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THE

# HISTORY OF CO-OPERATION

IN ENGLAND:

## ITS LITERATURE AND ITS ADVOCATES.

BY

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
We can create.—MILTON.

VOLUME I.

THE PIONEER PERIOD—1812 TO 1844.

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TO

WENDELL PHILLIPS,

OF AMERICA:

A COUNTRY

WHERE WHAT IS NEW IS WELCOME;

WHERE WHAT IS TRUE EXPANDS:

TO HIM

WHOSE INTREPID ELOQUENCE,

CONFRONTING DANGEROUS MAJORITIES,

ANIMATING FORLORN HOPES,

HAS EVER BEEN GENEROUSLY EXERTED

ON BEHALF OF THE SLAVE, BLACK OR WHITE,

IN BONDAGE TO PLANTER OR CAPITALIST;

THIS HISTORY OF THE PIONEER PERIOD

OF CO-OPERATION IN ENGLAND

IS INSCRIBED

IN GRATITUDE AND REGARD

BY

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

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# PREFACE.

My purpose has been to write an account of the origin and growth of Co-operation—of the literature which fostered it—of the persons who aided it—the principles which directed it, and the promise it implies of the ultimate re-organisation of labour. To this end I have sought, as was befitting such an undertaking, the co-operative assistance of all informed persons, both in England and America, saying to them that any books, pamphlets, rules, placards, papers, letters relating to the early or out-of-the-way history of the co-operative movement, I should be glad to hear of, to borrow, or to buy. My desire was to be told of articles in reviews or periodicals about it—of sermons preached against it, and of anything having the flavour of preservation in it which might have been said upon the subject. Also, any noteworthy recollections of early meetings for promoting it—if those possessing them would be at the trouble to write out particulars for me, many or few, in any terms or in any way. I sought the names of persons who took part in founding the early stores, or who were prominently identified with Co-operation as promoters, managers, committee-men, advocates, lecturers, or in any distinguishable way connected with it

in any place. I asked for remarks or speeches of theirs that had any quality in them—particulars of what ultimately became of the persons themselves; references to correspondences in old local newspapers, and other imaginable kinds of relevant facts. Moreover, I desired that none who could do me the service of sending me any information would assume that I might know what they knew. I wanted to be sure that I knew it, and trusted none would suppose some one else had given me the same information, as the result of such supposition would prevent me knowing many things of interest. It was said of Hume that his "History of England" would have been more accurate but for the obligation he was under of sometimes imagining his facts, from the difficulty of navigating his portly person to the other end of his sofa, where the means of their identity lay. For myself, being as lithe as an Indian and resilient as an American, I might be depended upon to get at any fact which came within reasonable distance of me.

Of a subject so large and a story so long I have obtained—if not all the facts—at least as many as will serve to give the reader a substantial idea of the adventures and vicissitudes of co-operators and their cause.

Besides relating the origin and progress of Co-operation, my wish has been to give some particulars of the persons who made the movement—it being not enough to treat Co-operation merely as a bale of cotton, and discourse of its fineness, its repute, and value in the

market. It concerns the reader to know who were the artificers of the ultimate fabric; what were its pattern and colour, its texture and durability.

Narrators sometimes miss their way, because those who could direct them fear to pester them with suggestions. But it is no mean benefit to a writer to be beset by suggestors. Many counsellors bring no perplexity, provided an author takes his own wilful way in the end; and he takes it with many advantages, who has his eyes well open, knowing all that can be said of the subject in hand. The purpose of a narrator may die of contrariety of ideas, and his mind be carried away in the whirlwind of various opinions; but such mild whirlwinds as prevail in these days ought not to be fatal to an historian, whose real peril is that he may paralyse his readers by tameness, or kill them by monotony. There are persons who have a well-founded terror of making suggestions. We have ministers of state who teach that persons with ideas are to be distrusted, and it is not certain that it is safe for anyone with "notions" in his mind to go about certain Government departments now. Co-operators, however, belong to a very different school. They discovered all they know of self-help by self-thinking; and it came to pass that my application for facts was not unsuccessful, and many co-operative "notions" have been "thankfully received" by the undersigned.

In some cases, however, information transmitted has not been very apparent, though worth all the trouble

of deciphering, the writing being of a kind almost to defy that operation. All penmen are not gifted. A bird pattering out of an ink pot over a page would be a rival writer to some correspondents, who seem the natural and ready-made secretaries of Secret Societies, since no expert of the most suspicious Government known would be able to make much out of their caligraphy.

It has, however, occurred to so many correspondents, as it did to Lord Palmerston, that the purpose of writing is to be read, and that what is to be readable must be intelligible, and they have practised the unappreciated art of plainness to my great profit. My letter of enquiry inserted in the *New York Tribune* brought more communications from that wide-a-wake land than Great Britain furnished. No case of any indecipherable caligraphy arose in American letters; they make things pretty plain out there.

The facts of this co-operative story are intended to be comprised in two moderate sized volumes, and to include all characteristics of the subject calculated to give the reader a practical insight of it. Where this explanation may seem not to account for omissions, or suggestions rejected, the reader must ascribe the error to that opinionativeness, phrase-love, and general self-contentedness, with which nature indulgently endows some writers in lieu of other gifts.

While sitting at the Bolton Congress of 1872, and seeing with the mind's eye the old familiar faces flitting,

as it were, round the hall—the faces which have gone, as Bamford expresses it, through the "Pass of Death," and greet us no more—watching the vacant places (growing more numerous every congress) of those who bore the heat and burden of the unregarded day of Co-operation—whose buoyant, cheery voices we shall never hear again—whose tireless energy we have for ever ceased to know—I desired, more than before, to write some history of that new power of industry which will grow mightier year by year, before the night cometh when no man can work. How I have acquitted myself of my task the reader who has the courage to make the attempt can now judge.

G. J. H.

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# CHAPTER I.

## NATURE OF CO-OPERATION.

Distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.—*King Lear.*

It is the duty of him who pleads a cause, or solicits the attention of the public to any subject, to state distinctly what the subject is—if he knows it; so that those who confer upon him the favour of their attention at the outset may possess the means of deciding whether or no they will continue it. I will therefore state definitely what kind of Co-operation it is whose wild origin, fluctuating fortunes, unexpected and amazing growth, I propose to trace.

Mr. Furnivall could tell all about the origin of the term Co-operation and when it first crept into language. I find less of it than I expected in quarters in which I have looked. "The Encyclopædia Metropolitana," 1845, says the French have the word *co-operer*, the Spaniards *co-operar*, the Italians *co-operare*, the Latin *co-operare*, and derive it from *co-* and *operari*, which simply means to work,—to labour together, to endeavour for some common purpose. Sir Thomas More, speaking of the Sacrament, mentions that "in certain respects it doth nothing work, nor is no cause thereof nor *co-operāt* thereto." The next writer is Crashaw, who, in his "Sacred Poems," uses the word in another form:—

Bring all the powers of praise
Your provinces of well united worlds can raise.
Bring all your lutes and harps of heav'n and earth,
Whate'er *co-operates* to the common mirth.

Hammond, in his published "Sermons," was, so far as I am aware, the first to use the word in the form with which we are now so familiar. He says, "Men will see the original of all the wealth, all that is worthy to be called such, either mediately or immediately from God; immediately without any *co-operation* of ours." Holland, in his "Plutarch," makes a quotation from Timotheus, the poet, in which a form of the word which has never come into use is employed:—

> Both boldness stout and fortitude,
> With mental discipline,
> In war, which are *co-operant*,
> With virtue doth combine.

In Boyle's Life there is given a pretty instance of the personal form of the term: "And the success will perhaps invite many more to be *co-operators* with the truth."

Co-operation, in the social sense of the word, is a new power of industry, constituted by the equitable combination of worker, capitalist, and consumer, and a new means of commercial morality, by which honesty is rendered productive. It is the concert of many for compassing advantages impossible to be reached by one, in order that the gain made may be fairly shared by all concerned in its attainment. From the commencement of human society Co-operation has been common in the sense of two or more persons uniting to attain an end which each was unable to effect singly, the benefit, however, always accruing to the stronger. As society grew, crowds were coerced into acting together by their sagacious masters, when king or chief had his own way with any profitable result; in modern days the capitalist has had it. It is still common to regard the labourer as being under great obligation by being supplied with the bare wages of subsistence, while he aids in creating or augmenting the wealth of his employer. This is concert of labour, but it is the mere concert of compulsion and necessity, disguised under a loose use of the term

"Co-operation." The workman, under this kind of Co-operation, lives under the tyranny of profits, maintained by force, and only tempered by the sympathy of the kind-hearted rich, by the pride of patronage, by the master's fear of discredit among his neighbours, or dislike of dissatisfaction among those he employs, or the dread of resentment arising from individual monopoly of mutually earned profits. The Co-operation of later days, of which I purpose to write the history in England, begins in mutual help, with a view to end in a common competence. A co-operative society commences in persuasion, it proceeds by consent, it accomplishes its end by common efforts, it incurs mutual risks, intending that all its members shall mutually and proportionately share the benefits secured. The equality sought is not a mad equality of

Equal division of unequal earnings,*

but that just award of gains which is proportionate to work executed, to capital subscribed, or custom given. There is equality under the law when every man can obtain justice, however low his condition or small his means; there is equality of protection when none may assault or kill the humblest person without being made accountable; there is civil equality when the evidence of all is valid in courts of justice, irrespective of speculative opinion; there is equality of citizenship when all offices and honours are open to merit; there is equality of taxation when all are made to contribute to the support of the state according to their means; and there is

* As Ebenezer Elliott maliciously wrote in the amusing epigram, which I have heretofore quoted as the best description in our language of what communism is *not*. Elliott first repeated it to me amid the charming hedgerows, where he wrote his song of "The Wonders of the Lane":—

What is a Communist? One who hath yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings,
Idler or bungler, or both, he is willing
To fork out his penny and pocket your shilling.

equality in a co-operative society, when the right of every worker is recognised to a share of the common gain, in the proportion to which he contributes to it, in capital, or labour, or trade—by hand or head; and this is the only equality which is meant, and there is no complete or successful Co-operation where this is not conferred, and aimed at, and secured. Co-operation, after being long declared innovatory and impracticable, has been discovered to be both old and various. Mr. John Macdonell counts Jacob tending Laban's* flocks as a very early co-operator, he being a servant directly interested in the profits of his master. Mr. Nasse has shown that there existed agricultural communities in Europe in the Middle Ages, and that there was a co-operative use of land in England which it would be deemed revolutionary to propose now. It is remembered now that Greek sailors in the Levant, American sailors engaged in the whale fishery and China trade, the Chinese traders in Manilla, the Cornwall lead miners, and the lead and copper miners of Flintshire and Cumberland, have long been either equal or partial participators in profits. The Metayer system† is a familiar illustration with political economists. A modern author, who has written with remarkable impartiality and discernment of the actual views of social theorists, has said that "the words Co-operation and Co-operative have been used by communist writers to denote that part of their system according to which all the members of a community are to work together for the common benefit, instead of working, as at present, each on his

* "Survey of Political Economy." Chap. xv., p. 213.

† "The principle of the Metayer system is that the labourer, or peasant, makes his engagement directly with the landowner, and pays, not a fixed rent, either in money or in kind, but a certain proportion of the produce, or rather of what remains of the produce, after deducting what is considered necessary to keep up the stock. The proportion is usually, as the name imports, one-half; but in several districts in Italy it is two-thirds.—*Mill.* "Political Economy," People's Edition, p. 183.

own account."* This definition is in the line of truth, and goes forward some distance upon it. It is not necessary here to define Co-operation in determinate detail, it is enough to describe its general spirit as a theory of labour, and its general aim as an industrial force. The practical definitions of it which have been from time to time devised, and its progressive methods of procedure, will be the subject of another chapter.

The distinction of co-operators is that they set the example of work purposeful, cheerful, hopeful, successful, for the workers. What mostly existed before their time was simply labour disliked—people doing reluctantly what they were obliged to do. Co-operation turned toil into industry, which is labour animated. Industry means men working willingly, busily, knowing the reason why—no apathy, no idling, no bungling, no evasion of duty; because the profit of each is in proportion to his work, and is secured to him. Co-operation proposes that, in all new combinations of labour-lender and capital-lender, the produce of profits shall be distributed, in agreed proportion, over all engaged in creating the profit. Co-operation means concert for the diffusion of wealth. It leaves nobody out who helps to produce it. Those who do not know this do not understand Co-operation; those who do know it and do not mean it are traitors to the principle. Those who mean it and do not take steps to secure it, or are silent when others evade it, or do not advocate it and insist upon it always, and insist upon it openly as the impassable principle of industrial justice, are unseeing, or silly, or weak, or cowardly. It is thus that Co-operation supplements Political Economy by organising the distribution of wealth in the near future. It touches no man's fortune; it seeks no plunder; it causes no disturbance in society; it gives no trouble to statesmen; it enters

* Charles Morrison, "Labour and Capital," p. 111.

into no secret associations; it needs no trades union to protect its interests; it contemplates no violence; it subverts no order; it envies no dignity; it accepts no gift, nor asks any favour; it keeps no terms with the idle, and it will break no faith with the industrious. It is neither mendicant, servile, nor offensive; it has its hand in no man's pocket, and does not mean that any hands shall remain long or comfortably in its own; it means self-help, self-dependence, and such share of the common competence as labour shall earn or thought can win. And this it intends to have, but by means which shall leave every other person an equal chance of the same good.

The one new, distinct, and hopeful thing visible in English society is, that a considerable portion of the working class have taken social affairs into their own hands, and prove equal to the management of them. Their creed is industry without exceptions, without patronage, and without abstraction of its gains, other than that which parliamentary government may require. This was the earliest creed of Co-operation; it has been its continuous creed, it is its present creed, as will appear as this history proceeds. In England, where even paupers—at least among the honest poor—have always regarded relief, whether indoor or outdoor, a degradation, no industrial movement could grow which was not thus defiant as against charity or dependence. This self-reliance is the characteristic of Co-operation, which has the sagacity to see that industry, which creates all wealth, can retain its own by taking all who will labour with it into partnership. And this is the reason of that silent march of Co-operation which few have noticed, and whose future progress none can measure.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EVIL DAYS BEFORE IT BEGAN.

> Defend me, therefore, Common Sense, say I,
> From reveries so airy—from the toil
> Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old in drawing nothing up.—*Cowper.*

MATTERS were at a very bad pass—as they had often been before—with the working people in England when Co-operation began. Some of their melancholy advisers used to entertain them by publishing, in pamphlets addressed to them, a certain statute of Edward VI., which set forth in its preamble "that partly by the foolish pity and mercy of them which should have seen godly laws executed" the poor and unemployed had become troublesome: and therefore, in order that godliness might do its duty to society, it was enacted that—"If any person shall bring to two justices of peace any runagate servant, or any other which liveth idly or loiteringly by the space of three days, they shall cause that idle and loitering servant or vagabond to be marked with a hot iron on the breast with the mark of V, and adjudge him to be slave to the same person that brought him for two years after, who shall take the said slave and give him bread, water or small drink, and refuse him meat, and cause him to work, by beating, chaining, or otherwise, in such work as he shall put him unto, be it never so vile: and if he shall absent himself from his said master, by the space of fourteen days, then he shall be adjudged by two justices of peace to be marked on

the forehead, or the ball of the cheek, with a hot iron, with the sign of an S, and further shall be adjudged to be slave to his said master for ever."

In the days when this Act was passed, it was easy to see that gentlemen knew what they were about; and at the beginning of this century there were worthy and worshipping persons, who regretted, as many do still, the decay of vigour in the governing classes. After this period statutes grew sentimental. What they had come to in 1822 Francis Place has recorded.* In that year a poor farrier had travelled from Alnwick, in Northumberland, to London in search of work. On the same day a shopman to a grocer—long out of employ—arrived penniless from Shropshire. Both had come up to London, that Mecca of knavery and poverty, as well as of genius; and met, companions in destitution, in the pens of Smithfield market, where they ventured to think they might be allowed to sleep in the bed of beasts. They were seized by the police, and taken before a magistrate of the city. Both begged to be discharged, and promised to make their way home in the best way they could; but to this humble request the magistrate would not accede. He said "he was of opinion that the prisoners were not justified in coming to town without any prospect before them, for they must have known that, in the present state of trade, no one would take them in, nor would any one be justified in taking in a perfect stranger; but whether their conduct arose solely from ignorance or not he considered was immaterial; the magistrates could not know the minds of the prisoners, and could make no distinction."

The lord mayor agreed with the alderman on the bench who had delivered this decision, and who consulted him in this case. "The city magistrates," the mayor said, "wish it to be known in the country at large that in

* "Principles of Population."

future they should feel themselves bound to send all to hard labour for the term enacted (which was not less than one, and as much as three months), whether they were actuated by a vicious spirit of vagabondage, or with whatever professed object or speculation they came to town. In short, they would put the law in full force against all who could not prove reasonable assurance or certainty of employment as their motive for coming to London." Here the utmost that degenerate executors of the law could do was to warn farriers and shopmen unable to obtain employment in their own parish that they must stay there and die. No slavery threatened them, no hot iron discomforted them or disfigured them, and if they kept from tramping they might perish without being kicked. This showed a frightful growth of humanitarian tenderness, and suggested that the French Revolution had demoralised our rulers.

The Tories of that time, who were above all weakness of feeling for the people, escaped the infection of sympathy; but the Whigs certainly manifested a mitigated recognition that the working wanderers had some interests of their own in the state, if they only knew what they were, and had a right to mend their condition if they only knew how.

In 1825 a dinner was given to Joseph Hume, M.P., in Edinburgh, on which occasion Francis Jeffrey made a speech in favour of the combination of workmen. How many persons spoke does not appear from any report accessible, but the substance of Mr. Jeffrey's speech occupies twenty-three pages octavo. Judging from the facility, prolixity, and persistence with which some Scotch bailies who come to England on deputations to ministers address them, beyond anything which Englishmen ever attempt,* this dinner may have lasted

* A Scotch deputation to Downing-street, headed by a lord provost of Edinburgh, first caused me to notice this. He was a man of solid

a week. The purport of Mr. Jeffrey's speech was to explain the impertinent toast, "Freedom of Labour," which was expressed as follows: "Freedom of Labour. But let the labourer recollect that in exercising his own rights he cannot be permitted to violate the rights of others." This was a defence, accompanied by what sounded like a lecture and a reprimand. It indicated the monitorial tone which these defenders of the working class felt themselves able to take. It was certainly generous of Francis Jeffrey, himself a Whig reviewer, to speak at all in defence of combination of the workmen ;* but at that time, and for years after, it was a perilous business for the labourer to attempt to unite, or to be known to be friendly with those who counselled him to unite, against his employer; and some more gracious way might have been adopted of warning him not to abuse the power he dare not use. The main thing, however, to observe is that the sentiment in its admonitory portion had no application to the largest number of the most active agitators of the working class—the co-operators—who never made any attempt, directly or indirectly, to violate the rights of others.

We have got so far now that homilies are read to us against cultivating class feeling and encouraging the people to regard themselves as a separate class. In the days of which I write, it was a great point to get them to understand that they were a class at all. No law recognised them as a class, having either claims or

repute, of humble origin, with the credit not only of ability, but of good sense. He had been kept some years out of his well-earned dignity because he was suspected of writing the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation" (it being unlawful to consider creation natural); yet I saw him fasten on a prime minister, who, though he had a great majority at his back, and was overdue on the Treasury bench, could not extricate himself from that pertinacious Scotch detainer.

* The Combination Laws were repealed the year before the speech—1824.

human feelings; but merely as a number of disagreeable, insubordinate persons who wanted more wages, thought they ought to have political rights, even asked for education, and who needed most the watchful eyes of the magistrate, the clergyman, the overseer, and the parish constable. At that time a very uncomfortable monitor of the people existed, who attracted a large share of attention in his day, and who gave the poor a "bit of his mind," which they have not forgotten yet—the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus. This is what he said to them, in deliberately chosen sentences, and in large type:—"There is one right which a man has been generally thought to possess, which I am sure he neither can or does possess—a right to subsistence when his labour will not fairly purchase it."* "I firmly believe," he says, "that such persons, by the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, have no claim to support." Only the rich had the right to live. The poor existed alone by sufferance or charity. Nor was this the language of some obscure theorist. Malthus had the ear of legislators, and he wrote for them; and this is what he said to them: "As a previous step to alteration in the poor-law, which would contract or stop the increase of the relief to be given, it appears to me that we are bound in justice and honour formally to disclaim the right of the poor to support." "To this end," he continues, "I should propose a regulation to be made declaring that no child born from any marriage, taking place after the expiration of a year from the date of this law, and no illegitimate child born two years from same date, should ever be entitled to parish assistance."†

This language struck the poor as an outrage on household life. It brutalised the purest feelings of domesticity. It punished even marriage offspring with starvation—it denied the right of the children to live.

* Essays. Vol. III., p. 154. † Essays. Vol. III.

The dreary days of indigence.

Next to the terror of machinery by the poor operative, and not less than it, was the terror of population by the political philosopher, and many of them ventured to recommend to the poor expedients for limiting the offspring which made parents slaves and filled the streets with criminals and paupers. Yet such was the insolence of opinion in those days, that everybody who thought parental precaution a duty was assailed by every form of speech in which outrage could be expressed. Nevertheless this question concerned none but the poor. Yet they were to be coerced by opprobrium into supplying offspring to be ground up alive in the mill of capital, or be cast aside when the labour market was glutted, to fall into the hands of a constable or the overseer. Let unthinking or unknowing people, who talk of the "good old days which are gone," understand that there never were any good days for the poor. There has always been a golden age for opulence, but no age save a desolate one for indigence. It is difficult in these times, when partial knowledge has mitigated the anger of misery, to estimate the intensity of that rage against the rich which the ignorant and hungry felt half a century ago. Things then were generally unpleasant to the poor, even in the pulpit, where all men are told they may confidently look for humility, or at least civil treatment. The St. Augustine tone prevailed in the churches. Piety was not only dogmatic, it was insolent. It dictated to men their beliefs. The struggling, whom it could not help—the miserable, whom it could not save, it interdicted from thinking for themselves. The workman was regarded as holding his soul under a ticket-of-leave from the churches; and men of free thought in religion, or politics, or science were treated as a criminal class. Common men were the vassals of the crown, the prey of the priests, the property of the taxgatherer. They bled for the king, they bowed before the clergy, they toiled for the pension list. The crown took their bodies—the

mitre their souls—the state their means. They lived in ignorance, they laboured without reward, and, what is worse, many of them had no more sense than to put themselves, like dry sticks, under the cauldron of corruption.

Only those who take into account the condition of the populace prevailing when Co-operation began can understand how the more intelligent welcomed the humble and hopeful thing that sprung out of that chaos of despair. Historical knowledge was not the strong point of the people. Those of them who were politicians believed that the history of the world began with the first French Revolution. Old midland politicians half believe now that history began with the Birmingham Political Union of 1830. A stout Radical of mark in Bradford, Squire Farrar, built himself a house early in this century, and over the door, cut in stone, still appears the date of the declaration of American Independence; and there is a general impression in many quarters here, as well as across the Atlantic, that the world recommenced at that period.

However, without troubling too much when the world began, workmen were to be found who were bent on improving it. Trades-unionists have the credit of being among the most active of this class. We need not go far for an example which will sufficiently illustrate their condition and their sense as well as their spirit.

The wool combers and stuff weavers of Bradford, published in 1825 a noticeable statement of the workman's case in local verse, which commences thus:—

Odds bobs, lads, pray what's the matter?
Come, tell the cause of all this clatter,
And let me know what 'tis about;
Have you with master fallen out?
"Yes, sir, we have, and well we might,
For sure we are our cause is right;
For let us work hard as we will,
We're ne'er the better for it still."

Trades Unions proposed by the poet in 1825.

Bradford men always had a stout, unyielding way of expressing dissatisfaction with their condition when they had sense to see it, or sense to listen to those who did see it, and could explain it to them. So these weavers, after recounting their masters' imputation against them, the one they always bring, namely, that the men are idle, the Bradford Homer proceeds to sound this note of battle, of which the world has heard a good deal since. Answering the masters, the poet sings :—

They say there's good work, plenty too,
As much as all of us can do ;
All this we grant, and are most willing
To work twelve pen'orth for a shilling.
But more we neither can nor will ;
We'd rather all, at once, stand still,
And form a UNION of our own,
As men have done in many a town.

The stuff weavers' bard, whose verse, it must be owned, is a little woolly, then takes a higher flight, and betrays some inkling of that doctrine of solidarity which Louis Blanc brought into prominence a quarter of a century later. Our bard supposes the employer to have married the workman. If so, it must be apparent that he has made a sorry provision for his wife. This is the inspired passage :—

'Tis said the world is like a chain,
Hung link to link, throughout the frame ;
If so, the rich and poor are tied
Together, sure as man to bride.
Then why are not the rich to give
Wages whereby the poor may live,
So that the chain may hang together,
In FOUL as well as in FAIR weather?

Those who know the lives of bitterness and hopelessness, the fruitless political agitations which led many to the gaol, the long-drawn years of toil which ended in dependence and the poorhouse in Bradford since that time, will sympathise with the humble strugglers who found comfort in such a song. Things were not in a

A great poet deems the condition of the people a subject for his Muse.

satisfactory state in England when men like Southey and Coleridge thought of seeking in another land more hopeful conditions of life. Even poets mostly addicted to genteel themes had some thought then for the misery of the many. In every publication of the people—when they first began to have publications—there was quoted Southey's noble invocation to the wealthier classes to give heed to the poor, who, though troublesome, were not entirely useless to the country. In a higher quality of verse than Bradford bards could employ, he said:—

> Train up thy children, England,
> In the ways of righteousness—and feed them
> With the bread of wholesome doctrine.
> Where hast thou mines—but in their industry?
> Thy bulwarks where—but in their breasts? Thy might,
> But in their arms?
> Shall not their NUMBERS, therefore, be thy WEALTH—
> Thy STRENGTH—thy POWER—thy SAFETY—and thy PRIDE?
> O grief, then—grief and shame,
> If in this flourishing land there should be dwellings
> Where the new-born babe doth bring unto its parents' soul
> No joy!—where squalid poverty receives it at the birth,
> And on her wither'd knees
> Gives it the scanty bread of discontent.*

The rise of machinery was the circumstance that filled the working class with despair. The capitalist able to use machinery grew rich, the poor who were displaced by it were brought in great numbers to the poorhouse. A man so strong thinking as Horace Greeley had his mind inclined to protection by the misery he witnessed in his father's household, when handloom weaving was superseded by merciless inventions. Political economists made what seemed cold and heartless speeches to the poor, to prove that machinery tended to the benefit of society, not seeing that acquiescence in the meantime exacted a

* I preserve the distribution of capitals employed by Mr. Owen in the *Economist*, in 1821. It was a popular quotation long after 1840, and is not untrue or entirely inapplicable in 1874. The *Economist* considered that "it deserved to be written in diamonds."

fine spirit of self-sacrifice from the thousands who were turned from their employment to famish under the parsimony and ignominy of parish relief, in order that the next generation might benefit by their destruction. The rich are not prompt in being thus philosophical. Besides, over the whole horizon of labour no one saw anywhere breaking a light of redress. One who was sanguine enough to see anything visible exclaimed, "We are pressed down by the weight of inventions and improvements."* Indeed, in 1807, things were so hopeless for the people that Mrs. Barbauld wrote that "they considered even depredators usefully employed in lessening the inequalities of rank."

Goldsmith relates how he found the philosophical shoemaker who had but one regret, that by changing his street he had abandoned a stall where a more settle-minded successor "had amassed a handsome fortune," having died at last over his lapstone, "with seven pounds seven shillings, all in hard gold," stitched in the waistband of his lucky breeches.

The tendency of competition, which the introduction of machinery intensified, lowered wages, and pushed the mass of the workmen with increased force against the walls of the workhouse. Mr. Thompson, of Cork, commenced an address, in 1826, to the distressed Spitalfields weavers, thus: "The system of labour by which your productive powers have been hitherto misdirected is fast coming to its close. All kinds of labour, agricultural and manufacturing, are rapidly approaching their fated equality—the level of competition, or the starvation

* Mr. Owen's speech at the Holkham agricultural meeting, on his health being proposed by Mr. Coke. Even landlords had their vicissitudes in those days. Then Mr. Coke's land let at 15s. per acre; a fall in the value of produce might throw it out of cultivation, reducing it to 5s. per acre, involving a loss of £40,000 a year. Even then the eminent and unfortunate owner would probably not need to come upon the parish, while the weaver or mechanic would have no choice but to make that application.

price, the lowest that even in times of average employment will support a miserable existence."* If one whom fortune had placed above want, and education above prejudice, had these impressions, no wonder the poor desponded, and were generally confused.

There was one unpleasant thing about the Social Reformers, who tardily came to the surface—they were all world-sick. They called this the "old" world, as though they had a new one on hand, instead of in the remote future. They evidently thought that destiny might have done better by them than placing them in this state of existence. Mr. Charles Bray, a solid thinking writer, and author of many works on principles of social life, wrote so late as 1844 to ask whether "commerce and the mechanical arts do not really point to a *declining age?*" Social innovators wrote about society all the dismal facts of the day, and those only were brought to the front, as though society had the small-pox and had never been vaccinated; whereas the great creature called society has "a pulse like a cannon." True, there is "something the matter with its head," since it permits the rich to display themselves conspicuously in the midst of a squalid people, as some one has said, like jewels in the hair of a mendicant woman. National secular education, if ever it gets it, will restore to it a sound mind.

True, Carlyle is a grim preacher, but his strong screech is not one of despair but incentive. To his manly and contagious indignation has been greatly owing the improved regard since shown for craftsmen. Carlyle created captains of industry, who thought of equity and honour as well as gain.† Before he wrote,

* "Co-operative Magazine," Nov. 26th, p. 333.

† Of later years an element of Titanic impatience has crept into those potent counsels. To applaud those who added pianoforte wire to the cats with which they flogged working men and women, lest they should become refractory, is an act likely to find more imitators than the nobler advice of

capital, as a commercial power, unallied to the labourer's interest, was both a tyranny and a terror. Such a capitalist was a new feudal lord, as selfish, as capricious, and more cruel than the king who reigned by conquest. The feudal lord had some care for his vassal, and provided him with some sustenance and dwelling; the new lord of capital charged himself with no duty of the kind, and did not even acknowledge the labourer's right to live. His condition was his affair, not his employer's. Thoughtfulness for the workman might be manifested as an act of patronage, but not as an act of duty.

The workman then naturally fancied that the wealth which existed through the instrumentality of his labour and the use of capital existed at his expense, and that he was poorer because this wealth existed; that it had been abstracted from his proper income, and that if he did not work for the capitalist he would be himself better off. But this is not so. If the workman acted for himself alone, and worked for himself alone, he would have to do everything for himself and to provide everything for himself. He would be a mere savage, without any food except what he could catch or fight for. So long as he lived where population was scarce, and the forests or rivers fruitful, he would be better off for health and freedom than as a workman in a large town, or as a labourer in a village, where he has a confined home and cannot plunder or kill. If, however, he lived wild, where there were many wild men besides himself, he would be worse housed, and never sure of his home. He would perish of hunger, or be killed by his comrades, unless he could kill them in the fights

work and justice. Men in the negro condition, black and white, will one day have their turn of power, and Mr. Carlyle's ferocious approval will invigorate many a cat, and sharpen many a knife, for use on respectable backs and throats, unless working people learn that firmness and fairness alone bring security.

that must occur. There is hardly any man so poor or miserable in civilised society as he would be in ordinary savage society. The poorest mechanic or labourer may get more from mendicity societies, and by chance-work from charities, than he would get as a savage, if he lived amid a large tribe of savages, in a poor country. He may die early of insufficient food, and of an unhealthy dwelling in a civilised town, but he would die earlier and suffer more as a savage; while by frugality and care everyone may find twenty chances of rising to some sort of comfort, however precarious, and some even to riches, which would never happen to one savage in a thousand.

Captain Burton, in his "Unexplored Syria," relates that he went out with Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake to visit Mount Lebanon. Lured by writers, whom he says had "Holy Land on the brain," he found life there, though ages removed from the barbarian state, such that he exclaims: "Having learned what it is, I should far prefer the comfort of Spitalfields, the ease of the Seven Dials, and the society of Southwark." Though the poor are kept down to the very limits of life and have to die early, they have many conveniences and pleasures no savage can command. The poor man, however, who does not know how to think, spends his time in complaining when he should be planning. English working men have no general comparison of savage life before them, and do not realise its helpless penury, tyranny, and misery. Hoarded earning is the beginning of progress. Capital is the handmaid of civilisation. Lord Brabazon points out that "the higher the civilisation of a country the more marked is the difference between rich and poor."* This only means that as the refinements and luxuries of the wealthy increase, the contrast grows greater between the condition of rich and poor. This does not necessarily imply that the

* Reports of the Condition of the Industrial Classes in Foreign Countries.

condition of the poor is therefore worse than it was. This is hardly possible, seeing that in every age it is declared to be as bad as it can be, and always worse than it ever was before. Civilisation gives the poor, who are wise, a better chance than the starvation stage. If a man is Lazarus it is better for him to catch the crumbs falling from the table of Dives than lie waiting for those which may drop from brother Lazarus's table.

As compared with the rich of the middle ages, the poor of to-day are better off in many respects than the rich of that time. But relatively to the rich of to-day the poor now are worse off, because the rich have got on faster than the poor. It is, however, an idle and irrelevant disputation whether the poor are better or worse off than their order were generations ago. The sole sensible question for them to ask is, can they better themselves, whatever their condition is? The rich neither trouble themselves when they meditate acquisitions, nor limit themselves in anything they can compass by historical considerations of the condition of their grandfathers. And this should be the policy of the working people. They should see, or try to see, the possibilities before them, and take the bearings of things about them. Progress is only bound by traditions of honour and heroism, not by those of poverty and degradation. Out of every condition it takes courage, and seeks to advance. Had the French been of our way of acting, they had exercised great inspiration in England. While their brilliant theories allured us forward their impatience threw us back. The French, demoralised by centralisation, had none of the English habit of working for majorities and winning them by agitation. The traditions of the camp in France have been another disqualification for progress by reason. It is showier, swifter, and more natural to man to fight out a difference than persuade men out of it. Reason is tiresome, and is rather counted unmanly. All the peril and imprisonments which

resulted from political movements in England the first half of this century were occasioned by members who had been in the army and wanted their associates to arm.

It is all very well for Dr. Johnson to say "clear your minds of cant." People who have the cant in their minds cannot do it. They do not know it. Hence there is a cant of dissatisfaction among workmen, because they do not see that to live in a state in which capital can exist is an advance for their order. It is only in that stage that emancipation is possible. It is by concert in industrial operations that wealth arises, rather than from individual isolated exertion. A workman who gets none of this wealth beyond mere subsistence is no worse off than he would be if he abstained from assisting in this combination. Since, however, he is one of the instruments in creating the wealth, he ought to get a reasonable share of it. This he may obtain, not by taking it from those who have amassed it, which can only be done by fighting, bloodshed, and waste, and by setting a precedent which will expose him to similar attacks in his turn; but by employing the economy of Co-operation to save capital, or by entering into industrial partnerships to earn it. This has been the lesson taught by co-operative thinkers, and by them alone.

But how evil the evil days were which preceded Co-operation will be more manifest if we take into brief account the manner of men who endeavoured to amend them.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE UTOPIANISTS WHO LED TO IT.

Now if . . . anyone should propose anything that he had either read in history or observed in his travels, the rest would think that the reputation of their wisdom would sink, and that their interests would be much depressed if they could not run it down, . . . as if this were a great mischief, that any should be found wiser than his ancestors.—*Sir Thomas More.* "Utopia."

"WORLD-MAKERS" seems a more relevant term than Utopianist. Dreaminess was but one of the characteristics of men who meditated the reformation of this planet on which we have the chance or privilege, it may be, to live. Those who are conversant with the history of social projectors will know that the phrase world-making is a literal description of the ambitious and insurgent schemes of most of them.

Co-operation, as we have come to know it in England, was really born of world-makers, and it becomes more intelligible when its order of descent is seen. If a project of to-day is good and useful in itself, it matters nothing whether it is old in the order of time; but if it be old it is well to know it. An idea recurring from age to age, and among various peoples, may be an obstinate or pertinacious one, but not necessarily a sound one. It may be a foolish one, since experience shows that silly ideas are more likely to recur than wise ones—folly being ever ready-made, while sense has to be acquired. But if it be a matter of history that certain ideas, oft recurring and widely agitating dissimilar peoples, have been mostly

originated by philosophers and only promoted by thinking people, the presumption is that there is something relevant to human needs in such projects; and it may be worth while showing, for the space of a page or two, that co-operative ideas have been of this character. It may conciliate the reader who considers all social schemes as the dreams of fools to find that they were not fools who first dreamt them. How it came to pass that schemes of social life were in so many cases turbulent, sanguine, and extravagant can only be understood by those who take into account the condition of society in earlier times. In no state or time are there wanting people who are humble and wonder that they have anything, and are afraid of any change which may rob them of what little they happen to possess. There are a better sort of men, of more sense and spirit, who want to know how it is that knaves are born on the bank and honest men in the ditch. But they do nothing nor encourage others to attempt improvement. The argument that "it has always been so" seems to them unanswerable. It is difficult for educated men to believe in the practicability of what has never prevailed. Only the wise, or the bold, venture on untried existence. Then there have been in all ages classes of men who found things so much to their advantage that they loudly recommended mankind not on any account to disturb them. In earlier days priesthoods arose, who found reason to adopt this view. Cleverer than carnal conquerors, they annexed the unknown world and used it as their gift, threatening, successfully, everyone with the loss of it who sought other rule than theirs. The generous doctrine of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" was unknown. Humanity was treated as prey; and the priesthood seldom made alliance with the people, but with successful soldiers and subjugators, and offered their services to them as a sort of spiritual police. Then arose an organised despotism of property

and piety, which forbade complaint and free thought. Discontent on the part of any who struggled for better things was called sedition, and free thought on the part of those dissatisfied was known by the hideous name of sin, which made it very disagreeable to avow any new opinion. There were always some good priests who were honest servants of humanity, and some bold priests who themselves led the way to noble innovations. But the good and wise were more in the minority than they are now, and the other sort had the sway, and thinkers who proposed new devices of life had a bad time of it. There must be some allowance made for those world-makers who, at the peril of their lives or repute, first broke through the dark ranks of political and spiritual intimidators. They ought not to be met with derision if they sometimes projected a wild world—for that was worth having, if it gave the ignorant new experience and the miserable some chance. For myself, I am no world-maker—averring with Hudibras:—

> Reforming schemes are none of mine;
> To mend the world is a vast design.
> Like those who ply with little boat
> To tug to them the ship afloat.

Though, therefore, not entitled to rank with these capacious dreamers, the reader need not distrust my story of their generous schemes. Sir Arthur Helps seems to me very justly to advise that we should discontinue the presumptuous term "reformer," and substitute for it the more modest one of "improver." Students of history, or morals, or politics must ofttimes be astonished at the solidity of ancient wisdom, rashly superseded by modern caprice or folly, and be aware that most human devices have truth in them which needs no reforming, rather re-considering and improving. The world-makers have, however, let in light where there was none. Impatience and daring have done much for mankind. Their grand schemes have opened the

eyes of the world, which, though a perilous operation to attempt, is serviceable, for men are never the same any more after they have once seen a new thing.

The uninstructed working people who ultimately set Co-operation going scarcely knew where their social ideas came from: not alone were they weak in history. Indeed journalists, preachers, and political economists did not seem very well read when socialism arose among us. They nearly all said it was contrary to human nature. What was new to them they concluded was new to humanity.* Yet there were traditions among the people that schemes of social life had been devised in earlier times. In recent years attempts have been made to render some account of them, but nothing considerable has been done. Eventually the day will come when some writer, of the necessary capacity for research and sympathy with forgotten ideals of life, will look up the marvellous instances scattered over the unregarded literature of social progress, and publish a history of the efforts to promote public happiness by public arrangements; and very interesting reading it will prove, even to those who do not care for the subject. If it does not amuse it will surprise them, and that may do them good.

All the world-makers sought to equalise property in society. The arrangement which confines to the few the possession of those objects which are coveted by the many breeds disorder, and may be said to invite crime. Yet it was useless to attempt any remedy if the arrangement proceeded from a permanent instinct in man. The social innovators thought they had reason to deny that it did. The sentiment of mine and thine, which now seems part of human nature, was once an invention.

* They seem to think like the Irish peasant whom Dr. King met, and asked whether he would rather live upon wheaten bread or potatoes, who answered, "Sir, I like bread well enough once in a way, but potatoes are more *natural*."—"Co-operative Magazine," 1826.

"Even when agriculture had been introduced," Herder remarks, "it cost some pains to limit men to separate fields and establish the distinctions of mine and thine."* Mr. James Mill pointed out, in his "History of British India," that "the different combination of benefits which are included under the idea of property, at different periods of society, are all arbitrary; that they are not the offspring of nature but the creatures of will determined and chosen by society as that arrangement with regard to useful objects which is, or is pretended to be, the best for all." According to Aristotle, there were nations who held the land in common and divided the produce, and there were others who divided the land and stored the produce in common. Minos, who, according to the legend, aimed at establishing equality among the Cretans, would not suffer any of them, whatever might be their rank, to lead an indolent life. Persons of all classes sat at common tables, partook of the same diet, and at the public expense. These laws subsisted in force for nearly a thousand years—a long time for a scheme of life to last which would now be held to be contrary to human nature. Minos left a mighty name as a lawgiver, which has lasted for ages; but if he appeared in England in these days, he would be written down in a month. Lycurgus governed Sparta as grandly as Minos did Crete. Obedience to the law, and the dread of living for himself, were the earliest lessons imprinted on the mind of a Lacedemonian; and this education was found—at least is reputed—to have endured 400 years. This "dread" of a man living for himself alone has been long extinct in modern society. It is a true saying that it is liberty which is old; it is despotism which is new. As with men so with industry; it is Co-operation which is ancient, it is competition which is new. Plato's Republic is the most splendid example on record of what

* Herder. "Phil. Hist." Vol. I., p. 372.

genius and judgment might do for mankind in the organisation of society. Plato had the sagacity to foresee and reason upon the danger of over-population, and considered it would be impossible to preserve equality in any state without regulating the number of the inhabitants—a question society has not made up its mind to look at yet.

The noblest body of Jews, unlike any others of which history has made mention, were the Essenes. They deemed riches to consist in frugality and contentment; nor had they any slaves among them. All were free, and all in their turn administered to others. Among them there was no house, however private, which was not open to the reception of all the rest. There was but one treasure, from which all derived their subsistence; and not only their provisions but their clothes were common property. Nor were they enervated by their communistic principles. Josephus attests the heroic fortitude with which they met their sufferings in defence of their opinions and mode of life. Jesus evidently thought well of their principles, and commended them. But not himself foreseeing the rise of the commercial and manufacturing systems of Europe, he left no directions—which approve themselves to practical men—for continuing a plan of life in which men should have "all things in common." Indeed political economists have with one consent ignored him in that great department of progress which is their especial study, and where sound teaching is most wanted. Professor Jowett, who has the merit of looking at things for himself, points out that "Aristotle censures the community of property much in the spirit of modern political economy, as tending to repress industry and as doing away with the spirit of benevolence. Modern writers almost refuse to consider the subject, which is supposed to have been long ago settled by the common opinion of mankind." The same discerning writer remarks that "the early

Christians are believed to have held their property in common, and the principle is sanctioned by the words of Christ himself, and has been maintained as a counsel of perfection in almost all ages of the Church. Nor have there been wanting instances of modern enthusiasts who have made a religion of communism. In every age of religious excitement notions like Wycliffe's 'Inheritance of Grace' have tended to prevail." Nothing can be more disastrous to the struggling poor than that a teacher of the highest repute among them should bequeath to them plans of social life so crudely stated that men should be contemptuously counted as "enthusiasts" who seek to reduce them to practice.

Even from these instances alone—and there are others equally familiar—the reader will see that philosophy and religion alike have sought to turn men's minds in the direction of social improvement. In all nations movements of this nature, more or less remarkable, have been made; but this narrative is necessarily confined to the instances which are known to have determined English thinkers to similar attempts. Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" had great influence in this respect. Considering More's position, and the eminence of the persons and interests which were satirised in his "Utopia," it was a bold as well as a wise book.* The form of fiction under which he wrote was a necessary disguise. People continue to regard the work as imaginary, whereas it was founded on historic facts and practical experience. What kind of book the "Utopia" is, and what manner of man the brave author was, has been told by one whose pen lends some charm to the meanest fact and worthily recounts the noblest. Mr. Ruskin says: "We have known what communism is—

* Bishop Burnet says the tenderest part of the whole work is the representation he gives of Henry the Seventh's Court, in which his disguise is so thin that the matter would not have been much plainer if he had named him.

for our fathers knew it, and told us three thousand years ago. . . . First, it means that everybody must work in common, and do common or simple work for his dinner. That much, perhaps, you thought you knew; but you did not think that we Communists of the old school knew it also. You shall have it, then, in the words of the Chelsea farmer and stout Catholic. He was born in Milk-street, London, three hundred and ninety-one years ago, 1480,* and he planned a commune flowing with milk and honey, and otherwise Elysian, and called it the 'Place of Well-being,' or Utopia, which is a word you perhaps have occasionally used before now, like others, without understanding it.

Listen how matters really are managed there." [It is Sir Thomas More who says what follows.] "Consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and if some few women are diligent their husbands are idle. Then consider the great company of the idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these all the rich men, chiefly those that have estates in lands, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons that do nothing but go swaggering about. Reckon in with these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and upon the whole account you will find that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you did perhaps imagine. Then consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that men do really need; for we, who measure all things by money, give occasion to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and that serve only to support riot and luxury. . . . If all those who labour about useless things were set to

* "Fors Clavigera." Letter 7. 1871.

more profitable trades; and if all that number that languish out their life in sloth and idleness, of whom every one consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work do, were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind." He who said this, Mr. Ruskin adds, "was one of the sternest Roman Catholics of his stern time; and at the fall of Cardinal Wolsey became Lord High Chancellor of England in his stead."

Sir Thomas More wrote in 1516. One hundred and forty years later, 1656, Harrington dedicated his agrarian "Oceana" to Cromwell. Hume considered it to be "a work of genius and invention, and the most valuable model of a commonwealth which had been offered to the public." Cromwell thought there was mischief in it, and is stated to have said, that "what he had won by the sword he was not going to be scribbled out of by Mr. Harrington."

Harrington was a man capable of being consoled by philosophy, but very little comfort accrued to his later followers, for one hundred and fifty years after his death any espousal of his scheme brought persons into difficulties; and his majesty's attorney-general, in 1793, spoke of him in a very unpleasant way. The vindication that Erskine made of him has interest to day. When the abusive attorney-general sat down, Erskine generously rejoined: "Yet this very Harrington, this low blackguard as he is described, was descended (you may see his pedigree at the Herald's Office for sixpence) from eight dukes, three marquises, seventy earls, twenty-seven viscounts, and thirty-seven barons, sixteen of whom were knights of the Garter." He was the most affectionate servant of Charles I., from whom he never concealed his opinions, for it is observed by Wood that the king greatly affected his company; but when they happened to talk of a commonwealth he could scarcely

endure it. "I know not," says Toland, "which most to commend—the king for trusting an honest man, though a republican, or Harrington for owning his principles while he served a king." He preserved his fidelity to his unhappy prince to the very last, after all his fawning courtiers had left him to his enraged subjects He stayed with him while a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, came up by stealth to follow the fortunes of his monarch and master; even hid himself in the boot of the coach when he was conveyed to Windsor, and, ending as he had began, fell into his arms and fainted on the scaffold. At Charles's death the "Oceana" was written. It breathes the same noble and spirited regard, and asserts that it was not Charles that brought on the destruction of the monarchy, but the feeble and ill-constituted nature of monarchy itself. It was seized by Cromwell as a libel, and the way in which it was recovered was remarkable. Harrington waited on his daughter to beg for his book, and on entering her apartment snatched up her child and ran away. On her following him with surprise and terror, he turned to her and said: "I know what you feel as a mother; feel, then, for me. Your father has got my child," meaning the "Oceana." The "Oceana" was afterwards restored on her petition, Cromwell answering, with the sagacity of a sound politician: "Let him have his book; if my government is made to stand, it has nothing to fear from paper shot."*

A century ago Harrington was very popular with the "advanced" politicians, who took interest in his schemes. Disraeli the Elder points out, in his "Amenities of Literature," that Toland had introduced in an edition of Harrington's works a treatise on the "Grounds and Reasons of Monarchy," "one of the most eloquent

* Erskine's defence of Paine, before Lord Kenyon, 1793. This was the occasion, according to Erskine, when Cromwell made the remark before quoted, which I leave in both forms.

invectives against monarchical institutions," but overflowing with defamations prevalent at that distempered season, when popular writers made monarchs into monsters. After Harrington's professed affection for Charles I. it would have been an infamous thing in him to have written that paper. "Placed prominently at the opening of the works of Harrington, inseparably combined with his opinions by the reference in the general index, this composition misled many generations of readers." It was really the composition of Hall, of Durham, a salaried party-writer, and was in no way connected with Harrington. It was thus that, while Harrington was admired by Liberals for his principles of government, those principles were, among adversaries, associated with a belief in the infamies of the invective of the author whom Toland, ignorantly or criminally, introduced into his works. Hall belonged to the class of Chatterton and Poe—brilliant and dissolute. It is one of the many services to literature which Disraeli the Elder has rendered to correct these errors.

Forty years after Harrington's scheme of public life founded on equipoise, came the proposal, by John Bellers, of a College of Industry—a remarkable instance of practical and co-operative sagacity. It appeared in 1696, and was the first known instance of a complete plan of an industrial community intended for immediate adoption in England. Mr. Robert Owen, of this century, was so struck by it, as anticipating more than he himself had originated from his own experience and reflections, that he had it copied and printed in the old type in which it first appeared. Bellers' scheme required £18,000 in the money of that time to carry it out. Had it been adopted by the statesmen to whom he addressed it, pauperism would have become a tradition in England before this time. Like Mr. Owen, he appealed directly to the heads of the state, and prayed the lords and commons in parliament assembled to give ear to his

plan, "by which the common people could be trained in the art of taking care of themselves." He also addressed the "thinking and public-spirited," who appear not to have been more numerous in those days than now. He adopted for his motto the wholesome words, "Industry brings plenty"—which has ever been the motto of the co-operators—and the uncompromising intimations, not always pleasant for rich people to hear, that "a sluggard should be clothed with rags," and "he that will not work shall not eat." Lest these sentiments should escape notice, Bellers placed them on his title page. His pamphlet was "printed and published by T. Sowle, in White Hart Court, in Gracious-street, London, 1696." Bellers began by quoting Lord Chief Justice Hale, who said that "they that are rich are stewards of their wealth"—a doctrine which was thought very new when first Sir John Sinclair and afterwards Mr. Drummond preached it in the House of Commons, and later, Thomas Carlyle out of it. "The best account," according to the Lord Chief Justice, "which the rich could give of their wealth was to employ it in the reformation and relief of those who want either money or wisdom;" and reminded them that "he who said, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' was one of the worst of men." "The want of a due provision," he said, "for the education and relief of the poor in a way of industry is that which fills the gaols with malefactors and the kingdom with idle persons. A sound, prudent method for an industrious education of the poor will give a better remedy against these corruptions than all the gibbets and whipping-posts in the kingdom." Bellers himself remarks that "it is the *interest* of the rich to take care of the poor." He seems to have had an idea in his mind that there were no poor, some of whose ancestors had not been rich, and that there were none rich then, some of whose ancestors had not been poor; and that in the revolutions of society the posterity of the rich might be poor again, and that

it would be good sense to put a stop to any more people becoming poor. He regarded money as "a crutch to the body politic," and insisted that an industrial college could produce all its members required, and could supply them without barter or a medium of exchange. The shopkeepers of this generation will be astonished to learn that their original enemy was Bellers, and many co-operators will be surprised at the sagacity with which Bellers saw farther than they see now. He did not call his college of self-supporting industry co-operative, because that lumbering name had not been invented then; but how completely identical his scheme was with what we now know as Co-operation will be seen in this: He enumerated more than twenty persons and things of which he intended to save the cost in his system: 1. He named shopkeepers and all their servants and dependents. 2. All useless trades. 3. Lawsuits. 4. Bad debts. (He was evidently opposed to the credit system.) 5. Dear bargains. 6. Loss of time for want of work. 7. Saving the labour of many women and children. 8. Saving by the abolition of beggars. 9. Saving of much separate house room. 10. Saving much firing. 11. Saving much cooking, brewing, and baking. 12. Saving much fetching and carrying of work and provisions. 13. Saving clothing hurt in the making and not fit for sale. 14. Securing that the land should be better tilled by the labourers being owners. 15. Securing that waste land should receive attention. 16. Providing mechanics to help in the harvest. 17. Frustrating stock-jobbers, who ruin many good things. These are examples of his proposals.

The profits of the college were to be divided among the shareholders, but the workers were to be guaranteed security in and for all things necessary in health or sickness, single or married, wife or children, and if the parents died early, the children would be well educated and preserved from misery. The workers as they grew

older were to be abated one hour a day of their work, and everybody be guarded against the intrigues of his neighbour in buying and selling, and no man was to prey upon another. The discipline Bellers proposed was very much in advance of his time, and must have very much surprised that age, which put its faith in whippings and the pillory. He proposed that the punishments should be rather abatements of food than stripes, and that those deserving of greater punishments should be expelled. His plan for teaching languages to the children contained the germ of that system which Mr. Prendegast has since made famous, and Bellers proposed the same abridgment of the hours of learning for children which Mr. Edwin Chadwick has since so mercifully justified. Bellers proposed, as Pestalozzi and Fröebel have since done, "to *raise the child's love* to what he should learn." Beating children to make them learn he thought silly, and spoiled their natural parts. "Grief," he said, "hurt the memory, and disordered the thoughts of most." "Understanding," he contended, "must rather be distilled as children can take it, than be driven into them." He was for giving them sensible employment, as he thought a silly employ left the mind silly. "A good education," he said, "though with but a little estate, makes a happier man than a great estate without it."

Bellers gave no account of himself as to who he was—what station he occupied—from what reading or experience he derived his thoughts, and nobody has asked; but he was clearly a sensible, original, thinking man, and described very accurately his industrial college as being an epitome of the world. His scheme is worth consulting by any community-maker, for it defines the number and proportions of persons in every department of industry who should be brought together. His was not a voluntary, but a state scheme of Co-operation, and the only one ever proposed in England. He ended his proposal by answering a number of objections which

he considered might be brought against it. One is very sensible and natural, and his answer to it is very conclusive as to his penetration and candour. The objection is: "Why should he propose to get the chief share of the profit of the poor's labour, and not let them have all the profit themselves, but give the larger portion to the rich, who are to supply the funds to the college?" His answer is: "Because the rich have no other means of living but by the labour of others; as the landlord by the labour of his tenants, and the tradesmen by the labour of the mechanics." It did not much matter that Bellers gave the surplus to the capitalists, seeing that he first made it a condition that every reasonable want of every member should be well provided for. The clear-headed projector, devoid alike of anger and enthusiasm, but a solid, clear-minded, just man, certainly proposed a college of labour which would have stood a good chance of succeeding had it been fairly started, because it would have been *governed*. It was no sentimental scheme in which those who set it going were compelled to find the capital, and those who used it did as they pleased. Bellers' college of industry was a despotism founded on industrial justice—*i.e.* free participation by the workers in the advantages they created. I learn, through the researches of Mr. W. E. A. Axon, that John Bellers was a member of the Society of Friends, the father of Fettiplace Bellers. John Bellers died February 8, 1725, and was buried in Bunhill Fields.

The reprint of Bellers' book made a great impression when it appeared, and was reproduced in periodicals. There was another writer subsequent to this social-minded Quaker—one Morelly, a Frenchman, who wrote in the 18th century. Mr. Owen was much influenced by what he came to know of his views. Francis Place gave some account of Morelly in a paper he once wrote. Morelly was distinguished for the precision of his ideas

and for the mathematical nature of his mind. He described what he aimed at with greater distinctness than any of his successors. He said the "problem" of social reform was "to find that state of things in which it should be impossible for anyone to be depraved or poor." No theorist ever expressed the thing to be done so well before,—no social reformer has expressed it better since. This is what social thinkers, in their wandering way, were always aiming to bring about.

In early co-operative literature there was frequently inserted an instance of co-operative life in France, which was new to many persons, and appeared to them instructive. The Marquis of Mirabeau, in a letter dated 1762, made mention of a family of the name of Pinon, living a few leagues distant from the town of Thiers, in Auvergne, in France, the head of which, a farmer, having lived to see his sons marry, requested them to continue a distinct tribe, and to maintain inviolably the sacred bond of union, by community of wealth and property amongst them. "After having been established, at this period, above a century," says the marquis, "this amicable institution has so greatly prospered, that the Pinons have not only a family seat in the mountains, supplied with all the conveniences of life, with elegant apartments for strangers of the highest rank, who are treated with the most generous hospitality, but they have also several villages appertaining to them, whose clergy, lawyers, and other professional persons are branches of the same stock. The necessary arts of life are exercised in this tribe for the emolument of the whole; and the superfluities sold at the adjacent fairs and markets, where everyone carries with him his family credentials. One tradition of their origin is that an ancestor of great wealth and a numerous progeny, well advanced in years, explained to his children "that their splendid way of living must be greatly diminished if, after his death, they should, as was customary, divide

his fortune into separate portions; but that, if they desired to be better economists than the rest of mankind, they should live in the united state they had done under his roof."

There are other instances in history not less curious but disregarded here. The Pinon case is cited because its success was based on secular reasons, which alone are of universal weight. Certain Jesuits are credited with very great and instructive success in carrying out arrangements of common life in Paraguay. With many merits these, however, are not the persons to afford the world an example of a self-acting and progressive community. If Jesuit communists displayed any fervour for political liberty, or exercise of free thought in things spiritual, the probability is that the holy fathers made things very unpleasant to them. No theological scheme of life is therefore of much account, or need be sought out, as far as ends of freedom and progress are concerned. The noble aspiration after truer and higher life, with all the perils, conflicts, and vicissitudes it involves, is better than the softest, smoothest, sleekest, and most steadfast stagnation.

The only instance in which social equality was the subject of conspiracy was at the end of the last century in Paris. It began in 1796. Its great leader was Babeuf. His conspiracy was not much known to English working people; but it would be well known to their rulers. His name occasionally occurred in the press, when it was always mentioned with an accompaniment of epithets not of the commendatory kind. In those days a blind love of innovation prevailed, not alone in France but in Europe, and was strongest in Paris. Then hope and eagerness had the force of a passion, and allowance must be made for many extravagances of manifestation. M. de Talleyrand used to say "that only those who had lived near the conclusion of the last century could realise the worth of the world to man." Gracchus

Babeuf was a young man when the French revolution occurred. Ardent, well-informed, of penetrating mind, and able to write with clearness and fire, he soon got himself into difficulties. Of what kind nothing more need be said than that it was Marat who saved him from the consequences of an order of arrest. At a later period he obtained the post of secretary to a district administration, and subsequently he got employment in the bureaux of the old commune of Paris. Mrs. Wollstonecroft, who knew Babeuf well, declared that "she had never seen any person who possessed greater abilities, or equal strength of character." His plan was to establish a system of equality by force. No Englishman has any sympathy with such an attempt, nor ought to have in a country which has a free press, free speech, and the right of public meetings, which Paris then had conquered. For these means of progress an Englishman would fight; but, having won them, he would count himself a fool if he could not make his way with them. Babeuf was not a wild reformer in the sense of not knowing what he wanted. He had a clear and complete idea of the system he would put in the place of that he intended to supersede. His object was to establish a despotism of justice and equality. Robespierre, on the other hand, held that "without the people's consent none have a right to thrust systems upon them; but with their consent, all systems should be equally accessible to them." But it was the fault and ruin of the French friends of equality that they interpreted political principles with an appalling latitude. To the credit of the French Liberals many of them objected to violent modes of attaining just objects. Certainly many of the aims of the conspirators were good. They were for abolishing mendicity as dishonouring to a free state; they proposed to establish a system of education in common. They regarded ignorance as a national danger. They were friendly to a policy of peace. They

adopted a doctrine of non-intervention. They would not intermeddle with other nations, nor suffer other nations to intermeddle with the affairs of France. There were to be no idlers. "Nature," they said, "had imposed upon everyone the obligation to work." They kept no terms with those who did nothing. Their words were: "They do nothing for the country who do not serve it by some useful occupation, and can exercise no rights in it." The common accusation is that men of social convictions seek other people's property—whereas the fact is they seek to make everybody work. This may be a very disagreeable passion; but it is not laziness, nor is it plunder. All the schemes of Utopians and world makers prove at bottom to be schemes of workers and wealth makers. Shopkeepers will be interested to hear that Babeuf and his colleagues proposed to retain retail dealers. They had, however, some calamitous notions in their heads. They meditated censorship and restrictions of the press, which the Napoleon family afterwards put in execution. But the conspirators had a ferocious thoroughness and vigour which Mr. Carlyle and other eminent friends of Governor Eyre, of Jamaica, would very much esteem them for. They decreed on the day on which they commenced their insurrection, that "to give or execute in the name of the existing government ('tyranny' they called it) any order whatever should be punished with instant death." According to some opinions in the insurrectional committee, the condemned who might be brought to an end by some more dilatory process were "to be buried under the ruins of their palaces; which ruins were to be left in that state, as a monument to the latest posterity of the just punishment inflicted on the enemies of equality."* A very pretty kingdom of

* This amiable design shows that the *petroleuse* business, which got connected with the honest and just aims of the communalist party in

equality France would have been with these murderous ruins defacing it.

Babeuf and his compatriots failed through a traitor,* and came to the block and deportation. They were brave men, neither afraid to avow their designs nor die for their cause. Babeuf's last letter to his wife contained some wise and lofty sentiments: "It belongs," he said, "to the family of a martyr of liberty to give the example of every virtue, in order to attract the esteem of all good people. I would desire my wife to do all in her power to give education to her children. I hope you will believe you were always most dear to me. Speak often of me to Camille; tell him a thousand times I bore him tenderly in my heart. Tell Caius as much when he will be capable of understanding it. I knew no other way to render you happy than by promoting the happiness of all. I have failed. I have sacrificed myself; it is for you as well as for liberty I die."

When the conspirators were sentenced, Babeuf and Darthe, the chief leaders, stabbed themselves with their daggers, and were dragged from the court by the gendarmes. Babeuf's poignard broke, and a piece remained imbedded near his heart. Both lived long enough to be beheaded next day, but their courage never forsook them. Their bodies were flung into a ditch. Some country people buried them. So ended the first and last conspiracy for equality! Its conduct justifies the high

France lately, was no new madness. Indeed it would not be new in England. An English Conservative lord some time ago had at his breakfast table one whom I knew to have acted in a plot to blow up London in the same way in 1848. It was a police agent's project, but the person in question fell in with it, and it took some trouble to save him from it. The said lord, who rather liked his guest, did not know of this little affair. The enterprising patriot has long left the country, though, as the public have heard, he keeps up a correspondence with his noble friend.

* This was Grisel, in whom they had confided, and who had flattered, inflamed, and caressed them, as is the way of suspicious patriots. The club of Babeuf assembled in the vaults of the Pantheon, and this Grisel was the most open mouthed scoundrel there.

repute for ability Babeuf won. It was a masterpiece of organisation. Nothing was forgotten. Proclamations, songs, manifestoes, decrees, laws, declarations of rights, were all prepared for issue, conceived with sagacity, and written with brevity, eloquence, and fire. The labour and secret discussions gone through were immense. Nothing is more astonishing than the sublime confidence of the conspirators in human nature to believe that no traitor would betray plans to which hundreds must have been privy. That only one was false shows that equality must have been a noble inspiration. Phillipo Buonarroti, a Florentine of high family, a reputed descendant of Michael Angelo—and his brilliant powers and daring services corroborated the belief—was a colleague of Babeuf, and afterwards published a history—with documents which he had the courage to preserve—of the famous attempt of Babeuf. Among them were the "Songs for the Streets," which had not been overlooked. Equality had its Marseillaise as well as Republicanism, though its notes got stifled with daggers. I shall quote it as giving some idea of the aspirations of the time. Let the reader remember that the French had found no way out of the long oppression under which they and their forefathers had lived save by insurrection; that they believed kingly luxury and tyranny to have been the causes of their misery and subjection; that the people had delivered themselves by the knife; that they had never seen any other means succeed; that the philosophers had all pleaded for them in vain; that they were firmly convinced that before kings arose equality, freedom, and ample means of subsistence were enjoyed by all who toiled; that everlasting emancipation from slavery and want depended upon themselves alone; and that one united, uncompromising, and thorough blow would redress for ever the wrongs of ages. Let the reader recall all this, and he is not English if his blood is not stirred by this—

Their famous Battle Song.

## BATTLE SONG OF THE CONSPIRATORS FOR EQUALITY.

By tyrant codes enthralled, by knaves borne down,
Man stoops to man, and villains wear the crown :—
Where is the freeman's voice ? the warrior's steel ?—
Shall we not stoutly fight, as well as keenly feel ?
Awake ! arise, at Liberty's command !—
Th' Aurora of our freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if we'll but bravely stand !

Oh, Nature, or whatever power it be,
Which said to man, "*Be happy and be free !*"
Say by what strange mischance thy laws o'erthrown
Have yielded place to slavery and a throne.
Is there not *one* will dare assert the cause
Of outraged manhood and thy broken laws ?
How long shall man quail 'neath the despot rule
Of a usurper or a king-born fool ?
Nations ! arise, at Liberty's command !—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand !

In ancient times, when yet our race was young—
Nor gold nor war the soul to madness stung—
Each in the land possessed an equal share ;
No kingly luxury known, no gaunt despair.
Then peace and competence went hand in hand,
Unfear'd the assassin's knife, the foeman's brand—
These days are ours again if we'll but bravely stand !

In those bless'd days when man, of man the friend,
Nor yet had learn'd to borrow or to lend,
Nature on all alike her bounty poured ;
No starving wretch was seen, no pampered lord—
Till fraud and priestcraft, by ambition led,
Taught man his kind to hate, his blood to shed ;
Then princes, subjects, masters, serfs were known,
And shuddering Freedom fled before—a THRONE !
Then started into life the warrior's trade—
Then groan'd th' assassined sire, the ravished maid !
Pillage and murder still the steps pursued
Of *heroes*, glorying in the path of blood.
Then first were heard the ravings of despair,
And dying wretches rent with shrieks the air.
Nations ! arise, at Liberty's command !—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand !

Where is the difference 'tween the serf and peer?
Why meanly quail ye, then, with idiot fear?
Bring front to front the oppressor and the oppressed;
Wealth cannot strength impart, nor title steel the breast.
Lay on! lay on! the death-sigh of the brave
Be ours, and not the death-bed of the slave!
Nations! arise, at Liberty's command!—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand!

The only English account of this great and disastrous conspiracy is the translation of Mr. James Bronterre O'Brien—a fervid and voluble author, who always wrote or spoke most eloquently upon some other subject than the one he had in hand. Of him, however, it ought to be recorded that he rendered great service to political advancement when boldness and political and historical knowledge were very important to the populace. He was one of the best-informed of the Chartist leaders. His translation and additions—of illustration and comment—of Buonarroti's History are still cherished by a few surviving old Chartists, who also cared for social progress. They excused Babeuf for his violent methods because he was French, while they admired him for his noble spirit and love of public justice. The French, demoralised by centralisation, were wanting in the English habit of winning majorities by discussion. Traditions of the camp have contributed to disqualify the French Liberals for seeking progress by reason. It is showier, swifter seeming, and more natural, to those who think more of present success than permanence, to fight out a difference than persuade men out of it. Reason is tiresome to the impatient, and no doubt ineffective for a time with those who do not understand how to manage the weapon in the use of which they have not been drilled. Most of the peril and imprisonments in England which occurred in Chartist movements were occasioned by persons who had been in the army. They said, "What is the use of reasoning when you know you are in the right? Why

waste time trying to convince those who know they are in the wrong." And while their plodding comrades were holding meetings, they were planning fights in the streets—declaring an hour's drill was worth a week of speeches, and that a single musket would carry farther than twenty resolutions. But no socialist in England ever listened to these political musketeers; and I have dwelt so far upon the conspiracy of Babeuf, because it is the only instance upon record of an endeavour to found a social system by force. Yet the imputation of seeking equality by violence is made against all socialists to this day: to some extent by persons who know better; by more who ought to know better; but mostly by persons who have no knowledge whatever upon the subject.*

People who think the working class and their leaders rather a "bad lot" cannot be expected to discriminate among them, and with the old clerical felicity of classification they put down Voltaire as an atheist, and, like the late Lord Dalling, describe Paine as a disbeliever in God, and put Robespierre among the communist conspirators. But Von Sybel, who seems to have the merit of hating everybody concerned in the French Revolution, admits that "Robespierre urged a gentle culture of prosperity. He was very careful not directly to offend the prejudices in favour of property. In this case, as well as on the question of Republicanism, he exercised the utmost prudence, and was satisfied if he could remove the more

* Mr. Thomas Hughes relates in his instructive "Memoir of a Brother," how George Hughes said to him, "You, Tom, don't want to divide other people's property?" "No." "Then why call yourselves Socialists?" Tom answered, "It is only fools who know nothing about the matter, or people interested in the competitive system of trade, who believe or say that a desire to divide other people's property is the essence of Socialism." "That may be very true," answered his shrewd brother George, "but nine-tenths of mankind, or, at any rate, of Englishmen, come under one or other of those categories. If you are called Socialists, you will never persuade the British public that this is not your object."—pp. 113-14.

immediate hindrance to the progress of his aims. By conviction he was as little of a communist as a republican."

A very striking instance of how alien the English world-making mind has always been to force is seen in Godwin's "Political Justice." Though unread now, it was regarded, next to the famous political works of Paine, as a text-book of working-class politicians at the end of the last century. Published in the year 1793, three years before Babeuf fell, who, as we have seen, was known to and highly esteemed by Godwin's wife, Mrs. Wollstonecroft, yet it contained no sanction of Babeuf's desperate methods. Nevertheless it advocated equality as broadly as Babeuf did; but Godwin added these warning, thoroughly English and social words: "As the equality contemplated would be the result *not of force* and requiring to be maintained by positive institutions, but of the serious and deliberate conviction of the public at large, it would be permanent, and until then it could not be realised." All English partizans of equality were aware that the four enemies of social progress were war, idleness, waste, and incoherence, and declared themselves in favour of peace, industry, economy, and reason.

Statesmen who would speak discriminatingly of the political aspects of communism might take notice of its historic policy of progress by persuasion. Among our social innovators have been men who cared nothing for political freedom. Many have come among them and have encouraged them, like Napoleon III., because they thought social ideas would beguile them of political aspirations. The majority of them, however, have been men and women steadfastly caring for political improvement—not shrinking from sacrifice or peril when it came; but they put not change upon issues of violence. Often brutally used by the authorities of the day, political and religious, at no time have they professed

retaliation. The doctrine of Jamaican officialism, which has found distinguished favour among us in recent days (that of stamping out adversaries), has never been countenanced by English communists, and is alone heard on the continent, where the ferocious example of rulers begets it.* Communism, which might be written *commonism*, seeking, as its theory implies, the common welfare of all united under it—their education, maintenance, recreation, and personal profit within the limits prescribed by common consent. Since force would make common life a tyranny and a terror, and common agreement could alone fix the conditions which make it an advantage and a pleasure, persuasion became the only means of unity. This abiding belief that success depended on the power of founding association on conviction made the difference between communists and mere politicians as marked as that which exists between Mahommedan and Hindoo religion. In Mahommedanism the sword largely prevails, in Hindooism toleration. Nevertheless, communism is not feebleness or apathy, but a force, as Coleridge recognized, "unhasting and unresting."

Considérant gives an interesting account of the fabrication of Gruyère cheese in the Jura mountains: "The peasants rent a small house in two parts, the workshop and the dairy, with a cellar. In the workshop they place an enormous copper, destined to receive the milk of two hundred cows. A single man suffices to make two or three cheeses of from sixty to eighty pounds weight. These cheeses are then disposed in a cellar to be salted and cured. Every day the quantity of milk brought to the dairy is noted on two pieces of wood—one for the milker, the other for the manager. It is therefore

* "A communist refugee thought the last revolution had been commenced with too much moderation. They ought to have acted at first as their adversaries had afterwards."—"International Working Men's Congress, Brussels," *Times*, September 14, 1874.

known exactly how much each family contributes. They can even keep an account of the relative qualities of milk by means of an acrometer. At the epoch of sale they sell at wholesale to the merchants, and charge the carriage. Then, in sharing the proceeds, they deduct rent, fuel, and implements; they pay the manager in proportion to the general benefit, and divide the rest amongst the families, proportionably to the value of their respective investments. It is clear that Gruyêre should be the favourite cheese of co-operators, as it is the first cheese made on their system; and if its manufacture is continued as in Considérant's day, the establishment ought to be visited by the agents of the Manchester Wholesale Society. If Protestants of historic tastes eat ox-tail soup (Huguenot soup) because the Huguenots taught us to make it, co-operators ought to eat Gruyêre.

St. Simon, a member of an illustrious French family, who was born in Paris in 1760, was one of the world-makers in everybody's mind conversant with social schemes. He served in five campaigns under Washington, but out of the ranks he proposed no violence, nor did any, except when he came to poverty and neglect he attempted to shoot himself. He, however, survived, regained his generous enthusiasm for human improvement, and prided himself on being the apostle of industry, a worthy species of apostles who have come rather late in the world. He took no part in the destructive movement of the French Revolution, but spent nearly all his fortune in instituting "A Grand Establishment of Industry and a School of Scientific Perfection." He did not see that mankind would be well content could he help them to an approximation to that. In 1814 he published a scheme for the "Reorganisation of Europe." Europe would have been very glad if he had accomplished that satisfactorily for France alone. In 1817 (a notable year, as will appear in another

chapter, with English social aspirants) St. Simon published his work on "Industry," upon the organisation of which he never ceased to write. "Industry," he declared, "was holy, for it serves to ameliorate the condition of the poor." His system was known by the formula—"To each according to his capacity: to each capacity according to its works:" which meant that the community would expect from each member the best he was able to do, and would reward him according to what he did. The followers of St. Simon acquired a grand way of speaking. "If Moses," they said, "had promised to men universal fraternity, Jesus Christ had prepared it, St. Simon had realised it." His system, which no one ever reduced to the level of the British understanding attracted many noble minds in France. St. Simon himself shared the common fate of those who think for others more than for themselves, and died poor and neglected in 1825. One disciple and two or three friends were with him when he expired, whom he exhorted "to be of courage, and go forward constantly."

In 1832 St. Simonian missionaries came to London to call attention to their principles and plans. They described themselves as representing the holy religion of progress—a very good religion in its way, but it is one that never had many followers.

Charles Fourier was the next French dreamer of social worlds who attained great celebrity. He was born at Besançon, in 1772. He began his career in a way that gave no promise of the sublime schemes of passional harmony he was destined to amaze mankind with. His first literary effort was a poem on the death of a pastry-cook, which astonished the professors of the college at which he was placed. He was hardly seven years old when tarts inspired his muse. Though of poetical temperament he was attached to business. His life was several times in danger during the fearful times of the Revolution. Notwithstanding that he was compelled to

enter the army and serve six years, his gentle and kind disposition never changed. He believed the miseries of humanity to proceed from ignorance; and held that pain, either physical or moral, was the sign of error—pleasure the sign of truth: sound principles, if we look far enough into consequences in applying them. He issued in 1808 a statement of his views, under the title of "The Theory of the Four Movements." His ultimate work of most mark was "The New Industrial World;" but it was not until Victor Considérant became his disciple that his views began to allure cultivated minds. Fourier founded Phalansteres, and bewildered men more than St. Simon. His plans were as boundless as the visions of the "Arabian Nights"—his statement of them as dry as mathematical rigour could make them; his divisions and sub-divisions were such that no Englishman could hope to master them and live. Never were there such pomp and perplexity presented to working people before. If Fourier had had his way nobody would have known the earth again. If the disease of social reformers be world-making, Fourier may be said to have had it in a very violent form. We have had bad attacks of it in England, but nothing like what Frenchmen have suffered from. Fourier does not hesitate to take the measure of God as well as of mankind. He ends his work on the social destiny of man by the astounding remarks: "The duty of God is to compose a social code, and reveal it to man. * * The duty of man is to search for the divine code. * * It is manifest that human reason has not fulfilled its task. This neglect has now been repaired, and the passional code discovered*"—by Fourier. His last work, "La Fausse Industrie," was published in 1835: in 1837 he died, after the manner of his kind, sad and dejected at the disappointment of his grand and gracious dreams.

* "Social Destiny of Man."

But these generous thinkers did not fail as far as the increase of social conviction was concerned. They put new ideas into the mind of the world. They kept up the inspiration of progress. They made it possible for new men to do more. The careless verdict of the unregarding public was that they had all discovered perpetual motion, but none of them could get their machines to move. In the meantime these disinterested Utopianists accomplished another thing for which men may yet be grateful—they mapped out the new country of industrial competence, through which the present generation are beginning to better find their way. Before pioneers for their encouragement stand the dying words of St. Simon, "Be of courage and go forward constantly"

## CHAPTER IV.

### HOW CO-OPERATION ITSELF BEGAN.

All around was dim,
Yet his face glowed with light revealed to him.
*Jubal. By Geo. Eliot.*

THE originator of that Co-operation which now attracts so large a share of perturbed attention, and which requires a history to be written of it, was undoubtedly one Robert Owen, who was born so far back as 1771, a year before Fourier. Nature was in one of her adventurous moods at that period. In the four years from 1769 to 1772 there appeared Napoleon, Wellington, Goethe, Owen, and Fourier—all historic men in their line: bane and antidote, war and art, world destroyers and world makers. Robert Owen was born May 14, 1771, in Newtown, Montgomeryshire. He was afterwards known as Robert Owen, of New Lanark. I am sorry to tell the reader this, as many will consider that he was not a proper kind of person to be brought forward in legitimate history, and that it was a want of taste in him to intrude improvements upon the world which would necessitate his being accorded some kind of acknowledgment. But history is an unceremonious and brutal thing. Its natural food is facts; and when it gets them it has no choice, no scruples, and no remorse. The truth is that in Mr. Owen's days "proper persons" had no faculty of improvement in them of the kind that the world most wanted, and therefore a wilful Welshman took it into his benevolent and fertile head to do what he could.

Co-operation of Welsh origin.

And thus it came about that Co-operation was really a Welsh invention. In no literature before the active days of this social devisor does any trace of this new industrial shibboleth, Co-operation, appear.*

Mr. Owen was a very unusual man. His career is one of great instruction and interest to many who will never think of imitating it. By patience, industry, sagacity, and kindness he raised himself to eminence and opulence. His life illustrates how much knowledge a man of observation may acquire without books. He attained distinction by two things—the observance of truth in conduct and experience in practice. He was known from the first as a man of veracity and reflection. From being a draper's assistant he became a manager of cotton mills at Manchester. He afterwards entered into the employ of Mr. David Dale, a cotton spinner, of Glasgow, who had mills at New Lanark. In due course, after the manner of other heroes of romance and real life, he married his master's daughter, became a partner in the business, and ultimately owner of it in conjunction with others. Subsequently Mr. Owen had a large population of the working class under his direction in Manchester, from 1791 to 1799, and a still larger number for many years afterwards at New Lanark, where, in 1810, he planned an institution unheard of before his time, but which statesmen and prelates have had in their minds ever since,—an Institution for the Formation of Character. He built commodious schoolrooms (one of them 90 feet by 40 feet) for the separate instruction of persons from the time when as infants they were able to walk alone until they were intelligent. No school board now, half a century later, with a town-rate to aid it, would venture

* This was recognised long ago. Some who peruse this page will remember reading that "the principles of Co-operation were first put together and clearly stated by Mr. Owen in his earliest writings."—*Co-operative Miscellany*, No. 2, 1830.

upon erecting premises so spacious for little children.* These proceedings being too far in advance for his money-wishing partners, they differed with Mr. Owen about it, and the building was suspended when the walls were half up. In 1814 he separated from these school-fearing colleagues, made arrangements for new partners, and purchased the whole establishment. Assent to his measures for the improvement of the population and the finishing of the institution were the conditions on which he accepted his new allies into partnership. The new institution was completed, fitted up, and furnished in the year 1815. On the first day of the following year, namely, January, 1816, "The Institution" was formally opened, in the presence of all the villagers with their children. The assemblage exceeded two thousand in number. There were present also the principal nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood, with some of the clergy of various denominations. The parents present were astonished at being called upon to send their children to school the very next day. This was the first infant school ever established. Lord Brougham—then Henry Brougham—visited it twice. It was by Mr. Owen's aid in supplying them with teachers that Mr. Brougham, Mr. James Mill, and others were able to open the first infant school set up in England, in Brewer's Green, Westminster. The first little scholars met there on the 14th of February, 1819.† Mr. Owen

* Modern testimony corroborates this. The late member of parliament for Plymouth lately stated that "Owen, like Plato, laid great stress on the value of singing, dancing, and drill, as means of education, much to the horror of his Quaker partners. Like Plato, he considered ease, graceful bearing, self-possession, and politeness principal tests and objects of any system of education. Where even now could you find such a school as the New Lanark school, for rich or poor, setting up these qualities as among its main and principal objects?"—Lecture on "Foreshadowings of Co-operation in Plato," by Walter Morrison, Co-operative Institute, London, 1874.

† This school failed. Not satisfied with the moral training and instructive amusement, as at New Lanark, the managers sought prema-

was incessant in translating his theories into practice in aid to others and in useful suggestions. It was in these kindly and skilfully-devised and long-continued co-operative arrangements for uniting intelligence with industry, and industry with working-class competence, that Co-operation was generated. Of course it was not in the beginning a very definite contrivance, nor was it self-acting, as it subsequently became. It was at first an administration by the thoughtful manufacturer who planned it. It was partly a benevolent, but mainly a well-considered economic scheme. The originator wanted to see in his workpeople more skill, better conduct, and improved condition. To attain these ends he knew there must be diffused among them intelligence; and the cost of imparting this intelligence he believed would be refunded by commercial results. He acted on the principle that intelligence would prove a good investment. It did prove so, and thus it came to pass that education of members has always been deemed a part of the co-operative scheme among those who understood it.

Though Mr. Owen earned an honourable name for benevolence he was not a man who played at philanthropy. The working people among whom he found himself were in ignorance, and viciousness, and discomfort. Their great employer's object was to show them how much could be done by mutual arrangement to improve their condition and prospects. If, like all ignorant persons, they did not care for knowledge for themselves, they would see it was good for their children and would care for it for them; and Mr. Owen's provisions in the attractions of the schoolroom, in the appliances for teaching, and the extent and quality of what was taught, have

turely to develop the intellectual powers. The tender brain of the infant was over-excited; more harm than good was done; and the system fell, in a measure, into disrepute, until Fröebel, in his "Kindergartens," brought back things to a more rational way.—*R. D. Owen: Autobiography.*

not been excelled by the provisions made for popular education in the most generous state in America, and which it has never yet entered into the imagination of any English minister to offer, or of any workpeople to ask in Great Britain. The weavers and their wives at New Lanark who witnessed this more than princely concern for their children's welfare knew that he who showed it meant them well, as was manifest also in a thousand acts of thoughtfulness and respectful treatment towards them, the like of which had never been seen before nor since in any manufacturer's establishment. Had Mr. Owen lived in happier and more appreciative days, such as our own, he had been offered a baronetcy. However, grateful workpeople offered him what he was prouder of, their confidence and co-operation, and their will and skill were new elements of profit in the workshop. Their good will, born of their regard for their employer, and their skill and honesty in their work, arising from increased intelligence and pride, meant money. They were new elements of gain to the company, and labour and capital worked together as they had never worked before; and thus the foundations of Co-operation were laid by Mr. Owen and his associated capitalists by sharing with the labourers and their families a portion of the common gain. Thus the share falling to the employers was made greater and greater than it otherwise could have been, by the confidence and co-operation of the working people.

These facts were referred to by Mr. Owen in his letter to the *Times* newspaper in 1834. In the same letter, addressing his early friend, who had then become Lord Chancellor Brougham, he said: "I believe it is known to your lordship that in every point of view no experiment was ever so successful as the one I conducted at New Lanark, although it was commenced and continued in opposition to all the oldest and strongest prejudices of mankind. For twenty-nine years we did without the

necessity for magistrates or lawyers; without a single legal punishment; without any known poor's rate; without intemperance or religious animosities. We reduced the hours of labour, well educated all the children from infancy, greatly improved the condition of the adults, diminished their daily hours of labour, paid interest of capital, and cleared upwards of £300,000 of profit."

Lord Brougham, in reply, stated in the *Times* newspaper, what he many years afterwards repeated in the House of Lords, that Mr. Owen was the originator of infant schools in England. Lord Brougham said: "I have not the least hesitation in stating that the infant school system never would, in all probability, have been established but for Mr. Owen's Lanark schools. I most distinctly recollect Mr. Mill (Mr. James Mill, father of John Stuart Mill, was the person referred to), Sir C. Grey (afterwards chief-justice of Calcutta), and myself discussing for some weeks what name we should give these new schools, and . . . after rejecting various names, we fixed upon that of Infant Schools. The thing as well as the name were equally unknown till then in England." Mr. Owen added, in a further letter to the same journal, that in 1799 he purchased the New Lanark mills for £60,000, and entered upon the premises on the 15th of August of that year; that he published a very full and detailed account of the new institution, which included the infant schools, in his third essay on the "Formation of Character," and that a mutual friend of his and Lord Brougham (Mr. James Mill) corrected the press for him. It was candid in Mr. Owen to make this acknowledgment of the assistance of Mr. Mill.* The reader is conscious of a vigour and directness of statement in those essays never attained in any other work of Mr. Owen's.

* Mr. Francis Place told me that he also was concerned in the revision of the MS.

Activities and Relationships of the Founder of Co-operation.

Co-operation in its earlier and inchoate forms traversed a wide area and commanded respectable countenance. Its fertile and energetic founder caused it to be tried in various ways. It was at his instigation that Fellenberg commenced an infant school at Hofwyl, which subsequently uniting industry with education became celebrated. Owen had the sagacity to make, and the influence to get carried out, numerous schemes of social and co-operative reform. The self-supporting Pauper Colonies of Holland were owing to his suggestion. He originated the short-time agitation on behalf of children in factories; he assisted Fulton with money to try his inventions in steam navigation; he purchased the first bale of American Sea Island cotton imported into England, foreseeing at once the future importance to the spinning trade of England of encouraging the foreign supply of raw material. The great "Utopian" (as persons call him who following the bent of their own faculties believe nothing which is not commonplace) was a practical man, and knew how to make money as well as to agitate great projects. His son has related instances of the splendid recognition accorded to him in his day. "He had," Dale Owen states, "been received respectfully, and sometimes with distinction, by those highest in position: by Lords Liverpool, Sidmouth, Castlereagh, and by Mr. Canning; by the Royal Dukes York, Cumberland, Sussex, Cambridge, and especially by the Duke of Kent (her Majesty's father); by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Sutton), and by the Bishops of London, St. David's, Durham, Peterborough, and Norwich. Besides Bentham, his partner, he was more or less intimate with Godwin, Ricardo, Malthus, Bowring, Francis Place, Joseph Hume, James Mill, O'Connell, Roscoe, Clarkson, Cobbett, Sir Francis Burdett, the Edgeworths, the statistician Colquhoun, Wilberforce, Macaulay (father of the historian), and Nathan Rothschild, the founder of the house. He had received as

guests at his own house at Braxfield Princes John and Maximilian of Russia, the Duke of Holstein-Oldenburg, Baron Goldsmid, Baron Just (Saxon ambassador), Cuvier, Brougham, Sir James Mackintosh, and Lord Stowell, father-in-law of Lord Sidmouth. When he visited Paris he took letters from the Duke of Kent to the Duc d'Orleans (Louis Philippe), and from the French ambassador to the French minister; and he was invited to the Visitor's Chair by the French Academy. In Europe he made the acquaintance of La Place, Humboldt, La Rochefoucault, Camille Jourdain, Pastor Oberlin, Pestalozzi, Madame de Stäel, and many other eminent persons."*

All these illustrious intimacies show that Robert Owen carried Co-operation into good company, and that, in a far more radical and ambitious form than this generation knows, it was known and considered by persons of great influence in Europe; for the knowledge or discussion of this subject was the sole reason why they sought Mr. Owen, or he sought them.

The gains and economies of Lanark Mill had taught him that the working class could, if they had sense to unite in it, make something by shopkeeping. His community schemes of life were always recommended on the ground of their saving arrangements. One oven, he pointed out, might suffice to bake for one hundred families with little more cost and trouble of attendance than a single household took, and set free a hundred fires and a hundred domestic cooks. One commodious washhouse and laundry† would save one hundred disagreeable, screaming, steaming, toiling washing days in common houses. It was not far to go to infer that one good well-stocked shop would, properly served,

* Robert Dale Owen, "Atlantic Monthly," June, 1873; pp. 735-6.

† These exist now. In Mr. Owen's days they were unknown and unthought of.

supply the wants of a thousand families, and supersede twenty smaller shops, and save to the customers all the cost of the twenty shopmen and twenty shop rents and rates, in addition to the economy in prices and advantage in quality in buying wholesale, in a degree small shops could not compass.

When the grandeur of Mr. Owen's plans for the reconstruction of society first dazzled the imaginations of men who suffered and men who thought, hope begat belief that the day of great change was nigh. Many middle-class men and gentlemen, as well as the poor, had a sense that society was ravel and cruelty, as far as competition went, and were excited at the new scheme of life. Princes, prelates, even monarchs had lent heeding ears to the inspired Welshman's story of what might be done for the formation of the character of mankind—if those who wielded national influences would use them to this end. The novelty of the dream is over now—science has taught men that the improvement of mankind is an affair of a million influences and unknown time. None now, save the survivors of that period, can tell the fascination of that vision of improvement, in which progress was considered to be reduced to a simple problem of state mechanism, of which all the conditions had been discovered.

The tireless Newtown Utopian instituted a magnificent publicity of his co-operative projects. He made speeches, held meetings, published pamphlets and books, bought innumerable copies of all newspapers and periodicals which gave any account of his proceedings, and distributed them broadcast over the world.* The very day

* He paid the full price for all newspapers he bought, and the price was considerable then; and he posted copies, among others, to every clergyman in the kingdom. Mr. Pare found that Mr. Owen's payments for papers amounted to £4,000 in three months. Yet people talk now as though Co-operation was a new thing. Many of the new co-operators—whom leaders of the earlier school have attracted to the stores and societies they have formed—imagine the same.

on which he opened his celebrated schools at New Lanark for the formation of character he dispatched to Lord Sidmouth the manuscript copy he had made of all he said, so that the government might have the earliest and most authentic knowledge of what was going forward. Where a great co-operative society now spends pounds in diffusing a knowledge of its principles Mr. Owen spent thousands of pounds. It was this wise, costly, and generous publicity that led the public to attach value to the new social ideas. Mr. Owen may be said to have impressed mankind with them: for he travelled all over Europe and made repeated visits to America to personally spread the information of the new system of society which he contemplated establishing. Simultaneously with his efforts in Europe he spent a fortune in America in endeavours to found communities there. But up to 1820 no periodical was started to advocate these views.

To his comprehensive plan of reconstructing society many naturally objected, as involving a great interruption of business. But the ardent remodeller of all things thought very little of this difficulty. Things were so bad that few saw any hopes of amending them. The conclusion of most who thought upon the subject was that of the link-boy, who, when Pope, stumbling, cried out, "God mend me," answered, "I think, sir, God had better make a new one." Political reformers oft repeated this reply, and said it was better to make the stumbling world over again—if it could possibly be done. Mr. Owen had made up his mind to it, and in the *Economist* of that day, the first of the name, which contains the most animated writing which ever came from his pen, he thus announced the resolution to which he had come:—

"Though far from entertaining a very exalted opinion of my own powers, yet from the mere conviction that the duty ought to be performed by some one, however humble, I have had the boldness *to take upon my shoulders*

*the burden of examining the whole affairs and circumstances of mankind.* The ponderous load is greater than I could sustain, but that I feel a strength beyond my own which shall enable me to bear it from obscurity into the full light of day, where the effulgent blaze of truth, darted from millions of quick and inquiring eyes, shall finally penetrate and pervade every portion of the mass. I summon to my aid all the friends to humanity. Would that I possessed the power to call around me on the instant the choicest spirits of the earth and the air,—that with a magic touch I could at once dissolve the delusions of error and of prejudice,—and, awing to obedience the genii of the lamp and the ring, *transport* mankind in a moment into that new world of delights which is opening upon my enraptured sight.

"But I must be content to toil my way through the intricacies of a laborious though pleasurable work by the ordinary exertion of human faculties. My lamp serves but to remind me of that feeble ray of reason and of knowledge which has played upon my mind. My ring is the narrow darkling circle which bounds and confines my powers. Yet if that feeble ray be a ray of truth it shall go forth increasing in eternal splendour. If this little circle be drawn from the immovable centre of justice and of wisdom it shall be extended until it encompass the whole earth. If my feeble voice be at first scarcely heard amid the noisy contention of the world, yet if it be joined by the full chorus of the sons of truth, swelling into the clarion shouts of countless multitudes, and caught with joyous acclaim from nation to nation, the harmonizing strain shall resound through the globe.

"But I am indulging in anticipations of joy before the battle is won. The song of triumph must be reserved for the hour of victory. The lyre must be relinquished for Ithuriel's spear. We lay down the pencil for the pickaxe and the spade. The region of fancy, with all

its gay and glittering fascinations, must be abandoned for the sombre gloom of the cloistered grove. We descend into the caverned mysteries of nature for the inestimable gems of which we are in search. We have not to run the career of genius, but to dig the quarries of knowledge and of experience. The fervour of imagination must yield to the rigour of philosophic research, and the flashy coruscations of wit be extinguished, till in the darkness which surrounds us we steadily discern the first dawn of the mild and sober light of reason and of truth.

"We must strip, then, for our work. We go down into our mines, where—if my readers will accompany me, and assist to penetrate the strata which have hitherto concealed our treasures, and to remove the rubbish, the accumulations of ages, in the unskilful excavations of former workmen—we shall find the bright reward of our fondest hopes."*

The enchanted philosopher comes in the end, as a philosopher should, to the dreary realities of the way which leads to a new order of progress. But common people would catch the enchantment and not the insight of the great Dreamer.

Was it possible that men poor and ardent could decide upon a policy as men may who are at once opulent and cool? A new world of hope and effort was opening to many eyes which hitherto had found no outlook beyond the poorhouse. Yet those who were able to think found that each must come to some conclusion as to what he would attempt. No Englishman can go on dreaming all his days. The new social innovator felt that he must do something. The British public, who walk by faith on Sundays walk by sight only during week days. In business they believe only according to results, and the social propagandist soon felt that he

* *Economist*, No. 1. 1821.

must clear his mind of confusion and get some definite idea of the course before him. Should he clear the world or take it as it is? Should he create new conditions for mankind or accept what he finds, and work from them to the higher thing he aims at? Many men had never thought at all in a systematic manner on any subject, and were prepared to put their trust in any thing new, because they were well nigh sick of the world as it was. Others were discontented with all things—were never to be reconciled either to the old or the new, and would die in a state of protest. Those who had resolved on action had an alarming leader to follow. Mr. Owen, like his French prototypes, was a world-clearer, though his methods were milder. He would make a clean sweep of all existing institutions. There was a prospect indeed of full employment for disciples of this thorough-going school, and a broom party of reformers was actually formed, who undertook to sweep error up and cart it away, and an enterprising and disastrous party they proved to be—standing for a generation in the way of all those not less resolute but more practical men who intended to build where they could, and with the scant and poor materials which alone were at hand.

Social science, now well recognised, was then an unknown term. Mr. Owen was the first public man to insist that there might be a science of society.* His doctrine was that by the wise use of material means men might make society what it ought to be. In these happy and latitudinarian days anybody may improve society who can, and society is very glad when anybody gives signs of the capacity of doing it. His services are accepted,

* During a period of twenty years I well remember when the phrase "social science" was regarded as much an indication of "something being wrong" on the part of those who used it, as mentioning Sir C. Lyell's doctrine of the antiquity of man or Dr. Darwin's theory of evolution afterwards became. We were all surprised when a "National Association was formed for the Promotion of Social Science" in which prelates took part.

and no questions are asked. But in Robert Owen's days no one was allowed to attempt any good unless he believed in the Thirty-nine Articles,* and down to the year 1840 the Bishop of Exeter made things very unpleasant in the House of Lords to any persons detected doing it. Our "pastors and masters" held then the exclusive patent for improving the people, and though they made poor use of it, they took good care that nobody infringed it. Improvement, like the sale of corn, was a monopoly then, but we have free trade in humanity now, though the business done is not very great yet. The day at length came when the most ardent paused. The world admired but did not subscribe, and it was left to chequeless enthusiasts to find funds to diffuse a knowledge of the new views. It was then that some practical minded persons advised the formation of Co-operative Stores, where money might be made without subscribing it, and proposed that shareholders should give their profits to a fund for propagandism.

It was in 1821 that the first journal appeared in the interests of Co-operation. It bore the name of *The Economist*. It was thought by many in 1868 an act of judgment, and believed to be an original designation, to take the name of *Social Economist*, as the title† which would best recommend to public sentiment a co-operative periodical—economy being that commercial feature in which society is most readily interested, and which is most easily proved as an advantage of Co-operation. Mr. Owen's title was the same as the one subsequently adopted by Mr. James Wilson, the founder of the

* This was as modestly put as could be expected by a prelate of that day. The Bishop of London said, "Mr. Owen's system was brought forward by an individual who declared that he was not of one of the religions hitherto taught. This alone was a sufficient reason for him to disregard it."—"Hampden in the 19th Century," p. 47, 1834.

† "*The Social Economist.*" Edited by the present writer and Mr. E. O. Greening.

*Economist* newspaper, who was likely to have seen Mr. Owen's publication, for there was much early knowledge of Co-operation in the house in Essex-street, where I used to see formidable files, reaching to the ceiling, of unsold *Economists*, before it became the organ of the commercial classes; and the proprietor had ample leisure left to wonder whether they would ever make up their minds to buy it. The first number of Mr. Owen's *Economist* appeared on Saturday, January 27, 1821, price threepence. It was preceded by a prospectus after Mr. Owen's manner, as elaborate as an essay and as long as a pamphlet. The title page of the volume declared that "*The Economist* was a periodical paper explanatory of the new system of society projected by Robert Owen, Esq., and a plan of association for improving the condition of the working classes during their continuance at their present employments." The time was clearly foreseen when an entirely new order of things would take the place of that then existing; but in the meantime temporary improvement was to be attempted in the condition of the "working classes." "Working people" was the better phrase Francis Place used in his addresses to them. In the very first number of this *Economist* mention was made of the formation of a "Co-operative and Economical Society," which is the earliest record I find of a name now so familiar to the public ear.

There was no want of emphasis in announcing the discovery of Co-operation when the idea had taken a definite form in the minds of its originator and his friends. For some time the public had been told, in abounding phrases, that human affairs were henceforth to be based on some new principle to which no definite name was given. It does not appear whether anybody had asked what it was, but there was a general expectation that the friends of the social state would soon hear of something to their advantage. At length one

Motto of the First Co-operative Society.

day in the autumn of 1821, the Editor of the *Economist* broke in upon his readers with an air of importance, and small capitals, and said to them :—

"The SECRET IS OUT: it is unrestrained CO-OPERATION, on the part of ALL the members, for EVERY purpose of social life."* Undoubtedly this was big intelligence. There was no want of comprehensiveness in it. Co-operation of this description looked a long way forward, and spread very far round. Clearly it meant Communism, and whoever expressed it, in the words quoted, knew very well what he meant, and said it in well-chosen terms, never used subsequently, and never in those days improved upon. It was a very small, eager, active, manifold thing which issued in the name of Co-operation, then for the first time distinctively named; but during the next ten years it spread wondrously over the land.

In the middle of January, 1821, a pamphlet was published describing this Economical society. It was issued at the Medallic Cabinet, 158, Strand, where the *Economist* itself was published. The particulars of the Co-operative Economical Society were signed by Robert Hunt, James Shallard, John Jones, George Hinde, Robert Dean, and Henry Hetherington. It professes to be a report of the committee appointed at a meeting of journeymen, chiefly painters, to take into consideration certain propositions, submitted to them by Mr. George Mudie, having for their object a system of social arrangement calculated to effect essential improvements in the condition of the working classes and of society at large. They took as a motto words from Milton, which were very appropriate to their purpose :—

> Our greatness will appear
> Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
> Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
> We can create.

* *Economist*, August 27, 1821.

From the general fitness and expressiveness of these words of Milton, and as being the first Co-operative Society motto, I have placed it on the title page of this record of their rise, fluctuations, and progress.

The term Co-operation was at first, as the reader sees, and for several years afterwards, used in the sense of communism, as denoting a general arrangement of society for the mutual benefit of all concerned in sustaining it. Later, the term Co-operation came to be restricted to the humbler operations of buying and selling provisions. From implying concert of life in community it sank into meaning concert in shopkeeping. It seems now, as it seemed then, a ridiculous thing that the commencement of the social reformation of the world should consist in opening a cheese and butter shop. It was a great descent from the imperial altitude of world-making to stoop to selling long-sixteen candles and retailing treacle. Doubtless, if we only knew it, the beginning of civilised society was not less absurd. There were in all probability dreamers who stood on the verge of savage life and contemplated with poetic exultation the splendid future of civilisation, when men should abandon their reckless and murderous habits and master methods of thrift and peace. And when that new order of life began which is now described as the dawn of civilisation, there must have been persons with a fine sense of contempt and words of sharp ridicule of those petty hoards and miserable transactions of barter, out of which capital and commerce grew, which have finally covered the earth with palaces and raised private individuals to an opulence surpassing that of monarchs. Had there been leading articles and reviews, parliaments and reporters, and political economists (who see nothing in human destiny save supply and demand) in those days, how these Utopianists who brought about modern society would have been held up to derision and have been glad to hide their confused and abashed heads.

The Social Maxim of Demosthenes.

Mr. Owen entertained the belief common with all social thinkers from the days of Demosthenes, that "if the bad position of men's affairs proceed not from necessity but from errors, there is room to hope that when those errors are forsaken or corrected a great change for the better may ensue." "It is comparatively of little avail," Mr. Owen was accustomed to say, "to give to either young or old 'precept upon precept, and line upon line,' except the means shall be also prepared to train them in good practical habits." They were these convictions which gave him strength—they were these ideas that made him useful. His grand dreams do not seem so Utopian now. He was but premature in expressing them. When passing by the new Royal Exchange, London, he, looking up at it, said to a friend with him—"We shall have that one day. The old system must give way. It will come down of its own weight." The course of progress in this country is happily otherwise. Society does not come down. It gets itself underpinned and shored up, and takes time to get itself reconstructed on the new plan as soon as the new plan condescends to render itself intelligible. In a way the originator of Co-operation never foresaw, a practical part of his views was destined to obtain a strange ascendancy. Who would have dreamed that flannel weavers and mechanics, shoemakers and cotton-spinners of Rochdale, that adventurous but humble band of pioneers who commenced their petty and then absurd store in 1844, were founding a movement the voice of which would pass like a cry of deliverance into the camps of industry in every country where workmen had the instinct of self improvement? Who dreamed that these obscure mechanics, who had no means but pence, and no sense but common sense, would, in 1872, cause shopkeepers in every High-street of every town and city of the British Empire to scream with an unknown dread, and cry to members of parliament, and

crowd the offices of the chancellor of the exchequer, praying to be rescued from the Red Sea of Co-operation, which threatens to submerge for ever all the tawdry chariots of higgling and huxtering? But more merciful than the Egyptian waves, the Pharaohs of capital and competition will be saved by the new power, although they have brought—as co-operators contend—countless plagues of poverty upon the people. Co-operation, that new power of industry which has grown up in this generation, Mr. Owen no more constructed than George Stephenson did that railway system which a thousand unforeseen exigencies have suggested and a thousand brains matured. But as Stephenson the elder made railway locomotion possible, so Owen set men's minds on the track of Co-operation, and time and need, failure and gain, faith and thought, and the good sense and devotion of multitudes have made it what it is.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHARACTER OF ITS DISCOVERER.

> There is a way of winning more by love than fear;
> Force works on servile natures—not the free:
> He that's compelled to goodness may be good,
> But 'tis but for that fit: where others, drawn
> By softness and example, get a habit.—*Ben Jonson.*

It is impossible to give any adequate account of the rise, decline, and restoration of the co-operative movement without taking into account the influence of Mr. Owen's proceedings upon its fortunes. But for him it would not have come into existence in England when it did, nor would it have acquired the character which in its early years it bore. It was often involved in theological as well as political conflicts: and moral ones not infrequently. Mr. Owen was the chief cause of this. Many facts and statements, which the reader will find laid before him in these pages in various places, will prove that Mr. Owen could not very well avoid giving battle to several kinds of adversaries, and, being a Welshman, I have no doubt he did it with good-will. In fact, he had to make up his mind either to assault the enemy or give up his enterprise altogether, for they barricaded the way before him frequently. I have done all I honestly could to subordinate these particulars. But to omit them altogether would be like pretending to write the history of England for the last century and leaving out the wars with France.

Robert Owen was the only Welshman I ever knew who did not think Wales the world, and he no sooner comprehended that there was a wider world elsewhere than he acted like one who had taken possession of it, and finding it in disorder, suggested how it might be put straight. Looking at it with an intelligent and benevolent eye he saw that crime was error and that misery was crime; in other words, that misery was preventable and that it was a crime in rulers to permit it. He was the first publicist among us who looked with royal eyes upon children. He regarded grown persons as being proprietors of the world—bound to extend the rites of hospitality to all arrivals in it. He considered little children as little guests, to be welcomed with gentle courtesy and tenderness, to be offered knowledge and love, and charmed with song and flowers, so that they might be glad and proud that they had come into a world which gave them happiness and only asked of them goodness. Mr. Owen began his career as a reformer—in what we regard now as the pre-scientific period—before men measured progress by single steps. As Duke Bernard of Saxe-Weimar expressed it, with admirable comprehensiveness, "Mr. Owen looked to nothing less than to renovate the world, to extirpate all evil, to banish all punishment, to create like views and like wants, and to guard against all conflicts and hostilities." There is grandeur in this wide horizon of social effort which will always have inspiration in it. Finding pious benevolence seeking progress by prayer, which did not bring it, Mr. Owen boldly proposed to substitute for it scientific benevolence, which seeks human improvement by material methods. "Here," he said, if not in terms in theory, "is the new path of deliverance, where no thought is lost, no effort vain; where the victory is always to the wise and the patient, and the poor who believe will no longer be betrayed." We know not now what courage it required to say this

when Mr. Owen said it. Gentlemen expected to provide the poor with their religion. If they subscribed to any school this was the chief object they had in view, for it was very little secular learning they imparted. In Sunday schools, spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic were given in homœopathic doses, and they got generally relinquished for the catechism. Mr. Owen gave lessons in the knowledge of the world in his schools, and justified their being given. Both the clergy and dissenting ministers regarded with jealousy any influence arising not under their direction, and they made it difficult for social improvers to do anything. They gave bad accounts of any working men who allied themselves to social schemes, so that they were intimidated. It was a great merit in Mr. Owen that he did more than any gentleman of his time to resent this, and inspire others to deliver society from it.

To teach common people the arts of self-help, the wisdom of choosing their own opinions, and to believe only in that religion which brought them actual deliverance from dependence and want was not a popular thing to do. Mr. Owen had the fate of Paine before him. Paine would have ranked next to Burke as a political writer. He excelled all politicians who addressed the people in teaching them principles. Ebenezer Elliott told me Paine was the greatest master of metaphor he had known. Cobbett's writings were mere vigorous wordiness compared with Paine's, and were far less instructive than Paine's finished thoroughness of exposition. In America the pen of Paine did as much as the sword of Washington to effect independence; yet he was long excluded from the rank of respectable authors. Certainly to this day he is spoken of in an unpleasant way, both in America and England, in consequence of his promoting theological independence of thought. But for this he would be remembered as one whose writings Pitt thought it worth while to study,

and be regarded in America as one of the founders of national independence whom Washington, and Jefferson, and Franklin consulted.

Robert Owen, knowing all this, yet protested against theology barring the way to the social amelioration of the people; and from being the associate of the first men of his time he was driven to consort with shoemakers and tailors, fustian-cutters, whitesmiths, weavers, and miners, who alone remained to work out his great ideas and gratefully honour his memory.

Mr. Owen had the capacity of personal inspiration. He was ready in public speech. He had bursts of impassioned oratory. Cambridge scholars, utterly prejudiced against him, were struck with the dignity of his bearing at the memorable meetings at the City of London Tavern in 1817. After a lapse of fifty-six years, one of those present has related that when Mr. Owen said "all the religions of the world were wrong," he thought him beyond the rank of common men. He seemed to this hearer to grow loftier in stature. The vast and various audience listened as men breathless. Then they broke out into tumultuous cheering at the courageous act of the speaker. Indeed I modify the terms in which that day has been spoken of to me. Readers now would not understand the impression made; and for any purpose of persuasion it is useless to say more than will seem probable to those addressed. Mr. Owen's reputation for great wealth, the munificence of his known gifts, his personal sincerity, his high connections, the novelty of his views,—all lent elements of popular interest to what he said on subjects on which no gentleman, save he, ventured to say anything. He had made himself a captain of industry. He had accomplished wonders never attempted before by any manufacturer. Statesmen from every part of Europe had been allured to New Lanark, and, for all anyone knew, he might be able to demonstrate what no statesman had ever deemed it possible to

compass—the conditions which should render certain the improved character and decent competence of the common people; realising, with the precision of science, a state of society in which neither depravity nor poverty should recur. No wonder much was thought of him, much was forgiven him, much was hoped for from him.

The determination to make the formidable statement described, at that particular time, his son relates, was come to suddenly. Certain sectarian publications, seeing favourable notices of his proceedings at his first and second meeting in the London Tavern made in the *Times* began to call upon him to make a declaration of his views on religion, which up to that time he had withheld. They had formed their own opinion on that subject, as many vexatious and unfriendly charges made against Mr. Owen's proceedings at Lanark had already informed him.* He had, however, held his ground and held his peace, and maintained a proud reticence towards them. He believed they meant him deadly mischief, and the public knew it. As he enjoyed the personal respect of several eminent prelates in the church—for the best educated are always the most tolerant—Mr. Owen could well afford to pass the lower sort by. As they were capable of doing harm, Mr. Owen, who was brave and not politic, defied them. It was the consciousness of this which helped to move the wonder and enthusiasm of the audience at his third meeting, when he made this long-remembered speech to the densely-packed and excited audience, thousands outside trying in vain to

* His son, Robert Dale, relates that he was with him during his examination by a committee of the House of Commons when he gave evidence on the condition of the factory children, and heard Sir George Philips put questions to his father in an insolent tone as to his religious opinions. Brougham, who was also on the committee, resented this irrelevant offensiveness, and moved that the cross-examination in question be expunged from the record, and it was done. If, however, a gentleman's personal opinions could be attacked in the House of Commons, the reader can imagine what took place elsewhere.

obtain admission. "What, my friends," he began, "has hitherto retarded the advancement of your race to a high state of virtue and happiness? Who can answer that question? Who dares answer but with his life in his hand?—a ready and willing victim to the truth and to the emancipation of the world from its long bondage of error, crime, and misery. Behold that victim! On this day! in this hour! even now! shall those bonds be burst asunder, never more to reunite while the world lasts!"

An English gentleman with anything to lose had never held this language before This enthusiasm and pluck moved the admiration alike of those who approved and those who dissented from this dangerous and impolitic speech. The consequences soon came home to him. He had friends too powerful for his life to be in danger; but those who could save his life could not save his influence. And in after years, in the provinces at public meetings, his life was often in jeopardy, and he was only saved by the intrepidity of working men, who protected him. The *Times* soon wheeled into line against him—the Conservative and influential classes deserted him. Only the Duke of Kent and Lord Brougham stood by him to the end.*

It is difficult to judge yet the extraordinary proceeding of Mr. Owen in "denouncing all the religions of the world." It was part of his plan. It was a deliberate act. He told his religious partner, Mr. Allen, the Quaker, that he would do so—two years before. He, however, arrested the acceptance of his social system by it. From being a social reformer he commenced to be a religious reformer, and being thorough, he did by the church as he did by the state—he proposed to reform it altogether. For this work he appears to me to have made no adequate preparation. He followed

* *Vide* Autobiography of Robert Dale Owen.

the instinct of his conscience without calculation. An ominous meeting in the Rotunda of Dublin in 1823 sealed the fate of his new world, and condemned his schemes ever after to the hands of the minority. The great powers of society set their faces against him, and the people were too poor to carry his ideas out. The greatest person of distinction who best understood Mr. Owen, and who did not desert him on account of his irreligious views, was the Queen's father. He said at one of Mr. Owen's meetings, two years after he had denounced all religions, "If I understand Mr. Owen's principles, they lead him not to interfere to the injury of any sect; but he claims for himself that which he is so desirous to obtain for his fellow-creatures—'religious liberty and freedom of conscience;' and these he contends for because his experience compels him to conclude that these principles are now necessary to secure the well-being and good order of society." This is excellently put, and is really what Mr. Owen meant. Being always a Theist, he was logically in error in denouncing "all religions." His province was to defend humanity against the abuses of religion, and maintain, as the Duke of Kent puts it, "religious liberty and freedom of conscience."

In those alarmed days, when politicians and capitalists were as terrified as shopkeepers at the progress of Co-operation, Mr. Owen, not content with spreading disquiet among the clergy, unhesitatingly countenanced the discussion of a new question, which has strangely passed entirely out of the sight of history. Mr. James Mill had written in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," as Malthus had done before, that it was both desirable and profitable to limit the families of the poor. He despised working people who crowded the labour market with their offspring, and then complained of the lowness of wages and the want in their homes, where there were more hungry mouths than food. And certainly a man or woman

entering the office of a parish overseer, to be questioned with suspicion, relieved with reluctance, treated as a burden on the parish, and advised to emigrate, as the needy shopkeeper assessed for poor-rates is necessarily, against his will, compelled to begrudge the flesh on their bones, which he had to help pay for—is a humiliating business, so shocking and deplorable that those who come to it had better never have been born. Any legitimate remedy which the wit of man could devise having this object would seem purity and dignity by the side of this degradation. Those who undertook to make communities soon found that the inmates would come to certain ruin if the houses were overrun with children, and they listened to the Malthus and Mill warning. Mr. Owen, who always gave heed to the philosophers, took oft-debated steps to give effect to their advice. His courage and thoroughness were wonderful. No man had a better right than he to invent the maxim he was fond of using—"Truth without mystery, mixture of error, or fear of man." He was not better able, peradventure, than other men to obtain truth free from error and doubt; but he was, beyond question, as free from the fear of man in moral things as any publicist who ever lived.

Beyond any gentleman of his time, Mr. Owen cared for the friendless, regardless of himself. This question concerned none save the poor, and he boldly counselled them not to be coerced by opprobrium into supplying offspring to be ground up alive in the mill of capital; or be cast aside when the labour market was glutted to fall into the hands of the constable or the parish overseer. The subject was regarded by the public then as the question of cremation was, which could never be mentioned in any periodical with tolerance, but which is sure to be discussed in the future, as cremation is, to the surprise of everybody, now—a question supposed to be inurned with the ashes of Shelley.

No notice of this curious episode in Mr. Owen's life occurs in the biographies of him which have appeared since his death. In other respects the life of him Mr. Sargant has published is very interesting. He has brought together a variety of facts which it must have taken considerable research and cost to accumulate. Though Mr. Sargant's views are unsympathetic and antagonistic, he never calumniates, although he often fails to judge accurately points which an alien historian could hardly be expected to understand; but as he is never dull and never indecisive, and often quite right in the opinion he forms, he is an instructive writer to those who incline to the side of the innovators, and must have considerably increased the curiosity of the public of this generation, who regard Mr. Owen, if they know him at all, as an heresiarch, whose proceedings had been unknown in polite society.

With his gift for pleasant and picturesque statement Mr. Dale Owen might give the world an incomparable life of his father, such as otherwise we are not likely to see. He had opportunities which no man, save he, of the last generation possessed, of knowing all the proper and improper people of celebrity—using the term improper in the sense of unconventional, not morally disqualified, persons. For a period of half-a-century, almost every man in Europe and America engaged in any forlorn hope of progress had communications at one time or the other with Mr. Robert Owen. Robert Dale lately published a work casting interesting but limited light on his father's career. It would seem, however, that Mr. Dale Owen has lived himself so long in the world that he is afraid of going about it. Some time ago he published the "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," which reads as though it were written by a man who had left this. Writing upon the suggestion of a friend, he has apparently given us from memory, or from scant notes, twenty-seven years of autobiography in "Threading my

Way," which, however, serves to show how curious and valuable a history of his father it would be in his power to make.

That I take to be the manliest reverence which praises within the limits of truth. The flatterer is either a knave who intends to impose upon you, or a patron who intends to befool you, or a coward who applauds because he has not the courage to condemn you, or a weak-eyed man who can only see one thing at a time. Those are wise who avoid the men who by wholesale praise hide from a man what he should be and keep him what he is. Prefer the man who blows hot and cold to him who blows all hot, because it is better to be invigorated than to be stifled. Believing so, I speak frankly as well as affectionately of Mr. Owen.

It is no part of my object to represent Mr. Owen other than he was. Though he was a very amiable, he was, doubtless, later in life a somewhat tiresome reformer. His letters were essays and his speeches were volumes. When he called a meeting together, those who attended never knew when they would separate; yet he was, undoubtedly, endowed with great natural capacity for understanding public affairs. He was accustomed to give practical and notable opinions upon public questions quite apart from his own doctrines; and his society was sought as that of a man who had the key of many state difficulties. Those know little of him who suppose that he owed his distinction wholly to his riches. A man must be wise as well as wealthy to achieve the illustrious friendships which marked his career. He had personally an air of natural nobility about him. He had, as the *Daily News* lately said, "an instinct to rule and command." I only knew him late in life, when age had impressed measure upon his steps and deliberateness on his speech. When he had the vivacity of youth and middle age he must have been an actor on the political stage of no mean mark. He always spoke as "one

having authority." He had a voice of great compass, thorough self-possession, and becoming action. Like many other men he spoke much better than he wrote. When he was but twenty years of age he applied to Mr. Drinkwater—who became his first employer of consequence—for a responsible situation. He was told "he was so young." "Yes," answered Mr. Owen, "that used to be said of me several years ago, but I did not expect to have it brought against me now." His boldness never deserted him. On one occasion William Johnson Fox, the famous preacher and anti-corn-law orator, delivered a discourse in South Place Chapel on Mr. Owen's co-operative system. Some of his remarks being founded on a manifest misconception of it, Mr. Owen, who was present, rose before the final hymn was given out, and addressed the congregation in a speech of great dignity and propriety, and corrected the error of the orator. Though the proceeding was most unusual, and would only have been permitted in a place of worship where freedom of conscience was not only maintained but conceded, Mr. Owen acquitted himself so well that no one felt any sense of unseemliness in what he did.*

Mr. Owen was an apostle not a rhetorician. He never looked all round his statements (as Mr. Cobden did) to see where the ignorant might misconstrue them, or the enemy could come up and pervert them. He said "man was the creature of circumstances" for thirty years before he added the important words, "acting previous to and after his birth." He had the fatal ideas of the New Testament that equality was to be attained by granting to a community "all things in common" at the commencement. Whereas equality is the result, not the beginning. You must start with inequality and

* Mr. David Dale, who was a shrewd, discerning man, once said to Mr. Owen, "Thou needest to be very right, Robert, for thou art very positive."

authority, steering steadily towards self-government and the accumulation of the common gains, until independence is secured to all. Mr. Owen looked upon men through the spectacles of his own good nature. He seldom took Lord Brougham's advice "to pick his men." He never acted on the maxim that the working class are as jealous of each other as the upper classes are of them. The resolution he displayed as a manufacturer he was wanting in as a founder of communities. Recognising his capacity as a manufacturer, even Allen, his eminent Quaker partner, wrote to him, "Robert Owen, thou makest a bargain in a masterly manner!" Sir John, then Dr. Bowring, allowed that the only time Jeremy Bentham ever made money was when he was a partner of Mr. Owen. In after life Mr. Owen was certainly reckless of his own fame. No leader ever took so little care in guarding his own reputation. He scarcely protested when others attached his name to schemes which were not his. The failure of Queenwood was not chargeable to him. When his advice was not followed he would say: "Well, gentlemen, I tell you what you ought to do. You differ from me. Carry out your own plans. Experience will show you who is right." When the affair went wrong then it was ascribed to him. The public knew nothing of executives from which he withdrew. They only knew Robert Owen; and whatever failed under his name they inferred failed *through him*. Mr. Owen was a general who never provided himself with a rear guard. While he was fighting in the front ranks priests might come up and cut off his commissariat. His own troops fell into pits against which he had warned them. Yet he would write his next dispatch without it occurring to him to mention his own defeat, and he would return to his camp without missing his army. Yet society is not so well served that it need hesitate to forgive the eccentricities of its generous friends. To Mr. Owen will

The moral impulse of Southey's day given by three men.

be accorded the distinction of being a philosopher who devoted himself to founding a Science of Social Improvement—a philanthropist who gave his fortune to advance it. Association, which was but an act of fear before his day, he converted into a policy and taught it as an art. He substituted Co-operation for coercion in the conduct of industry—the willing co-operation of intelligence certain of its own reward for sullen labour enforced by the necessity of subsistence, seldom to be relied on and never satisfied.

Southey, who was a competent judge of public men in his day, said: "I would class Owen in a triad as one of the three men who have in this generation given an impulse to the moral world. Clarkson and Dr. Bell are the other two. They have seen the first fruits of their harvest; so, I think, would Owen ere this, if he had not alarmed the better part of the nation by proclaiming, upon the most momentous of all subjects, opinions which are alike fatal to individual happiness and general good. Yet I admire the man; and readily admit that his charity is a better plank than the faith of an intolerant and bitter-minded bigot, who, as Warburton says, 'counterworks his Creator, makes God after man's image, and chooses the worst model he can find—himself.'" Mr. Owen was not a handsome philanthropist, but he had what I may call an accessible expression. He had a friendly face. There was a charm that those who approached him always found in his mind. Great or low each felt assured, as the poet puts it:

For there can live no *hatred* in thine eye.

The impression that Mr. Owen made upon workmen of his time is best described by one who won for himself a distinguished name as a working-class poet. I mean Ebenezer Elliott. In an address to him, sent by trade-unionists of Sheffield in 1834, Elliott says: "You came among us as a rich man among the poor and did not

call us a rabble. This is a phenomenon new to us. There was no sneer on your lips, no covert scorn in your tone." That this distinction struck Elliott shows us how working men were then treated. It was in reply to this address that Mr. Owen made a remark which is an axiom in the best political Liberalism of these days. He said, "Injustice is a great mistake." He saw that it was not merely wrong, wicked, malevolent, hateful; he believed that injustice did not answer in business, in fact that it did not pay. This is becoming understood now. Here and there we may hear a wise employer say: "I cannot afford to pay my men badly." There are co-operative productive societies which have not quite learned this yet. Indeed, it has taken a long time for employers to see that the workman, like the inanimate tools he uses, can only be efficient when made of good material, is of good temper, and kept in good condition.

The above society referred to in Sheffield, which has never been a sentimental place, bore the name of the "Sheffield Regeneration Society"—certainly a very sentimental name. The motto of the members was "Free Trade with Free Labour." Mr. Owen was in favour of a rule of eight hours' labour; he being a very early advocate of what is now regarded as an American novelty. The Sheffield society did not believe that the world could be regenerated in eight hours, and addressed Mr. Owen for an explanation. The document was written by Ebenezer Elliott, and was a good specimen of his prose style. It had also this passage: "Doctor Chalmers, though he bids us die unmarried, does not really wish that the noble race of Watt and Burns, Locke and Milton, should become extinct. . . . William Cobbett, almost a great man, and once our only champion [a phrase he afterwards used in his famous epitaph on Cobbett], seems to be mystifying himself and trying to mystify others on the all-important subject; but we do not call

him either rogue or fool." Elliott ended by saying that the appropriate epitaph for the great communist's tomb—when he arrived at one—would be :—

In the land of castes Owen was a Man.*

When Mr. Owen first proposed to his partners to institute educational arrangements at their works he admitted that there might be loss. Bentham, Allen, and other of his partners resolved to run the risk, which in the end led to great fame and profit. When the partners who opposed the outlay retired the Lanark Mills were brought to the hammer. They depreciated the property, spreading about reports that Mr. Owen had ruined it, and that the business was not worth £40,000. They intended buying it themselves. But the philanthropist had an eye to business, and sent his solicitor to bid against them. The discontented partners bid in person, and actually bid themselves upwards of £110,000 for property they had declared worth £40,000 only. Mr. Owen bought it for £114,000. They knew that it was worth greatly more, and regretted all their days their folly and their loss. They had prematurely invited a large party of friends to a congratulation banquet on the day of the sale, and they had to play the part of hosts without appetite or exhilaration to guests unable to console them. When the news reached the Lanark workmen that Mr. Owen was to be their future master the place was illuminated. When Mr. Owen and his new partners went down the workpeople and inhabitants for miles round went out to greet them with music. The horses were ungeared and, amid the acclamations of thousands, they were drawn

* The reader may see that Elliott, when he came to write his epitaph on Cobbett, must have recurred to this address. It was this :—

"Our friend, when other friend we'd none;
Our champion when we had but one;
Cursed by all knaves, beneath this sod
Bill Cobbett lies—a *Man* by God."

in triumph into the town. Mr. Owen's Quaker partners with him were astounded. Never before were followers of George Fox sharers in such a demonstration. And few have been the employers who have been welcomed back by their workpeople as Mr. Owen was. These facts have had great influence in making co-operative employers genial and considerate to persons in their mills, though none have equalled the great founder of the system. And these facts are worth remembering by the new co-operative companies continually forming, animated by the common notion that niggardliness is economy and that shabbiness can bring satisfaction.

Others may tell, in the Life of Mr. Owen which Mr. Pare has left to be completed from documents which he possessed as one of Mr. Owen's literary executors,* what I shall but briefly indicate as I proceed—what steps Mr. Owen took—what establishments he founded—what fortune he expended—what journeys he made, in order to interest the world in his undertakings. I am here concerned with his career only as Co-operation grew out of it.

Wesleyanism dotted the country with prayer-meetings—Chartism covered it with conspiring groups of worldly-awakened men—Socialism sought to teach industry power, property its duty, and the working people how to struggle for their improvement without anger or impatience. It was Mr. Owen who was conspicuous in teaching them the golden lesson of peace and progress, that to effect reform they must change erroneous systems and not hate men. He taught that benevolence ought not to be a cheap sentiment of pity. He taught pity to leave off weeping and ally itself to improvement. His was not that grand patriotism which talked platitudes of well meaning and did no work. His heart was with that religion which, though weak in creeds and collects,

* The Owen Memorial Committee.

rendered humanity service. No affluence corrupted him. When he saw gentlemen of his acquaintance adding thousands to thousands and acre to acre, and giving themselves up to the pride of family, of title, of position, he himself plotted for the welfare of mechanics and labourers. He found no satisfaction in the splendour of courts so long as the hovel stood in sight. He felt as one has felt since (Mr. Bright) who has a mightier power of expressing the great aims which raise the stature of mankind, who said: "I do not care for military greatness or renown: I care for the condition of the people among whom I live. . . . Crown, coronet, mitres, military displays, pomp of war, wide colonies, and a huge empire are in my view all trifles light as air, unless with them you can have a fair share of comfort, contentment, and happiness among the great body of the people."

## CHAPTER VI.

### HIS APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE.

There are some very earnest and benevolent persons who have nevertheless a hollow jingle in their goodness. Being without political insight they mistake their own indifference for impartiality, and call upon men to renounce convictions, for philanthropic purposes, which are as sincere, as salutary, and often more important to public freedom than philanthropy itself.—*M.MS. (Modern Manuscript.)*

It was the year 1825 which saw co-operative views—which since 1812 had been addressed by Mr. Owen to the upper classes—first taken up by the working class, with whom the originator had then cultivated friendly relations. His great ambition had been to interest cabinets and kings in his schemes, and he very wisely concluded that if he addressed himself exclusively to the labouring classes the aristocracy would not identify themselves with his views, and indeed might suspect an insurgent element in them. No promulgator of new ideas ever had greater success than he for many years. It has been recounted how his wealth, his munificence, the remarkable results he had achieved, his contagious confidence in his plans, his stately manners, and calm zeal, allured the most eminent philosophers and politicians of his time, who joined him as partners and counsellers in his New Lanark institutions. Consulted by the governments of England and America, a welcome visitor to every court in Europe—receiving princes and heirs to empires as visitors to his counting-house—being assured by the cabinet of his own country that they

One of Pope's falacies.

were convinced of the truth of his system, it is not surprising that he thought that the world was entirely converted to his opinion, in which he was certainly premature. But when in 1817, as the reader has already seen, he publicly declared "all the religions of the world to be founded in error," he alarmed for his day and generation the bishops and clergy, who were really to a great extent in honourable sympathy with his generous views, and had themselves intermittent compassion for the working class. For twenty-three years their wrath endured. In 1840, Mr. William Pare, one of the earliest and ablest of Mr. Owen's disciples, was compelled to resign the office he held of registrar of births, deaths, and marriages in Birmingham, in consequence of its being made known to the Bishop of Exeter that Mr. Pare sympathised with socialist views.

Many of Mr. Owen's difficulties with theologians arose through their not understanding him, and through Mr. Owen not understanding that they did not understand him. The fact is he had a religion of his own—he was a believer in the religion of humanity—a religion not at all recognised in his day. His followers many years after were fond of quoting the lines:—

> For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

It is not at all clear that a man has a fair chance of getting his life right while his creed is wrong. With sincere and intelligent men creed has a great deal to do with conduct. These lines are the doctrine of a latitudinarian without a conscience. But the argument of Pope imposed on Mr. Owen, as it has done on other excellent men. Mr. Owen was not himself indifferent to conviction. His own conviction that humanity was godliness was so strong that he paid no heed to any opinions which contradicted that; and hence he denounced the most sacred faiths of his countrymen with little ceremony, and though a philanthropist he

The unconscious insolence of philosophers.

did very cruel things in this way. A man may be a heretic, and have a perfect right to set forth the grounds of his convictions, and insist upon them, and point out the errors and mischiefs of a popular faith; but he can never command respect from adversaries unless he makes himself master of their case and does public justice to the equal honesty of those sincerely opposed to him. Mr. Owen was never wanting in kindliness of purpose, but he was in consideration and detail of statement. Quite unconscious of it, and meaning nothing offensive by it, he continually displayed the common insolence of philosophers—the insolence of pity. It is irritating and not at all instructive to earnest men to be looked down upon with compassion on account of convictions acquired with anxiety and many sacrifices. We are all struggling for more light; and, though the belief that we have found the truth is a proper sentiment to display, it is courtesy to others as well as modesty to avoid giving them the impression that our confidence proceeds from self-sufficiency. Airs of infallibility which greatness of character may condone in a founder are apt to become insupportable in followers who have not fought the battle which has given them distinction and ascendency.

If Robert Owen had had a compact agitating mind, which knew how to control speech as a part of policy, he would have made in the world a great name instead of a well-known one. "It is not our object," he used to say, in hours of accurate statement, "to attack that which is false, but to make clear that which is true. Explaining that which is true convinces the judgment when the mind possesses full and deliberate powers of judging, while attacking that which is false instantly arouses irritation and renders the judgment unfit for its office and useless." This Mr. Owen said very early, and very often, but not always, and almost precisely in these terms. He said, in a speech to the British

Co-operative Association, in Dr. Birkbeck's Mechanics' Institution, "that those who carried out the new social principles would have no need to injure a single individual, or wish for any of the emoluments of the rich, for they would have the power, when they began to apply it, to create more new wealth, than any rational being will desire to consume." Mr. Owen, as a rule, was apt to squander his words about his ideas, which sometimes permitted his disciples to evade them and his enemies to misconstrue them; but these admirable conceptions were so oft and so precisely repeated that everybody for the time admitted their meaning. The creed of Co-operation ought never to have had any enemies. It was simple, it was manly, it was honest, and well intended. It was that the people should be instructed to mean well, to work well, and secure to themselves the results of their labour; and neither beg, nor borrow, nor steal, nor annoy. Co-operation put its hand in no man's pocket, nor its fist in any man's face. To this social idea Mr. Owen was always consistent. Religion was the weak point of his associative advocacy. He denied men's responsibility for their belief, and then said the new system did not contravene religion. As religion was then understood it did. Mr. Owen's disciples echoed his challenging declaration that "all the religions of the world were founded in error," and then said "they wanted no religious discussion."

In 1837, as he had often done before, Mr. Owen, in his discussion with the Rev. J. H. Roebuck, at Manchester, said "he was compelled to believe that all the religions of the world were so many geographical insanities." It was foolishness in followers who did not repudiate language of this character to represent, as many did, that their views were those of "true Christianity." Their business was simply to contend that their views were relevant to the needs of the day and morally true, and rest there. At this distance of

time, in the light of experience which did not then exist, it is easy to see clearer. Neither to attack Christianity nor weakly to attempt to reconcile social views to it would have been a self-defensive and self-respecting policy.

Mr. Owen's theory of the motives of conduct was one which could only commend itself to persons of consider able independence of thought—who were then a small minority. To incite men to action he relied on four considerations, namely, that what he proposed was :—

1. True:
2. Right:
3. Humane:
4. Useful.

It was the failure of this high policy and the want of measure in religious argument that led to his appeal to the masses, to whom audacity and generosity are sources of inspiration. It was understood very early* that Co-operation was proposed as a system of universal industry, equality of privileges for all, and the equal distribution of the new wealth created. This was an alarming programme to most persons, except the poor. Many did not like the prospects of "universal industry." The "distribution of wealth" in any sense did not at all meet the views of others, and "equality of privilege" was less to the general taste. The great penniless crowd outside the doors of the opulent were likely to have different views.

Finding himself unable to succeed with the upper classes, Mr. Owen determined to carry his point, if he could, by committing his schemes to the hands of the people, for whom he always cared, and whom alone he sought to serve. They would be captivated by his philanthropy and his courage, yet, politically, he was not well fitted to succeed with them. Cobden said Lord

* "Co-operative Miscellany," No. 2, 1830.

Palmerston had no prejudices—not even in favour of the truth. Mr. Owen had no political principles—not even in favour of liberty. His doctrine was that of the poet:—

> For modes of government let fools contest,
> That which is best administered is best,

a doctrine which has no other ideal than that of a benevolent despotism, and regards as idle or futile the individual life and self-government of the people. Mr. Owen was no political go-between—no conscious agent of the adversaries of the political rights of the people. Had it rested with him he would have given them every right they sought. He simply did not think rights of any great consequence one way or the other. There never was any question among Liberal politicians as to the personal sincerity of Mr. Owen. Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, Francis Place were his personal friends, who were both social and political reformers, and valued Mr. Owen greatly in his own department, which was social alone.*

The French social reformers, from Fourier to Comte, have held the same treacherous tone with regard to political freedom. Albert Brisbane, who published the "Social Destiny of Man," himself a determined Fourierite, announced on his title page: "Our evils are social not political"—giving a clean bill of health to all the knaves who by political machination diverted or appropriated the resources of the people. "Our most enlightened men," he contemptuously wrote, "are seeking in paltry political measures and administrative reforms for means of doing away with social misery." Tamisier more wisely wrote when he said, "Political

* In his account of the Shakers in the *Economist* of June 2, 1821, Mr. Owen said, "They never meddle with public affairs—or even voting at an election," and described as "a few singularities" this base abandonment of the country to whomsoever might bestride it—to patriots who might care for it, or knaves who might despoil it of honour or freedom, while the unheeding Shakers took care of their conscience and comfort.

order has alone been the object of study while the industrial order has been neglected." Because social life had been neglected for politics, it did not follow that political life was to be neglected for social. This was merely reaction not common sense.

Another dangerous distich then popular with social reformers was the well-known lines of Goldsmith :—

> How small of all that human hearts endure
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

Goldsmith knew nothing of political science. The cultivated, generous-hearted, sentimental piper was great in his way; but social and political progress, as we understand it, was unknown in his time. He foresaw not England made lean and hungry by corn laws; or Ireland depopulated by iniquitous land laws; or France enervated and cast into the dust by despotism and ignorance—by political misrule; but social reformers of Mr. Owen's day had means of knowing better. It was not their ignorance so much as their ardour that misled them. The inspiration of a new and neglected subject was upon them, and they thought it destined to absorb and supersede every other. The error cost them the confidence of the best men of thought and action around them for many years.

It may interest modern readers to see Mr. Owen's own account of the way in which he sought to enlist the sympathies of the Tories of his time with his schemes. They were then as now, and as despotic rulers always are, ready to occupy the people with social ideas, in the hope that they will leave political affairs to them, who themselves believe they better understand them. How little the Conservatives of Mr. Owen's day were likely to give effect to his views of sound education for the people, irrespective of religious or political opinion, we of to-day know very well. However, this is Mr. Owen's account of his proposals and experience :—

"I have at different times attempted two decisive

measures for the general improvement of the population; and in the promotion of both I received great aid and assistance from many members of the aristocracy. The one was a good and liberal education for all the poor, without exception on account of their religious or political principles; and to be conducted under a board of sixteen commissioners, to be chosen by parliament, eight to be of the Church of England and the remainder from the other sects, in proportion to their numbers, and the education to be useful and liberal. Now this measure was supported, and greatly desired, by the members of Lord Liverpool's administration; and considerable progress was made in the preliminary measures previous to its being brought into parliament. It was very generally supported by leading members of the then aristocracy. It was opposed, however, and, after some deliberation, stopped in its progress by the late Dr. Randolph, Bishop of London, and by the late Mr. Whitbread. But the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and several other dignitaries of the church, were favourable to it. The declared opposition, however, of the then Bishop of London and of Mr. Whitbread, who it was expected would prevail upon his party to oppose the measure, induced Lord Liverpool and his friends—who, I believe, sincerely wished to give the people a useful and liberal education—to defer the subject to a more favourable opportunity.

"The next measure was the proposition to promote the amelioration of the condition of the productive classes by the adoption of superior arrangements to instruct and employ them. I had several interviews with Lord Liverpool, Mr. Canning, and other members of the government, to explain to them the outlines of the practical measures which I proposed. I found them more willing to listen and to consider these subjects than I could expect from the attention required in the general business of their departments. They referred

the examination of the more detailed measures to Lord Sidmouth, the secretary of state for the home department, and I had many interviews and communications with him upon these subjects.

"From this intercourse with the government I became satisfied that if they had possessed sufficient power over public opinion they would have adopted efficient measures to prevent the population from experiencing the present poverty and misery; but they were opposed by the then powerful party of the political economists. It is but justice to that administration for me now to state how my proceedings with it terminated.

"The principles and practices which I have now so long publicly advocated, but which are yet so little comprehended by the common mind, were submitted for their consideration, and at their request they were at first printed but not published. They were sent, by the permission of the government, to all the governments of Europe and America; and upon examination by statesmen and learned men of the continent were found to contain no evil, but simple facts and legitimate deductions. In one of my last interviews with Lord Sidmouth, secretary of state for the home department, he said:—'Mr. Owen, I am authorised by the government to state to you that we admit the principles you advocate to be true, and that if they were fairly applied to practice they would be most beneficial; but we find the public do not yet understand them, and they are therefore not prepared to act upon them. When public opinion shall be sufficiently enlightened to comprehend them and to act upon them we shall be ready and willing to acknowledge their truth and to act in conformity with them. We know we are acting upon erroneous principles; but we are compelled to do so from the force of public opinion, which is so strongly in favour of old-established political institutions.' To a statement so candid I could only reply, 'Then it becomes my duty to endeavour to

enlighten the people and to create a new public opinion.'"* If Lord Sidmouth believed what he said, in the sense in which Mr. Owen understood him, he dexterously concealed, in all his public acts and speeches, his convictions from the world.

It was happily no easy thing even for Mr. Owen to win the confidence of the working-class politicians. They honourably refused to barter freedom for comfort, much as they needed an increase of physical benefits. We had lately a curiously-devised Social and Conservative Confederation, the work of Mr. Scott-Russell, in which the great leaders of the party always opposed to political amelioration were to lead the working class to the attainment of great social advantages, and put them "out in the open" in some wonderful way. Several well-known working-class leaders, some of whom did not understand what political conviction implied, and others who believed they could accept this advance without political compromise, entered into it. There were others who felt that it was futile to put their trust in political adversaries to carry out their social schemes and then vote against them at elections, and so deprive their chosen friends of the power of serving them. Those working men who were dissentients on this occasion belonged to the old school of Radical advocates of political independence, and preferred the leanest liberty to the fattest submission that could be held out to them. Working men of this thorough cast of mind were sufficiently numerous all over the country to cause the Scott-Russell scheme to fall through. Most of the workmen who were allured by it were comparatively young men who did not know that the same sort of alliance had been canvassed by English politicians before they were born and had been stoutly resisted. Mr. Scott-Russell was alike unknown to the working people

* "British Co-operator." Page 154.

either as their friend or teacher. He had given no fortune, incurred no sacrifices, spent no great portion of his life in serving them. Mr. Owen had done all these things, and yet he failed to cancel their party preferences and extinguish their political principles and self-respect.

Mr. Owen's early followers were looked upon with shyness or distrust by the Radical party, although he numbered among his active disciples many of the most invincible adherents of that school; but they saw in Mr. Owen's views a means of realising social benefits in which they though Radicals were also interested, and which they believed they could compass without forfeiting their principles, and they stood up for both things. On the other hand, Mr. Owen looked on Radicals and Conservatives alike as instruments of realising his views, and seems not to have regarded any opinion save his own, and to have estimated Conservatism and Radicalism alike as pardonable eccentricities of the human mind. He seems to have imagined that the principles of social welfare would supersede all others, and he appealed to both parties in parliament with the same confidence and the same impartiality to place their names upon his committee; and remonstrated with one party or the other just as he found it deficient in social enterprise. He went one day with Mrs. Fry to see the prisoners in Newgate. The boys were mustered at Mrs. Fry's request for his inspection. Mr. Owen published in the newspapers what he thought of the sight he beheld. He exclaimed: "A collection of boys and youths, with scarcely the appearance of human beings in their countenances; the most evident sign that the government to which they belong had not performed any part of its duty towards them. For instance: there was one boy, only sixteen years of age, double ironed! Here a great crime had been committed and a severe punishment is inflicted, which under a system of proper training and prevention would not have taken place." He then

apostrophised one whose name has never ceased to be hateful to Radical ears: "My Lord Sidmouth will forgive me, for he knows I intend no personal offence. His dispositions are known to be mild and amiable; but the chief civil magistrate of the country, in such case, is far more guilty than the boy; and in strict justice, if a system of coercion and punishment be rational and necessary, he ought rather to have been double ironed and in the place of the juvenile prisoner."

When Mr. Owen applied personally to Lord Liverpool, then prime minister, for permission to place his own name with the leading names of the members of the then opposition, to investigate his communistic plans, Lord Liverpool answered: "Mr. Owen, you have liberty to do so. You may make use of our names in any way you choose for the objects you have in view, short of committing us as an administration." The next day Mr. Owen held a public meeting to propose a committee of leading members of both sides of the house. It was as numerously and respectably attended as any perhaps ever held within doors in London. "I proposed," Mr. Owen has related, "that these important subjects should be submitted for consideration to the leading members of the administration and of the opposition; and for several hours it was the evident wish of three-fourths of the meeting that this question should be carried in the affirmative. But as it was supposed by the Radical reformers of that day that I was acting for and with the ministry they collected all their strength to oppose my measures; and finding they were greatly in the minority they determined to prolong the meeting by opposing speeches, until the patience of the friends of the measure proposed should be worn out. Accordingly, the late Major Cartwright, Mr. Alderman Waithman, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Hone, and others, spoke against time, until the principal parties retired, and until my misguided opponents could bring up their numerous supporters among

the working classes, who were expected to arrive after they had finished their daily occupations; and at a late hour in the day the room became occupied by many of the friends and supporters of those gentlemen who well knew how to obtain their object at public meetings by throwing it into confusion."* The wonderful committee Mr. Owen proposed comprised all the chief public men of the day, who never had acted together on any question, and unless the millennium had really arrived—of which there was no evidence before the meeting—it was not likely that they would. This was the resolution submitted to the meeting: "That the following noblemen and gentlemen be appointed on the committee, with power to add to their number:—

The First Lord of the Treasury.
The Lord Chancellor.
Sir Robert Peel, the Secretary of State for Domestic Affairs.
Sir George Murray.
Sir Henry Hardinge.
The Chancellor of the Exchequer.
The Attorney and Solicitor General.
The Master of the Mint.
The Secretary of War.
The President of the Board of Trade.
The First Lord of the Admiralty.
The Duke of Sussex.
The Duke of Richmond.
The Earl of Winchelsea.
The Earl of Harewood.
The Marquis of Lansdowne.
Lords Grosvenor and Holland.
Lord Eldon.
Lord Sidmouth.
Lord Radnor.
Lord Carnarvon.
The Archbishops of Canterbury and York.
The Bishops of London and Peterborough.
Deans of Westminster and York.
Cardinal Wild and Dr. Croly.
William Allen and Joseph Foster.
Mr. Rothschild and Mr. J. L. Goldsmid.
Lord Althorp.
Mr. Brougham.
Sir J. Graham.
Sir Henry Parnell.
Mr. Spring Rice.
Lord John Russell.
Sir John Newport.
Sir James Mackintosh.
Mr. Denman.
Mr. Alexander Baring.
Mr. Hume.
Mr. O'Connell.
Mr. Charles Grant.
Mr. Wilmot Horton.
Mr. Huskisson.
Lord Palmerston.
Mr. J. Smith.
Lord Nugent.
The Hon. G. Stanley.
Lord Milton.
Sir R. Inglish.
Sir Francis Burdett.
Mr. William Smith.
Mr. Warburton.
Mr. Hobhouse.
Dr. Birkbeck.
Mr. Owen."

* "British Co-operator." Page 152.

There was this merit belonging to the proposal, that such an amazing committee was never thought possible by any other human being than Mr. Owen. Even common people of the slightest sense must have considered him a political lunatic. Ministers were to forsake the cabinet councils, prelates the church, judges the courts; the business of army, navy, and parliament was to be suspended, while men who did not know each other, and who not only had no principles in common but did not want to have, sat down with heretics, revolutionists, and Quakers, to confer as to the adoption of a system by which they were all to be superseded. It was quite unpardonable in Major Cartwright and Alderman Waithman to oppose the mad motion. The meeting of such a committee would have been the most wondrous and entertaining affair of their time.

Though Mr. Owen seldom succeeded he was never diverted, and he went on with his appeal to the people, as the reader will see in many facts to be recounted. Despite his alleged heresy and political indifference he was, as the great Corn Law Rhymer's address to him proved, well regarded by the people. Mr. Owen had the distinction of being the only gentleman of his time who had earned great riches with his own hands, and yet spent his wealth without stint in the service of the people; and it is amusing to see that reverence with which the sons of equality regarded him because he was rich. His name was printed in all the publications with all the distinction of italics and capitals as the *Great Philanthropist* OWEN; and there are disciples of his still living who regard the present greatness of Co-operation as a tame and timid device, as a mere lingering introduction to the system of the great master whom they still cite as a sort of sacred name. It was a very subdued way of speaking of him to find him described as the "Benevolent Founder of our Social Views."

Propagandist activity.

Long years after he had "retired from public life" his activity far exceeded that of most people who were in it, as a few dates of Mr. Owen's movements will show. On July 10, 1838, he left London for Wisbeach. On the three next nights he lectured in Lynn, the two following nights in Peterborough. On the next day at Wisbeach again. The next night he was again in Peterborough, where, after a late discussion, he left at midnight with Mr. James Hill, the editor of the *Star in the East*, in an open carriage, which did not arrive at Wisbeach till half-past two. He was up before five o'clock the same morning, left before six for Lynn, to catch the coach for Norwich at eight. After seeing deputations from Yarmouth he lectured in St. Andrew's Hall at night and the following night, and lectured five nights more in succession at March, Wisbeach, and Boston. It was his activity and his ready expenditure which gave ascendency to the social agitation, both in England and America also to a great extent, from 1820 to 1844.

# CHAPTER VII.

## THE ENTHUSIASTIC PERIOD. 1820-1830.

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
> He stared on the Pacific; and his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise,
> Silent upon a peak in Darien.—*Keats.*

THE enchanted wonder which Keats describes in this famed sonnet, on first finding in Chapman's Homer the vigorous Greek texture of the great bard, was akin to that "wild surmise" with which the despairing sons of industry first gazed on that new world of Co-operation then made clear to their view.

To the social reformers of fifty years ago the world itself seemed moving in the direction of social colonies. Not only was America under weigh for the millennium of co-operative life—even prosaic, calculating, utilitarian Scotland was setting sail. France had put out to sea years before under Commander Fourier; though it is true nobody well knew what port of Passional Attraction he was bound for. A letter arrived from Brussels, bearing date October 2nd, 1825, addressed to the "Gentlemen of the London Co-operative Society," telling them that the Permanent Committee of the Society of Beneficence had colonial establishments at Wortzel and at Murxplus Ryckewvorsel, in the province of Antwerp, where 725 farm houses were already built; that 76 were inhabited by free colonists; and that they had a contract with the government for the suppression of mendicants,

and had already 455 of those interesting creatures collected from the various regions of beggardom in a depôt, where 1,000 could be accommodated. No wonder there was exultation in Red Lion Square when the squab-built, slow-moving, dreamy-eyed, much-smoking Dutch were spreading their old-fashioned canvas in search of the new world. From 1820 to 1830 Co-operation and communities were regarded by the thinking classes, high and low, who turned their attention to social questions as a religion of industry. Communities, the form which the religion of industry was to take, were from 1825 to 1830 as common and almost as frequently announced as joint-stock companies now are. In 1826, April brought news that proposals were issued for establishing a community near Exeter—to be called the Devon and Exeter Co-operative Society. Gentlemen of good family and local repute, such as could not now be got in England to look at a community project through one of Lord Rosse's long range telescopes, gave open aid to the proposal. Two public meetings were held in Exeter in May, at the Swan Tavern. The Hon. Lionel Dawson presided on both occasions. Such was the enthusiasm about the new system that more than four hundred persons were willing to come forward with sums of £5 to £10; one hundred others were prepared to take shares at £25 each; and two or three promised aid to the extent of £2,000. Meetings in favour of this project were held at Tiverton, and in the Mansion House, Bridgewater. The zeal was real and did not delay. In July the promoters bought 37 acres of land within seven miles of Exeter. A gardener, a carpenter, a quarrier (there being a stone quarry on the estate), a drainer, a well-sinker, a clay temperer, and a moulder were at once set to work.

The Metropolitan Co-operative Society, not to be behind when the provinces were going forward, put forth a plan for establishing a community within fifty miles

of London. Shares were taken up and £4,000 subscribed also in 1826. There was a wise fear of prematurity of proceeding shown, and there was also an infatuation of confidence exhibited in many ways. However, the society soberly put out an advertisement to landholders, saying, "Wanted to rent, with a view to purchase, or on a long lease, from 500 to 2,000 acres of good land, in one or several contiguous farms; the distance from London not material if the offer is eligible." Information was to be sent to Mr. J. Corss, Red Lion Square. Four years earlier Scotland, a country not at all prone to utopian projects not likely to pay, entertained the idea of community before Orbiston was named. The *Economist* announced that the subscriptions for the formation of one of the new villages at Motherwell, though the public had not been appealed to, amounted to £20,000.* It may be that the events of this period will be more intelligible related in their chronological order.

Eighteen hundred and twenty-six was a famous year for communistic projects. A Dublin Co-operative Society was formed on the 28th February, at a meeting held at the Freemasons' Tavern, Dawson-street, Dublin. Captain O'Brien, R.N., occupied the chair. Though society was fifty years nearer the French Revolution than it is now, public men were not so afraid as they are at present of social ideas of continental repute. Better regarded, more ambitious, and self-confident than any co-operative society in these days, the Dublin Co-operative Society invited Lord Cloncurry to dine with them. His lordship regretted he was unable to do so owing to a previous engagement, and wrote to say that he was more fully convinced than he was four years ago of the great advantage it would be to Ireland to establish co-operative villages on Mr. Owen's plan, and spoke of Mr. Owen in curious terms

* *Economist.* No. 27, July, 1821

as the "benevolent and highly-respectable Owen." This was nine years after Mr. Owen had astounded mankind by his famous London declaration "against all the religions of the world."*

The chief events of this period which concern the reader took place pretty much as follow in the order of time.

Two years before the *Economist* appeared, as the first serial advocate of Co-operation, pamphleteers were in the field on behalf of social improvement. Mr. Owen certainly had the distinction of inspiring many writers. One "Philanthropos" published in 1819 a powerful pamphlet on the "Practicability of Mr. Owen's plan to improve the condition of the lower classes." It was inscribed to William Wilberforce (father of the late Bishop of Winchester), whom the writer considered to be "intimately associated with every subject involving the welfare of mankind," and one who "regarded political measures abstractedly from the individuals with whom they originated." Mr. Wilberforce, he said, had shown that "Christianity steps beyond the narrow bound of national advantage in quest of universal good, and does not prompt us to love our country at the expense of our integrity."†

The *Economist*, mentioned before in Chapter V., was concluded in January, 1822. It was of the small magazine size, and was the neatest and most business-looking journal issued in connection with Co-operation for many years. After the 32nd number the quality and taste of the printing fell off. Some irregularity in its issue occurred. Mr. Owen was frequently abroad, and its conductor appears to have been unequal to his duties. He explained in the 51st number that its printing had been put into the hands of the Co-operative and Economical Society, which was then in

* *Co-operative Magazine*, 1826, p. 147.

† These were Bishop Watson's own words, adopted by "Philanthropos."

successful action, "and that it would continue to be regularly executed by them in a more correct manner than some of the late numbers." With the 52nd number the *Economist* was discontinued, without any explanation being given. It was bound in two volumes, and sold at 7s. each in boards. Many numbers purported to be "published every Saturday morning, by Mr. Wright, bookseller, No. 46, Fleet-street, London, where the trade and newsmen may be supplied, and where orders, communications to the editor, post paid, are respectfully requested to be addressed." Early numbers bore the name of G. Auld, Greville-street. With No. 22 the names appear of J. and C. Adlard, Bartholomew Close. With No. 32 the imprint is "G. Mudie, printer"—no address. This was the period of the bad printing. After No. 51 the intimation is "Printed at the Central House of the Co-operative and Economical Society, No. 1, Guilford-street East, Spafields." The co-operative printers give their address boldly; as I hope they will always be able to do.

Mr. Pare, who was at his death in 1873 the oldest and best informed co-operator in England, and whom I had opportunity of consulting, told me in 1872, in answer to my inquiry, that he did not know who was the editor of the *Economist*. Mr. Francis Place, who not only knew more than any other man of his time of working-class literature, but made notes of what he knew, wrote on his copy of the *Economist*, which lies before me, the name of "Robert Owen." Mr. Place bound his books with his own hands in boards with white parchment backs, on which he wrote the names of the authors and the leading contents of the volume. The *Economist* stood on Mr. Place's library shelves for more than thirty years, obvious to all visitors, and Mr. Owen must often have seen it; and would, judging from his candid habit, have mentioned the error to Mr. Place, had it been one. Twelve years later, when the *Gazette of the Exchange*

*Bazaars* was started, a fly-leaf was issued, which Mr. Place also preserved, bearing a rude diagram of the classes into which society was divided, the privileged and petty portion converging round the throne; a favourite device of Mr. Owen's, which he afterwards reproduced with many elaborations; it stated, "This work will be conducted by the individual who founded the first of the co-operative societies in London, 1820, and who edited the *Economist*, in 1821-22, the *Political Economist and Universal Philanthropist*, in 1823, the *Advocate of the Working Classes*, in 1826-27; and who has besides lectured upon the principles to be discussed in the forthcoming publication (*The Exchange Bazaars Gazette*), in various parts of Great Britain. He enters on his undertaking, therefore, after having been prepared for his task by previous and long-continued researches." This writing, lecturing, and travelling would be equally descriptive of Mr. Owen; and if the narrator was not he, he was one who had caught his grand style. As Mr. Owen, though the cause of co-operative societies arising, never thought much of them, regarding grocers' shops as ignominious substitutes for the reconstruction of the world—this writer whose name never directly transpired, and who was a man of education, was possibly the editor of the *Economist*, but Mr. Owen was the controlling mind and chief writer and inspirer of its contents, warranting Mr. Place in putting his name upon it.

The dedication of the *Economist* was made to those persons precisely whom Mr. Owen had been associated with. It was thus expressed:—

"To Mr. John Maxwell, Lord Archibald Hamilton, Sir William de Crespigny, Bart., Mr. Dawson, Mr. Henry Brougham, Mr. H. Gurney, and Mr. William Smith, the philanthropic members of the House of Commons, who, on the motion of Mr. Maxwell, on the 26th of June, 1821, for an address to the throne, praying that a commission might be appointed to investigate

Mr. Owen's system, had the courage and consistency, under the sole influence of benevolent principles, to advocate a system so generally derided by ignorance and prejudice, this volume, a humble but sincere endeavour to serve the same great and good cause, is inscribed, in testimony of heartfelt respect and gratitude for their enlightened and humane conduct, by THE ECONOMIST."

It was a prophetic felicity that the very first periodical, an organ of co-operative societies, should bear the title of *Economist*—economy being the first recognised feature of Co-operation, its greatest commercial recommendation, and the one most likely to commend it to a practical people like the English—and the most prominent feature of the system in which co-operators have, as a body, always agreed upon and about.

The earliest name of literary note connected with Co-operation was that of Mr. William Thompson. He was an abler man than John Gray. Though an Irishman, he was singularly dispassionate. He possessed fortune and studious habits. He resided some years with Jeremy Bentham, and the methodical arrangement of his chief work, the "Distribution of Wealth," betrays Bentham's literary influence. This work was written in 1822. In 1825 he published "An Appeal of one-half the human race—Women—against the pretensions of the other half—Men." It was a reply to James Mill—to a paragraph in his famous "Article on Government." Mr. Thompson issued, in 1827, "Labour Rewarded," in which he explained the possibility of conciliating the claims of labour and capital and securing to workmen the "whole products of their exertions." This last work showed the growth of practical judgment for which he was distinguished; it consisted of business-like "Directions for the Establishment of Co-operative Communities." These "directions" were accompanied by elaborate plans and tables, and was really a most

exhaustive work. A moderate number of pioneers might, with that book in their hand, found a colony or begin a new world. He consulted personally Robert Owen, Mr. Hamilton (whom he speaks of as an authority), Andrew Combe, and others who had had experience in community making. Jeremy Bentham's wonderful constitutions, which he was accustomed to furnish to foreign states, were evidently in the mind of his disciple, Mr. Thompson, when he compiled this closely-printed octavo volume of nearly three hundred pages. He placed on his title page a motto from *Le Producteur*: "The age of Gold, Happiness, which a blind credulity has placed in times past is before us." His elaborateness in his "Distribution of Wealth" was out of place. The world did not want an argument in favour of distribution through the medium of communities, it wanted to see the thing done. It did not desire, like Diogenes, to have motion proved, it wanted to see something set going, but in practical directions for forming communities exhaustive instructions were precisely the things needed. Where every step was new and every combination unknown, Thompson wrote a book like a steam engine, marvellous in the scientific adjustments of its parts. Where the object was conviction this did very well; but where men were unwilling to read at all some elements of human interest were indispensable. Mr. Thompson's "Distribution of Wealth" is the best exposition to which reference can be made of the pacific and practical nature of English communism. He was a solid but far from a lively writer. It requires a sense of duty to read through his book—curiosity is not sufficient. Political economists in Thompson's day held, as Mr. Senior has expressed it, that "It is not with *happiness* but with *wealth* that I am concerned as a political economist." Thompson's idea was "to enquire into the principles of the distribution of wealth *most conducive to human happiness*." His life was an answer to those who hold that

socialism implies sensualism. For the last twenty years of his life he neither partook of animal food nor intoxicating drinks, because he could better pursue his literary labours without them. He left his body for dissection—a bold thing to do in his time—a useful thing to do in order to break somewhat through the prejudices of the ignorant against dissection for surgical ends. Compliance with his wish nearly led to a riot among the peasantry of the neighbourhood of Clonnkeen, Rosscarbery, County of Cork, where he died.

Another early and memorable name in co-operative history is that of Abram Combe. It is very rarely that a person of any other nationality dominates the mind of a Scotchman: but Mr. Owen, though a Welshman, did this by Abram Combe, who, in 1823, published a small book named "Old and New Systems"—a work excelling in capital letters. This was one of Mr. Combe's earliest but not happiest statements of his master's views, which he reproduced with the fidelity which Dumont showed to Bentham, but with less ability. There were three Combes—George, Abram, and Andrew. All were distinguished in their way, but George the most so, and became the best known. George Combe was the phrenologist who made a reputation by writing the "Constitution of Man," though he had borrowed without acknowledgment the conception from Gall and Spurzheim, especially Spurzheim, who had published an original little book on the "Laws of Human Nature;" but to George Combe belonged the merit which belonged to Archdeacon Paley with respect to the argument from design. Combe restated, animated, and enlarged into an impressive volume what before was fragmentary, slender, suggestive, but without the luminous force of illustrative facts and practical applications which Combe supplied. The second brother, Dr. Andrew Combe, had all the talent of the family for exposition, and his works upon physiology were the first in interest and popularity

of their time; but Abram had more sentiment than both the others put together, and ultimately sacrificed himself as well as his fortune in endeavours to realise the new social views in practice.

In 1824 Robert Dale Owen (Mr. Owen's eldest son) appeared as an author for the first time. His book was entitled "An Outline of the System of Education at New Lanark." It was published by Longman & Co., London, written at New Lanark, 1823. It was dedicated to his father. The author, who is still living, must have been a young man fifty years ago.* Yet his book shows completeness of thought and that clear and graceful expression by which, beyond all co-operative writers, Robert Dale Owen was subsequently distinguished. His outline is better worth printing now than many books on New Lanark which have appeared, it gives so interesting a description of the construction of the schools, the methods and principles of tuition pursued. The subjects taught to the elder classes were the earth (its animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms), astronomy, geography, mathematics, zoology, botany, mineralogy, agriculture, manufactures, architecture, drawing, music, chemistry, and ancient and modern history. The little children were occupied with elementary education, military drill, and dancing, at which Mr. Owen's Quaker partners were much discomforted. The schoolrooms were picture galleries and museums. Learning ceased to be a task and a terror and became a wonder and delight. When the reader thinks of the beggarly education given by this wealthy English nation, under its school boards, and the miserable conditions by which it is accompanied, he will feel admiration of the princely mind of Robert Owen, who gave to the children of weavers this magnificent scheme of instruction. No manufacturer has arisen in England so great as he.

* His "Autobiography," since published, states that his age was twenty-two, and that this was his first work.

## The London Co-operative Society.

The London Co-operative Society was formally commenced in October, 1824. It occupied rooms in Burton-street, Burton Crescent. This quiet, and at that time pleasant and suburban, street was quite a nursery ground of new-world principles. Then, as now, it had no carriage way at either end. In the house at the Tavistock Place corner lived for many years James Pierrepoint Greaves, the famous mystic who afterwards troubled the co-operative mind greatly. As secluded Burton-street was too much out of the way for the convenience of large assemblages, the discussions commenced by the society there were transferred to the Crown and Rolls Rooms, in Chancery Lane. Here overflowing audiences met—political economists seem to have been the principal opponents; and however wild their adversaries may have seemed certainly the political economists were wilder, for their chief argument against the new system was the Malthusian doctrine against "the tendency of population to press against the means of subsistence," which, whether true or not, had nothing to do with the co-operative system, since excess of population could be more easily regulated when society was a science than when it was a chaos.

In the month of April, 1825, the London Co-operative Society hired a first-floor in Picket-street, Temple Bar, for the private meetings of members, who were much increasing at that time. In November of the same year, 1825, the society took the house No. 36, Red Lion Square. Mr. J. Corss was the secretary. The London Co-operative Society held weekly debates, but generally upon subjects that had small relation to any practical business. One constant topic was the position taken by Mr. Owen—that man is not properly the subject of praise or blame, reward or punishment. It also conducted bazaars for the sale of goods manufactured by the provincial societies. The announcement of their sales was not always made with judgment. Thinking only

of themselves the managers of the co-operative bazaar thought little of local honour or trade pride, and spoke of goods sent up by the first Birmingham co-operative society as "Brummagem ware;" and this they put in the report of the fourth quarterly meeting of the British Association for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge. If the ware was not good Birmingham workmanship the co-operators there were discreditable for producing it, and the bazaar committee were wanting in judgment in accepting it for sale.

At New Harmony, Indiana, David Dale Owen, writing to his father, related that they had debates there, and Mary and Jane, daughters or daughters-in-law of Mr. Owen, both addressed the meetings on several occasions. After all the discourses or lectures opportunity of discussion and questioning was uniformly and everywhere afforded; a right but dangerous practice—as right things generally are when first attempted.

There was a "Newgate Monthly Magazine, or Calendar of Men, Things, and Opinions" published in 1825; price 1s. The title suggested a Newgate Calendar—of scoundrels, which was also published; but Liberals never hesitate to adopt an unhappy name for their publications. This "Magazine" objected to Mr. Owen's system, because, in Byron's words,

> It breeds more mouths than it nourishes.

The second serial journal representing Co-operation appeared in America, though its inspiration was English. It was the *New Harmony Gazette.* There was a dash of sentimentality in the motto of this *Gazette* set up to represent and record proceedings there. It was: "If we cannot reconcile all opinions let us endeavour to unite all hearts"—an absurd undertaking, in no sense possible until some one has found out how to reconcile all interests. This endeavour of reconciling interests did lie a little in the co-operative way; and while they

had this work on hand they really had no time for attempting the other thing. Divided interests are always producing divided hearts.

The recommencement of the people's co-operative publication in England took place in 1826. The first was entitled the "Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald," and appeared in January. It was "printed by Whiting and Branston, Beaufort House, Strand," and "published by Knight and Lacey, Watt's Head, Paternoster Row." It purported to be "sold by J. Templeman, 39, Tottenham Court Road; and also at the office of the London Co-operative Society, 36, Red Lion Square." The second number of this magazine was published by Hunt and Clarke, Tavistock-street. A change in the publisher occurred very early, and additional agents were announced as J. Sutherland, Calton-street, Edinburgh; R. Griffin & Co., Hutchinson-street, Glasgow; J. Bolstead, Cork; and A. M. Graham, College Green, Dublin. The third number announced a change in the Cork publisher; J. Loftus, of 107, Patrick-street, succeeded Mr. Bolstead, and a new store, the "Orbiston Store," was for the first time named.* The co-operative writers of this magazine were not wanting in candour even at their own expense. Mr. Charles Clark relates that while one of the New Harmony philosophers was explaining to a stranger the beauties of a system which dispensed with rewards and punishments, he observed a boy who approved of the system busily helping himself to the finest plums in his garden.

* I preserve the names and addresses of the earlier societies' printers and publishers. It is always interesting to know the places where historic movements first commenced and the persons by whose aid, or enthusiasm, or courage the first publicity was given to them. It would tire the reader to recount all persons and places concerned, but would surprise him to find that every part of London has been dotted with shops where they were printed and sold, with coffee shops where they were discussed, and with printing offices where the struggling publications were carried to be printed when one house after another had declined to print any more.

Forgetting his argument, he seized the nearest stick at hand and castigated the young thief in a very instructive manner.*

The worthy editor of the "Co-operative Magazine" did not know at all when he was being hoaxed, or his principles quizzed. In his first number he gravely reviews a grand plan of one James Hamilton, for rendering "Owenism Consistent with our Civil and Religious Institutions." His proposal is to begin the new world with one hundred tailors, who are to be unmarried and all of them handsome of person. Hamilton, who was either mad or a satirical knave, had a splendid burlesque of Mr. Owen's mechanical system of society. Anticipating by many years the political expedient of this time, Mr. Hamilton proposed to marry all the handsome tailors by ballot. His plan was to advertise that he was ready to receive five hundred girls from sixteen to twenty years of age; as the Mormons' prophet had not then appeared, why he wanted five hundred young women to match the hundred tailors is not made clear. These five hundred girls were to be virtuous and beautiful, and not under five feet one inch in height. After they had undergone a course of education under the direction of Mr. Hamilton and the females of his family and assistants who are not otherwise described, they were to be assembled in a great hall serving for a church, where they were to stand on one side veiled in uniform dresses. On the other side the handsome tailors, stature not given, paraded in the costume of Hamiltonian invention.† After sermon and prayer the head partner and minister, assisted by foremen of all the committees, were to put the written names of the men in one box

* Private Letter from New Harmony, 1825. "Co-operative Magazine." Vol. I., No. I., p. 50. 1826.

† This eccentric caricaturist had evidently been borrowing what he could from "Plato's Republic," except that Plato does not particularise *tailors* as the foundation of his model state.

and those of the girls in another. The head partner was then to mix the male names and the minister the female names, and each to draw one out and proclaim it aloud. The minister was immediately to draw out the name of a girl from his box; the interesting couple were then to receive these unpremeditated tickets of marriage and be requested to consider themselves united by decision of heaven. They then walk out on to a lawn to consult together, and if content with their lottery lovers the perplexing business of marriage was over. If they were not content they returned their tickets to the boxes and drew their connubial fortunes again. If any remained unmated the Hamiltonian society kindly gave them another chance at a future day. By this economical arrangement young couples were saved all the anxiety of selection, loss of time in wooing, the suspense of soliciting the approval of parents or guardians; and the distraction of courtship, sighs, tears, smiles, doubts, fears, jealousies, expectations, disappointments, hope and despair were all avoided by this compendious arrangement. How any editor, not himself an out-patient of a lunatic asylum, could have occupied pages of the "Co-operative Magazine" by giving publication to such a derisive scheme it is idle to conjecture. The reason probably was that the Mr. Hamilton was he of Dalzell, who joined Mr. Abram Combe in the purchase of Orbiston for £20,000, and who offered to let lands at Motherwell for a community, and to guarantee the repayment of £40,000 to be expended on the erection of the buildings. Of course such a person had a right to be heard, but the editor was not bound to go mad with admiration. In his place he had to represent the reputation and common sense of the party.

Apart from the eccentric views which we have recounted (if indeed they were his) Mr. Hamilton was distinguished for the great interest he took in co-operative progress and the munificence by which he assisted

it. In the projected community of Motherwell he was joined by several eminent men, who had reason to believe that a large and well-supported co-operative colony might be made remunerative, beside affording to the government of the day a practical example of what might be done. Several gentlemen in England subscribed many thousands each in furtherance of this project. Mr. Morrison, of the well-known firm of Morrison and Dillon, was one of those who put down his name for £5,000. When his son—Mr. Walter Morrison, the late member for Plymouth—was accused in the interest of shopkeepers among his constituents of aiding and abetting Co-operation, he said that he had only trodden in the footsteps of his father before him. But, reading a "Life of Owen," he found that he had at one time subscribed £5,000 towards some great co-operative project in his day, and his father's interests they knew were bound up with shopkeepers, whom he did not believe could be imperilled by promoting measures which must advance the general welfare.

The "Co-operative Magazine" of 1826, was adorned by an engraving of Mr. Owen's quadrilateral community out there. The scenery around it was mountainous and tropical. The said scenery in the imaginative picture was intended to represent Indiana, where Mr. Owen had bought land—the community land in question—with a view to introduce the new world in America. Mr. A. Brisbane prefixes to his translation of Fourier's "Destiny of Man" the Fourier conception of a phalanstere. Mr. Owen's design of a community greatly excelled the phalanstere in completeness and beauty. Mr. A. Combe exhibited designs of his Scotch community at Orbiston, but Mr. Owen had the most luxuriant imagination this way. Artists who came near him to execute commissions soon discovered that the materialist philosopher, as they imagined him, had no mean taste for the ideal.

It would fare ill with Co-operation if judged alone by its poetry. One of its earliest efforts is quoted in this magazine from the *New Harmony Gazette*. The poet breaks out:—

Ah! soon will come that glorious day,
Inscrib'd on Mercy's brow,
When Truth shall rend the veil away
That blinds the nations now.

When Earth no more in anxious fear
And misery shall sigh;
But pain shall cease, and every tear
Be wip'd from every eye.

The race of man shall wisdom learn,
And Error cease to reign:
The charms of innocence return,
And all be new again.

The fount of life shall then be quaff'd
In peace by all that come;
And every wind that blows shall waft
Some wandering mortal home.

We have no intimation how the poet came to know that the veil-rending day was soon coming. "Mercy" has had the inscription so badly done upon her brow that nobody has been able to read the date. In the second verse the poet supposes that there are "tears in every eye." Things are not so bad as that. There are a great number of people who have managed to do the wiping for themselves, and are now employed in bringing tears into the eyes of others with, evidently, profit and satisfaction to themselves. In the third verse the poet expects a grand renovation in public affairs, when "all is to be new again;" he does not, however, tell us when the "charms of innocence are to return," seeing that the world in these parts has progressed from the hungry stage, and there is very little innocence where there is nothing to eat. But the poet is more satisfactory in the last verse. He reserves all his strength to put it forth there The very "fount itself of life is to be quaff'd,"

and all the members of the community at large are to go to heaven at irregular times by meteorological arrangement.

The co-operators very early opened their pages to protest against principles, and, with the imbecility of impartiality paid for the printing and publishing of libels against themselves which not only defiled their pages but were outrages upon self-respecting adherents. Lamarck's theory of the "Origin of Species" was introduced into the August number of the "Co-operative Magazine"—a harmless subject certainly, but one that was theologically mischievous for forty years after that time. "Scripture Politics" was another topic with which co-operators afflicted themselves. They could say nothing upon that subject which was not likely to bring them to grief. In the September number "Phrenology," another terror of the clergy, appears. Discussions upon marriage followed, but, as the co-operators never contemplated anything but equal opportunities of divorce for rich and poor, the subject was as irrelevant as it was dangerous. Nothing can better testify the political and social harmlessness of these men than the craze of good-nature under which they laboured. They actually published papers on the "Unhappiness of the Higher Orders,"* proving it and providing remedies for it, as though that was any business of theirs. If the higher orders had unhappiness the co-operators could not mitigate it, nor would their offices be accepted if they could. It was time enough to sigh over the griefs of the rich when they had secured the gladness of the poor. Where one opulent man commits suicide because he has too much a thousand poor die by their own hands because they have nothing. The philanthropy of these reconstructors of the world seemed almost a disease. Yet, though they were thus gratuitously and therefore foolishly concerned

* "Co-operative Magazine," No. III.

about the "Unhappiness of the Higher Orders," both statesmen and prelates thought it their duty to assail and censure them. The imbecility of the people after all seems wisdom compared with the imbecility of governments and churches.

In those days a practical agitator (Carlile), who had the sense and courage to undergo long years of imprisonment to free the press, thought the world was to be put right by a science of "Somatopsychonoologia."* There were co-operators—Allen Davenport, the simple-hearted ardent advocate of agrarian views, among them—who were prepared to undertake this nine-syllabled study.

Every crotchet here runs at the heels of a new party of pioneers, and these associationists, who had heresies enough of their own to answer for, opened their pages to advocate the "Civil Rights of Women," to which they were inclined from a sense of justice; and the advocates of that question will find some interesting reading in co-operative literature. Their pages were open to protest against the game laws. The "Co-operative Magazine" gave almost as much space to the discussion of the ranunculus, the common buttercup, as it did to the "new system of society." The medical botanists very early got at the poor co-operators. A co-operative society was considered a sort of free museum, or a market place, where everybody could deposit specimens of his notions for inspection or sale.

In 1827, a gentleman who commanded great respect in his day, Mr. Julian Hibbert, printed a circular at his own press on behalf of the "Co-operative Fund Association." He avowed himself as "seriously devoted to the system of Mr. Owen:" and Hibbert was a man who meant all he said and who knew how to say exactly what he meant. Here is one brief appeal by him to the people, remarkable for justness of thought and vigorous

* A Greek compound, expressing a knowledge of body, soul, and mind.

directness of language: "Would you be free? be worthy of freedom: mental liberty is the pledge of political liberty. Unlearn your false knowledge, and endeavour to obtain real knowledge. Look around you; compare all things; know your own dignity; correct your vicious habits; renounce superfluities; despise idleness, drunkenness, gambling, and fighting; guard against false friends; and learn to *think* (and if possible to *act*) independently." This language shows the rude materials out of which co-operators had sometimes to be made. In personal appearance Julian Hibbert strikingly resembled Shelley. He had at least the courage, the gentleness, and generosity of the poet. Hibbert was a gentleman of fortune, and reputed one of the best Greek scholars of his day. Being called upon to give evidence on a trial in London, he honestly declined to take the oath on the ground that he was an atheist, and was treated in a ruffianly manner by the eloquent and notorious Charles Phillips, who was not a man of delicate scruples himself, being afterwards accused of endeavouring to fix the guilt of murdering Lord William Russell upon an innocent man after Couvoisier had confessed his guilt to him. Mr. Hibbert was so outraged by Phillips's treatment of him that he died in a few days after. The courage and generosity of Hibbert was shown in many things. He visited Carlile when confined in Dorchester Gaol for heresy, and on learning that a political prisoner there had been visited by some friend of position who had given him £1,000, Hibbert at once said: "It shall not appear, Mr. Carlile, that you are less esteemed for vindicating the less popular liberty of conscience. I will give you £1,000." It was not only in words to this effect that Mr. Hibbert spoke, but he gave Mr. Carlile the money there and then. It was Mr. Hibbert's desire in the event of his death that his body should be at the service of the Royal College of Surgeons, being another of those gentlemen who thought it useful by his own

example to break down the prejudice of the poor against their remains being in some cases serviceable to physiological science. It is not pleasant now to tell at this distance of time by what subtlety and boldness this object was partly carried out in Mr. Hibbert's case. Some portion of Mr. Hibbert's fortune came into possession of Mrs. Captain Grenfell, a handsome wild Irish lady after the order of Lady Morgan, though not of her brilliant abilities. Mr. Hibbert's intentions, however, seem to have been pretty faithfully carried out, for so long as thirty years after his death I was aware of five and ten pound notes occasionally and mysteriously percolating into the hands of one or other unfriended advocates of unpopular forms of political, social, and heretical liberty—who resembled the apostles at least in one respect—they had "neither purse nor scrip."

During 1827, and two years later, the "Co-operative Magazine" was issued as a sixpenny monthly. All the publications of this period, earlier and later, were advertised as being obtainable at 19, Greville-street, Hatton Garden, then a co-operative centre, and at co-operative stores in town and country. If all stores sold the publication it would prove that they better understood the value of special co-operative literature than many of them do now.

It was on May 1, 1828, that the first publication appeared entitled "The Co-operator." It was a small paper of four pages only, issued monthly at one penny. It resembled a halfpenny two-leaved tract. The whole edition printed would hardly have cost more than ten shillings weekly if none were sold.* It was continued for twenty-six months, ceasing on August 1, 1830. The twenty-six numbers consisted of twenty-six papers, all

* It bore as printer's name Sickelmore, Brighton. The last number (the first that bore any publisher's name) gave that of Taylor and Son, North-street, same town. It was always to be had at the Co-operative Bazaar, 19, Greville-street, Hatton Garden, London.

written by the editor, Dr. King, who stated that they were concluded because "the object for which they were commenced had been attained. The principles of Co-operation had been disseminated among the working classes and made intelligible to them." This was not true twenty years later, but everybody was sanguine in those days, and saw the things which were not more clearly than the things which were.* The chief cause of failure which the editor specifies as having overtaken some co-operative societies was defect in account keeping. Of course, as credit was customary in the early stores, accounts would be the weakest point with workmen. Dr. King wrote to Lord (then Henry) Brougham, M.P., an account of the Brighton co-operators. Lord Brougham asked Mr. M. D. Hill to bring the matter of Co-operation before the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Timid members on the council were afraid of it, as many councils are still. It would have been one of the most memorable papers of that famous society had they treated this subject. They never did treat any original subject, and this would have been one.

Mr. Craig, who had extensive personal knowledge of early societies, states that one was formed at Bradford in 1828, and that a stray number of the Brighton "Co-operator" (the one edited by Dr. King), soiled and worn, found its way into Halifax, and led to the formation of the first co-operative society there, owing to the foresight and devotion to social development of Mr. J. Nicholson, a name honourably known, and still remembered with respect, in Halifax. His son-in-law, Mr. David Crossley, of Brighouse, has long manifested the same intelligent and untiring interest in co-operative

* One of the disciples of Fourier, on being told that organised life was impossible because it was too beautiful, answered: "It is too beautiful not to be possible."

progress; lending to it not only a theoretical but great practical knowledge of the means by which it is to be advanced.

The first Birmingham co-operative rules were framed in 1828, by Mr. John Rabone, a well-known commercial name in that town, who was a frequent writer in early co-operative years. The reports of the early success of the Orbiston community reached Birmingham, and had great influence there. Some who had seen the place gave so good an account of it that it was the immediate cause of the first Birmingham co-operative society being formed.

On January the 1st, 1829, the first number of the "Associate" was issued, price one penny, "published at the store of the first London Co-operative Trading Association, 2, Jerusalem Passage, Clerkenwell." The "Associate," a well-chosen name, modestly stated that it was "put forth to ascertain how far the working class were disposed to listen to its suggestion of means by which they themselves may become the authors of a lasting and almost unlimited improvement of their own condition in life." The "Associate" was from the beginning a well-arranged, modest little periodical, and it was the first paper to summarise the rules of the various co-operative associations.

The author of "Paul Clifford" takes the editor of the "British Co-operator" by storm, who states that this work bids fair to raise Mr. Bulwer to that enviable pinnacle of fame which connects the genius of the author with the virtues of the citizen, the philanthropist with the profundity of the philosopher.*

The Society for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge held regular quarterly meetings, commencing in 1829. They were reported with all the dignity of a co-operative parliament in the *Weekly Free Press*, a

* "British Co-operator," page 62. 1829.

Radical paper of the period. The proceedings were reprinted in a separate form. This society bore the name of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge first in 1830.

This publication, entitled *The Weekly Free Press*, was regarded as a prodigy of newspapers on the side of Co-operation. The editor of the aforesaid miscellany described it as "an adamantine bulwark, which no gainsayer dare run against without suffering irretrievable loss." No doubt "gainsayers" so warned prudently kept aloof, and the "adamantine journal" ran down itself, suffering irretrievable loss in the process. That was the manner of its end.

No one could accuse the early co-operators of being wanting in large ideas. It was coolly laid down, without any dismay at the magnitude of the undertaking, that the principles of Co-operation were intended to secure equality of privileges for all the human race. That is a task not yet completed for the people of England. Yet, with the air of an "unconsidered trifle" in their power further to give, they made overtures to bring about the general elevation of the human race, together with universal knowledge and happiness. Ten years before the British Association for the Advancement of Science was devised in Professor Phillips's Tearoom in the York Museum, and forty years before Dr. Hastings ventured to propose to Lord Brougham the establishment of a National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, the Co-operative Reformers set up, in 1829, a "British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge." It had its quarterly meetings, some of which were held in the theatre of the Mechanics' Institution, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, known as Dr. Birkbeck's Institution. The speeches delivered were evidently studied and ambitious, far beyond the character of modern speeches on Co-operation, which are mostly businesslike, abrupt, and blunt.

Among those at these early meetings were Mr. John Cleave, well known as the popular newsvendor—when only men of spirit dare be newsvendors—whose daughter subsequently married Mr. Henry Vincent, the eminent lecturer, who was graduated in the vigorous and generous school of political insurgency which Carlyle afterwards familiarised in literature as "Chartism." Mr. William Lovett, a frequent speaker, was later in life imprisoned with John Collins for two years in Warwick Gaol, where they devised, wrote, and afterwards published the best book on the organisation of the Chartist party (which included practical education as well as political action) which ever issued from that body. Mr. Lovett made speeches in 1830 with that ornate swell in his sentences with which he wrote resolutions at the National Association, in High Holborn, twenty years later, when W. J. Fox delivered Sunday evening orations there. Mr. Lovett was the second secretary of the chief co-operative society in London, meeting at 19, Greville-street, Hatton Garden.

The fourth report of the British Association announced the *Liverpool, Norwich,* and *Leeds Mercuries;* the *Carlisle Journal,* the *Newry Telegraph,* the *Chester Courant,* the *Blackburn Gazette,* the *Halifax Chronicle,* besides others, as journals engaged in discussing Co-operation. The *Westmoreland Advertiser* is described as devoted to it.*

The first Westminster co-operative society, which met in the infant schoolroom, gave lectures on science. Mr. David Mallock, A.M., delivered a lecture on "Celestial Mechanics;" Mr. Dewhurst, a surgeon, lectured on "Anatomy," and complaint was made that he used Latin and Greek terms without translating them.† The "British Co-operator," usually conducted with an editorial sense of responsibility, announced to its readers

* "British Co-operator," page 47.

† "British Co-operator," page 20. 1829.

that "it is confidently said that Mr. Owen will hold a public meeting in the City of London Tavern, early in Easter week; and it is expected that his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex will take the chair. We have no doubt it will be well attended and produce a great sensation among the people." This manner of announcement was very likely to deter the duke from attending; and it was an announcement which ought not to be made until it was certain that the duke would preside.

The first London co-operative community is reported as holding a meeting on the 22nd of April, 1829, at the Ship Coffee-house, Featherstone-street, City Road. Mr. Jennison spoke, who gave it as his conviction that the scheme could be carried out with £5 shares, payable at sixpence per week.*

The first Pimlico association was formed in December, 1829. Its store was opened on the 27th of February, 1830, and between that date and the 6th of May it had made £32 of net profit. Its total property amounted to £140. Its members were eighty-two.

The first Maidstone co-operative society was in force in 1830, and held its public meetings in the Britannia Inn, George-street. A Rev. Mr. Pope, of Tunbridge Wells, gave them disquietude by crying—"Away with such happiness [that promised by Co-operation] as is inconsistent with the gospel." As nobody else promised any happiness to the working men, Mr. Pope might as well have left them the consolation of hoping for it. He would have had his chance when they got the happiness, which yet lags on its tardy way. The Rev. Mr. Pope was one of those solicitous preachers who are born before their time and do not know it.

In 1830 Mr. J. Jenkinson, "treasurer of the Kettering Co-operative Society," confirmed its existence by writing an ambitious paper upon the "Co-operative System."

* "British Co-operator," page 44.

The Co-operative Journals of 1830.

England has never seen, before or since, so many co-operative papers as 1830 saw. Now, if a second paper is proposed quite a scream goes up in deprecation, lest thirty millions of people should not be able to support two co-operative papers. Since the *Social Economist* was transferred to the promoters of the Manchester *Co-operative News* Company, in 1869, there has been in London even no professed co-operative journal.

The "Agricultural Economist," representing the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, is the most important-looking journal which has appeared in London in the interests of Co-operation. Associative topics form, however, but a small department in this paper.

In 1830, when the "Co-operative Magazine" was four years old, the "Co-operative Miscellany" (also a monthly magazine) commenced, and with many defects had more popular life in it than any other. It would seem that the editor was illiterate, or had a bad reader in his office. He was, I believe, printer as well as editor of his paper. Anyhow, he meant putting things to right with a vigorous hand. The "Co-operative Miscellany" also described itself as a "Magazine of Useful Knowledge;" a sub-title, borrowed, apparently, from the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, then making a noise in the world. The editor of this miscellany held that co-operative knowledge should be placed first in the species useful, and was much needed by the public. It was then a novel order of knowledge. The miscellany was of the octavo size; the typographical getting-up was of the provincial order, and the title-page had the appearance of a small window-bill. It was printed by W. Hill, of Bank-street, Maidstone. The editor professed that his magazine contained a history of the co-operative societies, and extracts of their reports and proceedings in general, with a development of the principles of the system. Co-operation had no system in those days. The allusion evidently was to what was

A belligerent Editor.

known as Mr. Owen's system. The tone of the editor, as expressed in his preface, shows embitterment at working-class distress. He shows what Lord Castlereagh would have called "an ignorant impatience" of poverty. Forty years ago sympathy with the working class was a great novelty. Those who took a personal interest in their improvement were designated as "noble philanthropic minds." The editor gives no hopeful idea of the people. All he can say is, that "many of them are beginning to feel the spark of British independence to glow." Uncomfortable allusions are made to persons who are not described by name, but as "those who have fattened by the industry" of the labouring class; who look upon them as their vassals or slaves, not worthy to partake of the food they produce, or live in the houses they build, or wear the clothes they manufacture. Mr. Owen would clear the world for his system; this editor would clear off mankind to make way for Mr. Owen. His first article tells us that "Some designing men, insulting the laws of nature, are directing public attention to the *Reverend* Malthusian doctrines of over-population [probably referring to Francis Place]. Another junto *(sic)* are busily occupied with the paper-money substitutes for wealth, so strongly urged by Banker Attwood [Thomas Attwood, of Birmingham, president of the famous political union in that town], so that the clamorous demands of a starving people may be buried in the joy of getting immediate relief for their necessities. Another junto are clamorous for free-trade in corn, feeling that it would immediately increase the manufactures of the country and prevent the people investigating any other measure of relief, and quiet their inquiries who ought to reap the benefit of their labour. Therefore they recommend Mr. Thompson's 'Catechism on the Corn Laws,' afterwards the eminent writer, Lieut.-General Perionet Thompson. Another junto, with as much love of individual wealth as the rest, are *Hunt*-ing

for a Radical reform in parliament, universal suffrage, and election by ballot. Another junto are severely afflicted with mono-mania; or, as the grand quack of quacks calls it, the currency mania. Mr. Cobbett is a professor on this yellow fever, and gives advice with his recipe for one shilling. A competitor has started forth from the anti-christian school of Mr. Carlile who, with the voice of a *Lion*, offers his nostrum at half the price." After contemptuously adding that "these gentlemen do no good except that of saving the public a waste of time in refuting their doctrines, for each does it admirably of the other," he tells us that "others" (who, of course, are free from error, bad designs, and mania,) "are moving onwards towards the diffusion of the views of Mr. Owen, of New Lanark, which are now generally known as the principles of Co-operation. These principles breathe universal love of our fellow beings, peace and goodwill to all mankind." After the conceit, contempt, and bad feeling with which this editor has described every other thinker in the metropolis who attracted popular attention, the reader must have acquired a lively sense of the universal love which the "Co-operative Miscellany" of 1830 represented. These passages, besides presenting a good picture of the agitators and temper of the time, inform us that it was about that period that Mr. Owen's views became "generally known as the principles of Co-operation"—a name then far too limited to cover them, and far too practical to suit them.

The early co-operative editors were not clever at appraising people outside themselves, but occasionally there are instances of external discernment which are perfect in their way. Speaking of the meeting of the British Association, at which Mr. Owen spoke, "who was received with enthusiastic and long-continued cheering," the editor of the "Co-operative Miscellany" said: "The theatre was filled with persons of an

encouraging and respectable appearance." Persons of an "encouraging appearance" is surely one of the daintiest discoveries of enthusiasm.

At this time Mr. Owen held Sunday morning lectures in the Mechanics' Institution, followed, says this "Miscellany," "by a conversazione at half-past three o'clock, and a lecture in the evening upon 'Astronomy,' by that enlightened teacher of youth, Mr. Fitch, whose powers of elocution are unequalled." Everybody was described in these pages with a painful superlativeness.

Early in this year there appeared, in magazine form, "The British Co-operator," calling itself also "A Record and Review of Co-operative and Entertaining Knowledge." Co-operation did not then excel in being entertaining: as the last peaceable resource of the necessitous it was rather a serious business. This publication really made itself a business organ of the movement, and addressed itself to the task of organising it. To the early stores it furnished most valuable advice. "The Co-operator," 1830, was considered to instruct co-operators, and the 6th No. "became a sort of text-book to co-operators." No. 22, however, fell among them like a shell. An article professed to be "from the pen of a gentleman holding an important office in the state," suggested that intending co-operators should bethink themselves of bespeaking the countenance of some patron in the infancy of their Co-operation —the clergyman of the parish, or a resident magistrate, who might give them weights and scales and a few shelves for their store shop. The members were to sign an arbitration bond, under which *all* questions of property in the society shall be finally decided by the patron, who must not be removable, otherwise than by his own consent to surrender his office to a successor. This was denounced as "a deep laid scheme for cramping the energies the journal had so ably assisted to awaken." This was an absurd alarm. The plan might have led

to the extension of Co-operation in rural districts where the means of self-help did not exist, and where self-action would be in those days at once put down without the countenance of some local gentleman. And as his authority was merely to extend to questions of property when no law existed for its protection, the members would have had their own way in social regulations. All the patron could have done would have been to take away his scales, weights, and shelves; and a very small fund, when the society was once fairly established, would have enabled them to have purchased or replaced these things.

There came, a month later, a grand scream from the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge, who published in the *Weekly Free Press* a special protest against "patrons of any sort, especially the clergyman or the magistrate." With the usual eccentricity of fervid agitators the early socialists spoke with two voices. With one they denounced the wealthier classes as standing aloof from the people and lending them no kind of help, and with the other described them as "wolves in sheep's clothing," coming forward with "insidious plans" of interference with them. It was quite wise to counsel the working classes "to look to themselves and be their own patrons," as the protestors in question did; but it was not an encouraging thing to gentlemen to see one of their order "holding an important office in the state," kicked, "by order of the committee," for coming forward with what was, for all they knew, a well meant though unacceptable suggestion.

The "British Co-operator," of 1830, prepared articles for the guidance of trustees and directors or committees of co-operative societies. It gave them directions how to make their storekeeper a responsible and punishable person. How to procure licences. How to execute orders and schemes of book-keeping. It usefully

remarked: "We regret that the neglect on the part of the first Bloomsbury society to take legal measures to secure their property has deprived them of the power to recover their trading stock from four of the members of the society, one of whom was *nominally* a trustee, which is as bad as having no trustee at all. We learn the parties entered the store at night, and decamped with all the movables they could carry off. This has broken up the society. Had the members adopted the measures we suggested in our former numbers, for security against such frauds, the first Bloomsbury would now be flourishing. We still repeat, the *trustees* of a society *ought not* to be members of the society they are trustees to.* The co-operators under competitive society must have recourse to the protection it affords, or they will always be exposed to designing boasters." Mr. Haigh, of Mill's Bridge Society, Huddersfield, wrote to inform the editor, that on the 14th ultimo "they were obliged to discharge their *storekeeper*, as he had defrauded them of much property during the quarter." A circumstance which subsequently occurred very frequently in that district. Some of the stores appear to have been troubled by the disappearance of cheese in larger proportions than the sales accounted for, and an announcement was made of the formation of a Mouse-trap Committee. The well-informed writer in "British Co-operator" said:—

"It is not generally known that co-operative trading or working societies are from their nature exposed to all the disadvantages of co-partnerships of two or more individuals, and that the laws affecting the protection of creditors and the losses of partners are those which in a court of equity would be applicable to suitors in co-operative trading societies. For a partnership to exist between persons does not require the signature

* The reason being, that if he were a member the law would then regard him as a partner, who might, as such, appropriate the funds to his own use. The law is changed now.

of deeds or agreements to that effect. Merely uniting the interests of two persons in any commercial transaction, where profits are the object of the union, constitutes a co-partnership. Therefore a union of two or more persons in a *trading* company or *society* constitutes a partnership, whether that partnership be called a *co-operative trading society* or a working union. The object being to carry on a trade, by making a profit on the sale of groceries or other commodities, as manufactured goods, and so forth.

"It is a law in England that no partner shall sue his co-partner for any fraud or breach of agreement by an action at common law; his only mode of proceeding against his partner being to file a bill in equity in the Court of Chancery. This mode of proceeding against any member of a co-operative trading society, from the immense expense attached to it (for £60 would only meet the cost of filing the bill), is rendered impossible for a working man to adopt. Therefore it is better for him to pocket the first loss sustained rather than throw two or three years' hard earned savings into the engulphing jaws of a chancery suit. Such being the case, effectual measures should be taken by every member of a co-operative society to avoid the unprotected situation he, and the property of the society to which he belongs, is exposed to, and prevent it from becoming the prey of designing and dishonest men."*

The want of legal protection was very early felt. It gave to a storekeeper who was a member of a co-operative society the certainty that he could not be punished if he committed a fraud; and it was therefore suggested in the "British Co-operator" that every storekeeper on being elected should sign his resignation as a member, that he might not screen himself behind the dark and impenetrable security of the law.

* "British Co-operator," page 8.

Discussion on "Educated Shopmen."

As early as 1830 a discussion arose upon "Educated Shopmen." The "British Co-operator" commenced its career with this subject. It was proposed that the storekeeper should be "a person of gainly appearance—clean, active, obliging, and possessing a high sense of honour." Mr. Faber, writer in the "Co-operative Miscellany" on this subject, contended that the storekeeper ought not to be regarded "as a servant only, but as a friend and brother of the associates."

Efforts were then being made in London to establish an agency for the sale of co-operative manufactures. In 1830 the distressed co-operators of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green weavers produced a co-operative silk handkerchief. It was an article that only ladies and gentlemen would buy in sufficient numbers to be of any advantage; but the disastrous proneness of enthusiasm to be instant in season and out of season, led to there appearing upon it a design representing the paucity, the presumption, and inordinate possessions of the upper classes, so that no gentleman could use it without putting the reproach in his face.

Mr. Charles Rosser writes in March to the editor of the "British Co-operator" to say that the proprietors of the London "Co-operative Magazine" had entirely given up that work, and that the proprietor of the "British Co-operator" may make whatever use he pleases of the title of their magazine consistent with the interests and advancement of Co-operation. This was friendly and civil, and creditable to the fraternal principles of the party.

About this time the House of Commons published a paper detailing the attempts happily being made to put down Hindoo suttees. The "British Co-operator" writes upon it thus: "Mr. Owen is right in saying that the period of a great moral change which he has announced is fast approaching. There is scarcely a publication which issues from the press that does not bring forward

some new evidence for its necessity." The co-operators at this period believed in the immediate advent of Mr Owen's systems as implicitly as the early Christians believed in the coming of Christ, and every new and hopeful incident of the day was regarded as the shadow, cast by the new world, before it.

Dr. Epps and his systems of phrenology, semi-Christian and semi-materialistic, is introduced also in the "British Co-operator," and Dr. Henry McCormac, of Belfast, described as "one of the illuminati of the age," is noticed as the author of a work on the moral and physical condition of the working class. Dr. McCormac was a promoter of social as well as medical ideas, and was known as a teacher of mark. His son, a well-known physician, is the author of similar works in our day. Dr. Epps, a leader in homœopathy when it was ill-regarded, took a sincere interest in advancing liberal opinion. In the "British Co-operator" a co-operative catechism was published, in the form of a dialogue between one Tom Seekout, and Jack Tellall a co-operator, who defines Co-operation as "everyone labouring—everyone exchanging labour for labour—everyone having plenty of food, clothes, and good lodging. In short, it is enjoying everything, and contributing to everything, equally; so that there shall be no distinction between the rich and the poor; the idle and the industrious; the ignorant and the learned. Neither will man nor woman be unequal in their rights, as members of society."

After nine numbers had been published of the "Associate," which bore no date save that of London, 1830, by which its times of appearance could be told, it took the second title of "Co-operative Mirror." The tenth number reproduced the catechism with pictorial embellishments, quite of the Catnach order of art, representing Tom Seekout, a dilapidated rascal, who wore breeches and stockings with holes in them, smoked a pipe, had a battered hat, and was very thin. He is shown as

coming out of the "Pipe and Puncheon" public house, a far less dismal place it must be owned than the drawing of the co-operative store opposite—a plain-looking, solid, rather dreary house, bearing the name "Co-operative Society" over the door. Before this stands a smiling, well-contented looking fellow, in good health and compendious whiskers, which are apparently the product of the co-operative store, as poor Tom Seekout has none. Jack Tellall, the co-operator, wears a hat with a brim of copious curvature, a coat evidently cut by some Poole of the period, voluminous white trowsers, and a watch and seals that would be sure to have excited Mr. Fagin. In the distance, between the "Pipe and Puncheon" and the "Co-operative Society," is a remarkable church, very much given to steeple. The pathway to it is entirely devoid of travellers; but it is quite evident that Jack Tellall, like a well-behaved co-operator, is on his way there, when he falls in with Tom Seekout, who confesses that his elbows are not presentable to the beadle, and that his belly is pinched in like the squire's greyhound. Jack Tellall informs him, in the course of an amusing dialogue, how Co-operation will put all that to rights. The "Associate" also bears the title of the "Co-operative Mirror." Number 11 of this publication was printed on good paper in clear type, and poor Tom Seekout, who appeared in Number 10, and our decorous friend Jack Tellall, continue their dialogue under conditions admissible in respectable society, and the engraving was a miracle of improvement. It represented a community of majestic and castellated proportions, quite a a city of the sun, resplendent on a plateau, raising its turrets above an umbrageous forest which surrounded it, with just one glorious pathway visible by which it was accessible. Beyond was the far-stretching sea, and from above the sun sent down delighting beams through clouds which evidently hung enraptured over the happy spot. Not even Ebenezer Elliott, with his sharp-eyed

criticism, could detect a single evidence of primness inflicted upon the wild luxuriance of nature. There has been only one portrait published which represented Mr. Owen as a gentleman, and this engraving of a community, in No. 11 of the "Associate," is the only one that had the genuine air of Paradise about it. No doubt the "Associate" was indebted for it to Mr. Minter Morgan, who had introduced it into his "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century."

Among the correspondents of the "British Co-operator" was Josiah Warren, who has recently died. He wrote from Cincinatti, January 30, 1830, to recommend a scheme of cheap printing, of which he was the inventor. Considering the power of giving a monopoly by patents absurd, he makes known his scheme and offers it to anyone to adopt. Application was to be made to the "Free Inquirer," conducted in New York by Frances Wright and R. D. Owen. Like Paine, Warren made a present to the public of those copyrights in inventions and books, which in Paine's case made others rich and kept the author poor. The world, which is apt to despise reformers for being always indigent, should remember how some of them became so. At writing disastrous passages, such as those of which Free Love has since been born, Josiah Warren was a great hand. Any production of this kind was sure to be quoted in some co-operative journal, and the "British Co-operator" quoted this from Warren: "We perceive the necessity of preserving to each individual, the liberty to act according to his or her feelings, or judgment, in each case—however we may be found to differ from each other, or to change from time to time; and in the place of the customary bonds, or pledges, with regard to our actions in the future, and circumstances yet unknown, we refer to our past actions, for a criterion by which to judge the future; and we hereby consent that all our actions, so far as they affect the rights of others, may be made known to them."

This was Warren's mad maxim for making association in communities uncertain, impossible, or ridiculous. Only mendacity is more dangerous than honesty unless good sense or some sort of culture take care of it. Mr. Josiah Warren was a member of Mr. Owen's community at New Harmony in 1826, and it was there he conceived the idea that the error of Mr. Owen's principles was combination; and he set himself to the unnecessary work of developing the principle of disintegration, which has always been well provided for, both in savage and civilised societies. Mr. Warren gave this doctrine the name of individuality—his system being to let everybody have his own way in everything, at his own cost, which has hitherto been found to be an expensive form of waywardness.

Mrs. Wheeler was a familiar name in co-operative literature of a lady who very sensibly advocated the usefulness of women taking part in public affairs. Frances Wright, afterwards known as Madame D'Arnsmont, was an American lady distinguished in the same way. Yet this did not prevent the editor of this magazine from introducing into it a paragraph calculated to bring a cause, which had few friends then, into contempt. The paragraph bore the title of the "Anti-man Society," and set forth that "a meeting of the ladies in Maine has lately been held, to take into consideration the propriety of establishing a society, to be called the 'Anti-man Society.' It is said to be an established fact, that the male party have for the last century, by unholy combination, contrived to keep all the political offices to themselves, to the exclusion of women. They are now resolved to put down this unrighteous combination; and, if not to exclude men entirely, at least to have an equal share among themselves." This was not intended to make the enemy merry. The editor who quoted it was one of those disastrous men who meant well and had no other capacity. To their honour the

co-operators always and everywhere were friendly to the equal civil rights of women. The subject is never obtruded and is never absent. It continually recurs as though women were an equal part of the human family and were naturally included in Co-operation. Mr. J. S. Mill frequented their meetings and knew their literature well, and must have listened in his youth to speculations in their society which he subsequently illustrated to so much effect in his "Subjection of Women."

This journal, however, had substantial merits. It had spaciousness of view as to the organisation of industry, and published thoughtful and practical papers thereon. It had cultivated correspondents who knew how to interest the reader and were not merely useful and dreary. One gave a picturesque account of one of Mr. Owen's meetings at the London Tavern. Some of the forgotten actors there are not without interest to the readers of to-day. The large tavern hall was crowded. Proceedings were delayed in order that adversaries might elect a chairman of their own. Mr. Owen quietly put it to the meeting whether, as was his custom, he should conduct his own meeting, or whether a stranger should occupy the chair. Hands were held up. It was Owen against the field. The enemy was abundantly beaten. "I have," said a religious advocate present, "often argued with Mr. Owen, but the misfortune is, I can never get him into a temper nor keep myself out of one." Mr. Owen read an address two hours and a half long. The most devoted admirer could not help trying to count the awful pile of pages in the speaker's hands, to estimate when he would be out of his misery. No House of Commons—no university assembly—no church meeting—would have borne such an infliction. Yet the audience kept peace. When the end did come, a fury took possession of the adversaries. A Presbyterian minister rushed to the platform. As he lifted up his Calvinistic voice he became aware that the Rev. Robert

Taylor, who had taken upon himself the unpleasant name of "The Devil's Chaplain," stood next to him, and close to him. The Rev. Presbyterian Pharisee pushed back with his stick the Chaplain of Lucifer. The meeting understood it. It was: "Stand off, I am holier than thou." Gentlemen would consider the act an insult—a magistrate an assault—Taylor did neither, but bowed and retired a little. The meeting applauded the dignified rebuke. In due course Taylor came forward of his own right to reply. As he had wantonly caused himself to be known by a hateful and injurious name, he was not welcome on his own account, and had a bad time of it. One evangelical lady spoke against hearing him with a volubility which showed how valuable she would have been at an earlier period in the age of the world. Had she lived in the days of the building of Babel, her tongue alone would have confounded the world better than the multiplication of languages, and saved the labour of Latin and Greek and other miseries of scholarship entailed upon us. The description of what followed by an eye witness, as given in the "British Co-operator," presents admirable portraits of two famous figures at a great co-operative meeting of that period, which, as they complete the interior view of one of Mr. Owen's meetings, are inserted here. The figures are those of the Rev. Robert Taylor and Mr. Henry Hunt:—

"Taylor at length obtained a hearing. His figure is good, his appearance prepossessing, his dress affected, though not as I had been taught to expect—eccentric. His language was florid and highly wrought, his sentences abounding in figures of speech and closing in well formed and generally pungent periods. He was elaborate, yet fluent, with much of the trickery of eloquence, much too, of the soundness of reflection. His gesture was appropriate to his diction, both were too highly finished. It was acting, the acting of the

Mr. Henry Hunt in his war paint.

theatrical performer, not on the stage but before the looking glass. It was the elegant play of the sword fencer in his practice, brilliant and dazzling, it wanted the earnestness, the ardour, the recklessness of the combatant. In short, it was more the rehearsal of the orator than the oration itself. In the midst of affectation, the greatest and the most faulty, was that (next after the display of the diamond on his little finger) which tempted him to quotations from the learned languages. To speak Latin to an audience in the city of London was certainly out of keeping.

"The attention of the meeting was now drawn to an object equally worthy of attention, another apostle for the cause he had espoused. It was the celebrated Hunt, the Radical reformer, standing on a chair near the centre of the room, with head erect, his short white hair mantling over his florid countenance, his coat thrown open, and his right hand fixed on his side, in the resolute attitude of determined self-possession. I could see in a moment why it was, he ever secured an ascendancy over the wills of those whom he is in the habit of addressing. He was old England personified, and his very figure spoke for him to English hearts. On his appearance the clamour broke out afresh, for there was a strong expression of disapprobation testified in some parts of the room against him. But he was not to be daunted; like the true English mastiff, he held his grip; John Bull might bellow, fret, and foam, but he was not to be shaken off. 'Gentlemen'—'down, down,' on one side, 'Go up, go up,' on the other. Still he was fixed and immovable.—'Gentlemen, if you will but allow me to speak, I will tell you why I will not go up.'—'Bravo, Hunt.' 'I went up and was turned down again.' Mr. Owen apologised to him, explained the mistake and requested him to go up to the gallery. 'No,' replied the sturdy orator, 'I am not one of your puppets, to be moved up and down at your pleasure.' Mr. Owen on his

side was as determined, though not so sturdy. 'Mr. Hunt, I do not hear you well, and as I would be sorry to lose anything of what you say, whether it be for or against my propositions, you will oblige me by coming up.' Good temper is Mr. Owen's distinguishing attribute, never was it displayed in a more amiable, effective manner. The stern rigidity of Hunt's features instantly relaxed, he testified his assent by a good-hearted nod, descended from his self-selected point of elevation, was by Owen's side, and commenced a harangue by declaring his strong sense of the claims which that gentleman had on the public attention, and his respect for the philanthropy of his views, and for his perseverance in pressing them on through good and evil report."

In those days the *Birmingham Co-operative Herald* existed. The storekeeper appears to have been an object of solicitude to it. Mr. Pare was afraid that the society would become dependent upon one man, and urged that all members should become in rotation committee men, so that there might be sufficient knowledge of the affairs of the society in as many hands as would enable them to change any principal officer without arresting the progress of the society. This has been admirably provided for in the Assington co-operative farms, devised a few years later. Every shareholder is a "steward" or member of the committee in turn.

A subject discussed and not settled at the Bolton congress of 1872 was discussed with great force by Mr. Pare in 1830, that was the permanence of share capital, and the necessity, not merely the advantage, but the necessity, of treating co-operative capital like joint-stock, railroad, and canal company capital, and not compelling the directors of a store to give members the value of their share on withdrawing from the concern. Mr. Pare urged this in his Liverpool lectures, and carried his advice as far as Gatacre, a village six miles from

Liverpool, where Lady Noel Byrom had, at that early period, suggested the formation of a co-operative store. Though living herself in another part of the kingdom, her solicitude for social progress was communicated to her correspondents.

Mr. Pare, who was called the first co-operative missionary, that being the title applied to him in the "British Co-operator," rendered in the appropriate publications of the day frequent, modest, and always interesting accounts of his first tours, and his narrative is very interesting to follow, as it alone records the dates when Co-operation was first preached in some of the chief towns of England. From Liverpool Mr. Pare proceeded to Lancaster. Going in search of the mayor of that day to obtain from him the use of a public hall, he found him at the County Lunatic Asylum, which struck Mr. Pare as being a place so superior to the comfortless lodgings and cottages of mechanics and farm hands, that he thought there were considerable advantages in being mad. The mayor, however, proved to be as much demented as many of the inmates, for he disliked Co-operation, lest its funds, which did not exist, should be applied to support workmen in case of a turn-out against their employers. By other means Mr. Pare obtained a building to speak in, and though his posters were up only four hours before his lecture, more persons came than could get in, being from two to three hundred in number. He next addressed in Blackburn about three hundred auditors. He was informed that there were at least twenty-six societies in this town and its immediate vicinity. The industrial ground was good in those days, for the co-operative seed sprang up fruitful everywhere. The condition of the bulk of the inhabitants he saw there is worth remembering. It might well make a co-operator distrust what competition might do for the working class. He beheld thousands of human beings pining with hunger, in rags, with little or no shelter for

their emaciated bodies, and who had absolutely to beg to be allowed to work to obtain even these miserable conditions of existence. His next visit was to Bolton, where he lectured in the Sessions Room to about four hundred persons. On this visit he was entertained by the Rev. F. Baker, who had preceded him in delivering two lectures on Co-operation in the Mechanics' Institute of that town.

Some of the leading men of the city of Chester attended a lecture delivered by Mr. Pare on the 17th of March. A co-operative society existed then in Chester, consisting of seventeen members, who were making arrangements to supply all the co-operative societies in the kingdom with prime cheese at low prices. The Chester men seemed desirous of getting at the bottom of the subject, for they put questions to Mr. Pare which caused his lecture to extend over four hours. At this period Mr. James Watson was known as one of the storekeepers of the first London co-operative society, 36, Red Lion Square, and Jerusalem Passage, Clerkenwell, when removed there. Mr. Lovett was his successor. On making a journey to Yorkshire, he was requested to act as a co-operative missionary, and he was furnished with tracts for distribution and the necessary credentials. Mr. Watson was an earnest and forcible speaker, who knew how to unite boldness of sentiment with moderation of manner. When Richard Carlile's shopmen were being imprisoned, beyond the rate of metropolitan supply, Mr. Watson was one, of many others, public spirited young men, who volunteered to supply the place of those imprisoned. He took his place at Mr. Carlile's counter, and also in prison when his turn came. He was incarcerated three times through his participation in public movements, and for periods of unpleasant length. He ultimately became one of the three famous Radical publishers, (Watson, Hetherington, and Cleave,) whose names were known all over the country, as leaders

of the unstamped publication movement. Mr. Watson remained in business until the opening of the Fleet-street House in 1854, when it was purchased by the present writer. He maintained all his life a reputation for principle and integrity, and was held in personal esteem by the leading Radical members of parliament from the days of the drafting the People's Charter, to the time of his death in 1874. Both as publisher and advocate, he always ranked as one of Mr. Owen's most practical disciples.

It was reported (in 1830) that a co-operative society was being formed at Marseilles, south of France, on the true social principle that the character of man is formed for and not by him; Mr. Hamilton, of Dalzell, appears to have carried this doctrine there. Persons wishing information about it were to apply to M. Boinet, Boulevard du Musée, No. 7, A.D., who would be at home from seven to eight in the morning for that purpose. Propagandism begins early in the day in France.

The *Newry Telegraph* reported two fervid speeches on Co-operation, by Edward Gardener and John Stephenson, made at the annual dinner of the Armagh Benevolent Society, held in the Market House, January 7th, 1830. Ireland, which is counted a superstitious country, has always been favourable to Mr. Owen's views, and received him well long after England had grown angry at his apparent heresies.

A Metropolitan Co-operative Book Society was formed, which met in 19, Greville-street. In the absence of P. O. Skene, of Lewes, the chair was taken by W. Ellis. The society had in view to establish reading rooms, libraries. This Mr. Ellis is the gentleman mentioned by Mr. J. S. Mill in his autobiography, as an early friend and associate of his, and to whom the metropolis was subsequently indebted for the Birkbeck secular schools founded by his generosity, and directed by his trained judgment.

In October, 1830, a magazine, sold at twopence, was published once a fortnight by Strangs, of Paternoster Row, and sold by co-operative store keepers. It bore the double title of "Magazine of Useful Knowledge, and Co-operative Miscellany." It took for its motto this premature sentence, "Learning has declared war against Ignorance." It had done nothing of the kind, but was only airing itself before a larger multitude with Latin quotations—and with Greek ones, where the printer happened to have that type. Many long years elapsed before Learning attempted any war against Ignorance. The first speech reported in co-operative journals of Mr. Henry Hetherington's appeared in number three of this magazine. The first number of the "Miscellany" had to tell of a Rev. Mr. Pope, of Tunbridge Wells, who had "proved Co-operation to be totally inconsistent with the Gospel." It is fair to mention that about this period, that one Rev. F. Baker, the same who entertained Mr. Pare at Bolton, appeared as an advocate of Co-operation, and published a pamphlet which had reached forty-three numbers in 1830, and was sold at one penny. But clerical dissentients were, however, never wanting.

After the Birmingham Political Union "was hung up" as Mr. Muntz expressed it "like a clean gun"—and never taken down again, John Collins became known as a Chartist speaker. He was a man of some force of earnestness, but not otherwise distinguished for power. It was to his credit that he assented to that form of progress which was to be advanced by instruction rather than by force which Chartism chiefly relied upon. Mr. Collins and I used to go to Harborne together, a little village some four miles from Birmingham, only famous because Thomas Attwood, the founder of the Political Union, had a seat there. Our object was to teach in a school in a little Pædobaptist Chapel. Heaven I hope knew what Pædobaptist meant. I did not. I was quite a youth then, and sometimes Collins used to take me by

the hand as I got over the long walk badly. I remember when the sermon, which followed the school teaching, was much protracted, I used to long for dinner time to come. I see now the humble cottage, belonging to a deacon, to which I went, in which the fire grate was very spacious, and the fire nearly invisible. I used to sit very close to it looking at the snow in the garden, which at that time covered the ground, as I ate my dinner off my knees, which usually consisted of a cold mutton chop, which my mother had thoughtfully provided, lest that article should not be prevalent in the cottage, and her dear solicitude was quite prophetic. John Collins came to know much of Co-operation and to take interest in it. He was imprisoned two years in Warwick Gaol with Mr. Lovett, where they jointly wrote their well-known book on "Chartism," which proposed an organisation more social and intelligent than had been before advocated among that party.

The impression that Co-operation was making upon politicians was set forth in very striking terms in "Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine."* The dignity and gravity of the estimate made, show that the new industrial views were recognised as a moving force of the time, as in that quarter no undue importance would be accorded to them. The writer said: "Difficult as it is to force upon the attention of those, who live in continual plenty and immoral indulgence, the severe distress of others, whom it is a trouble to them to think of, yet they can hardly be blind to the necessity of acting in a matter, which the people themselves have taken up in a way extremely novel in this country, and dangerous, or the contrary, according as the legislature may make it. Multitudes of the common people now see clearly the state they are placed in. They perceive that their labour is valuable, if they had the means of applying it;

* No. 161. Jan. 1830.

but as their former masters have no use for it, they are driven to see whether they cannot use it for their own advantage. Those who have the virtues of thrift and patience are forming themselves into societies for the purpose of enjoying the benefit of their mutual labour; and it is impossible to look at their virtuous endeavours, to substitute comfortable competence for the horrors of dependence upon precarious employment by masters, without wishing them God-speed. But it may be worth the while of the politician to look carefully at the effects which such societies, should they become extensive and abundant, may have upon the political state of the community. It is not always well (in a political sense) that the knowledge should be forced upon men of what they may accomplish by co-operation and union; and especially it is dangerous in an aristocratical state, where this knowledge is given to men of strong, coarse minds, to whom meat, drink, clothes, fire, and the liberty of being governed according to their own views of right, are the *summa bona*."

These words were evidently intended to influence those who influence affairs, and are of interest and moment still.

The last fruits of the enthusiastic period was the invention of congresses. Indeed from 1829, and for six years after, Co-operation may be said to have lived on congresses. Heretofore such co-operative deliberative assemblies, as we are told, were called "Conferences." It was Mr. Pare who introduced the American term "congress" to distinguish social from political proceedings, which were known as conferences. In America, congress implied a political parliament. Mr. Pare held that he brought the term into English notice by the frequent use co-operators made of it. The first co-operative congress was held in Manchester, in May, 1830. There were delegates present from fifty-six societies, representing upwards of three thousand members, who had, by small

weekly contributions and trading with these on co-operative principles, accumulated a capital of £6,000 in less than fifteen months.

Mr. Place has preserved a copy of the "United Trades' Co-operative Journal," issued in 1830, in Manchester. Its price is twopence. It was printed on the best paper with the greatest typographical clearness, and contained the soberest and most intelligent writing of all the journals of this period started to represent Co-operation. The anecdotes selected were in good taste. It admitted nothing which was silly, or uninstructive. Many of its quotations were selected with such judgment and knowledge that their literary interest is unabated to this day, and would be well worth reproducing. Even its original poetry was endurable, which was very rarely the case in these publications. Seldom did it violate ordinary literary etiquette. Once in making a quotation from the *Guardian* newspaper, which it felt justified in contradicting, it suffered its correspondent who wrote upon the subject to entitle the paragraph in question, "Falsehoods of the *Guardian*." To charge a journalist with lying, because he took a different view of the condition of the operatives, was utterly indefensible. Mr. Taylor, the editor of the *Guardian*, was himself a man of honour, but had it been otherwise it was quite sufficient to show that a writer was wrong without calling in question his veracity. This journal rendered a very great service by publishing a summary of the rules in force in various co-operative societies in the kingdom. An act of great thoughtfulness and labour, and one that shows that the enthusiastic period was not devoid of inspiration and sagacity. To this day these rules are instructive. They marked the towns, chiefly Brighton and London, Worthing and Belper, and Birmingham, where each rule was known to be adopted. They are worthy the attention of co-operative societies now, as showing the care that early societies took to secure character,

confidence, education, co-operative knowledge, and self-helping habits in their members. The following are some of the more notable rules :—

Loans of capital to the society by its own members shall bear an interest of £5 per £100, and are not returnable without six months' notice.

In the purchase and sale of goods credit shall neither be given nor received.

Every member agrees to deal at the retail shop or store of the society for those articles of daily use, which are laid in of suitable quality, and sold at fair ready money prices.

The name of any member who finds it inconvenient to deal to the amount of at least two shillings a week at this store shall be laid before the committee.

All disputes among members on the affairs of the society are to be settled by arbitration.

Any member misbehaving may be expelled by vote of the majority of members at a quarterly meeting.

No husband shall be admitted a member without his wife's appearing before the committee and expressing her consent.

A man is not eligible to be a member unless he can read and write; and in general he must produce a specimen of his work.

No member is eligible for this committee until six months after admission to the society.

Members who shall be found to receive parochial aid without having made known their wants to the society may be expelled at a general meeting.

Every member engages to subscribe weekly to a fund for the relief of sick and distressed members, when called upon to do so by the society.

The preface to the "Co-operative Miscellany," of 1830, stated that there were then upwards of 20,000 persons united in different parts of the kingdom.

The number of societies spread over England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, were estimated by the British Association as being 266 in 1830. The members of the British Association itself numbered 639. The enthusiasm with which Co-operation continued to be regarded was manifest by the statement in the "British Co-operator," that in the last quarter of the year 53 societies had been formed.

When William Thompson wrote his practical directions for forming communities in 1830, he stated there was nearly 300 co-operative socities of the industrial classes associated through England, Scotland, and Ireland. He spoke of two grand experiments instituted in 1825, on the principles of co-operative industry, one at New Harmony, in the State of Indiana, in North America, and the other at Orbiston, near Glasgow; and of others in different parts of the United States, particularly one at Kendal, in the State of Ohio, without any sort of connection with Mr. Owen, other than that of friendly communications of knowledge, as set on foot by gentlemen of benevolence and means. It was in 1827, he says, that the people themselves took up the idea of co-operative industry, and names William Bryen, one of the hard working industrious classes, as the chief promoter of an incipient modification of the thing, at Brighton, Sussex, under the name of a Trading Fund Association. Within three years of that period the combined efforts of Mr. Philip Skene, Mr. Vesey of Exeter, Mr. William Pare of Birmingham, and other friends of co-operative industry united with Mr. Bryen, led to more than eighty associations on similar principles being formed in different parts of England. He relates that the first Brighton association had accumulated funds sufficient to take a small piece of land, of twenty or thirty acres, and others had commenced the manufacture of cotton and stockings. The Brighton society published every month a periodical called the "Co-operator," while the Birmingham society issued the "Co-operative Herald."

The first London Manufacturing Society.

We have this year (1830) an announcement of the first co-operative manufacturing community in London. The object appears to be to give employment to members. A committee was appointed to superintend the manufacture of brushes. They were to be sent to the Co-operative Bazaar, 19, Greville-street, where goods manufactured by other co-operative societies were purchased for sale. Co-operators in Burslem were sending up orders for co-operative handkerchiefs, stockings, galloons, and such things as were likely to be sold among poor people. The British Association had the management of the arrangements, and they opened their bazaar from two to three o'clock daily. The terms on which goods were admitted were these: "The carriage of goods must be paid; the wholesale and retail prices fixed and attached to the articles, with an invoice, specifying the quantity, qualities, and kind of each article, which must be sent on sale, or returnable if not sold, marked with a distinguishing mark of the persons and association sending them. All damage or loss must be borne by the sender of the articles, the greatest care of which will be taken on their arrival at the bazaar, when receipts, exchangeable, will be given. The money derived from sales subject to a deduction of two and a half per cent will be paid over to the society, through which the goods have been sent to the bazaar. Notice will be given of the over or under price in the public markets, and of proposed exchanges of goods between different societies; and at such times as the proceeds of the bazaar management exceed the expenses, a bonus or dividend will be made to the senders of goods previously sold.

A list was published of seventeen societies, which in Manchester and Salford alone were formed between 1826 and 1830, bearing names like Masonic lodges, the "Benevolent," the "Friendly," the "Owenian," and others. But only the last-named society was intending to commence manufacturing.

The Chat Moss Millennium.

At that time (1830) a few co-operators in Manchester took 600 acres of waste land upon Chat Moss, and they contrived to cultivate it. England had not a drearier spot in which to begin a new world. There was scarcely a thing for the eye to rest upon over a flat of several thousand acres. Railway surveyors had declared it impossible to make the Manchester and Liverpool line over it. Those who stepped upon it found it a black, wet sponge, which absorbed the pedestrian in it up to his knees. Horses who walked over it had to wear wooden pattens. It was literally a "Slough of Despond," but enthusiastic co-operators thought they could cultivate the millennium there. Co-operation had the soul of charity in it: it honestly prated much thereof, and like that apostolic virtue it hoped all things and believed all things in 1830.

The growth of the social idea, as the reader has seen, like that of the railway system, or electric telegraphy, or the national postage, has been obscure, intermittent, gradual, and often ridiculous. It has been misrepresented before it was heard, and assailed before it had force. Its agents have sometimes been partially crazy and seemed wholly so. Ignorant themselves of what many knew, they therefore obtained no credit for what they well understood. Suffering to the verge of despair, when at last fired by a generous hope, their imagination betrayed them into assertion far beyond their need, or means, of proof or intent. Those who know nothing and excuse nothing to the pardonable flights of excited sorrow, alone deride as Utopianism the first joyful struggle of ignorance with a near evil.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE DEVICE OF LABOUR EXCHANGES.*

The night is darkest before the morn;
When the pain is sorest the child is born.
—*Kingsley's Day of the Lord.*

So far as my reading or experience extends there is no example of a commercial movement so simple, necessary, and popular as the device of labour exchanges—exciting so wide an interest and dying so soon, and becoming so very dead. The exchange of labour meant really an exchange of commodities upon which labour had been expended. One plan was to take a large room, or series of rooms, where persons having articles they needed to part with could exchange them for others, or obtain a negotiable note for them. The first intimation in England of this new device of commerce of industry came from Mr. Owen. It appeared in the "Crisis" in the following form:—

"NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: EQUITABLE LABOUR EXCHANGES' INSTITUTION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES, GRAY'S INN ROAD, KING'S CROSS.

"Agriculturists, gardeners, manufacturers, provision merchants, factors, warehousemen, wholesale and retail dealers of all descriptions, mechanics' and all others, who may be inclined to dispose of their various articles of trade and merchandise in the only equitable manner

* This midway story, which ranges over 1831–3, might be included in the narrative of the next chapter did it not seem best to treat so distinctive a subject as the Labour Exchanges separately.

in which men can mutually dispose of their property to each other, viz., its value in labour for equal value in labour, without the intervention of money, are requested to transmit their names and address, with the description of the kind or kinds of property which they desire so to exchange, to the secretary of the institution, Mr. Samuel Austin, of whom, on personal application at the institution, every information relative to the Equitable Labour Exchange may be obtained.

"All letters must be post-paid—ROBERT OWEN."

These exchange bazaars were designed to enable artificers to exchange among themselves articles they had made, by which they would save the shopkeeper's expenses. For currency labour notes were substituted, which it was thought would represent real value. The shoemaker brought his pair of shoes to the bazaar, with an invoice of the cost of the material and time (calculated at sixpence per hour) in making them. A person, supposed to be competent and disinterested, was appointed to sanction or correct the valuation. The labour note, of so many hours value, was given to the shoemaker, who could then, or at any other time, buy with them any other deposit in the bazaar—a hat, or teakettle, or a joint of meat, if he found what he wanted. Upon each transaction a commission of 8⅓ per cent was charged, in some bazaars payable in cash, to defray the expenses of the institution. The directors were not quite Utopian in providing funds for the management. Had they shown as much judgment in other respects their project would have lasted. Though the commission in this case was deemed heavy, the plan proved very popular. In the exchanges conducted under Mr. Owen's auspices the commission charged was only one halfpenny in the shilling. In the published rules of the Equitable Labour Exchange, in Gray's Inn Road, in 1832, the name of Robert Owen appears as governor

and one of the trustees; and Thomas Allsop, Sampson Mordan, and W. Devonshire Saull, as members of council.

According to Mr. Noyes, Josiah Warren, in 1826, originated the idea of labour exchanges, which he communicated to Mr. Owen when he was a resident in Mr. Owen's community of New Harmony in that year. After leaving the New Harmony community Mr. Warren went to Cincinnatti, where he opened a labour exchange under the title of a time store. He joined in commencing a second one in Tascarawas, Co. Ohio; a third at Mount Vernon, Indiana. He opened a fourth in 1842, at New Harmony, to which he had returned. Mr. Warren's mode of paying commission was by charging the exchanger for the amount of time expended in effecting his business. The manager had a clock before him; he noted the time of the customer's arrival and when the transaction was completed, and charged him for the time he had consumed in conducting it. This was done on the well-known principle of Mr. Warren, that "cost is the limit of price." It was not the value of the business done but the time taken in doing it upon which the charge was made. It might cost more on this plan to buy a pennyworth of needles than a sack of flour.

It is possible that Mr. Owen did derive the idea of the exchanges in this way, but I have not observed that he ever said so. However acquired, he alone gave effect to the plan in England, and by whom alone it was made known.

In May, 1833, the National Equitable Labour Exchange, London, was opened at noon on May-day with some pomp, at the new rooms in Charlotte-street, Rathbone Place, London. This place extended 250 feet from the front entrance in Charlotte-street, to John-street, at the back. In Charlotte-street it appeared to be no more than one of the usual private dwellings; but on passing through the entrance it opened unex-

pectedly into a quadrangular building of two stories, with a covered space in the centre of about sixteen feet by one hundred and thirty. Alterations were made in it to suit the convenience of the labour exchange and public meetings. Nearly twelve thousand people were able to stand in it under cover and hear a speaker with an ordinary voice. Three thousand seven hundred could be seated in it. Mr. Owen convened the opening meeting "purposely to announce his determination to reject the system of error, by which society had been so long governed, and plant his standard of open and direct opposition to it." He had done that sixteen years before, at the City of London Tavern; but that was a thing which would bear doing many times over. Society had a very obstinate way of going on, regardless of the stand Mr. Owen made against it. Mr. Roebuck, M.P., was the first chairman of the day, and the chief thing which he did was to make "the expression to the working men of his conviction, that nothing would be done for the labouring classes unless they do it themselves." Mr. Gillon, M.P., was also a speaker, but Mr. Roebuck, either fortunately or from foresight, had an engagement which caused him to vacate the chair before Mr. Owen began the address of the day, which, both in its length and its terms, would have been trying to Mr. Roebuck, who never dreamed and was a master of directness of speech. On one occasion, subsequently, a trades' festival, in which one thousand workmen took part, was held in the institution.

Mr. Owen, in the character of agent or head of the chief London exchange, sometimes appeared in an odd aspect. On one occasion a letter appeared in which a cargo of potatoes, at a very cheap rate, was offered to Mr. Owen, consisting of a hundred tons of the pink-eyed variety, for which the seller was willing to take labour notes for the value of two-thirds. It seemed somewhat of a degradation; if not a descent it was a digression of

The great Philanthropist becomes a Potato dealer.

dignity, that the greatest philanthropist in the world, and the correspondent of all the monarchs of Europe, and who had undertaken to remodel all the social arrangements of mankind, should be publicly engaged in considering tenders for pink-eyed potatoes. The labour exchange officer was to act as the general buyer for the public. The prices of goods taken was, as we have seen, estimated in hours of labour supposed to be bestowed, or reported to be bestowed, upon each article. Sixpence was the uniform standard of value for each hour, adopted by Mr. W. King, who made some pretensions, in 1832, to be an authority on these exchanges. He it was, so far as can now be discerned, who was the editor of the "Gazette of Labour Exchanges," at least who published letters to himself as editor, signed with his name, exactly coincident in style and argument with the editorial articles of the "Gazette." At this distance of time it is not easy to appreciate the theoretical reasons adduced to explain these exchanges. The exchanges themselves would have succeeded but for their advocates. The "Gazette" of these bazaars stated that the first labour bank was established at the Gothic Hall, New Road, Marylebone, in the month of April, 1832. This was the one which Mr. King founded and espoused. At the same time, or contemporaneously with its existence, there were exchange bazaars in Poland-street, Oxford-street, Red Lion Square, the Rotunda, Blackfriars Road (where the Rev. Robert Taylor, whom we have already met at the London Tavern, the "Devil's Chaplain," as he mischievously styled himself, officiated about that period), Hatfield House, Westminster Road, Tottenham Court Road, as well as at the famous Gray's Inn Road, where Mr. Owen was himself governor. It does not appear how the depositors of goods at the Gothic Hall estimated the cost of the material they had worked up, in hours of the value of sixpence; and persons naturally inquired how

the quick workman and the slow one estimated their work on a uniform standard of sixpence for sixty minutes. The director of the Gothic Hall did not profess to reply to his many critics, but boldly said: "Our answer shall be given from this building." He frankly announced that the projectors of the bank had no capital. Mr. Owen, who understood business, objected to this bazaar as premature; as persons who had no property to indemnify the public from loss were unfitted for the work. Those who deposited goods were not paid in money, but received labour exchange notes of the value of one hour's labour each. The editor complained of persons who "looked on with cold indifference" upon his Bank of Labour (as these exchanges came to be called) which had no capital at its back. It was to Mr. Owen's credit that when he judged the King scheme unsound he said so. The editor of the organ of them in question "wondered that he should find an opponent in the 'universal philanthropist,'" evidently being of opinion that a philanthropist should approve of everything well intended, whether well devised or not. The projector thought enough to allege that he "was conscious of the purity of his intentions, and confident in the soundness of his principles:" but, as the "principles" had never been tried, and as "purity of intention," however excellent in itself, is not capital in a commercial sense, and will buy nothing in the market, the exchange could not be expected to command confidence. Yet it obtained it. Within twenty weeks deposits of the value of £3,500 were made. At the end of the first month the deposits were upwards of fifty-two in number. At the end of the fifth calendar week they amounted to one thousand four hundred and thirty-five.

The exchange bazaars were stated by the *Gazette* of them in question to be "the offspring of the co-operative societies, and to have spread at that time [1832] over almost every part of the kingdom simultaneously."

In writing to the *Times* concerning the Labour Exchange Institution, Mr. Owen cited the great commercial organisation of the firm of James Morrison & Co. as slight approaches towards the change that he intended to effect in the distribution of common wealth among the common people.

A United Interests Exchange Mart and Bank was projected, and premises taken for it in Aldersgate-street, a few yards south of the corner of Long Lane, consisting of a spacious front shop, with three other floors each of nearly the same extent, for showrooms and exchange purposes. An exchange was opened in Sheffield, a town always venturesome in social things. But it was Birmingham that stood next to London in labour exchange fervour. Mr. Owen convened a congress in 1832 in Birmingham, at which delegates from various parts of the kingdom were invited, to discuss this new scheme of local commerce. The propagandism of it was in mighty hands, which were wont to strike the world in a large way. At once Mr. Owen held a great meeting in Birmingham, where he excited both enthusiasm and inquiry into the nature of co-operative plans generally. Mr. Thomas Attwood, himself then a man of national repute, with a natural affinity himself for men of spacious manners, introduced Mr. Owen, with many courtly phrases, to the council of the famous Birmingham Political Union, whom Mr. Owen addressed. He delivered lectures in the public office in Dee's Royal Hotel, Temple Row, which was largely attended by ladies; and in Beardsworth's Repository, which was attended by eight thousand people. Mr. G. F. Muntz, was announced to preside. Mr. Owen's subject was "Labour Exchanges;" and Mr. Beardsworth, having an eye to business, offered to sell him the repository for a labour exchange mart. Mr. John Rabone, Mr. George Edmonds (one of the most ambitious orators of the Birmingham Political Union, and subsequently

clerk of the peace of the town), Mr. Hawkes Smith, Mr. Pare, and others, addressed the great meeting at Beardsworth's.

Birmingham being distinguished among English towns for the variety of its small trades, and for the excellent industry and miscellaneous appetite of its inhabitants, exchanges of any kind came congenially to the people of those days. Journalism there soon showed itself interested in advancing the idea. A special "Labour Exchange Gazette" was started, and on July 29, 1833, the National Equitable Labour Exchange was opened in Coach Yard, Bull-street. Benjamin Woolfield, Esq., was the director, and Mr. James Lewes sub-director. The bankers were Spooners, Attwoods, & Co. The first day the deposits were eighteen thousand hours, and the exchanges nine hundred. Each day, for some time, the deposits increased, but the exchanges never exceeded one half. In August the association of depositors numbered eight hundred and forty. Coventry sent £30 worth of ribbons; but a much more saleable deposit was three hundred weight of good bacon, and one person undertook to take any number of well-manufactured Birmingham articles in exchange for the best Irish provisions. The capital upon which this exchange commenced was only £450, which the first three months realised a profit, clear of all rents, salaries, and other payments, of £262. By this time London was filled with the fame of the Labour Exchange Bazaar of Gray's Inn Road, which Mr. Owen had taken to accommodate the growing business which was arising around him beyond that which could be dealt with in the Charlotte-street Rooms. For a time popular interest and the ardent imagination of the promoters opened up illimitable prospects of a new order of progress. It was stated that in one week the deposits in the Gray's Inn Road bazaar amounted to little less than £10,000, and that if four per cent out of the eight-and-a-third per cent said

The cardinal point in Labour Exchange management.

to be then charged on those deposits, were applied to the extension of exchanges, there would be a disposable accumulating fund of £400 weekly, or if the deposits and exchanges proceeded at that rate £28,000 per annum would arise for that purpose. "Over the water"—as the Surrey side of London was called—things went on swimmingly. The Labour Exchange Association was so active that in 1833 and '34 it published monthly reports of its proceedings, with carefully drawn up papers and speeches of members.

The astonishing number of deposits made in a short time, and the avidity with which exchanges were made prove that a large amount of wealth remained stationary for want of a market. No doubt numerous persons were stimulated by these exchanges to make articles of use and value who before did nothing, because no means existed of disposing of them; and thus, by providing exchanges, new wealth was created. Mr. Owen, with his natural discernment,—when philanthropy did not prevent him seeing—strongly recommended the management of the exchange at Birmingham to be given to Mr. Wood, elsewhere mentioned. Had he accepted the appointment the future of these exchanges had been different—certainly that of Birmingham would in all probability have been successful. Mr. Wood better understood the commercial possibilities of these contrivances than anyone else. The cardinal point he insisted upon was, that each exchange should be provided with quick, sound, practical valuators—not men muddled with labour-note ideas of sixpence per hour estimates—but who knew exactly what a thing would fetch in the market if it had to be sold out of doors. The labour of a second-rate shoemaker, or button maker, might not be worth sixpence an hour, while the labour of a skilful oculist might be worth two guineas or five guineas an hour. Who could appraise the value per hour of the chair painter and the landscape painter at the same

sixpence? The labour exchange needed the pawnbroker's faculty of quickly seeing what a thing was worth. The institution of the three balls has no great credit for putting an extravagant value on articles it takes in; but without compelling a depositor to take the least he could, the exchange managers should have a clear eye to not giving more than could be obtained for an article in a reasonable time if they had to sell it to the stranger. No advantage is gained by giving more than the value obvious to the outsider; for the moment that becomes known—and such a fact soon gets diffused—the labour notes are depreciated in value; for it is said, and said truly, that the exchange notes have no equivalent behind them. Taking articles into the exchange which the public knew were not ordinarily saleable, and giving notes for them by which useful articles could be obtained, led in the same way to the depreciation of the note, and for the same reason—that there was obviously no available and equivalent value deposited to represent it. If a man of business went into an exchange and saw persons depositing chimney ornaments and firescreens, and carrying out kettles, good hats, and sound pieces of bacon, he knew at once that thing could not go on. While these exchanges were new, anyone not unfriendly to them might reasonably predict that many of them would fail deplorably; while it was perfectly clear that their rapid popularity showed that they really hit a general need, and good sound management must make them a profitable speculation to all concerned. At first, tradesmen around them readily agreed to take labour notes, and numerous placards were issued, and are still extant (preserved by Mr. Place*), giving this notice to the public. Of course these tradesmen took occasion to

* As many as three hundred tradesmen gave notice that the labour notes would be taken at their places of business, and in some cases the theatres made the same announcement—that labour notes would be taken at the doors.

run round the exchange themselves, and see what kind of deposits represented the value of the notes; and when they found unexchangeable articles taken in at an unsaleable price they began to decline to take the notes, or take them at an ominous depreciation. These banks of labour required to be managed by business men, and honest men, with some one to see that they were honest. Mr. Owen had a weakness for "respectable" friends of the system, and some of these—in one case a whole family of shrewd, talkative professors of the "new views"—got put upon the directory, in one exchange or other, to the exclusion of less pretentious, but really honest, good working, adherents, who really cared for the affair. And these adroit managers did business with their friends and acquaintances, and sent in articles of their own by other hands, and loaded the shelves with useless things which they appraised at a reverential rate, and gave information to the receivers of the notes what valuable and saleable articles they could carry away in exchange. Sharp shopkeepers thus got influence at the exchange, and sent down the worthless stock in their shops, exchanged it for labour notes, and before the general public came to hand carried away the pick of the saleable things, with which they stocked their shops. As they put in their windows "Labour Notes taken here," they were thought wonderful friends of the exchange. With some of them the proper notice in the window would have been "Labour Exchangers taken in here." And these were the knaves who first began to depreciate labour notes and compare them to French assignats, and they well knew the reason why.* The popularity and even profit of the deposit business

* On the other hand there were honest and favouring shopkeepers who took the notes with a view to promote their circulation as currency, and gave saleable goods for them, who found themselves unable to obtain a fair exchange at the bazaar, and thus they became victims of the exchange scheme.

were such that it bore this, until larger operators gave the thing a turn. These were the wholesale and general dealers, who systematically depreciated labour notes with a view to buy them up, which they did, and carried off all the saleable goods they could find at the exchange; and the silly people who first held the notes did not take time to find out what the depreciation meant. It is true these operators did not approve of the exchanges which appeared to threaten a new system of barter, and ingeniously devised means to discredit them and profit themselves in doing it. If Mr. Owen had been wise and vigorous in his choice of officers in the central exchange the enemy might have been frustrated; but disinterestedness had become with him a second nature, and he took for granted the integrity of those who offered their services. When his suspicions were aroused no man could see more easily or farther into a rogue than he. But, unfortunately, in those days these suspicions were generally awakened too late.

In addition to these societies having among themselves no organised inspiration, and Mr. Owen never looking upon them with any very friendly eye, but rather regarding them as weak expedients of persons who thought that they could mend or mitigate a state of society which he considered should be peremptorily superseded, they had not the advantage of that strong influence to direct them which it was in the power of his friends chiefly to exercise. Facility and certainty of exchange is a condition not only of commerce but of production; and these labour bazaars would have been of national value in England had they been more prudently conducted. As it was, astute persons failed not to see that a wealth-making power resided in them. It was obvious if pawnbrokers, who received no money with deposits, but had to pay out capital for them and be debared from realising upon articles taken in until a long period after, and then only when not redeemed, prospered, there was some

probability that a company of labour brokers who received cash with every deposit and paid no capital out for it, but merely gave a note for it and were at liberty to sell it the next hour, could make profit with good management. There might have been a department where valuable articles of uncertain demand could be received on sale at the depositor's own price, to be paid for in notes only when disposed of. Had the profits accruing been carried to the credit of customers in proportion to their dealings, as is now done in co-operative stores, and the first five pounds of profit so gained by the exchanger capitalised to create a fund to stand at the back of the notes to prevent panic or depreciation, these labour exchanges might have continued, as they might now be revived and spread over the land again, as they once did; and as co-operative stores do in our day.

At the Surrey branch in Blackfriars Road, which existed simultaneously with the Gray's Inn Road place, the total deposits soon amounted to £32,000, and the exchanges to £16,000. The public everywhere undoubtedly took great interest in the new system of business introduced. Mechanical inventions, steam engines, steam ships, and projected railways had changed the character of industry before men's eyes. Dr. Church was known to be running about the streets of Birmingham in a private steam carriage of his own; and though some of his patients were more alarmed at his untoward brougham than at his prescriptions, he made a favourable impression upon the popular imagination all over the country. The novelty of change on all hands had its effect on the new generation of the day, and disposed many to believe that the new discovery in barter and exchange was the very supplement of industry wanted, and that its uses and benefits would be indefinite. Undoubtedly their progress was marvellous, and their first discouragement came, strange to record, not from the enemy but from friends. They were the disciples of

the world-makers who helped, in their mournful, misgiving way, to bring the scheme down. They regarded these exchanges as another expedient for diverging from the straight road which led to the new world. Mr. Gray, in giving an account of these exchanges, says, "They proved entirely delusive, as all attempts to graft a new system upon the old must be, without any corresponding change of principles and habits of action;" whereas it was a merit of this scheme, that it required no change of principle and very little habit of action. If the socialists of the day had, with their usual business sense, lent themselves to the management, the failure that came would have been avoided. Mr. Owen, when he became governor of the chief one, appointed or permitted, as has been related, persons to be managers devoid both of the requisite knowledge of the commercial values, and of the demands of the market, who are said to have disregarded—for reasons more criminal than ignorance—the fact that weeks of labour might be expended upon fanciful articles not worth a shilling if regard was had to the chances of selling them; and shelves were loaded if not with grosses of green spectacles with things not likely to be in demand on this side the millennium. That there was a real convenience in these exchanges was proved by the fact that they sprang up in every direction, and it was their success and profit becoming obvious to utterly untheoretical eyes that led finally to their ruin. The Jewish proprietor of Gray's Inn Road saw that good commercial results could be derived from them, and compelled Mr. Owen to remove that he might continue one in the same place himself; but the enthusiasm which Mr. Owen had created, and which allured the public to any scheme with which he was connected at that time, was wanting to the new proprietor, who had no patience or capacity for acquiring adherents for his business; and in due course he closed it. He had taken to a shop without being able to secure

to himself what in England is called—but what in Scotland nobody understands—the goodwill of the business.

It is an entirely unpleasant fact to relate that the two greatest schemes of Mr. Owen—community and exchange,—founded in a philosophy of pacific forbearance beyond any preached in that age, were both terminated by outbreaks of force. In January, 1834, the labour exchange in Gray's Inn Road was broken up by violence. The proprietor, Mr. Bromley, having had his building empty in 1831 for four months, artfully placed the keys in Mr. Owen's unsuspecting hands, to do what he pleased with it, he relinquishing any claim to rent till 1832. Nothing was to be paid for the fixtures. Mr. Owen accepted the arrangement without any schedule of fixtures or any definite agreement as to terms and tenure of future tenancy. Had the place gone on indifferently, Mr. Bromley would have been very glad of such rent as Mr. Owen would have paid him. For a year and a half, less or more, Mr. Owen used the place as the grand central institution for promulgating his system. Lectures were delivered there on Sundays and other days. Great festive celebrations were held; and many of the most eminent men of that day and of subsequent years were among the occasional frequenters of some of the meetings. Trade unionists, social, political, religious, and philanthropic reformers of all schools, found welcome and hearing there. No opinion, and no want of opinion, was a bar to friendliness and aid, provided the object was one intended to benefit the public. It was taking the labour exchange there that brought the Institution (of which London never had the like before or since) to an end. The exchange was not long in operation in Gray's Inn Road before the palpable prosperity of the idea excited dangerous cupidity. When Mr. Bromley saw the exchange succeed he took steps to force Mr. Owen out of the place, as he was

satisfied Mr. Owen had discovered a mode of making money which was unknown to Mr. Bromley. One of his modest proposals, then, was that Mr. Owen should buy the whole institution at £17,000. Then he demanded that the fixtures should be paid for, which had never been estimated at more than £700. He, however, made a demand for £1,100; and, to prevent dispute or unpleasantness, Mr. Owen paid him £700 out of his own pocket. It was ultimately arranged that the premises should be given up, as the directors of the exchange refused to take any further lease of the premises at the rental asked, which was £1,700 a-year. Mr. Bromley, however, was so impatient of re-possession that he did not wait even for their leaving, but procured a mob of men and broke into the place, and let in sixty-four ruffians (the exact number of the gang was set down), who smashed the secretary's doors in, took possession of the fixtures belonging to the exchange, and turned the directors into the street. The police were called, some of the rioters were taken before the magistrates, and the same discredit occurred as though Mr. Owen had not paid the £700. Of course there was a remedy in law against Mr. Bromley, but the directors were too philanthropic to enforce it, and they were content to open a new bazaar in the Surrey Institution, Blackfriars Road. Even these conspicuous and damaging disasters proved how strong a hold the idea of the utility of these exchanges had taken. Notwithstanding the excitement and mischievous knowledge the public had that the Gray's Inn Road place might be peremptorily closed, the amount of deposits on the last day it was opened was 6,915 hours, and the exchanges 5,850, so that the directors continued to do business to the last day at the rate of more than £50,000 a-year. During the time the bazaar was open there, from September 3rd to September 29th, the deposits amounted to 445,501 hours value, and the exchanges were 376,166. The amount

of deposits remaining on hand suggests that very unsaleable things had been received. The institution, however, came to grief, not through its failure, but through its success, as, oddly enough, has often happened in Co-operation. The lowest rent Mr. Bromley would agree to accept as a condition of their remaining was £1,400, and the rates and taxes amounted to about £300 more, making a yearly outgoing of £1,700. The business of the exchange was clearly likely to bear this, and Mr. Bromley became so satisfied on this point, and as has appeared so impatient to get possession, that, rather than wait a week or two for the convenience of removal, he forced, as has been said, Mr. Owen and his friends peremptorily out of the place, and immediately issued a placard announcing that "The whole of the splendid and capacious premises, Gray's Inn Road, will be occupied in future by the National Land and Equitable Labour Exchange Company. The present occupants will close their proceedings this week, and the National Land and Equitable Labour Exchange Company will commence receiving deposits on Wednesday morning next, the 16th instant, at ten o'clock, and continue daily at the same hour; and the company's exchange stores will be opened to the public on Monday, the 21st of January, 1833; after which day the company will be ready to receive proposals for the occupation of land lying at convenient distances from the metropolis, or on the line of the intended railroad from Birmingham to King's Cross."

Here was a well-laid scheme, which was really a tribute to Mr. Owen's sagacity in recommending exchanges. This practical man, unembarrassed by any scruples, thought that if the plan succeeded so well when weighted with Mr. Owen's unpopular principles, the world would flock to the same standard when a neutral flag was displayed. He, however, overlooked that outrage, though it sometimes succeeds, is often a

dangerous foundation to build upon. Mr. Owen's disciples were not all philosophers—they were human enough to feel rage, and numerous and powerful enough to make their indignation felt; and they spoke so unpleasantly of the new project and its ingenious projector, that he got few exchanges, and lost his good tenants without getting any other. He found he had not only alienated those who had made the exchange system popular; he had alarmed the public by the spectacles of violence, police cases, and failure. The National Company fell into well-earned contempt and distrust, and the Gray's Inn Road buildings have been an obscure, woe-begone, deserted, and apparently an unprofitable holding to this day. No doubt, labour exchanges died there. Had Mr. Owen's friends been far-seeing and self-denying they would have stilled their hatchet tongues, and have promoted the success of the National Land and Equitable Exchange Company. They would have been discredited, but the cause would have been saved. They did not comprehend that steam was not pronounced a failure, though a thousand experiments broke down before a single steam-ship sailed or railway car ran; that new medicines as often kill people as cure them before cautious, patient, experimental physicians discover the right way of administering them. Yet no one decries the curative art. But in social devices the first scoundrel or the first fool—the first thief or the first blunderer, who by over confidence, fraud, or ignorance, brings a scheme to immediate grief, sets the world against it for generations, and journalists evermore speak of it as that "abortive failure which was tried long ago and brought ruin and ignominy upon all concerned." Men yet live, a few honourably known in the "city" at this day, another professionally eminent elsewhere, who took part in the Gray's Inn Road affair, who have always maintained their confidence in the plan. But so intimidating is

failure over vulgar minds, and even the repute of it over those who do not know the facts, that no co-operative society has ever ventured to revive labour exchanges, though they would be auxiliaries of Co-operation in every town, and sources of profit and local advantages in numerous places. Mr. Lowe, in a recent speech, alluded to the curious exchanges he had seen recorded in a journal called the "Exchange and Mart." Some one has discovered the secret of profit and use which lies in that poor and costly revival of a method of commerce—neglected, disparaged, but not exploded, which labour exchanges revealed.

Despite the conflict of management, the inexperience which belong to all new schemes, the ignorance, the distrust and the jealousy which the new plan of commerce had to encounter, it attained to considerable organisation. The labour note was a model of curious and skilful engraving for that day, more elaborate than a bank note. Notwithstanding the novelty and disaster of the advent of labour exchanges, the child was well born, was of good promise, but was strangled as signs were appearing of lusty youth. Labour exchanges did not perish because they failed but because they succeeded. As is the habit of enthusiasm, the advantages of labour exchanges were exaggerated. They were predicted to supersede all the ordinary forms of retail barter, and render a metallic currency needless. This unguarded language turned the attention of the public to the results never likely to arise, so that they never looked at the advantages the exchanges did bring—that of creating facilities for commerce, most useful to the public, and which otherwise were never likely to exist.

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE SOCIALISTIC PERIOD. 1831–1844.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
Tho' one did fling the fire,
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many dreams
Of high desire.
Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
Like one great garden showed,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.—*Tennyson.*

For fourteen years now Co-operation has to be traced through Socialism. Store keeping had in many cases failed, and, where successful, its profits were insufficient to pave the way to the new world, much less defray the cost of that rather extensive erection. Accordingly grand schemes of life were revived, in which idleness and vice, silliness and poverty were to cease by mutual arrangement. This unattained, and hitherto unattainable, state of things came to bear the name of socialism. How socialism came to supersede Co-operation from 1830 until 1844 can only be traced through its publications, which in one shape or other have never ceased in the land. The path is devious and is often overshadowed, has curious little spaces of spring and sunlight here and there.

Social and co-operative literature has not been very brilliant. Very few writers upon the subject have endeavoured to write as well as they could. The art of rendering their views acceptable by a simple and fresh expression of them has seldom been attempted. Yet in the earlier literature of Co-operation there were many

instances of literary ambition. In those cases the writers were gentlemen of leisure and some cultivation, and they manifestly studied the art of expression. Robert Dale Owen was incomparably the best writer of the early period. William Hawkes Smith, of Birmingham, had an animated readable style. Mr. Minter Morgan had literary ambition. These writers belonged to the early period of Co-operation. In the second period the writers were mostly working men, often eloquent by accident, impulse, and passion, but quite incapable of eloquence by design. They told their story ofttimes with energy, but it was a verbose energy. There were often instances of wit and humour in their platform arguments. But their writing was only endurable to persons of the same way of thinking, to whom earnestness was eloquence, and to whom any argument, in which they agreed, seemed witty. In the early days any man who stood up manfully for opinions he believed true, at which society scowled, seemed admirable, and was admirable in the doing of it; and by the majority, who thought that deliverance from precariousness lay that way, no art save sincerity was esteemed. Nothing save this feeling could have reconciled disciples to the reading furnished to them in their accredited journals, which were overrun with writers whose sentences are as insipid as turnips, and their pages were as fields full of them.

Englishmen, as a rule, get so few generalised ideas into their heads, and are so afraid of anyone who has any in his, that they make rather too much of one when they get it. If a new principle makes its way into their minds, whether political, religious, or social, they go mad about it for the first few years. They see nothing but that. Everything else in the world is obscure to them; and they believe that their crotchet is the high road to the millennium for all the world. Such persons are not likely to write good tracts for sober days of facts

and experiment. On the other hand, practical people have not leisure for the work. And many who might do the work well do not always think it worth doing in that way. Certainly no co-operators arose who had the pen of Bunyan, the Bedford tinker.

In the mid-period of Co-operation many books and papers were published without any date, or any allusion by which a person unacquainted with the time could determine when they were issued. So important a book as William Thompson's "Practical Directions for the Establishment of Communities" merely contains an incidental date which suggests rather than tells when it appeared. All these authors doubtless thought they were commencing a new world, and that their works would be known as issued at the beginning of things. Printing was never a strong point with the party of progress. Even Robert Fellowes, B.A., Oxon, who published an address to the people in 1799, on the "Genius of Democracy," though he printed and published on good paper, was not well served by the printer, who made him say that "Nelson's victory on the Nile had laid the *posterity* of France in the dust." He meant to say prosperity. The other thing would have been a famous achievement and saved Europe much trouble. Huber states that some ants are subject to a peculiar malady, which, after being once seized with it, prevents them moving any more in a straight line. There are a great many writers who are subject to this disease, who not only move, but reason deviously, and never arrive at the point of their meaning. Ant writers of this description overrun socialist literature.

With the close of 1830 the several periodicals so plentifully representing Co-operation appear to cease. Few, if any, reached 1831. No new ones were announced in London for that year, and no trace of any remain. Another form of activity commenced. As 1830 was the year of journals, 1831 was the year of con-

gresses. The fervour of the five years from 1826 to 1830 stimulated action, and then ceased to direct it. Societies popular in conception can hardly become so in practice, or be largely diffused and sustained without the aid, animation, and counsel which well-contrived periodicals supply. Yet then none could possibly pay. At no time were there sufficient readers to yield funds out of which the journals could be adequately advertised, or pay for competent editorship or competent contributors. At length it comes to pass that journals written by charity come to be read only by charity. The very printing having to be sustained at the cost of the more ardent, their losses alone would either decrease their ardour, or impair their means of showing it. At length in 1832, Mr. Owen entered the field of weekly journalship himself, and issued a much larger paper than had ever before appeared, purporting to represent Co-operation. Of course it must bear a momentous title if Mr. Owen had anything to do with it, and accordingly it was named "The Crisis." The poor are always in a crisis, and rich and poor in that year were rather better off in this respect than they had been for a long time. There was a profitable crisis approaching, of some importance, for the Reform Bill was near, but this did not concern Mr. Owen, and it was scarcely mentioned in the volume edited by him. The French Revolution had occurred two years previously, and Mr. Owen narrowly escaped being shot in it; but as Louis Phillippe was not a believer in the "new views," Mr. Owen made no note of his deportation. It was the change from error and misery, to truth and happiness, by the introduction of co-operative plans, that was to constitute *the* crisis. Mr. Owen proposed to offer for the guidance of the affairs of men the extraordinary and heroic development of "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without mystery, mixture of error, or the fear of man"—a commodity which the world has certainly not

seen yet. It was proof that social hope and expectation was still strong, and the public interest in Mr. Owen very great, that 12,000 copies were sold immediately "The Crisis" was out, and a second edition of 5,000 was issued.

In the meantime, however, the provinces were busy with organs of associative opinion. After the first subsidence of the co-operative journals in London they arose in Lancashire, and were continued during 1831 and 1832 in a far more practical way than they had been in London. The price was lower, being mostly a penny, while in London they were published as sixpenny magazines, and, of course, only purchased by people who had sixpence to spare; while in the provinces Co-operation had become a matter of interest chiefly to workmen who had nothing to spare. Then in London and the south of England Co-operation was more sentimental, as though the warmer atmosphere rarefied it; while in the north it appeared as though the cold condensed it, for the whole tone of the Lancashire and Yorkshire journals was more practical. Instead of theories about the happiness of the higher orders, the pages were filled with reports of societies actually in operation with accounts of their experience and profit to the "lower orders."

The monthly papers had hitherto been the rule, it being illegal then to publish news earlier than twenty-eight days old, unless the paper bore the newspaper stamp; which made it impossible for a poor proprietor to issue a weekly paper which reported the immediate proceedings of the body. Long before the newspaper stamp was abolished considerable latitude had been allowed by the government with respect to journals representing religious, scientific, or educational movements. So impossible was it for the stamp office to make a restrictive definition of news, as Mr. Collett, the secretary of the society which effected the repeal of the

stamp, proved, that all weekly publications reporting any proceeding which gave immediate information, came under the definition of a newspaper; and Mr. Owen's crisis might have been put down at any time if it had occurred to anyone to call the attention of the law officers to it. Mr. Collett made this clear when he stopped Mr. Dickens' "Household Narrative of Current Events," and brought the "Athenæum" within the operation of the law.

The "Lancashire Co-operator, or Useful Classes Advocate," as it with some judgment called itself, took for its motto this well-conceived improvement upon the half maxim "Union is strength," namely—

> Numbers without union are powerless,
> And union without knowledge is useless;

That is, if commendable and not mischievous objects are intended. This publication, edited by Mr. E. T. Craig, first appeared in September, 1831. It published addresses to Christian co-operators, who, however, could never be persuaded to take to the thing, having objections to associate with the only persons who understood Co-operation and cared for it, who, however, in theological things were not many of their way of thinking. This journal first appeared in June, 1831, and was sent out by the Manchester and Salford Co-operative Council. It was a small penny weekly periodical, the cost of issuing which could scarcely have cost the members more than a farthing each, even if none had been sold. The editor showed great taste in selecting illustrative extracts. One was from Shipley, the Bishop of St. Asaph, which set forth that the art "of preventing insurrection and rebellion is not to take from the people the power to resist, but to make it their interest to obey." The fifth number reported a co-operative tea-party, attended by about a hundred and thirty men and women, in Halifax. In September a successor to this little journal appeared under the title of "The Lancashire

and Yorkshire Co-operator," resembling its predecessor in every respect, with the addition only of the name of "Yorkshire." In those days, persons who thought English an inefficient mode of communication for English people were fond of describing Co-operation as an *ignis fatuus*. The phrase being calculated to give the enemy a false impression, the co-operators, as was their custom, adopted it, and of course wrote an article under that term—"Co-operation an *Ignis Fatuus*"—to prove it was not true; but nothing could open their eyes to the fact that fifty people read the title for one who read the article.* French propagandists are very much addicted to this satirical mode of defence, as they conceive it to be; but no nation has such talent in this direction as the Scotch. In the second number of this two-counties' journal Mr. B. Warden, an enthusiastic saddler, of Marylebone, addressed a communication to the "Eight Millions of Workpeople of the British Nation," though it was perfectly certain that eight hundred would never see it. The editor continued to make extracts from Bishop Shipley; and, knowing that co-operators were esteemed latitudinarians in religion, because they were more scrupulous in believing only what they could give an account of in reason, he judiciously called attention to Bishop Shipley's wise saying: "I am not afraid of those tender and scrupulous consciences who are over cautious of professing or believing too much. . . . I respect their integrity. The men I am afraid of are the men who believe everything, who subscribe everything, and vote for everything." These scoundrel evasionists overrun the country now, and pass for most respectable persons of irreproachable faith. This journal continued until February, 1832—writing to the last about Co-operation being an *ignis fatuus*. It,

* The adversaries whose eyes fell on the suspicious title exclaimed: "We always said Co-operators were under a delusion, and now they see it themselves."

however, reappeared as a four-weekly organ. There was no halfpenny postage of publications in those days, and the editor intimated that the cost of the carriage proved a barrier to its circulation, and the "Six Acts" prohibiting their giving news, such as reports of lectures or societies' meetings, oftener than once a month, they had determined to issue their journal in future monthly; but whether the "Six Acts" frightened them from discovering the name of the month or year of issue did not transpire. The journal, however, never contained the one or the other, till, incidently, in October, the month and year appeared. In its monthly form it was printed very prettily. It was in double columns, and the chief subject of each page was printed at the head. The new series commenced by another address from Mr. B. Warden, "To the Eight Millions." Its last number appeared in November, and was entirely occupied with a report of the fourth congress of delegates, which was held at Liverpool. This year Mr. T. Wayland, of Lincoln's Inn, published a work on the "Equalisation of Property and the Formation of Communities."

The congresses and their incidents will be more intelligible perhaps if related in the order of their succession. The first congress, as the preceding chapter sets forth, was held in Manchester, in 1830. The second co-operative congress was held in Birmingham, in October, 1831, and for a season divided attention with the Reform Bill in that town. It met in commodious rooms in the Old Square. At this congress Rowland Detrosier was present, who had already distinguished himself by the possession of unusual scientific and political knowledge, in one of his rank of life, and who had a voice, an energy, and an eloquence, which was considered strikingly to resemble Brougham's.

Birmingham in those days was quite a centre of co-operative inspiration. Here the first organised

impulse was given to the formation of a band of missionaries. Here the congress proposed to contribute to the capital of the "Voice of the People," with a view to its becoming the accredited organ of the movement. Then there were neither railways nor funds for coaches, and two of the delegates from Glasgow walked the whole distance, nearly 300 miles. Robert Owen and William Thompson were the chairmen of the congress. In December of the following year a public meeting of 8,000 persons was held, lasting from eleven in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon, consisting of small manufacturers, shopkeepers, and operatives, and many ladies and persons of the wealthier classes. Mr. Owen said, in writing to his son Dale, that "in all his experience in Europe and America he had never witnessed so numerous and gratifying a meeting."*

The third co-operative congress, held in the Gray's Inn Road Institution, London, in 1832, was notable for many things. Further and more open attempts were made to cultivate political indifference among co-operators. Mr. Owen remarked that "despotic governments were frequently found to be better than what were called democratic. In the countries where those governments existed the industrial classes were not found in such misery and destitution as in this country, and therefore on this ground there was no reason to dislike despotisms. As far as the co-operative system was concerned, it was of no consequence whether governments were despotic or not."

Mr. Joseph Hume, M.P., who was a visitor to the congress, at once challenged this fatal doctrine of political indifferentism. He said "he had himself been a co-operator, perhaps longer than most present. He was surprised to hear what had been said in reference to the character of governments. The English was not

* "Crisis." No. 39. 1832.

a democratic government. Though democratic in name, it was despotic in practice. In Austria and Constantinople despotism was exercised by one man. In England it was inflicted by many. He was surprised also that popular instruction was not urged in Mr. Owen's address. It was only by knowledge that the people could be freed from the trammels of bad laws, and State religion." The number of persons attending this congress were eight hundred on the day on which it assembled: certainly showing great popular interest in the proceedings. The new project of labour exchanges was that which was uppermost in the minds of the public both at the Birmingham congress and at this great one in London.

The first number of "The Crisis" before mentioned announced this co-operative congress of the associations in Great Britain and Ireland, and the societies were admonished "to choose men capable of having their minds elevated, and of such moral courage and singleness of purpose that the passions of men should not be able to turn them from the godlike course which they will have to run." A delegate needed to have a good deal of courage to present himself at the Gray's Inn Road Institution, where the congress was to assemble, as a person likely to fulfil these sublime conditions, especially as all the members of parliament were invited to meet the men of the "godlike" career. It is curious to observe all through the history of social reform, and possibly in the interest of other reforms if they were traced, how very few persons among the leaders ever seem to consider how far their language or pretensions would be likely to excite the amusement rather than the respect of those who differ from them.

It would appear that members of parliament were not distinguished by their attention to the congress. Mr. Pare reported "the absence of Mr. Portman, M.P.; Mr. Hughes, M.P. [there was a Mr. Hughes, M.P.,

favourable to Co-operation in that day]. Mr. Slaney, M.P., had agreed to support a petition; but neither Lord Brougham nor Mr. O'Connell, who were to present it, ever did so, or even acknowleded its receipt"—not a wise way of telling the fact, since it gave the public the idea that those honourable members did not think much of the congress—the probability being that both gentlemen were overwhelmed with more applications than they could attend to, or even write to say so. Lord Boston sent a letter to the congress.*

Only three members of parliament—Mr. Hume, Mr. Mackinnon, and Mr. Jas. Johnson—appear to have been present. Mr. Owen presided. The names best known to co-operative history of the delegates who attended were Dr. Wade, who afterwards wrote a history of the working class; William Lovett, honourably known subsequently for his advocacy of educational Chartism; Mr. John Finch, a Liverpool iron merchant, a famous advocate of temperance, and a man of great earnestness and simplicity of character—a religious man with great capacity for making socialism disagreeable to religious people; Mr. William Pare, of Birmingham, elsewhere mentioned; Mr. Joseph Smith, of Salford, whom the reader must see mentioned in due course; and James Watson, B. Cousins, and John Cleave, previously named; the Rev. Thomas Macconnell, a ready and powerful speaker, not known subsequently to much advantage. Mr. Hume came in in the course of the congress, and, as we have seen, took part in the proceedings—the report of which was made and edited on the order of the congress, by William Carpenter, a famous name among the reformers of that day as the author of "Political Letters," and many publications which still live in political recollection. The motto of the political tracts published by William Carpenter

* "Crisis." May 5, 1832.

was: "Every man for every man, himself included"—a co-operative device in which it was provided that the individual should not lose sight of himself. Why great interest on the part of the delegates was taken in labour exchanges was that Mr. Owen had given great prominence to them, and had taken the Gray's Inn Road Institution to conduct in it the great national experiment of establishing them. Had he succeeded, Co-operation had revived in a new form and attained a career of great influence and popularity. In other respects this was a remarkable congress. It adopted a wise and much-needed resolution upon which nobody ever acted, which, however, was ordered to be the standing motto of the society, to be printed with all publications regarded as official issued by the co-operative body. It was this:

"Whereas, the co-operative world contains persons of all religious sects, and of all political parties, it is unanimously resolved—that co-operators *as such* are not identified with any religious, irreligious, or political tenets whatever; neither those of Mr. Owen nor any other individual."

This resolution was actually brought forward by Mr. Owen, and showed on his part a prudent disposition. It was, however, impracticable since the principles of Co-operation as explained by Mr. Owen, and accepted by co-operators, did contradict the popular belief of the day as respects the unwilfulness of sin, the practical purity of human nature, the unjustifiableness of punishment except as a means of influencing others—the power of influencing character substantially by well-devised material conditions alone. No resolution could save a party whose principles committed it to dissent from the popular theology. These points of difference and divergence should have been defined and limited, and all other responsibility repudiated. Men of clear heads and strong judgments might have fought out the question of

Co-operation on this line, and the societies might have been restricted to defending their own propositions and never suffered to attack the irrelevant tenets of others.

It remains, however, greatly to the credit of Mr. Owen that he proposed the resolution in question, though he could never have entertained any practical idea of acting upon it himself. He certainly never did act upon it. At this congress the United Kingdom was divided into nine missionary co-operative districts, with a council and secretary for each. 1, The Metropolis; 2, Birmingham; 3, Manchester; 4, Glasgow; 5, Belfast; 6, Dublin; 7, Cork; 8, Edinburgh; 9, Norwich. The "old immoral world" was to be assaulted at many points.

This congress of 1832 is remarkable as being the first historic departure from Co-operation as it had existed and been advocated in its periodicals since 1821. A circular was drawn up and sent to all the societies at this congress and adopted unanimously, which proposed to them all an entirely new object, which was thus set forth under the head of "Regulations for Co-operative Societies," introduced in these words:—

"The congress of delegates from the co-operative societies of Great Britain and Ireland, particularly recommend to all present and future co-operative societies the adoption of the following fundamental rules and regulations as the only constitutional basis upon which their societies can be permanently and successfully established.

"1. Let it be universally understood, that the grand ultimate object of all co-operative societies, whether engaged in trading, manufacturing, or agricultural pursuits, *is community in land.*

"2. To effect this important purpose, a weekly subscription, either in money, goods, or labour, from a penny to any other amount agreed upon, is indispensably

necessary to be continued from year to year, until a capital sufficient to accomplish the object of the society be accumulated."

Mr. Owen and his friends had always kept before the public that a new state of society was intended, which was to take the form of a community of united interests; but in the manner that has been related these dreams were postponed on the part of many, and were regarded as separate objects by more, and not regarded at all by the majority of co-operators, who had formed stores, and established numerous manufacturing societies for the mutual advantage of the members. In addition, many friends of the people, among the middle and upper classes, had devised and established co-operative stores, and had advanced capital to start them, from a kindly regard to the welfare of the members, and sometimes to improve their social habits and train them in economy; and sometimes with the view to control their social and religious views by their influence as patrons. As working men grew independent in spirit this patronage, as has been already noticed, was sometimes declined, and sometimes unceremoniously resented. In these various ways there had grown up a numerous party of co-operators all over the country—and England, Ireland, and Scotland were studded, England especially, in Yorkshire and Lancashire, with co-operative manufacturing and provision associations, similar in character but less opulent, less organised, and far less certain of success, than those which we now know. Several of these stores were destroyed by success. The members for a time made money, but having no idea of capitalising their profits [and indeed having no object in doing so, as the extension of their business might not increase their custom, since they had not discovered the principle of dividing profits in proportion to purchases made] the shareholders simply found success monotonous. Some betook themselves to other enterprises more adventurous,

and their places not being filled the society in time dwindled away. In other cases insufficient capital prevented profitable competition with shopkeepers; in some cases want of religious toleration broke up the society. Others fell through when their novelty wore off, the members having no ulterior objects. In more cases bad management ruined the concern. In possibly quite as many instances scoundrel managers extinguished the society. The law at that time enabled a thief to plead that being a member of the society he only robbed himself, although he stole the shares of everybody else. The amendment of this state of things was not attempted until twenty years later, when the lawyers joined the co-operative movement and took a practical view of it. Mr. E. Vansittart Neale, Mr. J. Malcolm Ludlow, Mr. Thomas Hughes, J. J. Furnival, and others, took parliamentary action, and these crime-encouraging infirmities of the law were corrected.

The congress of 1832 had grander views than dwelling on the perversities of acts of parliament. Co-operators were invited to set out, like pilgrims, to the land Beulah, where communities flourished and acts of parliament were unknown, or unnecessary. Of these dreams Mr. Pare spoke happily, and with the good sense from which English communists never departed. "It was true," he said, "they wished equality, but it was *voluntary* equality. It was true they were levellers, but they wished to level up and not down. They sought to create and retain fresh wealth for themselves."*

This congress meant business, for, on "Mr. Owen communicating that a community might be obtained if thought desirable, at Aylesbury, in Hertfordshire, of four hundred acres, with one thousand acres adjoining, which he thought might also be had, he, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Bromley were appointed to inspect the estate,

* "Crisis." No. IV., 1832.

and a deputation was likewise appointed to wait upon Mr. Morgan, of the Stock Exchange, and endeavour to effect a loan of £250,000."*

The fourth congress of delegates was held in Liverpool, October, 1832. So impatient and confident of progress were the co-operative communists becoming that they held two congresses in one year.

The fifth co-operative congress was held at Huddersfield in April, 1833, when a public meeting took place in the White Hart Inn, and one was held at Back Green, called by the town crier. Mr. Rigby's name appears for the first time at this congress as a delegate from Manchester. It was stated that "numerous delegates from the various co-operative societies throughout the kingdom gave encouraging accounts of their progress, and that the societies in the West Riding of Yorkshire alone had accumulated a capital of £5,000, which was thought a great sum then in the north. It was at this congress that the death of Mr. Thompson, of Cork, was announced by Mr. Owen, which was matter of deep regret to all social reformers. Mr. Stock, high constable of Huddersfield, spoke at the White Hart meeting, and "Mr. Owen moved a vote of thanks to their patriotic high constable." Mr. W. R. Wood, of London, was appointed one of the secretaries of the congress. "A provisional committee was appointed to immediately engage premises for a labour exchange." This congress is described in "The Crisis" for May, 1833, as the sixth. In September of the same year the full report is reprinted as that of the "fifth congress," which appears to be the right enumeration.

The sixth congress was held at West End, Barnsley, March 31, 1834. It is not, so far as I can trace, even mentioned in "The Crisis."

* Report of Third Co-operative Congress, 1832. Reported and Edited by order of the congress by William Carpenter. It was a rule in those times always to have the congress reported and edited by men of mark.

The seventh congress recorded was held at Halifax, April 20, 1835. "The Crisis" has no mention of this. Co-operation was coming to be regarded as a minor matter. This was the last meeting of delegates from stores described as "a co-operative congress." This Halifax congress was the end of the co-operative congress series. They lasted six years.

This year, 1835, the Association of All Classes was formed, and in May was held the first of the Socialist congresses. This name was not given to it at the time; but in 1836 it was spoken of and classified as a congress. It was not convened as a delegate congress, but was open to all who cared to come. It is elsewhere described. It was really the great meeting at which the A.A.C.A.N. [Association of All Classes of All Nations] was floated. The second socialist congress was convened at Burton Chapel, Burton-street, Burton Crescent, London. Its proceedings consisted of addresses and resolutions, and had no organised delegate deliberations.

The third socialist congress was held in Manchester, May, 1837. It assembled in the Social Institution, Great George-street, Salford. Strictly speaking, it ought to be called the Salford congress; but meeting in Salford was a mere matter of local convenience. The congress was intended to be, and is always described as the "Manchester" congress.

The practical result of this congress was the formation of a National Community Friendly Society. On the motion of Mr. Lloyd Jones, a missionary and tract society was resolved on.

The chief things otherwise accomplished were the enrolment of the society under the 10th George the Fourth, chap. 56, as amended by the 4th and 5th of William the Fourth, for the purpose of obtaining legal security for the funds of a society having in view the establishment of a system of united property, labour,

and education among the members thereof. Mr. James Rigby, of Salford, and Alexander Campbell, of Glasgow, were appointed the permanent missionaries of the association, who were to receive instructions from the Central Board of the Home Department. The Foreign department announced was little heard of afterwards, though London was assigned as the seat of the foreign government. The main objects of all the resolutions, and departments, were founding communities of united interests. The fervour which prevailed at this period was indicated in an editorial article on "The Socialists' Campaign," in which it was pointed out that things would go on badly everywhere, "until 'The Book'—the book of the new moral world—shall be received and acknowledged as a guide, not simply to all parties, but to the entire family of human kind."

The second quarterly report, presented after the announcement of the Home and Foreign departments referred to, showed a total income of only £122. 10s. 4d. The revenue of £500 a year certainly suggested that the world was going to be governed with a very moderate budget.

The fourth socialist congress was held in Manchester, May, 1838. Mr. Hollick was first appointed a missionary at this congress. At the same meeting Messrs William Clegg, John Finch, and Joseph Smith, were instructed to seek an estate capable of accommodating five hundred persons. It adjourned to the 30th of July to Birmingham, where it met under the designation of a "Congress of Delegates of the National Community Friendly Society." Mr. Owen, the president, artfully read to the delegates an account of a council of savages in the South Seas,* where throughout the whole of the proceedings no two persons had attempted to speak at the same time—no speaker had attempted to impugn the

* From "Montgomery's Travels."

motives or opinions of the rest—but all had honourably confined themselves to the question before them—one of many instances in which savages are capable of teaching the civilised.

The two last-named associations—that of All Classes of All Nations and the National Community Society—made a PROCLAMATION at this congress, and the "Outline of the Rational System of Society" was first issued then.

The fifth congress of this series was held in Birmingham in May, 1839. Birmingham had become so influential a centre of co-operation that not only was the "Moral World" printed and published in it, but the Central Boards of the two associations were established in Bennett's Hill, and the longest congress that had then been held took place in Birmingham. The congress there of 1839 sat sixteen days. The Association of All Classes and the National Community Society were amalgamated and transmuted into something more wonderful still, "The Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists."

The sixth* congress met in a music saloon, South Parade, Leeds, in May, 1840. The chief announcement made was that since the last congress the estate of East Tytherly, in Hants, had been secured for the purposes of a community. This first congress of the Community Society was occupied chiefly with the affairs of Tytherly.

The seventh congress (second of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists) met in Manchester in the great hall of the Social Institution, May, 1841. The affairs of Tytherly—the Queenwood Community as it came to be called—was the main topic of debates which lasted seventeen days. In the pro-

* In the "Moral World" report, July 25, 1840, this is spoken of as the fifth. The enumeration of congresses was often inaccurate.

ceedings of this congress the name of the present writer appears for the first time officially as appointed Social Missionary for Sheffield.

The eighth congress opened May, 1842, in the new building, Harmony Hall, Queenwood. Standing orders were published this year. The later congresses showed business progress and order of deliberation. More than the powers of a prime minister were accorded to the president, that of choosing his administration and changing them at his discretion. This was the first Queenwood congress. The docility which persecution had taught some tongues was shown by Mr. Fleming at this congress, where he said by way of admonition to social missionaries that "fondness for theological controversy always argued an ill regulated mind, to say the least of it; and he who fostered that spirit could be neither good nor happy." A proposal was made to suspend the missionaries as the general fund was low.

The ninth congress was a special one, called at the Institution, 23, John-street, Tottenham Court Road, July, 1842, to take the affairs of Harmony into consideration, as funds were wanted. The congress sat on Sunday. The business occupied nine days.

The tenth congress of May, 1843, again held at Harmony Hall, was styled the "Eighth Session of the Congress of the Rational Society" (the "special" congress not being counted in official enumeration). The way in which even Mr. Owen spoke of Mr. Lowe, the secretary of the Manchester society, though courteous in some respects, yet represented him as "ignorant and incompetent," should never have been reported. Mr. Lowe was an earnest officer, and had as much intelligence as the members when the society began. If it had advanced beyond him it was in measure owing to his zeal. A young lady left Queenwood through ill health. This was reported in a manner very unpleasant, through the editor of the report not considering how statements

that she was diseased before coming there, and that "organic disease" existed, might prove unwelcome reading to herself and family when published to the whole country. It made it a serious thing to join the society if any physical ailment happened to a young woman who was a member of it. In the case here noticed the name of the young person was given. True she had complained of the governor, and some notice of her letter had to be taken. She was probably wrong, yet the governor could have been justified in some more considerate way.

The eleventh congress of the "Rational Society," as it was now called, took place again at Harmony Hall, May 10, 1844. The practical questions as to Harmony occupied the main time of the delegates, who grew fewer as the business became more serious. Lack of funds and hope and diminished members deterred or disqualified many societies from electing representatives.

The twelfth congress met again at Harmony Hall, May 10, 1845. A series of elaborate business papers and financial and other statements were laid before the delegates. Mr. George Simpson was now the general secretary, quite the ablest man who had held the office. Had Mr. Simpson been secretary from the beginning of the Queenwood community it would probably have had a different fate. A clear-minded and single-minded and capable financial secretary is of priceless value in experimental undertakings.

A thirteenth "special" congress was convened at the Literary and Scientific Institution, John-street, London, in July, 1845. The disposal of Harmony was the critical question debated. The proceedings were remarkable for a curious reactionary confession made by Mr. Lloyd Jones, who said "he had serious doubts now as to the good effects of their preaching for several years past, and it was with him a question whether they had bettered the state of those who by their preaching they had

loosed from the authority they were formerly under and placed them under themselves."* Mr. Henry Hetherington stoutly said "it was always good to release individuals from the influence of bad men and false opinions, and was at a loss to conceive how people could be made better if it was not done." There are times when able men are discouraged at the small impression on those with whom they are directly in contact. Truth often deflects from those it strikes, travels far and hits other men. Different persons and a later time alone show the good done. It is worth while telling mankind they are in the wrong if you can prove it, although he who does so may not see what is right. It gives others a motive to look in that direction, and the world has many eyes and may see what an individual may miss. Besides, it is the duty of those who strive to be reformers to take care when they set men free from ignorant motives and aims, that they place them under the dominion of intelligent and demonstrable ones, and provide for such repetitions of the teaching as shall keep the new conception strong and clear. This alone is organised progress.

Socialism under Mr. Owen's inspiration and its own enthusiasm continued in its grand ways to the end. It issued proclamations, manifestoes, and addresses to her Majesty. If the Queen has preserved them she must have a fine collection.

The fourteenth and last of the socialist congresses was held at Queenwood Farm, June 30, 1846.† The "Moral World" had ceased then, and these proceedings were reported in the "Reasoner," edited by the present writer, which from 1846 to 1872 vindicated the socialist aim and explained and advocated the co-operative principle.

The early co-operators were never successful with their poets. They had a wonderful opinion of one Mr.

* "Moral World," July 26, 1845.
† "Reasoner," July 8, 1846.

George Petrie, a Scotchman by birth, but who had the appearance of an Irish gentleman. He served as a private in the army, and took part in the Peninsular wars. He was a man of considerable address and courage, and ran generous and frightful risks for his comrades, from which only his wit extricated him. Having a strong sense of justice, and being left on duty several days without his proper rations, and being quite capable of eating them all up, he applied for them to the quarter-master, the adjutant, the captain, the commanding officer of his regiment; and, not obtaining his lost rations, he determined to apply for them to the commander-in-chief, who was then the Duke of Wellington. Upon entering the room he found that illustrious general perusing documents at a table. Wellington, without raising his eyes, said, "What does this man want?" The officer in attendance said he came to appeal about some arrears of rations. Wellington, without raising his head or asking a question or hearing a word, said, "Take him away, and give him a damned good flogging." It was not administered, but Petrie did not like the reference to the triangle, and lay in wait two days with a view to shoot Wellington, when the hungry and angry Petrie was luckily wounded in an engagement. After settling in London among the co-operators he wrote a poem on "Equality," which was dedicated to Robert Dale Owen. His "Leicestershire Yeomanry Man" was the most effective of his poetical pieces. None of them are readable at this day. He was an energetic man in his way, and attracted many personal friends. He became an inmate of one of Mr. Baume's experimental cottages on the Frenchman's Island, where he became insane in a month. His neighbours said lodging under such an eccentric landlord accounted for it.

The Rev. C. B. Dunn, curate of Camberworth, is a name which frequently occurs in the congress and other

co-operative reports, as a successful speaker and advocate of Co-operation, and he helped to encourage some religious persons to form societies in connection with churches and chapels. Mr. Dunn also contributed to the lyrics of Co-operation. A verse or two will be sufficient to show that the intention exceeded the execution, though much worse verse, that fell less trippingly on the ear than those of Mr. Dunn's, were printed and sung by co-operators. One of his co-operative melodies ran as follows :—

Since now on every side we see
The poor man's prospects brighten,
Let music, mirth, and melody,
Our mutual labours lighten.
Should want assail, or care annoy,
Or sorrow's blight come o'er us,
Hope's glittering sun shall gild with joy
The halcyon days before us.

Let none, who Christ's example court,
Contend for sect or station,
But all, who human weal support,
Support Co-operation.
Ere long shall men of every clime
With tears and prayers implore us,
To show them in the glass of time
The halcyon days before us.

The polyglot supplicators have not come forward yet; but it is to be hoped the halcyon days are nearer. Among the writers of co-operative melodies was Mrs. Mary Leman Grimstone, a popular contributor to the "Monthly Repository," edited by W. T. Fox, who some twenty-five years later became member of parliament for Oldham, and who himself was one of the early and literary friends of Co-operation. Mrs. Grimstone, the lady mentioned, wrote an acrostic on the founder of Co-operation, which, though not very brilliant, was the best of many which appeared in his time :—

O mnipotent benevolence, this is thy holy reign :
W oe, want, crime, vice, and ignorance shall fall before thy fame;
E re long, o'er all the gladd'nd earth shall thy full blaze be glowing,
N or leave a spot that shall not hear and bless the name of OWEN !

Honourable propagandist enthusiasm.

All these glowing predictions should be deposited privately in some house of prophecy to be brought out when the day of fulfilment comes. It is, however, through the "Crisis" that our immediate path lies. The trail is not very clear. Co-operation as a manufacturing and distributive system almost ceased to be recorded in the three volumes to which that publication extended. It placed on the title page of the first volume a ferocious portrait of Robert Owen enough to scare any one away from its pages. To compensate for this a vignette adorned the "Crisis," representing the Labour Exchange Institution at Gray's Inn Road, where Mr. Owen had delivered his best known lectures of that day. Unsympathetic readers said that was the place where *the* "crisis" was to occur. The design was a sort of Canaletto interior. The place never looked half so well as in the engraving at the head of this journal. Very early in volume two this disappeared, and gave place to a large straggling parallelogram intended to represent a community. The "Crisis" was the first London weekly paper officially, as one may say, representing Co-operation, and excited great interest and hopes.

The friends of the "great change" impending were far from intending that the public should pass through the "crisis" without knowing it. The Social Missionary and Tract Society of the time established three stations, at Primrose Hill, Copenhagen Fields, and White Conduit House, where they sold sixteen dozen of the "Crisis" in one day. All matters of interest to the party were made known in its columns. When indispensable news of meetings had to be published, Mr. F. Bate would write a note to the editor to say that "the annual report of the London Society would be received at the Burton Rooms on Sunday morning, at ten o'clock."

Though the co-operators were charged with latitudinarianism as respects responsibility, they appear to have had a very sharp conception of it in practice.

Mr. Eamonson was a burning and a shining light of Co-operation. It was he who delayed the index of the first volume of the "Crisis" for some time, in order to get, what he called, a good likeness of Mr. Owen put upon the title page; and who finally produced that alarming representation of which the reader has been told. This gentleman, having a debt which he was unable to get paid, actually inserted in the "Crisis" the following interesting notice:—

"To Persons in Debt.—Whereas, if Mr. Puckeridge, alias Mr. Mackellon, proprietor of the Royal Clarence Theatre, New Road, does not immediately settle the small account which is due to Eamonson, 15, Chichester Place, for papers, he will continue to give publicity to it by this and other means, as also some other persons who are in his debt, and whose conduct has been shuffling and unmanly."

The sub-editor who suffered this notice to appear should have been put into the street by the first costermonger who passed by the office with his barrow.

In the 35th number of the "Crisis," Mr. Owen associated with himself his son, Mr. Robert Dale Owen, as conductor of the paper. This occurred in November, 1832. Mr. Dale Owen and his father's joint names appeared for the last time in 1833. Volume two was much diminished in size, and altogether a poor looking paper. Clearly, the change from error and misery had not yet begun. Articles still appeared in it with the well-welcome signature of "R. D. O." Soon after, the journal stated that its co-editor, Robert Dale Owen, had set out for the United States, and, it would appear, took the parallelogram with him, for it never appeared after; and the title-page bore the new title of "National Co-operative Trades Union, and Equitable Exchange Gazette." There, however, appeared very little co-operative trading in the pages of the "Crisis," the proceedings of labour exchanges and projected communities being its principal

topic. The "Crisis" bore the additional information that it was "Under the patronage of Robert Owen." A third volume commenced in September, 1833. It now returned to its original size, and was again a spacious, well-printed paper.

From the prevalence of Mr. Owen's articles and expositions of his views in it, the probability is that he found the funds.* Its price was now three half-pence, having previously been one penny. It now bore two small engravings on either side of the title, one representing a small town where the buildings, on one hand, appear in very irregular groups, while opposite is a lunatic asylum. All the people to be seen in the streets before it are crippled, or blind, or ragged; while in the new town the buildings are in mathematical order; the walks well laid out, all the people there are well dressed, well to do, and perfectly upright. The artist, however, had no genius for sketching the new world; for the old, immoral arrangement of the houses, with their quaint appearance, presented a far better sky line than the monotonous regularity of the well-built pile.

The lunatic asylum had a far more picturesque appearance, and must have been a pleasanter place to live in than the solid prosaic structure with which it was contrasted.

A fourth and last volume of the "Crisis" appeared in 1834. By that time all the diagrams had disappeared. There was less and less of Mr. Owen in its pages, and more and more of the Rev. J. E. Smith, who was a continual lecturer at the Charlotte-street Institution, and

* When the labour exchange was broken up at Gray's Inn Road by violence, 9,000 hours of labour notes were stolen—"abstracted" Mr. Owen said. These Mr. Owen undertook should be honoured if presented. About the time of the Queenwood Community of 1840, Mr. Owen appears to have come to the end of the money he had reserved for the furtherance of social principle. He appears afterwards to have been limited to an income only sufficient for his personal comfort.

The inexhaustible ingenuity of "Shepherd Smith."

his fertile and industrious lectures frequently filled the pages of the "Crisis," which became more various in contents, and more readable; but Mr. Smith lectured upon socialism with so much ingenuity that Mr. Owen did not know his own system, and at last he protested, announcing that he would issue an entirely new publication, to be called the "New Moral World," stating, with his usual grandeur, that "the great crisis of human nature would be passed that week." At length the date was definite and the event near. Three years the crisis had been picking itself together, but then, the world was shy. It had now determined to make the plunge. In the same number Mr. J. E. Smith protested, and announced that any persons left undispersed by the crisis he would gather into a fold of his own, and announced a new publication to be called the "Shepherd." Amid a shower of fables and playful gibes at his illustrious colleague and his disciples, Mr. Smith took his departure.

The Rev. J. E. Smith, better known subsequently as "Shepherd Smith," was one of those clever and curious spirits who alighted within the confines of Co-operation. He was a born mystic, who explained everything by means of indefinite and untraceable analogies. He entertained his hearers, he baffled his questioners, he evaded his adversaries. He constantly said excellent things, but all that was admirable was mostly irrelevant. He became the wonder and delight of thousands who never hoped to understand him. Mr. Smith afterwards achieved a wide and prolonged repute as the fertile, diverting editor of the "Family Herald." He made a fortune by his wit and inexhaustible variety, and exemplary editor! he left it among his contributors, with a considerable portion to Mr. B. D. Cousins, his publisher, a pleasant and active promoter of Co-operation, whose name was honourably associated with those of Hetherington, Watson, and Cleave.

The vicissitudes of propagandist papers.

The "Crisis," like all propagandist papers which preceded it, and many which followed after it, appeared, as we have seen, in several sizes, and variations of title. All these journals were characterised by fluctuations in quality, and colour of paper; by infirmity of type and orthography; by shape, quantity, price, and changing names. Like flags carried in battle, they were made out of such material as happened to be available in the exigencies of forced marches, and were often shot into tatters by the enemy. In the early days the taxes upon knowledge and upon news hampered them, and excluded the matter which would have made them of general interest, and enabled them to command a popular circulation. They were obliged to be published at a small price, and this prevented them using the newspaper stamp, which alone would carry news, and entitle them to include matter of daily interest. The heavy newspaper stamp of those times shut them out from advertisements which might otherwise have assisted in defraying their expenses. "The True Sun," of 1834, stated that the "Crisis" was prevented assuming the character of a newspaper through the cost of the stamp, and that in the hands of Mr. Owen and his son the "Crisis" would probably have had a prosperous existence.

The organ of the future, projected by Mr. Owen, lost no time in rushing forward. Two "New Moral Worlds" appeared. The first was issued August 30, 1834, and was larger and altogether better printed than the volume which was issued three months later, and which formed the first of a series of annual volumes, which were continued until 1845. It showed increasing vitality in a movement which was changing its front, and was attempting larger schemes when lesser ones had failed; that its weekly journal of the "New World," of a quantity cheap as periodicals are now sold, should have a career of twelve years before it. The August issue of the journal in question was described as the "Official Gazette

of the National Association of Industry, Humanity, and Knowledge," a most compendious representation, it must be owned. The first article addressed to the "Unions of Great Britain and Ireland," was signed W. R. Wood, the young and eloquent speaker, whose name has appeared in the proceedings of some of the earlier congresses, always an intelligent and consistent promoter of labour exchanges, and from belief in their utility and relevance he has never departed during a long, honourable, and successful professional life.

The "New Moral World" may be regarded as the most important, the longest continued, periodical which the co-operators have yet established, and marks what may be regarded as a new departure then in social advocacy. Co-operation, however, was really less formally noticed than in the "Crisis. The fact is that at this time co-operative societies were dying out all around. Mr. Owen and his disciples were more and more influenced by the belief that these small affairs could effect no permanent change in society, and that they must concentrate their endeavours on the establishment of the great social scheme of Co-operation, which should demonstrate once for all and for ever the possibility and advantages of organised industry and organised society. The failure of the Indiana and the Orbiston experiments certainly discredited their schemes in public estimation, and discouraged numerous advocates, but Mr. Owen's persistent assertions that a larger combination of means only was wanted to attain a striking success, kept up the faith of many adherents. The missionary propaganda proposed in 1832, and put in operation in 1833, created a new generation of adherents. Numerous young men of considerable ability were inspired by the addresses made in various towns, and the facilities of discussion afforded in the various lecture rooms opened, which gave them opportunities for public speaking. Popular excitement arising, and large audiences being attracted, active

and provoking adversaries made their appearance, and all who could address an audience took the platform in defence of the new principles, and thus acquired training as public debators, and a formidable and disturbing stand was made on behalf of a great social change. How could anyone within that enthusiastic circle doubt that Mr. Owen saw his way to the introduction of the new co-operative world, seeing that he had applied for the government of Coaquila and Texas, and that the Mexican government had actually conceded to him the jurisdiction of the entire line of frontier stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, some 1,400 miles in length, and 150 miles in breadth, in which to establish his wonderful government of peace and plenty.* To plant the English millennium on 1,000 or 2,000 acres would be, to use Mr. Disraeli's unpleasant and ignominious simile, be a mere "flea bite" of progress.

In 1834, a correspondent of Mr. Owen's, whose communication, signed "J. C.," appeared in the "New Moral World," in November of that year, proposed a "Floating Co-operative Community," which was to have its station on the Thames, where it was thought the inhabitants would be safe from the extortions of retail traders, lodging-house keepers, and gin shops. Convenient spots were to be selected where the families of the floating society could go on shore for the instruction of the children in horticulture, agriculture, and botany. "Community" coffee houses existed in London in 1834. Co-operators were never deterred by poverty of means. A halfpenny a week land fund had its enthusiastic members and friends, who expected to join Mr. Disraeli's territorial aristocracy by patient subscriptions of two shillings and twopence a year.†

At 14, Charlotte-street, Fitzroy Square, was situated

* "New Moral World." September 26, 1835.
† "New Moral World," No. 10, p. 64, Dec. 20, 1834.

"The Institution" where Mr. Owen lectured every Sunday and festivals, and discussions were held on week-days. Socialism was always social. Its worst enemies could not deny this, and it first set the example of teaching working people to meet like ladies and gentlemen, on a pleasant equality, and abandon habits of isolation, sullenness, and conspiracy; and to chat and sing, and dance, and think their way to schemes of competence. This result was so little credited by the public, that the "Poor Man's Guardian," of 1834 (so late as that), thought it necessary to print an assurance on that point, and said, "We believe greater order or more genuine good feeling and politeness, are not to be met with in any of the public assemblies in the metropolis or elsewhere." Considering that these assemblies were composed mainly of lodging-house keepers, newsvendors (who in those days were seldom long out of prison), grocers, tailors, costermongers, shoemakers, tallow chandlers, and in some cases, as I know, sweeps; good people of conventional tastes were perplexed at this new species of association. It was not then understood that variety of industry was really the dress and decoration of the public service; and those who rendered none were merely nude and useless, and if they wilfully evaded work they were disreputable compared with those who lived by their honest labour. Habits of labour do not imply refinement in all cases; but industry, as a rule, implies honesty, and honesty is worth, which, when combined with intelligence, makes good company as times go. At length these assemblies commanded respect.

At the end of 1834 the first female co-operative association was formed. The object of the promoters was to form associative homes, and enable their members to acquire the art of living in contiguous dwellings—an art which is frequently cultivated and never progresses. Eventually it will. The plan of this excellent society

A confident Co-operative motto.

needed funds; and to raise these funds these female co-operators commenced selling tea and coffee, inviting the custom of the faithful to that end.

There was one co-operative notice, in 1834, of congratulation to the members of the Charlotte-street Institution, on their having given spontaneous support to a grocery store and that it was in contemplation to open a butcher's store.

A French advocate of association, Mons. J. Gay, sent a letter by Dr. Bowring, in 1834, in which he described a plan of association which he had himself projected, and which was to consist of 12,000 souls. His dining room was to be the size of the court of the Louvre, and capable of seating 12,000 guests—a very satisfactory dinner party.

The "London weekly publication," as its advent was described, bore the title of the "New Moral World." Old things were now to pass away. This was to be the organ of the rational system of society, conducted by Robert Owen and his disciples. Its tone and terms were apostolic: otherwise its topographic style and appearance were rather shabby and inferior in quantity of matter and quality of writing to the "Crisis." The new moral world that was to be, so far as this journal represented it, was not very respectable. It bore a proud, confident motto, which averred that "Silence will not retard its progress and opposition will give increased celerity to its movements." This was one of several famous sentences which Mr. Owen constructed. The great crisis of human nature, which was to take place in the fourth week in August, appears really to have come off, for the first serial number of the volume, appearing on Saturday, November 1, 1834,* declared in its opening sentence that "the Rubicon between the old journal world and the new moral worlds is finally passed."

* It was printed and published by Rowland Hunter, junr., at the office of the Association of All Classes of All Nations, 14, Charlotte-street, Fitzroy Square.

These astounding tidings were followed by twenty-one proofs of the principles and practices of the new state of things, dreary enough to make the reader regret that the days of the old and livelier immoral world were numbered. As, however, Mr. Owen had had his forces in the City of London Tavern in sight of the rubicon eighteen years before, it must be admitted that they had been a long time in getting over it. Of his twenty-one proofs of his principles, the most that can be said is they were very oppressive. In the second number he announced that "truth had at length gained the victory over error. Its reign upon earth had commenced, and would now prevail for evermore." The two volumes for 1835 and 1836 contain mainly papers by Mr. Owen and lectures delivered by him in the chapel in Burton Street.

Two pages of the "New Moral World" of 1835 contain the most intelligible and brief calculation of the material requirements in the way of agriculture, manufactures, and provisions for 500 persons of the working class which appears in the records of these schemes. The proportions of persons were 110 men, 110 women, and 280 children, who were to occupy 1,000 English acres, upon part of which a village was to be built for their habitations.

Early in the year, owing to the excessive cold which prevailed in 1835, Mr. Owen ceased to lecture in the Charlotte-street Institution, and delivered his addresses in his chapel in Burton-street, Burton Crescent.

Early in 1834, Mr. Owen had proposed that the "Friends of the human race"—a very large detachment—should form "An Association of all Classes, and of all Nations." An elaborate scheme was published of this very comprehensive society, of which Mr. Owen was to be the "preliminary father." This new paternal authority published long and unreadable proposals for a "change of system in the British empire," which were duly offered to the Duke of Wellington's administration. Whether

the duke's administration were influenced by timidity, or whether they did not understand the proposals cannot now be determined, but it is matter of history that they were not adopted.

Many notices were published that at one o'clock on the 1st of May, 1835, a great meeting would be held in the Charlotte-street Institution, when the superseding of the old world by the new would be made, and the contrast between "the world that is, and the world that is to come," would be made evident to the public.

The Association of All Classes of All Nations, the great cosmopolitan device of 1835, was formed at this meeting. Its immense object was "to effect an entire change in the character and condition of the human race." Mr. Braby opened the proceedings and Mr. Owen took the chair. His speech occupied, when published, nearly two entire numbers of the "New Moral World," and must have been long enough to weary both worlds at once. Its delivery tried the temper, and would have affected the character of all the nations together, had they been present. Nor did the trouble end there. One Mr. Charles Toplis, of Leicester Square, had contrived or conceived an infernal engine, a sort of Satanic mitrailleuse, which was to throw a thousand balls in the time one man could fire. This fine invention he called "the Pacificator." Mr. Toplis had the wit to send an account of the horrible thing to Mr. Owen, who thought it something like an act of Providence that it should reach him just as he had finished writing his address, as it seemed to confirm the announcement he had made of the probable termination of war all over all the world. Mr. Toplis had, Mr. Owen thought, made war impossible by multiplying the powers of destruction; and insisted upon the Toplis paper on "the Pacificator" being read, which being long must still have further wearied the Association of All Classes of All Nations. Indeed, the Toplis document was dull enough to have

dispersed any army had it been read to them without any other application of "the Pacificator." The report says the meeting was numerous and respectable, but the only person of note who spoke at the end was Richard Carlile; he, however, was a man of historical powers of endurance.

The term socialism was first introduced on the formation of the Society of All Classes of All Nations, the members of which came to be known as socialists.

A congress was announced to be held fourteen days later, to set the "Association of All Classes and All Nations" going, when Mr. Owen stated that he should retire from public life. On that day he would be sixty-five years of age. He said that he had, while he was wealthy, taken the precaution of making his wife and children sufficiently independent of his public proceedings, which always involved a certain degree of personal and pecuniary risk. Mr. Richard Carlile made an eloquent speech on Mr. Owen's retirement from public life. Henceforth, the lectures in the Charlotte-street Institution were given in the name of the Association of All Classes and All Nations. Of course, Mr. Owen never retired, but public letters appeared every week from his pen; sometimes to Lord Brougham, at another time to Sir Robert Peel, and to Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer. Three months later, Mr. Owen served upon a sub-committee with Thomas Atwood—a committee appointed of members of parliament and others who had met at the Exchequer Coffee House, Palace Yard, to consider means of relieving the distress which then existed among the working class. Mr. Owen even wrote an address to the "Religious of all Denominations," though it is very difficult to conceive how any argument could be constructed which would interest half of them about anything. Twelve months after his retirement, he was addressing letters to His Majesty, William IV., from 4, Crescent Place, Burton Crescent.

The "Pioneer" of Trade Unions.

In September James Morrison, the editor of a trades union journal called the "Pioneer," died. He was the first platform and literary advocate of unionism, who obtained distinction for judicious counsel, and a firmness which was made strong by moderation. He died prematurely through working beyond his strength. His widow was long known at the Social Institution, Salford, for activity and intelligence nearly equal to his own. She was one of the lecturers of the society.

This year some friends in Finsbury obtained possession of Zebulon Chapel, in the Curtain Road, and converted it into an Eastern Associative Hall. It caused disquietude in certain quarters that "Zebulon" should become a social institution.

A Social Land Community Society was the quaint name of a scheme this year, which never got far beyond its name. We have known a good deal in London of co-operative tailors since "Alton Locke" appeared. In the "Social Land" year (1835); an association of the tailor craft conducted a business at 5, Brydges-street, Strand.

Mr. Owen's lectures on marriage, and that kind of perplexing thing, were first printed in volume one of the "New Moral World," in 1835. Nothing could be more unfortunate than the tone, terms, and illustrations of the subject. Those who recognised Mr. Owen's rectitude of intention, found it hard to defend his views in the face of his awkward and inapt statements; while those who thought ill of his objects, found in them a whole armoury of weapons for the assault of co-operative views which lasted them ten years. In the abstract and dreary pages of the "New Moral World," the lectures were harmless and inaccessible, but some one—on mischief bent it must be—had them reprinted in Leeds, and Mr. Joshua Hobson published them. It was then brought to light that the lectures were not verbatim, but made up of abrupt notes taken by a hearer. On such a

subject, Mr. Owen should have prevented appearing, or repudiated any statement not his own. There was no necessity to preach a new doctrine of marriage to render associative life possible. Those who had discordant homes should have been kept out of communities. It did not need Mr. Owen to tell us that we cannot love whom we please: yet it continues true that we may all our lives remain pleased with those who allure us to like them. There will often be unsuitable marriages, and divorce is far more moral than association with hate. But this doctrine is more wanted in the old world than the new.

Things moved on in those days at an express rate towards perfection. The rubicon being passed so late as November 1, 1834, was followed on October 31, 1835, by the second volume of the "New Moral World," which opened with the sub-title of the "Millennium." The full title read, "The New Moral World and Millennium." That hitherto evasive form of perfection had been secured. A junior member of the council of that wonderful Association of All Classes of All Nations, unaware that it had been secured, delivered a lecture at the Charlotte-street Institution, on "Millennial Prospects." Nothing, one would think, could be of more interest to mankind. Yet, the editor of the "Millennium," who had published part of its "Prospects," unfortunately declared that "his limits did not admit of more extracts;" so that to this day the world does not know what was in store for it.

In due course, a proposal was made for establishing a sort of co-operative Freemasonry, and the principles of association were to be propagated by means of "Lodges," and one was determined upon, and the "punctual attendance of all the brothers was respectfully requested."

Trade unions and trade benefit societies took these imposing titles. The printers, who acquire increase of sense by setting up the sense of others, were first to

have their grand lodge, and schemes were published for extending new world principles, by establishing lodges in all nations of the world. An attendance of "all the Brothers" of the "Grand Lodge of Miscellaneous Operatives and Friends of Industry and Humanity" was called, in February, 1835. No doubt, brotherhood was put to a strong test in this composite lodge, from which the strangest creatures could not be logically excluded. This catholic device certainly gave everybody a chance; for he must be very badly used by nature or circumstance who was not qualified to be classed among "miscellaneous" people.

Volume two of "Moral World" of this date (1836) had a department called "Herald of Community," but the "Herald" was many years blowing his trumpet before the forces were collected. Social reformers were great at trumpets. They were always blowing them, or making trumpet calls at which nobody appeared. In 1835 one W. Cameron, author of the first "Trumpet," announced a second, which he dedicated to Robert Owen, who certainly did not require it. His friends had a large stock.

About this time Mr. Owen became acquainted with a little book which afterwards made some noise, known as Etzler's "Paradise within the Reach of All Men." The great co-operator must have had in these days some side of his nature open to wonder. The clever German, who regarded mechanics not as a department of science, but as a species of poetry, undertook to put the whole world in ten years in a state of Paradise, which might be permanently maintained without human labour, or next to none, by the powers of nature or machinery. Etzler was a man who stood by the way-side of the world, and offered the philosopher's stone to any passer-by who would take it. "Look here," he cried in his preface, "ye philosophers, ye speculators, ye epicureans, behold a new, easy, straight, and short

road to the summit of your wishes." By Mr. Etzler's invention the sea was to become a drawing room, and the air a sort of upper chamber, for the accommodation of those who dwelt on the land. So far from distrusting these preposterous proposals, Mr. Owen merely regarded Etzler as a fellow renovator of the universe, who had, in some wonderful way, got before him.

Now and then French socialists contributed some astounding scheme of co-operative cooking, which was received with applause in the periodicals of the English party. The idea was in a limited degree practicable, but it was projected on a scale of magnitude which made it ridiculous. Before the day of Mr. Corbett's Glasgow soup kitchen, or cafés for the people were talked of by Lord Shaftesbury, a proposal was made in Paris to supply the city with food by one immense *restaurateur*. One who had studied the project said, with something of the fervour and confidence of Mr. Etzler, "Go and see it. The sight and the steam will cost you nothing. There are Greek statues holding frying-pans, brilliant portraits of Lucullus, of Gargantua, Vatel, Caréme, and all the great men who have honoured universal gastronomy. There you will see the great cook, M. de Botherall, skimming his gigantic pot, his forehead enveloped at the same time with a cotton nightcap and a viscount's coronet. To prove the profits arising from the solvency of the scheme he offers to wrap his cutlets for twelve days in bills of 1,000 francs each. In a short time the restaurative omnibusses will circulate through Paris. A cook will be upon the front seat, and a scullion behind. These vehicles will contain broth and sauce for the whole city. There will be the soup omnibus, the omnibus with made dishes, and the omnibus with roast meat, running together, after which will come the tooth-pick omnibus, and lastly the omnibus with the bill." This must have been ridicule, but it did not deter social editors from quoting it as one of the schemes of the time.

At a later period, in 1836, Elliott made a speech in Sheffield in favour of news-rooms, in which he stood up stoutly on behalf of political knowledge, and said, "Be not deluded by the Owens, the Oastlers, the Bulls, and the Sadlers, these dupes of the enemy."

In 1836, Mr. Owen published the book of the "New Moral World," which, while it animated his disciples by many observations which it contained, gave persons of any vivacity of temperament rather a distaste for that state of existence. Episodes of co-operative experience in conducting stores for the sale of provisions, would have contributed to the interest of the book and been a practical and relevant variation. The phrase "taxes on knowledge," so often heard twenty years later, appeared in the "New Moral World," in February, 1836, imported from the "London Review."

Traces of co-operative societies grow fewer and fewer, in volume two of the "New Moral World," but in lieu of them we have announcements that the "Religion of the Millennium" is now ready, and may be had of the publishers. In volume four of the "New Moral World," November, 1836, occurs a notable passage which illustrates how poor an opinion Mr. Owen entertained of Co-operation, which had excited so many hopes, and had been the subject of so many endeavours, and how seriously he discouraged it. He related that on his journey to New Lanark, he passed through Carlisle. Devoting Tuesday and Wednesday "to seeing the friends of the system, and those whom I wish to make its friends: to my surprise I found there are six or seven co-operative societies, in different parts of the town, doing well, as they think, that is, making some profit by joint-stock retailing. It is, however, high time to put an end to the notion very prevalent in the public mind, that this is the social system which we contemplate, or that it will form any part of the arrangements in the 'New Moral World.'"

Later, in December, a prospectus appeared of an intended Hall of Science in Brighton, prefixed by the phrase "Science belongs to no party." This might be true, but there were certainly many parties who never had it, and a curious thing about these halls of science everywhere has been that they never had any science in them. The fact is they were thinking, not of physical science, which the name implied, so much as of social science, but that name being too long to introduce, it was omitted, and the public were always expecting what never took place.

Mr. J. Ransom, of Brighton, was one of six who wrote a letter to the "New Moral World," proposing means of increasing the sale of the publication, and showing that the early interest which Brighton took in Co-operation was still sustained, and on the part of that writer and others has been honourably continued there to this day.

A writer in the *Radical*, a weekly stamped newspaper, addressed several brief, well-written letters to the working class on the means of obtaining equality. The writer took the signature of "Common Sense," and published his letters in dateless pamphlets; but I believe the *Radical* appeared in 1836. The most striking thing that "Common Sense" had to say was that "the besetting sin of the working people is their admiration of the unproductive classes, and their contempt and neglect of their own." The third volume of the "Moral World" gave signs of sense. It must be owned that during this period of departure from Co-operation to Socialism, the adherents of this scheme got a little feeble, sentimental, and sometimes melodramatic. Their styling Mr. Owen the "Preliminary Father," and addressing him, as Mr. Fleming did in public letters, as "Our Dear Social Father," showed that their wits were nearly gone. They pulled themselves together a little towards the end of 1836, when they silenced the Millennium gong, and called their journal the "New Moral World and Manual of Science."

By whose courage or good judgment the ecstatic term "millennium" came to be dropped does not appear. It was creditable that the term "manual of science" succeeded it; but when, instead of that remarkable literature of lectures, songs, and religion of the millennium, the reader was introduced to papers on "the functions of the spinal marrow," the transition was very great. The directors of the paper retained the word *New*, but put it in small letters, which showed that a sense of modesty was returning. They really meant physical science by their title, and though they had small conception of what a "Manual of Science" should be, and no means of furnishing it if they had, yet it is to be remembered that science then was not the great, definite, classified, organised, mighty thing it now is. The British Association for advancing it was not born till four years later. The "Penny Magazine" people and the Chambers Brothers both excluded discussions on politics and religion from their pages, and the journals of the co-operators were the only papers of a popular character which dealt with religion and politics, and recognised science as one of the features of general progress. The little they did, therefore, passed for much and meant much in those days. It was a merit, and no small merit, to recognise what they could not advance, because recognition was aid when the love and honour of science was deemed a form of sin. The volume bearing the sub-title of "Manual of Science" did something to sustain the profession by giving a page or more in each number upon subjects of physical science. In several towns, notably in Manchester, the Socialist party erected halls of science. There was an instinct that science was the available providence of man, and would one day be in the ascendant. It, however, was never in their power to advance it other than by defending its study. The volumes of the "Moral World" at this time were devoid of advertisements. The scrupulous editor withheld

necessary information from his readers of public and other meetings to take place on behalf of their own principles. "We refrain," he said, "from making formal announcements, which by some persons might be mistaken for advertisements, though we never deal in this kind of merchandise," as though publicity were venal.

In the same year, Mr. J. L. Gay, of Paris, addressed a letter to Mr Owen, from which it appeared that the French world makers did not think so much of the English contrivance to that end as English co-operators thought of the French. Mr. Gay reports, that the most rational of St. Simonians and Fourierites refuse either to hear or read any exposition of socialism; but they very sensibly demanded a practical trial of it. They would look at that. The French socialists of Mr. Owen's school, were then about to establish a "Maison Harmoniene de Paris" (House of Harmony at Paris).*

The fourth volume of the "Moral World" was printed by Abel Heywood, of Manchester,† always known to Radicals and Social Reformers as a man of honour and energy, and the chief Liberal publisher of Manchester, when that trade required not only business ability, but the courage of meeting imprisonment. Volume four was more belligerent than the previous one. The politicians united against a system which disregarded immediate political right, under the belief that a state of universal community would render rights unnecessary, or secure them in full; but community was distant, and the need of political liberty was near. One number of the "Moral World" stated that "Mr. Hetherington, with the Radicals at his back, decried their proceedings." The "Moral World" published an article from the "Shepherd," stating

* "New Moral World." December 24, 1836, p. 66.

† Volume III. had been printed by John Gadsby, of the same city. The price of each number of the fourth volume of the "New Moral World" was three half-pence. A number contained eight pages.

that Mr. Owen had been to Paris, and found that "the French were looking beyond politics, and lucky would it be for us also if, instead of palavering with such trifles as ballot, and canvas, and law amendments, we were to cast this smallware overboard, and raise one loud and universal shout of social re-organisation. This patching and mending system is a miserable delusion." Yet, the same article recorded that Mr. Owen had been prevented lecturing in Paris by the police, lest he should excite commotion through the numbers he attracted. The fact was a prompt rebuke of the contemptuousness expressed as to political freedom. The "smallware" had great value in practice. The editor of the "Moral World" had published offensive and foolish articles himself, disparaging Radical politics.

In an article upon the name of the paper, the editor stated that he rejected the abandoned name of co-operator, the most sensible that had been adopted, and the members of the Grand Society of All Classes and All Nations, wisely refused to be called Owenites, although they persisted in their affection for Mr. Owen, whom they designated at the same time their "social and right reverend father." At the Manchester congress of all classes of all nations—at which only one class of one nation appeared, and only a very small portion of that took part in the proceedings—they determined to call themselves socialists. At this period, June 1837, the "Moral World" was printed at Manchester, and then Mr. George Alexander Fleming became editor,* and also general secretary of the central board which had been formed. Henceforth the "Moral World" was edited with more controversial vigour, and with general energy and ability as a propagandist organ, but the last volume, edited in London, the "Manual of Science" volume, was the most various

* Mr. Fleming's editorship commenced June 10, 1837, and his resignation was dated from Avenue Cottage, Queenwood, November 8, 1845.

and readable of the whole that had been published. It published weekly a column taken from the "Daily Politician," composed of short passages of current political interest selected from the general newspaper press; Notable sayings of philosophers, well chosen anecdotes, extracts from books of mark and force, such as Mr. Mill's "History of British India," rendering that volume readable to this day.

"Live for others," that afterwards became the motto of the Comtean religion of humanity, was the subject of an editorial article in the "New Moral World" for January 21, 1837.

Mr. Saull, of London, announced that he had received exchequer bills to the amount of £1,000, of which the interest was to be devoted to the purposes of an educational friendly society. £500 more were announced when Mr. Baume appeared at Bradford as a deputy representative of the society. His proceedings being reported in the "Northern Star," and quoted in the "New Moral World," the editor added a caution against confounding that project with the National Community Society, and professed doubts as to the practicability of the plan.

The *Star in the East* commenced in 1837. Its price was fourpence-halfpenny. It was a newspaper and stamped, and the first which professedly advocated social views. Its editor and proprietor, Mr. James Hill, of Wisbeach, was a member of the distinguished Rowland Hill family, to whom the public has been indebted for so many national improvements.

The east and north had "Stars," both edited by Hills. Both "Stars" arose in the same year. "The Northern Star" had Feargus O'Connor for proprietor, and Mr. Hill, an energetic Yorkshire schoolmaster, for editor, but no relative of Mr. Hill, of Wisbeach. The northern luminary was political, being the organ of the Chartists, but always friendly to social ideas — both

proprietors being community makers in their way; Mr. James Hill having a peculiar social theory of his own to work out at Wisbeach, chiefly educational, after the genius of his family; Mr. O'Connor having a land scheme which, with the usual talent of reformers for administering to the merriment of adversaries, he located among other places, at Snig's End.

The Rev. Joseph Marriott, who represented Rochdale at the Manchester Congress of 1837, published a drama entitled "Community," which appeared in the "Moral World." It was a silly affair, but some of the predictions of telegraphic facilities which it contained are now seen realised in every street, which then only the socialist imagination would incur the risk of regarding as a possibility of the future. The fact of to-day was a "craze" then.

The Rev. Mr. Marriott was a gentleman of far more enthusiasm on the whole than discernment, for he described Mr. Thompson's essay on "The Distribution of Wealth" as a work "as superior to Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' as one book can be to another.'" The subject was certainly an important supplement to the great topic stated by Smith, but the difference in the capacity and range of thought of the two writers ought to have been perceptible even to enthusiasm. Adam Smith traced the laws which were found to operate in human and commercial affairs. Mr. Thompson planned the laws which he thought ought to operate under circumstances which had never existed. Mr. Thompson's book has only been kept in print by the bequest he left for the purpose, and all his admirers have never been able to induce the public to read it. If they did they would be of opinion "that there was something in it."

In June, 1838, the seat of social government and the journal of the society were removed to Bennett's Hill, Birmingham. Mr. Guest became the publisher; known as the leading Liberal publisher of the town, as

Mr. Heywood was of Manchester. The printer was Francis Basset Shenstone Flindell, of 38, New-street, Birmingham. The editor announced that various considerations had induced the central board to limit the number of impressions to 2,000. There was a pardonable periphrasis in this statement, since only one consideration could have determined it, and that was that they had no more purchasers. There had arisen in Birmingham several correspondents. It was the residence of Mr. Pare, the earliest and ablest organiser of the movement, and Mr. Hawkes Smith, its most influential advocate through the press; and the town furnished two lecturers, Mr. Frederick Hollick, and the present writer. Birmingham was long distinguished for its influence in co-operative things. There was, also, actively connected with the central board an Irish gentleman, Mr. John Lowther Murphy, the author of several minor works of original merit—the best known being, "An Essay Towards a Science of Consciousness." They were illustrated by diagrams, broadly designed, which had an air of ingenuity and newness. The argument was materialistic, put with an unmisgiving boldness, and, what was more to the purpose, with a definiteness.

Occupying a position of respectability, and having audacity in council and in action, Mr. Murphy was always a popular figure on the platform. Single, and a dentist in sufficient practice, no social persecution could reach him, since Christians with the toothache would waive any objection they entertained to his principles, providing he could afford them more skilful relief than anyone else. Eager and daring, it must be owned Mr. Murphy troubled himself very little as to the consequences of following himself the advice he gave. What was enjoyment to him he thought must be good for the party. In meetings of danger his courage was conspicuous and effective, and that was a great merit.

There is a greater conquest than that of intimidation, namely, that of conviction, and the leader herein was Mr. Hawkes Smith, a man who knew a fact when he saw it—that is, he could discern its relevance, and put it in its proper place in argument. Mr. William Hawkes Smith, of Birmingham, was incomparably the wisest and most practical writer in defence of social views. He wisely maintained that the denunciation of religion was irrelevant to scientific co-operative ends. His son, Mr. Toulmin Smith, became a man of eminence as a black letter lawyer and author of remarkable works on municipal and parliamentary government.

A writer who really contributed accurate information on many subjects employed the instructive signature of a "Student of Realities," whose name was Vieussieu, a gentleman in official employment at Somerset House, whose sons after him took a generous and expensive interest in social progress.

In these days a small book was published separately called "Outlines of the Rational System and Laws of Human Nature." They were divided into five fundamental facts (they would call them "fundamental") and Twenty Laws of Human Nature. Human nature in England was never so tried as it was during the five years when these were discussed in every town in the kingdom. When a future generation has courage to look into this unprecedented code as one of the curiosities of propagandism, it will find many sensible and wholesome propositions, which nobody now disputes, and sentiments of toleration and practical objects of wise import.

The fifth volume of the "Moral World" was enlarged to sixteen pages, and published at twopence. The phrase "Manual of Science" was now omitted. Indeed, the previous volume had paid scarcely any attention to science, and it was right to drop the pretence of it. It indeed published under the head of "Physical Science"

Mr. Mackintosh's "Electrical Theory of the Universe," and this was all. The volume showed a great increase in reports of propagandist lectures in numerous towns, and bore as its large-type title, the simple name of the "Moral World," "New" being modestly subordinated.

"Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy" is the name of an energetic little book by Mr. J. F. Bray. It was a good deal read by co-operators of the time. It was a book of the period, having no permanent relevance.

There was a "Social Pioneer" made its appearance in 1839, printed by Mr. A. Heywood, of Manchester, which deserves mention. It was rather late in March, 1839, to bring out a "Social Pioneer," thirty years after those operators had been in business, nevertheless, a publication of this name appeared. In October of the same year a more ambitious journal appeared, entitled the "Working Bee," "printed by John Green, at the Community Press, Manea Fen, Cambridgeshire, for the Trustees of the Hodgsonian Community Societies." It took the usual honest and determined motto "He who will not work neither shall he eat;" but it turned out that those who did work did not get the means of eating, there being no adequate provision made for this at Manea Fen. The fifth volume consisted of 37 numbers only, and volume six commenced with No. 38.

Volume six of the socialist journal started with the full pretentious title of "The New Moral World," and the ponderous sub-title of "Gazette of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists, enrolled under Acts of Parliament 10 George IV., c. 56, and 4 and 5 William IV., c. 40." This was the first time the movement put on a legal air. The sixth volume commenced in Leeds in July, 1838.

Volume seven also continued to represent the National Religionists of the Universal Community Society, the public never quite understanding whether the society was intended to cover the universe, or whether its

principles were to be understood as of universal application. Either conception required great confidence or great knowledge to assent to it.

The eighth volume of the "Moral World" commenced a series of a larger size than had before appeared. It was as large as a moderate sized newspaper, all in small type, and was the costliest weekly journal the co-operative party had yet commanded. It was charged threepence per number of sixteen pages, and was, like volume sixth and seventh, printed by Joshua Hobson, in Leeds, who was himself an author upon social and political questions, and was well known among the politicians of the Chartist times as printer, and publisher also, of the *Northern Star*. The year 1840 was the culminating period of the socialist advocacy. The expectation of a new community being near its establishment brought an accession of writers to the "Moral World;" and the eighth volume was edited with spirit. The articles had a general and literary character.

In volume ninth, which commenced January, 1841, the Rational Religionists still confronted the public on the title page of each number.

Volume tenth was a serious issue, abounding in addresses and congress reports, animated a little by reviews and accounts of provincial and metropolitan lectures. It commenced in July, 1841, and ended June, 1842. Never despairing, early in the volume, the editor again commenced to give directions how to obtain the millennium, although it had arrived and had had its own way some years previously. In October, 1841, the printing of the "Moral World" was brought back to London after wandering in the wilderness of Manchester, of Birmingham, and of Leeds five years.

The eleventh volume let slip one of its anchors. It began with the simpler sub-title "Gazette of the Rational Society." The society remained rational, the Rational Religionists peremptorily disappeared. Whether they

had sworn themselves into disrepute, they having taken to oath-taking, or found it onerous to maintain the clerical pretensions they had assumed, or found that the pretension itself raised the very questions of religious controversy which it was the policy and duty of the society to avoid, was never explained.

The twelfth volume continued to mankind the comfort of knowing that there was in their midst one "Rational Society." Of course the meaning was that the society aimed at promoting rational conditions of rational life, and it was well that there should be some persons pledged to find out these if possible. But unfortunately the name did not represent the aspiration, but seemed to express the fact; and, as the world is apt to put the worst construction on any new profession, "Rational Society" was a cheering but not a fortunate term. This volume, which commenced July, 1843, formed volume five of the "New Series."

The thirteenth volume of the "Moral World," the largest and last of the official issue, commenced on June 29th, 1844. The end of all things communistic was then casting its ominous shadows before. In February, 1845, this journal was first printed at the Community Press, by John Melson, for the governor and company of Harmony Hall, Stockbridge, Hants. The last number printed there appeared on August 23rd, 1845. The type was sold, and bought by Mr. James Hill, who bought also the second title "Gazette of the Rational Society." Mr. Hill contended that he had bought the copyright of the paper. The title "New Moral World" Mr. Owen claimed as his copyright, and by arrangement with him, a further volume was commenced, under the title of the "Moral World," the word "New," which had been hitherto part of its title, was omitted, and it appeared under the further editorship of Mr. Fleming. The result was that on the 30th of August, 1845, two "Moral Worlds" again appeared, the old one being the new

"Moral World," and the new one ceasing to be the new one. Mr. Fleming editing the "Moral World," which Mr. Owen retained, and Mr. Hill editing the "New Moral World," which he had bought. Mr. Hill's "New Moral World" continued to January, 1846, when he merged it into a new paper entitled the "Commonweal." It ought to have borne the title of the Commonsqueal, for a shriek was heard in every column. Indeed there was a pang in the title. Under the words "Gazette of the Rational Society," which Mr. Hill retained, was printed Mr. Owen's motto: "Any general character, from the best to the worst, may be given to any community by the application of proper means, which are to a great extent under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men." Underneath this Mr. James Hill placed his rival and refutatory motto: "It must certainly then be concluded that 'proper means' have not been applied, since such means to a great extent have been 'under the control' of Mr. Owen and those who have had influence in the affairs of the Rational Society." Mr. Hill himself had been an educational and social reformer of no mean note in his time. His *Star in the East* had been a journal of great interest, and great instruction, but he had a faculty for vigorous and varied disputation, which grew by what it fed upon. He was a writer of ability and flexibility, who attacked any one who dissented from him with great celerity; and if disputation could be entertaining of itself the new issue in his alien hands would have been the most alluring of the series.

The fourteenth volume of the "Moral World," amended by suspending the profession of being the gazette of the Rational Society, which it appears was after all a saleable title, since Mr. Hill certainly bought and continued to use it, long after the society was practically extinct. Mr. Fleming described his new volume as the "advocate of the Rational System of Society, as

founded by Robert Owen." It was printed by Mc.Gowan and Company, the printers of the *Northern Star*, in London. Only eleven numbers of this volume were issued.

The close of 1845 and the early months of 1846 introduced to the social reader a new journal, bearing the ambitious and provoking title of the "Herald of Progress." Seeing that no progress of the quality so often promised had been made, and that there was absolutely less prospect of it than ever, the name of the journal was a new imitation. Mr. John Cramp was the projector and editor of it. The present writer was one among the contributors after it commenced.

During these later years, there was collateral activity in social literature in several quarters, but Co-operation seldom attracted attention. Mr. Frederick Bate published in 1841 a play, in five acts, entitled "The Student." Mr. Goodwyn Barmby, a poet who possessed real lyrical power, and advocate of original tastes, hung up his hat in the social hall, where no hat save his could hang. He married "Kate," the clever correspondent of the "Moral World," who has been named. Mr. Barmby founded a Communist church, and gave many proofs of boldness and courage. He and Mr. George Bird, who afterwards obtained professional eminence in medicine, issued a prospectus of the London Communist Propagandist Society. Mr. Bird contributed the best literary reviews which appeared in social publications of the day. Mr. Lewis Masquerier, of New York, was a frequent correspondent, dating as early as 1836, who is known to this day as a fertile and original author of social works and plans of considerable interest, and is distinguished as a leader of the land reformers of America, who take for their motto certain famous words from Jefferson's last letter, namely, "The mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their back, for a favoured few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately by the grace of God."

In 1840 the Fourierites established in London a paper called the *Morning Star*, edited by Mr. Hugh Doherty, a writer who had puzzled the readers of the "Moral World" through many a weary column, and who was going in mercy to restrict his efforts to readers whom he might train to understand him. He entitled his journal "A Phalansterian Gazette of Universal Principles and Progressive Association." Its sources of authority were the book of scripture and the book of nature. Dr. Doherty has since published many works of great interest to those who accept Fourierist principles.

In 1842 a magazine, entitled "The Union, and Monthly Record of Moral, Social, and Educational Progress," was edited by Mr. G. A. Fleming. It contained papers from the fertile and ingenious pen of "Pencil'em," by January Searle, Charles Lane, Charles Bray, and a writer who used the name of Arthur Walbridge, who wrote a story of "Torrington Hall," and a very suggestive book on "Social Definitions;" and annonymous papers by eminent and popular writers, whose names the editor suppressed on the sound but uninteresting principle that truth should stand upon its own merits unsupported by names which might induce people to look at it. Reformers in those days took pride in adopting all the means they could to prevent the truth they had in hand becoming popular, and then complained that it had few friends. "The Union," however, appeared at a time when union was worn out.

In 1843 there appeared a publication entitled the "New Age," a pleasanter and less pretentious title than the "New Moral World." The "New Age" was also called the "Concordian Gazette." It represented a small band of mystics, who were inspired by James Pierrepont Greaves, one of whose doctrines was, "as man cannot do right when he himself is wrong, a right nature must be superadded to him in order to establish right institutions in society." One mode prescribed for

superadding the right nature, or rather one of the conditions, as Mr. Greaves would say, were pure air, simple food, exercise, and cold water, which he contended were much more beneficial to man than any national doctrinal creeds, or any churches, chapels, or cathedrals. Mr. Greaves was seldom so clear and intelligible as this. He was himself the most accomplished, pleasant, and inscrutable mystic which this country has produced. He possessed competence, which enables a man to be unintelligible and yet respected. Persons who have to earn their dinner before they eat it, experience great hindrances in dreaming. An American gentleman, Mr. H. G. Wright, and who was a natural disciple of Greaves, by a kindred capacity of profundity, described him as possessed of "a lofty forehead, a well defined contour, a nose inclined to the acquiline, a deep, sonorous, slightly nasal voice, a stature rather above the middle height, and a marvellous eye. Mystery, God, Fathomlessness, all were written upon it." A man of mark, after his kind, it must be owned.

The disciples of Mr. Greaves took premises at Ham Common, in Surrey, which they called Alcott House. The society was called the First Concordian. It was also the last. Also their two best writers were Charles Lane, who dated from Concord, Massachusetts, and Goodwyn Barmby. The "New Age" was very intelligently edited, but it was discontinued when it had existed little more than a year and a half, on the ground that "no book could represent what was passing in that establishment. Even the proceedings of a single day were found to be of far greater moment than could be transcribed or recorded in any work whatever." Those who visited the Concordian were certainly not of this opinion. The inmates were scrupulously clean, temperate, transcendental, offensive to any one who ate meat, attached to Quakers, especially white ones, repudiated even salt and tea, as stimulants, and thought

most of those guests who ate their cabbage uncooked. They preached abstinence from marriage, and most things else. Their cardinal doctrine was that happiness was wrong. The managing director, Mr. William Oldham, was called Pater, and, like Howard, preferred damp sheets to dry ones. Mr. Lane invited the Pater to join the Shakers at Harvard, Massachusetts, where he would find no want of liberty to carry out his self-denying plans to the utmost. A very little liberty is sufficient to do nothing in, and a very small space would have enabled the society to carry out its only experiment, which consisted in standing still in a state of submission to the spirit until it directed them what to do. Mr. Greaves' disciples, however, had the great merit of pausing before they did anything until they had found out why they should do it, a doctrine which would put a stop to the mischievous activity of a great many people if thoughtfully followed.

The old sin of contempt for political freedom and parliamentary justice beset the new world socialists to the last. So late as 1843, Mr. G. A. Fleming, the editor of the official organ of the party, and Mr. Lloyd Jones, its best regarded missionary, opposed the Anti-Corn Law League. An active representative of the school, Mr. Ironside, a well-known representative of socialism in Sheffield, reported on one occasion he had been to hear Dr. Smiles, editor of the *Leeds Times*, lecture on Complete Suffrage, and "was at a loss to imagine how socialists could waste their time in listening to expositions of such petty measures as these."

The Central Board issued charters authorising the foundation of branches in the different towns, when satisfied as to the zeal and respectability of the parties making application for them; and to this day they hang up in places of honour in some of the old halls. Occasionally a grand notification was made to the branches of the Association of All Classes of All Nations,

and to all others whom it may concern, running thus:—"Whereas, the Congress of the Association [with the far-reaching name] did, for the more extensive and systematic diffusion of the social principles, divide Great Britain and Ireland into certain districts with missionary stations; and whereas a memorial has been presented to the Central Board from the branch of the Association, situate at Sheffield, requesting that that town may be made a missionary station, and that a district may be assigned for the labours of the missionary. Now, therefore, we, the Central Board, in pursuance and by virtue of the power and authority vested in us by the congress, and in consideration of the memorial hereinbefore mentioned, do hereby make the following revision of the districts; that is to say, the town of Sheffield, and generally that part of the county of York not included in the Leeds district, to be taken from the Manchester district; the towns of Derby and Nottingham, and generally the county of Nottingham, and that part of the county of Derby north of a line drawn immediately south of the town of Derby, to be taken from the Birmingham district; and the county of Lincoln to be taken from the London district; and, further, we do hereby order and determine that the counties and parts of counties and towns so taken from the said districts shall constitute a new district to be called the Sheffield district, which shall comprise:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sheffield | Spalding | Ashbourn |
| Rotherham | Market Deeping | Belper |
| Doncaster | Bourn | Wirksworth |
| Barnsley | Folkingham | Cromford |
| Thorn | Grantham | Alfreton |
| Barton-upon-Humber | Lincoln | Mansfield |
| Great Grimsby | Gainsborough | Bakewell |
| Louth | East Retford | Buxton |
| Market Rasen | Newark | Dionfield |
| Boston | Nottingham | Chesterfield |
| Holbeach | Derby | Worksop |

Then they did "furthermore order and determine" certain other things, not necessary here to recite. Who was the fabricator of all this legal pomposity, it would be difficult to determine. It could never have been of Birmingham growth. The board there had acquired a Mr. Bewley, as a secretary, a gentleman of capacious ways, who might have inspired those extraordinary terms, which would have been intolerable if the society had done something, but were ridiculous in the position it occupied. It was like making alarm calls, to which the society was addicted, when people were not only fast asleep, but intentionally asleep, and would not move if they were awake. The enumeration of places which comprised the district of Sheffield was, however, real. There was work doing and to be done there. It was no uncommon thing to meet in social literature a protestation that "we must not be understood as advocating any *sudden* changes." * Seeing that during 130 years the party had never been able to produce any direct change whatever, it was idle to encourage society in the belief that there was possible danger in their efforts.

A disastrous peculiarity in advocacy, by which the pages of co-operative journals were disfigured, was that of quoting the most offensive things said against the doctrines and advocates of its own party. The enemy never did that by them; but this fact never instructed them. The information the socialist editors were able to give their readers was not much. They could never afford to pay the printer for what they did give; and yet they went to the expense of reprinting and circulating, by all the agencies they could command, among their own adherents, the most unpleasant and telling imputations, which ignorance or embittered wit could make against them. All timid adherents were

* "Outlines of various Social Systems," 1844.

alarmed when they saw these things. Half-informed adherents could not possibly tell what answer could be made; and prudent readers withdrew at once from a cause against which such imputations were being levelled, and which they were called upon to circulate among their own family and friends. Seeing that this was done from a feeling of foolish honesty, sharp-witted adversaries had every encouragement to go on, multiplying their accusations, with a very reasonable certainty that they might in time come to fill entirely the publications, and exhaust all the means of the society in publishing effective disparagements of itself. The outside public possessed writers more numerous and skilful than these semi-penniless reformers could command. Such, however, was their infatuation and literary incapacity that they not only suffered the sharpshooters of the enemy to take aim at their own readers from their own pages, but allowed the rabble of evangelical pamphleteers and tract writers to possess their gates, and to pelt them with mud and stones. It was doubtless the duty of an honest editor to hear, within limits, the most powerful adversaries in his pages, to take notice of all clear and relevant objections to the views he represented, to make a fair statement of them, and give a fair and, if he could, a sufficient answer to them, so that his readers should be fairly informed, and not taken by surprise when objections he had never heard of were being made to him.

On one occasion the editor, Mr. Fleming, having made a vehement comment upon the Manea Fen scheme, afterwards expressed his regret in a very manly way that he had violated the pacific principles imposed by socialism upon its representatives; but these were at times violated in many subsequent volumes. Imputative terms were often applied to opponents. From some, it was said, "the truth was not to be expected." Of another it was said that "it was absurd to hope for

anything like fairness of statement from him." Charges of "dishonesty," of "wilful misrepresentation," of "garbling," and so on, through all the phrases of controversial disagreeableness and feebleness, which spite and blindness mistake for strength. Their employment in controversy simply obliges all the friends a man of honour has to come forward in his personal defence; and enables all the friends a scoundrel has to intrude themselves in your controversy, where they never could have had a place but for the opportunity thus created for them. The testimonies of the honest and the protests of knaves alike divert and distract the attention of the auditor from the argument in hand. If it appeared desirable for historical uses that a distant age should hear the echo of the howls of rabid adversaries, they should have been printed by subscription of those who desired to confer that advantage upon posterity. Nevertheless, it ought to be said, as it honestly may, to the credit and honour of the social party, that though its leaders had no clean grasp of principles of neutrality in invective, it was only on great provocation that they spoke ill of others. Compared with the vituperation and personalities of every other party, political and religious, of their day, they were examples of forbearance to adversaries, who showed them no quarter. And no advantage came to them when they gave way to retaliation. They rendered the "Moral World" wearisome by articles on Mr. Brindley. It made the reputation and influence of that disagreeable adversary to be so often noticed. The natural desire of editor and correspondent was to show that he was a totally worthless person; but this once done, it was sufficiently done, but when done in number after number, the journal of the society became tiresome. This policy accorded to him the triumph of occupying the organ of the society with himself. Any mischief he was able to do on his own personal authority, or activity, or influence was a very

small thing compared with the importance which we conferred upon him. A page of laughter is a better defence against a worthless adversary than a volume of anger. It would have been sufficient to have noticed any statements of his which might seem to the public to demand it, only when some clergyman or gentleman of repute repeated them, and thus made themselves answerable for them. An editor who uses or suffers needless personal disparagement of opponents or correspondents may be excused on account of provocation sustained, but he cannot be praised. He either pays no attention to what he inserts, or he does not know imputative terms when he sees them, and consequently does not prohibit them. Terms which impute want of honour to others, or accuse them of conscious untruth, dishonesty, or bad motives, are charges with which the judge and not the journalist may deal.

When occasions arise which warrant the personal condemnation, or justify an incriminating description to be made of opponents, the greatest care is required in restricting the application to special individuals, lest honourable men are included in them. When one person makes imputations of dishonesty upon another, the only legitimate notice is to kick him, and nobody ought to make these imputations unless he is prepared for that operation being performed upon him; and no editor ought to permit such imputations unless he is prepared to recognise that form of reply. If, therefore, it is not desirable to conduct the controversy in this way, it is most profitable not to recognise such persons, and give them no place in controversy. The least pleasant and least profitable pages in the records of co-operative literature are those which are occupied in putting evangelical malefactors in the stocks. Some of them deserved better treatment, and those who deserved what they got are not worth looking at when undergoing that ungraceful operation. Besides giving unwise aid and

importance to offensive and vituperative opponents, social editors hampered themselves by opening their pages to every wild thinker who arose. This, however, has served the public, though it did not serve the cause at the time, yet it has brought subsequent credit, to some extent compensatory.

Very many things, social, polemical, and progressive, with which society now concerns itself, appears to have began in one or other of these co-operative publications; or if not originated were espoused in them, and publicity accorded to them, when they were denied any hearing elsewhere. The reader should remember that what now seems eccentricity of publication, was toleration and generosity when those who thought in any unconventional way were derided, and those who spoke were peremptorily silenced. In other quarters, editors who had sympathy with those who crudely, rudely, but always courageously, took the side of unfriended truth, gave them no countenance through fear of their readers, while editors opposed to them held them up to derision and contempt, in mischievous articles, which often brought the unfortunate pioneer into loss of employment and sometimes civil peril.

But the greatest disasters to the party arose from confusion of mind as to the theological policy to be pursued. It was not possible to arrest controversy on matters of belief in an association necessarily composed of all the active and thinking spirits of the time, where principles were included which involved metaphysical and economical questions. Those who saw the society drifting into theological controversy and deplored it proposed no practical remedy. There was no remedy, except some strong and discerning leaders had separated the economical from the metaphysical principles and reconstituted the branches by exacting assent from each member to those economical and associative principles only, for which members of the society were alone to be

responsible. No lectures or discussions should have been allowed to be delivered or conducted by the missionaries in the name of the society, upon other than its official and associative propositions. The Central Board might have permitted the formation of debating societies in all its institutions by special committees, in which any questions should be discussed within the conditions of their being conducted without personal imputations, and such as a mixed assembly could listen to; provided that whenever the institution was used for this purpose it was announced to the public that it was under the auspices and responsibility alone of the Debating Committee, and not of the Economical and Communist Association. This distinction, observed with patience and firmness, would have saved the society from misconception and preserved the utmost liberty of inquiry and debate.

While Mr. Owen was warning his disciples against religious disputation he adopted the title of Rational Religionists for his followers—a conceited and presumptous designation in the eyes of the enemy, and one, certainly, which re-opened the whole question of religious controversy everywhere and on all occasions. This did not pass without protest, on the part of the few socialists who remained rational on this subject. One ventured to remind the editor that "Abram Combe, by calling his organ of Orbiston the 'Register of the Adherents of Divine Revelation,' alienated the country around him." The editor ignorantly retorted that "Abram Combe was perfectly right in adopting whatever name he thought proper, as a free and unbiassed expression of his conscientious opinions." This was simply a silly judgment. If Mr. Combe's object was not to establish a public community for the public advantage and concurrence, but simply a group of persons for the profession of Combism—he was not a publicist, but a fanatic of a rather more liberal quality than usual, but

that was all. The editor added, "We are great lovers of candour and moral courage." But candour and moral courage have to be exercised in private and public life in two ways. In the expression of personal opinion, candour, unless it is mad, says only that which is relevant to individual belief. As respects a society or a party, the business of candour is to urge only the principles collectively adopted, and for which the society intends to hold all its members responsible. A candour that goes beyond this is irrelevance and foolishness. The courage which goes further than this is recklessness or impertinence, because it commits every person to the opinions of some few; and founders of societies who do this, make them to represent only the opinion of a few influential individuals, and have no right whatever to employ the Catholic language of universalism. However, the disposition to dare everything for the truth, even in its aberrations of courage, is to be respected—and avoided, so far as wild deflections go.

A very different spirit, and far less honourable than this, pervaded the same pages two years later, when some advocates, encouraged by this authoritative approval, of following individual conviction irrespective of party responsibility, insisted in some cases upon the right even of atheistic exposition, as one of the conditions of determining theological truth. The editor, Mr. Fleming, abandoned them when imprisonment overtook them, although two of them were social missionaries, the present writer being one; Mr. Charles Southwell, of spirited memory, was the other. I was put upon my trial for delivering a lecture in Cheltenham upon "Home Colonies." It was never pretended by the witnesses that the lecture was otherwise than neutral, and it was admitted by the judge, Mr. Justice Erskine, that no remark whatever was made in it which transgressed the proper limits of the subject. In the town of Cheltenham, in which it occurred, a small socialist poet, one Mr.

The fate of Sperry.

Sperry, suspected of heresy, had been induced to recant, and had then been naturally, not to say properly, abandoned and despised by those who had promised him advantage if he did so. This affair had produced an impression in the town that socialist speakers were wanting either in courage or honesty, and the same feeling existed elsewhere. The Bishop of Exeter had really frightened many adherents. When Mr. Pare was forced to resign the registrarship of Birmingham, it became a question with other gentlemen, who held official situations, how far they were prudent in standing connected with this party; and the Central Board began, under alarm, to urge the policy of theological neutrality, which they ought to have adopted earlier on principle. Instead of retiring within this line with dignity and patience, giving public opinion time to understand it, some of the missionaries took a running leap into the clerical ranks, upon which they had so long made war. They obtained licenses as preachers, and advertisements were issued, setting forth that lectures would be delivered to the Societies of the Rational Religionists, by the "Rev. A. Swearatlast" and the "Rev. B. Swearatonce." As the gifts of these gentlemen were not understood to lie in this direction, this step caused scandal. To many members of the party it seemed a humiliating spectacle which compromised them, and led to the concerted avowal of extreme opinions, with a view to vindicate the courage of free thought, a proceeding which otherwise would not have taken place. When, at the Cheltenham lecture referred to, a question was put by one of the audience, having a theological object, I gave a definite answer, which, at least in that place, restored the reputation of socialist speakers for uncalculating explicitness. Neither the trial and imprisonment which followed, nor the parliamentary proceedings in reference to it, were ever mentioned in the "New Moral World." Room was

found for articles on "Chinese Manure" and the "Sense of Beauty," but in its Levite pages not a reference was made to the Samaritan missionary, who had literally "fallen among thieves" in the discharge of his official duty, and who had committed but an excusable indiscretion, seeing that Mr. Owen, the president, had said to the congress, only a month before, "When we are questioned on any subject, we should declare what convictions we are obliged to have. Such is the ground I mean to take. What I have told you is my determination, and, though not a single individual go with me, I shall pursue the same course."* A special congress was held during the imprisonment of the missionary lecturer at Cheltenham, and no allusion was made, no resolution proposed respecting him, though some personal recognition would have been a mitigating act in those six months of indignity. The Central Board addressed weekly its "Friends, Brothers, and Sisters" upon many subjects, but they never suggested that some help might be needed in a certain household, though the subscription of a penny a day, by the members of the board, would have saved one young life in it. Neither secretary nor president of the society, nor editor of its organ, wrote a line to Gloucester Gaol, so careful had they become lest the public should impute to them complicity with heresy. Thus it constantly occurs that those grand and wild enthusiasts who suffer no discriminating policy to regulate their eagerness for the truth, pass at no distant date into that stage in which no respect for truth and conviction regulates their policy of discreditable and timorous prudence. It was right in these gentlemen to prefer the interests of the party to those of a member of it; but it was possible to have shown some self-respect and consideration in doing it.

What was wanted was neither defiance nor compliance, unless there was a change of conviction. Then a manly

* "New Moral World," May 28, 1841.

and explicit retraction of what errors the convert supposed himself to have held was due as an act of honour; so that the abandoned opinions might no longer possess the influence, whatever it might be, that his authority and example could be considered to lend to them.

The following narrative of the attitude taken by these socialists, when persecution came to them, is not an inspiring passage in their history. The Hall of Science, in Manchester, was registered in the Bishop's Court as a place of worship belonging to a body of Protestant Dissenters called "Rational Religionists," and by that means it was brought under the act of parliament which licensed it to be open for divine worship. This act rendered all who officiated in the building liable to be called upon to take the following oath:—

I solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that *I am*

First. A Christian, and

Second. A Protestant; that as such, *I believe*

Third. The scriptures of the New and Old Testament, commonly received among the Protestant churches, do *contain* the revealed Word of God; and that I do receive

Fourth. The same as the *rule* of my *doctrine* and *practice*.

Mr. Swearatlast took this oath in Manchester. Mr. Maude, the magistrate, who administered it, first demanded to know whether this was an oath binding on his conscience, and whether he really believed in a future state after death of rewards and punishments? This missionary, who had been several years lecturing against every one of these points, as one of the expounders of "truth without mystery, mixture of error, or the fear of man," replied that he did believe in all these things, and that the oath was binding upon his conscience. The Central Board never repudiated the missionaries who took

this oath. Indeed, the editor of the "New Moral World" justified it, and stated that he would take it. Mr. Swearatlast had sufficient self-respect to make scruples about it. He was anxious to prove to the court that he had a conscience, and to stand well before the public; and the court was adjourned to give him time to make up his mind. On Tuesday, August 11th, 1840, he appeared, took the oath, and made the declaration under 19th George II., c. 44, and received his certificate of having done so.* Mr. Fleming, although he had said he would do the same, so far respected the moral sense of his readers of the "Moral World" as never to publish this discreditable scene. Mr. Swearatonce gave his own account of how he went through the part on February 13th, 1841, in Bristol. "On Tuesday [Tuesday seems to have been the day of humiliation. Mr. Swearatlast took the oath on a Tuesday] I attended at one o'clock for the purpose of taking the oath. The office was crowded by gentlemen who seemed anxious to see the performance. It passed off very comfortably. I took it without any words. I am now, therefore, the REV. B. Swearatonce." The small capitals are the "REV." gentleman's and the word "performance" too.†

Other gentlemen than those who were present long remembered these scenes. Many years after, when the present writer was concerned in getting the Secular Affirmation Bill passed through parliament, Sir George Cornewall Lewis demanded, reproachfully, (looking at me as I sat in the gallery of the House of Commons as

* *Sun*, August 14th, 1840.

† These proceedings made Mr. Southwell indignant, and, being a man of fiery courage, he wrote an article in the "Oracle of Reason" (started as a protest against the "New Moral World" policy of the day), which caused his imprisonment for twelve months. He intended to defy persecution; and Sir Charles Wetherall, who was his judge, was a man quite ready to meet him half-way in supplying it. Mr. Southwell was imprisoned in Bristol and I in Gloucester Gaol.

he spoke) "Where are your cases? Where are the men of honour who refuse the oath? It is your free thinker who takes it 'without any words.'"

Those of us who had consented to act as missionaries, or had had the presumption or indiscretion so to appear, were in some sort, in our secular way, apostles of a new state of society, or "system" of things which, we weekly assured the public by the title of our accredited journal, was to be at least "moral," if not otherwise notable. Then it did not become any of us—so it seemed to me and my heretical colleagues of the protesting school—to fall, in self-respecting honour, below those other apostles with whose teaching we were in many respects "non-content," and had not concealed from the public our dissatisfaction with it. The "system," of which we were self-constituted heralds, might be as erroneous as most of us believed that of the early apostles to be. Though sincerity does not connote or imply errorlessness, it gives dignity to those who, unhappily for themselves, and yet more unhappily for mankind, profess error honestly. The Christian apostles had this personal dignity, as has been admitted through all time subsequent, by their stoutness in suffering for their opinions. It seemed to me, for one, that we had no moral right to dissent from them openly, were we content to advance our cause by meaner means than theirs. We could not be their equals in advantage. Our inspiration was not owing to contact with teachers, whom so many generations have recognised as divine: but it was in our power to be their equals in honesty, and refuse to profess the opinions we did not hold, whatever peril, or personal loss, or social discomfort followed. We were counselled by one who thought more of conscience than consequence, to explain "truth without mystery." That were not possible to any who live. Our limited faculties are confused in the infinite maze of the universe, and can but see and not interpret more than the near surface of

things. We were to teach "truth without mixture of error." Even if we follow mathematical truth—dealing with definite and palpable magnitude—we travel but a short way, and that as it were upon the outermost ridge of life, into the realms of certainty; while in moral and social things—where sense is submerged daily by sensibility, where we are ourselves but effects of unseen and to us unknown causes, where our most forecasting knowledge hourly turns out to be but helpless ignorance taken by surprise—who can fathom truth of doctrine or precept without error; or escape the need of hourly precaution, qualification, moderation, and humility? We were to teach "without fear of man." That was the one thing, happily in the power of the humblest advocates. Fearlessness of man—in the discharge of the duty of speaking our minds in the spirit of relevance and service to others, within the limits of conceeding the same freedom to them—that alone was within our power. It needed only a stout love of truth. To fail herein before the world, in the publicity of a court of law, when persecution gave us the priceless opportunity of winning respect, which we could not of ourselves seek without the crime of provoking persecution, seemed alike a failure of policy and honour.

Free thought has no claim to free speech unless its object is to utter true speech and to maintain a higher veracity among the common people by example. Though I never took an oath of any kind in my life, since I could not take it in the sense in which the court administered it, and it did not seem honourable to take it in a private sense of my own; yet I am no fanatic against oaths, and respect those who take them sincerely. Conscience is, fortunately, a holy thing in the eyes of the world. The common instinct of society respects the memory of those poor and humble religionists of despised sects, who, having hardly any grace but that of truth, have in so many ages suffered peril, and torture, and death, rather

than say the thing which was not. No eccentricity, no extravagance, no error of ignorance, no wild hope of impossible good, but is forgiven by history as a generous aberration. But the solemn and public profession of opinion, which is not held, for the sake of policy or personal advantage, lowers the party which connives at it, or stoops to profit by it. Socialists who professed and proposed to introduce a higher morality were bound to set a higher example. Addison usefully tells us of Euripides that: "The great tragic poet, though famous for the morality of his plays, had introduced a person who, being reminded of an oath he had taken, replied, *I swore with my mouth, but not with my heart.* The impiety of this sentiment set the audience in an uproar; made Socrates (though an intimate friend of the poet) go out of the theatre with indignation, and gave so great offence that he was publicly accused and brought upon his trial, as one who had suggested an evasion of what they thought the most holy and indissoluble bond of human society, so jealous were these virtuous heathens of any the smallest hint that might open a way to perjury."

They who had reproached Christians for saying what could not be proved should have shrunk from swearing what they had declared to be false. It were better to have closed and sold the halls we had built, and preached as the apostles did in the market places, or highways, or byeways.

Often when meditating the text of this history I have thought whether I could omit or modify this part of it. If we, the protestors, were right in resistance to the policy of which oath taking was part, this narrative reads like a reproach to some whom I otherwise honour. If we were wrong our example may do harm. I do not disguise the fact that the theological protestors, of which I was one, created a schism in the policy of the co-operative party of that day, which is a bad example to set, unless it admits of justification as a necessity of honour and

truth. If it was a necessity of this character the responsibility rests with those who compelled it, and I have recounted the facts that the reader may judge them, and that those charged with the administration of the affairs of a party may take warning, forecalculate the effects of their policy, and not lightly or unknowingly compel a step which is a disaster in an association. Undoubtedly we did harm of one kind—at the time. In setting up a new camp we weakened the force which held the recognised co-operative fort; and those who may be influenced by our example in the future should weigh well the responsibility we incurred, and be satisfied whether we were justified in our course before they imitate us. The reaction which we considered forced upon us, had the effect of misleading the public, who concluded that heresy was an attribute of Co-operation, when it was but an accident. The public have small discernment. As an original observer of public affairs has said: "With us men are more conversant with principles than details [and I should add, not much with either]—more conversant with names than things—names are necessary for the press, for society, and they often cloy curiosity, which but for them would apply itself to facts. Facts, by our complications, are of difficult access, and the reference of effects to causes too fatiguing for common attention."* We accelerated the fall of Queenwood by dividing forces while the enemy was in the field—when the utmost unity was wanted—and by creating dissatisfaction when cordiality and confidence were indispensable to success. Yet I do not apologise for what we did, nor recant the principle on which we proceeded, nor withhold this narrative.

The socialist party was not as a whole wanting in concurrence. Only two missionaries took the oath, and this raised a revolt in the society. The present

* "Turkey and Its Resources," by David Urquhart.

writer and Mr. Southwell were the first to incur imprisonment in protesting against it. Others, as stout Mr. Finlay, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Paterson, then of the same city, Mr. Adams and Mrs. Adams, of Cheltenham, not missionaries but of the party, underwent imprisonment on the same account. Dr. Watts especially, and at personal risk to himself; Mr. Jeffery and Mr. Farn, who were all missionaries, rendered every help in their power to sustain those who had made the protest. Mrs. Emma Martin fearlessly aided. Nor will I omit to mention, with what honour I can, my untiring friends in the Gloucester affair—Maltus Questell Ryall, a man remarkable alike for ability and courage, and William Chilton also. Both not merely cared for socialist honour; no obloquy nor personal peril intimidated them from vindicating it. They both perished prematurely by generous efforts beyond their strength.

It was the intention of the opponents of the propagation of social views to close the halls by forcing the oath described upon the lecturers. This was evaded in Manchester, in the manner recounted. The Rev. Mr. Kidd, and some other divines, took the step of indicting the owners of the halls for receiving money for admission at the doors. As the partisans of Co-operation were not wealthy, and incurred expense beyond their means in disseminating their views, it was only by taking admission money at the doors from the curious and hostile public, who thronged to them, that they could maintain a vigorous advocacy. The clergy knew this, and calculated that if they could prevent admission money being taken, they would succeed in closing the halls; and in this they were quite right. It was a shabby, but a well-calculated proceeding. Accordingly, they did lodge an indictment against the hall owners in Manchester, for receiving money at the doors. They found an act of parliament of the reign of George III. (fruitful in infamous acts), which levied serious fines upon the conductors of halls

The Clergy, like other Monopolists, exclude their rivals from the market.

if money was taken at the door on the Sunday, unless such hall was licensed as a place of worship. The Rev. Mr. Kidd's prosecution failed, the directors producing a license which described it as the authorised place of worship of the Rational Religionists. But, as the speakers in a licensed hall must be licensed preachers, Mr. Kidd next prosecuted the lecturer at the hall, who, we have seen, eventually took the oath. Mr. Kidd thus triumphed in inflicting the humiliation which has been described.

In various halls in the country to this day money is taken without their being licensed, and addresses are delivered by lecturers who never took any oath as preachers; but, owing to the ignorance or generosity of the clergy, no legal steps are taken against them, which, if taken, must have the effect of disgracing the parties or closing their proceedings. These Georgian acts are still in existence, and persons of pernicious intent still put them in force. A few years since eminent scientific teachers in London were prevented by them from instructing the people on the Sunday. Recently the Aquarium at Brighton has been closed by them on the same day; and in no Co-operative Hall is it legal to take money for lectures or even a tea-party on the Sunday, and the most valued forms of co-operative life are arrested by those unwise laws. Thus Co-operation has not only to be judged by what it has done, but what it has been prevented doing.

Amid the crowds of incidents and of persons, standing in connection with this movement, record can only be made of so many as may serve to illustrate the features of the great industrial movement in question; many circumstances and many actors must remain unnamed lest the weight of detail oppress, rather than interest, the reader. Where two events or two persons equally served to explain the story, like the two women grinding at the same mill, one is taken and the other left, the necessity of history being imperious.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LOST COMMUNITIES.

Seeing that human society labours under a chronic want of disinterestedness and mutual consideration on the part of its members, there is a demand for select or heightened pictures of love, devotedness, and sympathy, as an ideal compensation.—*Professor Bain.*

It is a long time since Joseph de Maistre declared that "the human race was created for a few, that it is the business of the clergy and the nobility to teach the people that which is evil and good in the moral world, and that which is true and false in the intellectual world. Other men have no right to reason upon such things: the people must suffer without murmuring." The teachers are mostly dead who inculcated this doctrine. If any exist, they no longer talk with this boldness. The people decline to suffer. They murmur if they are compelled to suffer; they do more than murmur, they resent the infliction of suffering upon them. They see that the inequalities of nature are made greater by the wilful contrivances of men. The people protest against inferiority being imposed upon them. They see that some men by opportunity, energy, and enterprise are able to forfend themselves against suffering. The people demand that these opportunities shall be equalised; and not finding much progress made in this direction, they, as is the wise way of the English, endeavour to equalise opportunities for themselves, and the method they have adopted in their own country or elsewhere has been the attempted establishment of

communities. Though they have not much to show for their efforts they have gained experience, and set a great self-helping example. Their failures are not to be mourned over, but imitated, and will be, doubtless, in the near future. France, which for seventy years has held political supremacy in Europe, has forfeited it through the ignorant temerity of an imperial adventurer, who happened to possess a talent for assassination. The supremacy has now passed to Germany, and Saxon genius, which is industrial, pacific, patient, and social, seems likely to lend a new inspiration to social movements.

Though France, in its own brilliant and insurgent way, has borne the palm of distinction for the propagandism of social reform, England, in a quieter and more solid way, has in ages gone by and forgotten, through want of more general historic knowledge among the people, shown that it had the capacity for comprehending equality, and there is reason to suppose that there exists among us hereditary genius for entertaining social projects. They had of old deep and honest root in England. A distinguished lawyer, who had great knowledge of the municipal history of his country, the late Toulmin Smith, of Birmingham, in his great book on the "History of Early English Gilds," traced the social features of English life with a depth of research in which he had no compeer nor any master, amid his predecessors in the same field. His daughter, Lucy Toulmin Smith, in the befitting preface which she supplies to her father's work, states that the early "English gild was an institution of local self-help which, before Poor Laws were invented, took the place, in old times, of the modern friendly or benefit society: but with a higher aim, while it joined all classes together in a care for the needy and for objects of common welfare, it did not neglect the forms and the practice of religion, justice, and morality."

These were objects higher and nobler than any to which the best modern trade association has aspired. "Gilds," says this authoress, "were associations of those living in the same neighbourhood, and remembering that they have, as neighbours, common obligations. They were quite other things than modern partnerships, or trading companies; for their main characteristic was, to set up something higher than personal gain and mere materialism, as the main object of men living in towns; and to make the teaching of love to one's neighbour be not coldly accepted as a hollow dogma of morality, but known and felt as a habit of life."

It is a fact also worthy of notice in these days, in which we flatter ourselves that social reform is being born —that there were "scarcely five out of five hundred gilds known to history which were not formed equally of men and of women." During the last seven years the British Association for the Advancement of Science has admitted ladies to read papers at its meetings. The Social Science Association did so earlier. It has been counted an astonishing and reckless step. It is creditable, but not astonishing, seeing that in the old social days of England women were counted upon to take part in the civil progress of the city. Many women who take part in these movements think it a new thing; and many more who stand aloof, think it unwomanly in them to appear in anything of the kind, not knowing that they are merely the degenerate daughters of noble mothers who thought it their duty to take a public part in the duties of society.

The English of to-day dream no dreams, conceive no generous schemes, expect no Utopias, trust no grand projects; they only believe in the next step in advance. They do nothing because it is reasonable—in fact, the reasonableness of a scheme would be a reason for their not adopting it. This is the habit of all uneducated populations. The great Social Pioneers did not at all

understand this, and the people still stone the prophets for their generous mistakes.

The problem which has come down to this day for solution is that stated, in 1870, by the Deputy Johann Jacoby, who, addressing his constituents in the Second Arrondissement of Berlin, said: "The great end before the people is the abolition of the wage system and the substitution in its place of co-operative labour." It is to this end that International Working Men's Associations have been formed. One of their most indefatigable representatives, a gentleman of high social connection himself, the late Mr. Frederick Cowell Stepney, a great friend of British and foreign workmen, said, in their behalf, that "The emancipation of the working classes must come from the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the workman is not a struggle for class privileges but for the obliteration of all class dominion. The economical subjugation of the workman to the appropriator of the means of labour is the cause of servitude. The economic emancipation of the working classes is, therefore, the great end to which every political movement must serve as a means. The emancipation of the workman is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem." It is, therefore, worth while looking a little at some Lost Communities, whose eccentric and romantic story has instruction and encouragement in it. Of course these pages will not have interest for those who are glad these communities are lost, and who hope they may never be found again. The author has rather in view those perverse and persistent readers, who will go in search of much-needed progress in unexplored paths, if the pioneers who have perished there have left hopeful reports of some discovery.

When the tireless Welsh reformer, of whom we have spoken, was one day dining at the house of a Franfort banker, he met a renowned German statesman, Frederick

Von Gentz. "I am in favour of seeing social progress commence," said the founder of the modern agitation; "for if union could replace disunion, all men would have a sufficiency." "That is very possible," replied Von Gentz; "but we by no means wish that the masses should become at ease and independent of us. All government would then be impossible." This was the old terror of the higher classes, which has now long abated. Everyone sees now that good government will never be possible, and permanent popular government ought never to be possible, until competence and independence are enjoyed by the whole people. They are quite possible.

When the term "Social Science" was first employed in England it sounded as the wildest and most visionary word dreaming philosophy had suffered to escape in its sleep. Statesmen had none of that quality which scientific men call prevision—a compassing foresight, seeing what ought to happen, and taking care that it should happen. Society was a sort of legally arranged blunder, the costly device of public incompetence and private despair. We are still in that state that Fourier used to call our "incoherent civilisation." It is from this that community contrivers strive to deliver us.

A Pantisocracy was the idea of cultivated men, a name derived from Greek words, implying a state in which all govern and all serve. This is one of the prettiest names and prettiest definitions of association extant. Nothing has been done yet in the way of realising this conception of life, which will entitle any one to speak, very confidently, that it will become the state which men will ultimately adopt. Communities on a superstitious basis have hitherto been the most successful and the most enduring. Hitherto associations on a secular basis have not proved themselves stable. That they will become so some day is possible and probable, but long years must elapse before age,

the great test of success, can stamp them with the seal of endurance. The belief in things unseen and in supernatural duties, has been hitherto the most powerful influence on the human mind. It is easier to trust in what you are told than to find out what you ought to trust in. Science is the latest born power which controls the human understanding. The knowledge of it, belief in it, the use of it, and the trust in it, are of slow growth. Reality seems to be the last thing men learn. When they do come to comprehend its nearness, its importance, its influence over their destiny, men will do things hitherto unknown, to avail themselves of its teachings. There will be heard then from platform and pulpit words of passion, of power, picturesque force of dramatic inspiration, of fiery council, such as fitful, fluctuating, albeit potent belief in unseen influences have never yet called forth. It is quite true, as Italians say, "he who has a partner has a master;" and this is true of marital partnership, yet men and women enter gladly into it. Civilised society is sacrifice compared with the liberty of savage life. All association is sacrifice of minor things for the attainment of greater. In religious societies sacrifice is made by authority, in secular association there is no authority but that of common sense, and that is not common; it has to be created in most minds. The reason of every great step has to be made plain to the general understanding. As experience and intelligence increase, association becomes more possible. Co-operation was impossible to the extent it now prevails, until later years. Association is still an almost unknown art, but it is becoming more familiar day by day. Religious communists have sought peace and plainness, security and competence. Secular communists will seek peace and art, intelligence and prosperity, and the attraction, emulation, and individuality of their lives will exceed anything hitherto realised by communities of mere industry and faith.

Mrs. Martineau's great testimony.

One who gave the English people the earliest and the first unprejudiced account of American communities, has written an instructive passage upon the successes of the ignorant and unmarrying Rappites, contrasting what they have done with what better informed persons might accomplish on the same principle in association. Mrs. Martineau says: "If such external provision, with a great amount of accumulated wealth besides, is the result of Co-operation and community of property among persons so ill prepared for its production as these, what might not the same principles of association achieve, among a more intelligent set of people, stimulated by education, and exhilarated by the enjoyment of all the blessings which Providence has placed within the reach of man? If there had been no celibacy amongst them, they would probably have been much more wealthy than they are; the expenses of living in community being so much less, and the produce of co-operative labour so much greater, than in a state of division into families. The truth of these last positions cannot be doubted by any who have witnessed the working of the co-operative system. *It can never now rest till it is made matter of experiment.*"*

Communities are, as yet, in their infancy, and the only notice of them intended here is merely a brief account of the few which have historical connection with Co-operation or illustrate it. The causes of their failure it is premature to dwell upon in detail. Many sufficient causes will strike the reader as he proceeds. There are two which will account for the failure of any of them.

First. The want of sufficient capital to maintain the place for a few years on a frugal scale, until the members could be trained to self-supporting efficiency.

Second. That the members were not picked men

* Society in America.

and women pledged to obey the authority established among them, and readily removable in case of becoming intractable.

There is no occasion to go farther to account for the non-success of any of the experiments which have been in vain attempted. Not in vain absolutely, since each experiment makes still clearer the conditions required to accomplish the end in view. Everything, as well as new schemes of social life, which require combination of many means and general intelligence on the part of the person concerned in it, has to be attempted many times before it succeeds. Could the present railway system have been perfected in the minds of inventors at the beginning of the century, it could not have been got into work, as there did not exist sufficient persons of intelligence enough to believe in it and to trust their money to carry it out; nor were workmen to be had of sufficient skill to make the engines or conduct the traffic.

Few English people have any idea of what the objects of English communists have been. They have derived their idea second-hand from reports of newspaper writers concerning continental projects. Continental writers attack a system of communism which nobody ever heard of save themselves, and they are quoted in England by persons who never paid attention to any system, nor know what was intended by their projectors. M. Siegwart's small book, "Der Communisten Staat," lately published at Berlin, judges communism from the iron age of the crude feudal village communities of ancient Germany, and represents that marriages are to be prohibited, and only prostitution is to be tolerated. Indeed, those who become husbands without permission, are to be thrown naked into a hole full of thorns. It is strange that writers of intelligence should imagine that a system whose tendency is to too much compassion, and imposes upon itself the onerous obligation of proceeding by

common consent, should be described as a system of ferocity and tyranny. The most sensible account given of the English system by a foreigner is that which Buonarroti made at the end of his long life in a letter to Mr. Bronterre O'Brien.

"Babeuf," he said, "attempted to combine a numerous people into one single grand community; Owen would multiply in a country small communities, which, afterwards united by a general bond, might become, as it were, so many individuals of one great family. Babeuf wished his friends to seize on the supreme authority, as by its influence he hoped to effectuate the reforms they had projected; Owen calculated on success by preaching and by example."

But it is useless to reason on the distinctions and possibilities of a scheme of life which can only effect a popular conviction in its favour by success. I therefore proceed with the story of such Lost Communities as throw light on the objects of this history.

Mr. David Urquhart, a writer who never fails to interest the reader, and to whom the public are indebted for much out-of-the-way knowledge, as well as political inspiration, gave in his work on "Turkey and its Resources," in 1833, a remarkable account of the great Co-operative Society of Ambelakia, whose organisation had a completeness which has never been exceeded, and whose varied activity was a miracle of co-operative sagacity. It was broken up through its elaborate commercial arrangements being in advance of the law of the period, which included no court in which questions in dispute could be speedily and cheaply settled. It has been the fate of Co-operation often to be, not only before its time, but before the law.

"Ambelakia," says Mr. Urquhart, "is the name of a spot overlooking the Vale of Tempe, where an extraordinary association, after a brilliant existence of twenty years, was dissolved in consequence of complicated legal

proceedings, which it had no competent court to decide, and in which the ruling body was an interested party. . . The failure of the Vienna Bank, where their funds were deposited, the evil effects of protracted litigation, and, much more than these, the revolution in commerce that English cotton yarn was beginning to effect, conspired with political troubles for its ruin. . . . I extract from Beaujour's "Tableau du Commerce de la Greece" the details he has preserved respecting it, in as far as they were confirmed to me by the information I obtained on the spot.

"Ambelakia, by its activity, appears rather a borough of Holland than a village of Turkey. This village spreads, by its industry, movement, and life, over the surrounding country, and gives birth to an immense commerce, which unites Germany to Greece by a thousand threads. Its population has trebled in fifteen years, and amounts at present (1798) to 4,000, who live in their manufactories like swarms of bees in their hives. In this village are unknown both the vices and cares engendered by idleness; the hearts of the Ambelakiots are pure and their faces serene; the slavery which blasts the plains watered by the Penens, and stretching at their feet, has never ascended the sides of Pelion (Ossa); and they govern themselves, like their ancestors, by their protoyeros (primates, elders) and their own magistrates. Twice the Mussulmen of Larissa attempted to scale their rocks, and twice were they repulsed by hands which dropped the shuttle to seize the musket.

"Every arm, even those of the children, is employed in the factories; whilst the men dye the cotton, the women prepare and spin. There are twenty-four factories, in which yearly 2,500 bales of cotton yarn of 100 okes each were dyed (6,138 cwts.) This yarn found

* Chap. IV., p. 46, of his work named.

its way into Germany, and was disposed of at Buda, Vienna, Leipsic, Dresden, Anspach, and Bareuth. The Ambelakiot merchants had houses of their own in all those places. These houses belonged to distinct associations at Ambelakia. The competition thus established reduced very considerably the common profits; they proposed, therefore, to unite themselves under one central commercial administration.* Twenty years ago this plan was suggested, and in a year afterwards carried into execution. The lowest shares in this joint-stock company were 5,000 piastres (between £600 and £700), and the highest were restricted to 20,000, that the capitalists might not swallow up all the profits. The workmen subscribed their little profits, and, uniting in societies, purchased single shares; and besides their capital, their labour was reckoned in the general amount; they received their share of the profits accordingly, and abundance was soon spread through the whole community. The dividends were at first restricted to ten per cent, and the surplus profit was applied to the augmenting of the capital, which in two years was raised from 600,000 to 1,000,000 piastres (£120,000).

"Three directors, under an assumed firm, managed the affairs of the company; but the signature was also confided to three associates at Vienna, whence the returns were made. These two firms of Ambelakia and Vienna had their correspondents at Pesth, Trieste, Leipsic, Salonique, Constantinople, and Smyrna, to

* This competition was of a peculiar character. These houses were agents of one factory, and the competition between the agents did not allow the produce of the factory its fair advantages against other factories. The factories had a common administration at home, and it sent its goods to market at its own expense and risk, combining the profits of merchant, broker, or manufacturer; as it was carried on by an association of capital and labour which equalised the profits so much that the poorest could wait for a return, to reap the benefits of the speculation as well as receive the wages of his labour.—*B.*

receive their own staple, effect the returns, and to extend the market for the cotton yarn of Greece. An important part of their trust was to circulate the funds realised from hand to hand, and from place to place according to their own circumstances, necessities, and the rates of exchange."

"Thus the company secured to itself both the profits of the speculation and the profit of the banker, which was exceedingly increased by the command and choice which these two capacities gave of time, market, and speculation. When the exchange was favourable, they remitted specie; when unfavourable, they remitted goods; or they speculated on Salonique, Constantinople, or Smyrna by purchase of bills, or by transmission of German goods, according to the fluctuations and demands of the different markets, which their extensive relations put them immediately in possession of, and the rapid turning of so large a capital gave them always the means of profiting by.

"Never was a society established upon such economical principles, and never were fewer hands employed for the transaction of such a mass of business. To concentrate all the profits at Ambelakia, the correspondents were all Ambelakiots; and to divide the profits more equally amongst them, they were obliged to return to Ambelakia after three years' service, and had then to serve one year at home to imbibe afresh the mercantile principles of the company.

"The greatest harmony long reigned in the association; the directors were disinterested, the correspondents zealous, and the workmen docile and laborious. The company's profits increased every day on a capital which had rapidly become immense; each investment realised a profit of from sixty to one hundred per cent, all which was distributed, in just proportions, to capitalists and workmen, according to capital and industry. The shares had increased tenfold."

Important statement of Mr. Urquhart's.

However, it is as important as relevant to see Mr. Urquhart's estimate of the causes of failure. He says: "I believe the causes of their disunion, with all the evils that ensued, and the subsequent ruin of Ambelakia, to have been,—first, the too great extension of the municipal body, its consequent loss of activity and control, and the evasion of responsibility by the managers; and, secondly, the absence of judicial authority to settle in their origin disputes and litigated interests, which, in the absence of law, could only be decided by the violence of faction. That the exclusion of the workmen from a due influence in the administration, and share in the profits, was the real cause of the breaking up of the commercial association, is established by the fact of the workmen separating themselves, immediately afterwards, into as many small societies as there were associations of workmen possessed of shares in the joint stock. As I have already stated, a litigated question depending on the violation of one of the bye-laws separated the whole community into two factions."

That is a very important statement Mr. Urquhart makes, and very suggestive to those concerned in deciding upon the constitution of co-operative productive and manufacturing, namely—that "the exclusion of the workman from a due influence in the administration and share in the profits was the real cause of the breaking up of the association."

This remarkable society had a great defect—the Ambelakiots made no attempt at propagandism, it was this generous inspiration in modern co-operators which has made them powerful and respectable. Every new society in the most distant place extends the possible range of brotherhood, and makes confederation more profitable. The Ambelakiots had, however, many points worthy of modern notice. They were citizens as well as co-operators, and fought when occasion required for independence. The ingenuity and economy of their

arrangements are quite worthy of study in these days. They understood the theory of industrial partnerships better than many modern companies do, and profits were divided between capital and labour long before modern discussions arose upon that subject. More modern instances, however, claim our attention. No one should accuse socialists of wanting in intrepidity when they settled down amid the miasmatic swamps of Indiana, which the much enduring German celibates were deserting.

New Harmony—a name never applicable to it—consisted of 30,000 acres of land, purchased by Mr. Owen in April, 1825. In 1822 it was peopled by 700 persons, who had previously occupied a back settlement in Pennsylvania, near Pittsburg, and were chiefly German emigrants. They had had for their spiritual teacher and temporal director, Mr. Rapp. They were ignorant, bigoted, despised intellectual attainments, and were celibates. They greatly enriched themselves, and might have multiplied their wealth, as we have seen, had they multiplied themselves. "New Harmony," which Mr. Owen appears so to have named, stood in a thickly-wooded country on the banks of the Wabash and about thirty miles from the mouth of that river. The site of New Harmony was generally flat for about a mile and a half from the river; but the neighbouring hills were covered with vineyards and orchards. The Wabash here was an ample stream, winding its course in front of the town and beneath the luxuriant and lofty woods on the opposite banks of the Illinois. The town was well laid out in straight and spacious streets, crossing each other at right angles, after the manner of modern American towns. There were excellent wells in this Wabash settlement, and public ovens at convenient distances from each other. There were well-built granaries, barns, and factories, and a pretty village church, the white steeple of which was pleasantly seen

from afar. Mr. Owen explained his intended plan of proceedings in the House of Representatives at Washington, an opportunity which would not be accorded to the angel Gabriel of speaking in the Houses of Parliament in London, if he contemplated founding a settlement on the Thames. In three months Mr. Owen was joined by upwards of 900 individuals, which further increased, and notice had to be given to prevent more persons coming. It is clear the old world is not all-attractive, since so many persons are ever ready to try the new.

Lord Brougham, being asked (about 1826) to give his opinion of schemes of industrial societies, answered: "Co-operation will, by and by, do for the worst, but it must begin with picked men." The Indiana communists were not of this description. In fact, they were advertised for. Notice was given that all ready to join the new system of society might make their way to the banks of the Wabash, and all who came were accepted, just as though you could begin the New World with a job lot. As was to be expected, the men of good sense were ultimately overwhelmed by the mass of wayward adherents, composed, in the words of Mr. Horace Greeley, for the most part of "the conceited, the crotchety, the selfish, the headstrong, the pugnacious, the unappreciated, the played-out, the idle, and the good-for-nothing generally, who, discovering themselves utterly out of place and at a discount in the world as it is, rashly conclude that they are exactly fitted for the world as it ought to be." Nevertheless, the men of good sense ruled at first, and prevailed intermittingly throughout. A committee was appointed to govern this heterogeneous assemblage of 1,000 Republicans. It is clear they had business instincts, for the first thing they did was to pass a resolution "that no spirituous liquors

* "Co-operative Magazine," July, 1828.

shall be retailed in New Harmony;" and this resolution has been repeated in every great co-operative society down to this day.

The orthodoxy of the co-operators, whose general story is told in these pages, was none of the soundest. For the first forty years of their career no clergyman, with a character to lose, would speak of them with respect, or guarantee them Christian charity. St. Peter had been copiously apprised to have a sharp eye upon them if they came to his gate. Yet these men were not wanting in self-denial, which the very elect, who sat in judgment upon them, often failed to practise; and they were resolute that Co-operation should always mean Temperance. They had none of the teetotalers' tenderness for wilful inebriates, treating them with more respect than the self-sustained, self-respecting, temperate man. They had no theories, but they knew that intemperance was uneconomical. Many thought it a sin; others saw in it ill-repute; the peaceable considered it a trouble; and some knew it as a danger. They knew that drunkenness is madness at large, and in countless families children and women are shut up with these maniacs, and live in daily jeopardy and terror. It was better to have a tiger or a snake in a community than a drunkard. You could kill the beast or the reptile, but the drunkard might kill you. It would not pay to manage him in a community. He must be put down. The co-operators were under no sentimental illusions. Some of them knew the inebriate in every stage. In the first he is amusing. Playwriters make merry with him; comic artists put his foolishness into demoralising cartoons. In the second stage his officious good nature is succeeded by suspicions, which make his society a nuisance and a peril. In the third stage he stabs those who oppose him, or does it on surmise of his own, against which there is neither warning nor defence. If it is a woman who drinks, not merely the body but the mind is conspicuously poisoned.

The foulest suspicions grow real to it. In some cases daughters hear infamous accusations against their father, or against the mother by the father; and all who know either are astounded by imputations they cannot but heed, upon testimony apparently so authentic. Waste and violence, reaching and often passing the verge of crime, mark the days of horror and sorrow in the household. Little children undergo frights which affect their reason (as doctors know), and not untrequently the little ones are killed outright, as frequent coroners' inquests tell. But for their sakes no wife or husband would inhabit an inebriate house; and some working men and women have been hanged for murder which mere self-defence against deadly provocation, has forced upon them. The most brilliant men, the sweetest and most self-denying women, whom suffering, weakness, or sorrow bows low, until nervous exhaustion befals, come to this dreadful end. Thirst-madness is stronger than love, or duty, or decency. Could it be foreseen before the treacherous chain of habit is forged, they would, as poor Charles Lamb wrote—

> Clench their lips and ne'er undo them
> To let the deep damnation trickle through them.

In a community there could be no lunatic asylums for these persons—mad with a madness unrecognised by the law. If sent under any pretext to an asylum anywhere, they were, as soon as they were sober, found to be (as later it came to be known) saner than commissioners of lunacy themselves, and discharged—their insanity not lying in want of sense, but in want of self-restraint. In a man's home nothing can be done. He cannot lock up his wife, nor the wife lock up her husband. The only chance of not making things worse is to let things take their dreadful course. Disapproval incites to rage and murder. Husband or wife must fight or one or other make miserable submission, living with madness (where humanity, or family reasons, or inextin-

guishable love forbid desertion), without any means of opposing it. Drunkards are masters, and they know it; and, without the power of restraining them, they must perish. Inside community there can be no protection save in prohibition. Outside there is no land of refuge, no escape for them. The fatal temptation is ever in their sight. At every corner of every street that which to them is the accursed spirit, is blazoned. Every advertisement page of newspaper or magazine carries the dreadful information where can be got the dainty drink of death. The path of self-destruction is not only unobstructed—the glittering meshes of misery entangle every footstep. The co-operators had knowledge enough of the causes of sin to pity the poor wretch on the inclined plane, but they would have no inclined plane laid down in their stores. The drink illusion they well knew hides, while it lasts, the path of death from the eyes of the drinker. Yet the mind has intervals of horrible sensibility. Physical pain and remorse, and longing for love and life recur. But sharp torment sets in, with shaking hand the fatal glass is seized again; and with the reason clear, but bereft of will, terrified and helpless, the inebriates go down to a deeper degradation, and to an open grave which they see and know. No sympathy can serve them, no prayer can aid them. There is no deliverance save by lock and key, doctor and nurse. But no nurse can mitigate, no doctor can help, until the gate is closed through which the brandy-seller can be reached. The only thing to do is to pray that death may come to the unhappy inebriate in his daily stupor, without crime preceding it, and without the terror of a final and hopeless consciousness. These scenes could never be suffered in a community. There have been drunken saints and drunken sceptics, whom both sides have deplored, but a drunken co-operator would be a nuisance, a scandal, and a fool; and none of the race have ever been reared by them. All these

reasons against the thing did not occur at once; but convictions of the same nature and of sufficient intensity prevailed everywhere, and always; and thus it has come to pass that in no co-operative community, colony, or store has drink ever been in favour. There is obviously no need for co-operative stores to undertake the duties of inns. They are more than sufficiently supplied outside. When communities become populous it will be necessary to provide inns on the wise plan of those of Lady Byron, where the landlord is simply a purveyor, secure of maintenance for discharging that duty, and without any interest in the supply or sales. Such co-operative inns would be commodious, pleasant, airy, fresh and clean, where pictures and newspapers, coffee and chocolate, ale or wine, tobacco, and chess, could be had as in working men's clubs, for refreshment and diversion—where temperate use would be the observance, would be expected as naturally as courtesy or truth; and immoderation treated as a failure of social faith and self-respect, liable to the penalty of expulsion. In a community which lacks the dignity of temperance or the influences which enforces it—prohibition, always an indignity to others—becomes self-protection. As community life advanced inns would be needless, as all that pertains to diet would be supplied from the common store to the common table. Drinking could never be a difficulty among civilised people.

New Harmony, however, soon began to be inharmonious from another cause, which, in every age of the world, has been perilous to social peace. News came in May, 1826, that a division of sentiment on the subject of religion had led to the formation of another community. A third community was also forming of those who were willing to enter the new buildings put up, and live under a strict community of property. The best men had always this in view, and the settlers should have been limited from the first to those among whom there was a

common agreement of whatever kind. The religious difficulty was made to submit to the co-operative conditions of liberty, conscience, and criticism. To the co-operators of these days, as also down to these times, is due the credit of practising the toleration which they taught. At New Harmony the different sects ultimately met in church and hall, attending as they chose, when they chose, and upon whom they chose; and preachers of all denominations had free liberty to teach, and discussions are mentioned* as having occurred after the morning services.

In July, 1826, a Manchester paper stated, upon the authority of a letter from Philadelphia, that many of the settlers at New Harmony had been attracted by the hope of gain, and that Mr. Owen would shortly be obliged to give up his project. Mr. Owen had incurred great expense, and would probably lose the whole; but as he had bought 37,000 acres of land, with houses on a portion of them for 1,000 inhabitants, he was not at all likely to lose that property, however disorderly the heterogeneous multitude, which he had suffered to assemble upon it, might become—and did not.

As late as 1842, New Harmony, in Indiana, was the subject of report in the "New Moral World." Robert Dale Owen was there at that time, and stated in a speech there that many of those present, himself amongst the number, hoped to live and die in New Harmony. They expected there to leave their children, their daughters as well as their sons, behind them, the future inhabitants of the place. Mr. R. D. Owen was occupied in the old way, which unfortunately always consumed the chief time of the co-operators, that of replying to the objections of ministers of religion. From the beginning of their career almost to this day, the co-operators would have certainly done twice as much

* "Co-operative Magazine," 1826, p. 50.

as they ever accomplished for the furtherance of their interests, and advancement of their system, had it not been for the amount of time they appeared always willing to spend in answering clerical critics, who had nothing whatever to do with their business. Mr. R. D. Owen occupies four long columns in replying to objections that "the Harmonists frequented balls, went to their own theatre, and broke the Sabbath," because they did not go to the objector's church; "that Mr. Owen, junior, himself delivered historical and literary addresses on Sundays." Mr. R. D. Owen, who had not delivered a single lecture on the subject of religion for ten years, condescended to answer for himself against one Rev. B. Halstead, who all that time had been lecturing upon it every Sunday. It cannot be said that these social reformers did nothing for the future. They spent a great part of their time in writing papers on theological subjects, long enough to fill the bookshelves of posterity. As an economical and social society, the co-operators should never have suffered any official notice to be taken of objectors, who belonged to an entirely different and alien party. On their own ground, ministers of religion had a certain authority to speak, and were to be regarded with respect so long as they were unimputative; but religion, being an affair of individual conscience, and incapable of being determined by committees, or councils, or parliaments, and since individuals and not committees are made responsible in the future, if anything is wrong, the discussion of these questions should always have been left to individuals, acting in their private capacity only; and if necessary for the satisfaction of individual conscience that these critics and libellous objectors should be dealt with, there ought to have been set apart in each colony a Critical Room, and a Howling House, with a secretary for each, whose duty should be to receive all relevant communications, and lay them before such persons as might care to stroll in and attend to them.

It would seem from Mr. R. D. Owen proposing to live with his family in the community that the health of the place must have become tolerable, though European visitors to this day speak with dismay of living there themselves. As a community on a principle of united property and associated life, New Harmony has never made any mark in the world. A spot which Shakers were glad to desert could not be a favourable one. A miscellaneous crowd of persons assembled there. The absence of Mr. Robert Owen during the years when personal inspiration and training were most important, were causes quite sufficient to account for the fluctuations and effacement of New Harmony.

After the Wabash community the next of note was one formed on the banks of the Calder in Scotland.

Abram Combe (the brother, as we have said, of George Combe, who became distinguished as a phrenologist) deserves to be ranked next to Mr. Owen, for the cost to himself and devotion with which he strove to prove co-operative life a practical thing. He published a periodical informing the public of the progress of the Orbiston community. It was a small neatly printed paper, which he named "The Register of the first Society of Adherents to Divine Revelation at Orbiston," which was not very civil to all the other Christian societies, which for eighteen centuries have regarded themselves as being the same description of persons. Mr. Combe was, however, on the whole one of the most sensible, and certainly the most practical, of Mr. Owen's disciples. He professed to derive his principles from Mr. Owen, and appeared to treat the principal things Mr. Owen had said as discoveries. These discoveries Abram Combe had the merit of stating in his own way, and stating very well; and in a much more acceptable form than the master had put them. Though "The Register" was devoted entirely to the proceedings of Orbiston, it was the least tiresome and most sensibly written of any of the publications of

the class. There were practical articles about the situation and prospects of the place, the views of the inmates, the different occupations, diversions, and departments; the proceedings of the theatre which was opened in Orbiston. Letters, when they were good, were introduced, and extracts also from private letters when they contained passages publicly interesting. Notices of co-operative publications were given, and of experiments elsewhere, commonly done in a very pleasant spirit. Lectures were reported, some of which must have been well worth hearing since at this time they are interesting reading. The sole department in which the editor was unsuccessful was that where he contributed what he called poetry of his own. A friend wrote to him and advised him to write no more poetry, as he thought it was the worst possible vehicle for the propagation of useful truth. If the friend in question had never seen any other poetry than that of the editor, it must be admitted that his opinion was well founded. Mr. Combe, however, not agreeing with the objector, answered him in another and vindicatory poem, which we may regard as a triumphant specimen of his powers. The first four lines will probably be sufficient to enable the reader to form an opinion:—

> I am sorry to differ from you, my dear friend!
> And for this reason now a *poetic* I send;
> So, for once, I beseech you! repress your "dislike,"
> And a truce with "contempt" I would have you to "strike."

The poet afterwards speaking in praise of poesy, which he believed was a magical power in his hands, sings—

> Indeed such the power that to her belongs,
> Oh could I but write all our national songs.

We can all see now that it is a mercy he did not.

In 1826, the Orbiston Community buildings were began on the 18th of March. An average of 100 men were employed. The art ideas of Mr. Abram Combe were of the most sterile utilitarian order. He held that "it

ought always to be borne in mind that the *sole use* and end of domestic accommodation is to protect the *body* from painful sensations." "To me," he said, "it has a slight appearance of irrationality to seek *mental* pleasure from such a source, seeing that liberty, security, and knowledge, united with social intercourse, and confirmed by the affection and esteem of *all* with whom we are brought in contact, constitute the only source from which the wants of the mind can be supplied." This excellent gentleman must have been born without any sense of art in his soul. Every longing for beauty in his nature must have been satisfied at the sight of putty and stones. What a genius dissenting architects and poor-law commissioners missed in Abram Combe. He would have been the Pugin of bare Bethels and union work-houses. He was wise in proposing the plainest conveniences until prosperity was attained, but he need not have struck his harp in praise of naked monotony. A building was described as possessing a centre—left centre and left wing—right centre and right wing. The left centre contained about 120 private rooms. The whole building was plain, was all of hewn stone, and was said to have "a rather magnificent appearance," which, after what we know of the architect, this criticism must have been written by a gravedigger. It is, however, but just to add that the *Glasgow Chronicle* of that day said that "the rooms intended for the inmates were neat and even elegant." If so there must have been some departure from Mr. Combe's principle of dreariness.

Orbiston was near Hamilton. The funds for the settlement were raised by a joint stock company, and were divided into two hundred shares of £250 each, paid in quarterly instalments of £10; Mr. Combe, of course, being the giant contributor.

One visitor speaks of Orbiston as being near Holytown. The community buildings are described as situated on the banks of the Calder, at that place the river being but

a paltry, quick, shallow, mill stream, but the banks beautiful. The visitor approaching the place saw only a tall white building, covered with blue slates, standing entirely by itself, without a house or tree to keep it company. The general feature of the spot was flat, but surrounded on all sides by near or distant, high mountainous scenery. On arriving at the building it was found to be plain, of great extent, and devoid of every ornament. Not a very alluring commencement of the new world this, yet it is pleasant to trace every particular of these famous attempts to reconstruct society. The aim, the zeal, the sacrifices of the promoters, and the hopes they inspired, make these places sacred.

By March, 1826, news came that—"The roof of the left centre and left wing of the dwelling-houses at Orbiston were about finished, but what was now in hand would enable them to demonstrate (in a plain way it must be owned) the efficacy of the system of Mutual Co-operation." The "new system" was so near and so sure that the left wing of the dreariest building in Europe was sufficient to demonstate its efficacy, in the moderate eyes of sanguine believers in it.

Mr. Combe was described as a stout-built middle-aged farmer-looking man, giving no indication of the general knowledge he was understood to possess. Known in Edinburgh as a sharp-eyed tanner—that being his business—well understanding the art of pursuing the "main chance," of a cynical turn of mind, and satirical and vivacious beyond either of his eminent brothers, he visited New Lanark in 1820. Though he was then thirty-five years of age, he experienced an entire "change of mind," as complete, remarkable, and salutary as any recorded in the annals of religious conversion.

Some of the many persons visiting Orbiston were naturally disposed to make some compensation to the community for the time of the members consumed in taking visitors round, and they made offer of money

on account of the attendants placed at their disposal. This was resented in a very dignified and foolish article, for the community might have been eaten up, either in food or time, by visitors—a few curious to learn, but more curious to ridicule. A proper way would have been to have charged attendance in showing people round, at so much per hour, according to the value of the services of the persons so engaged, and the profits would have been ofttimes welcome to the common fund. However, a very sensible suggestion was made, namely, that visitors who felt desirous of serving the place should purchase some article of its produce.

In the "Co-operative Magazine" of this period (1826) were prudently published several calculations of the proportion of the agriculturists, mechanics, and other workmen who should be included in a community, according to the quantity of land which is to be occupied. There are also statements of the conditions to which members were to conform in the Orbiston and New Harmony Communities. These calculations and conditions are not devoid of historic interest as showing what conceptions were entertained of the art of association, by two such eminent leaders and students of it as Robert Owen and Abram Combe. But it would be unfair in the historian to waylay the reader with twenty pages of these technical details, which would weary him if he read them and obstruct him if he did not. When the day returns, as return it will, when co-operative colonies are again devised, a little volume devoted to the recital of these curious papers will find both readers and students, though the constitution and habits of society are now so much changed, that the papers in question would rather illustrate the difficulty to be overcome than furnish the solution required. I content myself therefore by indicating where they may be found, and shall recite, in due course, some of the more memorable maxims which are readable in themselves and of perennial application.

Orbiston terminated by George Combe.

The Orbiston estate consisted of 290 acres, for which the serious sum of £20,000 was paid. The land was cold and poor, and has been judged to be not worth half the money; and an additional £20,000 was expended on ill-contrived buildings. An ill-assorted random collection of most unsuitable persons flocked to the spot, which speedily acquired the emphatic name of "Babylon" from the surrounding population, a title, we should imagine, most applicable alike to its inhabitants and its proceedings. At its breaking up the land and buildings were sold for £16,000; a fact which shows the judgment with which its affairs had been commenced and administered; and but for Mr. George Combe, who, at the death of his brother Abram, forced on the total destruction of the concern, the foundry, with its "forge and water-wheel" might yet have remained to waken the echoes of that "romantic dell," and remained too as an example of the practicability of the principle of "mutual co-operation" in connection with a large and successful colony. Orbiston was ridding itself of its idlers and its unsuitable members—it was gradually consolidating itself, and would, but for the forcible legal interference of the great phrenologist, have righted itself, and been at this day a flourishing establishment.*

Orbiston was very near succeeding, nearer so than other European experiments. Had Mr. Abram Combe lived, his practical sense and fine example, no doubt, would have sustained the community until its success was assured. He was quite right in wasting no money on ornament in the erection of the earlier buildings, but he was wrong in writing against ornament; true ornament is art, and art is pleasure; and pleasure in art is refinement, and refinement is the grace of life. It was of no consequence that the buildings were plain at first. The enthusiastic would be quite content if the buildings were wholesome,

* "New Moral World," Vol. VII., p. 995, January 4, 1840.

but they might have been so contrived that the addition of comeliness could have been given, when there was money to pay for it. Mr. Combe died of his own enthusiasim. Unfitted for much field-work, he persisted in it excessively, even after his lungs were affected. When what he had done was explained to him, he regretted that the physiology of health had not been taught to him in lieu of much other knowledge, which could not now save him. He was a man of fine parts and many personal accomplishments, saving that of poetry, and was the greatest of the martyrs of Co-operation.

Subsequently, a greater master in social devices than Mr. Combe arose—Mr. William Thompson, with whose name the reader is already familiar. He had a definite scheme of social life in his mind, which he had given the best years of his life to describe and define, and which he left—vainly left—his fortune to forward.

In those days and long subsequent, it was impossible to leave money for purposes of social or mental progress, not of a conventional or orthodox character. Religious judges at once confiscated the bequest on the ground of alleged immorality of purpose; or any persons to whom the money might revert if the will was set aside, could successfully plead the lunacy of the testator. Nobody believed in the sanity of any one who sought unknown improvement in an untrodden way. The only way to promote these objects is to give the money for the purpose, right out while you live. If testators could have been persuaded of this, some projected communities never attempted would have been heard of, and some commenced would not have been lost.

Mr. Thompson died in March, 1833, and left freehold estates to the value of £8,000 or £10,000 to thirteen trustees, to be applied in loans to communities, and the purchase of shares in communities, and the reprinting for gratuitous distribution such of Mr. Thompson's works as might be supposed to further co-operative objects.

Fate of Mr. Thompson's generous bequest.

One of the trustees took possession of the property on his death. The heirs at law disputed the will, and collections had to be made to defend it. A plea of insanity was set up against Mr. Thompson. Ultimately a decision was obtained in the Rolls Court, Dublin, when the counsel for the heirs brought forward the same imaginary charges of intended sexual immorality in community arrangements which were brought forward thirty years later in the Rolls Court, London, with respect to the Queenwood community. The Cork case ended in the court taking possession of the funds, and applying them to purposes paramount to the will altogether. The precise effect of the decision was never explained, but it appeared that Mr. Pare obtained some residue of the property as he from time to time brought out new editions of Mr. Thompson's works, which still continue extant. Public money was collected to defend Mr. Thompson's will in the interests of Co-operation, and it was an omission in Mr. Pare, Mr. Thompson's most trusted trustee, not to explain publicly what was the amount of the advantage that resulted, and the details of the expenditure of the trust funds.

Better than any other community maker, Mr. Thompson knew what steps lay before the adventurers on the untrodden path of organised social life. He prescribed in early works that land should be taken at a perpetuity, or at a very long lease, on which buildings were to be erected and agricultural and manufacturing operations conducted. The conductors were to honestly and equally distribute to every member of this community all the means of happiness arising from wealth produced by their united labour. The members themselves were to contribute from five shillings down to sixpence a week until five pounds were paid for every adult individual, and fifty shillings for every child under ten years of age. "The rest of the funds—but a few thousand pounds, necessary to make the members' labour productive, and

ultimately to secure to them the whole of its products (taxation excepted)—would be contributed," Mr. Thompson said, "by those who now live, vexatiously to themselves, on the products of the labour of others, but would wish to cease so to live and to join in this scheme of equal and universal justice and happiness; or the money would be advanced on simple loan by benevolent persons." Members and promoters of this affair were instructed to pay their subscriptions to the secretary of the London Co-operative Society, 36, Red Lion Square, London, and were promised that a community on these principles would be begun in the spring of 1827, with any number of the industrial classes who may come forward, from two hundred to two thousand individuals. Should any wish in a few years to retire they were to be entitled to their full share of the increased value of the establishment, which, even in three or four years, though the worst and most inefficient years of production, it was expected would amount to not less—"cannot be less" was the phrase used—than one hundred pounds to each individual.

In September, 1831, announcement was made of a Co-operative Community being established in Cork, under the influence of Mr. Thompson. It was intended to consist of two thousand individuals. Land was to be taken at the rate of one acre for each individual, young or old. Two years before Mr. Thompson's death, a congress was held in Manchester, May, 1831, for the purpose of arranging the immediate formation of a community upon the social system. The first Birmingham Co-operative Society had published, in "Carpenter's Political Letter," a recommendation that the incipient co-operative community should be upon the plan laid down by Mr. William Thompson, and that application should be made to 199 other co-operative societies to elect one member of community each, and supply him with £30, in order that the incipient community should start with £6,000.

Messrs. Prescott, Grote, and Co. were appointed bankers, but it does not appear that any funds ever came into their custody. Mr. Owen declined to be a party to the petty purpose of writing to two hundred societies only. Mr. Owen proposed that they should form themselves into a committee for universal correspondence, which would have delayed the community for a generation; and he refused to have his name associated with any committee who was for making a beginning with a smaller sum than £240,000. Mr. Thompson, who had come up to London, with other gentlemen resident at a distance, to promote practical operations, appear to have been frustrated by Mr. Owen's grander aspirations.* At the Manchester Congress, Mr. Thompson wisely urged that they should commence with a small experiment in proportion to their possible means, and the congress was disposed to advance £6,000 to Mr. Thompson, when it could be raised upon their scheme. A document was agreed to in which his plan was recommended, but Mr. Owen, saying that £6,000 or £20,000 would be insufficient, discouraged the attempt. Had Mr. Thompson become the practical director of the experiment, it seems probable that some humble but hopeful result would have occurred.

Mr. Thompson's theory was that the system of Mutual Co-operation is the only one yet proposed which admits, as one of its fundamental bases, the *equal* improvement of the physical, intellectual, and social faculties of men and women, which judges the actions of both by the same *equal* system of morals, which allots to both the same enjoyments and the same liberty, and which subjects both to exactly equal restraints; restraints supported by reason and persuasion alone, and never prescribed with any other view than to increase the happiness of those to whom they are recommended, as well

* Mr. Thompson's speech, London Congress, 1832.

as of their fellow creatures, their companions and friends surrounding them. In the Cork community, which Mr. Thompson meditated, entire freedom of thought and expression on all subjects were to prevail, guided by regard for the feelings of others; and entire freedom of action, not interfering with similar freedom in others, were amongst the mutually guaranteed rights of every member of this community. Religion was declared to be the peculiar concern of the individual alone. Women were to be entitled to equal means of improvement and enjoyment, and to be equally eligible with men, to all offices to which their inclination or talents might lead them as in the American Granges, which have been of late originated. Idlers and persons of vicious habits, irreclaimable by mild treatment, were to be discharged from the association.

No rewards or punishments, but those naturally following in their good or bad consequences, were to be permitted in the community. These the community could not prevent. The punishments referred to were not such as magistrates inflict. Of course, if the laws of the country had been broken the civil magistrate would interfere, and if no civil rule prevailed where a community existed, restraints for the violent must have been provided, or the community would become a refuge for scoundrels.

Mr. Thompson had all the experience and prudence necessary for conducting successfully an experimental community. Had it not been for the magnificence of Mr. Owen's views and the unfortunate way in which he discouraged small attempts, no doubt one under Mr. Thompson's directions would have been successful. The congresses at that time were wisely in favour of such minor and well-considered attempts as were in their power. Mr. Thompson would have made a wise selection of men. He perfectly understood the scarceness of men of the right quality, and would have contented

himself with very few of them rather than had many of the wrong ones.

Besides his famous Scotch convert, Abram Combe, Mr. Owen made an Irish convert hardly less remarkable, and who founded an Irish community which attained greater success than that of Orbiston. It was in 1830 that Mr. Vandeleur, of Ralahine, devoted six hundred and eighteen English acres to the uses of a modified community on Mr. Owen's plan. His tenantry were of the lowest order of Irish poor, discontented, disorderly, and vicious. Mr. Vandeleur had heard Mr. Owen's lectures in Dublin, and was persuaded of the suitability of his scheme of co-operative agriculture for Ireland, and he did not hesitate to trust his fortune in order to verify the sincerity of his convictions. His expectation of success was very high, and, although he proposed to apply the co-operative principle to the most unfavourable state of society in the world, it is admitted on all hands that his experiment perfectly succeeded. Success so complete has not been achieved anywhere in modern times.

The greatest and most needed application of Co-operation is to agriculture. England has been backward herein. In one or two places a sensible farmer has achieved notable success. Mr. Gurdon, of Assington, is the most conspicuous instance. Strange to say, the most important application of Co-operation to agriculture has occurred in the restless land of potatoes and Whiteboys. Amid the bogs of Ralahine, an experiment of co-operative agriculture produced great results. Mr. William Pare, once governor of Harmony Hall, a writer of great social experience, has published a history of this Irish experiment—very surprising and very instructive. If there be a place in the world where the pacific and reasonable procedure of Co-operation might be expected to have no friends and no success, it would surely be Ireland—the land of agrarian conspiracy and suspicion.

Misrule, class legislation, and legal outrage have mostly made it so. Its characteristics have ample justification: it was nevertheless the most needful place to try Co-operation in, and the most unlikely in the world in which it could succeed. Yet its powers of social pacification and ability to promote peasant prosperity were never more strikingly displayed. The sort of treatment to which farm labourers were subjected on the Vandeleur estate, before Co-operation "put its foot down" there, was not calculated to promote good-will. A reaper on a hot harvest day paused to get a drink of water from a can, when the steward kicked it over, declaring that he would not have water there as an excuse for the reapers wasting their time. No wonder that a few wandering shots flew about this estate: and after better treatment set in, the men went on shooting as a precautionary measure, but when they saw good homesteads put up for them, a share of the produce of their labour secured to them, peace and even prosperity reigned in what was a most wretched district. Oddly enough, this patch of Irish communism is the only one that the societarian reformers ever got to flourish. It did not come to grief of itself; its proprietor ended it. Though a gentleman of good family, Mr. John Scott Vandeleur was a gambler, and lost the co-operative farms and everything else in a dicebox. He fled himself, and passed into outer darkness, and was never more heard of by men. There being no equitable land laws, such as Mr. Gladstone has devised, for Ireland, the co-operators had no claims for improvements or stock, and the "New Systemites," as they were called in Ireland, vanished also. There is no doubt that the scheme answered among the worst-used people and under the worst circumstances imaginable; and there is no doubt that it will answer among better used people and in better circumstances in England, if any persons have the sense and patience to try it. The Rev. Francis Trench, brother of the present Archbishop of

Dublin, visited the "New Systemites," and not only expressed but wrote out his approval of what he saw in detail. The society had made itself rules. One was, that "no member be expected to perform any service or work but such as is agreeable to his or her feelings." Irish human nature must not be of bad material, since both honest and disagreeable work was daily done, and done cheerfully. One day a mail coach traveller found a man up to his middle in water repairing a dam.

"Are you working by yourself?" inquired the traveller.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Where is your steward?"

"We have no steward."

"Who is your master?"

"We have no master. We are on a new system."

"Then who sent you to do this work?"

"The committee," replied the man in the dam.

"Who is the committee?" asked the mail coach visitor.

"Some of the members."

"What members do you mean?"

"The ploughmen and labourers who are appointed by us as a committee. I belong to the New Systemites."

When Mr. Craig, the co-operative steward, first went among these men, who had shot the previous steward, they sent him an interesting sketch of a skull and cross bones, and an intimation that they intended to put him to bed under the "daisy quilt." As he went along the road, the people who did not know him saluted him with the kind country greeting of "God be with you." One of his labourers told him that he should always reply in Irish—"Tharah-ma-dhoel." Accordingly Mr. Craig answered everybody "Tharah-ma-dhoel;" but he observed that his rejoinder did not make him popular, when a friend explained to him that "Tharah-ma-dhoel" meant "Go to the Devil." The man who taught this dangerous answer became one of the best members of

the society; and once, when the co-operative steward was supposed to be lost behind the Cratton Wood, he met "Tharah-ma-dhoel" looking for him, and on being asked why he came out on that errand, answered—

"We thought you lost in the Bog Mountain."

"Suppose I was lost, what then?" said the steward.

"Sure, sir," answered Tharah-ma-dhoel, "if we lost you we should lose the system."

The curious thing is that these people did not lose their love of co-operative farming by being set to sing to the tune of "Rule Britannia" feeble, sentimental, eccentric lines like these:—

The social brotherhood of man
Alone can bless the boon of earth,
And nature, in her generous plan,
Has taught us how to use the earth.
Hail! brothers, hail! in bark, or hut, or hall;
Hail! for each must live for all.

There was more to match, also sung, and it did not kill Co-operation. There is no proof known of its vitality so strong as this. Had the poor fellows shot the poet nobody could have found fault. The Scotch make watery verses after Burns; the Welsh write verses which, happily, nobody tries to translate; but the Irish have wit and poetry in them, and can make a song. The washer-woman of the Vandeleur Colony would have beaten the steward's verses. He should have appointed "Tharah-ma-dhoel" poet-laureate to the co-operative ploughmen.

Mr. Craig deserves some words of honour for his courage and confidence in undertaking the post of steward and general manager, seeing that his predecessor had been shot, and that the proprietor, Mr. Vandeleur, had been compelled to leave the country under the protection of an armed force. Between Terry-Alts, White Feet, Black Feet, and other disagreeable factions, and a "Tharah-ma-dhoel" set of labourers about him, Mr. Craig had a very unpleasant prospect before him.

Government of the Clare Community.

The government of the colony was absolute in Mr. Vandeleur, who retained the right of summary dismissal of any person brought upon the estate of whom he disapproved. Yet during the three years and a half the Clare community (it was situated in the county of Clare) lasted, he never had occasion to use this summary power. It would not have been very wonderful if he had, seeing that the members of the community were elected by ballot among the peasants of Ralahine. The business of the farm was regulated by a committee, also elected by ballot. The committee assembled every evening, and appointed to each man his work for the following day. There was no inequality established among them. The domestic offices, usually performed by servants, were assigned to the members under seventeen years of age.

It seems quite incredible that the simple and reasonable form of government should supersede the government of the bludgeon and the blunderbuss—the customary mode by which Irish labourers of that day regulated their industrial affairs. Yet, under co-operative arrangements, peace and prosperity prevailed, through mere arts of considerate arrangement and equity. From this quiet community, established in the midst of terror and murder, the skedaddled landlord, Mr. Vandeleur, received back in full all money he advanced for the wages of the labourers; £200 a-year interest on the working capital, the stock, and farm implements; and £700 a-year rent.

What induced the labourers to work with such profitable zeal and good will was, that the members of all ages above seventeen received an equal share in the division of profits over the above payments. Besides, a co-operative store was established similar to the one at New Lanark, whence they obtained provisions of good quality and nearly cost price. Pure food, honest weight, and reduced prices, filled them with astonishment. None had known such

a state of things before. None had conceived the possibility of it. The members lived at one table, which saved much expense in cooking food and serving meals. People who had always lived in doubt whether they should have a meal at all, made no scruple of eating with one another when a well-spread table was before them. In addition, great care was bestowed on the education of their children. The school was conducted upon purely secular principles, and the results were highly valued by the parents. As was the habit of communities, spirituous liquors were not permitted on the estate, and neither was smoking, which was gratuitous and petulant prohibition.

Had the Ralahine farm continued, arrangements would have been made for enabling the members to acquire the property of the place and hold the community as their own by common capital. This community, though it ceased, did not fail; it was indeed lost, but it was lost in the dicebox.

It was in the "enthusiastic period" when this Clare community flourished, and it needed enthusiasm to carry social ideas to these desperate districts. Communism should no longer be counted sentimental since it did the stout-hearted practical work it achieved in Ireland. It is a thousand pities all counted that Vandeleur was a gambler, as otherwise the merriest community in the world would have been established in the pleasant land of Erin. Men who taught their new steward to reply to the pious greetings of the peasantry by telling them to go to the devil, had an infinity of fun in them. In racier humour than this, and in harmless drollery and wit, the Irish surpass all tribes of men; and communism in their hands would have been industry, song, and laughter.

Later communities were attempted in England, which involved more peril to the principle of association than those more remote. True to the instinct of unhappy selection of place, or yielding to a necessity always

The wild leader of the Fen Community.

adverse, experiments were next proposed in the fens of Cambridgeshire. The projector, Mr. Hodgson, was a handsome and lusty farmer, who, having heard from clerical adversaries that in a community the oddest things were intended to be done, conceived the ingenious idea that it might serve some personal as well as public purposes; and as he had some land, a little money, and plausibility of address, he turned out as a peripatetic orator in favour of beginning the new world in his native fens of Cambridgeshire. No one suspected his possible collateral object. He was regarded by many merely as an eager advocate for realising the new system of society. Mr. Owen at once set his face against the ingenious schemer, whose hasty and indefinite proceedings he disapproved. Mr. Owen's high-minded instincts always led him to associate only with men of honour and good promise. He went down to Manea Fen, the name of the site chosen, and, having acquaintance with landowners of the neighbourhood, was soon able to properly estimate the qualifications of the new communist leader. Some gentlemen farmers, who knew Hodgson's antecedents and unfitness for trust, did Mr. Owen the service of telling him the truth. Mr. Fleming, the editor of the "New Moral World," wisely declined, on business grounds, to sanction the Manea Fen project. It did not add to the repute of the scheme, that Mr. Rowbotham made himself advocate of the discountenanced projector. Many honest, and some able, men, naturally thinking that the discontent with Mr. Hodgson's plans originated in narrowness of rivalry, having no reason to doubt the sincerity of professions made with zeal, and impatient to try their fortunes on the land themselves, went down and endeavoured to put the place in working order. Buildings were erected and many residents were for a time established there; but the chief of the affair soon found that he had misconceived the character of those whom he had attracted; and they, dissatisfied with the business security of the concern,

soon abandoned it. Those who had the smallest means suffered most, because they remained the longest, being equally unable to help or transfer themselves. The "Working Bee," the organ of the association, edited by Mr. James Thompson, had animation, literary merit, and the advantage of appealing to all who were impatient of delay and not well instructed in the dangers of prematurity. It was in August, 1838, that Mr. E. T. Craig made the first announcement that Mr. Hodgson, who had the suspicious address of Brimstone Hill, Upwell, had an estate of two hundred acres within a few miles of Wisbeach, which he intended to devote to a community. This was the disastrous affair afterwards known as the Manea Fen Community. Mr. Hodgson addressed the readers of the "Moral World" as "Fellow Beings," the only time in which that abstract designation was applied to them. The editor of the paper prudently prefaced his remarks upon the communications by quoting the saying of the Town Clerk of Ephesus, "Let us do nothing rashly." Mr. William Hodgson had been a sailor in his younger days—and many things else subsequently. He was acting in the character of the farmer when he invented the Manea Fen Community. It was mortgaged, but this did not prevent him offering to sell it to the socialist party. The Fen Farm, as we have said, consisted of two hundred acres. There were four fifty-acre lots, divided by dykes as is the fen country plan. The dykes acted as drains also. Three fifties lay together, the fourth was somewhat distant—half a mile. Twenty-four cottages, twelve in a row built back to back. They were single-room shanties. There was a dining shanty, which would accommodate one hundred people.

There were brave, energetic, and honourable men attracted to this place. To set up a paper, which was one of the features of the Fen Farm, was to enter the ranks of civilised and aspiring cities; and had Mr. Hodgson

been a man capable of furthering the moral aims of those who were allured by his professions, and could have given a secure tenure and sustained the settlers by subsistence and capital until the plots became productive, there is good reason to believe that the project would have succeeded—for there were men and women among the members who were "working bees" in the best sense, and were capable of success anywhere where moderate industry and patience could command it.

Besides being disastrous to individuals, this Fen Community was great harm and hindrance to the greater scheme of the Queenwood Community, which had then been projected, and which represented what of unity, wisdom, and capacity the great socialist party could lay claim to. Having executives of their own, and the veteran leader of communism, Mr. Owen, at their head, and many gentlemen generously perilling a large portion of their wealth to further their fortunes, it was want of sense as well as want of allegiance on the part of those communists to follow one whose antecedents and purposes were unknown, who had given no hostages to progress, who was half sailor, half farmer, and less than half reformer. Still, the zeal which goes wrong in its impatience to go forward is to be treated with a certain degree of respect.

The possibilty of Co-operation aiding in new forms of social life was next destined to be illustrated in an unexpected manner, and by a very unlikely person—namely, by Mr. Feargus O'Connor. Though the English never attained ascendancy in Scotland as leaders of popular opinion, and were never heard of in Ireland in that capacity, the Irish have always been most welcome in English movements, and, indeed, have overrun them. Were the Irish as impartial as they are fervid, they would have pleasant words to say of the English in every country in which they go. Mr. O'Connor soon became master of English Chartism; and he and countrymen of his carried

it clear away from all the moorings to which the English leaders would have held it secure, practical, and progressive. Not content with making Chartism antagonistic and obstructive, and acting with Tories as their method of advancing Radicalism, they vehemently protested against social reform as digressive and impossible. Against all attempts to obtain property for the purposes of community they urged, you cannot get land—laws of primogeniture and entail forbid. If law did let you get land, government would not let you keep it; and if law and government consented, how can those get land who cannot get bread?

Mr. O'Connor was a man of candour and foresight, and had a mind susceptible of new ideas, and ultimately came himself to project a "Co-operative Land Scheme." He gave to it at one time the name of "Co-operative." It was subsequently known as the National Land Scheme. It was through contact with the social advocates that the Chartist leaders turned their attention to life upon the land. Mr. O'Connor started his land scheme partly to satisfy the longing for social experiment which had began to show itself in the ranks of his adherents. He bought four estates and contracted for two others. O'Connorville, near Rickmansworth, formerly bearing the name of Heringsgate, Herts; Snigsend, near Staunton, Gloucester; Lowbands, near Tewkesbury, on the borders of Gloucester and Worcester; Minster Lovell, near Whitney, Oxford; Bromsgrove, Worcestershire; and Mathon, near Great Malvern. The purchase of the two last was not completed. O'Connorville cost £9,736; Lowbands, £18,903, Minster Lovell, £22,978; Snigsend, £27,237; Dodford, £12,046; and there was a deposit on Mathon of £2,005. Mathon, however, did not come into the occupation of the company.

There was confusion in making the allotment, which were given by ballot. They fell, of course, often to the unprepared and unfit. The properties, owing to an

ill-devised mode of purchase, came into Chancery: Nevertheless, there remains to this day several persons upon these estates who lived successfully and profitably upon their holdings. Had the subscribers to the land fund been limited to those who knew what to do with it, when they came into possession of it, and had sufficient capital to enable them to subsist while they built their habitations and gathered in their first crops; had the holdings been of four acres instead of two acres only in extent, and had the price charged to members been sufficient to make the scheme remunerative, and had the transfer been free from the Chancery vicissitudes, the scheme would have been sufficiently successful to have been a lasting benefit to many persons, which is almost equivalent to saying, had everything been otherwise the result would have been better. Had the experiment been persisted in, the errors of the first attempt were quite remediable. The public have lately been furnished with a very interesting account of the present condition of all these settlements, the proprietors of the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* having sent (1875) a special commissioner, Mr. Longstaffe, to visit all these places, and very interesting is the account he has rendered. He recounts how the shares were fixed as low as twenty-six shillings each. The member who had paid up four shares (five pounds four shillings) was entitled to ballot for two acres. It was assumed that good arable land might be rented in the most fertile parts of the country at fifteen shillings an acre, or bought outright at twenty-five years' purchase at eighteen pounds fifteen shillings an acre. As soon as the share capital realised £5,000, a hundred and twenty acres were to be bought to locate sixty persons on two-acre holdings, and leave a balance of £2,750; this would allow to each occupant a sum of forty-five pounds sixteen and eightpence with which to start on his enterprise. It was believed that thirty pounds would be sufficient to build a commodious and comfortable cottage, and that

the fifteen pounds remaining would provide implements, stock, seeds, and subsistence until the land became sustaining to its occupiers. It was thought that the allotments with dwellings might be leased for ever to the members at an annual rental of five pounds. The Chartist land cry was :—"A beautiful cottage and four acres, with thirty pounds to work it for a prepayment of five pounds four shillings."

When the society had the amazing number of 70,000 members, the total sum they subscribed was a little over £36,000. It took £78,000 to locate fewer than two hundred and fifty persons. Seventy thousand members spread all over Great Britain involved unforeseen cost to register. It was found to require £6,000 to put their names upon the books. The cost of land, the expense of conducting the great society on Mr. O'Connor's plan, actually required an enormous sum of money and time to carry out. When the subject was examined into before the parliamentary committee which sat upon it, Mr. Finlason, the actuary of the national debt, calculated that it would require twenty-one millions to place the whole seventy thousand members on the land, and that, supposing Mr. O'Connor's most sanguine scheme of profit could be realised, it would require every minute of three centuries to get all the shareholders on their holdings.

Thus the politicians failed, as no social reformers ever did. However, some advantages accrued from their efforts. The attention of the great mass of working-class politicians, who were mere politicians and nothing more, was turned to the fact that progress had a social side as well; and, as we shall see hereafter, their political leaders, as Mr. Ernest Jones for instance, instead of opposing Co-operation in public debates became eloquent advocates of it.

The last of the English attempts at community necessary to recount here was the one at Queenwood, in

Hampshire. This was the greatest effort of the kind made in this country. Many years were devoted to preparing and maturing it. It was early the subject of many hopes. A wide-spread organisation was employed to compass it; and its failure, disastrous and complete, has discouraged one generation and seems likely to intimidate another.

For more than twenty years before it began the early working class disciples of Co-operation had been forecasting the means of a decisive experiment in England. Rich men had believed in community as a reasonable commercial speculation, but without, owing chiefly to pre-occupation, bringing their personal and business resources to the control of the experiment sufficient for the purpose. Benevolent men with a turn for statesmanship had believed in these home colony schemes as a means of easier and better government of the people, and of the improvement of their moral and physical condition. After the rise of the socialistic agitation the working people believed in community as a means of self-help and self-government. Their idea was, that the ordinary conditions of subsistence, and dwelling, and clothing might be made common to all; that moderate labour on the part of the many, and moderate attainments in the science of society on the part of the few, would enable this to be done. Experience is thrown away upon those who do not see that there will always be a savage element in society so long as the lower classes are left to scramble like barbarians for the supply of their physical wants. So long as labour is presided over by want and death, civilisation will alternate between splendour and tragedy. Working men had heard it urged against their communistic scheme that to have food, shelter, garments, and knowledge in common, would ruin everything, enervate everybody. This was said, although men then were having old things in common and new things in common without these

results. The socialists understood by communism simply that state of society in which the fruits of intellect, art, and industry should be diffused by consent, poverty made impossible, and ordinary crime unnecessary. They saw that every day they were nearing to this. The laws of the universe were not partial. Light, and sky, and air, were common. Life and death were common. In the hour of his birth the young prince has to scream for air like any pauper; and unceremonious Death walks into the parlour of the gentleman without sending in his card. It had been proposed in Parliament that noble galleries of art should be open to the gaze of the shoeblack as well as to the connoisseur. Works of highest art, and books of rarest value, were being made accessible to all. Fire offices insured the cottage or the mansion. The careless were made as secure as the careful. Life insurance was a new form of equality. The strong and the temperate were made to use their prolonged lives to pay up premiums which go to the progeny of the weak and the reckless. The virtuous and the vicious, the base and the noble, had been all declared equal in the sight of the law. The same police watch over the life of the scoundrel and the patriot. Before civilisation began the weak had to take care of themselves, and had to get strength or discipline. Now the feeble and the stout, the coward and the brave, are equally protected. In savage times a man had to take care how he got into a quarrel. In all danger, whether he sought it or whether it was thrust upon him, he had to defend himself. It was the reign of animal competition. The law has done away with this competition. The obvious effect of this was to encourage the coward and the sneak. That personal daring which made the inspiration of Homeric song, which made Sparta a name of energy through all time, which makes the blood tingle over the pages of Sir Walter Scott, was no longer a daily requisite or means of renown. A man need not either

carry arms or use them. He neither requires personal bravery nor discipline. A set of men are paid to defend him. An old warrior of the romantic days would rather die than call the police. If a man gets into a disputation he is not allowed to settle it in honest hot rage, but must refer his quarrel to the decision of a cold-blooded magistrate, who will probably fine him for his fervour and compliment his adversary. How the brave were abashed—how courage blushed with shame—how the pride of manliness was stung, when craven, cringing Peace, in the name of law, first put valour down. But we all know now that the peacemaker was right. There is plenty of exercise for courage without expending it in broils and bloodshed. The equality of the law has produced justice—and the equality of competence may lead to happiness, security, and morality. Society will not be disorganised, though co-operators and communists should succeed in finding the means of competence without competition. In a rough, crude form convictions of this nature were stoutly embedded in the co-operative mind between 1830 and 1840. The "Crisis," the "New Moral World," and the Social Missionaries had accomplished this.

A Hall of Science was erected in Rockingham-street, Sheffield, in 1839: a commodious and handsome building for the time. Mr. Joseph Smith had erected the first at Salford, less pretentious, but a pleasant structure, costing £850, and capable of holding six hundred persons. The Liverpool Hall, a building of mark for those times, cost £5,000. The London Hall, in John-street, Tottenham Court Road, cost £3,000. Lawrence-street Chapel, Birmingham, built, or held by the Southcotians, was bought for £800. More than £22,000 was spent in one year in securing "Social Institutions," and Mr. Pare, with that business wisdom in which he excelled, had a deed drawn on the model of that by which Methodist chapels are vested in the Conference. Had the community

plan at Queenwood succeeded, a powerful social organisation had existed in England. A good looking chapel was held in Glasgow, in Great Hamilton-street. In other places halls were continously occupied. The most famous and costly erection was that of the Hall of Science in Campfield, Manchester, which has since been purchased for the City Free Library—the most honourable use to which any of these halls have come. Dr. John Watts was chiefly or mainly instrumental in promoting this welcome destination of it. At the time when the community project herein in question was in force, upwards of one hundred thousand members of Socialist Societies could be counted upon for Co-operation. The Community Society contributions were fixed at threepence a week from each member. As Mr. Owen calculated that £250,000 was the lowest sum which would enable a successful experiment to be conducted, the prospect of collecting it by threepence a week was a distant one. The hope of increasing the fund more rapidly led to a recurrence to the old and abandoned co-operative store plan, and a store for the sale of tea and groceries was opened at the Institution in John-street, London. Thus the old necessity of self-created capital brought back the old store, long extinct in London. In 1837, when the National Community Friendly Society was formed, heretofore mentioned, the subscription was fixed at one shilling a week, and those only who had subscribed £50 were declared eligible to go upon the land. In 1838, the members amounted to four hundred. In 1839, £1,200 were collected in this way, which in two hundred years or more would furnish the £240,000 Mr. Owen required. Nothing discouraged by this circumstance, a year before, Messrs. Wm. Clegg, John Finch, Joseph Smith, by one of the formidable ukases from the Central Board, were instructed to enquire for an estate, capable of sustaining a colony of at least five hundred individuals. There was some idea of going Fenwards again

in search of a site for the new world. They actually made an offer for an estate in Norfolk, for which they were to pay £11,500.

The Community Committee contracted to buy the Wretton estates, near Wisbeach, of Mr. James Hill, but, as that gentleman had social and training views of his own, he stipulated that he should have a paramount right to carry those out. As this would confuse the public judgment of what was done by two different sets of regenerators acting in the same field, the purchase was not proceeded with. After much enquiry, other negociations and more misgiving, land was rented in Hants.

The estate consisted of two farms, one of 301 acres, named Queenwood, tithe free; the other 232 acres, extra-parochial, named Buckholt. The annual rent was £350, having been fined down from £375 by payment of £750. The society had the power to further fine down the rent to £300, £250, and £200 on making three payments of £1,500 each at three successive periods. Complaints were made that the land selected at Tytherly, on which to erect the community, was unsuited in several respects. It was unfruitful, it was inaccessible for those needing to frequent it; it was too far from markets. In the same way the land taken at Orbiston was described as poor, most difficult to render profitable, besides other disadvantages attaching to the site. In the same way Mr. Owen's community at Indiana was thought objectionable from its great distance from the chief towns of America, and the heat and insalubrity of the climate. Indeed there are considerable difficulties in the way of obtaining suitable sites for these experiments, which are not sufficiently taken into account. Unless there is a large amount of capital to commence with, it is impossible to buy the most suitable site (which should be somewhat near a great town), on account of the dearness of land there. When capital is limited, a great outlay upon land

is disproportionate to the other requirements of the scheme; and if the land is poor, the agricultural and most important part fails. Besides the promoters of social schemes are mostly unpopular, reluctance is felt by landowners at having a body of people established in their midst, whose proceedings might be regarded as affecting the value of property in the neighbourhood. Even in London, where the vast number of people living together necessitates a certain amount of tolerance from the impossibility of their taking notice of the peculiarities of one another—it has been difficult at any time to obtain a site for a hall of science or social institution. In the town of Bury, in Lancashire, chiefly possessed by the house of Derby, who were not favourably disposed to Unitarians, it was once found impossible for a long period of years to obtain a strip of ground on which to erect a Unitarian church; and those enterprising and ill-regarded religionists were under the necessity of waiting until they could convert a gentleman who happened to possess a little land, when at length they obtained a site. These difficulties have always stood in the way of buying or leasing land for the purposes of any social experimental colony. When the projectors of those schemes have succeeded in securing some spot, it has generally been one which had many disadvantages, and which was offered to them because nothing better could be done with the place, and nobody else would have it. The calculation of the owners has sometimes been that the social occupants would, after spending all their capital in improving the land, be obliged to relinquish it, when it would return, considerably and gratuitously improved, into the hands of its original possessor.

The most important accession which was made at this time was that of Mr. William Galpin, a banker, of Salisbury, who wrote to the "Moral World" one of those modest, comprehensive, business-like letters which a

gentleman of the unsuperseded world would send, saying "he regretted that Mr. Owen did not intend being himself a resident in the community formed in his name;" arguing properly that "he who knew most should be at hand to give effect to what he knew, and that he thought a joint stock fund was possible to be formed for the especial purpose of advancing the practical objects of the home colony contemplated." The editor, who did not at all comprehend the quality of his correspondent, answered with more confidence than judgment, that it was not probable that much could be done in way of a joint-stock fund, till the members of the proposed community had proved the success of their undertaking; which meant, if it meant anything, that when they had succeeded without money they would be able to get it when that time arrived. The unseeing and sanguine editor argued "they would get more than they knew how to use."

In 1841 the buildings were commenced at Tytherly, from the designs of Mr. Hansom, a clever architect, who had a sympathy with social views. He had erected a Philosophical Museum in Leicester, not much distinguished for gracefulness of design, for which he may not be held responsible, as it is known that the structure was never completed as he intended it. His best known performance, and which brought him the most credit, was the erection of the Birmingham Town Hall, which for many years was considered the handsomest town hall in the kingdom. He was a man of great mechanical resource. He was the inventor of the Hansom cab, and some parochial machines which were successful. It was probably through Mr. Pare's municipal connection with Birmingham that he became architect of the Queenwood Hall at Tytherly. It was a building of more taste than had previously been erected for a community; a sketch of it appeared in the "New Moral World" for October 9th, 1841, about the time of its completion.

The building, as any one may see to this day, was a pleasant semi-baronial structure, and had a certain comeliness and stateliness. The manner of the erection was more creditable than many churches, it was built with the care that befitted a sacred edifice. The parts out of sight were finished as scrupulously as those that met the eye. Owing to Mr. Galpin's wise and wholesome sense of thoroughness, the laths which formed the partitions were of the best quality, and the nails used in the obscurest part of the building were the best that could be had. There was nothing hidden that was mean, and nothing exposed that was shabby. It is one of the pleasant recollections of the place, that its directors endeavoured to make it honest throughout. Seven or eight hundred pounds were spent in making roads and promenades—handsome, spacious, and enduring. The old Romans would have respected them. Even the kitchen and basement rooms, used by the members for evening meetings, were wainscoted with mahogany, many feet high. Comfort and grace were consulted as far as means permitted in everything.

To the credit of the English communists they were no Barebones party. Had they succeeded in making a community, it had been a pleasant one. They were not afraid of art, and beauty had no terrors for them. Mr. Bate, who was an artist, and who ultimately gave his fortune, when he inherited one, for the advancement of the Queenwood experiment, sent eight original drawings in water colours, framed and glazed, as a beginning towards forming a gallery of drawings. Mr. Minter Morgan had exhausted the architectural imagination of his time in designing structures of grace. Mr. Devonshire Saull meditated bestowing his mysterious geological museum upon Tytherly. Geology did not make much progress in his time, as the clergy imagined there was something wrong with Nature, which it was thought had not behaved itself consistently with the Hebrew Scriptures.

Indeed, many suspected Sir Charles Lyell of thinking himself wiser than Moses. These drawbacks, notwithstanding geological science, progressed faster than Mr. Saull, and his museum was not worth many hundreds of pounds, although valued by him at some thousands; but such as it was the community would have had it had Queenwood established itself. To Mr. Saull belonged the merit of enthusiasm for the suspected science, and according to his knowledge he promoted it.

It being stated that £3,500 was required on loan for five years, bearing interest at five per cent, intimations were at once received that the following sums would be sent from the following places:—Oldham, £38; Birmingham, £80; Sheffield, £60; Worcester, £61; Coventry, £121; Leicester, £60; Nottingham, £60; Northampton, £17; a London Friend, £100; Glasgow, £20; Brighton, £5; Chatham, £50; Suffolk, £100; Edinburgh, £230; Hyde, £184; Norwich, £50; Ashton, £56; Macclesfield, £24; Liverpool, £61; Boston, £20; Hull, £7; Louth, £20. This celerity of subscription is good evidence of the wide-spread enthusiasm with which the Queenwood project was regarded.

In 1842 Mr. Owen resigned the governorship of Queenwood, and Mr. Finch became president of the society, when a new executive was formed for carrying out the affairs of Queenwood. At the Congress of 1843 Mr. Owen was re-appointed president. Subsequently Mr. William Pare became governor; and his suavity, accessibility, and zeal, rendered him one of the most popular that held the office.

Among the new and honourable expedients for diverting the mind of the public from the polemical character of the communistic association, was that of creating a Home Colonisation Society, which proposed to take the affairs of Queenwood into its hands. It was thought that men of money might be induced to join the society divested of controversial names which have proved

hindrances to the general investment of capital. The projectors of the new Home Colonisation Society contributed largely to its funds, and for some time the "New Moral World" contained frequent announcements of the receipt of a thousand pounds at a time from this society. But its name had no enthusiasm in it, and its example produced very little outside effect. Had Queenwood been destined to continue, the public would no doubt have appreciated the good sense of this prosaic but prudent association. The constitution of this society was, as were the best business projects undertaken by the adherents of Mr. Owen, devised by Mr. W. H. Ashurst, an eminent solicitor in the city of London, whose name often occurs honourably in the annals of co-operative procedure. A man of remarkable sagacity and of generous sympathy with all who sought the social improvement of the people —even where he differed from them—his advice was continually sought by such persons, and always with advantage to them; which many gratefully remembered all their lives. In other matters more distinguished, his clients were spread over the nation. Struck with compassion for poor people in every part of the empire who, by reason of the high rate of postage formerly subsisting, were prevented from receiving or giving information affecting their interests or affections when separated from members of their families, Mr. Ashurst rendered invaluable and prolonged assistance to Sir Rowland Hill in the great advocacy which gave the people the Penny Postage. No writer made a more striking impression than he by a union of sympathy and facts in his statements which always influenced public affairs when presented together. Many humble insurgent reformers sought his protecting counsel; he warned them against the pitfalls of the law, and when in the course of what they thought their duty they fell into them, he stretched forth a strong and generous hand to pull them out; and his son who succeeded him inherited the same disinterested thoughtfulness and power.

Neutrality of policy distinct from the neutrality of conviction.

In 1843, came the resignation of Mr. W. Galpin, of his office of general secretary. A certain grandeur of aim, which he had in common with Mr. Owen, had led him to sanction a scale of administration which promised soon to exhaust the available funds of the party to which he had himself contributed with honourable and notable liberality. His influence, which was wholly and wisely given to rendering the society neutral in matters of theology, destroyed the zeal of many, whose activity was necessary to sustain the popularity of the movement among the branches, and his connection with the society was of too short a period for the education of new supporters, who should be content to advance economical projects by considerations purely economical. The chief capitalists, who had supplied the funds of the society, were persons individually believers in co-operative colonies; but of outside capitalists, who would invest money in the scheme as a matter of business, none came forward. The public difficulty was that enforced neutrality, dictated by policy merely, is different from the intelligent neutrality of education and discernment. A man of genius, at the head of affairs, who could have conserved the intrepidity of the society, and who could have found it the means of exercising itself at its own cost, as Josiah Warren would say, and at the same time afford a sphere for the operation of practical members without being involved in responsibility for individual opinions from which they dissented, might have saved the Queenwood community. The result unfortunately was, that many persons who deserved honour for the sacrifices they made, were ill regarded or inadequately regarded at the time when they were risking their fortunes in the service of the party. Mr. Galpin took leave of the society, in a letter of perfect good taste and dignity. It was "enough for him," he said, "that there existed a feeling that the cause might be better served by his ceasing to be one of its officers."

It matters not now to trace minutely the details of this final failure. Those actors in the affair who still survive would take interest in dates, events, and circumstances which no longer concern the public. To-day it is of small consequence to the outside world to be told on what day of the month, or what month of the year, funds began to decline, faith to waver, new difficulties were discovered, or new disasters set in. Mr. Owen had had the Tytherly Hall made to bear conspicuously outside of it the mystic letters C.M., which meant Commencement of the Millennium. The obstinate millennium, however, declined to begin its career there.

Towards the end of 1845 ominous editorial articles appeared upon the question, "can the Harmony experiment be saved?" Obviously the end was very near. If mischief to any popular enterprise of the people was about to occur, a Conservative journal was prompt to give the sinister news, as though the failure of any attempted improvement confirmed the wisdom of the stationary party.

The *Standard* announced that "Mr. Owen had taken his leave of Rose Hall, Hampshire, for America. The speculation, after spending upon it £37,000, has proved a decided failure. Mr. Owen left it a few days ago."

"Rose Hall" was the name of a house on Rose Hill, a pretty little residence on part of the estate generally assigned as the home of boarders, or as the occasional residence of the governor. Many ladies and gentlemen went down to Queenwood, and became residents in apartments not required by members. Others contributed very pleasantly both to the funds and the society of the establishment.

When affairs at Harmony (for Mr. Owen had given Queenwood this unfortunate name, which served to exaggerate every minor difference into discord) began to present financial complications, the boarders gradually fell off. Members' meetings ceased to be interesting, and

residents who went to Queenwood for peace and pleasant intercourse, no longer found repose or entertainment. Credit, which formerly destroyed so many co-operative stores, was the agreeable, but insidious canker worm which eat up Harmony; like jealousy, the dangerous reptile grew by what he fed upon, works were undertaken, provisions were ordered, accounts with tradesmen grew, preference shares were invented, loan holders multiplied, and the more enthusiasm was required to contribute funds, the more it was appalled as the knowledge of these ever growing encumbrances spread. Had the community began on the principle on which modern co-operative stores are conducted—of neither giving or taking credit—all its operations would have been humbler, but they would have been lasting. Then the democratic constitution of the society added to the mischief. The government of the society required to be mainly absolute in hands of those who mainly supplied the capital, that confidence might continue where the strength of the experiment lay. When the capital is redeemed, and the members are financially equal, a democratic administration becomes a necessity, and an advantage. It came to pass in the process of Queenwood affairs, that the branches of the society in which poorer members predominated were able to send delegates, who represented their anxieties, and were able to elect a new governor, who was unable from his own means to exert influence among the capitalists who were wanted, and the creditors who were dreaded. Mr. John Buxton, the new governor, was a man of honesty and courage, and, in happier and more solvent days would have been successful.

The three trustees of this society (Messrs. Finch, Green, and Clegg), being mainly or altogether liable, naturally became solicitous to protect themselves. Had they proposed to take the affairs of Queenwood into their own hands, undertaken to conduct it first for their own

security, subjecting their administration to annual audit on the part of the members, and paying any profits they could realise in proportion to all claimants, the proposal would have been eventually, after expressions of discontent, suspicion, and scrutiny, accepted. In this case Queenwood would have ceased to be a public community, but it would have ceased without discredit; instead of this they seized the property by violence. Discouraged members of the community society ceasing to subscribe had ceased to have the power of electing delegates, and the trustees had no difficulty in obtaining a small congress to justify action on their part. A rival congress, supporting chiefly the interests whom the new governor was appointed to represent, proposed the estate should be sold, they being prepared to purchase it at the utmost price that could be obtained for it in the market. In the meantime as the trustees continued liable for the loss of the rent, they might reasonably be unwilling for a delay which might not, in their opinion, end in business, and must, in the meantime, increase their liability. Ultimately they hired labourers and such stray ruffians as were to be had cheap, and put Mr. Buxton and his family forcibly into the lanes, where they all remained, for days and nights, in ignominy and misery in honourable and courageous protest on behalf of the humble community shareholders, who had subscribed their money in as much good faith as the largest lender, and were at least entitled to have some honourable treaty made with their chief representative; but in the event of realising profit their humble claims should have proportionate recognition: thus ended the affair of the Queenwood community in 1846. Mr. Buxton and his family were exposed exactly to the same fate as lately befel Mrs. Gurney and the Hampshire Shakers. The temper of the time was then greatly different, no one showed any sympathy or kindness, or offered any protection to the expelled chief of the communist party, who represented not fanaticism

and waiting on Providence, which mean a new expense to the ratepayer, but a creditable and industrial effort which a taxpayer had a great interest in protecting and promoting.

The trustees were assisted in their summary proceedings by a leading missionary. There is no doubt they all acted to the best of their judgment on behalf of the interest they recognised as most important. Their fault was that they did not see the only justification for their summary and violent proceedings was that they made it clear to all men that they had rescued the property from further loss and danger, with a view to do what justice was possible to every class of subscribers who had made contributions to it; whereas when they had converted it into private property, or at least placed it under private control, the trustees used it for private purposes. They bought up the claims of the tradesmen; they met the demands of the Goldsmids from whom the estate was leased; they relinquished portions of the estate, and let the Queenwood Hall and grounds for a school to Mr. Edmonson, a celebrated educator, of Lancashire. It was afterwards known as Queenwood College; it combined industrial with commercial and scientific training. As a college it more resembled the famous school of Fellenberg, of Hofwyld; or that of Mr. Heldenmayor, of Worksop, in Nottinghamshire, unrivalled among English schools for the industrial, social, and classical education it imparted—of which Chas. Reece Pemberton gave a memorable account in the "Monthly Repository" when edited by W. J. Fox. The socialists were proud that Queenwood had become a college so much in accordance with their own conception of education. The best known teacher connected with it was Dr. Yeats, of Peckham; himself a writer of great distinction and authority on education.

Many years elapsed and it was found that the trustees, Messrs. Finch, Green, and Clegg, who had seized the

estate, rendered no account of what proceeds they derived from it, not even to the principal loanholders, and it came to pass that Mr. Pare and others entered an action in chancery to compel them to render an account to the society. The trustees held that no society existed. But so long as a single branch of the community society continued to pay subscriptions the society had a legal continuation. The rival congress mentioned, of which Mr. Buxton, the governor, was the legitimate officer, continued the society. The present writer was appointed and continues the general secretary, and for one has always continued a subscribing member; and he, on behalf of the humble community subscribers, became a party to the action in chancery. The case was tried before Lord Romilly. Corrupted, it would seem by immunity, the trustees resisted the honest demand to produce their accounts, and, incredible to relate, they set up the plea to the old enemies of social reform that the society was constituted for the propagation of immoral principles, and was therefore illegal, and could not enforce accountability of its trustees. This plea from men who had been vehement and passionate defenders of this society, when other persons had brought this unfounded and calumnious charge against it, was a new scandal when this accusation was preferred by them. One of the trustees was certainly not of this opinion, for in 1841 Mr. C. F. Green wrote a letter from Spithead, announcing to his dear brothers and sisters of the "New Moral World" that he had given up competition, and exclaimed—

> Farewell, dear brothers, I have marked you well,
> Nor yet for ever do I leave you now;
> And busy thoughts of thee my bosom swell,
> And thronging recollections crowd my brow.

Mr. Green had no intention then of filing a statement in the Court of Chancery that he and his brothers and sisters were members of an immoral association. When

these affidavits, too long to quote here, were read by their counsel to Lord Romilly, he said: "Ah! it is all very well, my learned brother, but where is the money?" and, when the learned counsel again implored the court to listen to hackneyed extracts from Mr. Owen's ill-reported lectures on marriage, Lord Romilly said: "The court is quite aware of that, my learned brother, what we want is a statement of receipts and expenditure since the trustees took possession of this property." The reluctant accounts had to be produced, and the balance withheld had to be paid into court. Lord Romilly was a just judge, regardless of the speculative opinions of those who sought justice at his hands. He had known Mr. Owen from his youth, and was quite aware that his opinions were not open to the imputations sought to be put upon them by the apostate trustees. The Queenwood Hall was sold by order of the court, and the proceeds equitably distributed among the loan holders and preference share holders. There was none to be divided among original contributors to the community funds. Hundreds of men and women, who invested all their savings in this generous and hopeless enterprise, received nothing. And thus Queenwood passed away for ever as a communistic scheme.

Concerning the last of the lost communities, some other incidents and circumstances deserve to be stated. When the trustees seized upon the effects of the society, they made an attempt themselves to sell it, and they actually advertised Harmony Hall for sale in the *Times*, suggesting to purchasers that it might be made available for a lunatic asylum. In the opinion of the public, it had been used for this purpose already, and when such a use was officially pointed out for it in the future, it was quite clear that the directors were qualified to remain in it.

The "Herald of Progress" aforesaid, was the continuation of that official record of the proceedings of the

communist affairs which had been so long made in the "Moral World." The new journal was edited by Mr. John Cramp. The society of many names—Co-operative, All Classes of All Nations, National Religionists, but always communist at heart—had been, as we have seen, declared extinct by lapse of members, at a congress at Rose Hill. This was not strictly true, as in London and Sheffield members continued to pay, and therefore legally represented the interests of the society's subscribers in every town, who held what was called community scrip, and the "Herald" in question was maintained from a sense of duty, to represent the interest of these superseded but deserving members. To this end a new Central Board was appointed, a president, and general secretary. In the "Herald of Progress," which was published from October, 1845, to May, 1846, the official addresses of the society appeared. In May, 1846, the "Reasoner" was commenced, which in its early volumes continued the official representation of the Queenwood society, and the history of its final proceedings were given in that journal alone. Thirty volumes of the "Reasoner" were issued between 1846 and 1872, edited by the present writer, in which the advocacy and vindication of Co-operation in the applications contemplated by its founders, through its subsequent vicissitudes and ultimate ascendancy, were almost uninterruptedly continued. The thirtieth volume was under the commercial charge of the leaders of Co-operation in Lancashire and Yorkshire, who had arisen since the Queenwood days, and who inherited the traditions of those honourable and unsuccessful struggles.

No important blunder, or failure of plans, or discontent of members caused the cessation of Queenwood. The mischance was insufficient capital to last while the new order of life consolidated itself and the conditions of industrial profit were found. Astute farmers sometimes find that they must vary the nature of their

produce—change grain-growing into grass land—to realise the best profit. It could be no argument against a communistic estate that its managers did not all at once make a profit by it. The chief charge brought against the management was that too much money was spent upon the Hall, which was but another form of saying that the capital was too small—since the Hall was not out of proportion to the estate rented, the educational convenience required, and the effect to be produced upon the alien and outside public. Miscellaneous as were the members collected together, they were all believers in the principle on which they associated; and there were none who did not deplore the day of parting when it came. None entertained a doubt of the advantages they enjoyed. Working members said they would rather live on an Irish diet of potatoes than go again into the old world, of which they had had experience, if that would enable the society to hold on. Mr. Ironside, who had a few thousand pounds—all his available means—said he would throw it into a common fund, if others who had similar means would do the same, so that they might go on. Residents—and there were many who were boarders in the community—all regretted the end of their tenancy. To this day few who survive, who were there in any capacity, but regret the loss of the happy days which, till the end approached, were spent at Queenwood. Ladies, who are always difficulties in a new state of miscellaneous association, came to prefer Queenwood life. Some who were at first unhappy in the changed condition in which they found themselves there, and made their husbands unhappy who brought them there, eventually liked their new life exceedingly. Others who were tartars in their social relations in the old world—just women at heart, but impatient of the crude wayward ways of domestics—there became the most agreeable and honoured of residents. It was not because they had to control their tempers, but because the occasions of

natural irritation no longer existed under the happier circumstances of equality of duties and enjoyment.

The inmates of Queenwood ate as they listed. No restriction was put upon their preferences. There was a vegetarian table, at which some twenty dined, and, to the credit of their simple diet be it said, theirs was the merriest table in the hall. At meal times it resounded with laughter, and often others came and surrounded it to listen to the pleasantries which abounded there. When the difficulties which threatened the extinction of Harmony became apparent, opinions as to the errors committed and caused to be pursued were made public with more sincerity than good sense. Among those who did this was the present writer, who published an account of a personal visit he made to Harmony Hall,* in which the state of affairs there were judged from the point at which they ought to have arrived in the opinion of the writer and of the party he represented. So far as its influence went the narrative did harm; so far as the criticism affected the reputation of those who previously controlled the affairs of the place, it irritated them, and they behaved unpleasantly towards their friendly critic. They still had the power to serve the objects all had at heart, and it was therefore unwise to diminish their interest in doing the best they could. The appointment of Mr. Buxton to a position of control over four or five previous governors, who were still officers and influential persons in the management, and agents of great-loan holders, was a very delicate business, and it was done without any delicacy. They were gentlemen by position, and did not regard Mr. Buxton as belonging to that class. Of course, this ought to have made no difference to advocates of social equality, but acting up to principle requires a long training, or great capacity for regulating conduct by the

* Visit to Harmony Hall, reprinted from the "Movement," 1844.

judgment of what is right. Englishmen, who are all exclusive and conservative in a very great degree, do not easily recognise the equality of manhood apart from social caste. Mr. Buxton, belonging to the intelligent artisan class, required infinite tact and refinement to make things pleasant to his proud and superseded rivals. Mr. Buxton was an honest and intelligent man, but not gifted in this way. Had not the Manchester party sent Mr. Buxton to the front, probably Harmony would not have come to an end. If the control of affairs had been left in the original hands, they would have done for the society what the trustees afterwards did for themselves—make it pay by reduction of its objects—and, probably, have established a training college for the families and missionaries of the co-operative party. No sooner was Mr. Buxton made governor, than the previous governor demanded repayment of loans he had advanced, and financial embarrassments were at once created by those who were expected to support him. Harmony Hall had fallen in the ways of paternal government, and it was folly to send a democratic governor like Mr. Buxton, without, at the same time, supplying him with ample funds to hold his position against creditors and loanholders.

To speak through a passage in the first person my publication of my visit to Harmony Hall was an error. At that point of time it was the duty of all members to continue to support the executive who had hitherto governed, since the party who would change the administration had not the means to take affairs into their own hands. It was far better to suffer disappointment at the limitation of community objects than to witness the enterprise brought to a premature end. Any knowledge I had of the public use of truths came to me from speeches from political platforms and preachers whom I mostly delighted to hear. I never once heard allusion made to the art of advancing truth; not one among

whom I came seemed to know that it was an art. Truth was with them a conviction, not a perception; and I was led to believe it might be promoted by impulse, and never knew it was a matter of calculation. It was long before I discovered for myself that truth was not to be spoken on all occasions because it was truth. No man may speak a lie or act a lie; but of all that he knows to be true he is only warranted in stating that which is relevant and useful. It may be quite true and a well ascertained fact that the Home Secretary has changed his boot maker, but it would be irrelevant to state it on the trial of the Guicowar of Baroda. It is well known to be true that Mr. Disraeli is "on the side of the angels," but nothing comes of it, and we are obliged to have Moody and Sankey to put things right; therefore, however true, there is no use impressing upon men's attention Mr. Disraeli's seraphic alliance. In the days which I wrote the visit to Harmony Hall, nothing was known among the people of the conditions of advancing truth, and that only so much as was relevant and useful, and was put with the utmost consideration and fairness, could be beneficial.

Many of these enthusiastic and generous projects fell through, owing to the change of feeling which arose before land of the required kind could be found. Offers would be made of estates, sure to involve loss and considerable responsibility for a time, and which it required consideration to undertake. Inequalities of education, and commercial experience were greater then than now, and conflict soon arose in council between the prudent and the infatuated. The "earnest," as they were called, were (as they commonly are) anxious to go forward with other people's money. The prudent were considered "timid," because the prudent were generally those who would have to pay if the project failed. The infatuated had only principle to put into the concern, and of that they were prodigal, since if they lost their stock of that,

mayhap they could acquire a sounder one by the experience gained; but those who lost their fortune might not be able so easily to repair that mischief. The enthusiastic are commonly honest, and would themselves incur all the risks they advise, were they in a position to do it. But this does not give them any right to vote a liability to others which they do not, and cannot equally share. Yet this is constantly done in popular societies. The cheap-tongued orators of mere "principle," talk tall, and carry off all the applause, because their irresponsible followers are the majority; while the prudent, who "want to see their way," are put down as "discouraging persons." There is yet a subtler creature than the infatuated, to be encountered with in societies of progress—the spontaneous enthusiast: sharp, quick, fertile, unscrupulous, or unthinking, who sets schemes going because they ought to go, who regards those who have money as persons who should be made to pay, and calculate that if a good project is started, many who would not join in commencing it, will subscribe rather than it should go down; and that those who have made advances will make more, in the hope of not losing what has been already lost. These are not the architects, they are the conspirators; they are not the administrators, they are the speculators of progress; for business is dealing with accumulated means—speculation is dealing with imaginary or prospective capital. The brilliant and plausible operators in this line commonly end in diffusing an ineradicable distrust in the minds of those who have been trepanned into their enterprises. Principle is good, and there is an end of progress when its voice is not heard, or being heard is not regarded; fertility is good, progress is slow and stupid without it; enthusiasm is good, it is the first sign of sincerity, and the best of causes will perish which lacks it. It is the province of principle to determine objects to be attained; it is the business of fertility to devise the profitable use

of means provided; it is the occupation of enthusiasm to increase those means; but it is the duty of prudence and honesty to employ them, so that they may go as far as possible in the attainment of the common objects of the association, and to see that the means available are never embarked without the clear consent of those who will be the losers if there be loss. In matters of social progress, as in commerce, risks have to be run, and loss and failure must be calculated upon. Some may risk fortune, some health, some even life, as many do in the public service; and it will be an evil day for society when people are wanting to do it. Whoever enter upon these generous enterprises with their eyes open we honour as philanthropists, or patriots, or martyrs; but they who trepan others into these sacrifices without their knowledge and consent, or without prudent, patient, and adequate preparations for success so far as honest knowledge can foresee them, are responsible for their ruin or murder; and though a philanthropic motive may mitigate indignation, it does not excuse the crime of destroying others, in the name of benevolence.

Thus it came about in many instances that the delay in procuring suitable estates for communities brought promoters of communities in contact with each other, and confidence did not always grow thereby. And thus many a bright scheme faded from the pages of history.

No social community in Great Britain had a long enough time allowed to give it a reasonable chance of succeeding. Had any gentleman existed who would have supplied as much money to be experimented with and to be sunk as Sir Josiah Mason, of Birmingham, supplied during fruitless, disappointing, and perilous years to the Messrs. Elkington for perfecting the discovery of electroplating, some of these social colonies would have pulled through. Establishing a new world is naturally a more elaborate and protracted work than establishing a new manufacture. Electroplating turbu-

lent and competitive man with pacific and co-operative habits is a more serious affair than electroplating metals.

The social movement often had the good fortune to be countenanced and aided by persons of high position and large means. When Mr. Owen held his great meeting in Dublin in 1821, the Archbishops and other prelates and many noblemen appeared on the platform to support him. At one meeting the Lord Cloncurry wrote to say that he was, to his great regret, prevented being present. But this was no formal evasion, though expressed in the well-known terms of avoidance; he wrote a letter intended to serve the object, and afterwards sent £500 to further it. Frequently when steps were about to be taken likely to compromise the scheme before the public the prudent had the wisdom, which they do not always display, to come to the front and dictate the steps which would lead to a surer success than those about to be taken at the instigation of the eager and uncalculating.

Despite all the eccentricities by which these new opinions were accompanied, and by which all new opinions are accompanied, it is impossible not to honour these ardent agents of improvement, who both made sacrifices and incurred discomfort and disadvantages for no selfish end of their own, for their enthusiasm arose from the belief that everybody would be advantaged by the change they sought. Though Coleridge had warned them that it is vain to be sane in a world of madmen, yet they resolved to run this risk, and do the best they could to introduce more sensible arrangements of life.

Social progress, though an old historic dream, and an anxious pursuit of so many persons, can hardly be said as yet to have a policy. New social plans, which in their experimental days must be costly and dependent for success on monetary aid, are so far philanthropic. How should persons be dealt with who are sought to promote them? It cannot be presumed that the rich

ought to aid unless they are satisfied of the need and soundness of the plan put before them. To assume that Brown ought to subscribe because Jones thinks he should is a sort of philanthropic confiscation of Brown's property. All that can be reasonably done is to ask Brown's attention to the scheme, which should be clearly and honestly put before him, with a full statement of the chances against its success as well as those in favour of it, and if he declines to take part in the affair it may be matter of regret, but not of reproach. With those who are friendly to such projects, and ready to help them, scrupulous care should be taken never to induce or allow them in generous enthusiasm to advance more than they are ready and able to lose in case of failure. If they do more, and do not show regret when the day of loss or ruin comes, their relatives will; and an unknown party of fierce and defamatory adversaries of social progress will be developed in society, active perhaps for two or three generations. No less disadvantage occurs if humbler and poor adherents are encouraged or suffered to do their utmost "for the cause." The Jewish tribute of a tithe of their means is as much, experience has shown, as can be safely taken from the household resources. If more be taken the family suffer, and what is worse, the family complain, and diffuse among all their neighbours and friends a dislike and distrust of the philanthropy which puts upon them privations without their consent.* And when the day of reaction comes to the over-taxed contributor, he himself forms the most dangerous disparager of the very undertaking he himself has aided beyond his means. He cries to all

* My attention was engaged very early in popular movements by the fact that the most discouraging persons applied to for Co-operation were those who had belonged to and had suffered disappointment in earlier movements. And they had been heroes of forlorn hopes. In most cases there was reason to believe that had their sacrifices been limited to a tenth of their resources of time and money, they had never lost interest in struggles which did them honour.

who approach him "take warning by me, these benevolent projects ruined me." The extreme advocate commonly becomes the extreme adversary—defamatory, virulent, and vindictive; and his discouraging word goes farther than that of the stranger, who dislikes the thing, being ignorant of it—the reactionary enemy tells you he has known it, and counsels you against it. Thus, as far as social progress is concerned, it is policy to have a policy, that it may be promoted by calculable methods.

With the commonplace and ignominious fall of Queenwood, communism became extinct in England; numerous persons remained faithful to the idea, and were as satisfied as ever that the conception was sound, and would one day be carried out successfully by wiser, more forecasting, and fortunate men, but the idea was dead in the public mind. No one had the confidence ever after to appeal for popular support; no society has since been formed to carry out the conception. When high and confident promises are made in the name of a new and great project, the public expect some signal fulfilment, and when nothing comes of the great pretension, their interest in it and their faith in it are no more to be awakened in any generation which remembers the disappointment. This should be a warning to those who believe they have some important and untried truth on hand, never to risk the experiment which is to decide its validity until they have at command the best conditions known to be necessary for realising it. Better to disappoint the eager by delay than the faith of the enthusiastic should fail; better that accusations of timidity and cowardice for insincerity should be borne, rather than premature action should need a failure. A great project unrealised will live from age to age, and the longer adherence delay may damage, but it never kills; whereas inadequate action is always regarded by the majority, who never inquire, as the failure of principle rather than the failure of men

Luckless was the day on which the last disciples of the new views turned their footsteps from Queenwood, to find their way again, abashed and desponding, into the grim and unsociable, unsympathetic, old world. What hopes they had raised which had never been realised; what predictions they made, now regarded as being false for ever; what privations they had endured; what weary miles they had travelled on propagandist service; what adversaries they had confronted; what calumnies they had borne; all in vain! They had opened their halls to every howling theologist; they had suffered the eccentric and the incapable likely to commit them to appear on their platforms. These irrelevant reformers had been welcomed coadjutors. When dissection was regarded with as much terror as murder they admitted the advocates to their halls; and when the socialist leaders were dead, they were, by their own pre-arrangement, cut up by the surgeon for the gratuitous extension of science. When teetotalers were deemed more offensive than Southcotians they were allowed to scream in the social institutions.

All this care, patience, toleration, labour, generous sacrifice, and endurance had proved fruitless. They had created but a new and startling confirmation of the prediction of the enemy—schemes of associated life must always end in failure. None of them, probably not the youngest of the number, would live to witness the renewal in England of their honourable efforts. They had, however, the proud consolation so generously expressed for them by the great Midland poetess: *—

> "The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
> Is to have been a hero. Say we fail:
> We feed the high traditions of the world,
> And leave our spirit in our country's breast."

* George Eliot.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ADVERSARIES.

Look closer to't; you make the evil first;
A base, then pile a heap of censures on it.
'Tis your own sin supplies the scaffolding
And mason work: you skilful, rear the grim
Unsightly fabric, and there point, and say
"How ugly is it." You meanwhile forget
'Tis your own handy work. I could say more;
But there's a check within: 'tis such an one,
As you I trow, have banished from its birthplace.
—*Old Play.*

Some account of the obstacles which the social pioneers had to encounter, and of the adversaries who promoted their discomfiture, will further elucidate the early history of co-operative enterprise.

The system of challenging everybody to discuss everything produced some excitement. The clergy, who then never discussed long with anybody who answered them, naturally felt that these debates ought to be put down; and not the clergy only: many other partisan persons did not like controversy, and though they would take no part themselves in actually suppressing, they were not unwilling to see it done. The teetotallers of Liverpool, members of a verbally offensive society themselves, who invented a new social crime, called Moderation, and rather apologised for the sot, actually suspended Mr. Finch, who had done more than all of them put together to advance temperance, and interdicted him from speaking on platforms in their name, because of his social notions. In Birmingham, an honest Quaker shoemaker,

named Empson, not being able to live by working on his own account, had to obtain a situation, but requiring testimony to his character as a sober man, he applied to Mr. John Cadbury, a well-known, influential, and kind-hearted, and exemplary Quaker of the town, to give him a testimonial. Mr. Cadbury being secretary to the temperance society, who had known him many years as a good teetotaller, was naturally sought to certify to the fact. Mr. Cadbury (whose handsome calves were the admiration of Birmingham, and who wore breeches the better to show them) answered as only a conventional Quaker can—"William Empson, I want to hold no communion with thee, and I have ordered others to hold no communion with thee. Thou recollects the conversation I had with thee about John Finch, of Liverpool, when I told thee he was a blasphemer." "Yes," said Mr. Empson, "I said if Mr. Finch comes to Birmingham, I will do all I can to get him a temperance meeting; but Mr. Cadbury, you have long known me as a prominent member of the temperance society, will you give me a character for sobriety?" Mr. Cadbury answered, "No, William Empson." "But, are you not a Christian, sir?" inquired the applicant. Mr. Cadbury answered, "Yes, William Empson, I am, and I always respected thee, but I do not want to hold any communion with thee."

The chief reason why persecution is so hateful, is that it so frequently succeeds in putting down the truth. Well-directed persecution is a great power, like assassination. The Bishop of Exeter, whose claims for dignity in the church were not godliness, but vigorousness and virulence, well understood that. Tory pamphleteering had done more for him than divinity, and he naturally came forward in the House of Lords to revile the grey-headed philanthropist, Mr. Owen, who had given his fortune to mitigate the lot of the poor. Lord Normanby had presented Mr. Owen at Court.

Her Majesty, with that queenly impartiality with which she recognises every man of distinction who has served the nation, was glad to meet the ancient friend of her father. In their intimacy loans had passed between them, which the Queen repaid when she knew it. Good taste, if good feeling did not, should have kept the bishop silent concerning a presentation so honourably accorded, and which in no way concerned him. The bishop's speech was thus reported in the *Morning Chronicle*, of January 27th, 1840:—

> He wished of his task he could be rid:
> For he felt a horror, indeed he did,
> Yet had seen and heard, with profound disgust,
> Their deeds of shame, and their words of lust.
> He was able to tell them all, he said,
> The nauseous tale, from A to Z.
> And he thought the Marquis of Normanby
> Might relish the tale, as well as he.
> The socialists were the vilest race
> That ever on earth or hell had place.
> He would not prejudge them—no, not he;
> For his soul overflowed with charity.
> Incarnate fiends, he would not condemn;
> No, God forbid he should slander them;
> Foul swine, their lordships must confess,
> He judged them with Christian gentleness.
> He hated all show of persecution,
> But why weren't they sent to execution?
> To hasty censures he objected,—
> But was not Lord Normanby suspected?
> He never believed a rash report,
> But who took Robert Owen to Court?
> He would not call Owen a bloody man,
> But he wrote in words of blood his plan.
> He would not offend, but would fain be knowing,
> If Normanby was not as loose as Owen?
> And would ask, nought meaning by the hint,
> Did he believe in God? for Owen didn't.

This was the spirit in which the church commended itself to the people in those pleasant days. The socialists were sometimes irritating, because they were suffering. They ofttimes put forth their views unwisely, because many of them were ignorant. But they were not

covetous, and they were not sensualists; they were honest men, seeking to better their condition by honest work.

The bishop made no idle speech. He meant mischief, and he did it. This was the time when Mr. William Pare, the registrar of Birmingham, lost his situation, and the town lost a publicist of a quality of knowledge which has never been replaced. This was not the worst. All over the country working men of skill and character were dismissed from their employment for attending lectures upon the new principles of association. Some of the men became masters, and blessed the day when they were dismissed; and, as they became capable and relentless rivals of their former employers, the said employers did not bless the Bishop of Exeter for his services. Many workmen were ruined, and others had to emigrate; and I have heard them say that if they can get at the Bishop of Exeter in the other world, either above or below, they will make things very uncomfortable to him—and as the sharp-tongued bishop, clever in all things, prolonged his life to a great age, some of them thought he desired to delay the day of meeting them as long as possible.

W. J. Fox, who wrote the epitaph on the grave of Charles Reece Pemberton, in Birmingham, says that if the poet's dowry be the hate of hate, and the scorn of scorn, it includes also the love of love. Happily this is shown often to those who serve mankind. Often when bishops are angry the people are grateful. Mr. Pare experienced this. On his leaving Birmingham, a dinner was given to him, November 1842. Mr. Pare was then councillor of the ward of St. Thomas. Mr. G. F. Muntz, M.P., was present, and said, "if he was asked who he should appoint to take charge of business requiring great care, great investigation, and great honesty, he should say Mr. Pare was the man to do it. It was not the second, nor the third, nor the tenth time he had

made that statement. If every man had worked in the cause of reform as Mr. Pare had done, no man could calculate what would have been the effect."

It did not mean very much that a bishop was angry with co-operators; men of mark who showed any civility to them were scolded in a grand way. One of the quarterlies was disagreeable to the poet laureate. It said—"Mr. Southey brings to the task two faculties which were never, we believe, vouchsafed in measure so copious to any human being—the faculty of believing without a reason, and the faculty of hating without a provocation. He seems to have an instinctive antipathy for calm, moderate men—for men who shun extremes and render reasons. He has treated Mr. Owen, of Lanark, for example, with infinitely more respect than he has shown to Mr. Hallam and Dr. Lingard; and this for no reason that we can discover, except that Mr. Owen is more unreasonably and hopelessly in the wrong than any speculator of our time."* Happily poet laureates have succeeded Southey equally incapable of being intimidated out of sympathy for the fortunes of honest, self-helping industry.

A number of wandering and flockless preachers hawked challenges from town to town. One was a Mr. John Bowes, a pachydermatous believer, who was not without the gift of imputation, and with whom many discussions were held. He was a sort of itinerant preacher among the Methodists: but who discoursed chiefly for his own hand—using street preaching as a means of collecting a congregation for himself. The impression he gave when he assailed the socialists was that he did it chiefly as a means of attracting attention to himself. He showed a rough sort of adroitness in dealing with the necessarian arguments, then common on social plat-

* The student of social progress in this country scarcely needs to be reminded that it was Southey who held out a helping hand to the promoters of co-operation.—*Leigh Hunt.*

forms. As was the way with opponents of his class, he was little scrupulous in what he imputed, and not at all sensitive when he had laid himself open to just reproach. In a discussion of some nights which I held with him in Bradford, he gave me the idea that he was a species of moral rhinoceros. Apart from the religious vices of imputation which passed in those days for holy zeal, he was known as a friend of temperance and political freedom, and died last year in Dundee well stricken in years, after forty years of Wesleyan-like activity as a peregrinating preacher.

The best qualified adversary who occupied co-operative attention for a long period was the Rev. Joseph Barker, a restless Wesleyan local preacher, who had not been used well by his own party, and he avenged himself by never treating any other party well. He published pamphlets against social principles, always readable for their offensive invective, but not instructive, as the objections he brought were entirely theological. The social advocates, who always had an appetite for an adversary, found Mr. Barker much occupation, and were not very tender in the terms of speech they applied to him. Mr. Barker excelled most men in his character as a Christian, who destroyed respect for Christianity in numerous persons, who otherwise would have dissented from it in part, without disliking it as a whole. The overwhelming majority of social reformers were believers in the precepts of Christ, and desirous of being associated with what would now be admitted as practical Christianity. Mr. Barker was a man of strong feelings, with wonderful command of Saxon-English, and an almost poetic imagination; so that whatever side he adopted, and he adopted every side in turns, he presented it with a force of speech which commanded attention. He was not a man who originated thought, but in discerning all that could be made of thought which he found originated, he was unrivalled as a

popular expounder. The imputations he made upon those who differed from whatever views he happened to hold at the time would have amounted to a crime, had it been an intellectual act of his mind; but, as his imputations were applied to every party by turns to which he had ceased to belong, it was merely the expression of a powerful nature concentrating itself upon the new opinions which possessed him, and which made everybody and everything seem hateful that stood outside the convictions which at that hour possessed him. He left to the adherents of every opinion that he espoused a legacy of exposition and denunciation which no other man contributed in his time.

Of all the opponents who were encountered by this party, the most impudent was a person known subsequently as Dr. Brindley. Mr. Hawkes Smith, of Birmingham, having delivered some lectures on phrenology, after a visit of Mr. George Combe to that town, Mr. Brindley attacked that science. The present writer advised Mr. Hawkes Smith to answer him. Mr. Smith knew all about the subject, and Mr. Brindley nothing. Not being able to reply, Mr. Brindley attacked Mr. Hawkes Smith for his advocacy of Mr. Owen's views, of which he was an important exponent. This excited the applause of the clergy of that day, who were willing that the new social principles should be denounced by some one, and Dr. Brindley was engaged to do it. He became the Caliban of the church. He did not issue from a Cave of Adullam, where all who were discontented were invited; but from a cave of Vituperation, where all who uttered rude words of Mr. Owen, or had offensive imputations to make against his followers, were welcome. He went on his mission of defamation to our manufacturing towns, and counselled employers to dismiss men of far honester repute than his own; and scores of families were brought into distress by his calumnious tongue. His prayer was literally—

Lord, in Thy day of vengeance try them;
Lord, visit them who did employ them.

Brindley was originally a travelling comb seller. It was to his credit that he became a schoolmaster—but he need not have continued a pedlar in piety. As a disputant he was not without some good qualities. He was not afraid of discussion. He never sheltered himself under German mysticism or occult or transcendental interpretations, but stated and defended the broad vulgar orthodox Christianity of the day, from which abler, wiser men weakly and unworthily shrunk. He perished at last in the streets of New York. Ministers of religion in America were more scrupulous than in England, and would not work by his means. Dr. Hollick, who was living in New York, did not hear of his fate until it was too late, else, he wrote, he would have rendered succour to the old adversary in his last extremity. He had professed to follow Mr. Bradlaugh to America. It is impossible not to feel respect and sympathy for the fate of the old combatant. He died like the war horse, sniffing battle afar off, when age had weakened his powers without being able to tame his spirit. It would not be fair either to the clergy or to our lay critics to conceal what the excitement was all about.

Mr. Owen had great designs, which made him undervalue the importance of regulated explanations. Moved by a general eagerness to turn men's attention to the power which dwelt in circumstances, he was careless of the perversion of his words by unfriendly hearers, and put into the heads of all who listened to him, the bewildering but instructive phrase, that "man's character was formed for him and not by him."* Lest the alarming idea should not strike sufficiently a hostile

* This troublesome proposition, Mr. Bray relates, "was one upon which his followers, without exception, took their stand." By a resolution of the proprietors of Orbiston, the tenants were obliged to sign their assent to it before admission into the society.

public, he coined or used (for I have not been able to trace its origin) the unforgetable and alliterative phrase "man is the creature of circumstances." This was not an alarming idea to the school of material improvers, for they believed they could create and put in permanent force right circumstances. Instead of being alarming to them, to contemplate man as having "his character formed for him"—the great dogma was, their charter of encouragement. To mankind at large, in whom hating amounts to a talent—who dislike each other gratuitously, and to whom abuse of those they differ from is a moral pleasure—it seemed a restrictive doctrine to be asked to admit that there were extenuating circumstances in the career of every rascal. To the clergy of those days, with whom censure was a profession, and who held that all sin was wilful, man being represented as the "creature of circumstances," appeared an absolute denial of moral responsibility. When they were asked to direct hatred against error, and pity the erring—who had inherited so base a fortune of incapacity and condition—they were wroth exceedingly, and said it would be making a compromise with sin. The idea of the philosopher of circumstances was that the very murderer in his last cell had been born with a staple in his soul, to which the villainous conditions of his life had attached an unseen chain, which had drawn him to the gallows,* and that the rope which was to hang him was but the visible part. There was manifestly truth in the idea, as legislators since that day have come practically to admit it, in the unrevenging doctrine that penal infliction should be limited as far as possible to the prevention of crime, and that punishment itself is justifiable only as far as it is conducive to that end, or to use the great words of Hobbes, "Punishment regardeth not the past, only the

* See this idea, which is better expressed by my old friend Thorn, the poet, of Inverary, in the preface to his poems.

future." Unfortunately, the sociologists of half a century ago had no skill, or no thought of clothing their new truth in considerate explanations, but sent it naked into the world, where it merely shocked an unprepared public. They should have remembered that society ever liked holding individuals responsible for its own neglect. The social advocates, however, believing that they held the secret which priests, legislators, and moralists had missed, for saving mankind by a science of material life, they thought society would be very glad to hear from them in the plainest terms, and did not find out their mistakes until they had got well kicked for their unceremonious ardour.

After this unpleasant operation had gone on for forty years, Dr. Travis, an early and influential disciple of Mr. Owen, proposed a new statement of the doctrine of character; which, while it recognises the causation of the will, admits a self-determining power in man, which justifies instruction being given to him, and appeals being made to him. One who is in the foremost rank of those who have thrown light over ravelled questions of controversy, remarks, "Instead of saying that man is the creature of circumstance, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of circumstance."*

It would therefore be unjust to imply that adversaries of co-operative doctrines, clerical or lay, always gratuitously misunderstood them. There were unskilful statements of them made, which often left them open to honest misconception. The greatest masters of statement sometimes fail to convey an exact impression of their meaning. I have seen Mr. Cobden look at his words as though they were palpable to him in the air, retracting doubtful terms, amplifying the deficient, and qualifying those that went too far. Those who had none of Mr. Cobden's experience and sagacity, must have

* G. H. Lewes' "Life of Göethe."

misled many fair meaning opponents. Those who looked to what co-operators did, and interpreted by that light what they said, knew that instead of teaching regardlessness, they brought a new sense of responsibility to bear upon the world.

But in the days in question more than in these, it was the habit of theologians to regard their own inferences as facts. Their own interpretation of what a certain principle would lead to they asserted to be what the author of the principle *intended* it to lead to. And, as it seldom occurred to these critics that they could be mistaken, some of them gave their own inferences as their adversary's own statement. And if anyone pointed out that he never had said it, the only redress obtained was, that he *ought* to have said it, and had he been an honest man, and capable of understanding his own doctrines, he would have said it. Thus it came to be represented that "Mr. Owen taught that man was the creature of circumstances over which he had no control, and therefore was not responsible for his belief, conduct, words, or actions."* Mr. Owen gave emphasis to the doctrine of the mighty influence of material things over man for good or evil, because that was not acknowledged then. As far as belief was concerned, that, he said, was so entirely commanded by evidence, that a man could not be held responsible for conclusions which evidence justified. On any question of moment it was urged that every one should fully inform himself, and study both sides of it. Christians could say no more, and it was well known that in matters of faith they never did so much. No one was better aware than Mr. Owen that the man who did not master all the facts he could upon a question upon which he had to decide was a fool, and would probably come to the conclusion of a fool. As to conduct and

* Dr. Brindley reproduced in Leicester, in 1873, this fossil objection in these diseased words.

action, they were the affairs of society, not of faith. The working effect of these views was to awaken in the minds of those who understood them the instincts of pity and prevention. They wasted no time in hate or retaliation; even when they saw men do base and brutal things, and knew that they meant them. If knaves could be arrested or instructed, they attempted it: if not, they took counsel against them, to make, as far as they could, the repetition of the offence impossible. They knew there dwelt in the human mind no mad, devil-born will, but a *caused* will, obedient to the laws of evidence, sympathy, and circumstance, and which had to be studied and educated as the source of character and energy. Circumstance was with them a name for causation. Seeing that belief arose from the prejudice or evidence that produced it, and whoever could supply the right evidence would in the long run command the right belief, they held that penalties for mere belief were immoral and misleading. They saw that no man was free in the wild theological sense of being able to act without reason, but free only in the philosophical sense, which teaches that a man is free to do what he will according to reason, when no law prevents him, or no external force restrains him, and no penalty terrifies him. They made war upon wild-will, and were always opposed by the wild-will men, whose mad case is, that responsibility begins where men have choice and liberty to choose. Libertine theologians say that a man's freedom constitutes his responsibility, whereas, responsibility to God or man is the creation of contract. A person who never heard of Christianity is not responsible to believe in it. The church understands this, as it appoints sponsors for a child, as a child is not able to enter into any contract. When it is old enough to enter into an engagement to believe, it is asked to do so; that being called confirmation. If an adult does not enter into the contract, he is not responsible to believe. The Bible

with some, the Thirty-nine Articles with others, is the contract of belief. The Bishop of Peterborough has put this point with great clearness. He says, "Starting from the maxim, man is free, we arrive logically at the conclusion that there can be no authority for that man. Starting from the axiom, authority is supreme, is to arrive at the logical conclusion that there is no room for liberty."

If men in the days here referred to had had the habit of thinking for themselves, they would have seen that in civil society all responsibility is the result of contract to obey law and respect the rights of others. If, like a savage, a man chooses to remain free, he is responsible to no one. When he enters into society he gives up his freedom and accepts the limits law imposes upon him. Man's responsibility does not depend on his freedom. It does not commence until he has given his freedom up. If freedom means responsibility, then God, being most free, would be the most responsible of all beings. "In so far as man is free he is not responsible. In so far as he is responsible he is not free."*

The most sacred part of the mind is reason. Whatever the understanding holds in the highest repute and regards with the greatest devoutness should be founded in reason. Otherwise the most foolish or dangerous superstitions or erroneous conceptions might find permanent lodgment in the mind. There is one town (Leicester) where social views early took root—where a few men of strong understanding, of unusual dispassionateness and judgment, have, during more than a generation, maintained public interest in social ideas. What may be called the Leicester principle of controversy is to question and try all assertions and pretensions. To this day no person in the society meetings there can advance any propositions except under the condition of

* Josiah Gimson, in controversy with Dr. Brindley, 1873.

submitting them to discussion. Dr. Brindley's last appearance in England was in Leicester. He proposed in his usual rabid way to debate the question of Atheism. Secular and social questions being both larger and distinct from Atheism, the present writer refused to discuss a subject with him which would confuse the undiscerning public, and lead them to confound Atheism with social and secular principles. That the pretensions of dogmatic Theism should not be advanced unquestioned, Mr. Josiah Gimson, a resident engineer in the town, met Dr. Brindley several nights in discussion, contributing greatly to the public information upon the subject. Elsewhere no instance has occurred in which a private gentleman had stepped forward in this way to discuss such a topic—the town fully understanding and respecting the courage and independence of the proceeding on his part. This was in 1873. In the earlier days of social controversy this could not have happened. This persistence in discussion, temperately but firmly, on the part of co-operative thinkers, has advanced the capacity and toleration of English society. Professor Tyndall, after one of his great addresses at the Dundee meeting of the British Association, which had somewhat amazed the Duke of Buccleugh, the president for the year, said generously to the present writer, in reference to the wise and instructed toleration of modern controversies of the nature, "We do but reap where others have sown."

It could not have been that there was newness in the social doctrine which excited opposition: perhaps it was the co-operative application of it to the judgment and improvement of character, and to the allaying the antagonism and intolerance which made association of men impossible—that led to it being condemned. Certainly the state did not approve of unity among workmen. Laws had long been directed against combination; the pretence was that the combination prohibited was for dangerous purposes, but the fact was that in the eyes of

rulers all combination was dangerous. Divisions among workmen were advantageous to those who could not trust them. The divided were weak, and the weak could be held in check. Nobody supposed that workmen would combine for peaceable, self-helping objects, without harm to anyone. The clergy had less excuse for their angry words, for many of great name among them, as James Mill had shown, in his exhaustive tract on Toleration, had laid down the same doctrine with a force far greater than Owen possessed. One may be named here, whom Mr. Mill does not cite, had expressed with unrivalled precision, the social tenet that opinion was not a crime, but a conviction, and that tolerance and instruction were the conditions on which social unity could be hoped for. Jeremy Taylor, nearly two hundred years before Owen, wrote: "Force in matters of opinion can do no good, but is very apt to do hurt; for no man can change his opinion when he will, or be satisfied in his reason that his opinion is false, because discountenanced. If a man could change his opinion when he lists, he might cure many inconveniences of his life; all his fears and his sorrows would soon disband, if he would but alter his opinion, whereby he is persuaded that such an accident that afflicts him is an evil, and such an object formidable; let him but believe himself impregnable, or that he receives a benefit when he is plundered, disgraced, imprisoned, condemned, and afflicted, neither his sleeps need to be disturbed, nor his quietness discomposed. But if a man cannot change his opinion when he lists, nor ever does heartily or resolutely but when he cannot do otherwise, then to use force may make him a hypocrite, but never to be a right believer; and so, instead of erecting a trophy to God and true religion, we build a monument for the devil. . . . We either punish a man for keeping a good conscience, or force him into a bad; we either punish sincerity, or persuade hypocrisy; we

persecute a truth, or drive into error; we teach a man to dissemble and to be safe, but never to be honest."*

The relevance and conclusiveness of these authorities availed us nothing with the vehement majority. It was regarded as a new sin in the social party to show that eminent men had agreed in principle with them. The vindictiveness of the enemy harmed the movement in two ways: one by alarming men of capacity and position, who therefore ceased to instruct or countenance it by coming to the front; the other and more serious by making the high spirited among the party resentful and retaliative, prone to follow the advice of those bold and indignant leaders whose principle is courage, and whose policy is outrage; men of the order of St. Just, who destroyed many excellent reformers by his maxim that they who attempt half measures dig their own graves. But St. Just's maxim did not keep him alive long enough to observe that they who insist upon whole measures while they are only half supported commonly get themselves or their cause, and commonly both, into the sexton's hands very early.

Those do not see far who say that truth cannot be suppressed. Most persons of public observation must have seen it suppressed many times. Lord Brougham succeeded in terrifying Parliament in his day into toleration of unpopular opinions, by contending that nothing could extend them but the power of persecution. If brave men stand by unfriended truth and choose a proper time to die in its defence, persecution will spread it. If cowards or ease-loving, time-serving, unobservant men are the only advocates who have truth in hand, persecution, well directed, will soon put it down. This is the real reason why persecution is intrinsically hateful. Theoretical people, who have never been engaged in the battle for truth, talk of it being immortal. It is the

* Liberty of Prophesying.

good popular well-timed lie which is the longest lived. In the nature of human things it must be so. Truth is the child of Culture and Courage. Falsehood has a thousand charms for ignorance and interest, and timidity of mind.

Certainly Co-operation suffered in the assaults to which it was subjected. Though retarded, it was not disabled. Of other agitations it may be said that they brought into play the passions or ambitions of the people: of the social agitation it must be owned that it brought into play the understanding only, and made men enquiring and reflective. The intellect let loose proved no wild animal needing a chain to restrain it, as Dr. Newman asserts, but a salutary and self-managing agent, active in improving individual character and the means of life. These debates delayed the march of Co-operation just as that of an army is delayed when needs arise for halting the men for rest and further training. There is no doubt of the effect of that precaution upon the fortunes of the campaign. If, when the fighting ceased, no victory was declared, there can be no doubt with which side lay the advantage; for in all the subsequent career of Co-operation the clerical adversaries never returned to the charge; and the co-operators have grown fearless and secure. The mistake the pioneers made was that of too much confidence in the force of truth, and making too little provision for the continuous educational discipline of their forces.

We certainly gave the theologist reason to attack us, as the reader will think whose courageous curiosity has carried him thus far. Still, it would have been creditable to the enemy had they attacked us with a little more temper—perhaps one ought to say with a better quality of temper—for there was enough of it, such as it was.

The adversaries of the socialists were not as a rule dainty in their imputations. The Rev. Mr. Anderson, of Glasgow, a man of character and great ability, and of

generous political sympathies, and from whom in later years I oft had the pleasure, through my friend Mr. William Logan, the wisest city missionary I have known, to receive valued communications; yet in his vehement days Dr. Anderson called the "Very Reverend and Preliminary Social Father" an "Incestuous Profligate." But this was not a very objectionable phrase, in a rhetorical sense; for when an angry adversary departs from the truth the farther he departs the better. He is more picturesque, and he is placed by the concurrence of common judgment outside the pale of those who are to be regarded. It is not improbable that many of the adversaries who appeared were dishonest, and had, some of them, a natural and some an acquired habit of not knowing the truth when they saw it, and of not speaking it even by mistake; and, doubtless, some of them did garble with an ability that would have entitled them to a prize medal, had there been any board of examiners to award distinction to that kind of merit; but in controversy he who recognises these peculiarities arrests altogether the progress of his arguments, and invites attention to the adversary instead of to the subject. To show that accuracy of statement appears not to be an opponent's forte, and to make a stronger presentment than before existed of what the truth of the matter in question really is, is to damage the adversary sufficiently, and advance the argument at the same time.

In February, 1834, the "Rev. Mr. Redford," as he was then called, published a letter in the *Worcester Journal*, against Mr. Owen; not more objectionable than clerical letters of that time were, but not at all a letter likely to serve the "cause," as rage then ran. The "Crisis" following the usual policy of the social party, that of helping the enemy to abuse its friends, published this letter, which I shall not reproduce.

In Worcester, the religious opposition to co-operative speeches amounted to violence. It was only by the effort

of a strong-handed carpenter, whom I well knew, and in whose house I subsequently lived, one Robert Jones, that Mr. Owen's life was saved from an infuriated mob.* The Rev. Dr. Redford was an adversary who went great lengths. In a public discussion, he committed upon Mr. Owen an indignity which created a stronger hostility to Christianity than anything else which had occurred in the Midland counties.

Mr. Alexander Campbell, the most fatherly-minded of all the missionaries, whose voice sounded like a truce, was forcibly prevented preaching the new gospel of industry, on Glasgow Green, on Sundays. It was a common thing to have halls refused after they had been duly let, and no County Court Judge in those days would award any damages for a breach of faith. Riots took place at the Broadmead Rooms, Bristol, upon the "social innovators," as Mr. Sargant pleasantly names them. Attempts were often made to retaliate, but the imitation generally fell far short of the original.

If harsh things were sometimes said, if speeches good taste should have chastened were spoken, if fierce phrases sometimes escaped these advocates, let it be remembered that assailing divines, established or dissenting, were not much distinguished for felicity in their phrases, and seldom showed towards us toleration or patience of speech.† Therefore, the coarse representa-

* I have heard that Jones, as years advanced, joined the Methodists. If so, he has a double chance of salvation if his creed be good, for he has generous works to plead, as well as faith.

† Indeed piety was not always self-respecting in the company it proposed to take above, nor very dainty in its invitations to the public. There were those among us who remember, in our early chapel days, reading in our hymn books sturdy verses beginning—

"Come dirty, come stinking, come just as you are."

An invocation of fine Saxon vigour, but not remarkable for delicacy. Nor did noblemen and clergymen then shrink from countenancing such style of address, any more than they have recently done in the case of Moody and Sankey, and if not deeming it good enough for the people, at least thinking it might do the people good.

tions of the adversaries from the Bishop of Exeter downwards to the Rev. Brewin Grant, should not be accepted as though co-operative controversial advocates fell below their adversaries or sinned in the face of higher example. In Bristol, there was a dangerous fight through the narrow passage leading to the Broadmead Rooms, occupied by the socialists in that city. Workmen were sometimes dismissed who were observed to have a copy of the "New Moral World" in their possession. In some cases clergymen refused to bury co-operators, and in one case a sexton caught the posthumous contagion, and refused to dig a grave for a socialist's child. Mr. Connard, a well-known speaker, who became an insolvent, was stigmatised as deranged because he honourably refused to make oath, as not in accordance with his conscience, and Mr. Commissioner Reynolds sent him back to prison with many words of outrage when he could otherwise have discharged him. Mr. Connard was kept in prison many months, as a punishment for his creditable scruples. The Rev. Mr. Giles, a Baptist minister of disagreeable ability, said "Socialism was a union of all practices, save those of chastity and virtue." Many clerical graces of speech, not easy to excel, were expended upon the poor pioneers. Epithets of such variety and such profusion, hurled with such vicious effect, have not fallen upon the heads of any modern parties of workmen. Had the showers of denunciation been material, like hail or rain, the pioneers would have lost the brims of their hats, and their garments had hung in sodden shreds. They came to be known as the Well Battered Party. One good, however, came out of the long fray, the missiles of speech thrown at them were so broken in the rebound, that they have never been of use any more.

When Mr. Owen was a boy, he swallowed some scalding food in his anxiety to reach his school early. His digestion was very much weakened by it, he was

obliged to be very careful in the food which he took. In illustrating his belief of the influence of circumstances, he related this event as one which early disposed him to observation and care. With his oft indifference to what advantage might be taken of his expressions, he mentioned that the kind of food which he partook, which was common in Wales in his youth, was called flummery. As this word was a slang term for untrustworthy speech, adversaries made much of it. Clerical speakers thought it an excellent point to say that the social system began in flummery.* This seemed very witty, and always produced peals of laughter.

The people would have permitted discussions about the science of society to go on in the hope that something would come of it for their advantage had they not been told by preachers that there was something wrong in it. In Runcorn, a Mrs. Johnson left the Established Church and went over to the Wesleyan chapel. She was called upon to explain her proceeding. She at once replied that it was on account of her Sunday pie being exactly done when the Methodist chapel came out; whereas when she attended the church it was always overdone. The good woman regulated her piety by her pastry. Arguments about will, necessity, and circumstances, such as were used by these crude propagandists, would have sent all the people to sleep had not the ecclesiastical gongs kept them awake.† When the familiar vehicle we now see in the streets without terror first appeared in a university county, a peasant, in the vicinity of an Oxfordshire village, ran one night to warn

* Charles Knight, in his "Passages of a Working Life," gives an account of his tour in 1828, to gain support for the Useful Knowledge Society. He tells us that at Liverpool he found a few *clerical* opponents, and one of them preached also against mechanics' institutes; at Manchester, no clerical support could be obtained; and at York he could do but little, for "the commercial atmosphere was better adapted for the diffusion of secular knowledge than was the ecclesiastical."

† See "Majoribank's Tour."

the inhabitants that a frightful monster with saucer eyes, and making a snorting noise, was coming towards the place. Those who had courage got behind the hedge to look. The monster turned out to be a post chaise,* with two lamps. The clergy always mistook social science for an Oxford post chaise, and alarmed quiet people at it.

A fair, a clever, and gentlemanly opponent met with great respect and regard when one appeared, which was very seldom. The Rev. J. H. Roebuck held a public discussion with Mr. Owen, in Manchester, in 1837. He was a Wesleyan of remarkable ability and remarkable fairness, and the distinctness of his objections were well seen in consequence. Though he was, therefore, a more influential adversary than many vituperative ones, he was always spoken of with respect, and his early death was sincerely deplored.

There can be no great progress in state or store, which does not maintain social, as well as theological toleration; because under freedom of thought and action, everyone has a chance of being of public service, while under restriction, only a few have that opportunity. The old pioneers of Co-operation understood this, and stood up always for liberty and relevance of speech. But the new members of stores did not like it, and could not trust it. The earnest among them thought toleration meant indifference to what opinion prevailed. This was the mistake which some still make. Toleration does in one sense mean indifference, but it is only that indifference which every sincere man ought to feel, namely, indifference which particular party view prevails—providing it be the true one. Toleration means anxiety for the truth: it means ardour for the truth: it means confidence in the truth. It believes that truth, like fire, is excited by collision, and that no truth can be

* Joseph Brosbridge, 1824.

known to be true, save that which has passed through the ordeal of controversy. Toleration means giving new truth fair play. Intolerance, which is prohibition, gives it none. Therefore toleration is not indifference to the truth, but regard for it; and very courageous regard too. It is intolerance which is really indifferent to the truth, unless it coincides with its own predilection. And the wisdom of the pioneers has been shown in this, that those stores which have grown most, become the strongest, and most famous, have been those in which its members have permitted and exercised the utmost liberty of opinion, within the limits of fairness and relevance. It would indeed be a formidable objection to social toleration, if it rendered men indifferent to that which is, and ought to be, an object of chiefest solicitude to all who care for the security of progress—namely, the truth of prevailing opinions. It is, therefore, of importance to insist, with whatever distinctness of expression can be commanded, that since the conditions of truth are now well ascertained to be liberty of idea, of expression, and of criticism, it is not he who is tolerant of these, but he who is intolerant of them, who is indifferent to the truth, and upon whom the stigma of looseness and latitudinarianism of mind ought to fall.

# CHAPTER XII.

## EARLY ADVOCATES.

So when the Parthian turned his steed,
And from the hostile camp withdrew,
With cruel skill the backward reed
He sent; and as he fled he slew.

Louis Blanc has described the Jacobin as powerful, original, sombre; half agitator and half statesman; half Puritan and half monk: half inquisitor and half tribune. The co-operative advocates were not men of this strong stamp, but they were not wanting in some of these qualities; and in purpose, perseverance, and propagandist capacity they surpassed all working-class advocates of their time, and produced an historic impression upon public opinion. They certainly were not demagogues, as any one may see from the definition of a modern writer who excels in comprising in one short passage a complete study of those troublesome persons.* These early advocates chose the unpopular side, which

* The demagogue, in all ages and in all countries, is likely to be a man voluble and vehement in speech—expansive and popular in his humour—more plausible in advocating measures than wise in choosing them—unscrupulous in his alliances with all who will serve his immediate objects—extreme in his views—magnificent in his promises—ready with specious theories and proposals of sweeping change—restless in agitation, but impatient of obscure labour—aiming at immediate and showy results, which may keep up his popularity—and, from a certain loose and random way of living, often not a safe man in pecuniary affairs, although he may have no inclination for deliberate dishonesty.—*C. Morrison.* "*Labour and Capital.*" *p.* 126.

was venomous and ill-requited; they believed in their measures themselves, and their lives and industry alike commanded respect, and their disinterestedness was shown in persisting in a course which was far from bringing them flattering recognition. The Duke of Wellington, when they were brought under his notice, admitted they were clever, but added, in his coarse, vindictive way, "they were clever devils." With more discrimination and courtesy, as befitted his station, the Bishop of London said of these social reformers, that, though they were generally men of "some education," their deficiency was that they were wanting in humble docility, that prostration of the understanding and will, which are indispensable to Christian instruction." No doubt they were open to this charge; want of "humble docility" was conspicuous in them. It never occurred to them to "prostrate their understanding." The use of it seemed to them the only way open to themselves or others of making out how things stood.

These adventurous and unskilled social navigators had to pull their doubtful skiffs through rough water. At that time society abounded with persons, they are not yet quite extinct, who would never do anything for the workman except think for him. They would neither find him work, nor bread, nor money, but they would supply him with opinions, either religious or political, ready made. These people gave a very poor account of social projects. The political economist considered them the dream of folly—the clergyman, of wickedness—the statesman, of insubordination—the employer, of idleness—the rich man, of plunder—the capitalist, of confiscation—the journalist, of demagogism. Being converts themselves, with no faculty for standing outside the movement, and making out what it should be, the pioneers were themselves a bit confused; and the strange party, amid whom they had to act, was calculated to increase that state of mind.

Ramshackle Stores.

Co-operation in its early days was somewhat of a ramshackle, ricketty vehicle, not much unlike the droll establishments suddenly opened by the Cheap John benefactors of the fair. It was laden with doubtful articles—brought together by poor fellows who had too little money to buy many things, and small skill to select the right ones. Mostly pale and thin, these amateur shopmen looked as though they needed themselves to eat up the commodities they tried to sell. Their humble anxiety to get customers was an argument against going to their shop. And what business they did was done in a noisy and suspicious way. Every crotchet that thickened the air of Utopia was proclaimed at their doors. Poets, enthusiasts, dreamers; reformers of all things, and the baser sort of disbelievers in any, gave them a turn: for, as we all know, a nimble eccentricity always treads on the heels of change.* Preachers who had no churches, and lecturers who had no hearers, formed an audience here. There was nobody so mad but their right to improve the world was respected; and there was not a regenerating lunatic at large who did not practise upon them, eliciting their unsuspecting applause. The philosophers were scandalised at them—the political economists shook their heavy heads at them—the newspapers were scornful—politicians in the House of Commons proposed, as we have seen, to put them down—bishops interdicted them in the House of Lords, and the clergy consigned them individually and collectively to perdition. The established shopkeepers, who alone understood the nature of the enemy, assailed them in tin kettle tones. Luckily the honest fellows had a well-instructed patience. Their recognised advocates, however, served them well, teaching them that every creature must be allowed to articulate after its kind, and would do better if it only knew how. The

* "Licentiousness always treads on the heels of reformation."—*R. W. Emerson.*

heretics, who were their only friends, eventually silenced the clamour; and the men of sense and purpose made their way to the front, and Co-operation got a hearing, and grew in favour with men.

The progress was slow and intermittent. As in all new parties, and as for that in old ones too, at times there were figures in the social landscape that attracted attention, without enticing adherents. Fastidious friends of progress were not pleased that the prominent advocate of the system should be an Irish philosopher,—Mr. Thompson, of Cork—who was against large families, and in favour of dissection. So soon as a party makes the dangerous profession of being "Rational," everybody looks to them to countenance or aid everything that can claim to be rational; so that unless it is strong enough to hold fast, and hold mainly to one great purpose, it is overwhelmed with all the aspirations of the time. Thus it was that Social Reformers, not knowing how to subordinate without discouraging the just efforts of others, became the Nursing Mother of all the "Crazes" of the day, as all new things are deemed until they are generally adopted.

There was a Dr. Mc.Cormac, of Dublin, who, being, like Bentham, a philosopher above vulgar prejudice, prominently advocated that all co-operators should leave their bodies for anatomical purposes. He was called the "Skeleton-Man" of the movement; and some Christian partisans did not hesitate to say that Mr. Owen wanted to get men into communities in order to sell their bodies for dissection. Every friend of the new system was supposed already to have sold his soul to a certain eminent and enterprising contractor for that article. As to Mr. Owen, it must be owned charity was his sole religion, and this was a religion which God may recognise but has not found favour in the world yet; and one which had no followers in Mr. Owen's days except a few perilous persons, of whom the Rev. Robert Hall,

with his fine talent for contemptuousness, said, "lived in the frigid zone of Christianity." Mr. Owen himself was called the "Circumstantial Philosopher"—a name not without honour, for circumstances were in very bad want of a philosopher.

One of the strange and inexplicable figures that flitted about the early co-operative movement was a gentleman who usually signed himself as P. Baume, "reforming optimist."* In after years two or three other initials would appear between the P. and the B. Who, indeed, he was, or whence he came, nobody ever knew. Common repute said he acquired a fortune as a foreign spy. If so, it was doubtless in the interest of freedom, for he always appeared to care for it. He had spent the greater part of a long and wondrously active life in bequeathing property which nobody ever came to possess. For thirty years there was hardly any meeting held anywhere in reference to social reform at which he was not present in some part. He was ubiquitous. In distant towns, in Manchester or Liverpool, the eye of a lecturer, skilled in discerning mysterious faces, would be sure to light, in some quarter of the room, upon a disguised figure, whose brilliant, penetrating eye alone revealed his identity.

Mr. Baume had what he called Experimental Gardens, in the New North Road, leading from Battle Bridge to Holloway, where he invited all practical men and women to meet him, with a view to agree upon something which would settle everything. The presumption is that they never did agree upon anything, since everything has not been settled yet. His proposal at that time was to establish a Co-operative College, for which purpose he said he would unhesitatingly and most cheerfully give

* The profession of principles of the Reforming Optimist was that though everything is for the best at this instant, everything will be better upon the whole surface of our planet at every one of its diurnal revolutions—nay, at every pulsation of the human heart.

up to them his most valuable leases and ground rents—several extensive plots for building and gardening ground, fourteen acres altogether, his funded property, his ready money, in a word, everything he possessed; "including his most unrelenting exertions through life." Mr. Baume had made a proposition to advance money to any amount, and on the most liberal terms, to any carpenter or bricklayer willing to build cottages on his premises, on speculation, or for the location of their families. He stated then that all his property was vested in the hands of trustworthy characters. His unremitting exertions being devoted to the establishment of a Co-operative College and Community.

At one of Mr. Owen's Sunday lectures he sent a little boy with a note, saying the lad had been born three years before, and had been entrusted to his care, but he had never allowed him to be christened because he had never found any character in history sufficiently perfect to warrant him in adopting his name; but now Julian Hibbert was dead, he requested Mr. Owen to christen him by that name. Mr. Owen, and many of his disciples after him, were accustomed to christen children who were brought to them, and they commonly made little speeches to the parents, counselling them to remember how much sensible treatment and pure material conditions might influence the child for good.

This gentleman continued to give this property away. He gave it to nearly every community that was formed. He gave it to the United Kingdom Alliance. He has given it to the co-operators, and to other persons and parties, certainly too numerous to mention. A considerable portion of his property at last lay in the neighbourhood of Colney Hatch. He always professed to be afraid that some one would confine him in a lunatic asylum, and yet he established himself in the neighbourhood of one. There was not the slightest fear for him. There was

no asylum which would have undertaken to manage him. He would have driven the governors and directors all mad in a month, by the inexhaustible fertility of his projects. He was quite sincere in saying he would give the whole of his possessions away, as well as his "unrelenting life exertions," for he appeared never to require anything whatever to live upon. A few peas, which he commonly carried in his pocket, seemed to be his chief source of subsistence. With ample means he would live in one obscure room, or rent a railway arch, and deposit himself there, and he did not, like the parties in Mr. Pickwick, select the dry ones, but took a damp one as being the cheapest. He would carry about with him bundles of bank notes in a dress coat pocket, and keep a small live monkey there; so that if any adventurous hand found its way there, it would meet with a very unexpected remonstrance. His property, at the site of the Experimental Gardens, lay over what is now known as the Caledonian Road, opposite the Pentonville Prison, and had he retained it a few years longer than he did, he might have derived an immense income from it. At that time his land was covered with furze and mysterious looking cottages, in one of which he lived. It was known as the "Frenchman's Island," where very unpleasant visitors were frequently attracted; but as he was known to go about at night with a pistol in his pocket, and as he was very likely to fire it, and knew perfectly well how to do it, a good deal of curiosity was repressed by that peculiar reputation. He had all sorts of projects for a community experiment there, and he brought more scandal upon the cause by his wild and eccentric proposals than any other man ever connected with the movement. He had a scheme of lactation for mothers in community, whereby the children should not see to whom they owed their tender nourishment, lest the little ones of the community should acquire local instead of universal affections.

Dr. King.

One of the curious enthusiasts of that time, 1837, was Samuel Bower, of Bradford. He was one of the abstemious co-operators who lived, like the Reforming Optimist, chiefly upon grey peas, of which he carried a considerable supply in his pocket. That would have been of small consequence, but he strenuously insisted that that peculiar diet should be universally adopted. Nevertheless, he was a strong-thinking man, and had many useful and self-denying views, which he illustrated in many curious and impracticable papers.

Of course there were many among the advocates whose position, judgment, and attainments commanded respect, else the movement could never have attained the ascendancy it did. One who remained longest known was "Dr. King, of Brighton." This gentleman was educated for the Church, at Trinity College, Cambridge. He married a daughter of Dr. Hooker, Vicar of Rottingdean. He subsequently adopted the medical profession, from intellectual preference, and settled in Brighton, where he originated and edited the first publication, called the "Co-operator." He was a man of notable friendships, and promoted many liberal movements in conjunction with Dr. Birkbeck, Lady Byron (whose trusted friend he was), Ricardo, Owen, and Lord Brougham. His daughter married Mr. John Robertson, well known as one of the early editors of the "Westminster Review," during Mr. Mill's connection with it. Dr. King was justly considered one of the founders of Co-operation.

Dr. King continued his interest in Co-operation until the end of his life. On entering his eightieth year he wrote to the "Co-operator" a letter as enthusiastic as those he wrote half a century earlier, and which might have been sent by a young convert. "When England was discovered by the Romans," he said, "she was pronounced the largest among the islands, and the richest in corn and pasture. Only lately, one of the greatest

of modern historians, Sismondi, pronounced her the happiest in her climate, soil, government, institutions—among which we may now reckon Co-operation." He had the honour of being consulted by Lady Byron, who had contributed £300 towards the success of a productive association established among those Brighton societies.

Dr. King's "Co-operator" was a source of inspiration in many parts of the country, mere fragments of numbers being, as we have related, treasured up by the recipients. Stores have been founded in consequence of their perusal. The fairness, temper, and the certain moderation of tone rendered Dr. King's little paper, all the articles being written by himself, one of the most wisely-influential precursors of Co-operation which appeared in the press.

P. O. Skene, Esq., who is always mentioned as an Esq., appears frequently in early co-operative reports as a promoter, contributor, and medium by whom ladies and others made contributions. There was also a Mr. G. R. Skene, his brother; but being less personally distinguished he is described as *Mr.* G. R. Skene. Being very watchful and workful as a secretary, he deserves equal mention in these pages. In those days, when Co-operation was struggling, it was no doubt necessary to mark when one of its adherents held a position of more conventional respectability than others. "Philip O. Skene, Esq.," was really a very accomplished gentleman, an eminent teacher of languages in his day. He held a German class in the upper room of the first-named London co-operative store, 19, Greville-street, Hatton Garden. Mr. J. S. Mill and Mr. J. A. Roebuck, when young men, were among the remarkable pupils who attended.

The *Times* of 1837, gave a very honourable notice of Philip Orkney Skene. "His father, Major Skene, and grandfather, Governor Skene, were both attainted of high treason against the United States, as British

Loyalists; and his great-grandfather was attainted of high treason in the rebellion of 1715. The *Times* stated that the Earl of Fife, who is a branch of the Skene family, had taken the estate which had previously descended from father to son for eight hundred years in the Skene family. Before Philip O. Skene was twenty years of age, he was sent to superintend the erection of the military fortification at Hoy Island, in the Orkneys. He joined the English army, entering Paris, in 1815, and from his great knowledge of the French and German languages, was appointed to attend the Crown Prince of Prussia, whose sovereign, in distinction of his services, presented Mr. Skene with a valuable ring, set with numerous brilliants. After attaining much scientific distinction abroad, he returned to England, entered the Middle Temple, and ate several terms; when Mr. Owen's efforts at New Lanark, in its best days, so impressed his mind, that he devoted afterwards much of his time and means to promoting similar objects. Mr. Skene died at the age of fourty-four, at Lewes, from exhaustion, after a protracted state of debility, brought on by over-exertion in his duties, as surveyor of roads, a post which he had held for several years." The *Times* added, that "he left elementary works in German, Italian, French, Spanish, Latin, and Greek, besides works which bear other names than his."

At the early (Third) Co-operative Congress, of 1832, elsewhere mentioned, a very remarkable letter was received from a distinguished man, Leigh Hunt, who dated from 5, York Buildings, New Road, London. He alleged that "increasing avocations and ill health alone prevented his attendance." Happily neither killed him until nearly thirty years later. He stated he believed he was the first journalist who endeavoured to impress upon the public the propriety of considering Mr. Owen's views. Touching the supposed contradiction between the claims of this life and a future one, he cited what

was said by a wise man, "that it would be a very strange and ungrateful thing if we behaved ourselves gloomily or indifferently in a beautiful garden which some friend gave us, because by and by he had promised us a better."

Another name, always one of interest and respect, was that of Mr. Thomas Allsop, who, to the manners and cultivation of a gentleman, united an originality of sentiment and generous enthusiasm for political as well as social change, displayed with the same force and boldness by no other adherent of social views. A member of the stock exchange, he understood the conditions of business as well as those of the social state contemplated. He was the adviser of Feargus O'Connor in his best days, and conferred upon him the necessary property qualification which Mr. O'Connor did not possess when he was first elected a member of Parliament. On one occasion Mr. Allsop, who was also connected with a large and fashionable business in Regent-street, alarmed the law courts and the press by refusing to be sworn upon a grand jury, on which he had often served, on the ground that he objected to find a prisoner guilty, even upon the clearest evidence, alleging as a reason that in every part of London the criminal class was recruited by flagrant, social neglect. Of course this was done for the express purpose of forcing public attention to the subject. Such an act by one in Mr. Allsop's position produced a great impression.* Being known as a friend of European freedom, he was subsequently charged with complicity in the affair of Orsini; a reward of £500 was offered for his apprehension. He directed the present writer and Dr. Langley to inform the Government, on their undertaking to hand over to us the £500 with which to defray the cost of his defence, he would appear in court at the proper time. Objecting

* He is the Author of "Recollections of Samuel Taylor Coleridge," who was his periodic Sunday guest for a long period of years.

to be put to expense to disprove a groundless charge, and being accustomed to open air life, he disliked imprisonment in the meantime. After this, the prosecution was abandoned by the Government; Mr. Allsop was then in America. In the late Mr. Justice Talfourd's memorial of Charles Lamb, the reader will find graceful acknowledgments of Mr. Allsop's long and helpful friendship to the great Essayist. Mr. Allsop happily still survives; most eminent and intrepid of the early school of the influential societarian innovators. Another writer, who impressed society with the opinion that persons of taste and means were favourable to social views, was Mr. John Minter Morgan, author of "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century." This work appeared in two handsome volumes, and was printed in the costliest manner of books of that period, and with original copperplate illustrations of great skill of design and finished execution, in mezzotint. There were some rather bewildering diagrams, but some of the scenes, dramatic and communistic, surpass in beauty of conception anything produced either before or since. The events of the story carry the reader into the highest society, and the dialogues conducted with the most eminent men of the day are not only gracefully rendered, but also probable—their known and published sentiments being skilfully interwoven in the speeches made. If co-operative views had always been presented with as much judgment, even though they might not have appeared under such elegant conditions, they would have made rapider and wider way in the world. Mr. Morgan's "Hampden" is one of the books which curious publishers of another century will no doubt reproduce. He wrote other works, as the "Reproof of Brutus," and the "Revolt of the Bees," which attracted considerable attention in their day, but none were so popular as "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century." The "Reproof of Brutus" was written in verse, but though cleverer in

the use of that instrument than Mr. Abram Combe, Mr. Morgan's performances in that way excited no jealousy among the poets of his time.

When a young man, Mr. Morgan displayed more courage than was to be expected from his gentle character. He appeared as a lecturer in the theatre at the Mechanics' Institution in defence of Mr. Owen's Sunday lectures. Mr. Morgan's lecture, however, was delivered on Thursday, May 6, 1830. Mr. Owen had been permitted to deliver Sunday morning lectures in that theatre morning, afternoon, and evening, on the "Moral and Social Duties of Man." The clergy, however, had interfered. Bishop Blomfield had spoken at King's College, and said that "all other sciences and acquirements than those of the Church of England and Ireland ought to be held subservient to those principles of action furnished by the doctrines of the Gospel." The members of the Mechanics' Institution were compelled, in deference to public opinion, to recommend a discontinuance of the Sunday morning lectures, as they were delivered during the hour of divine service. Mr. Tooke, the eminent solicitor of the institution, gave it as his opinion that the lectures were illegal, besides being calculated to compromise the usefulness of the institution. Mr. Tooke is mentioned by Mr. Morgan, who said that he had consulted with Mr. Brougham on the subject, who entirely concurred in that view. Mr. Morgan said that if Mr. Brougham was right in his opinion as to the lectures being illegal, it was incumbent on him, who stood so committed to the cause of mental liberty, to move the repeal of the act. The act is still unrepealed. Lord Amberley boldly endeavoured in vain to procure its repeal. By retaliative proceedings and ignominious evasions, lectures have continued to be delivered since; but as often as bigotry opens its disagreeable eyes, and chooses to make itself offensive, it sends the philosophers home mute and discredited, with their

lectures in their pockets. Those who think that social reformers have at times troubled themselves needlessly with theology should take into account that their way has been blocked up by it all their days. Mr. Morgan, later in life, took fruitless trouble to induce the clergy to interest themselves in social reform. Gentlemen who were his guests at Sackville-street still tell how they were always escorted after dinner to see his model of a community, in which a church formed one of the pleasant ornaments. Mr. Morgan made his fortune as a paper maker, which is probably one reason why he excelled other social writers in producing elegantly printed books, whose clear and thick leaves and broad margins felt in the hand like a lucid and substantial argument.

Mr. William Pare was the first recognised co-operative lecturer, and the most persuasive and persistently practical of them all. The Editor of "The Co-operative Miscellany," of 1830, introduced him for the first time to its readers in curious deferential terms as being their "very respectable and indefatigable friend." His first lecture was delivered where he spoke three times, in the Music Hall, Bold-street, Liverpool. There were four co-operative societies established in Liverpool at that time.

Mr. Thompson, of Cork, had the merit of satisfying Mr. William Pare of the utility and practicability of the co-operative system. His conviction was converted into ardour by Mr. Thompson's "Enquiry into the Distribution of Wealth." Mr. Pare first appears in co-operative literature at the anniversary of the first Birmingham Co-operative Society, at which he presided, on the 28th of December, 1829, at the Vauxhall Tavern, Ashted. Nearly a hundred persons were present, including some thirty of the members' wives, for co-operative tea parties were from the first sociable, and included wives and children as well as husbands. Mr. Pare began by

proposing the health of "the king in his social capacity of father of his people," which denoted the benevolence rather than the accuracy of the social imagination of the period. Mr. Pare quite understood then, and expressed at that early date the policy of Co-operation as being "a scheme of voluntary equality;" and contended that the English were not to be confounded with French agitators. "The French," he said, "worked by force, the English by persuasion. The French cried 'Down with the aristocrats;' the co-operators said 'Let them alone.'" Mr. James Guest, the well-known bookseller, of Birmingham, was vice-president on the occasion, and gave "Success to the numerous co-operative societies then established in England, Scotland, and America." One of the toasts was "The immortal memory of John Bellers, the first known projector of a co-operative community in England."

The sixth number of the "United Trades' Co-operative Journal" records that on Tuesday evening, March 30, 1830, Mr. Pare, the corresponding secretary to the First Birmingham Co-operative Society, delivered his first public lecture at the Mechanics' Institution, Manchester, remarking—"Mr. Pare is a young man of very extensive practical information, deeply impressed with the evils which afflicts the working classes of this country, and most zealous in his endeavours to disseminate that information which he thinks must ultimately produce a very beneficial effect."

At Manchester, which he subsequently visited in 1830, he held a meeting at the house of one of the members of the first society, which was well attended. Several persons were present belonging to the Stockport society. On three successive evenings he spoke in the theatre of the Mechanics' Institution. At his first lecture there were not less than one thousand persons present. Mr. Owen seldom distinguished any of his adherents by notice, but in Mr. Pare's case he did. He said, describing

a visit he, Mr. Owen, made to Birmingham some years earlier—"I found him engaged in the business of railways, which he appears to understand in his department of it, if we are to judge from the approbation he has received from the committees of both Houses of Parliament."* This instance shows with what judgment Mr. Owen could praise when he chose. Nothing could be more delicate, indirect, and uncompromising. Had he said more, or said it differently, it might have been disastrous to Mr. Pare. For more than forty years, Mr. Pare was the tireless expositor of social principles. He learned early from Robert Owen the golden principle which Leigh Hunt so finely expressed—namely, that "the errors of mankind proceed more from defect of knowledge than from defect of goodness." All the acerbities which ever arise in any of our societies, arise from members who do not know this, or who forget it if they do. Mr. Pare seldom forgot it. His angerless voice and his pleasant patience were an endowment as strong as his general zeal, which never hasted and never rested until envious death took him from us.

Besides Mr. Pare, Mr. Hawkes Smith, and Mr. Murphy, there was Mr. John Rabone, before mentioned, also of Birmingham, whose pen was often to be met with in early co-operative literature. His letters in the volumes of the "Crisis" were always earnestly and pleasantly written, mainly appealing to Christians to recognise the spirit of Christianity in co-operative effort. It was his writings which first caused the name "Christian Socialist" to be used. In 1837 persons began to sign themselves by that name.

Another man of mark and promise in the early social movement was Rowland Detrosier, who died prematurely, very much regretted by all politicians of the people, in every part of Great Britain. Though well cared for at

* "Moral World," October 1, 1836.

times by opulent friends, he had no sustained support, and exposure upon a coach, after a night lecture, when he was in a weakly state, brought on inflammation of the lungs, which killed him.* He was a man of the greatest promise of any who arose among the political and co-operative classes, and had he lived he would have been a leader. He had all the qualities of knowledge, enthusiasm, geniality, respect for the convictions of others, and powers of commanding address. Detrosier was the natural son of Mr. Robert Norris, of Manchester, and was abandoned, when a boy, by his French mother, whose name he afterwards bore. He was put to the trade of a fustian cutter. At nineteen he unfortunately married. By self study, continued when he and his family were nearly famishing, he taught himself French and Latin, and acquired a knowledge of the sciences, which enabled him to lecture upon them in a manner which few professional lecturers of the day could imitate in communicating animated knowledge. He obtained admission to the pulpit of a Swedenborgian chapel, in Hulme, where he used to astonish the congregation by filling his pulpit with geological specimens, and placing electric and galvanic machines on the desk, where his Bible and hymn-book should lie. He had the distinction of founding the first two Mechanics' Institutions ever established in England. As he had no support but that which his daily labour brought him, he often suffered extreme distress. His reputation, however, reached London, where he was welcomed when he arrived. Jeremy Bentham had been so struck by some of his discourses that he sent him a present of his books, and showed him marks of flattering regard until his death. Lady Noel Byron sent him £20, and often invited him to her house in London. Mr. Mordan is said to have bestowed some of the earlier proceeds of his

* He had been delivering the opening lecture at the Mechanics' Institution, at Stratford, near London.

gold pens upon him, and Mr. John Stuart Mill not only befriended him while he lived, but befriended his family for many years after his death. It was, however, to Leigh Hunt to whom he was indebted for his introduction to London: his name being first mentioned in a generous and discerning article in the *Examiner*, Leigh Hunt being greatly struck, as everybody was at that time, by his lecture on the necessity of the extension of moral and political instruction among the working class. Detrosier had a voice and eloquence resembling Lord Brougham's, and his mind was distinguished by rapidity and power.

In these times nobody need suffer much in the way of patriotism, or public service in England, except in the way of being starved, and not then unless he is a very great enthusiast; but at that time propagandism was a very different thing. Mr. James Watson, one of those few publishers of forbidden literature, forbidden on the ground of political or religious liberalism, who gave some consideration how far the reputation of his party might be promoted by his judgment in the books he sold, and by his personal probity—came up from Leeds, when a young man, to take the place of one of Carlile's shopmen, 500 of whom were imprisoned, who had been imprisoned for selling unstamped publications, a fate which very soon befel Mr. Watson. He is recorded as acting as a co-operative missionary in Leeds, Halifax, Barnsley, Todmorden, and other places in connection with the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge. He is spoken of as "the first missionary to the country, and as having done great and permanent good." In one of his speeches Mr. Watson put the case of the working class co-operators in a suggestive form, thus:—"The co-operators would have those who had hitherto lived upon the labour of others henceforth live upon their own capital. They would then discover how long it would last"—that is unless recruited by the exertions of the industrious.

Mr. Henry Hetherington.

The name of Mr. Henry Hetherington appears as far back as the report of the fourth quarterly meeting of British Association for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge, 1830, when he was elected one of the committee of the first Soho society. His name afterwards occurs frequently among the speakers. He was another publisher distinguished by a long career of peril. His straightforward and intelligent heartiness made his thoroughgoing views genial, and redeemed his socialism from sentimentality. He was best known by the "Poor Man's Guardian," which he edited, printed, and published, when no one else out of prison could be found to undertake the peril of it. He sustained a series of 150 indictments, when at last, on the trial of an *ex-officio* information filed against him by his Majesty's attorney-general, in the Court of Exchequer, before Lord Lyndhurst and a special jury, the "Poor Man's Guardian" was declared to be "a strictly legal publication."

Another man of subsequent note, who took part in the early congresses, was Mr. James Bronterre O'Brien, then the editor of the "Midland Representative." He subsequently suffered imprisonment in the cause of Chartism. He was an animated and able speaker, of very varied information, and possessed a considerable knowledge both of French and English literature. He was regarded as the political schoolmaster of the Chartists, but, like most Irishmen, his genius lay chiefly in suspicion, in which he excelled; and he undid, by the distrust which he diffused, the good he was capable of accomplishing by his generous fervour. He it was who translated Buonarroti's "History of Babeuf," as we have seen elsewhere.

Bronterre, as he delighted to call himself, helped to make the co-operators silly on the subject of usury. "Usury," he said, "is in civilised countries what priestcraft is in comparatively barbarous ones." Because the

capital employed in paying poor women two pence halfpenny per pair for making soldiers' trowsers yielded a large interest to the contractor, this writer concluded that usury was infamous.

Among other qualifications for the millennium displayed by energetic socialists, was that of originality in figures of speech. One of the greatest masters in the rhetoric of the "New Moral World" was a certain Mr. Joseph Smith, of Salford. When the Queenwood Community was in force he went about the country collecting sheep with which to stock the farm. His plan was to rise at the end of a public meeting, and propose that all who had enthusiastically passed communist resolutions should prove their sincerity by joining there and then in subscribing a sum sufficient to buy a sheep. The most ardent who had held up their hands in favour of the motion of the evening were not always prepared to put them in their pockets. To incline the surprised enthusiasts to that operation, Mr. Smith would apprise them that he had ordered the doors to be locked, so that no one could leave until the price of the sheep arrived on the platform. Then he would say they had bought a community, they must pay for the community, and they must stock the community, "else they would all fall into the abyss which was hanging over their heads." In view of this unforseen calamity, reluctant shillings were produced until the market price of the coveted sheep was made up. When this was done, they were rewarded by being assured by Mr. Smith that "now they would all sail into port on the top of their watch towers," a kind of vessel quite unknown to Her Majesty's constructor of the navy—and an opportunity was afforded to the astonished subscribers of going home. This inventive rhetorician was described in the organ of the society as "the high priest of the 'New Moral World.'"

On other occasions he proved himself not deficient in old world illustrations. He had been descanting with

his accustomed fervour upon the deceptions of competitive commerce, when a curious and astute auditor put the question—what did he mean by deception? The ardent and good-natured orator, who was commonly right when he felt, and wrong when he thought, had probably never given a public definition in his life, and was without any idea how to define deception. The meeting was large, hostile, and impatient, and the hesitation of the lecturer was loudly resented, when it suddenly occurred to Mr. Smith that his head was quite bald, and his black, curly, and unsuspected locks were not his own, so he boldly snatched off his wig and exclaimed: "That is deception." His raven hair, hanging in his hand like a scalp, and the sudden sight of his unimagined and naked pate was so ludicrous, that his adversaries were confounded and convinced, and with the generosity of an English audience, the enemy applauded him as heartily as his friends.

At a fancy dress ball, got up in Salford, Mr. Smith appeared in the character of the high priest of the "New Moral World," in beard, satin shoes, and surplice, sacerdotal head dress, and staff bearing, with standard inscribed with letters of gold, calling upon the frivolous crowd to remember Three Great Truths about convictions and feelings being instincts, and not acts of the will. The misfortune was that there was no central committee with courage, and authority, and disposition to repudiate this compromising eccentricity, and disassociate socialism from it.

In those exalted days, editorial art went for nothing. No one troubled himself as to how the world would regard his language. Just as the early apostles never reflected how distracted fathers of the future church would labour to reconcile their sayings (believing, as they did, that the end of all things was at hand, and there never would be any fathers to be perplexed), so these social seers expected that the "old immoral world"

was played out, and that nobody in the new substitute they had in hand could ever heed anything said or done in it. Their least impulsive writer called the attention of two counties "to the active, the energetic, the devoted Fleming,"* and the editor asked "Where did Joseph Smith get his superior spirit of prophecy, and give us tablets of remembrance chiselled as it were in alabaster for purity and gold for splendour and endurance."†

Mr. Finch was the earliest and greatest pamphleteer of the party, and, as has been said, not a wise one. Mr. Owen first introduced Mr. Finch to the co-operative public at his institution, in Charlotte-street, in 1834, as "a new labourer in the field." The "new labourer" actually got inserted in the *Liverpool Albion* a series of letters on the "Fooleries of Sectarianism." These "fooleries" were sincerities to those who entertained them, and they naturally resented this mode of describing them. But it is always your religious man who is most offensive to pious people. A man who dissents from the newspaper religions is respectful to them; and if he cares to oppose them, reasons against them without offensive imputation: but your religious man, who has a little infallibility of his own, can venture to commit outrages on others, knowing that his rudeness will pass for holy wrath. Mr. Finch took great liberties in this way, and his offensive "Fooleries" letters were reproduced in the "Moral World." In the midst of an argument which had no relevance to socialism as an economical system, Mr. Finch would break out, "Burst your chains. Throw your creeds and dogmas to the moles and to the bats. No confession of faith is necessary to secure our acceptance at the great day, when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, all religions, and no religions at all." The test, in Mr. Finch's mind, being whether Christ was

* "New Moral World," December 31, 1836, p. 75.
† "New Moral World," February 4, 1837.

honoured by those who ministered to such as were hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger. This might be a pardonable reading of that Scripture, but it was very offensive in those days; but, generally, Mr. Finch was far more irritating and irrelevant than this.

Society would have been saved before it was lost had it listened to its remedy-makers. In 1842 Mr. John Gray, of Faldonside, Galashiels, published "An Efficient Remedy for the Distress of Nations." Systemisers impart to improvement the gloss of foolishness. Mr. Owen having set a fashion of devising "an entirely new system of society," Mr. Gray put forth one. But society is deaf, obdurate, and wilful, and regards none of these new constructors. It takes its own time and its own way to change. It profits, in a silent, sulky way, by suggestions made to it: yet it cannot help disliking anyone who proposes to overhaul it. It has no time to begin again; and if it made the attempt it would be distracted: for no sooner should it adopt the new scheme of one than twenty other projectors would make contrary proposals. Mr. Gray had a great plan of a Standard Bank and Mint. The Duke of Wellington made known this year, in one of his wonderful notes, that "he declined to receive the visits of deputations from associations, or of individual gentlemen, in order to confer with them on public affairs: but if any gentleman thinks proper to give him, in writing, information or instruction, on any subject, he will peruse the same with attention." The modest painstaking duke had not Mr. Gray before his eyes when he said this. That gentleman would have taken the duke at his word, and soon have brought him to a standstill. The pleasantest part of Mr. Gray's "Efficient Remedy" is where he tells the reader that he had published a previous work which had not sold, so that in issuing another he could only be actuated by a desire to advance the interests of mankind. And this was true. He was a well-meaning, disinterested writer,

and he had the ability of mastering his own system, which is more than can be said of most world-makers. His books never sold, nor could they be given away; and there is still a stock at two places in London where they can be had now for asking, and those who apply are looked upon with favour. He wrote an earlier work, known to the curious as "The Social System," in which he propounded a "Principle of Exchange," on which he contended "it would be as easy to sell goods for money, without any limit or restriction as respects quantity or value, but not without regulation as to their kind, as it is to buy them with money."

The reader will misunderstand the moral of this narrative if he supposes that the remarks made on the eccentricity of advocacy, by which the social movement has been characterised, is intended to beget indifference to it, or disrepect or disregard of individuals promoting it. Those who have read much of the rise and career of new opinions will be aware that religious and political history, if written with frankness and explicitness, would present also a plentiful series of ridiculous situations and deplorable absurdities. And one reason why similar eccentricities are continually being reproduced in new movements is because party historians do not think it a duty to relate them. If they did, they would be warnings to ardent adherents to consider how they may best guard the truth which they represent from misapprehension, contempt, or dislike. It is true that many of the disciples of social science were flaccid, dreaming people, possessed of a feeble goodness; but there were also a larger number of strong, wise, cultivated, and determined adherents who sustained the movement, when only men of sound judgment could discern the value of it, and only men of courage would espouse it.

The same extravagances and eccentricities, feebleness of sentiment which excited the common derision, absurdities of speech or song, which set the world

laughing, are not confined to any party; but when a party becomes established, these vagaries are set down to the conduct of irresponsible individuals, whom nobody can restrain, and by whom nobody is bound; but in the case of an unrecognised and unpopular association, every act of folly is considered a necessary inspiration of its principles, or as the natural and practical outcome of them.

Of the accredited representatives of socialism who put S.M. after their names, signifying social missionary, the first in order of rank and service should stand Mr. George Alexander Fleming, who was the chief editor of the official journal of the party. Mr. Fleming was a native of Scotland, a man of considerable energy and maturity of self-acquired talent. He wrote as well as he spoke, and did both well. He was the first in office, and he kept there. He was under no delusions of fervour, as others were liable to be. His talent lay in making the movement safe rather than great, and certainly there was room for his order of skill. Mr. Fleming has now been for many years connected with one of the chief daily papers of the metropolis, besides being connected with journals immediately under his own management, always consistently giving effect to the principles he early entertained.

Mr. Lloyd Jones, who ought to be named next in order of service, had the repute of having the best voice of any of the social lecturers, and that readiness of speech which seems the common endowment of Irishmen. He was always regarded as the best debater who appeared on the platform; and if it was possible to perfect that talent by practice, he certainly had the opportunity, for more discussion fell to his lot than to any other of his compeers.

To Mr. Jones belongs the distinction of being the most active to defend social views when its adherents were weakest, and to meet more of the enemy when the

enemy was strongest, than any other missionary. While he was a Manchester district missionary, he had continually to be despatched to meet furious adversaries, or furious audiences. After a venomous tirade was delivered, he would present himself to answer it, when it was matter of common experience that the confident adversary, who had gone up like a rocket in his lecture, came down like the stick in the discussion. Mr. Jones joined the Salford Co-operative Society as early as 1829, and fortunately still lives the most influential of the old leaders of the movement.

Mr. James Rigby was one of the earliest, merriest, and pleasantest speakers among the missionaries. His vivacity of illustration was very remarkable. He had genuine imagination; not, perhaps, always well in hand. If he did not obscure the facts by the fecundity of his fancy, he cast such a glamour over them that the hearer forgot to look for them. As an expositor of socialism, he was the most fascinating of all his compeers. His vivacity, his graphic language, his brightness of imagination, his agreeable garrulity, always made him a popular speaker, notwithstanding that he was prone to repetitions of ideas. He was long remembered for his happiness of expressing the immense hopes and prospects of the party without any sense whatever of the limited means which alone were at the command of social reformers to realise them. He first came into notice from the active part he took in the laborious agitation for the Ten Hours Bill. After the fall of Queenwood, he was associated with Mr. Owen as a personal attendant, having charge of his manuscripts. He was entirely a communist, echoing literally Mr. Owen's material views on that subject; but when a semi-spiritualism came in after days to be engrafted upon them by the master, Mr. Rigby proved that though he was a disciple, he was not a follower in the sense of departing from the ancient way. He was with us when

we buried Mr. Owen at Newtown. Among all who stood at that grave, none were so assiduous, so faithful, so wary, as he. When I went down to relieve him late at night, as he kept watch over his master's tomb, it was with difficulty that he could be induced to go home, until I satisfied him that certain fears which he entertained were all anticipated, and that no unauthorised hands could disturb those honoured remains—faithful fears dated as far back as the days of Julian Hibbert, at whose death Mr. Baume interfered by virtue of some personal warrant which he was understood to hold. All his life Mr. Rigby remained constant to the abstemious habits of his youth, and died at fifty-six years of age, without having tasted animal food. Up to the day of his burial no change from life was observable in his pleasant and placid countenance.

The missionary who excelled all in vigour of speech, in wit, boldness, and dramatic talent, was Charles Southwell, of London, the youngest of thirty-six children, with activity enough on the platform for them all.

The Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Bathurst, was the youngest of thirty-six brothers and sisters.* So there was nothing heretical on Mr. Southwell's part in this peculiarity, for which, otherwise, he might have been held accountable. It must be owned he was more brilliant than relevant. On one occasion, when the public were excited concerning some new aggression of free thought, he announced a special lecture, from which his immediate colleagues there, myself, Maltus Questell Ryall, and William Chilton, expected that some effect would arise. A good audience was assembled at the City Road Hall of Science, the same that Mr. Mordan provided for Detrosier. After Southwell had spoken three-quarters of an hour it was remarked by us that he had not arrived at his subject. Half-an-hour later he concluded amid a storm of

* *Norwich Mercury*, 1837.

applause, when we said to him, "Why, Southwell, you never mentioned your subject." "No," he added, "it did not occur to me." And, to do him justice, neither did it occur to his audience till next day so much had he diverted and entertained them.

Ultimately Mr. Southwell left England, and settled in New Zealand, a singularly unsuitable retreat for one so fiery and fearless of spirit, unless he intended to set up as a chieftain. On the stage, on the platform, or in the secular press, he might have found a congenial sphere; but nothing fell to him available except the editorship of a Wesleyan newspaper. It must have been a livelier publication in his hands than its readers had known it before. Its orthodox articles must have been written by proxy. When death befell him, as it did after a very few years sojourn there, he was waited on by members of the proprietary whom he served, to offer him the religious consolations available to that body, and were surprised to be told by their patient that he had edited their paper because no other employment was open to him, but he never undertook to edit their principles. He could not deny that Wesleyanism was a form of opinion he could live by, for he had lived by it, and he was much obliged to them for the opportunity of doing that. He, however, preferred to die in the principles in which he had lived. He was an Atheist.

Frederick Hollick was a young Birmingham man, who cast his lot with the social movement in 1837-8. He and the present writer were townsmen, each engaged in mechanical industry, were fellow students in the same mechanics' institution, both became speakers in the same movement, and were nearly of the same name. But to Mr. Hollick belonged the palm of seeing more things at once, seeing them soon, seeing them clearly, and stating them with unrivalled lucidity; certainly with a lucidity beyond anything to be observed in any compeer of the social platform. When the missionaries

were dispersed he went to America, where he studied dentistry and medicine, and published many works on physiology, were he acquired both fortune and reputation; and there is hope that he will shortly return to live in the old country, where thirty years of absence have in no way diminished the regard in which he was held.

Thomas Simmons Mackintosh was a socialist lecturer of note and popularity. He was a man of considerable scientific reading, and published a book entitled the "Electrical Theory of the Universe," which attracted considerable attention. The simplicity and boldness of his theory, seemed true to those who did not understand it, or who did not possess that reach of knowledge necessary to verify so vast a theory. It certainly showed originality and great capacity in combining the limited electrical knowledge which was then existing, and his book had the merit of inspiring many persons to think and enquire upon such subjects. His son has been for many years honourably connected with the newspaper press of Birmingham. Mr. Mackintosh was a ready and animated speaker, with a faculty for vivid and humorous scientific illustration. He ultimately perished in Ottawa, being drowned, bathing in the river in the cold season.

Mr. Alexander Campbell was an earnest, angerless advocate of Co-operation. He was, as most of the co-operative missionaries were, early connected with trade unions, and in Scotland he was a trusted leader among the men all his earlier years of active life. He shared at one time the mystic doctrines of "Being," advocated by Mr. Greaves. He was one of the vegetarians of the Concordium at Ham Common. He trusted himself among the White Quakers. Mr. Campbell is remembered with distinction as one of the managers of the Orbiston Community, under Mr. Abram Combe; one of his daughters married Mr. William Love, known

during his lifetime as the chief Liberal bookseller of Glasgow. He had the further co-operative distinction of having discovered the principle of distributing profits in stores in proportion to purchasers as early as 1829; and the principle was no doubt acted upon in some stores in Glasgow, to which he had imparted it. We shall see in the next volume that this principle was re-discovered fifteen years later in Rochdale by James Howarth. Some time before Mr. Campbell's death, which occurred recently, a presentation was made to him by his fellow-citizens in Glasgow, in acknowledgment of his long social services. He was many years connected with the *Glasgow Sentinel*, a paper established by Robert Buchanan, the social missionary. An excellent three-quarter portrait, in oil, hangs in the hall of the Secular Institute, Glasgow, of which he was a valued member and speaker.

Coventry furnished two missionaries, Dr. John Watts and Mr. John Colier Farn. Dr. Watts became distinguished for high character and remarkable practicable ability. In the days when the Central Board displayed a reaction of timidity, after the Bishop of Exeter had assailed them, he was foremost in vindicating those who came to peril through maintaining the action of free thought. When two of the editors of the "Oracle of Reason" were in prison, he volunteered to conduct, and did conduct, a defiant publication of an alarming name in order to continue public resistance to the legal suppression of speculative opinion. The repeal of the taxes upon knowledge was greatly accelerated by the lucid and powerful speeches he made in London and elsewhere upon the economical folly of those imposts. In Manchester he received a very valuable testimonial in acknowledgment of political and municipal services rendered during a long residence in that city. Among other works he has published have been several on the Economy of Co-operation, of which he has become an

original and very suggestive expositor. Mr. Farn was known as an animated lecturer, familiar alike with co-operative, trades union, and political questions. He was subsequently connected with newspaper journalism, and latterly held the position of editor of the *Co-operative News*, and still continues the same ardent and zealous worker on behalf of the principles which first brought him into distinction.

One of the pleasantest advocates of early Co-operation was Mr. Henry Jacques Jeffery, a bright, quick-speaking, energetic lecturer, distinguished for ardour and variety of exposition. Mr. Jeffery was one of those who made generous exertions for the support of his colleagues who incurred imprisonment when bigotry behaved unpleasantly to them. Mr. Jeffery was equally known in Edinburgh and London for the fervour with which he espoused social principles. He has long held a place of considerable trust in one of the greatest and most popular publishing houses in London.

Mr. John Green was one of the early lecturers, sometimes stationed at Liverpool. He was a useful rather than a distinguished advocate, and appeared to take an honest interest in the movement. My recollection of him is very distinct. Then a very young man, I had been wandering on foot for purposes of health for some three weeks, when, embarking at Liverpool for a short voyage, which, as I had never seen the sea, seemed an immense adventure, a pleasant, homely voice called out to me from the Quay, "Mr. Holyoake, Mr. Holyoake." As I had not heard my name for three weeks, I felt like Robinson Crusoe, when he was first addressed by his parrot, and thought so at the time. I was grateful to Mr. Green for that greeting. He afterwards went to America, where, before he had acquired the faculty of seeing two ways at once, necessary in that land, he was cut into two halves by a railway train. He held some official position upon the line.

Robert Buchanan was another Scotch advocate who joined the missionary propaganda of 1837. An ardent and ready speaker, he was also addicted to poetry, in which he succeeded better than any of the competitors in verse by whom he was surrounded. After the social movement subsided, Mr. Buchanan became connected with journalism, both in Glasgow and London, until his death a few years ago. His son, the Robert Buchanan of to-day, has far more than his father's genius, and is a poet of accredited reputation.

Another poet who made some noise, and obtained considerable notice among those for whom he sang, was Mr. John Garwood, whose protracted performance, "The Force of Circumstances," appeared in many numbers of the weekly publications of the party.

Mr. Eben Jones was a young poet, who made several contributions to the "New Moral World." He really could write readable verses. His poems being, like Shelley's, heretical, contributed strongly to impart that character to the party publishing them, without distinguishing them as un-official contributions.

One speaker, who was really a man of capacity, was a tailor named Robert Spiers. In social condition he, too, was a person to whom any form of the millennium would have been welcome. I first met him at the opening of a social institution at Huddersfield, at which I was to speak morning and evening; but when I saw my name in large letters, rainbow coloured, on the walls of the town, I was dazed and abashed, and did not make much of the speaking, except for one ten minutes in the evening, when I forgot the placard. I had walked from Sheffield, twenty-six miles, the preceding day, which did not conduce to energy of speech or imagination. But I well remember that Mr. Spiers, who spoke in the afternoon, he being regarded as a secondary person to the luminary who was imported to speak in the morning and evening, amazed me by the mastery of statement

which he displayed. In capacity of logical statement, not mere subtlety of sequence, but a broad obvious dependence of one part on the other, and all the parts leaving one whole impression upon the mind, I still think him the ablest lecturer we had.

Mr. Napier Bailey was a strange figure, who flitted across the social platform. He had been a Lancashire schoolmaster, and he always remained a schoolmaster. He had not a particle of imagination, but possessed more literary information than any other of his platform colleagues. He was the first and only contributor to the "Moral World" who quoted Greek. It would be a fortunate thing if everybody who knew Greek and Latin could be allowed to wear some intimation of the fact upon them, that the general public might honour them accordingly without being obliged to recognise the acquirement by quotations which, being assumed to be highly rare and interesting, are therefore presented to ordinary readers in a language they cannot understand. Mr. Bailey's article must have been delayed a fortnight while the printer in a midland town, where Greek is not the language of the inhabitants, sent to London for the necessary type. Mr. Bailey was, however, an active writer, and really communicated a great deal of interesting information to all who read or heard him. As he had far more literary knowledge than the majority of opponents in his time, he silenced more adversaries than any other lecturer by overwhelming them with quotations which they could not answer, because they could not understand them. Mr. Bailey was the writer of the "Social Reformers' Cabinet Library." He passed away suddenly from the view of men, and has never since been heard of.

Mr. G. Simkins, whose name frequently occurs in early reports of the Charlotte-street Institution, was a shoemaker by trade; a tall, pale, spare-looking man, who looked as if the old world had not done much for

him. Mr. Simkins, like most of the lecturers of that time, took the principles pretty much as he found them; but if he did not make them plainer he did not obscure them, nor compromise them by extravagance of statement.

Mr. Henry Knight was another young speaker, who after a few years of activity went to America. He wrote a series of short letters in explanation of the principles he represented as a missionary, which were by far the freshest and most interesting statement of them produced by any advocate of the time. His papers appeared under the title of "Short Essays on Socialism." Though a very young man, he had the merit of being the first lecturer who attempted to select from the collection of principles set forth by Mr. Owen those which were essential to the community scheme, that all others might be understood as private opinions merely.

Mr. J. R. Cooper, an active news agent and bookseller, of Manchester, was favourably known as a lecturer on social questions. His younger brother, Robert Cooper, became a Social Missionary. He (Robert Cooper) wrote several pamphlets chiefly on theological subjects, which had considerable sale. In later years he came into possession of a fortune which was intended for Mr. Southwell, to whom it was first bequeathed. But on his leaving for New Zealand, Mr. Fletcher, in his disappointment, bequeathed it to Mr. Southwell's chief friend and coadjutor of the "Oracle of Reason," who held Mr. Fletcher's will two years. Acting on treacherous information, which Mr. Fletcher did not know to be untrue, he altered the will in favour of Mr. Cooper, and, dying suddenly, Mr. Cooper inherited it. The giver honourably remembered Mrs. Emma Martin's children by a small legacy to each.

One of the writers who contributed most to the pleasant information and poetic amusement of the "Moral World," was a gentleman who signed himself

"Pencil'em," with a knowledge of and a taste for art, extended to literature. His verses had a pleasant sparkle of wit and humour, which often relieved the perennial disquisitions upon the Five Fundamental Facts, and Twenty Laws of Human Nature; some who have acquired distinction have owed the inspiration and practice of art to him, and he holds an official situation in which his attainments are beneficial to the nation.

Mrs. Wheeler attracted considerable attention by well-reasoned lectures, delivered in 1829, in a chapel near Finsbury Square.

Miss Reynolds was another lady lecturer who excited great admiration for her effective speaking. She afterwards became Mrs. Chapel Smith, went to America, and is understood to be the same lady who frequently writes to the *Boston Investigator*, and whose letters are dated from New Harmony, Indiana.

Among the new writers of 1835, appears one under the signature of "Kate," afterwards the wife of Mr. Goodwyn Barmby. "Kate's" papers were always fresh, pleasant, and sensible.

In 1841, Mary Hennell wrote an interesting "Outline of the various Social Systems and Communities which have been founded on the principle of Co-operation." It appeared as an appendix to Charles Bray's "Philosophy of Necessity." It has the merit of being the first, and still the only, book of its kind. Incomplete, unclassified, at once redundant and deficient, it is yet interesting. Sara Hennell, her sister, has written many works of considerable originality, of literary completeness, arrangement, and style.

Madame D'Arusmont was the most accomplished and distinguished woman, who personally identified herself with the propagation of social views. As Frances Wright, her lectures were popular both in England and America. To the United States her reputation naturally belongs. She was known as the friend and associate of General

Lafayette, and in the years when the emancipation of slaves was almost unknown, she bought lands and en-endeavoured to establish a free negro community. She was a lady of commanding presence, and a cultivated and eloquent lecturess in days when only women of great courage ventured to lecture at all. Madame D'Arusmont is reported as declaring, in 1836, in favour of the immediate abolition of Southern slavery. This occurred at Tammany Hall. Mr. J. S. Mill held her in regard as one of the most important women of her day, and pointed this out to the present writer on her last visit to England.

The most notable of all the ladies who have been lecturers among this party was Mrs. Emma Martin, who had the wit and courage of several men, and delivered lectures in the stormiest times and to the most dangerously disposed audiences. She was a small lady, of attractive expression, with dark luminous eyes, a pleasant far-reaching voice, and the most womanly woman of all the lecturesses of those times. The vivacious and mischievous "Vivian," of the *Leader*, whom the public now know, with various admiration under his own name, used to say that he disliked bony priestesses, learned in all the ologies and destitute of hips. Co-operators have not been wanting in beautiful advocates; but they remembered that wise men were not always beautiful, and they esteemed greatly a pleasant mind. Mrs. Martin studied medicine and practised with success, and during the cholera of 1849 displayed great courage, as she did in everything.

Among the well-known pioneers of the earlier period was Mr. E. T. Craig, mentioned in the story of the "Lost Communities," for the intrepidity shown by him at Ralahine. The following letter from Lady Byron to him serves to explain the diversified nature of the social work done in those days, and the respect in which Mr. Craig was held by eminent persons. The honourable

and the practical welfare Lady Byron took in promoting the interests of the humbler classes led her to give him the direction of an industrial agricultural school, which she founded at Ealing Grove, on land formerly belonging to the Duke of Newcastle. Her ladyship's letter was as follows:—

"Sir,—I had the satisfaction of receiving your letter yesterday. After Mr. Finch had informed me of the possibility of obtaining your valuable assistance I addressed you on the subject, directing my letter to Mr. Barry's residence (Glandore, Ireland), where you were supposed to be. I am, however, glad to find that you are not so far distant, and if you feel disposed to enter into the scheme, of which I send you the prospectus, I shall be happy to defray the expenses of your journey from Manchester, in order that you may communicate with the gentlemen who are engaged in the undertaking. I do not consider myself as having a right to settle anything individually as I am only one of the parties concerned, and have not the knowledge requisite to direct the arrangements of such an institution. It has, however, been my advice that the master should be found *before* the land was bought or rented (for that point is not decided), and before any of the economical details were finally determined upon; because I thought that the person chosen to conduct the establishment would be the best adviser on such questions. The locality will be within eight miles of London. The amount of funds not yet ascertained. You will therefore perceive that there is not at present an absolute certainty of the *whole* of the above plan being carried into effect; but there can scarcely be a doubt that the day-school, with land attached to it, might be speedily established if a competent director were found.

"I am strongly impressed with the belief of your possessing the energy, experience, and benevolence necessary to execute our design. The remuneration to

be afforded you must depend in part on the success and extension of the school. You will be enabled to form your own judgment if you take the trouble to come to London. I could see you either there or here, and will refer you in the first place to a friend of mine, who feels great interest in the agricultural school plan."

Mr. Craig accepted the appointment from Lady Byron, and while the buildings were being prepared he went on a commission to the continent to examine the industrial schools of Rotterdam, Switzerland, including the famous one of E. de Fellenburg, at Hofwyl, near Berne. Lady Byron's school, which he organised at Ealing Grove, on the plan pursued at Ralahine, obtained considerable distinction, and was much visited. The Duchess of Roxburgh, the Lady Lytton Bulwer, Ada Byron, Lord King, Sir William Molesworth, and Mrs. Somerville were among those who came.

In the course of this narrative it will necessarily happen that many persons will be omitted who really are entitled to a place in it. It is impossible to mention everyone, to do it would require a work so large that many persons would not buy it, or, what is worse, if they did, would never read it. There is also the difficulty which besets every writer, that whatever trouble he takes to be well informed, he will not escape giving evidence that he does not know everything. My care is to include all those whose services were most obvious and influential in the movement.

Many will remember the frequent names of Mr. Vines, and Mr. Atkinson, who is still promoting associated homes, as he did in earlier years. Mr. Alger and Mr. Braby, long actively connected with the movment; Mr. Walter Newall, long held in regard as one of the general secretaries of the central board; Mr. Nash, a familiar name to the friends of labour exchanges; Mr. Ardell, one time treasurer in community days; Lawrence Pitkeithly, of Huddersfield, alike regarded by Chartists and Socialists;

Mr. H. Constable, and earlier and later friend of the old cause; Mr. J. Cross, of Shoreditch, who lost two fortunes in his later years, and gallantly earned a third, and equally, rich or poor, worked for the promotion of social ideas; Mr. Austin, who, like Philip O'Skene, wore himself out with his enthusiasm; Robert Adair, to whom the poet Wordsworth selected to give the first appointment he bestowed when he became Her Majesty's Distributor of Stamps; and many others in the chief towns in England and Scotland might, if space permitted, be named for services by which this generation is benefited, and for which they obtain no requital.

Several of the missionaries were remarkable instances of monotony of power. As young men, they manifested sudden and unusual ability. They "struck twelve all at once," and never struck anything after. They were a sort of petrified publicists. Some of these social apostles were pleasant persons to know, but a few of the most endurable were the least worthy, inasmuch as they gave thought and talent to their cause, but did not consider how far they could advance it by giving it also the tribute of their conduct. They did not consider that their credit and connections belonged to it.

Others adorned their principles by their career; but they took, as it were, the weight of the disordered world upon their shoulders, and their earnestness always wore an air of depression. I remember only one, and he was an outlying propagandist, who had the martyr-spirit without the martyr-manner. Like Talleyrand, he waited for the hour of action, and never acted before it came. He knew that things were going round, and he watched until the turn came for him to do his part, and he did it with the full force those only can exert who have reserved their strength for the blow. He was thin, poor, and seedy; but even his seediness had a certain charm of taste, cleanness, and care. There was no seediness in his soul. His spirits were always bright.

Of the majority of these social advocates it may be said that nothing was more striking in them than the clear, strong worldly sense which they possessed. Indeed their principles and conduct refuted everything which the world commonly alleges against communists. They were innovators without hatred, advocating change without bitterness or selfishness. They were communists only that others might enjoy the fruits of their own labour, thinking little of theirs. They were materialists utterly without sensualism; dreamers clearly awake, and their vivid faith in the golden age to come was no phantasy of a morbid mind, and with the importation of a severe experience, manly courage, energy and industry, which never forgot that the brighter future of a new social world had to be won by prudence, by patience, by self-denial, and by toil.

Mr. Fleming challenged Mr. Richard Carlile to discussion; Mr. Lloyd Jones also met him. Mr. Green challenged a Mr. Halliwell, of Oldham. Mr. Haslam "challenged all the ministers of the Gospel in the country," and other missionaries challenged everybody else who had been omitted. Mr. Booth has collected statistics of the propagandist activity of this party from 1839 to 1841. In two years and a half two millions of tracts were circulated. At Manchester one thousand were distributed at public meetings every Sunday. In London forty thousand were given away in one year. During the Birmingham Congress half a million were dispersed. Fifty thousand copies of Mr. Owen's manifesto in reply to the Bishop of Exeter were sold. The outline of the rational system was translated into German, Polish, and Welsh. At one meeting £50 was received for the sale of pamphlets. During one year fifty formal discussions were held with the clergy. During another 1,450 lectures were delivered, of which 604 were upon theology and ethics. Three hundred and fifty towns were regularly visited by missionaries, and the

country was divided into fourteen missionary districts. This was genuine propagandist activity and intrepidity displayed. If collision of thought leads to enlightenment the co-operators certainly promoted it. Every hall in the kingdom that could be hired resounded with debate; the corner of every street had its group of disputants; every green and open place where speakers could hold forth was noisy with controversy; no fireside was silent; pulpits were animated; the press abounded with articles. Unitarians, who in those days were less Evangelical than now and mercifully helpful of secular improvement, and at all times more liberal than any other English sect, often opening their chapels and schoolrooms to lectures, and even discussions. Often social lectures had to be delivered in the streets, in the market place, and often in some field belonging to some fearless friend of free opinion in the town. Though most of the social reformers were total abstainers they were glad to occupy rooms in the most disreputable public-houses. Respectable innkeepers were afraid of their customers, or afraid of the licensing magistrates, who commonly threatened them with the loss of their license. The leading advocates of temperance had, therefore, often to go down obscure, filthy, miserable passages, jostling against beery people frequenting the house.

Theologians would accept an act of liberality from others, but would not show it in return. When the Rev. Edward Irving and his followers were deprived of their own church, they were admitted into the Gray's Inn Institution; but when the co-operators wanted to hold a meeting only in the schoolroom of the Rev. J. Innes, of Camberwell, a minister of the same church, they were refused it. It was frequently the lot of the social advocates to find themselves in the streets; sometimes they met in an old barn, or a back room, lying far down a mysterious court, where the audience could ill find their way, and had often more trouble to get out

than get in. Persons were often sent to break up the meeting by violence, when it ended with a free fight within, and a general attack outside on leaving the place. The ascent to the lecture room was often up a ricketty ladder, with a penny candle outside, which was always blowing out, to indicate to the public the Hole in the Wall, through which they were to enter. Inside, two or three miserable candles, stuck up among the rafters with soft clay, shed flickering and precarious light over the wretched interior. The lecturer (on the subject of the New World) had to stand upon an old table, which, when he mounted it, was discovered to have but three legs, which was generally propped up by some enthusiastic disciple, who put his knee under it; but when he was carried away by some point which his friend on the table made successfully, he joined in the applause, which often needed assistance, altered his position, and let the orator down. These were the circumstances under which the speedy coming of the millennium was often announced. In one respect, the circumstances were not unfavourable, as most persons present were convinced that something of the kind was wanted. In some towns a desolate theatre was the only place that could be obtained, and it was sometimes necessary, as in Whitehaven, when the present writer lectured there, to fortify it the day before the lecture, and to select, as a sort of body guard to the lecturer, those converts to the new views who had the thickest heads, in the event of bludgeons being employed; and as an audience would threaten to assemble with stones in their pockets, I left my friends in the wings, and presented myself on the platform alone, judging that only good marksmen would be able to hit a single target. Mr. Owen, Mr. Alexander Campbell, and other lecturers incurred far more serious danger. The pulpit public either did not believe in, or did not care for the improvements offered to them, and often made

things unpleasant to the proposers. Sometimes the lecture room was situated, as in Leeds, over a series of butchers' shops, which in summer time gave a carnivorous odour to the principles promulgated above. It was a common thing to find the place of meeting over a stable, when a stranger entering would be struck by the flavour of the principles before hearing them explained.

Two movements of great hope failed through very opposite conduct, the associative colonies and the mechanics' institutions. The co-operators opened their doors to all sorts of discussion, and the mechanics' institutions closed theirs against all. As social speakers welcomed all comers, they had to encounter a strange assortment of adversaries. Now and then a fat disputant appeared, and very welcome his presence was. We never had a large speaker among our advocates, which was a great disadvantage. It would have suggested a well-fed system. Obesity has weight in more senses than one. A fat look is imposing. A mere self-confident turn of a rotund head has the effect of an argument. An attenuated visage always seems illogical to the multitude, while a mellow voice rolls over an audience like a drum. True, it was mere sound and not sense, but it drowned all that had been said by the squeaking logician in the corner. A pallid face is fatal to an unpopular cause; as a green veil is to a white-faced woman—causing the bevelled nose to appear like the receding extremity of a spermaceti candle—so a lean-visaged orator bespeaks a hungry cause. The thinking socialists were of the Cassius order—lean.

The faithfullest followers of a prophet are commonly the foggiest, and Mr. Owen was not destined to escape the common lot. Certainly his mantle, which fell on some of his disciples, proved to be of a very hazy texture. They had geniality, but not perspicacity. They were not the pillar of fire which guided by night, but the pillar of cloud seen by day, encouraging but not instructive.

The early advocates, like many others, who have done the world some service, and made a lasting name in it, were better inspired than informed. Many of them had no more notion than Jesus had of political economy, or the Apostles of the manufacturing system, and often talked beside the time and needs of the day. It was, nevertheless, freely owned that the missionary representatives of Mr. Owen's views not only held their own but made important captures from the enemy. Mr. Owen himself, who, although he had relinquished public life, continued a most untiring travelling advocate of the time; and his addresses were undoubtedly successful, and excited both interest and enthusiasm wherever he appeared, though in the public discussions in which he engaged, if he disregarded the arguments of his adversary, it was not because he was unable to meet them, but because he thought the exposition of his own views more important to mankind. When adversaries appeared after his lectures, he always proved equal to returning a prompt and effective reply. For instance, when lecturing at Edinburgh in 1838, one of the acute opponents, always to be met with in that city, derided Mr. Owen's statement, that human beings could be trained to believe anything, ever so absurd and contradictory. "Is it possible," demanded the sharp-tongued querist, "to train an individual to believe that two and two make five?" "We need not, I think," said Mr. Owen, "go far for an answer. I think all of us know many persons who are trained to believe that three make one, and think very ill of you if you differ from them." This was a good instance of his repartee, for the answer seemed most obvious when it was made, but it occurred to nobody till it was given.

The missionaries who had no prestige as philanthropists had to bear the unpleasant construction put by vicious adversaries upon their ill-contrived statements. For them what could be worse than to sail out before the

world with the burden of a doctrine which neither blamed nor blessed. To the good it gave no encouragement; while the knave would, until he was undeceived, take advantage of it. It was no uncommon thing for an adverse hearer to be very offensive, and plead that "he was the creature of circumstances, over which he had no control," when a vigorous adherent of ready wit would reply—"that's very true, we are all in the same case, and your behaviour is a circumstance which compels me to knock you down,"—and in a moment the adversary would be reflecting on the floor that, while social doctrine devised and tried the best conditions it could to induce a man to be agreeable it did not hesitate to divert or arrest him when he was offensive. The audiences encountered were often curiously composed. Anon a disputant shot like a meteor over the darkness of debate. Some men's thoughts are like matches, they ignite by the mere attrition of sentences, and throw light on the dim places of an argument. Other men's never ignite at all. Some have fusee ideas, and smoulder merely. Others have tar minds, and give out more odour and smoke than flame. Now and then a man would get up and strike his arguments together like the old flint and tinder box, producing more noise than sparks. Occasionally a speaker burnt with a strong, steady, flame of speech, which both lighted and warmed everyone, and the hearer was inspired, and saw clearer ever after. There are hearers with India rubber minds, which stretch with a discourse. Some understandings are like porcelain, and crack if you hit them with a strong syllogism—and the parts never unite any more. There are speakers whose influence, if not their intellect, is in their throats, and their wild, strong, musical cadences charm the ear. They who listen do not well know what they have said, and they do not know themselves, and do not need to know. Their speech is applauded like a song, of which

no one knows the words. Others speak like a railway whistle, and impart knowledge and the headache together. The scatter-brained men would come forward in force, and some with no brains at all. Not unfrequently a disputant did not know what the point was he was replying to; or if he did, his speech, like Mrs. Gamp's, went elsewhere, and not there. We had all sorts of opponents, lay and clerical. Some would swell the truth until the audience thought there was something the matter with it; others thinned it until it seemed in a decline, or dislocated it; while the rough-handed made it appear out of joint. Violent hands were laid upon it, and unskilful or knavish manipulators so used it that its statement no longer answered the purposes of veracity.

Most people are a little mad, and are inclined to take a poetic view of life: and so long as they keep their feet upon the earth they are the most agreeable persons to know. There is infinite amusement in them. Their innovatory vivacity renders progress brilliant—when they leave the earth it is not worth while looking up in the air after them. There was nothing lost when they left us below, and there is nothing to gain until they alight. There used to be whole meetings in which there were no persons on the ground, they were all up above. A man thoroughly sane is a very interesting person. He stands firm upon the earth, and you know where to find him. He sees things exactly as they are, and the people who do that are very rare. They are the spectacles of their friends, enabling the dim or dazed to look discerningly and steadily at what is before them. A wise man consults the same seeing man as he would a telescope when he wishes to make out the danger appearing in the uncertain distance.

It is one of the lessons of party experience to perceive that the loftiest precepts have but small force, except they are addressed to minds with a basis of kindred

conviction in them. As a rule hearers need to be educated to receive them. Only partial results ought to have been expected until this was done, whereas no doubt was entertained of the immediate and permanent effect of right principles. It was thought that reason would operate at once, and for ever influence the mind which apprehended it. It was not foreseen that only very powerful minds act on principles from energy of personal insight. New opinion is a burden which few men continue to bear unless they are instructed in all its disadvantages, and enter upon the duty with their eyes fully open to what will follow. Then hostility gives them no surprise, and contempt no pain. In the enthusiastic period of a movement principles are masters of the advocates, instead of the advocates being masters of the principles. Enthusiasts push their principles against circumstances, instead of using circumstances to advance their principles. It was debate, and debate alone, that taught co-operators this lesson; and where they have learned it Co-operation advances and never goes back.

Those who peruse history for themselves will not find it difficult to discover that ignorance has at all times been the bane of national prosperity; and he who employs his understanding aright, will soon discover that even reforms may come too soon to be permanent. If proof be wanted, the history of Europe for the last forty years will supply it. A people must understand the sources of their prosperity before they can take those measures which are necessary to secure its perpetuity. Without that knowledge, though they were prosperous and happy to-day, they would be in danger to-morrow of giving their sanction to something which might speedily become the cause of their poverty and wretchedness. It does not appear that any social advocate ever produced or attempted a description of the state of society for which he pleaded, which had the merit of

arresting public attention, or lingering in the public memory.

Uncultivated off-hand advocates trusted more to a sort of Wesleyan readiness and impulse, and accomplished what they did more by fervour than by art. On the canvas on which they worked they put in some figures of great force, but they executed no finished picture of power. Cabet, who succeeded Mr. Owen in order of time, was an equable, but mild, delineator of social life; he was the most practical and coherent of French world-makers. Nothing was produced in the literature of English socialism comparable to the writings of Louis Blanc.

At times, we had learned lecturers appear among us. Some of a legal turn of mind, and some who were lawyers, who endowed the new system with attributes of categorical profundity, which held us all in amazement. There was, in what they said, a protracted coherence, an illimitable lucidity, which compelled ordinary hearers to fall from the line of proof on the way, exhausted, despairing, and enthusiastic.

More or less these advocates were propagandists. Some clearly understood what that meant, and endeavoured to fulfil that duty. Very few people understand what it implies. None ever choose to be propagandists of new and unfriended opinion—to which powerful interests, and no less powerful social habits, and even existing social necessities are opposed—unless he be a person of courage, industry, and self-denial. It is the most unprofitable business that any one can follow. In the case of new thought as to life, duty and the expectation of the future, two immense obstacles stare the propagandist in the face, namely: 1. Most people do not like to think at all. 2. They do not like the new thinking when they do think. People who have minds mostly have their minds made up already, and those who have no minds to make up are still more difficult to

deal with. You cannot convert vacuity; and you have to create mind by teaching the very elementary principles of thinking.

If a man's mind moves on some hinge of prejudice you have not only to provide that it turn on some pivot of principle, but to show that higher confidence and satisfaction will follow from that action than the prejudice gave him. In Co-operation new objects, new feelings, new habits had to be proposed. Men had to be shown that their welfare and security were best attained by an arrangement of business which gave equal advantages to others. This was the new object which none would entertain who had not good feeling towards others; and good feeling of this working kind does not come by impulse but by reflection, and requires a good deal of cultivation then to make it permanent. Then alone it becomes a habit of action, and a habit of action no one need be told never exists in civilisation, on any large scale, unless it pays. To make it pay is a matter of business devices which have economy for their means and gain for their end. As these devices in Co-operation are never to contradict good intent, honesty and equity must be insisted upon; and to insist on these with any success the propagandist must be himself clean handed.

A propagandist is an agent of ideas, a cause of change, a precursor of progress, possibly a ruler of the future. To do his work well, he must have some mastery of his own language, for grammar is merely the law and policy of intelligibility in speech. He must know enough of rhetoric to be able to set his facts in the order in which they can be seen as he sees them; and enough of logic to enable him to reason upon his facts, when he has set them forth, else their purport can never be enforced. The practical effect of grammar is economy in speech; the practical effect of rhetoric is economy in comprehension; the practical effect of logic is

economy in thinking; and an advocate of Co-operation, whose commercial merit is economy, should show economy in his advocacy. He has to remember that his life is an argument. A man may give good advice who never intended to follow it, or may be incapable of following it, as a finger-post may point the right way though it never moves in that direction. But he who is seen to do himself what he counsels, will always have more influence over men than those who say one thing and do another. There is a sin of consistency when a man professes opinions after he sees their error, not liking to own his altered convictions. But consistency between conviction and conduct is a very different thing. It is ever a duty to others, who may be misled by observing our conduct. Inconsistency between belief and practice is hypocrisy, whether before man or God. Consistency is often inconvenient, but a propagandist has no choice. He who urges others to be true, must be true himself. He cannot advise zeal, and spare himself. Hence he must be at the service of the principles he proposes to advance to the extent of his strength. He has to be frugal in all things as far as his health permits, lest he gives adversaries impressions of insincerity. The Italian proverb says, thoughtfully, "Beware of being too good." There seems that no harm could come of that. But it may come. When a man acts disinterestedly among others who do not they will disbelieve him, for none believe heartily in what they do not feel capable of themselves; and these persons, finding the just conduct of others a reproach to themselves, decry it, and, being the majority, they get believed for a time. A propagandist must take this as he takes other risks, and do the best he can. He will be believed in the end if he keeps doing the right thing to the best of his power. He will have worse troubles than this before him. Social annoyances, obloquy, and personal peril may overtake him; for innovators are counted

conceited, impertinent, and offensive; and, when they begin to succeed, dangerous. So that a propagandist should either incur no family obligations or count upon the pain of involving them in consequences of his own convictions, which they may not share, and yet will have to bear the penalty, and he be helpless to prevent it. The wife and children may be nobly willing to share any consequences which may result through the father maintaining his convictions, and count the bearing of an honest name an honourable inheritance. But these cases are not common. Privation, the consequence of social exclusion, comes in so many ways that, however bravely borne, it must be painful to the propagandist to contemplate. Long after he is dead his opinions may have to be borne like a brand by those less proud or less strong than he to bear it. He who chooses to embark his life in the service of mankind must make up his mind to this; and he had better know it from the beginning. There is the high pride and satisfaction which comes from discharging a self-chosen and difficult duty. There, too, may come regard and honour, before which all days of peril and labour pale in the memory; but these are happy accidents on which no man may count.

There will, therefore, be but one feeling of respect for the forerunners of co-operative opinion, who, arising in times of tumult and ignorance, mostly themselves self-educated, explained with such generous industry and vindicated with so much courage, those new principles of industrial organisation which promise power without displacement, and prosperity without revolution, to the people of England.

The reader will find it difficult to recall to his recollection any new school of thinkers in modern times, in Europe or America, which has inspired so many men of the working class, and so great a variety of the more cultured class, as the school of Social Improvers, whose

careers and fortunes we have now followed through the Pioneer Period. The seed cast upon the waters by these active advocates has brought forth wonderful fruit after many days, as the reader will see in the next volume. The school has grown, their ideas have extended, their influence every year augments. They fought not for their own hand, but for the hand of the people. They taught the new doctrine of self help, and preached industrial emancipation. Their object was to enable the common people to obtain common competence, without molesting the peaceful, or injuring the interest of any other class; and in this they have greatly succeeded. Milton, who had a militant spirit, who could not think of heaven without thinking of the fighting there, whose spirit strode the earth in stormy times, understood better than most men, as he wrote—

> Peace hath her victories,
> Not less renowned than those of war.

And this is the victory the Social Pioneers won; Louis Blanc, in his most striking work on the "Organisation of Labour," began with the impassioned cry, "Christ has come; but when cometh salvation." It has been this long-promised, much-needed, long-delayed, material salvation, which these social propagandists have brought.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### FORGOTTEN WORKERS.

By my hearth I keep a sacred nook
For gnomes and dwarfs, duck-footed waddling elves
Who stitched and hammered for the weary man
In days of old. And in that piety
I clothe ungainly forms inherited
From toiling generations, daily bent
At desk, or plough, or loom, or in the mine,
In pioneering labours for the world.
—*George Eliot*, "The Minor Prophet."

THE reader who has followed this story thus far has arrived at the close of the Pioneer Period of Co-operation. If the character of my narrative is not wholly what the reader expected, I can only hope that he will have patience with my purpose, which has been to write for the information of the public, and not less for the instruction and advantage of co-operators, so far as the moral of my story can serve them. There have been, I trust, incidents enough related to show to the reader the personal and economical character of this remarkable industrial movement. More detail might weary him without increasing the quality of the premises upon which he must form his conclusions. My difficulty has been what to select from the abounding materials which so long a period of activity have naturally furnished. In my narration I have thought it right to include principles and conflicts, ideas and aims, as well as struggles and incidents. I have concealed no subject, no sentiment, which is a legitimate and relevant part of the story. I have written no passage, I have stated no

proposition, which has not agitated the co-operative ranks a hundred or a thousand times within my own experience. I have wished to interest the public, I have desired yet more to interest co-operators. What the public will think of them eventually will depend not so much upon what are their aims as what they accomplish; not so much upon what they profess as upon what they do. And this will be apparent when I come to describe the Constructive Period of Co-operation in the next volume. The Pioneer Period is the period in every great movement which best displays the aims and errors, the generosity of service, the impulse of passion, the mistakes of policy, the quality and force of character, of leaders and followers. In many movements in which I have taken a personal part, and of which I have read in history, nothing seems to me more palpable or mournful than the way in which the same errors are repeated, the same mistakes are made, the same passions rage, the same digressive contests are engaged in, until, finally, the same disasters close upon once hopeful and inspiring enterprises. No man who has passed a long and busy life among struggling movements, and counted the weary years of labour spent in them, but must have one abiding conviction—that nearly all the errors which were fatal arose from the rank and file of persons engaged in the work never having been clearly told of the nature of what they were doing. Twenty men err from pure ignorance where one errs from wilfulness or incapacity. How often I have heard others exclaim, how often have I exclaimed myself, when a foolish thing had been said, or a wrong thing had been done, why did not some one who had had this experience before tell us of this. How many books have I read, how many speeches have I heard, in which neither writer nor speaker thought of the men and women who hung upon their words for light and guidance, whose lives were wasting, whose days were shortening, whose exertions would bear no fruit,

whose hopes would never be realised, and who have at last turned away with minds occupied but not inspired, because in the mind of the writer or speaker thought was divorced from action. My endeavour has been to write what might personally influence co-operators and convince them that they should master clearly, and hold fast openly, and hold fast always, a policy of truth, toleration, relevance, and equity, respecting others and respecting themselves.

The unremembered workers, so nobly regarded in the words of the poetess placed at the head of this chapter, have abounded in the social movement. Less fortunate than the religious devotee, who sails more or less with the popular current which favours those who row ever so eccentrically on the theological side, the social innovator had no friends. The rulers distrusted him. His pursuit of secular good caused him to be ill-spoken of by the spiritual authorities, and he had, in all the earlier years of his career, no motive to inspire him, save the desire of doing good to others; since his own good would be best answered by his attending to his own interests, as his adversaries did to theirs. Therefore the services rendered by this class of persons deserve acknowledgment. Too much is not to be made of those who die in discharge of well understood duty. In daily life numerous persons run risks of a like nature, and sometimes perish through their protest against mischievous opinion, as well as by their acts of personal help rendered to unfriended movements. They have no reward, save that experienced in the noble impulse which animates them. Yet such acts may be distinguished, remembered, and honoured for the encouragement of manful service of the truth. To know how to estimate those who stand true, we must take into sight those who never stand at all—who, the moment loss or peril is foreseen, crawl away like vermin into holes of security. These are the rabbit-minded reformers, who flee at the first sound of danger, who

wait to see a thing succeed before they join it. These people amount to crowds. Those who flee a struggling cause are a great army compared with those who fight.

To make up your mind to work hard, to owe nothing, and expect nothing, save as the result of your own endeavour, is the sign of honest, courageous, self-trust. The world of men as a whole is not brutal nor cold. It is like the aspects of nature: parts, large parts, are sterile, bleak, inhospitable; yet, even there, the grandeur of view and majestic grimness delight the strong soul that takes time to look at them. In other parts of physical nature—warmth, light, foliage, flowers, make glad and gay the imagination. So in society—strong, tender, wise men will give discriminating aid to strugglers below them; strugglers, indeed, perish unhelped, ofttimes because they are unnoticed rather than because of the inhumanity of the prosperous. There are, of course, as experience too well tells, men who do not want to help others; while there are more who do not help, simply not knowing how. But there are others, and it is honest to count them, whom affluence does not make insensible, and who feel as the poor for the poor.

The agitation for giving to working-men competence and rational character had for leaders many disinterested gentlemen who not only meant what they said on behalf of this movement, but were prepared to give, and did give, their fortunes to promote it. There was not a man of mark among them who expected to, or tried to, make money for himself by these projects of social improvement. Some, as Abram Combe and William Thompson, gave not only money but life. Others absolutely divested themselves of their fortunes in the cause. They indeed believed that they were founding a system of general competence, and that such share as was secured to others would accrue to them; and with this prospect they were content. Some of them might have possessed stately homes and have commanded deference by the

splendour of their lives, but they generously preferred common happiness with the many to splendour with the few. And when their disinterested dream was not realised, their fortune squandered, and disappointment, derision, and penury overtook them, as happened to some of them, they never regretted the part they had taken, and died predicting that others would come after them, who, wiser and more fortunate than they, would attain to the success denied to them. Thus there have been gentlemen connected with co-operation who were not wanting in the spirit of self-sacrifice, and who died, like Mr. Cowell Stepney, of caring for everybody's interest but their own.* This is not at all a common disease in any class, and takes very few people off. Yet none are remembered with the reverence accorded to those who die these disinterested deaths. Were their services understood in their time they would receive honour exceeding that which the successful win who are greeted by—

> The patched and plodding citizen,
> Waiting upon the pavement with the throng,
> While some victorious world-hero makes
> Triumphal entry; and the peal of shouts
> And flash of faces, 'neath uplifted hats,
> Run like a storm of joy along the streets!
> He says, "God bless him!" almost with a sob,
> As the great hero passes: He is glad. . . .
> 'Tis glory shed around the common weal,
> And he will pay his tribute willingly,
> Though with the pennies earned by sordid toil.
> Perhaps the hero's deeds have helped to bring
> A time when every honest citizen
> Shall wear a coat unpatched.†

Throughout this history, therefore, I strive to write words of honour of those who, able to help forward this

* Eldest son of Sir Cowell Stepney, who, until his death, attended all the co-operative and international congresses of working-men wherever held, and who corresponded with all the social reformers of the world, and sent them every publication bearing upon the movement.

† "A Minor Prophet," by Geo. Eliot.

movement of the people, accorded to it no barren wishes of success, but gave their fortunes to strengthen it. But before I close the final chapter of this volume other words are due to the memory of humbler and yet more unnoted promoters of Co-operation. Ignoring certain noisy adherents, who infest every movement, whose policy is conspicuousness, and whose principle is "What they can get;" who seek only to serve themselves, and never, except by accident, serving anybody else; who clutch at every advantage, without giving one grateful thought, or even respectful word, to those whose persistency and labour have created the advantage they enjoy—my concern is not for this order of adherents, whose very souls are shabby, and who would bring salvation itself into discredit were it extended to them. My last care is for the honest, unobtrusive workers. These are they who drudged, without ceasing, in the "cause"—who devoted the day of rest to correspondence with unknown enquirers—who spent their strength, and as far as it would go, their means, in journeying to distant villages and towns, lecturing or explaning co-operative views, so that they might stir up the helpless to act upon them. They poured out their time, and health, and thought—which made up their wealth—without stint and without conditions to all who sought it, or might profit by it. The just-minded took it with gratitude, knowing at what peril it was given; the selfish took it as their right, never asking at what cost it was accorded, nor seeking in any way to requite it. Knowing that self-help meant self-thinking, and that no deliverance would come if the people left it to others to think for them by proxy—these advocates counted it a first duty to awaken in their fellows the inspiration of self action. But in thus making themselves so far the Providence of others, the most generous of them had no time left to be a Providence to themselves, and not a few of them perished, as those mostly

do who fail herein. But it is not for us to forget the self-forgetting, whose convictions were obligations, and whose duty was determined by the needs of others. During the sixty years over which this history travels there have been compeers of the pioneers here described who, less able to advise and to guide, drudged also during what hours fell to them after their days' work was done in stores, hours which should have been given to rest and to their families. They travelled from street to street, or from village to village, on Sundays, to collect the pence which started the stores. They gave more than they could afford to support periodicals, which never paid their conductors, for the chance of useful information thus reaching others. They sacrificed the subordination and influence of home in the service of an unregarding public, in the generous hope that other homes, less fortunate than their own, might come one day to know the consolations of competence. For themselves, they reaped in after days dismay and disregard at their own fireside, for their disinterested and too ardent preference of other interests than their own. There were others who gave their nights to the needful but monotonous duties of committees, and to speaking at meetings at which few attended, returning late and weary to cheerless rooms—who lost their situations in consequence of their principles—who, while teaching others to save, sacrificed themselves all prospects of saving a little money for their old age; who wore themselves out prematurely, and died at last unattended in obscure lodgings, lingering out their uncheered days, on the precarious bread occasionally sent them by some one who happened to remember that they were benefiting by the forlorn peril which had brought the old propagandists low. Not a few of them, after speeches of fiery protest on behalf of independence, and noble pride in councils of self-help, in political movements to which they were also attracted, spent months and years in the indignity

of prison, and at last died on a poor-house bed, and were laid in a pauper's grave.* I have met their names in every struggling periodical advocating social and political progress, and at the chief meetings reported of this nature. They took the peril, they bore the scorn, they made no terms for themselves, and no one thought of making any terms for them. Many of them were my comrades in this work. Foreseeing their fate, I often tried to mitigate their devotion. I stood later by the dying bed of some of them, and spoke at the burial of many. They lie in unremembered graves. They never heard the first cry of confidence at assured victory raised by their successors. It was denied to them to see the signs of its approach. Their fate, however, is not to be mourned over; it is, when necessary, to be imitated. No tongue has spoken their praise, no pen has cleared

* One might give many instances. One is that of George White, of Bradford, who died in the poorhouse, in Sheffield. Had I known of his death at the time I would have asked Mr. Hardy, who was then Home Secretary, for leave to remove his body and lay it by the side of Holberry, the Chartist, who died in prison and was burried with public honour in Sheffield. Tory though Mr. Hardy is, I think he would have given the order. White was well known to his father, who had some respect for the vigorous and turbulent Irish Chartist. We were both in prison at the same time, and it was arranged that he who was out first, his wife should make pies and take to the other. As I was at liberty first, many savoury pies found their way to White's prison. I have no doubt he died dreaming that more pies were coming to him, for he died very desolate. For years, if danger threatened us in public meeting, George White brought up his Old Guards. On one occasion, when the great discussion in which the Birmingham Socialists were concerned, White's detachment of the Old Guards attended five nights, and, although poor men, paid for admission to the best places; and when the final fray came the respectable belligerents in every part of Beardsworth's Repository found a strong-handed Chartist behind him, and the enemy found themselves outside the hall on their way home before they knew where they were. George White gave the signal to the Old Guards from the platform, where he and his trusty colleagues did execution among the clerical rioters there, who, when the police were introduced, had all disappeared. Honour to the generous Old Guards, who stood up for fair play although they were not partisans of the doctrines in dispute. Sometimes the co-operative seed had to be sown on turbulent ground.

their lives of the contempt which an undiscerning and brutal respectability cast over them. But there was an inspiration in their career which has quickened the pulses of industry. Though the distant footfall of the coming triumph of their order never reached their ear, they believed not less in its march. They knew knowledge, and patience, and purpose would bring conviction and success, and they sowed seed with earnest voice and untiring hand, and were not dismayed when it was trodden over before their eyes. They never lost their trust in the vitality of truth. Far more than they who gave of their abundance, which brought them applause; far more than they who gave of their wisdom, which won them fame, do I honour those who worked, though they obtained neither plaudit nor repute, who listened and laboured unrequited; who by their vigorous and unselfish zeal taught their order by their example the possibility of self-help, and made the movement—of which I venture to write the history—what it is.

# INDEX OF HEAD-LINES.

*FOR ADDITIONAL TOPICS SEE GENERAL INDEX.*

[The reader will find a Head-Line Index and a General Index. The object of both is, not merely to indicate subjects for the purpose of reference, but in most cases to summarise the principles illustrated of the History—serving the purpose of Exposition as well as Reference.]


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END OF VOL. I.

# CO-OPERATIVE ADVERTISEMENT SHEET.

[*These Advertisements are inserted to Represent the leading Co-operative Distributing and Manufacturing Societies, Banks, and Agencies, as far as they could be collected in time for the present volume, to which are added short Trade Lists of Works of Trubner and Lippincott, the English and American Publishers.*]

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The "News" is the property of a Federation of Co-operative Societies located in all parts of Great Britain. It is an exponent of opinion, thoroughly impartial and comprehensive, upon all subjects connected with Association, particularly in its application to the Distribution and Production of Wealth. It is a free platform for the discussion of topics bearing upon the social well-being of the people, and affords an opportunity for the expression of every view of Co-operation, which recommends itself as thoughtful and sincere.

It aims at becoming *the paper* for the working man, by embracing every subject interesting to him in his daily life, and falls short of the attainment by reason chiefly of the limitations of its space, which a more extended circulation would enable the proprietors to enlarge.

The importance of maintaining a vehicle for the conveyance of co-operative intelligence cannot be overrated. Each Society is invited to become a shareholder, and every individual co-operator is solicited to subscribe.

The "News" may be had by application to any bookseller, through the Local Store, or from the Offices of the Society, 9 and 10, City Buildings, Corporation-street, Manchester. Price 1d. weekly.


## HEBDEN BRIDGE

## Fustian Manufacturing Co-operative Society

LIMITED

*Enrolled September 1st, 1870.*

**Shares £1 each. Societies enrolled as Members.**

Co-operative Societies may ensure the purchase of a sound article at an ordinary price from the above Society. Seven-and-a-half per cent per annum to share capital, and no second division; the remainder of the profits to labour and trade, at an equal rate per £.

CORDS, MOLESKINS, VELVETEENS, and TWILLS, in every variety, promptly supplied.

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N.B.—The Society has purchased an estate which is in every way calculated for carrying out its business. We have already commenced Dyeing, and are prepared to Cut, Dye, and Finish all kinds of Cords, Moles, and Twills, at reasonable terms, which may be had on application.

Nut Clough, July, 1875.

**Agents: North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society, 1, Balloon-street, Manchester, and Pudding Chare, Newcastle; the Scottish Wholesale Co-operative Society, Paisley Road, Glasgow; and the Central Co-operative Agency, 28, Wardour-street, Oxford-street, W.**

THE ROCHDALE DISTRICT

# CO-OPERATIVE CORN MILL SOCIETY

LIMITED.

## MILLERS AND MALTSTERS.

This Society was established in 1850 to enable Co-operative Societies and co-operators generally to procure genuine and wholesome Flour at a reasonable price.

Its trade has steadily increased, in spite of the prejudice and difficulties it has had to contend with, and its present turn-over is a quarter of a million sterling annually.

## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION.

THE

# Mississippi Valley Trading Company

LIMITED

*Incorporated under the Companies Acts 1862-67.*

**SHARES £1 EACH. Payable on application, 2s. 6d.; on allotment, 2s. 6d.; remainder by instalments of 5s., at intervals of three months.**

*Original Capital £100,000, with power to increase to £2,500,000.*

Profits, after paying Eight per cent dividend, to be shared ratably between Capita and Trade.

N.B.—The business of the Company will not be commenced, except by a resolution of a Special Meeting of the English Shareholders, unless at least £25,000 of capital is subscribed in England, and an equal sum in America.

Resolution of the Seventh Annual Co-operative Congress, held in London, March 29, 30, and 31, 1875, on the motion of Thomas Hughes, Esq., Q.C., seconded by Mr. J. Crabtree, of Heckmondwike, and carried unanimously.—

"That this Congress is of opinion that the time has come for the inauguration of a system of International Exchange between the Co-operators of England and the Mississippi Valley, and recommends the plan proposed to be carried out by the Mississippi Valley Trading Company to the support of this Union.

Copies of the prospectus, forms of application for shares, lists of the Local Agents of the Company, and every other information may be obtained on application to

JOSEPH SMITH, SECRETARY *pro tem.*

9 & 10, City Buildings,
Corporation Street, Manchester.

"There is much in the scheme which shows a nice discrimination of the laws that regulate commerce, a just appreciation of the vast resources of the Valley of the Mississippi, and a sound practical view of the value of close relations with this fertile region. There is bold enterprise in it, and great wisdom shown in the choice of the sphere for its operation. We shall watch with interest the progress of the Company."—*Monetary and Mining Gazette.*

# The Agricultural and Horticultural (Co-operative) Association Limited,

## 47, MILLBANK STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

GOVERNING COUNCIL FOR 1873-1874.

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1st.—Complete protection against adulterations, short weights, admixtures of qualities, and other frauds on buyers.

2nd.—Supply of Manures, Seeds, Oil Cakes (and other feeding stuffs), Implements and Machinery, Coals, Groceries, and other Farm, Garden, and Household requisites at fair prices.

3rd.—Relief from vexatious overcharges for freights, cartages, warehouse rents, sack hire, and railway carriages, the Association delivering free to rail or free to a Member's station at fixed prices whenever desired.

4th.—Return, to the purchasing Members, of all the profits realised after payment of current expenses, and five per cent interest on capital. This return is now a clear half of the gross profit on each purchase.

5th.—The right to purchase articles, not supplied by the Association itself, at wholesale prices from other Co-operative Societies in alliance with the Association, or from respectable manufacturers and merchants with whom the Association has negociated beneficial arrangements.

6th.—Five per cent per annum interest paid quarterly out of the reserved profits to Members on their investments in the capital fund, however large or small.

7th.—No liability beyond the sum invested in the Association, whether £1, £10, £100, or £1,000.

8th.—Facilities for withdrawal of capital whenever necessary, subject to conditions as to notice, &c., ensuring the safety, stability, and permanence of the Association.

9th.—A copy of the *Agricultural Economist* (organ of the Association) sent post free, monthly, advising Members of all variations in markets, and of current prices of goods at London, Liverpool, Hull, and other ports and centres of supply.

10th.—Greatly reduced rates for analyses of their soil, or of Manures, Oilcakes, &c., which may be offered to Members by outside traders.

11th.—Voting power and right to attend meetings *for every Member.*

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

1st.—Five shillings per annum for the *Agricultural Economist.*

2nd.—An investment of £1 or upwards in the Capital Fund (on interest).

3rd.—Cash payments for goods to accompany orders.

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*BOOTS, SHOES, BRUSHES, &c.*

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**Agents for Dunfermline Manufacturing Society Limited; Eccles Industrial Manufacturing Society Limited; Hebden Bridge Fustian Manufacturing Society Limited; Leeds Woollen Cloth Company Limited; Lurgan Damask and Linen Co-operative Manufacturing Society Limited; and Paisley Manufacturing Society Limited.**

This Society is a federation of Co-operative Societies, and was established for the purpose of uniting their purchases, in order to enable them to go direct to the producer and manufacturer for all their requirements, and thus secure to themselves the profits of wholesale dealers. This object has been attained in many articles. Butter and Cheese is purchased from the producer in Ireland; and is also imported direct from France, Holland, and Denmark.

Share capital receives 5 per cent per annum interest. The Profits, which are divided quarterly, after paying interest on capital and working expenses, is distributed among Societies, according to their purchases—to Shareholders the full rate of dividend, to non-members only half. It is thus to the interest of Societies, and those that are Shareholders especially, to support it all that they possibly can.

One price only is charged to all Societies, the smallest purchaser being charged at the same rate as the largest.

All Goods are charged at net prices, and supplied to none but registered Societies.

A Large Stock of First-Class Groceries and Provisions always on hand.

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N.B.—Every information, by correspondence, will be communicated to assist in the formation and for the successful conducting of Co-operative Societies.

JAMES MARSHALL, Manager.

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No. 5 STORE.—Earthenware, China Toys, Washing Machines, Oil, Watches, Clocks, Gold and Silver Alberts, Chains, &c., &c., and various other Sundries at the cheapest rates.

No. 6 STORE.—Bacon, Butter, Cheese, and other Provisions of the best quality.

No. 7 STORE.—Branch Establishment at Burnopfield, where all kinds of the above Goods are sold.

No. 8 STORE.—Branch at Prudhoe-on-Tyne, where the Society sells the same class of Goods, equally cheap and of the best quality.

The Society is also member of several other Co-operative undertakings.

Any person can join the Society at any time by paying two shillings and sixpence, and paying three shillings and threepence each quarter, until they hold five shares of one pound each in the Society.

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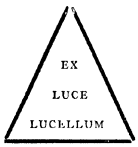
*The Office is open Daily for the Admission of Members, &c.*

PRESENT NUMBER OF MEMBERS ON THE BOOKS, 2,900.

# Coal Co-operative Society Limited.

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REGISTERED OFFICE: 47, MILLBANK STREET, LONDON, S.W.

**Established 1872. Capital in £1 Shares; One Shilling per Share at least to be paid on allotment.**

The Coal Co-operative Society supplies country Co-operative Societies by the truck-load, and London Societies by the truck-load and by retail; London and country Working Men's Clubs are also supplied wholesale and retail in London and in the country. During the year 1874 about 100 Co-operative Societies were supplied. The trade increased from £2,413 for the six months ended 30th June, 1873, to £16,963 for the six months ended 31st December, 1874. Arrangements are now being made for the supply of members of the Coal Society through the Local Co-operative Societies. After payment of a dividend not exceeding 5 per cent per annum on capital, and setting aside 2½ per cent out of surplus profits for a Propaganda Fund, surplus profits are divisible amongst shareholders according to the number of tons ordered during the year.

All classes of Coals are supplied by rail, canal, or sea.

Every information will be readily afforded on application to the Secretary. See advertisement in *Co-operative News* (City Buildings, Manchester), and *Workmen's Club Journal* (150, Strand, London).

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A CARD.

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