handling, transporting, and distributing those goods. That would amount to sending them out to various industrial and other establishments to do the work in connection with supplying what they themselves needed. Shops in different parts of the country could serve as depôts where these people would make their purchases with their special currency. It would then be co-operative production using the machinery and organisation of ordinary trade. If the special currency were used simply as a medium of exchange for this produce, and not allowed to circulate as currency, it would not raise any "currency" questions.

In some cases, however, the (capable) unemployed would be helping to produce the actual things they wanted, but in other cases, doing some work for people contributing in some way to the production of those things.

They, for instance, would buy bread with this special currency; a portion of it would be kept by the distributor as his profit, whilst, with another

part, he might pay some of the "unemployed" to do the work connected with the distribution and with another pay the baker. In the same way the latter might keep some of the payment as his profit, pay some of the "unemployed" for the labour and, we might add, pay a proportionate part of the repairs and renewal of his machinery, and finally, pay the miller for the flour. The latter would do similarly; transport charges and shipping freights would be paid for also with the currency. But we shall assume that the government would be called upon to exchange some of the cheques for ordinary currency to pay the foreign exporter of the wheat—this would be instead of giving the unemployed a dole—but then the government would use those cheques to employ some more of the "unemployed" in doing work of national utility.

The "unemployed" who were set to work to help make the bread, grind the flour, repair the machinery, work on the railways and for the shipping companies, would be working to produce and distribute what they themselves wanted.

But people receiving their profits in cheques would not generally want labour of the "unemployed" for them, but would want various goods which they would get from the depôts. The "unemployed," then, would work for other manufacturers to produce something those people wanted for "their wages of organisation."

The depôts, thus, would obtain all kinds of goods for payment in the special currency and in that manner, practically, the organisation would be sending some of the "unemployed" out to work in various

industries helping to produce goods to give in exchange for various help and services.

Then, also, some producers would not need much extra labour to do the extra work. The railways, for instance, would probably carry the goods without taking additional workers in any branch, and it would be so with other industries. But the effect would be the same as in the above case: namely that there would be people asking for goods instead of for money, and with the same result. Then, again, we would never be sure that the baker would pay exactly for his raw material and charges under the above mentioned headings with the special currency.

All these departures from the strict programme of production for use would have the same effect: namely, that there would be people asking the organisation for goods instead of taking labour; but the effect would be simply that the "unemployed" instead of producing what they wanted, would produce something that would be given in exchange for it.

If A, from whom the unemployed wanted goods or services, did not want payment entirely in labour, but partly in goods, the organisation would indent on B for the goods and on C to produce goods B wanted. The question might arise how far we might have to go down the alphabet before these various employers, taking often only a little extra labour to do the extra work, employed all the "unemployed."

But the answer is that the organisation would make the whole profit of exchange, which would be considerable, because it would have the monopoly; exchange currency holders would have to buy of it.

Probably by when B or C were reached, any men remaining unemployed could be employed on some public works out of the profits of exchange.

The whole scheme will be more easily understood by some as one to set up an exchange employing the capable "unemployed" and to give the rest some suitable work paid for out of the profits but which, it has now been proved, could also have value.

From the purely economic point of view, however, the further we went, the more indirectly the process worked, the better it would be, for the more wealth-producing power would then be called into activity, but objections might be raised. Theoretically, thus, even a country like Great Britain, can solve entirely its problem of unemployment.

The question arises why we should use a special currency, or at least why we should not let it circulate. The currency reformers advocate something of the kind, but the financiers are opposed to it, and as we are considering here the solution of the problem of unemployment by co-operative production for use, and not the "currency question," we shall assume that this currency would have to come back to the dépôts and be cancelled or re-issued, and used in a word as mere exchange vouchers and cancellable after a certain time to prevent its use as currency.

But considering further how this co-operative production for use would work in practice, without at present entering into the question of whether or not the State would be likely ever to adopt it, we see clearly that we should not in practice have a part of the efficient working population labelled "unemployed"

and paid with a special currency. When trade slackened, employers would not dismiss capable workers to re-engage them as "unemployed," but would make an arrangement with the organisation to sell it some goods in exchange for this special currency, and would pay its employees a part of their salary in ordinary currency and a part in the special exchange currency, and so keep all employed.

What it would amount to, then, would be that, instead of some people losing their work when trade was slack, the workers would work shorter hours for *trade*, dividing the work between them, as we might say, and complete their working day producing articles for themselves, with the exchange system organising the production and distribution of suitable articles. We should have co-operative production supplementing individualistic production, using the same machinery and keeping it busy. But evidently, this plan would act directly with some trades and indirectly with others—especially with imports.

Now, if we bear in mind the principle we already referred to, of the difference between the cost of production and ordinary retail price, and the facts of profit and loss in industries, owing to fluctuations of trade—which would then be prevented—we see at once that, with this co-operative organisation supplementing the individualistic, the State might quite well finance industries to equip themselves properly, in the public interest; it might also control profits, because there would then be no slack periods, and working at a loss; thus we should be able to attain everything that state socialism proposes to

attain, without abolishing private industry and private enterprise. We should, in that way, be able, by financing industries, to keep productive power up to fifty, when fifty was possible and, by controlling profits, to keep remuneration up to the normal—instead of the abnormal “competition wage.”

But all those who know anything about our democratic governments as they are, know they cannot yet be expected to do anything of this kind. Such a way of applying the principle of state socialism would not satisfy the party of the *have-nots*, because it would take nothing from the propertied classes. The latter, on their side, would see possibilities in it dangerous to themselves. Thus unemployment, with its fearful results, goes on unremedied. All artificial and impossible schemes to remedy it are fully discussed, inadequate ones also, but the economically right ones are, under this party system, taboo.

But a strong co-operative productive organisation could do all this for us. It would deal directly with all permanent forms of unemployment, with the unemployment of educated people who cannot work manually and cannot get the kind of employment they have been trained for; a co-operative education system would give work at once to a practically unlimited number of such people, not only teaching but also in connection with the co-operative production.¹ Even people who did not want to work permanently in a co-operative organisation would find that, by working in one for a time, they would

¹ See Appendix I.

be able to save money for any enterprise they contemplated, or in the case of Great Britain save money for a passage to the colonies.¹ There are many who, in various ways, would find that a co-operative organisation—of which the educational organisation could form the basis or starting point—would solve their economic problem.

A sufficiently large co-operative productive organisation would be able to carry out the plan detained above, which the State, we may assume, will not ; and the State would not be able long to forbid it, though it might at first. A co-operative organisation could order the goods of the various producers and merchants in the way we have just described, paying with barter-notes of its own, and, in that manner, organise the co-operative production for use among individualistic firms. A great practical example of co-operative production is, thus, what we need, and can certainly have in the form first of an educational organisation ; that, therefore, is the great work of the day.

It is the same with the problem of making the towns healthy. In connection with the land question the deadlock is as complete. But a strong co-operative productive organisation would be able to show people what rational and healthy condition of life and work are, and then they would demand reform of the towns. If the crude absurdity of our land system were removed in any way, it would at once become very paying to re-plan the towns, because of

¹ See "The Times," Educational Supplement, 7th April 1921, p. 156.

the enormous increase of land values that would result. This is another extremely important and extraordinarily interesting question that all should study now that towns are developing in every country. Governments remain inert in these matters and need to be forced to act. A strong co-operative state within the state would force them.

The fact is being now quite well recognised in the West that governments are unable to take the initiative in dealing with the important problems that arise in connection with modern industrial developments, and hence the disrepute into which politics is falling in all advanced countries.

India has always held as a political axiom that central governments alone cannot deal effectively with matters intimately affecting the welfare of the people, and there must be a proper centralisation and decentralisation, which ancient India had as its fundamental principle. We urgently require it now in the form of the co-operative state within the state which in economic matters would act, and force governments to act.

Never, then, had a people a clearer vocation than Indians have to-day. If, instead of giving their whole attention to reforming governments, which have ceased to be of primary interest and importance, they were true to their own philosophy and their own national genius, they would be leaders among the nations now, and not mere imitators. Creating the co-operative state within the state, they would soon dictate terms to the government by reason of the fact that the co-operative state, even in miniature,

even as an educational organisation, would control labour of all kinds.

We have dealt with the moral and humanitarian aspects of the question of constructive work in the preceding lectures, here is the specially national one.

It is no dream of a poet, but a fact of scientific sociology, that India is called upon now for every reason to be a leader, not an imitator. Not only is it now her particular genius that is needed, but, as the dawn of the age of co-operation will be the end of the age of domination, and as the people of the West, who now dominate, conscious of this, are not always whole-hearted about it, India who has every reason to be in earnest, must lead.

Can the co-operative state within the state, so long the dream of the most thoughtful and most earnest of reformers, be realised at last? To this question there are any number of insincere answers but to us at present only one sincere one, and it is this: India's leaders and, with them, the foremost men of the world in the domain of economics, say that it should be tried, laying the foundations with an educational organisation, and therefore it should be worthily tried, and now is the time and, to the educationalist, the call is clear and strong.

LECTURE IV

CO-OPERATION

In these lectures we have been considering primarily the immense importance to India in the present crisis of doing everything that can be done towards establishing co-operative production in the widest sense of the word, and that all should help in this whatever their political views may be, and whatever opinions they may hold as to the probable success. It was enough for us to insist on the fact that any success, however small, might prove of absolutely vital importance in some circumstances that are likely to arise in the future, and if very successful, economic co-operation may be India's strongest and most reliable weapon in her fight for freedom. We must try; and in trying, we shall find out what exactly we can do; facts not theories are wanted in the domain of sociology. Bearing this in mind, however, as the fact of practical importance, it is in the very highest degree interesting and encouraging to make a survey of the position, and to see the prospects we have now both of rapid and of very brilliant success in this direction.

First of all we have to realise that co-operation—except, of course, for certain new applications of it—

is not a nineteenth and twentieth century invention we are trying to force upon a conservative world, but that we should be much nearer the truth in saying that it is the plan that millions of people in all countries have been working on throughout the centuries, and primitive people are still working on now ; and that, on the contrary, it is individualism that is the new thing. All primitive communities, of course, were essentially co-operative in their economic working. As countries emerged from primitive conditions, people began to free themselves from the early control, and then individualism arose, and was in its glory, extolled by sociologists, during the last century. But the glory was short-lived. Its limitations are obvious, and the workers very soon began to suffer from it, and so the co-operative movement arose really to lead back to the old system, only in a new form and under a new name.

Thus the statement we hear so often that co-operation has been tried again and again and has failed, is a grotesque absurdity. The only truth it contains is that some efforts made to return suddenly to the old plan were unsuccessful. That is to say, the attempts made by certain idealists to establish co-operative commonwealths failed. But the great co-operative movement has gone on, increasing in volume in every country ; despite the setbacks it has suffered it is, in the opinion of a great many people, the most hopeful movement of our time, and the Co-operative Wholesale of Great Britain long made the proud boast of being the biggest trading concern in the world.

Then, even as regards the much spoken of failure of co-operative commonwealths we have to note exceedingly important exceptions. Many such organisations have been established by people actuated by religious motives with entire success, because success depends on an unselfish communal spirit, which religion gives. Now the non-co-operation movement contains some of this religious fervour, and should be successful in any endeavours in this direction for that reason, if there were no others.

As we have insisted in the previous lectures, we base our expectations of *ultimate* success on the immense facilities modern industrial progress has given to co-operative production when developed into a large organisation. But as these methods do not help a small organisation very much, we shall need the spirit of enthusiasm and self-sacrifices at the start; and that, indeed, is what the movement is waiting for to make its start.

To sum them up briefly, the main facts in connection with co-operation are the following: Man is fundamentally a social creature, and it is only in co-operation of some kind with his fellows that he can attain good results in any of his efforts. In the primitive community individuals of different occupations combined together to do the different kinds of work, under particular theocratic or other forms of often more or less tyrannical governments, against which they rebelled when progress took place, and began to produce independently for sale or barter.

Co-operation, however, began at once to reappear in a limited sense in the shape of partnerships, that

is to say of co-operation of individuals working together to produce things for sale, or to trade; then there was larger and larger co-operation of individuals for these purposes, under the names of companies and syndicates, finally, there were attempts by individuals to organise themselves again to work together and produce what they want for their own use, that is to say the movement arose to which the name of co-operation has been given, though all these developments, really, were the step by step return to co-operative working. Thus we have seen the breaking up of the primitive, and, as we might say, compulsory co-operation, and the step by step reappearance of co-operation voluntarily organised.

Individuals combining voluntarily, however, have not succeeded in establishing co-operative production for use, and that is why we hear the movement spoken of as a failure, and why indeed it has, so far, been disappointing as an emancipating force.

But now let us follow further the course of this evolutionary process. First, we have seen *individuals combining* into groups to co-operate in their trading enterprises, and then combining to supply themselves with necessities, and now we are witnessing *groups combining*; the prominent feature of the modern commercial world being the formation of trusts and combines. The next thing, then, in the order of evolution we are following, would be *co-operation of groups* to supply the wants of their members; in other words, industries co-operating instead of individuals co-operating. It is at that stage that co-operative production for use, integral production,

should be entirely successful. The groups co-operating should be able to produce the various necessities on a large scale and it is then that the advantage given by modern methods is enormous.

No altruism will be required for that development. The co-operation of groups, which we briefly described in the end of the last lecture, will be nothing but a highly advantageous business arrangement, and a way of putting an end, once and for all, to unemployment—and domination.

Our gradual evolutionary advance in co-operation has been proceeding, in a very interesting way, on the lines of biological evolution. Biology tells us that we have first a grouping of cells, and then of groups of cells. Industrial evolution has gone through its first stage, the grouping of individuals in partnerships, companies and syndicates, and in co-operative distribution and to some extent manufacture, and we are now well on in the stage of grouping of groups, and the next thing on the line on which we are advancing would be the grouping of groups for co-operation, when co-operative production should be entirely successful.

Of course there is nothing so uncertain as the development of events in the domain of sociology, and if we had simply to wait for the next event to come we might not know how long it would be before it came, but forces are now quickened which, directed with intelligence, should bring about the change for which everything is prepared.

Now at this point it is necessary for us to realise how extraordinary has been the failure of the

individualistic system to make good use of the productive power progress has given us. The amount that a day's work can produce is constantly being increased, so that it ought to become constantly easier to make a living, and the security of a living ought to be constantly increasing. Instead of that, however, the general impression is that life is becoming constantly more strenuous and precarious. The comparison of our industrial system to an engine we have built but have not learnt to control seems here to be terribly true; we see it going in exactly the opposite direction to that in which we would wish it to take us. The failure of individualism is very vividly illustrated by the fact that, very often, small industries producing articles in a primitive manner, continue for a long time to compete successfully with big organisations. That, of course, means, in other words, that the consumer does not get the benefit of improved methods. The explanation of this failure is simple. The big industry is an organisation to produce very economically so long as it can get a constant succession of big orders that will keep its expensive equipment fully working. To do that, however, it has, in the first place, to spend a great deal of money, and even then it suffers from its slack periods, and has to take risks of expensive failures, so that the advantage of the better methods it uses is to a very large extent neutralised.

If there were not these fitful fluctuations of trade, manufacturers would know what to do when the demand for any kind of article diminished.

They would know that there was a more or less permanent change, and that they must turn themselves to producing something else.

Co-operative production, as we explained in the last lecture, would insure industries working to their full capacity and so prevent fitful fluctuations. The risks, in a word, that now neutralise the advantage of progress would be avoided by co-operation.

Even those who look only at effects without examining causes, see clearly that co-operation is the need of the day. We are suffering now-a-days from high prices, but all know that prices need not be high, because the cost of production is low if good methods are used; all feel that in order to have the benefit of our power to produce cheaply, and to escape the tyranny of high prices, we must organise co-operation. The difference between cost of production and retail price has now become scandalous and intolerable. For every reason we should be now on the threshold of the age of co-operative production.

Now there is another thing we want to be clear about in this connection. Some people will say that new social evolutions cannot come about suddenly, that the world is conservative and it is only very slowly indeed that anything fundamentally different from what exists can be introduced. This statement needs a great deal of qualification. The truth is that, just because the world is conservative, and does not easily take new departures, possibilities remain long unrealised, changes, in other words, become very overdue, until some cause arises to force

matters on, and then things begin to move with great rapidity.

We have had a very striking example in the development of railways in Great Britain, particularly, and in the world generally. Long after Stephenson had fully demonstrated the possibility of the railway, people remained incredulous, unable to conceive that such wonderful changes as he predicted could ever come about. When, however, at last, a practical demonstration was given on a large scale, railways began to develop with wonderful rapidity all over the country and, soon after, all over the world. Perhaps a striking example in India is the development of the cotton-mill industry in Guzerat. The possibility of this development had existed for a long time, only because people are conservative the mills had not been established, but when it was done at last, the idea spread with great rapidity. There is every reason to think that the same will take place as regards co-operative production when once it is started; and with the immense advantage in its favour that a co-operative organisation can go on extending itself automatically, in the way we have already indicated; so that when once a start is made, the development may be extremely rapid.

But, as we must constantly remind ourselves, the important thing in the domain of economics is facts. The whole world has been moving now for a long time in the direction of co-operative production, only, as people do not always call it by the same names, that fact is not always fully realised.

The great social movement of the beginning of this century was certainly socialism. The plan of the socialists was simply to organise whole nations as great co-operative organisations under their governments. The late war is said to have had, as its immediate cause, the rapid advance of socialism, which alarmed the German Imperial Government, and caused it to seek to turn the attention of the German people away from this, to its dangerous doctrine, by launching them on a war of conquest. The mathematical facts we dealt with at the end of the last lecture, and the everyday fact of high prices despite the power we have now to produce at very low cost, have long shown people that the individualistic system as it is at present will no longer do; and hence, when the co-operators failed to establish co-operative production, that great movement in favour of compulsory state-organised co-operation called socialism arose.

It will be said by many that socialism is not now the power that it was a decade or more ago. But the fact is that people have come to realise that, as a general rule, the larger the organisation the less efficiently it is managed. So, early in this century, the new plan called Syndicalism, which is decentralised socialism, began to gain favour.

To explain it again briefly, under socialism as originally conceived, people would be employed in various State productive establishments and receive a salary from the State, which would be so calculated as to enable them to purchase their proportionate share of the total produce. Syndicalism however argues that,

as, after all, what the State wants of the individual is the articles he produces, it should not contract with people for hours of labour, but for goods, and allow the different classes of producers, formed into Syndicates, to organise themselves to do the different kinds of work for the community, receiving their shares of produce in exchange; thus it is a plan for national co-operation in a decentralised form.

The fact is that the simple idea of state socialism, which fascinated people at first by its theoretical perfection and the immense power it promised to give when applied under modern conditions, has been felt to be unrealisable in practice, and so the masses are at present without a definite plan. But this condition will not last. It is evident that if once we admit the correctness of the principle that large organisations are not generally easy to manage, and that, in any case, personal freedom is of greater value than economic perfection, we must not only agree with the Syndicalist secession from the original idea, but must go further and say that there should be separate syndicates, and then further still, and say that each one should be managed on whatever plan its members think best; and that clever individuals should manage if, by using their organising ability unhampered, they are able to get the work done more easily; or, to put it in commercial language, if they can give better pay for the same number of hours of work—for it would come practically to that even under that system. Thus we arrive at another conception of socialism, that which we indicated briefly at the end of the last lecture. According to it individuals

might be left to make their own arrangements to produce, also to exchange, but the State would at least keep industries fully occupied, by organising an exchange system supplementing the individualistic one, and would finance industries when necessary, to enable them to equip themselves efficiently for their work, controlling them, however, so that there would not be more machinery to produce any one kind of article than was required; finally, the State would control prices and wages. But, again, a co-operative organisation would be able to do all that, without needing State help, because a co-operative organisation can control both prices and wages in a most effective manner; we are therefore clearly on our way back to the original idea of the pioneers of the co-operative movement only modified.

Thus, in the light of reason and knowledge of human nature, the great vision of the socialist state dissolves itself, but for co-operation, which all thoughtful people have always believed in, to remain the substantial thing behind it and we are brought back to it.

From every point of view, the important thing now is to understand the strength that co-operation, in the broad sense, would have with modern means of production, and the essential difference between the way we must regard it now and that in which the pioneers of the movement regarded it, and we must know exactly what the modern situation demands of us.

The early co-operators attempted to do two things at once, namely, to produce articles co-operatively for

their own use, and to manage their organisation co-operatively. The result of the attempt they made to go two steps at a time was a failure.

To recapitulate briefly, the system of co-operative or co-ordinated production for use is one under which the organisation makes it its business to produce for each individual what he requires, demanding of him simply that he shall join in its labour, and do an amount of work equivalent to that required to produce what he wants,—and obtain what is required for its production. A community working on that plan would, as a matter of course, use the best machinery,¹ its economics would be absolutely simple, so it would reward its workers to the full extent of its producing capacity.

This plan, however, to be carried out in a really useful way, demands a large organisation. But the pioneers, wishing at the same time to make their organisations industrial republics—or else governed by people who had no business experience—were not able to obtain either capital, or many really good workers; and, starting under every handicap, they failed.

They had then to make up their minds which of the two steps they would take first, the co-ordinated production or the democratic management.

To us, with our productive power standing at fifty, and developed only up to twenty-five—using again

¹ It must, of course, be understood that individuals would be perfectly free to work with primitive methods if they chose; only remuneration would be based on the amount of work needed using the best methods. But that shows also the difficulty of carrying out co-operation in the way idealists conceived. Individuals would often persuade themselves that work done in their particular way was better done.

the figures we have been taking for illustration—it is perfectly clear which step we should choose: namely, that of establishing first co-ordinated production, capitalistically organised if necessary. Co-operators, it is true, are idealists, actuated by the desire to work together on the co-operative plan. But the fundamental difficulty, again, is that large groups cannot manage to work together in harmony, and small ones cannot work under economically advantageous conditions. In the circumstances the right way is obviously to establish, as a foundation, an organisation producing as many as possible of the principal necessities of life, managed in any suitable way—only an organisation, like the educational one, not worked for commercial profit-making—and for groups of co-operators, of workable size, to produce as much as they could economically for themselves, and specialise in some particular work they would do for the large organisation, receiving its various produce in exchange. In that manner the co-operator would be able to advance towards the attainment of his ideal. The small group would be able to co-operate among themselves, and might form, finally, a purely co-operative organisation which would have grown up around the semi-co-operative one, as we might call it, like a delicate plant growing round a strong stake, till at last, intertwining its slender stalks it became able to stand alone.

For us now this seems, of course, the common-sense way to proceed, whether we look at the question practically or as enthusiasts for co-operation. Why, then, did the early co-operators choose the opposite

course? Why did they give up for the time the idea of co-ordinated production, to establish democratically managed trading and manufacturing concerns?

It is of fundamental importance to understand the reason for their having chosen what seems to us now the wrong way, and it is also very simple. In the first place, their plan was absolutely sound in theory, for they proposed to build up the various industries, producing at first for sale in the ordinary way, and giving their customers the benefit of cheap prices, combining ultimately for co-ordinated production to make their workers economically independent. They did not, however, anticipate that forces would come into play that would make their progress so slow and defeat their aims in a great measure.

Then also, returning to the figures we were taking for illustration, productive power was then ten, not fifty, and this limited power was utilised to a much greater extent than ours is

When productive power was ten, the dominant idea in the minds of all reformers was to reduce the part of it that was used for the benefit of the privileged classes. There was no question with them of expanding a twenty-five into a possible fifty. They thought of co-operation mainly as a means of escape from working for the capitalist, and paying him toll. To them, therefore, any organisation, even if producing for use, capitalistically managed and perhaps paying interest on capital, did not appear as being a step in the direction in which they wanted to go, so they never thought of it.

Moreover, such an organisation had not then such remarkable chances of success as it has now, because the cost of "handling goods" was not then so great in proportion to the cost of their production.

But with our problem, with productive power fifty but developed only up to twenty-five, and with an immense difference between the normal cost of production and the ordinary sale price, and our experience of co-operative production for sale, we see that it would be right to establish production for use, capitalistically managed if necessary, as the first step.

It is of fundamental importance to bear in mind that the social problem of to-day is totally different from that of the past. Fighting the privileged classes to win for the workers seven out of ten instead of six out of ten is one thing; striving to organise better, so as to develop an actual productive power of twenty-five into something nearer a potential fifty is a totally different thing.

But people of Western countries, having inherited a fine literature and ideas from great social reformers of the time when productive power was ten, find it difficult now to shake off those ideas and take an accurate view of the modern situation. Not, indeed, that they can fail to realise that the problem we have to solve now is a different one, that is, of course, obvious; but they do not realise fully that some of the old aspects of the question are no longer worth considering at all, especially in connection with the land question and co-operation. The toll taken by both landlords and capitalists is now a negligible

affair,¹ if only we could manage to use our productive power better; waste is the main enemy now, not exploitation. The result as regards co-operation is that *we no longer need to separate co-operative production from individualistic, as the early co-operators conceived. We must blend the two in every conceivable proportion. People should work for both, and co-operation, not as a separate organisation, but an element pervading the whole, will regenerate our civilisation and make it both morally and economically healthy. That is the fundamental fact we have to seize, now that the question is no longer one of dividing up the ten, but of developing the twenty-five.*

The facts, as they present themselves to an unbiased mind are plain; co-ordinated production is what we need, and an educational organisation working on that plan would evidently be a singularly good and hopeful foundation to build it upon. It is clear how co-operative production, in the wide sense in which we can take the word to-day, might develop from an educational organisation and give simple and immediate solutions to some of our most important problems. It is of paramount importance to every country to solve the problem of making the conditions of life and labour of industrial workers fit for normal human beings, which they are not now. Great Britain seems to be under the absolute necessity of giving an important lead in this matter, so let us consider her case. She is now losing some of

¹ This, of course, must be understood broadly; in individual cases of course, such burdens may be fatal.

her great share of the world's trade. If the workers knew that unemployment and short-time were going to last, the simple solution of their problem would be to take land near the industrial towns and learn to work on it part of their time, producing food for themselves. But the amount of produce a man can obtain from a garden, though it is enough to be of appreciable importance to one who is in fairly good employment, is not enough to be of very great help to one who is out of work, or on short time. If, however, groups of industrial workers combined to take enough land to produce a considerable part of the food they and their families required, with experienced men to guide them in their work, they might be quite well off even on unemployment allowance.

But such organisations, at first, would have to be of the nature of training farms, and not co-operatively managed. By working long enough in a well-managed organisation paying its workers in kind, people would be able to earn some small capital.¹ We may assume that the more individualistically inclined ones would use that capital to emigrate, and others would be able to form themselves into groups to work on the land.

Industries might then bargain with groups of co-operators to give them weekly a certain number of hours of labour of certain kinds, and, within the limitations imposed by the contracts, the members of the groups would be able to arrange among

¹ That is the plan of the Educational Colonies Association. See footnote, p. 9; and p. 67, first para. and footnote.

themselves which days and hours each one would work in the factory. Such an arrangement would be advantageous for the industries because of its elasticity. In exceptionally busy times all the members of the groups would be able to give a full day's work to the factory, which could then be kept going very long hours, with relays of workers; in ordinary times members would give a small number of hours, and in slack times a still smaller number, but without suffering want, because the work on the land would give them and their families food. In some cases the co-operators would be able to do their work for a factory in their own workshop on their farm; which, of course, is an old and well-known plan that, with electric power, it may be possible to revive in some cases. A practical example is what we need and then an immediate beginning might be made in that way towards solving the problem of unemployment. In all such things a strong lead and practical demonstration is necessary, and it is for up-to-date co-operators to give it; this crisis offers us at the same time a duty and a great opportunity.

It will be said, of course, that an organisation of that kind would be sure to revert to something like the present system; that out of a group of say three co-operators, two would work in the factory the whole time and one on the land. But that after all is only stating a truism. Every new departure we take in the whole domain of sociology reverts more or less to type. That, however, does not prevent a new plan remaining operative to some extent. In this case it would be operative to a very great extent indeed. The

workers' children at all events, would generally work on the land. This can be stated with certainty on a basis of practical experience. That result alone would be of fundamental importance both economically and sociologically. In any case men out of work would then have the *opportunity* to be usefully and profitably employed.

India's great problem, of course, is that of bettering the lot of the peasant classes. When a country becomes thickly populated, there is but one solution for its poverty problem—apart from the artificial and also disastrous one of relying on foreign countries for food—and that is to have the land divided into farms of suitable size to use good agricultural methods and yield the maximum of produce. But the problem then is to find employment for the people, because modern methods need very much less labour than primitive ones, whilst yielding more; with of course the limitations imposed by the "law of diminishing returns."

Speaking practically, then, taking things as they are now, we have the economic paradox that when a country becomes thickly populated it must develop industrially or it will be short of *food*; a paradox, however, that is simple to explain, since its population must be occupied in some way, and cannot be allowed, when dense on the land, to employ itself producing inadequate crops from too small holdings.

Practically, then, we must have one of two things, either industry—or war, pestilence and famine to keep the population down. When men and their social arrangements have attained such a degree of

perfection that people will work in great co-operative groups, using the land communally, we shall be able to dispense with the industrial work if we do not want the products of industry. But, taking things as they are in India to-day, co-operation, again in the wide sense of the word, offers the only solution. People employed in modern co-ordinated industries would be able easily to have, as their remuneration, goods to three or four times the value of what their earnings, working on their too small holdings, would purchase. Now, making all the various allowances practical people will see must be made, it is clear that those with little land would be drawn away to work in the industries, and then those with more land would be deprived of the class that labours for them for a wage, so a crisis would be brought about in which people would be compelled by circumstances to adopt labour-saving methods. That is possible only by working either co-operatively, or in any other way, with holdings of suitable size. The co-operative organisation would, of course, make it its business to organise the amalgamation of holdings for co-operative working.

Now, in India a co-operative educational organisation extending into all parts of the country, would obviously form the natural basis of a suitable co-ordinated industrial system ; from an educational one it should develop rapidly into a great economic co-operative organisation with education as one of its activities.

It is hardly necessary to answer here the question how establishing co-operative industries would be

enough by itself to turn a poor country into a well-to-do one. Riches, that is to say the colossal accumulations characteristic of the present time, are a harmful abnormality, symptomatic of economic crudeness or disorder. Well-being can be had simply by organised production of what people need. The exchange currency of an organisation supplying everything necessary in abundance is money to people who desire only to have their wants and those of their family well satisfied, and not to be "rich"; and it is hardly necessary to point out that there would be no difficulty about enabling co-operators to have ordinary currency to the extent to which they really required it.

There are other things co-operative or co-ordinated production might do for India; it might reduce military expenditure enormously, on exactly the same principle as it would educational expenditure; an army in peace time is in fact an educational and training organisation. We might make the European troops in India self-supporting and very useful to the economic development of the country, by enabling men skilled in various industrial work to come to India as soldiers, spending part of their time in "military colonies" similar to the "educational colonies" and part in civil employment, on a plan of rotation. All this is dealt with in other publications of the University on this subject.¹

Summing up now these lectures as an appeal to India, I will say that, whilst it is not for a foreigner

¹ See "Man and Machine Power."

to lay down the law as to what patriotic Indians ought or ought not to do, and to risk, in their fight for freedom, it is for every truthful man to recognise that agitating the masses is but making a great gamble for it; as agitating *might* further the cause, or *might* bring about a state of affairs that will be followed by reaction, and delay the attainment of liberty. It is gambling with everything one would least wish to gamble with; with the lives of men, women and children, with the very existence of civilisation. But when we are acquainted with modern industrial facts, and the facility they give for working constructively, we see that it is entirely unnecessary and therefore criminal to make this gamble *at least until we have exhausted every possible means of working constructively viâ economic emancipation*. Industrial progress has opened up these new possibilities in connection with economic progress the most eminent economists agree that we are on the threshold of a new era of co-operation, which would evidently take India by a perfectly safe and sure road to freedom; it would indeed be criminal not to try at least, and very earnestly, to go by that safe way so providentially opened. Enthusiasm, to break down the initial obstacles, is realised by all to be the one and only thing needed to bring in the era of co-operation now that we have an easy way to it *viâ* the application of co-operative production to education. We must harness the political enthusiasm to the chariot of co-operative production; it may then soon be beyond the difficult portion of the journey; at least we must try our very best.

It is not a question here of whether or not we personally believe that the establishment of co-ordinated production can lead India to freedom as quickly as political agitation. The one fact for us is that *there is every reason to try*, and those who *are* authorities agree that there is every reason to hope that we would succeed. People with a conscience therefore cannot turn their backs on the peaceful way on the authority of their own inexperienced opinion and try *nothing but* the old and uncertain way ; the way inevitably of hatred and murder ; for agitation always produces both, if not worse things still, whatever may be the intentions of the agitators.

From the party point of view even, the mere agitator is criminally wrong, for he persuades people to leave their employment to lead them into the wilderness, instead of *trying first* the constructive plan of organising co-ordinated employment and so *inducing* them to leave for something better.

From a higher point of view, again, we see that the forces of hatred are strong enough already in the world, and India should at least *try also* to work for freedom by a new method that is entirely good, *hoping* that it will, in itself, suffice. It will certainly make the way easier and more merciful, and co-operation will as certainly make it much easier for her to manage her affairs successfully when free. Co-operative production would, once more do everything that is required to enable India to organise things in the ways that are not only suitable but also traditional. It is impossible to insist too much on that fact, because it is an imperative reason in itself to work

with all our might for co-ordinated production. Without it, in her position of exceptional internal difficulties and external dangers, that have kept her for centuries in a position of dependence, her attempts to gain freedom might be abortive or even end disastrously. With it she must gain freedom for "constructive non-co-operation"—to put it in the language the nationalists have adopted—would be absolutely invincible and not slow.

It is not for a foreigner, again, to say what plans should prove most acceptable to India, but it is for one whose endeavour is to rise above the limits of nationality, and who wishes to see every nation according to its particular gifts, and its particular genius, make its contribution to the promotion of human welfare, to plead with those of the country of his adoption and represent to them their duty as it appears from the international standpoint. The state of Europe is not enviable but pitiable; the British are deteriorating physically owing to inconceivably anomalous social conditions—a nation of town dwellers with the land system of a primitive rural age, a nation with high and increasing productive power with the wage system of an age of low and stationary power!—Conditions for which co-operation seems the most hopeful remedy; France has a diminishing population attributable to similar causes; unemployment and starvation are rife in many countries, demanding the same thing again for their relief, co-ordinated production.

Here is India's real opportunity. Independence is not in itself a worthy ideal to fight for, India must

aim at making other nations *depend on her* by rendering an essential service. She cannot do that if she forgets herself, her traditions and her national genius and becomes a mere imitator; but she can, nay she is clearly called upon to do it, by being true to herself, and giving a lead in the direction of co-operative or co-ordinated production, without which there seems to be no hope for our modern civilisation; independence will come to her then on the line of her duty to the human fraternity, and she will take her place among the nations free and leading others to freedom.

Britain has her strength in her political stability, based on the loyalty of her people to their Sovereigns, and the loyalty of her Sovereigns to the ultimate authority of the People. Her particular strength has made others lean on her; *Pax Britannica* has been her gift to the world; and that strength may make her for some time to come—whilst measures of defence remain necessary—the centre of a group of free nations, when domination has become a thing of the past. Let India find her own self-expression in her own equally important manner, let her be ambitious, not patient, aggressively national in that high and noble way not quiescent and passive, and then if she wishes she will be able to remain a member of that group, but a free member; for, as the non-co-operators have taught her now, a people that need not serve cannot have any government imposed on them against their will as people are beginning now to realise everywhere.

APPENDIX I

THE INDIAN POLYTECHNIC ASSOCIATION

*See Report of Calcutta University Commission, Vol. VII,
pp. 20 to 22*

The Indian Polytechnic Association was formed first to help the establishment of practical training in schools generally by making commercial use of the boy's labour, which is necessary first because practical training is really good only when the work done is visibly useful, and secondly because good equipment is altogether too costly unless used in that way.

In connection with this problem we are confronted with the fundamental difficulty of the cost of the equipment; and the fact that the way in which we should have to set children to use it for educational purposes is not that which is calculated to secure the best economic return from it. In a word, people have to be employed in a different way to learn from what they have to earn. To make work instructive, we should keep the young worker at one process until he had learnt it, and then pass him on to another, whereas, to get an economic return, we have to keep the workers to one process—which, with modern methods, often makes the work singularly uninteresting.

These difficulties have to be met by organisation.

Good modern equipment might make education self-supporting, but to do that generally and not only in some specially favoured cases, organisation is needed to arrange what each school is to produce, when necessary giving different schools

different parts of an article to make, changing occasionally the distribution of work to make it instructive, and arranging for the disposal of articles and the supply of equipment on suitable terms.

THE SIMPLEST CASE.

When, however, we employ the children producing things for use in their own homes, so that they will be able to earn distributor's profits, we need not trouble about their work as producers having any economic value.

Boys might, for instance, with great benefit to themselves, spend, say, four hours a week working on the land.

In a school farm or market garden, paid workers would perhaps have at first to be engaged in sufficient numbers practically to do the whole work, without reckoning much on the boys. The boys, however, would, in a systematic way, take things home so as to earn as distributors.

There is, in many cases a simple way out of the difficulty of earning and learning, arising from the economic fact that there is such a great difference, with many articles, between cost of production and the retail price.

Now to understand how work should be organised we have to understand the principles of the employment of small groups of unskilled workers under skilled ones.

If a worker has quite unskilled boy assistants sent to him in a haphazard manner, they are likely to hinder more than help him. If, however, they come to him systematically, in groups of suitable sizes, which might be two, four, six, or even more, according to the work ; if, moreover, we arrange systematically that when the boys composing a group are changed it will not be all at once, but half of them at a time, so that there will always be some boys in the group familiar with the work ; if, finally, the boy helpers are generally of the same age, so that the men will know from experience what they can expect of them, the men will at least manage, with them, to do a full day's work ; that is to say, to be helped by them as much

as hindered, and will be *kept at their work, which is very important as all practical people know*; in the latter way the children, in a properly managed school, would have a very real economic value soon earning well as distributors by taking the produce home. But most people will say that we should soon get material help from them also.

From the educational point of view at least such work would be valuable in many ways; the boys would be trained to practical work *and when older to supervise it*.¹

A GRICULTURAL TRAINING FOR TOWN BOYS.

Now, the next thing we have to understand is that the benefit of this training could be given to all town boys.

It would be a most excellent thing to do everywhere what is done to a very great extent in America: namely, to take town children by railway or tramway to schools outside the towns, at least for some days in the week. We cannot, of course, contemplate schools removing at once outside the towns, but it should be possible, at least, to induce some to send their boys twice a week or so to a "garden school." If two or three classes went each day, on a regular routine, it should be possible to make good arrangements for school work being done. The children should go early to the "garden school" and return as late as possible, so as to have time for studies, practical work and games, and should have a meal at the school consisting largely of things they had grown themselves.

It would be an advantage if a number of schools combined and had one "educational colony," to use the usual expression; though they might have their separate school house, gardens, and workshops.

To enable the boys to earn their railway fare and other expenses by bringing produce home it would be sufficient to carry out the market-garden plan systematically.

¹ See p. 13.

In this connection we need to realise that the cost of conveying people by rail is extremely small, as illustrated by the fact that workmen's tickets have been issued at as low rates as twenty-six miles for one penny. The cost of railway travelling is, in fact, made up by the standing charges on a railway system, not by the actual "cost of haulage." That means that very low fares can be charged, without loss, for *extra* traffic—in exactly the same way as a theatre, when not quite full, might without loss, admit poor people at nominal rates.

In America the plan, generally, is for town children to go out to schools in the suburbs by the trains or trams that bring in the town-workers, and return empty unless so used, and to bring them back by those that go to the town to take town-workers out again. That, of course, is the ideal arrangement, though not always possible.

INDUSTRIES AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

But besides gardening it would be desirable to add industries as soon as possible, and in connection with them an organisation such as the Indian Polytechnic Association would supply would be necessary.

Here, again, we should have to work in similar ways. In the first place, we should endeavour to make the boys earn as distributors, industrial work also would be done on the group system.

The group system has been tried with most unskilled workers with brilliant success in the Swiss Colony at Witzwil, and its application to education will be a very interesting and hopeful study, which we should start upon without delay. But organisation is necessary. In industrial work, the sizes of the groups would vary very much indeed; they might be anything from one to half a dozen, or even more in some cases. Modern industrial methods lend themselves so well to this arrangement, that the very moderate ideal of the young helpers being useful enough for the total effect to be neither to hinder nor to help, is an easily

attainable one, whilst changing the boys about from one process to another so as to make the work really instructive.

PAID APPRENTICES.

The fact that educated people would work willingly in the industries of such an organisation opens up many possibilities.

Youths past school age could be employed as paid apprentices, paid in kind, which would give suitable employment at once to large numbers of middle class young men.¹

MIDDLE CLASS EMPLOYMENT.

Now this brings us to an aspect of the question that is of the greatest interest. It might prove to be possible, to a very great extent, in the industrial work, to employ men of education as "group masters." Modern developments help us there. The pay of an efficient industrial worker is now quite enough to satisfy a man of education; and, as the war has demonstrated so fully, people can soon learn to take their place usefully in many of the processes of modern manufacturing. Educated "group masters" would be members of the educational staff, able to help in the educational object. Working in an organisation of this kind, that would be producing for its own use, the "real wage" would be greater than the nominal wage.² These educational organisations, therefore, would offer a hopeful solution to the problem of middle class unemployment in all countries, the problem of the "new poor" as it is called in Europe. There need not be any separation of the educational and industrial staff. This would be "socialism" applied to the solution of the problem of the unemployed educated people.

Thus teachers also would be able to learn commercial and industrial work, which would broaden their horizon and enable them to command better remuneration, whilst the schools, we should hope, would earn the means to pay them better, in

¹ See p. 19.

² See p. 17 last para.

kind and in cash; the "Educational Colonies" giving thus an immediate solution to the problem of middle class unemployment.

In connection specially with the industrial work we see that, whilst bold and well-organised action might give splendid results, unorganised attempts can give but costly and disappointing failure. We cannot count on the groups being larger than three, on an average, in industrial work, so that, if we allowed for the boys doing one-and-a-half hours a day of practical work, a school of 450 boys would need about thirty "group masters," in other words, thirty capable industrial workers receiving good pay as such, clearly they would have to do work of economic value, or the cost would be prohibitive. There are not a great variety of independent industries that could economically employ that number of workers. Schools would often have to do some portion of some manufacturing work, either for each other or for firms. Organisation would therefore be needed. We should have to arrange also for each school to be, as far as possible, a distributor for the industrial products of all the schools and to arrange for equipment.

COMMERCIAL TRAINING.

Now this brings us to the commercial side of practical training that is very important, and would probably have to be organised before much could be done successfully on the industrial side, and is the *readiest means by which schools can earn to at once improve their teaching generally.*

On the commercial side school co-operative stores could be greatly developed. The school is a place where the representatives of a large number of families meet, which is the thing required for business, and this opportunity should be utilised to the full.

But the mere school co-operative store, good as it is as far as it goes, is apt to die of inanition, because, after all, in most articles of daily use, the difference between the wholesale and

retail price is not very great, so the savings on co-operative buying are small.

If, however, there were a central co-operative agency for all the school-stores, the margin would, of course, be greater, and *through the central agency the stores would be able to do business in connection with articles that people do not buy every day, and on which considerable savings might be made.*

THE FIRST STEPS.

Together, then, with school gardening, school co-operative stores, with a central organisation, seem to be the natural first steps. All use garden produce and little capital is required for market gardens ; and, of all forms of co-operation, a co-operative general agency, to help people in making purchases that are not of every day, would be one of the most useful.

No school store, however large, would be able to carry on such an agency, but a central organisation of school and college co-operative stores would be in an ideal position to do it. It could not only make purchases for members when wanted to, but also place information at their disposal, to help them in making purchases themselves. It could ascertain the experience of all its members in connection with purchases, and record the information, and in that way place the experience of all at the service of anyone making purchases that are not of daily occurrence.

Members would also be able to get many things cheaper through such an organisation than they would by purchasing them themselves, because discount is allowed to agencies. An educational organisation of the kind would have special advantage in this respect. Firms would give it discounts because of the useful educational work it was doing.

Schools could earn immediately in this way and boys could earn too. Opportunities would be given to boys to be canvassers—through their school store—and they would be able to get all kinds of practical commercial training and be rewarded in suitable ways for their efforts.

As a co-operative general agency, the school organisation would enjoy a kind of monopoly, because no commercial organisation of the kind would be as useful, as it would not be entirely impartial; and perhaps no other kind of co-operative one would succeed, as it would be costly to organise in any other way. Experienced people would give the benefit of their experience much more liberally to an educational organisation, and the boys would do the work as an excellent training, helped by experienced people. These special advantages would be of great value in making the start.

MEANS OF EARNING.

There are special lines an educational agency would be able to take up, and that would give it immediate opportunities to earn. Some novelties placed on the market are good, some are worth a small outlay for the trial, because they are useful in some cases, but a great many are almost worthless, so people are, on the whole, shy of them, and novelties are, therefore, often difficult to sell. The Board of an educational co-operative organisation, however, would always consist of people in whom all would have confidence, so it would have a unique advantage as regards novelties.

Repair work would be in many ways one of the most suitable kinds of work for school industries.

The agency would therefore do very useful business in connection with second-hand articles. Members would send to it lists of articles they were willing to dispose of, if they could obtain fair prices for them, and people wishing to buy good second-hand articles would apply to the school agency for its lists and be willing to give fair prices, because they will have its guarantee that the articles were examined and put in good condition in the school workshops.

The general agency would, of course, canvass for work for school workshops, obtaining orders from private people, contracts from firms, and deal in, and advise and help about, workshop

equipment. It would be able to overcome the difficulty of schools equipping themselves, by supplying various equipment on easy terms, as it would be able to borrow money at low interest from philanthropic people, *when there was an organisation to use it and make it pay.*

Finally, the co-operative general agency would help the youths, when trained, to set up their own business, or their own commercial or professional work.

It would be able to get firms to take youths as apprentices.

THE IDEAL EDUCATION.

The idea, then, of the Indian Polytechnic Association, to which, again, so many prominent business men and education-
alists—including conspicuously among the former Sir Dorab Tata, and among the latter Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, have given support and patronage, is to take advantage of the unique commercial opportunities educational establishments offer, and create a great school co-operative organisation, first distributive, then productive, which could raise education to a level that is not dreamt of at present. It would make the system of instruction practical, and make it a *training of the character, by loving service* of the children to their homes, and to the advancement of their country ; recognising the principle so well stated by Ruskin that “Employment is the half, and the primal half, of education” “it is the warp of it ; and the fineness or the endurance of all the subsequently woven pattern depends wholly on its straightness and its strength.” “The formation, namely, of the character of nations *and the determination of their final fate by their character.*”

Practical education will give teachers the opportunity of being, not ill-paid men, too often with a hopeless outlook on life, but men of business, earning well, teaching their pupils to be business-like, energetic and self-reliant. Progress has made all this possible, only our own good efforts now will show us how fast and how far we can advance towards the realisation of

these possibilities ; the future of education is now in the hands of the educationalists themselves. They can revolutionise it and, from it as a foundation, reconstruct society, by energetically and *intelligently* applying co-operation to overcome the difficulties of vocational training and for their own immense advantage, making teachers not men in a groove, but men of varied experience having also varied opportunities open to them.

We must follow in the footsteps of the co-operators who have taught us that a co-operative distributive organisation is, in many cases, the step leading to co-operative production and the agency clearly would lead the way for the school industries, whilst giving boys commercial training.

APPENDIX II

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

AND

THE PROBLEM OF POPULAR EDUCATION

(*From the "Commonweal," March, 1914.*)

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore is one of those patriots whose patriotism takes a practical shape, and one of those who soon realised that if we established a system of popular education such as we might establish now, we should lay the foundations of a Co-operative Commonwealth that would become a State within the State, far more powerful to do good to the people than the strongest and best government has ever been, and making the people much more free than the most liberal governments have ever made them.¹ Educational reform, thus, opens up an infinite horizon, one that can satisfy the ambitions of the most ardent social reformer, or even of the most ardent nationalist.

Dr. Tagore, with a poet's insight, perceived long ago that to solve the problem of popular education we must teach the children to do useful work co-operatively; that has been his steadfast aim at his school at Bolpur. It is not exceptional, but rather the common thing, for the dream of the poet to prove itself to be the correct sketch of the plan which will be drawn in more detail later by the statesman or the social reformer. It was so in this case, and, during his visit to England he became acquainted with the Educational Colonies and Self-Supporting Schools Association, which was formed to advocate social reform *via* educational reform, on the lines he had dreamt of.

¹ Many people consider that of all the things we could do to prevent unmerited poverty, that is the most hopeful.

Let us state in a general way what its scheme of social reform is. Industrial progress has had the effect, on the one hand, of enabling quite unskilled workers to be employed in large industrial organisations with just a small proportion of skilled leaders, and, on the other hand, of making organised labour extremely productive. The result is that we might organise boys after their school years—and girls too if they could be spared from their homes—in a great educational organisation, in which they would produce the main necessities of life for their own use, and for their parents, when it was necessary to help them, so that they would be able to earn their living better even than by going out into commercial employment *and earn any education for themselves.*

Now the effect of these “educational colonies,” as they are termed by their advocates, would be revolutionary, both on education and on the social question. When the school years were to be followed by a period of educative employment, it would obviously be possible to give a good manual training in the elementary schools; for lessons could be continued, if necessary, in evening classes during the “educational colony” period, so all would be well educated and well trained. Educationalists recognise the immense value of manual training. With this plan we should not only have the system that is regarded as the best to train the mind, but one also under which children would be taken in hand young and brought up to be industrious; we should have them kept under the healthiest possible conditions, and employed at healthy work, during the whole of their tender years; we should have them trained to be versatile before their vocational work ran them into a groove. A training in versatility is of paramount importance, not only because man cannot be the best specialist unless he has first learnt to be versatile, but also, and chiefly, because if he has learnt to do only one thing his development, as a man, is one-sided and, moreover, he can never be sure of a living; mind and hand must be trained in every case.

Now, if we gave the boys the training that would make men

of them, and fit them to be efficient workers, the value of their labour in the "educational colonies" would be so great that it would pay in a short period for whole of the expense of their training. *We arrive, thus, at the fact of infinite hopefulness that, under modern conditions, we have only to make our educational system thoroughly good, and it will also be inexpensive.*

The "educational colonies" would produce things mainly for their own use; but in every country there is some work the youths could do for the public, if it were necessary to make the educational system pay for itself entirely.

To explain "self-supporting education" in another way: children should have a good schooling, and those who have left school, *i.e.*, the community generally, should pay for it. Modern industrial methods have rendered it possible for the boys to pay as soon as they leave school by giving their labour for a time in "educational colonies." The only sacrifice they would make would be that of taking their remuneration in produce instead of "having the money to handle." Evidently, however, this discipline during adolescence would be the best possible thing for them. *Again here the system would be made educationally good by being economical.*

The effect of educational colonies on the solution of the social question would be the most important thing in connection with them; making any education or training accessible to every youth their effect would be revolutionary.

Our commercial system wastes productive power wholesale, or when it does not waste it, uses it to make profits for capitalists "educational colonies" would not.

An organisation producing things for use, and remunerating its workers with its own produce, does not dissipate its energies in those ways: hence its immense strength, as illustrated in such a striking manner by the Swiss organisation on that principle, which employs tramps and vagrants and is self-supporting.¹ Well-trained young men working under the same economically

¹ The colony of Witzwil, Bern.

advantageous conditions would easily produce enough to enjoy a considerable degree of comfort. Having once experienced economic freedom, and the enjoyment of all the decencies of life they would not easily remain content in after life with conditions of dependence and squalor.

They would be able to organize co-operation in the towns and villages to which they would return when their education was completed, and put into practice the lesson in practical economics they had learnt and a production-for-use organisation could work just as well with its various industries spread out in different localities, as with them gathered together on an "Educational Colony."

In India it is of the greatest importance that the management of this industrial State would call for the display of civic virtues. Those who had tasted freedom and well-being, and who knew what they had to do to continue to enjoy them, could be counted upon to display the necessary qualities and thus be trained for independence.

Complete success would not, of course, be realised at once, results would fall far short of theoretical possibilities. The capitalist system and the wage system would, no doubt, continue very long to exist by the side of an industrial republic rising slowly to power.

Meanwhile, however, the path to freedom could be opened up by "educational colonies" and they would give us at once workers who would be worth a good wage and able to command it, and that, coupled with good education, would open up a broad horizon of social progress.

Shortly after the appearance of this article the Indian Polytechnic Association was formed.
