

The Ethical and Religious Foundations of
Socialist Politics in Britain:
The First Generation and their Ideals , 1884-1931.

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Abstract

British Socialism 1884-1931 comprised a variety of organisations and individuals, and a wide range of outlooks. Views ranged from The State Socialism of the Marxist S.D.F. to the libertarian anti-industrialism of William Morris, and the Simple Life advocacy of Edward Carpenter and groups attempting a new life-style such as the Tolstoyans and other Anarchist communities or the Fellowship of the New Life.

At the level of practical political involvement views ranged from the complete rejection of a State organisation and the appeal to innate social attitudes of some Anarchists through the pursuit of independent working-class representation by the S.D.F. and I.L.P to Fabian permeation and Socialist involvement in London Progressivism. In religion, Christian Socialism affected all but the most evangelical of the churches, while the ethical idealism of Socialism overcame many former religious differences, manifesting itself in such bodies as the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools. Devout Christian, non-Christian mystic and agnostic alike proclaimed a common adherence to Socialist ideals of communal ownership, co-operation and altruism. Though differing as to whether such ideals derived from man's natural reason or were divinely inspired, each saw in Socialism the goal of the ethical and social evolution of mankind.

This ethical idealism at the heart of British Socialism, transcended former party allegiances, appealing to many young recruits from both Liberal and Conservative backgrounds, so paving the way for the realignment of party loyalties in the years around World War I.

This thesis traces the origins of this uniquely British Socialist outlook in the changing nature of religious ideas towards the close of the 19th Century, through its chief exponents in the Socialist and Labour Movements to the period of political realignment on the Left, providing an analysis of the backgrounds and outlooks of the 417 Labour M.P.s elected prior to 1931 in order to ascertain the nature and extent of such influence on Labour's representatives in Parliament in the decades of the Party's rise to office.

Abbreviations

A.S.E.	Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
B.S.P.	British Socialist Party.
C.O.	Conscientious Objector.
C.S.B.	Christian Social Brotherhood.
C.S.F.	Christian Socialist Fellowship.
C.S.L.	Church Socialist League.
C.S.S.	Christian Socialist Society.
C.S.U.	Christian Social Union.
E.L.R.L.	English Land Restoration League.
F.N.L.	Fellowship of the New Life.
G.S.M.	Guild of Saint Matthew.
I.L.P.	Independent Labour Party.
L.C.C.	London County Council.
L.C.U.	Labour Church Union.
L.R.C.	Labour Representation Committee.
M.F.G.B.	Miners' Federation of Great Britain.
N.A.C.	National Administrative Committee.
N.C.F.	No-Conscription Fellowship.
N.U.T.	National Union of Teachers.
P.S.A.	Pleasant Sunday Afternoons.
S.D.F.	Social Democratic Federation.
S.D.P.	Social Democratic Party.
S.S.S.	Socialist Sunday School.
S.W.M.F.	South Wales Miners' Federation.
T.U.C.	Trades Union Congress.
U.D.C.	Union of Democratic Control.

INTRODUCTION

British Socialism was, from its earliest days, qualitatively different from its continental counterparts. As Egon Wertheimer (London correspondent of the German Social Democratic newspaper Vorwaerts) noted,¹ its basis, instead of being Marxist, was ethical and religious. This allowed it much greater flexibility than continental Socialism, which was characterised primarily by its theoretical rigidity and "pseudo-scientific" Marxist base. In practical policies this flexibility resulted in a greater willingness to pursue immediate goals such as the equalisation of educational opportunity, State provision of pensions (and other social welfare benefits) and the redistribution of wealth on a fairer basis through taxation. Hence the British Labour Party, as it had evolved by the mid-1920s, was able to attract to itself a support socially far wider than the purely working class, absorbing most of the more progressive elements in British politics into its own ranks and displacing the Liberal Party as the major radical alternative to Conservatism.

The organisational outlines of this process are well-known, owing much to the work of Henry Pelling, whose Origins of the Labour Party (1965) remains the standard work on the earlier years. The breakup of Liberalism in the years around the First World War, and the transfer of many former Liberals to Labour also has its

1. E. Wertheimer : Portrait of the Labour Party (1929)
esp. pp. viii - xxiv, 88-9 and 194

historians in C.A. Cline Recruits to Labour (1963) and Marvin Swartz The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics during the First World War (1971). Early Socialist organisations such as the Fabian Society, the Social Democratic Federation (S.D.F.), the Socialist League, the Anarchist groups of the 1890s and the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) have all been the subject of published research as have leading figures in the early Socialist Movement such as William Morris, H.M. Hyndman, Edward Carpenter, Robert Blatchford and the bulk of the early I.L.P. and Labour leadership. Some aspects of the history of the development of Socialist ideas in Britain have been researched, such as the influence of Marxism on the early British Socialists,² and Christian Socialism³. More recently, Stephen Yeo has drawn attention to the wider religious aspect of the movement in his article "A New Life : The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-96",⁴ and N. and J. Mackenzie have stressed the importance of ethical influences in their The First Fabians (1977). But, as yet, there has been no major study of the extent and nature of the influence of ethical and religious ideas on the development of early British Socialism as such.

2. See e.g. H. Collins "The Marxism of the Social Democratic Federation" in ed A. Briggs and J. Saville Essays in Labour History 1886-1923 (1971) and K. Willis : "The Introduction and Critical Reception of Marxist Thought in Britain 1850-1900" in Historical Journal 20 (1977) pp 417-59.
3. See especially P.d'A. Jones : "The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914 (Princeton 1968) which also has an extensive bibliography.
4. In History Workshop Journal 4 (Autumn 1977) pp 5 - 56.

Although there is much in Yeo's article with which one could take issue⁵, its very title points to the new awareness of how British Socialists of the first generation regarded the movement which they were themselves creating. As Conrad Noel, one of the young Socialist propagandists of the 1890s onwards, wrote in his Autobiography (1945), these were "the early days of Socialism before materialist Marxism had captured the movement and before Labour had become moderate and respectable", a time when, especially in the North of England, the Socialist Movement "was a distinctly religious order and Labour churches were springing up everywhere".⁶ Major elements among British Socialists, of the 1880s and 1890s in particular, and not merely those who could be regarded as Christian Socialists, viewed their movement as essentially a religious one; and many others who rejected the name 'religion' itself because of its association with the churches, sought an ethical and moral basis for their Socialist convictions.

It is the contention of this thesis that the religious and ethical nature of much British Socialist thinking in these early years of the movement was the result of powerful new trends in

5. In particular, his attempted construction of an "ideal type" of the "religion of socialism", by ignoring the specifically religious influences on the movement's founders leads to a distorted interpretation of the insistence of the early British Socialists on the ethical basis of their Socialist faith. He argues this was integral to their purpose of creating disciplined revolutionary masses, and he wrongly identifies the early Socialists' belief in the ethical evolution of mankind - which underlay their conviction of the ultimate triumph of Socialism - with a Marxist belief in the inevitable working of social forces "Towards Revolution". Ibid. esp pp 17ff and see above p
6. Conrad Noel : An Autobiography (1945) p 48.

popular religious opinion in the late 19th Century. These new intellectual currents, building on the mid-century clash of Biblical Christianity and Science, created a religious outlook which sought a new compatibility between religion and the claims of science, basing itself on the religious experience of the individual and the collective religious experience of mankind. This emphasis on personal spirituality cut across not only denominational boundaries, but also sought out the common features of religious experience in the different world religions. Its emphasis on mysticism was borne of the conspicuous failure of dogmatic Christianity to stand the test of human reason, and its appeal to the wider religious experience of mankind exactly suited, an age in which all matters of faith were subject to scientific investigation. For it was unquestionable that there was a long history of religious experiences, so-called, which cut right across cultural, racial and doctrinal barriers, and across the barriers of time. The Bible might be proved wrong on many points, but here, in the religious experience of man was one unquestionable fact, which would stand the test of scientific investigation.

A whole generation seemed set on its own spiritual pilgrimage after truth. Autobiographical accounts of this quest abound. Everywhere there was questioning, an end to old certainties, and the painful conquest of a new inner conviction. This fact has to be clearly grasped if the nature of early British Socialism is to be truly understood. Its advocates saw themselves on a great spiritual pilgrimage, missionaries of a new religious faith,

participants in a great new spiritual awakening of humanity. For some, the quest led them outside traditional views of Theism itself, but whether self-confessed agnostic, theist or christian, the ethical values to which they held, and the view of man's fundamental spiritual needs which they proclaimed, showed a remarkable similarity.

The Socialism which resulted from this centred itself in the needs and capacities of the individual. The Socialist ideal was a society in which each individual could develop his talents to the full in the service of his fellow beings. Individual self-fulfilment, so it was argued, was only possible by the pursuit of eternal values. Mere materialism and its concomitant selfishness would never truly satisfy the eternal spirit of man. Beauty, truth and goodness - Love, in man's personal and social relations - alone could meet the yearnings of the human soul. To enable men to live such a life - the only truly human existence possible - was for this generation of Socialists the goal of society, and for many it was towards this that society appeared inevitably to be moving as mankind evolved, ethically as well as materially. Altruism, service, fellowship - these were the watchwords of the new movement as it spread amongst the industrial centres of the nation, and it is these ideals which, again and again, we shall have cause to note at the heart of the thinking of the early Socialist propagandists. Within the Socialist movement it gave rise to such developments as the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools (S.S.S.s)-

conscious attempts to give religious expression to the Socialist ideal - and to the many Utopian groups associated with the movement, where people tried to live out their ideals in deliberate opposition to a society which, as they saw it, put materialism and selfish acquisitiveness - profits - before human lives.

Within the established denominations the new religious impulse gave rise to the various Christian Socialist and social Christian bodies of the period, whose members played such an important part in the early development of British Socialism. Particularly affected were the Church of England, Unitarians, Quakers and more liberal Congregationalists. There was even a Catholic Socialist Society (C.S.S.), started in Glasgow, though the Catholic hierarchy remained firmly opposed to all forms of Socialism itself. Only amongst evangelicals was there a uniform hostility to the new ideas, and it is highly significant that adherents to the traditional non-conformist churches (Methodists, Baptists and most Congregationalists) while forming a large element in the I.L.P., and producing such Labour leaders as Hardie or Snowden, contributed nothing substantial to British Socialist theory at any stage in its development. From MacDonald to Morris the theoreticians and leading advocates of British Socialism (as opposed to labourism) were all affected to a greater or lesser degree by the new religious and ethical ideals of the time. The transference of working class nonconformity from Liberalism to Labour came later, and owed less to any sympathy with Socialism

as such than to the inability of the Liberal Party to satisfy basic working-class demands and aspirations.

This thesis traces the development of this first major phase of British Socialist thought from its origins in the changed religious climate of the 1880s through its various forms until the growth of a major working class movement in the 1890s leading to the formation of the Labour Party in 1900. The focus then changes to examine the outlook of Labour's intellectual recruits from social radicalism - mainly former Liberals, but some ex-Conservatives. The religious affiliations and outlooks of those who sat as Labour M.P.s from 1906-1931 are then examined to enable an assessment to be made of the strengths of the major strands of thinking within the Parliamentary Labour Party. In conclusion an explanation is attempted of the decline in influence of this older Socialist tradition (as it was by then already regarded) in the face of newer currents of Socialist thought which had been obvious in the industrial agitation of the immediate pre-war period, but which developed particularly after the First World War and in response to such events as the Russian Revolution.

CHAPTER I : THE CHANGING NATURE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF IN LATE VICTORIAN BRITAIN
AND IMPULSES TOWARDS SOCIALISM.

(i) Introductory : the breakup of traditional dogma.

British Socialism did not arise out of an intellectual vacuum. It grew up at a time of rapidly changing conceptions of man's nature and the purpose of his individual existence. The religious climate of the 1880's and the 1890's, during which British Socialism developed as a movement, was very different to that of the mid-Century. British Socialism reflected these changes. Many of its young men were deeply influenced by them, as is obvious not only from their liberal quotation of the leading ethical and religious writers of their day, but also in their own peculiarly ethical (and often very religious) conception of the purpose of the Socialist Movement. Even those (such as the S.D.F.) who regarded themselves as 'Scientific Socialists', in conscious distinction from these developments within the Movement, were led to define their own Socialist Ethic by way of response.

An examination of these religious changes is therefore essential to an understanding of the debates within the early British Socialist Movement. The concern is, however, with ideas rather than organisations and individuals, these latter being regarded as examples and manifestations of the new outlook.

British Socialists drew inspiration from a wide range of individual writers and organisations. This chapter is thus

necessarily long if the peculiar contributions of each to the development of the thinking of the early Socialists in Britain is to be fully understood. Christian Socialism is but one manifestation of these developments. Many of the major influences went far beyond the confines of doctrinal Christianity. Yet there was a common core of accepted ideas between them. Thus leading Christian Socialist priests could proclaim their substantial agreement with the attacks of the agnostic Robert Blatchford on the traditional Christianity of most of the churches: and leading Socialists, whether Christian or otherwise, could unite in praise of Blatchford's ethical altruism, or the scientific Mutual Aid theories and concentration on human creativity of the equally agnostic libertarian Socialists, Kropotkin and Morris.

In contrast to this general movement of ideas, the contribution of the nonconformist denominations - Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists - to the central ideas of British Socialism was slight, although, as shown in chapters 6 and 7, it was from these churches that the largest numbers of Labour M.P.s, as distinct from Socialists, were drawn. Where nonconformist Socialists were active within the movement, as for example Keir Hardie and Philip Snowden in the I.L.P., the tendency was towards the assertion of traditional concerns of the "nonconformist conscience" in such matters as working class morality, drink and gambling, even at the expense of Socialist measures. Indeed for them Socialism was often seen as the necessary social counterpart to, and precondition of, individual regeneration and salvation from sin. Nevertheless, even this view marks a considerable shift from the pure

individualism of the traditional 19th Century evangelical preoccupation with conversion and personal salvation from hell.

In fact one issue on which Socialists of all shades were united was in their unanimous rejection of the traditional evangelical orthodoxy of the mid-century. In some cases, as with the leaders of the S.D.F. - Hyndman, Bax and Aveling - William Morris of the Socialist League with his disciple (and later leading I.L.P.er) J.B. Glasier, and Robert Blatchford of the Clarion, such rejection led to the attempt to construct a new secular, humanistic ethic. This was often proclaimed in direct opposition to what was referred to as "Christianity" but was in fact close to the evangelicalism from which they had revolted in their youth, rejecting its puritan morality, which they commonly regarded as unhealthy, especially in its sexual connotations.¹ Many religious Socialists rejected the puritan aspects of conventional Christianity. John Trevor and Edward Carpenter both reacted against its traditional and sexual ethics², while within the churches the Guild of St Matthew (G.S.M.) maintained a constant onslaught on Sabbatarianism and other manifestations of puritan moralism. Even amongst leading nonconformist Socialists

1. For the S.D.F. leaders' religious views and background see above pp 165 ff. Their equation of evangelical individualism with Christianity is reflected in Bax's rejection of the very different views of the Anglo Catholic Socialist priests of the G.S.M. as not Christian at all but "Neo-Christian". Blatchford's attacks were based on the same assumption. See above pp 349 ff Morris' proclaimed preference for a healthy "paganism" in contrast to an unhealthy Christian asceticism provided yet another example of their revolt. For a sympathetic interpretation see J.B. Glasier : William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (1921) Chapter xvii : "Socialism and Religion" pp 164ff.

2. For Carpenter see above. pp 235 ff.

who retained to some extent the traditional moral attitudes of their background, as for example, Philip Snowden³ or the Rev. R.J. Campbell, there was a notable move away from the traditional theological orthodoxy of their denominations, Snowden having rejected the traditional predestinarian view of hell and salvation as a small boy, and Campbell jettisoning his earlier Calvinism prior to his Socialist conversion in 1907.⁴

This rejection of the evangelicalism of the earlier 19th Century was a common feature of the intellectual development of the future Socialist leaders and propagandists. This was hardly surprising, for the evangelical creed, in its main features, offered a view of man's nature and of the meaning of life which ran counter to most of the assumptions upon which Socialism was to be based. The Evangelical view of man was simple. He was a fallen creature, utterly depraved and incapable, by virtue of his own sinful nature, of redeeming himself from the everlasting punishment which his actions truly merited. It was for this reason that God sent Jesus Christ, his only son, into the world, to take upon Himself, though sinless, God's judgement on fallen mankind, and for this reason He was crucified and descended into hell. But because of His sinless nature, He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and has become man's advocate with God the Father, that all who believe in Him shall have eternal life. This traditional belief in the "penal substitution" theory of the Atonement and Justification by Faith, derived largely from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, was the cornerstone of mid-Victorian evangelical belief. There was thus a

3. For Snowden see above pp 363 ff

4. See above pp 122 ff.

strict division between "nature" - "the world" - and "the spirit", between the "unredeemed" and the "redeemed". What mattered was not the affairs of this life, man's earthly affections, works, etc. but salvation, judgement and the world to come.

In this, the "conversion experience" came to assume a central position, for it was through this that the believer often knew and experienced his own salvation for the first time. Hence the "hell-fire" sermons, setting out the consequence of man's sinfulness, the call to repentance and declaration of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour, against which increasing numbers of the generation born from the mid-century onwards were reacting. In sensitive natures such as John Trevor (born 1885), or E.B. Bax (born 1854), fears of hell and the devil, whipped up by evangelical preachers, caused childish nightmares and great suffering. The Rev. Conrad Noel (born 1864), whose reaction against it led him to Catholic Modernism, ritualism and Socialism, dubbed it "the religion of the torture chamber",⁵ and throughout his life opposed what he saw as the selfish individualism of "the soul-savers with their Glory-for-me religion" caring only for "one's own rotten little isolated soul".⁶

In fact, of course, evangelicalism lay behind many of the reforms of the early 19th Century - Wilberforce and the abolition of the slave trade, Shaftesbury and the factory acts - but such were conceived rather as acts of charity, "good works" on the part of believers for the alleviation of suffering rather than as the

5. C Noel. Autobiography (1945) p 5

6. Manifesto of the Catholic Crusade (1918) reprinted in ed Reg Groves : The Catholic Crusade 1918-36 (1970). pp 15-16

result of any notions of social justice or the fundamental equality, or rights, of man.⁷ As such, the charitable activities of the comfortable classes often appeared patronising to the poorer classes, who resented the implicit paternalism of the relationship. As the Century drew to its close the demand for justice not charity dominated much of Socialist propaganda, both inside and outside the churches.⁸

The evangelical mind, with its essentially negative view of human nature and concentration on individual salvation, tended naturally towards an equally negative view of the role of the state, seeing it rather as a necessary means for the restraint of lawlessness and vice than as potentially the instrument - as many Christian Socialists proclaimed it - for the creation of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth (or, amongst non-Christians, the realisation of man's deepest social impulses and Utopian desires, which amounted to the same thing). To an evangelical, God's Kingdom was definitely "not of this world".

By the latter part of the Century, however, the central tenets of evangelicalism were coming increasingly under attack from several distinct sources. It was, in all essentials a

7. A point made by one of the most recent commentators on the subject - Ian Bradley : The Call to Seriousness . The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians (1976) p 120 and cf pp 80,116.
8. See eg MacDonald's attack on the charitable activities of West End ladies in Whitechapel in The Socialist August 1886 p 10: "Philanthropist's Troubles", in which he pointed out that in such activities the wealthy were merely returning to the labouring classes a small proportion of what they had stolen from them through high profits and low wages, and cf the programme of the G.S.M. adopted at its 7th A.G.M. in Sept. 1884 in Church Reformer 15 September 1885 p 40 which based its social and economic demands on the promise "That the present contrast between the condition of the great body of the workers who produce much and consume little and of those classes who produce little and consume much is contrary to the Christian doctrines of Brotherhood and Justice".

Biblical religion, based substantially on a literal view of the inspiration and authority of the Bible as God's revelation to man, Together with the opposition of "flesh" and "spirit" was the fatal opposition of "reason" and "revelation", which led to obscurantist attempts to preserve a literalistic Biblical faith in the teeth of overwhelming evidence to the contrary from the twin sources of German Biblical scholarship and modern scientific discoveries, in particular the evolutionary theories which were coming into vogue after the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species in 1859. The impact of this latter, as many recent historians of 19th Century religious trends have noted,⁹ was little short of revolutionary. In particular, evolutionary anthropology dealt a crippling blow at literalism regarding the Genesis Creation stories. To attempt to maintain a belief in Adam and Eve and a six day Creation, was now manifestly absurd to all but the extreme dogmatist; and if the Bible could thus no longer be regarded as literally infallible, on what authority could the Christian religion ultimately rest?

The conflict between Science and Biblical Christianity seems to have been responsible for a number of leading British Socialists jettisoning their Christian faith. Such was certainly true of the young J. Bruce Glasier whose strict Calvinist Presbyterianism offered him the unenviable choice of rejecting either his religious

9. See eg B.M.G. Reardon : From Coleridge to Gore. A Century of Religious Thought in Britain (1971) pp 293ff and cf the similar judgement of L.E. Elliott-Binns : The Development of English Theology in the Later Nineteenth Century (1952) who attacked the "rigid attitude" and "obscurantism" of the clergy of the time in their insistence on "an infallible Bible" despite the evidence against them, which had the effect of destroying the faith of many ordinary people to whom the debates among theologians were a closed book. Op. Cit. esp pp 11-12, 25ff.

creed or the conclusions of his own reason, after he had discovered the evolutionary theories of Darwin, Huxley and Tyndall for the first time. He chose the Glasgow Secular Society eventually, and his own reason - though by the end of his life he had adopted a religious outlook which provided him with a reconciliation of science and religion which the Calvinism of the mid-century could not. Annie Besant's experience was somewhat similar, as she made clear in her own account of her spiritual pilgrimage from orthodoxy first into Bradlaugh's National Secular Society, and then into Theosophy, in which she too at last found a religion which did not conflict with the dictates of her own reason. In her case the problem was somewhat different, for her crisis of faith occurred after the illness of her daughter, when she began to question God's love in the light of human suffering. This led her to doubts about the traditional teaching of the atonement, the infallibility of the Bible, and the idea of eternal punishment, and eventually to question the divinity of Christ himself. Putting these doubts in an interview with Pusey she apparently received not answers but the advice to curb her intellectual pride and submit to the traditional infallible teaching of the Church. When she explained why she could not, but had to follow the truth as she saw it, he could only warn her that in that case she would be lost for eternity.¹⁰ In the case of the young MacDonald it was the supernatural, miraculous element in Christianity, conflicting as it did with his understanding of science, which marked the beginning of his movement away from orthodoxy at the age of 12

10. See Annie Besant : "Autobiographical Sketches" in Our Corner, monthly from January 1884 : for the interview with Pusey see Ibid August 1884 pp 67-9.

although he doesn't ever seem to have bothered himself about hell, and it is doubtful whether he had ever believed in it.¹¹

Such experiences could be multiplied at least tenfold in the lives of the early Socialist pioneers in this country. And in all cases, whether the original problem was a scientific objection to the miraculous, supernatural element in the Bible, or a moral objection to the evangelical scheme of salvation, the root of the issue was the false antithesis posited by traditional orthodoxy between nature and spirit, reason and authority (either of Bible or Church), and the demands made on the genuinely questioning believer to suppress his doubts and believe the unbelievable.¹² In this regard it is interesting to note that the two main types of theology most associated with Christian Socialism, the Catholic Modernism of the Anglican slum priests of the G.S.M., and the Protestant immanentism of R.J. Cambell's New Theology, both rejected this antithesis and produced a religious outlook which was both spiritually and rationally compatible with the discoveries of science and other branches of human knowledge. In its main outlines, this new Christian outlook differed little from the religious viewpoint of leading exponents of the Labour Churches, or the Ethical Societies, or such seminal individuals as Edward Carpenter. Indeed, the similarities cut right across

11. See above p 390

12. It was the conflict of reason and authority, the dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural, and the need on the part of individuals to follow the truth, wherever it might lead, which underlay the revolt against Orthodoxy throughout the period, and it is particularly obvious in the cases of F.W. Newman, J.A. Froude and Mary Ann Evans cited by H.R. Murphy in support of his thesis of moral revulsion as the root cause of "The Ethical Revolt against Christian Orthodoxy in Early Victorian England" in American Historical Review 60 (1955) pp 800-17.

the boundary between religion and agnosticism, prompting the agnostic Blatchford to proclaim that his one major difference with R.J. Campbell was that what he called Nature, Campbell called God,¹³ or priests of the G.S.M. such as the leading propagandists and Socialists the Rev. C.L. Marson and Conrad Noel to proclaim again and again in the Socialist journals their essential agreement with the secularist attack on the traditional Christianity of the churches.¹⁴ For whatever their differences, both secular and Christian Socialists recognised in each other an ally in the common attack on evangelical orthodoxy from which they had both consciously revolted, and which they were united in seeing as a major obstacle to the spread of Socialist outlook in Britain in the decades up to the First World War. And in many respects too, each owed much to a common body of belief - about the nature of man, the purpose of life and of the universe - which transcended denominational allegiances and even the boundary between theism and agnosticism, and which gave to British Socialism its unique character.

This new outlook, gaining in popularity in the last quarter of the century was in direct contrast to the pessimistic view of human nature of evangelicalism. Gone too was the division between the world of the flesh and the spirit. Nature, the world, was viewed increasingly optimistically, and there was a conscious belief in a moral purpose towards the good underlying the evolutionary process. For Christians the earth and man were God's Creation, which was moving gradually towards the consummation

13. See above Chapter 4 p 343.

14. See above p 359 n 137

of his purpose. To others it was the process of the self-realisation of "the Unknown", the Spirit - the source of the Good, the Beautiful and the True - a position held in common by Trevor, MacDonald, Carpenter, the British Idealists, the Romantic poets and leading figures in the Ethical Movement such as Stanton Colt, or J.A. Hobson, one of the most important New Liberal thinkers of the period. It underlay the "immanentism" of R.J. Campbell's New Theology, and formed the philosophical standpoint of the "Catholic Modernism" of the G.S.M. It lay behind the "Incarnationalism" of the writers of Lux Mundi (1889) perhaps the most important work in late 19th Century British theology, determining the trends of thought within Anglicanism and educated opinion for a generation.¹⁵ Even the agnostic Blatchford was to proclaim his belief that Altruism would be the most powerful force in future human evolution; and the Socialist philosopher E.B. Bax of the S.D.F., while ruling out the possibility of the existence of a God, would proclaim nevertheless his faith (for

15. See eg A.M. Ramsay : From Gore to Temple : The Development of Anglican Theology between Lux Mundi and the Second World War 1889-1939 (1960). Lux Mundi (ed C. Gore 1889) subtitled: "A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation" marked a major swing from an Atonement-centred, to an Incarnation-centred theology in the Church of England. Of its authors Henry Scott Holland and J.R. Illingworth in particular were heavily influenced by the new currents of philosophical idealism and immanentism. It ran through 10 editions in the first 10 months of publication. The editor, Charles Gore, co-founder of the Christian Social Union in 1890, and an eventual convert to Labour Party membership in 1918, was also strongly influenced by this philosophical outlook, but maintained an equally firm Biblical theology, which he termed "Liberal Catholicism", as a necessary safeguard of the uniqueness of the Christian revelation against drifting from Christianity into a vague ethicalism. See eg C. Gore : The New Theology and the Old Religion (1907), a criticism of R.J. Campbell which eventually led the latter to withdraw "The New Theology" (1907) from circulation as representing only a partial view of the truth (though its basic outlook underlay his later works) and be received into the Church of England by Gore (in 1916) in which he became a Canon of Chichester Cathedral.

such it was, it being quite impossible to reach the position on the basis of his own stated premises) that the world, and mankind were moving inexorably towards the moral good.

Man, far from being the fallen creature which he had seemed to the previous generation, was seen as capable of almost unlimited progress, both in the realms of Science and industry, and in morals and social organisation. William Morris, and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement proclaimed man's Creativity and Art. Evolution was given a new scientific basis in the work of men such as Kropotkin, spreading the message that species evolved not through bloody competition and the survival of the fittest, but through Mutual Aid and co-operation. Nature was no longer seen as "red in tooth and claw". In innumerable authors and individual lives, Man proclaimed again his sense of "oneness" with Creation, his sense of the unity underlying the Universe. There was a resurgence of that spirit which underlay the Humanism of the Renaissance, confidence in the essential goodness of man, and in his achievements. There was a resurgence too of the Utopian impulse once expressed in the writing of Thomas More, and underlying the millenarianism of many of the mediaeval popular movements, from the Hussites, and Anabaptists to the millenarian radical movements of the English Civil War - in which tradition Christian Socialists and others from Morris and Bax, to the leaders of the G.S.M., and individuals such as Bishop Westcott proclaimed themselves.¹⁶

16. cf E.B. Bax : The Rise and Fall of The Anabaptists (1890), W. Morris: "Hopes of Civilisation" in Signs of Change (1888). Cf the views of B.F. Westcott in Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West (1891) esp p 188 or Conrad Noel : Socialism in Church History (1910) - the Christian Socialist tradition usually began earlier, with the Old Testament Prophets, and included Plato and the Early Greek Fathers.

In place of the old dogmas and intermediaries there was a general desire for individual relation with God, the Unseen, the Unknown, Nature, the Universe, the Absolute, call it what they would, and a consequent major revival of interest in mysticism and personal religious experience. The autobiographies of this period are full of descriptions of religious experiences which formed the basis of much of the new immanentist and idealist outlook, from Carpenter, Trevor, MacDonald, through to Conrad Noel, R.J. Campbell and Beatrice Webb.¹⁷ Man, the individual, was seen in conscious relation to the unseen, the divine. Through rare moments of spiritual insight, in religious experiences of communion and through the workings of his conscience, man was seen to possess an "inner light", the root of his moral conceptions, conceived as a relation with the Ideal, the source of the Good, the True and the Beautiful.¹⁸ For with the discoveries of science shaking the old authorities of Bible and Church, there was a necessary awakening to a realisation that only man's inner authority, the authority of his reason and "inner light", offered any sure basis for religious faith or ethical values. For many, therefore, religion came to mean less a matter of intellectual belief in Christian teaching, and more a question of prayer and moral actions - a prime tenet of the Ethical Societies and Fellowship of the New

17. The titles of many of these confirm this as the central concern of their authors eg. John Trevor : My Quest for God (1897); Percy Redfern : Journey to Understanding (1946); R.J. Campbell : A Spiritual Pilgrimage (1916); Edward Carpenter : My Days and Dreams (1916); W.J. Jupp : Wayfarings: A Record of Adventure and Liberation in the Life of the Spirit (1918). For Beatrice Webb's continued references to prayer see eg ed M.I. Cole : The Diaries of Beatrice Webb 1912-24 (1952) pp 48-50; B. Webb Our Partnership (1975 ed) pp xxxix, li-lii.

18. "On Religion, the Conduct of Life and Man's Relation to the Unknown" was the title of one of MacDonald's lectures: see in full in B. Sacks : J. Ramsay MacDonald (1952) pp 133-5

Life - a common devotion to "the Good" manifested in practical acts. ¹⁹

(ii) American Transcendentalism : Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman.

It was this outlook which was expressed most fully in the writings of the New England philosopher R.W. Emerson (1803-82), in particular his Essays (1841 and 1844) of which a popular edition edited by Percival Chubb, an active member of the F.N.I., was published in 1888; in the works of his disciple H.D. Thoreau (1817-62) especially Walden; and in the poetry of Walt Whitman (1815-92), Leaves of Grass, and the prose Democratic Vistas. The high regard in which these authors were held is an important pointer to the nature of early British Socialism. Ramsay MacDonald, especially indebted to these writers and to their leading English disciple, referred to "the spiritual sources of the movement - Thoreau, Whitman, Edward Carpenter, Emerson".²⁰

19. Thus argued MacDonald in his article : "The Protestant Succession" in The Ethical World 2nd July 1898 pp 418-9 in which he called for "the casting aside of dogma and creed, and everything which is purely intellectual as a test or sign of spiritual fellowship" and instead, a dedication to the truth and one's own "inner light" wherever it might lead, conduct alone proving the worth of the man and his faith. In this, according to one commentator, MacDonald's outlook resembled that of "a whole generation" : S. Mayor : The Churches and the Labour Movement (1967) p 380 - though he is quite wrong in writing it off as "little more than the lingering echo of a more dogmatic faith which now seemed to be untenable" - a mistake resulting from Mayor's Christian bias, a common feature of commentators on the religious developments of the period. See eg Elliott-Binns op cit esp p 111 commenting on "the unduly optimistic" belief of the 19th Century that "Christian ethical standards" could long survive" where the roots of Christian dogmatic beliefs are lacking." He saw the reliance on mysticism and "spiritual intuition" as only of use to a small naturally religious elite, while the mass of ordinary former churchgoers "Confused and disquieted" abandoned religion as a matter beyond their comprehension and drifted into indifference and agnosticism", Ibid pp 120-1.

20. J.R. MacDonald review of W.J. Jupp Wayfarings in Socialist Review Oct - Dec 1918 p320.

The Americans' writings provided the chief sources of ideas for many leading figures in the Ethical Movement, the F.N.L. and its offshoot the Fabian Society, in the Labour Churches and later the Socialist Sunday Schools, including MacDonald, Carpenter, Herbert Burrows of the S.D.F.; the Fabian Essayist William Clarke; John Trevor, founder of the Labour Churches; Henry Salt, founder of the Humanitarian League; and Katherine Bruce Glasier of the I.L.P. and her son Glen. The Socialist periodicals of the 1890's onwards - Seedtime, Labour Prophet, Labour Leader, Clarion, Labour Annual - contain innumerable quotations and photographs of these authors, and articles on them, their popularity extending even to quotations from their writings appearing in election addresses.²²

Following Emerson, all three writers stressed man's "inner light" as the sole source of religious and moral knowledge, freeing religion from the dogmatic accretions of the past which it was becoming increasingly difficult for thinking men to accept.

Their confidence in man's own innate abilities and in his

22. eg. the election address of F.J. Gould, Socialist, ethicist and agnostic, standing as a candidate for the Leicester City Council, November 1903, had quotations from Plato and Whitman. F.J. Gould : The Life Story of a Humanist (1923) p 100. Wolverhampton Fabian Society headed its programme with the proclamation, taken from Thoreau, "If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours". Noted by John Trevor in Labour Prophet Feb 1893 p 12. The quotation is from the Conclusion to Walden (1960 Signet Classic edition p 215).

capacity to work out his own spiritual destiny in direct personal relationship to, (as Emerson referred to it), "the Over-Soul" attracted men such as John Trevor, who realised that it offered "the only alternative" basis for religious faith to that of accepting beliefs upon an external authority which his reason told him was intellectually bankrupt in many of its most central propositions.²³ For him, his discovery first of Emerson, and later of Whitman and Thoreau, gave the possibility of renewed religious faith in the face of the collapse of his belief in the tenets of evangelicalism.²⁴ Emerson provided a way out of the same impasse for MacDonald with his belief that each man must make his own individual relationship with the Unseen, and not rely on past teachers,²⁵ as he did also for W.J. Jupp, a Congregationalist and later Unitarian minister and Ethical Society preacher, in his passage from Calvinism to a similarly mystical belief in individual communion with the divine.²⁶

Emerson, a former New England Unitarian minister, finding the mechanistic view of the Universe of most Unitarian theology sterile, with its view of God as a divine "clockmaker" who then stood aloof while the world operated according to the Laws of Nature which he had laid down, had transmitted into New England thought the more spiritual conception which he had discovered in German Idealism with its stress on the role of feeling, the imagination, "intuition" as the

23. J. Trevor : My Quest for God (1897) p 216.

24. Labour Prophet November 1893 p 109; J. Trevor "Thoreau": see also his My Quest for God p 135. He later noted the same ideas in T.H. Green and Edward Caird Ibid p 184.

25. See above p 391

26. W.J. Jupp op cit pp 32 ff

religious faculty, rather than logical reasoning. Branded a heretic by the religious establishment, his writings, and those of William Channing, Theodore Parker, H.D. Thoreau and other members of the Transcendental Club set up in 1836, especially through their magazine The Dial (1840-44, edited after 1842 by Emerson) had a lasting impact on religious thought both in America, and later, Britain.

Religious knowledge, for Emerson, was rooted in individual experience, in man's "inner voice", through which, alone and in moments of prayer and spiritual insight, man could experience communion with the "Over-Soul", "that Unity ... within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all others."²⁷ This it is which lies beneath the flux of the material world, what Emerson referred to as the "abyss of real Being. Existence, or God ... the whole" permeating all life on earth, the origin of man's notions of goodness, truth and beauty; the absence or incompleteness of which, at the present stage of the world's development and man's perception, man conceives of as a positive force, Evil; but which is in reality negative, an absence of the completeness of Being.²⁸ All else other than "true Being" is illusion. Therefore man's quest for self-fulfilment is really the quest for the realisation of his own spiritual self, his real self, which is but "the incarnation of the spirit", the "Over-Soul", in the physical form known as man. This includes the fullest development of his talents of creativity, his ability to

27. R.W. Emerson : Essays (1st and 2nd Series) Everyman edition (1906) p.150. "The Over-Soul" is the title of Essay 9 (1st series) from which this is taken.

28. Ibid p 73.

appreciate Beauty, his intellect, or faculty for the appreciation of Truth, including scientific knowledge and mechanical invention. But the true end of man's work is not to secure therefrom material gain, luxurious living, or mere sensual pleasure, or the pursuit of selfish ends. Such is to gamble with Fortune, on the next turn of whose wheel all might be lost. Instead, all such must be used only in pursuit of the Good, in fulfilment of man's truest nature, for in that alone lies true happiness, all else is empty, and in the pursuit of pleasure for its own sake, even that which might have been had is lost - what Emerson termed as the law of "Compensation" - whereby Divine Judgement and Retribution is not a matter for the next world, with Heaven for the good and Hell for the bad, rather it is in this world, and the choice is between Life, or spiritual death, as the inevitable direct consequence of a man's acts.²⁹

From this indwelling of the spirit in man comes also the experience of love and friendship, the recognition of the unity of mankind and, despite obvious differences and inequalities of ability and circumstance, man's essential equality of worth.³⁰ But to Emerson human affections, like other material things, are of their nature transitory, and it is upon man's solitariness that he dwelt. The experience of other persons is secondary, they are but imperfect mediums of the underlying Soul. Rather it is communion, alone, with this inner reality which is important to Emerson.

"Persons are supplementary ... In youth we are mad for persons. Childhood and youth see all the world in them. But the larger

29. Ibid pp 55-6, 62ff, 73-4 and of his attack on materialist goals pp 218-50.

30. Ibid pp 154, 355-6

experience of man discovers the identical nature appearing through them all. Persons themselves acquaint us with the impersonal God."³¹

Though austere in his singleminded pursuit of individual communion with the divine, and in his constant reminders of the transitoriness of all material things, Emerson was not led thereby to neglect the world. Certain political principles must inevitably follow from his view of man's nature and true purpose in life. Thus he was a democrat, firstly because of the equality of worth of each individual life, as a manifestation of the Universal Spirit; and secondly because democracy offers the best opportunity for the development of that virtue and character, which to Emerson is so central, through the demands it makes upon man's sense of responsibility.³² Thus he criticised modern technical education for its failure to develop the child's moral nature.³³ Equally, the basing of society upon selfishness and an acquisitive materialism is wrong, and harmful to the growth of the individual.³⁴ It is based upon a false understanding of man's nature. Rather it is to man's higher nature that a society's laws and institutions should appeal, and in this, through a process of moral growth, lay his hopes for the future progress of

31. Ibid p 155 and cf pp 246-7. Thus he argued for a large measure of separation and time spent alone even in marriage. Ibid pp 278-9.

32. Ibid pp 312,318. The argument is based on two Essays : "Politics" (pp 310-23) and "New England Reformers" (pp 338-58)

33. Ibid p 348

34. Ibid p 353

human society. As the law of man's own soul is growth, towards the higher good, so must be society's.³⁵ As though the State at any time can only reflect the current stage in the moral development of its citizens, through the educative nature of democracy, there is inevitable social evolution. As yet, we are only at the beginning of the process, but Emerson envisaged an eventual time when society would be based on "union and co-operation", the result of the "unward" conviction of individuals, voluntary and without any external constraints.³⁶ "To educate the wise man, the State exists; and with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires. The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary."³⁷ Thus Emerson provided a theory of social evolution based upon the growth of man's ethical nature, issuing in an eventual voluntary co-operative society, an ideal represented within British Socialism primarily by the libertarians, and strikingly similar to the ethical/religious theory of social evolution put forward as the only real basis of Socialist hopes by Ramsay MacDonald, in his innumerable writings on the subject.³⁸ And in his belief that when such a state of affairs comes about, there will be no need for schemes of government because when men "are pure enough to abjure the code of force, they will be wise enough to see how these public ends of the post office, of the highway, of commerce, and the exchange of property, of museums and libraries, of institutions of art and science, can be answered,"

35. Ibid p 320

36. Ibid p 347

37. Ibid p 320

38. See above pp 393-4, 397-9.

Emerson provided another argument identical to that of many British Socialists, from Hardie to MacDonald or Blatchford, that the essential is the creation of the Socialist spirit, there being no need for detailed schemes, since, when that spirit at last came to rule humanity, men would know instinctively how to organise themselves.³⁹

The view of man's nature and destiny presented by Thoreau was similar to that of his master, Emerson, but its practical outcome was rather different. Whereas Emerson's writings provide the clearest systematic statement of American Transcendentalist philosophy, Thoreau was its chief practical exponent. Like Emerson, underlying Nature and Man he saw the reality of the Spirit, God, "the perennial source of our life, whence in all our experience we have found that to issue".⁴⁰ To live in conformity with the dictates of the spirit was likewise his aim, Thoreau seeing in this alone the possibility of a truly fulfilling existence. Man's life-work was self-exploration of his own inner spirit rather than the acquisition of any outward possessions, which he saw as mere "encumbrances", "laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal. It is a fool's life."⁴¹ Instead he believed "with respect to luxuries and comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life than the poor."⁴²

39. Ibid pp 322-3 and cf above p 382

40. H.D. Thoreau. Op Cit p 93

41. Ibid p 8. Thus he wrote that rather than exploring the globe man should recognise "that there are continents and seas in the moral world to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet" and which he should explore too. Ibid p 213

42. Ibid p 14.

Having obtained the necessities of life, therefore, instead of seeking ever more material benefits, man should turn his attentions to his own self, to an exploration of the meaning of life.⁴³ As with Emerson, this led him to seek solitude for thought and communion with his inner spirit. "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived".⁴⁴ Thus he explained the purpose of his experiment in self-sufficiency and the Simple Life which he set down in Walden, a book which became the chief inspiration of the British Socialist advocates of smallholdings and a return from urban industrialism and materialist production to the slower, more natural life of the countryside. For Henry Salt on first reading it was "a revelation"; his friend Edward Carpenter, discovering it in 1883, found in it a purer ideal of the simple life than that which had already moved him to retreat to his smallholding at Millfield, outside Sheffield in 1882.⁴⁵

In Walden (1854) Thoreau tells of the 2 years he spent at Walden Pond, 2 miles outside Concord, Massachusetts, living for the minimal outlay of \$28.12c in a one-roomed log cabin he built and furnished himself, growing his own beans, potatoes, peas and turnips, from which he fed himself and sold enough to make \$8.71½c, thus proving the possibility even for the poorer working-man to liberate himself from the drudgery of conventional life, with its overwork,

43. Ibid p 15

44. Ibid p 66

45. H.S. Salt : Seventy Years Among Savages (1921) p 76. Edward Carpenter : My Days and Dreams (1916) p 116 and see above pp 244-5; 285.

bills, rents and other restrictions on freedom. With a little carpentry and other work in the village he earned enough to cover expenses, reckoning on the basis of his experience over 5 years both in the village and at Walden that he could earn enough by 6 weeks' such work each year to cover all his costs. The remainder of the year was his to plan as he wished, allowing him the freedom which he needed to study and think.⁴⁶

Comparing this existence with those of most city-dwellers, tenant farmers and the like, the multiplication of whose wants forced them to work almost incessantly just to meet their commitments, he asked whether such a life had any point. And he recalled his own period after Harvard, as a teacher, when his labours allowed him a scarcely better material existence than he had found at Walden, "and I lost my time into the bargain."⁴⁷ His lifestyle was thus a direct attack on modern industrial social values.

Instead of what he saw as a meaningless round of production and consumption to no clear purpose he proposed the simplification of man's wants to the basic necessities of life - food, clothing and shelter - using the time thus made available to develop his own personality. It was in essence a plea for humane and spiritual values in an increasingly materialistic society, and as such had a wide appeal to all who felt ground down by social conditions, to whom it opened the possibility of a new ideal of life.

46. H.D. Thoreau : op cit esp pp 32-8, 42.

47. Ibid pp 51-2

But in one other aspect too, Thoreau's Walden added an additional dimension to British Socialist thinking. for in this period spent close to Nature, Thoreau developed a deep respect for sentient life, leading him to forsake meat and fish and become a vegetarian. His reasons he set out in his chapter on "Higher Laws", on which Henry Salt, who became, among British Socialists, the leading advocate of vegetarianism and the abolition of the killing of animals for food or sport, based his own arguments, as did the authors of many of the Humanitarian League's pamphlets on the subject, amongst whom Shaw was another major exponent.⁴⁸ Thoreau distinguished in himself two impulses, the savage and a higher moral impulse. The former he associated with boyhood, before the moral faculty develops. Most men sadly do not progress much beyond. But the highest examples of humanity, he was convinced, could never willingly inflict suffering "on any creature which holds its life by the same tenure that he does."⁴⁹ Thus as part of moral evolution he was convinced that "it is part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized."⁵⁰ Thus to all those who placed their Socialist faith in the moral evolution of humanity, Thoreau's arguments had an obvious appeal, whether they went all the way in their condemnation of the killing of animals to include meat - eating, or whether they confined their concern to bloodsports.

48. For the Humanitarian League see above pp 290 ff

49. Ibid p 144

50. Ibid pp 146-7

And amongst those Socialists connected with the Humanitarian League, under whose auspices was held the centennial celebration of Thoreau's birth, the frequency with which his name occurred is therefore hardly surprising.⁵¹

But it was the writings of Walt Whitman which had the widest circulation within British Socialist circles. Katherine Bruce Glasier, the pioneer I.L.P. propagandist, regarded Leaves of Grass as her "special scripture", the chief inspiration of her religious and Socialist faith after her move away from orthodox christianity.⁵² John Trevor of the Labour Churches referred to it as "a volume of my Bible, my Book of Life, that helps me often in my own effort to live."⁵³ And together with Democratic Vistas, it influenced such other Socialists as Ramsay MacDonald, whom his biographer Molly Hamilton recalled reciting Whitman poetry to his Socialist friends during the First World War, Robert Blatchford of the Clarion, who found in Whitman that same doctrine of altruism and comradeship which formed the basis of his own Socialism, and Edward Carpenter, whose own Towards Democracy

51. For accounts of the meeting see Labour Leader 12 July 1917 p 4. Humanity August 1917 p 47.

52. K.B. Glasier The Glen Book (1949 edition) p 82 and cf her statement in the memorial volume ed G. Beith : Edward Carpenter. In Appreciation (1931) p 86 that "it is no exaggeration for many of us inside and outside the political Socialist movement to say that Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass and Edward Carpenter's Towards Democracy have become as a kind of Twentieth-Century Old and New Testament, fulfilling rather than destroying the work of others that have gone before them in our lives".

53. Labour Prophet February 1895 pp 17-18. J. Trevor : "Walt Whitman".

closely paralleled Whitman whom he had first discovered in 1868 or 1869.⁵⁴

In many respects Whitman's ideas closely followed those of Emerson and Thoreau, and all three are often found referred to together. Thus MacDonald's and Henry Salt's friend from the Fellowship of the New Life (F.N.L.), W.J. Jupp, referred to Leaves of Grass together with Towards Democracy, Walden, Emerson's Essays and other works, as "Scriptures", "given by inspiration of God".⁵⁵ He singled out these works because of their emphasis (1) on the need for each man to realise his own individual relation to the Universe, (2) for their emphasis on man's individual spiritual worth, and (3) for their proclamation of spiritual values and a mode of simplicity of living in the face of an ever-increasing commercialism.⁵⁶ For Jupp and Carpenter, the difference between Whitman and the other Americans lay in his greater warmth and emphasis on comradeship and human affections, in contrast to the austerity and concentration on a solitary pursuit of communion with Nature and the Unseen which was the predominating theme of Thoreau and Emerson.⁵⁷

54. M.A. Hamilton : Remembering My Good Friends (1944) P 130. MacDonald, who visited Walden Pond and Concorde on his visit to America in 1930 had Whitman's own copy of Leaves of Grass in his library. M.A. Hamilton ("Iconclast") The Man of Tomorrow : J Ramsay MacDonald (1923) pp 252-3. Clarion 26th October 1901 p 8, 2nd of 4 articles by Blatchford on Whitman's influence. He likened Leaves of Grass to the philosophy of Carlyle's "Professor Teufelsdröckh" in Sartor Resartus. Ibid 2 November 1901 p 1. E. Carpenter : My Days and Dreams (1916) p 65.

55. W.J. Jupp : Wayfarings p 68. It was Jupp who introduced Salt to Thoreau's Walden for the first time. H.S. Salt op cit p 76.

56. W.J. Jupp : op cit pp 111-2

57. Ibid p 140.

Nevertheless, in his conception of the world and man as infused by the underlying spirit of the whole, Whitman's ideas are indistinguished from those of his American predecessors, and provided another source of support for those who turned from dogma to the evidence of their own internal spiritual natures. Jupp himself cited him in this respect,⁵⁸ as did John Trevor and Mrs Glasier. Thus Trevor quoted Whitman:

"We consider bibles and religions divine - I do not say
they are not divine,
I say they have all grown out of you, and may grow out
of you still,
It is not they who give the life, it is you who give the
life,
Leaves are not more shed from the trees or trees from the
earth, than they are shed out of you."

and again:

"And I call to mankind, Be not curious about God.
For I, who am curious about each, am not curious about God.
No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God,
and about death.

I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God
not in the least,
Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than
myself.

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and
each moment then,
In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face
in the glass,
I find letters from God dropped in the street - and every one
is signed by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that others will
punctually come for ever and ever.

...."

For Trevor, Whitman's message was that "In you, you yourself, is the source and rising fountain of life... Things were his servants, not he the servant of things. In himself he felt the same creative power which worked all round him ... In conclusion, let

58. In W.J. Jupp : The Religion of Nature and of Human Experience (1906) passim.

Whitman advise you clearly of this - that there is one question of greater import to you than that of the public possession of capital and land: that of the private possession of yourself. Whitman is not the Poet of State Socialism. He is the Poet of of the divinity of the Body and Soul".⁵⁹ It was this same belief, in man's spiritual nature, which formed the basis of Mrs Glasier's Socialist faith and that of her son, Glen, and her husband, J.B. Glasier, in his last years. Thus her son saw communion with this universal spirit, "possession by the Spirit of the Whole" as the source of selfless love, on which Socialism had to be based if it were to succeed. As she herself put it "In every human being there dwells the angel self, the perfect son or daughter of God. The realisation of that self is the purpose of life on earth, and the way to that realisation lies through the effort to realise or bring out the angel self in each and all of our fellows, by striving to realise or win with and for them the conditions of Heaven on Earth - the glorious freedom of conscious Sons and Daughters of God."⁶⁰

For those who believed in Socialism as essentially an ethical faith, a way of life - of regarding other people - rather than as an economic system, Whitman was a major source of inspiration. This was most obvious in Whitman's belief in Comradeship as the basis of society, which is to be found in such poems as "I Dream'd in a Dream"

59. Labour Prophet February 1895 pp 17-18 art cit. These quotations will be found in Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass and Democratic Vistas (Everyman edition 1912) pp 182 and 75. They were favourite quotations, see eg Labour Prophet April 1892 p 28.

60. K.B. Glasier op cit pp 58,89.

and his description of "the Great City" in "Song of the Broad-Axe".

In the first, a short poem, he described his vision of the ideal society thus:

"I dream'd in a dream I saw a city invincible to the attacks
of the whole of the rest of the earth,
I dreamed that was the new city of Friends,
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love,
it led the rest,
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that
city,
And in all their looks and words."⁶¹

A similar sentiment forms the basis of the second poem, prompting Blatchford to quote nearly 2 pages of it by way of explanation of the spirit of Socialism. Its argument was that the great city is not where there is the most effective production, nor the wealthiest, with the best schools, libraries, etc. but where there is no exploitation, but rather genuine equality, where laws are of minimal importance because of the inner control of the citizens, and where democracy and active involvement by citizens forms the basis of government:

"Where children are taught to be laws to themselves, and to depend on themselves,
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs,
Where speculations of the soul are encouraged,
Where women walk in public processions in the streets the same as the men,
Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men,
Where the city of the faithfulest friends stand,
Where the city of the cleanliness of sexes stands,
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,
There the great city stands."⁶²

61. W. Whitman op cit p 111. This poem particularly impressed W.J. Jupp Wayfarings p 185.

62. Ibid pp 159-60 quoted by R. Blatchford in ed A. Reid The New Party (1894) pp 26-7.

These beliefs formed the basis of Whitman's prose essay, Democratic Vistas. In it he makes clear that he is describing the Ideal of Democracy, that which he is sure is democracy's true end rather than its present manifestation in party intrigue. It will be based on "loving comradeship, as its most inevitable twin, or counterpart, without which it will be incomplete ... incapable of perfecting itself."⁶³ Its climax will be the coming of a society on "the eternal bases ... of absolute Conscience, moral soundness, Justice."⁶⁴ Towards this, society is slowly evolving as man grows in his moral nature, until the time when, in harmony with the divine spirit he will achieve an inner freedom which will abolish the necessity for external restraints.⁶⁵ This quest for self-integration is man's true purpose in life, rather than the pursuit of culture, knowledge or other intellectual developments.⁶⁶ And it is this spirit which it is democracy's role to foster through the opportunities and responsibilities it places before the individual.⁶⁷

Thus here again is that same theory in the ethical/spiritual evolution of man and therefore of society which lay at the heart of much Socialist thinking in the late 19th Century, and which has already been noted in Emerson. Whitman's greater emphasis on comradeship however gave his works a wider appeal than the more austere

63. Ibid pp 323-6, 348 n1,349

64. Ibid p 348.

65. Ibid p 344. Thus he argued evolution, the infinite progression from the lower to the higher, to be the fundamental law of the Universe underlying the moral progress of man and society. Ibid p. 318.

66. Ibid pp 329-32.

67. Ibid pp 313,317,328

Thoreau and more metaphysical Emerson. In particular Edward Carpenter based his Towards Democracy and his own Socialism on the ideal of comradeship which he found in Whitman, "That thought, so near and personal to me, I had never before seen or heard fairly expressed," and which conformed so closely to his own view of life as it had evolved in his early manhood.⁶⁸ Coupled with his evolutionary conviction that a society on such a basis must be the inevitable ultimate purpose and outcome of human progress it provided the foundations of that Socialist faith, of which Carpenter, Mrs. Glasier and her son Glen within the I.L.P. were perhaps the chief British exponents.⁶⁹

In his rejection of puritan sexual morality and his glorification of the body, Whitman contributed notably to that theme of sexual emancipation which characterised one particular strand of Socialist thought most particularly in the writings of Trevor and Carpenter. In the case of John Trevor, whose Puritan upbringing left him with deep-rooted sexual problems, "Whitman helped me to see how clean and noble the body is."⁷⁰ It was a major reason for his attachment to Whitman's poetry, for Trevor's strict Calvinist Baptist faith had eventually collapsed because as a romantic young man with a deep intuitive sense of the ideal of love and marriage, he found it

68. E. Carpenter : op cit p 65

69. K.B. Glasier op cit p 82 stated that their religious Socialist faith was best summed up in Whitman's poem "Song of the Universal", which described "the mystic evolution" of "the good" which was alone universal, culminating in:

"Health, peace, salvation universal,
Is it a dream?
Nay but the lack of it a dream,
And failing it life's lore and wealth a dream
And all the world a dream"

(W. Whitman op cit pp 192-4)

70. Labour Prophet February 1895 p 18 art cit.

impossible to reconcile this latter with the scheme of salvation he had been taught in which human attachments counted for naught and the sexual urge was regarded as little short of sinful.⁷¹ It was rather Whitman's implicit homosexuality which appealed to Carpenter, whose own homosexuality formed the basis for his glorification of comradeship and the idea of male love as the basis of society, in emulation of much Greek thought, which he cited lavishly in his own writings.⁷² Whitman's views on sex could of course have the opposite effect, as they did on Robert Blatchford, who, writing in Clarion, recalled his first reading of Leaves of Grass in 1887, which "shocked" his sense of decency and left him disgusted at "the repulsiveness of his naked talk of sexual mysteries." In his case, his later praise of Whitman's ideal of comradeship was very definitely despite his sexual opinions⁷³, though on the whole the response was favourable rather than reverse to this aspect of his outlook.

In Britain, too, by the late 19th Century there had built up an outlook based on the same ideas. Among its earliest recipients had again been the Unitarians, for the works of Emerson, Channing and Theodore Parker, the leading New England

71. J. Trevor : My Quest for God pp 28-9, 46-8. His advocacy of sexual love in The One Life (1909) marked his final emancipation from his upbringing.
72. See above pp238ff. The importance of homosexuality and the relationship between the sexual problems and Socialist thought of a number of other early Socialists who were associated with Carpenter, including Olive Schreiner, Havelock Ellis and his wife, etc. are dealt with in a recent study by S. Rowbotham and J. Weeks : Socialism and the New Life : The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis (1977).
73. Clarion 19-October 1901 p 1 - the first of Blatchford's 4 articles on Whitman.

divines, had a major impact on British Unitarianism, resulting most fully in the works of James Martineau, and his friend F.W. Newman, brother of the Cardinal, whose The Soul, its sorrows and aspirations (1849) set forth an identical belief to that of the Americans, that it is only in a man's soul that he can come to have knowledge of God. In this tradition, Heaven came to be seen in a qualitative rather than temporal sense as a state of union with God rather than as something removed from present experience as a hope for the future - a viewpoint transmitted into Anglicanism as the cornerstone of his own theology by F.D. Maurice, the early Christian Socialist, and himself the son of a Unitarian minister.⁷⁴ As a natural corollary, Hell came to be seen as non-being, an absence of communion with the divine, or spiritual death, thus totally undermining traditional Atonement-centered theology. The claim of Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, was seen to rest on the perfect nature of his communion with God and consequently the moral perfection of his life and teaching, recognised as such by man because of his own "inner light" which saw in Christ the perfection for which he was striving, and failing to attain.

It was essentially this same outlook which was represented by another small denomination in Britain, the New Church or Sweden -

74. D.G. Rowell : Hell and the Victorians (1974) pp 49 ff and 76 ff and cf R.V. Holt : The Unitarian Contribution to Social Progress in England (1938) esp pp 212, 339 ff.

borgians. For Emmanuel Swedenborg, the 18th Century Swedish mystic and divine, who lived most of his life in England, had argued similarly in his The Divine Love and Wisdom (1763), moving Peter Jones, one recent historian to dub his outlook "a kind of Christian Unitarianism".⁷⁵ Swedenborgians also rejected the traditional Pauline view of the Atonement, which came to be seen in terms of the reconciliation of man to God according to the ethical quality of his life. Judgement was the disclosure of a man's character. It is interesting to note, given the influence of a number of Unitarian Labour M.P.s and of T.D. Benson, founder of the Swedenborgian Socialist Society and Treasurer of the I.L.P. for many years, that these twin outlooks had led to activity in the Utopian movements of the earlier part of the century, a number of Unitarian and Swedenborgian ministers being notably involved in the advocacy of Owenism and "moral force" Chartism.⁷⁶ Indeed, these movements of the earlier part of the century had a very similar ethical and religious outlook to that of such later Socialist manifestations as the F.N.L. or the Utopian communities of the 1890's, and the Labour Church Movement, itself inspired by a Unitarian minister (John Trevor). Neither can the numbers of Unitarian ministers listed in Justice and Commonweal in the 1880s and 1890s involved in the founding of Socialist organisations in such diverse places as Aberdeen, Lancaster, Sheffield and Croydon

75. P.d'A. Jones: The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914 (1968) pp 354-9.

76. Ibid p 355; R. Wearmouth : Some Working-Class Movements of the 19th Century (1948), p 175 and J.F.C. Harrison : Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America (1969) esp pp 122-3, 134, 245. G.J. Holyoake came to Owenism via Unitarianism.

be coincidence,⁷⁷ for in this respect they were unique amongst nonconformists, the only other clergymen mentioned in the Socialist periodicals of the period being Anglican members of the G.S.M. whose theological outlook was in many respects similar.⁷⁸

77. See eg reports in Commonweal 19 February 1887 p 63, 5 March 1887 p 75, and 8 October 1887 p 328. The Rev. E.P. Hall the local Unitarian minister chaired the first public meeting of the Lancaster Socialist League and had been chiefly responsible for Socialist propaganda in the City prior to the League's formation. The same was true of the Rev. A. Webster in Aberdeen, whose sermons had prepared the way for a Socialist League Branch there, while the Rev. Charles Peach, an Emersonian, was a leading member of the Sheffield Socialist Society, founded by Edward Carpenter. Justice 10 May 1884 p 6 reported the Rev. J. Clarke (Unitarian) lecturing for Socialism at Darwen, Lancashire, and p 7 noted the Rev. E.M. Geldart, minister of the Croydon Free Christian Church preaching a Socialist sermon. Geldart was a founder member of Croydon S.D.F. and later committed suicide by drowning on a ferry-crossing from Newhaven-Dieppe after having been forced out of his pulpit by wealthier members of the congregation. Justice (obituary) 24 April 1985 p 1. However The Croydon Free Christian Church remained a centre of Socialist influence, its later minister from July 1892, the Rev. J.P. Hopps was an active Libertarian Socialist and was the founder of The Coming Day in 1891, a journal filled with quotations from Emerson and Thoreau. see eg W.H.G. Armytage : Heavens Below (1961)p 335.
78. H. MacLeod : Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City 1880-1914 provides further evidence for this in the case of London, noting that Charles Booth's survey found very few Socialist clergy in 1890, and those that he did find were members of the G.S.M. plus a Unitarian, Congregationalist head of Mansfield House Settlement F.H. Stead, himself in the same immanentist tradition, and Bruce Wallace of the Brotherhood Church. Op Cit p 118. He noted that it was this same ethical "Unitarian" outlook among church-goers - not usually in the denominational sense - which was most associated with Socialism in London. Ibid pp 62 ff.

(iii) British Idealism : T.H. Green, Carlyle and Ruskin.

The new religious outlook manifested itself too in the revived interest in Platonist thought in the universities, in particular at Oxford where there developed, most notably in the works of T.H. Green and his followers, the school of thought known as British Idealism. Between 1830 and 1860 the Oxford philosophy syllabus had been transformed, mainly under the influence of B. Jowett, of Balliol. Whereas previously the course had included 4 set texts of Aristotle and no Plato, by the latter date the Republic was a set text, others were optional and the course had been widened to include Bacon, Kant and Mill.⁷⁹ Alongside the traditional empiricist insistence on logic therefore there was now a new awareness of the Kantian limitation of its sphere of function and the role of intuition and feeling as a source of moral and religious knowledge.

It was this which lay at the heart of T.H. Green's own thought. Born in 1836 the son of a non-dogmatic Anglican clergyman, much of his philosophy is an attempt to work out rationally the basis of moral and religious knowledge at a time when the old creeds were crumbling under the assaults of science, biblical research and a growing rationalism. Unable to accept the creeds, or a belief in miracles, and unable to submit to an external authority in the face of his own God-given (as he conceived it) intellect, he sought the basis of faith within man's own moral nature. The conclusions which he came to he summed up in his

79. For a full description of the import of these changes see D. Newsome: 2 Classes of Men : Platonism and English Romantic Thought (1974) pp 75 ff

sermons in Balliol chapel. "It is in himself and his thought, which is in the truest sense a revelation ... that each one of us finds God, if he finds him at all."⁸⁰ Faith is thus moral and intuitive, the experience of "God ... immanent in the moral life of man."⁸¹ It is from God that man's moral sense comes, indeed he is the "ideal self" which man seeks to realise in his own nature, that ideal personality which, as St. John's Gospel shows, Jesus realised in his life thus justifying our conception of him as Son of God. "He is so as the 'ideal man', man as an object to the mind of God, and thus already, from eternity, for God, what we are becoming."⁸² The goal of human life therefore is the self-realisation of the individual divine personality. Sin is merely the result of man's pursuit of false goals, the consciousness of which spurs man on to a higher moral life, and is thus part of the present teleological process, but will disappear at its end.

It was this development of the personality which for Green was the goal of social organisation, the true end of each and therefore the common good of all. As a social animal, man could not be separated from human society, which is thus a natural growth rather than the result of any alien imposition or 'social contract'. But "since society is the condition of the development of a personality" and its function is that development, "the realisation of the human spirit in society can only be attained according to the measure in which

80. ed R.L. Nettleship : T.H. Green: Collected Works Vol. III p 244 from an address: "The Witness of God".

81. Ibid p.215 from "The Incarnation" an extract from Green's Lectures on the Fourth Gospel.

82. Ibid pp 208-9 and cf the same arguments pp 220-9 "Fragment of an Address on the Text 'The Word is Nigh Thee' (Rom Ch X v 8.)"

that function is fulfilled."⁸³ Green himself being very much in the traditional mid-century Liberal mould in his practical political outlook, that function was restricted to such matters as education, abolition of child labour, and later, the provision of working class housing. Such State action he saw as the removal of barriers to the growth of individual character. Beyond this the State could not go since the development of that individual character depended upon the exercise of freedom and responsibility. Therefore as he concluded in his Principles of Political Obligation: "the effectual action of the state .. for the promotion of habits of true citizenship seems necessarily confined to the removal of obstacles."⁸⁴

However, in one of his last lectures on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract (1880) he went rather further in his conception of the role of the State. Thus he argued that the traditional Liberal view of freedom in negative terms as the absence of obstacles did not go far enough. Freedom must be redefined in a positive moral sense as power to the good, to the growth of human capacities and character. "When we measure the progress of a society by its growth in freedom, we measure it ... by the greater power on the part of the citizens as a body to make the most and best of themselves." On this basis he limited property rights in Land and advocated regulation of contract to prevent exploitation, together

83. ed A.C. Bradley: T.H. Green : Prolegomena to Ethics (1883) p 201

84. ed R.L. Nettleship Op Cit Vol. II "Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation" pp 514-5.

with such social reforms as the provision of adequate working class housing and education, arguing "Every injury to the individual is, so far as it goes, a public injury. It is an impediment to the general freedom; so much deduction from our power, as members of society, to make the best of ourselves." 85

In this emphasis on individual self-fulfilment as man's goal in life, and in his conception of the role of the State in providing the necessary conditions, T.H. Green can be seen to be very much in the same tradition of thought that we have been following, and in particular that of the American Emerson. If Green himself was largely bound, in his political programme, by the traditional policies of Liberalism as they had evolved up to his time, his philosophy and arguments could be and indeed were used to justify a far wider conception of the duties of society to its members than he had himself envisaged in his writings. Thus the arguments he used in favour of a tax on land values could equally apply to capital, or his view of the obligation of the State in the prevention of injury to its citizens could be shown to apply to such later schemes as Old Age Pensions and Insurance. In this way both New Liberals and traditional individualists, of which the Charity Organisation Society is the most obvious example, could see in his principles support for their policies. Nevertheless it was this religio-political outlook, of which his writings were but one more example, which, as developed by New Liberals and Socialists in the 1880's and 1890's, formed their underlying presuppositions about the purpose of their activities - the creation of a society in which each

85. Ibid Vol III pp 371,373

could develop to his fullest capacity for the common good.⁸⁶

In popular literature the works of Thomas Carlyle provided another source of the Idealist outlook, most noticeably in his spiritual conception of life and rejection of past dogmas - the argument of Sartor Resartus (first English edition 1838). But in common with other authors of the earlier part of the century, such as the "Christian Socialists" F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley, the view of politics to which these ideas led was aristocratic rather than democratic, the rule of the best, the wisest, rather than, as Carlyle conceived it from the experience of France, the rule of a mob. However, his call for Heroes was not incompatible with democratic selection, as he himself argued in Past and Present (1843), a point which did not go unnoticed by Keir Hardie, himself an avid reader of Carlyle's works.⁸⁷

86. Ibid pp 523 ff. In this respect it seems better to follow Adam Ulam: Philosophical Foundations of English Socialism (Harvard 1951) especially in his view of the later developments of Idealism in men such as A.D. Lindsay, the 20th Century Oxford philosopher and Labour Party member. See eg pp 100 ff rather than Melvin Richter : The Politics of Conscience . T.H. Green and His Age (1964) eg pp 267 ff. Richter is also misleading in his continual attempts to relate Green's religious thought to the Evangelicalism from which it is a quite obvious reaction see esp Chapter 4 "Towards a Theology."
87. T. Carlyle Past and Present (Everyman edition 1970) pp 240-1 Keir Hardie : "The Eve of the Battle" in Labour Prophet March 1892 p 21 "I have read history in vain if any great movement ever reached fruition which had not a person for its centre. I don't say such can be made; like the poet he must be created, and the hour will doubtless usher in the man"; and cf From Serfdom to Socialism (1907) p 29 listing his "Social Giants". Past and Present was one of the books he urged Socialists to read in his bibliography. He had read Sartor Resartus 3 times in his youth: Emrys Hughes: Keir Hardie (1956) pp 21-29.

Sartor Resartus, describing the spiritual pilgrimage of the German Professor Teufelsdröckh from doubts about the validity of the old faith to the construction of a religious outlook compatible with his own reason, is really autobiography in the guise of fiction. It tells of a youth of vague spiritual longings, of a deep-rooted belief in goodness, a sense of eternity occasioned by sunsets and a belief in life as a spiritual journey to truth, and the gradual realisation of its incompatibility with the traditional teachings of the churches. Reflecting the experience of many of its readers it tells of the salvation of the future professor through his unerring quest for truth wherever it might lead, and argues this individual quest for one's own truth to be the essential purpose of life.

The philosophy which Teufelsdröckh adopts is rooted in his own religious experiences. For him God is "felt" in the heart. This alone is belief, "All else is Opinion".⁸⁸ Man is Spirit, akin with God, the one spirit, underlying all created things. In friendships and love this unity of spirit is discovered in another person, "a discerning of the Infinite in the Finite." And the same is true of those mystical experiences occasioned, for example, by mountain sunsets in which is realised a sense of "oneness" with the Universe.⁸⁹

88. T. Carlyle: Sartor Resartus p 146 and cf Past and Present pp 218-20 in which he says "Rituals, Liturgies, Creeds, Hierarchies; all this is not religion," but rather it is "the Inner Light or Moral Conscience of his own soul ... the one end, essence, use of all religion past, present and to come, was this only: To keep that same Moral Conscience or Inner Light of ours alive and shining ... to remind us ... of the quite infinite difference there is between a Good Man and a Bad; to bid us love infinitely the one, abhor and avoid infinitely the other - strive infinitely to be the one, and not the other." Thus in Sartor Resartus p 157 he praised the Quaker George Fox as one who realised this.

89. Ibid pp 89, 109, 116.

It is this which is the basis of human brotherhood, and notions of justice, upon which society must be based. And indeed it is towards this that society is at present, and always has been, moving. As he argued in Past and Present, "Towards an eternal centre of right and nobleness, and of that only, is all this confusion tending ... and by laws older than the World, old as the Maker's first plan of the World, it has to arrive there."⁹⁰

Carlyle's outlook, with the exception of his views on democracy, was thus extremely similar to that of Emerson, a close friend and regular correspondent of his,⁹¹ and was drawn from the same sources, of German Idealism and Platonist thought, as his choice of the name Teufelsdröckh for his "philosopher of clothes" signified. Thus it was as the Platonic source of beauty, truth and goodness that he conceived God, as the spiritual Reality underlying the outward appearances of material things: "in the heart of its tumultuous Appearances, Embroilments, and mad Time-vortexes, is there not, silent, eternal, an All-just, an All-beautiful,; sole Reality and ultimate controlling power of the whole?"⁹² From this man derives not only his moral sense but also his creative and intellectual abilities, which it is his duty and goal in life to develop to their fullest possible extent and to use in accordance with that moral sense. It is in the pursuit of this end that man experiences true liberty, even though he be compelled to it.⁹³ Thus Carlyle, as Green and others were to do later, redefined liberty as the condition of the positive self-development of the individual towards an inner moral freedom, even if achieved by use of external forces.

90. Past and Present pp 11-12 and cf Sartor Resartus pp 184-5

91. For connections between Carlyle and Emerson and also between the 3 Americans and Carlyle, Ruskin and Morris see eg Holbrook Jackson: Dreamers of Dreams (1948)

92. Past and Present p 221

93. Ibid pp 204-5

But it was precisely this opportunity of self-fulfilment which the present industrial system based on "Mammon-worship" denied to the individual, through its cash nexus and division of society into idle "Dandies" and impoverished "Drudges". Because of the materialistic doctrines of Utilitarianism, and the Political Economists- theorists of laissez-faire- and the consequent loss of all humane and spiritual considerations in the ordering of society, Carlyle saw its imminent collapse in a civil war between the Haves and Have-nots which could only be averted by the owners of property realising their duties and responsibilities. Already Chartism was a sign of protest on the part of the masses at wealthy "Dilettantism", an omen from which he hoped society's rulers would learn in time, and so avert the otherwise inevitable destruction - precisely the argument used in Hyndman's article in the Nineteenth Century (1 January 1881) "The Dawn of a Revolutionary Epoch", and underlying much of his advocacy of the Socialist solution.⁹⁴

Another commonly cited source for an attack on laissez-faire economics was Ruskin's Unto This Last. It was one of those works which seems to have been read by just about everybody connected with British Socialism, and Ruskin's conclusion appears regularly quoted, especially by I.L.P. leaders with a nonconformist background, such as Hardie or Snowden, probably because of its overtly Christian basis : "There is no wealth but Life ... That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both

94. Sartor Resartus pp 174ff and 214 ff. Past and Present pp 18 ff, 172 ff etc.

personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."⁹⁵

Unto This Last is an attack on the traditional assumption of political economy of individual self-interest as the basis of human motivation. It is an attempt to put economics on an ethical and human basis in direct opposition to that "scientific" spirit which insists on their total divorce. And it was for this reason that it attracted men such as the leading "New Liberal" theorist J.A. Hobson, a close friend of MacDonald and active member of the F.N.L., Humanitarian League and Ethical Movement.⁹⁶ In this respect Ruskin made a substantial contribution to the changing entrenched attitudes to economic theory. But his own practical conclusions were closer to the Tory Democracy of Disraeli's Sybil than to either the New Liberalism or Socialism. Nevertheless, his insistence on the rule of the wisest, as has been suggested in the case of Carlyle, is not incompatible with the ideas of many elitist Socialists, as their adoption of his ideas demonstrates, though he himself specifically ruled out Socialism as a means of achieving his aims.⁹⁷

Rather, he wanted a wider distribution of property-owning, not its abolition. The chief defect in the way in which society operated

95. J. Ruskin : Unto This Last (Everyman edition 1907) p 185 and see eg P. Snowden : The Socialist's Budget (1907) p 9 and Labour Leader May Day Supplement 29 April 1910 p 3 in which Hardie took the phrase "There is no Wealth but Life" as his heading. It is interesting that this is the one quotation of Ruskin to regularly appear in Socialist speeches perhaps suggesting that it was the common property of the time rather than indicating any very substantial reading of Ruskin by the Socialist leaders. The slogan was painted on the Caroline Martyn Memorial Clarion Van which toured the country in the late 1890's. See the photograph facing p 134. H Pelling Origins of the Labour Party. (2nd ed 1965)

96. See above pp 87, 417.

97. Ruskin Op Cit pp 160-1

was, for Ruskin, the accumulation of riches not in the hands of those best fitted to use them but in the hands of those whose sole purpose in life was their acquisition. Thus he defined wealth in terms of (a) the usefulness of an article and (b) the ability of its owner to use it. The central problem of political economy was to get the "right thing to the right man" "not of everything to everyman."⁹⁸ Nevertheless, in his advocacy of a Just Wage - the payment of the actual value of a man's labour, rather than the lowest wage rates men would accept in a fiercely competitive system - ⁹⁹ Ruskin made a useful contribution to the thinking of many Socialists, adding further support to their moral attack on the workings of laissez-faire as the basis of production. It was thus in his moral attack on acquisitiveness and the profit motive, which treated men as units of production to be obtained at the cheapest possible rates contrary to any acceptable notions of justice, that Ruskin's ideas filtered into Socialist thought, giving rise to the common Socialist slogan : "Production for Use, not Profit."¹⁰⁰

(iv) Eastern Mysticism and Theosophy

The growing interest in Eastern Religions in the latter part of the 19th Century also had much to do with the breakup of Biblical orthodoxy and the consequent search for individual religious experience, for it was this latter, the mystical element, which

98. Ibid p 171

99. Ibid p 149 ff

100. See eg Snowden's recollections of preaching from a horse-drawn cart adorned with a banner bearing the slogan.
P. Snowden : Autobiography. Vol. 1. p 71.

Buddhism and Hinduism in particular stressed. It can be found in the American authors examined above as well as amongst their British counterparts. Thus Emerson, like Edward Carpenter later, came to the religious outlook of the East first through the Bhagavat Ghita, an epic poem which seems to have been popular with Thoreau too; and Emerson translated the Upanishads, a collection of verses dealing with the relation of the soul to the Absolute.¹⁰¹ Blatchford, in his attack on traditional Christianity in God and My Neighbour (1903) cited Buddhist ethical teaching both as superior and antecedent to the Christian ethic, and seems to have been particularly interested in the subject in his last years.¹⁰²

It is clear from Carpenter's reference to "Maya" (the concept that the evidence of the material senses is "illusion", and that the path to enlightenment and salvation lies in a renunciation of material desires, which forms the argument of "After Long Ages" in Towards Democracy) the extent to which he was himself indebted to the philosophy of the East.¹⁰³ In the Upanishads the equation of the Absolute - Being - with Good, and the consequent view of Evil as Non-Being (a view to be found also in Platonic thought) not surprisingly met a sympathetic response in

101. T.F. Eagleton: Nature and Spirit : A Study of Edward Carpenter In his Intellectual Context (Cambridge Ph.D. Dec 1968) p 206. For Thoreau's references to the Bhagavat Ghita see Walden pp 43, 46, 198-9, and for Hindu Vedantic teaching, pp 148 ff.

102. R. Blatchford : Op Cit pp 157 and see eg his articles in Clarion in 1924 on Theosophy, Spiritualism etc, and the supplement by Annie Besant on "Living Religions Within the Empire" Clarion 3 October 1924 pp 7-10.

103. See above pp 249 ff.

authors such as Emerson and Carpenter. Carpenter spent two months with a guru in Ceylon in 1890 with whom he realised more than ever before what he came to regard as "the root-thought of all existence - the intense consciousness (not conviction merely) of the oneness of life," a view of which he regarded Whitman as the prime modern exponent. He also preferred Whitman's greater concentration on human feeling to what he felt to be the too austere concentration on union with the Absolute to the neglect of the world in Eastern thought.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, Eastern Religion was another element in the religious make-up of a number of leading Socialists of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Its prime manifestation was in Theosophy, to which Annie Besant had been converted in the late 1880's, and her conversion stirred quite an interest in the subject in the Socialist world of the time. The Church Reformer carried a series of 5 articles on Theosophy in the autumn and winter of 1889, and the Reformers Yearbook (formerly the Labour Annual) in 1901 carried a page-long report of the activities of the "Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood".¹⁰⁵ Theosophists were invited to address Labour Churches,¹⁰⁶ and sympathetic Socialists such as Edward Carpenter addressed local Theosophical Society branches.¹⁰⁷

104. E. Carpenter: My Days and Dreams (1916) pp 143-6. From Adam's Peak to Elephanta (1892) pp 179-80.

105. Church Reformer : "The Restoration of Theosophy" by "H.P.M." August - December 1889. Reformers Year Book (1901) p 47.

106. Labour Church Record September 1889 p 215. Bolton and Farnworth Labour Churches were both referred to as having had speakers recently from the Theosophical Society.

107. E. Carpenter : My Days and Dreams pp 255 ff - to Theosophical Societies in Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield. He spoke on such topics as the Indian religion and the social question.

Annie Besant's conversion illustrates the central appeal of Theosophy. As she described in Why I Became a Theosophist (1889), Theosophy offered her a new possibility of religious faith after the loss of her evangelical convictions some 15 years earlier. It insisted on no creeds, nor any belief in a dichotomy between "the natural" and "the supernatural"; indeed one of its tenets was that there was no such thing as the miraculous. All phenomena would one day be explicable. It was man's lack of knowledge rather than anything exceptional which was the explanation for what were at present regarded as miracles. Thus, there was no need for her to retract anything of the belief in science which had undermined her earlier creed. On the other hand, during her years as a Secularist she had come to realise the limitations of scientific thought. It could not explain the existence or origin of thought itself. Theosophical Society membership meant acceptance of three points: firstly that each was part of the Universal Brotherhood; secondly the duty to promote the study of Eastern religions; and thirdly the investigation of the psychic processes of man. Finally, it discarded the Christian concept of a personal God for the pantheistic view that "God is all and all is God". Here there was nothing which conflicted with her reason. Yet it raised the Brotherhood of Man to the place of a central ideal, which alone commended it to a Socialist.*¹⁰⁸

108. A. Besant : Why I Became a Theosophist (1889) passim

In another pamphlet Theosophy (1892), she elaborated on this latter. Theosophy taught the underlying reality of the Absolute. This it was which manifested itself in the Cosmos, and which, indwelling in the human soul, distinguished him from animals - "the brute". The Universal Brotherhood of Man was the outcome of the belief in "the One Universal Spirit" dwelling in all. Love was the recognition of this essential kinship. It was the experience of the true "Self" of each, in which is recognised "the Higher Self" of all. At present such recognition occurs only in rare moments of mystical insight, but it was the destiny of the race to evolve to a higher spiritual plan where such experiences will be the norm, and basis for existence. Individual souls, through a process of death and rebirth (reincarnation) but always only as man, are gradually moving to this higher plane which is the goal of all, their progress being measured by their learning the lessons of self-abnegation and service as the way and thus realising the law of Karma - that every act is ethical and has a consequence. Hence the duty of social reform.¹⁰⁹

Thus Theosophy offered in its central tenets - of Brotherhood based upon the indwelling of the common spirit in each, and of the spiritual/moral evolution of the individual and the race - another source of what was a common belief, especially within the Socialist Movement from the late 1880's to the 1920's. It is interesting in this respect that

109. A. Besant : Theosophy (1892 address at South Place in Religious Systems of the World).

these were the two aspects of Theosophy seized upon by other Socialist sympathisers. Thus the Reformer's Yearbook singled out Brotherhood as the basis for the Theosophical Society's various educational and other social activities, So did Major Graham Pole, future Labour M.P., who was for over 20 years Mrs. Besant's legal and financial advisor until her death in 1933. He cited it as his reason for joining the Theosophical Society and a potent influence on his later conversion to Socialism.¹¹⁰ While for another Theosophist Labour M.P., Dr. Haden Guest, it was Theosophy's concept of spiritual evolution which provided a sound basis for social reform.¹¹¹

A similar conception of the spiritual brotherhood of man and of the spiritual evolution of the individual and society can be found in the central ideas of the leading theorists of the Anglican Guild of St. Matthew, in the Ethical Movement, and in the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools. It was a major feature of R.J. Campbell's New Theology, though it is somewhat less evident elsewhere within the nonconformist Christian Socialist societies (mainly because of their more purely Biblical and non-metaphysical outlook). Each drew on a different combination of the influences which we have been examining, the more overtly Christian bodies in particular going back to the Platonist tradition within

110. D.G.Pole: War Letters and Autobiography (1960) pp 178-9. This work was privately circulated, edited by Rhoda Vickers, his secretary for 26 years until his death in 1952.

111. L. Haden Guest : Theosophy and Social Construction (1912 forward by A. Besant) pp 14 ff.

Christianity as a further major source. But in each the tendency was towards this same conception of man and the world, and of the evolutionary and moral/spiritual basis of social progress.

(v) Christian Socialism in the Church of England.

It was the Guild of St. Matthew, a body comprised chiefly of Church of England clergymen, which most clearly demonstrated the effect of the new religious outlook on the churches. Looking back consciously to F.D. Maurice, to whose theological writings the leaders of the G.S.M. proclaimed their indebtedness, their body rivaled the S.D.F. in its claim to be the first organised Socialist group in England. Founded by the Rev. Steward Headlam, originally as a parish organisation at St. Matthew, Bethnal Green in 1877, on his sacking from his curacy there in the following year it became a national organisation. Its original aims included firstly the justification of the new Christian outlook to Secularists who had reacted against the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, and also "the promotion of the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation."¹¹² But in 1884, it adopted a programme as advanced as that of the S. D. F. , chiefly under the same impetus of the land agitations and the visits of Henry George which led so many

112. Quoted in P. d'A Jones op cit pp 114-5.

recruits into the latter.¹¹³ Thereafter, it formed a part of the Socialist world of London in the 1880's and 1890's until its demise in 1909, by which time it had given birth to the Church Socialist League, centred on the I.L.P. strongholds of the North to which many of its members had since moved. The G.S.M. was never a large organisation, but rather was conceived by Headlam as a body of activists acting as missionaries for the new viewpoint wherever they might get a hearing. As such, at its peak in 1895 its total membership was probably only 364, including 99 priests.¹¹⁴

In its religious viewpoint, the G.S.M. was very much part of the new outlook. Thus Headlam's Church Reformer could say sympathetically of Emerson that "He calls us back from dogma and precedent and rule to the image of God impressed in our own souls", and could follow him in his rejection of logic in favour of "intuition" and religious experience as man's way to knowledge of God.¹¹⁵ But as Christians the members of the Guild preferred to interpret the Biblical revelation in

113. Church Reformer 15 September 1885 p 40 report of 7th A.G.M. September 1884 given at 8th A.G.M. September 1885 for Headlam's justification of the programme which included Land Nationalisation, redistribution of wealth, Universal suffrage and the abolition of hereditary privilege and the House of Lords, see Church Reformer 15 October 1884 pp 217-9. S.D. Headlam: Warden's Annual Address to the G.S.M. (22 September 1884) "A Priest's Political Programme".

114. P. d'A Jones Op Cit p 129 Table 5 "Growth and Decline of the G.S.M." In 1885 it stood at 126 members including 40 priests.

115. Church Reformer 15 November 1885 pp 248-50 "Emerson". The article also praised his belief in "the Oversoul" pervading all Nature and Man, of Evil as the absence of this spirit, an imperfection on the way to the good, and the consequent belief that in each man were "the germs of perfection" into which he would eventually grow. They regarded this viewpoint as a revival of the same Greek Platonism which pervaded their own Catholic Christianity.

the light of the new outlook rather than throwing it over altogether. Thus in his Warden's Annual Address of September 1889, reviewing the development of new creeds and organisations based on the rejection of Christianity for "a humanitarian theism"¹¹⁶ grounded in the sole appeal to religious experience and the moral life, Headlam argued the superiority of the Christian view of man, and as a churchman denied that there was any need for a new church. He preferred to ground his faith in the Trinity, in the Fatherhood of God, in Jesus Christ as the Eternal Incarnate Word, and hence the ideal man, and in the Holy Spirit working through man as the source of all good, wherever it might be found, whether in believers or non-believers alike.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, as Percy Dearmer, another Guild member, wrote of what he called "this 'higher pantheism'", the new outlook "brings us very near to Christianity, to our modern Oxford theology ... which has been well described as 'Christian Pantheism!'. He saw it as a reaction to the supernaturalism of evangelical Christianity, which had resulted in a widespread loss of faith on the part of many genuinely religious men and women who had been forced to seek outside Christianity for a creed which met the dictates of their own experience but did not clash with their own reason -

116. The description given by another G.S.M. member, the Rev. H.C. Shuttleworth to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's outlook as expressed in Robert Elsmere. See Church Reformer July 1888 pp 153-6. The Church Reformer maintained a considerable interest in the growth of this type of religious viewpoint, and ran a series of 5 articles on Theosophy too, after Annie Besant's conversion. Ibid August - December 1889

117. Ibid October 1889 pp 219-22.

exactly the task which members of the G.S.M. has set themselves.¹¹⁸

Thus in a reply in the Socialist monthly To-Day to an attack by the secular Socialist Edward Aveling, the Revd. Charles Marson sought to define Christianity in terms of the new thought, and as the basis for Socialist ethics. Rejecting the supernaturalism of evangelical Christianity as scarcely worthy of the name, he insisted on God's immanence throughout Creation, in the working of natural laws and more particularly immanent in Man, who was created in the divine image. Jesus, who most fully realised his own manhood, was the "ideal" man, and in that sense is regarded as divine. In that sense too, he is the ideal of human nature, the ideal of manhood for which every individual strives in his own life. "There is only one ideal man underlying all outward personalities. If I can but be a Christ ...". Thus for Marson "religion involves no belief in the supernatural whatsoever, but is a belief in the ideal, realised at least once in history, often partially realised, and never wholly absent from any man; so that to realise this ideal is the one and only end of human life." And it is upon this which Socialism for Marson and other members of the Guild was based, for he continued: "This involves a complete set of relations of conduct. From these we come to hold certain political principles, such as the universal brotherhood of man, and that all should start 'fair' in the world ..."¹¹⁹

118. Ibid June 1891 pp 135-7 Reviewing Olive Scheiner: Story of an African Farm.

119. To-Day February 1884 pp 125 - 33. Rev. C.L. Marson "Christianity and Capitalism. A Reply".

Here, in the language of Christianity, is the same view of man and the same ideal of self-fulfilment seen in Emerson, and here too it led to a similar political belief. For there had been a strong tradition of this type in Christianity, stretching back to the early Greek Fathers, with their reception of Platonist philosophy into Christian thought, and demonstrated most obviously in St. John's Gospel and letters. In them, the Hebrew God the Father is equated with the Platonist Ideal Form of the Good, the source of beauty, truth and goodness, whose working in the world St. John calls the "Logos" (Word). It is the Word, which according to St. John, is the source of all knowledge, "the light of men" and of all Love, and from which springs all man's good acts. It was in Christ that this Word was made flesh, incarnate, fully and completely, making him therefore fully man and fully God. Basing their faith on the "Logos theology" of St. John's Gospel, therefore, the members of the G.S.M. adopted the same modes of thought as their "Unitarian" and Emersonian counterparts. For it was the same Platonist Idealism to which the G.S.M. looked within the Christian tradition, which, revived in German Idealism and thence transmitted again into English thought via Coleridge and Emerson, formed the basis of the wider religious outlook of the time.¹²⁰

120. For an excellent summary of this theological tradition as seen by G.S.M. members see Rev. G.C. Binyon : The Christian Socialist Movement in England (1931). himself a former priest member of the Guild, he traced its origins in Greek Platonism, through the Greek Fathers, the 16th Century Humanists, Cambridge Platonists and radicals of the Civil War period, in the Quakers, Robert Owen, the Unitarians, F.D. Maurice, etc., and saw it in direct opposition to the Latin insistence on a theology of personal salvation from hell starting with Augustine and at the root of both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism since the Reformation.

Coupled with this philosophical outlook was a radical new interpretation of the life and teaching of Jesus as found in the Gospels, and in particular his teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus Stewart Headlam equated it with "the righteous socialistic society" which was to be "established on earth". He was quite clear that Jesus' teachings referred to this life and not to a life after death, and that his references to judgement were clearly meant to be understood by his hearers in this sense, "that if men did wrong, if they were selfish instead of social, they would suffer terribly for it, and that that suffering was intended to purify them".¹²¹ As Marson put it, suffering was the result of men turning away from the ideal and pursuing false goals. It was man-made. But it was also in a sense redemptive, for it educated the soul, as, by experiencing suffering as the consequence of his selfishness, man would be gradually led to seek fresh goals until he found self-fulfilment. Thus mankind, albeit slowly, was moving inevitably nearer to the ideal for humanity - to the Kingdom of God and the Utopian vision of the Socialists. While with regard to life after death the Bible gave no firm guide, no more did man's scientific knowledge; "and Christians are sure that if no clear light of knowledge is given us on this subject it is for this obvious reason that our business is with this life, if life it may be called."¹²²

For Headlam, and other members of the G.S.M., Jesus was seen as a divine rebel against an unjust social order, "Carpenter

121. To-Day February 1884 pp 133-4 "A note by the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam".

122. Ibid February 1884. C.L. Marson art cit esp p 130. For a secular interpretation of Jesus' life's work see eg Rev. Conrad Noel : The Life of Jesus (1937) or Jesus the Heretic (1939)

of Nazareth, the Divine Revolutionist, the Emancipator of the Oppressed, the Founder of the Democratic Church."¹²³

The Church was the vanguard of the new social order and proclaimed its mission most notably through its sacraments, corporate acts of dedication on the part of its members.

Baptism was the sacrament of Equality in which divine brotherhood was proclaimed, and the Eucharist the "Great Emancipator's Supper",¹²⁴ the Magnificat being heralded as "The Hymn of the Universal Social Revolution".¹²⁵

Believing that the Holy Spirit was now at work for the consummation of God's Kingdom in the growing Socialist Movement, the priests of the Guild threw themselves into every aspect of its work. It was Headlam who conducted Alfred Linnell's funeral, for which Morris composed "A Death Song", after the Trafalgar Square riots of 1887 at which he and several other prominent members of the Guild were present.¹²⁶

123. In ed M.B. Reckitt : For Christ and the People (1968): K. Leech : "Stewart Headlam 1847 - 1924 and the Guild of St Matthew" esp p 78.
124. Ibid pp 71-2. The same can be seen in Conrad Noel see eg Clarion Pass On Pamphlet No 17 : C. Noel: Socialism and Church Tradition (n.d.) in which the Church is seen as "the Social Democratic organ of the Kingdom ... The Sacraments were social pledges of the Kingdom. The creeds had a Social Democratic Significance" (p 3).
125. Church Reformer November 1886 pp 244-6 Rev. T. Hancock: "The Hymn of the Universal Social Revolution".
126. Ibid December 1887 pp 265-9 "Remember Trafalgar Square!".

He was also active attending meetings of the S.D.F. in the 1880's and was a member of the Socialist Defence Association Council together with the Rev. W.E. Moll. (This was a body set up to maintain free speech in the face of police harassment of Socialist meetings in 1887-8¹²⁷). In addition, Headlam served for a number of years on the E.C. of the Fabian Society (1890-1, 1900-10), and, again with Moll, on the E.C. of the Strand Liberal and Radical Association, as well as on several other London Radical committees - a pattern quite common in those years amongst middle-class Fabians and Socialists in London.¹²⁸ As a Progressive, he sat on the London School Board, and later on the L.C.C. and, together with the Treasurer of the G.S.M., Frederick Verinder, was an active member of the English Land Restoration League, set up to promote the ideas of Henry George after the latter's visits to England in the early 1880's.¹²⁹

127. See eg Justice 19 January 1884 p 7 report of meeting of all involved in recent Socialist Propaganda at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, called at the invitation of the S.D.F. Committee. It included a wide range of figures from the S.D.F. leadership to such Fabians as Webb, Bland, Olivier, etc. Headlam aired the question of admitting priests to the S.D.F. because some he knew had been refused membership, provoking a discussion in which E.B. Bax stated his opposition as Christianity "was one of the enemies they had to combat". He was present at another similar meeting in October. See Justice 18 October 1884 pp 6-7, at which he offered to speak for the S.D.F. at Bethnal Green on the Law Question. Justice published notices of G.S.M. meetings from January 1885 and carried advertisements for the Church Reformer. For Headlam's activities in the Socialist Defence Association see Commonweal 12 November 1887 p 367 and for a list of members of its E.C. The Link 4 February 1888 p 4.

128. A.M. McBriar: Fabian Socialism and English Politics 1884 - 1918 (1962) pp 236-7.

129. F.G. Bettany: Stewart Headlam. A Biography (1925) esp pp 84 ff. For a full description of the impact of Henry George on the G.S.M. see P. d'a Jones : The Christian Socialist Revival 1877 - 1914 (1968) Ch V. "Stewart Headlam and the Guild of St Matthew".

A similar range of activities could be cited for a number of the leading members of the Guild. The Rev. W.A. Morris of Lambeth, one of the leaders of the gasworkers in their strike in 1890 was Chairman of the Battersea S.D.F.¹³⁰ The Revs. Percy Dearmer and F.L. Donaldson were regular attenders at Morris' Hammersmith Socialist Society in the 1890s and Dearmer and Conrad Noel were delegates to the 1896 Socialist International Congress.¹³¹ Members of the G.S.M. addressed branches of the S.D.F., the Socialist League, the Bloombury Socialist Society and numerous local Radical Associations.¹³² G.S.M. members included such well-known Socialist propagandists as Katherine St. John Conway (later Mrs Bruce Glasier), Enid Stacy, Caroline Martyn, Joseph Clayton and Mrs Charlotte Despard.¹³³ At Bristol, the local Socialist Society was largely run by G.S.M. members, one of whom, H.H. Gore, came within 182 votes of defeating the Liberal tobacco manufacturer W.H. Wills in the February 1895 Bristol East by-election.¹³⁴ At Oxford, the University Branch of the G.S.M. arranged a series of joint meetings with the local Socialist League Branch in 1886.¹³⁵

130. Labour Leader 13 June 1912 p 380 Mrs. C. Despard : "How I became a Socialist."

131. B.J. Butler : F.L. Donaldson and the Christian Socialist Movement (Leeds M.Phil 1970) pp 55 ff. Nan Dearmer: The Life of Percy Dearmer (1941) esp p 101.

132. See eg notices of meetings in Church Reformer (1884-95) or Reynolds News (1896 on). Such contacts continued throughout the 1880's and 1890's.

133. Church Reformer : March 1891 p 93, January 1891 p 20, March 1892 p 68, April 1892 p 91, November 1893 p 259.

134. For Gore's membership of the G.S.M. see Ibid April 1890 p 89.

Others were active in the I.L.P. after its formation in 1893, the Rev. W.E. Moll sitting on its N.A.C. as the North East representative up to the First World War, the Revs. P.E.T. Widdrington and Conrad Noel, both his curates at St. Philip's, Newcastle in the late 1890's, joining it under his influence, and all of them speaking regularly at meetings both of the I.L.P. and the Labour Churches.¹³⁶ The Rev. F.L. Donaldson, who became Vicar of St. Mark's, Leicester, was a leading member of the I.L.P. there and led a march of the Leicester unemployed to London in 1905. Ramsay MacDonald and his wife used to stay with the Donaldsons when they visited Leicester after MacDonald was elected as its M.P. in 1906.¹³⁷ Yet another G.S.M. member, the Rev. J. Cartmel-Robinson, a friend of Blatchford and regular contributor to the Clarion, was responsible for the formation of the Clarion Fellowship in 1900.¹³⁸

135. Ibid June 1886 pp 139-40, July 1886 pp 162-3. Its onetime secretary, the Rev. P.E.T. Widdrington, who later married Enid Stacy, remembered the Oxford G.S.M. also having such Socialist speakers as Shaw, William Clarke and Herbert Burrows. See his reminiscences in Christendom June 1944 pp 177-82 "Memories of Oxford in the Nineties" the first of 5 articles originally intended as part of an autobiography "Canon off the Red" which was never completed.

136. Christendom September 1946 pp 205-8 P.E.T. Widdrington: "The Awakening of the North". Later, at Coventry Widdrington was a member of the editorial board of the local Labour weekly the Coventry Sentinel, and threw himself into the movement. In 1918, removing to Great Easton in Essex he became chairman of the Saffron Walden Constituency Labour Party for some years. Ibid September 1947 pp 86-90 "Sent to Coventry" and March 1948 pp 160-6 "The Country Takes Hold". For Noel's view on these early activities and the religious nature of the I.L.P. see C. Noel Autobiography pp 48 ff.

137. B.J. Butler op cit esp pp 84 ff, 283 ff.

138. See above p 304 n 17.

Thus members of the G.S.M. exercised a presence out of proportion to their size throughout the Socialist world of the late 19th-early 20th Centuries, providing activists within all the leading Socialist bodies and thus contributing their particular brand of Christian Socialism to all. They could be found on the platforms of Labour candidates for Parliament at Jarrow and Burnley, Accrington and the Colne Valley.¹³⁹

And when, spurred on by the Labour victories of 1906, a group of the northern priests formed the Church Socialist League, they counted among their membership two Labour M.P.s, T. Summerbell (Sunderland) and George Lansbury.¹⁴⁰

The C.S.L. breathed new life into Anglican Christian Socialism, for the G.S.M. had become relatively moribund as an organisation with the gradual removal of most of its activists from London to parishes in the industrial provinces, and Headlam had been unwilling to change its London base. The C.S.L. was a logical departure therefore, more especially because of a desire on the part of many in the North to identify much more closely with the emergent Labour Party than Headlam and those who had been involved in London Progressivism. For

139. In 1906 Hyndman apparently invited them to help him at Burnley, and Irving at Accrington. P.E.T. Widdrington "Those Were the Days" Christendom March, 1947 pp 20-1. For their help to Victor Grayson at Colne Valley see R. Groves : The Strange Case of Victor Grayson (1973) pp 29 & 35 and The Optimist Vol 2 No 4 October 1907 pp 314-8 Rev. F.R. Swan : "The Colne Valley Socialist Victory".

140. Church Socialist League List of Members November 1909. Lansbury, its Vice-Chairman since 1908 became Chairman of the C.S.L. in 1912.

Headlam continued to see the best opportunity for Socialism as being through the Left wing of the Liberals rather than through a new class-based party with no hopes of achieving a majority in the foreseeable future.¹⁴¹

But if the emergence of political Labour created a dilemma for members of the G.S.M. over which party they ought to support, they were quite clear about their reasons for being committed to Socialism. Modern society had failed to provide the basic conditions for individual self-fulfilment. Based on selfishness and acquisitiveness, reducing the individual to a mere unit of production in a process whose end was profits for the idle few rather than the satisfaction of the basic needs of the labouring many, Capitalism was morally bankrupt. In contrast, Socialism was the ideal of human society, a society based on justice and equal regard for the individual, in which production was for need, not profit, and in which the goal of life was the fullest possible self-development of each human being for the common good of all. If they adopted the measures of what was termed "economic socialism" it was as a necessary means to this higher end.

141. P. d'a Jones op cit pp 149 ff

(vi) The Ethical Societies

Another movement, confined largely to London, which reflected current religious trends was the Ethical Movement, as the statement of views of the London Ethical Society founded in 1886 makes clear. Its chief aim was to provide a rational basis for "the moral and religious life of Man ... apart from Authority and Tradition" at a time when "old sanctions and principles have lost their hold."¹⁴² Other societies followed this lead. The South Place Chapel, a once Unitarian body whose members had included Thomas Carlyle, J.S. Mill, Harriet and James Martineau and Robert Browning, had for many years, under the ministry of Moncure Conway (1864 - 1865 and 1892-7), an American minister and friend of Emerson, Thoreau, Theodore Parker, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whitman and others of the same outlook. In 1887 its name was changed to the South Place Ethical Society at the request of its new minister (1887-91) Dr. Stanton Coit, another American who had studied in Heidelberg and come under the influence of both Emerson and later Dr. Felix Adler, the ex-rabbi founder of the New York Ethical Culture Society.¹⁴³ Other societies were set up in Cambridge (1888-96), East London (1890-1912)¹⁴⁴, West London (1892 on)¹⁴⁵, South London (1892 on)

142. Quoted in G. Spiller : The Ethical Movement in Great Britain (1934) p 2 from a leaflet in July 1886.

143. H. Snell : Men, Movements and Myself (1938) pp 159-60. For Coit's intellectual development see S. Budd : Varieties of Unbelief : Atheists and Agnostics in English Society 1850-1960 (1977) pp 224 ff.

144. It changed its name to Bow and Bromley Ethical Society in 1905, the Hackney Ethical Society in 1908, and collapsed in 1912. G. Spiller : op cit pp 57 ff.

145. It was renamed the Ethical Church by Coit, its minister until his gradual retirement after 1932. G. S. Spiller op cit pp 65 ff. S. Budd op cit pp 232-9.

and North London (1895 on), leading to the setting up of the Ethical Union in 1896, the Moral Instruction League (1897) and under Coit's editorship the weekly Ethical World in January 1898. Societies further afield included Halifax, Rochester, Neath and Merthyr.¹⁴⁶ By 1906 there were 42 such societies, all of them influenced in some way by Stanton Coit and his ideas, a number of them deriving their origin directly from him.¹⁴⁷ Membership of the individual societies corresponded to the size of the church and chapel congregations, varying from c60 for the early years of the East London Society to 390 for the South London Society at its peak in 1914.¹⁴⁸

The Ethical Movement's rejection of doctrine and supernatural sanctions as the basis of morals and its emphasis on individual conscience and conduct attracted a membership composed of yet more of those for whom traditional Christianity had lost its hold. As in many other allied developments of the period, the chief sources of inspiration referred to by leading members were Emerson and American Transcendentalism Idealist thought from Germany, and its British counterpart in the writings of T.H. Green and his school. Thus the original London Ethical Society was founded in 1886 by a mixture of

146. S. Budd op cit pp 204,249. The Neath and Merthyr Societies, were formed as a result of the 1904 Welsh Revival, the latter later transforming itself into an I.L.P. Branch. Ibid p 253.

147. S. Budd op cit p 231. Of the London Societies, he was full-time minister of West London after 1894, and had been involved in the foundation of the London Ethical Society, London Society, etc. G Spiller op cit passim.

148. G. Spiller op cit pp 58, 96-7.

Emersonians such as William Clarke, Percival Chubb and Herbert Burrows (who were also instrumental in the founding of the F.N.L. and Fabian Society),¹⁴⁹ and such British Idealists as Bernard Bosanquet, J.H. Muirhead and R.B. Haldane, fresh from University, who saw the London Ethical Society as a place in which to further their philosophical interests. Its first chairman was Professor Edward Caird, and its early activities centred on Toynbee Hall, whose tolerant religious atmosphere provided a congenial London meeting-place for many young Oxford students influenced by the writings of T.H. Green and interested in the social problems. Some Societies were principally academic. The Cambridge Ethical Society under the chairmanship of Professor Henry Sidgwick included on its committee Professor Marshall the economist, and Sidgwick wished his society to rule out any discussion of the social question, restricting its programme to pure philosophy.¹⁵⁰ This outlook led swiftly to a divergence of views with other societies which, following Coit and the growing interest in social questions, provided a meeting-place for those dedicated to the active pursuit of the ethical ideal both in individual conduct and social relationships. It was this latter view which came to predominate.

The temporary predominance of this narrower concern with philosophical discussion, however, caused the exodus of Stanton

149. See above pp 264 ff for an account of the F.N.L.

150. Ibid pp 48ff

Coit and a number of his younger supporters from South Place in 1891. At first they merged with the London Ethical Society, but Coit's belief in the need for meetings to inculcate a sense of reverence and moral commitment - in practice to make the meeting a service rather than a discussion - and his own radical social views, alienated the philosophers, causing a further split as a result of which Coit and his supporters left to form the West London Ethical Society in 1894. Here was a body much more akin to other religious organisations of the time, with ethical hymns (Coit published an Ethical Hymnbook in 1904), readings from suitable religious and ethical texts, and discourses (ie sermons)¹⁵¹, placing the emphasis firmly on commitment - not discussion.

With the formation of the Union of Ethical Societies in 1896, this became the chief hallmark of the movement. In the American and German traditions, Coit wished to emphasise the place of "feeling" as well as mere intellect as the basis for a rational morality, a view expressed too in the new statement of aims of South Place in 1897 that: "The object of the Society is the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment, the study of ethical principles, and the promotion of human welfare, in harmony with advancing knowledge."¹⁵²

151. S. Budd op cit pp 232-9 for further developments of the religious nature of the services held by Coit, especially after his wife's acquisition of a Methodist Church in Queensway as the premises for what he later called the Ethical Church.

152. G. Spiller op cit p 34.

By the end of the century, South Place, where Sunday lectures after 1899 were given by J.A. Hobson, J.M. Robertson, both leading New Liberals, and the Radical and Socialist Herbert Burrows, in place of a full-time minister, clearly followed the new trend. The Cambridge Ethical Society had folded up by 1896, in which year the Union of Ethical Societies in its original declaration of aims made clear the social dimension of ethical advance in its advocacy of "a religion of human fellowship and service ... and ... to help man to love, know and do the right in all relations of life."¹⁵³ This increasingly close identification of the Ethical Union with Socialism and the New Liberalism led to a further exodus of Individualists from the London Ethical Society. Led by Bernard Bosanquet (a leading member of the Charity Organisation Society) they founded instead the short-lived London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy (1897-1900) whose training programme for the C.O.S. eventually merged into the London School of Economics in 1912.¹⁵⁴

The outlook of the Ethical Union, however, attracted many who sought the basis of a religious commitment in a common devotion to the good rather than in the older creeds in which they no longer believed. Thus the Ethical Societies attracted many ex-evangelicals and others who no longer felt able to

153. H. Snell : The Ethical Movement Explained (1935) p 16

154. S Budd op cit p 204. For a hostile view of the C.O.S. under Bosanquet from another leading Ethical Societies member, the future Labour M.P. and one time Woolwich C.O.S. organiser who eventually lost this job because of his social views see H. Snell : Men, Movements and Myself (1938), Chapter 5 "London, Woolwich and the C.O.S."

remain within the churches, as can be seen in the case of 2 leading figures in the new movement, Harry Snell (b. 1865), who from 1900 was the main influence on the Council of the Union of Ethical Societies and for many years its chairman; and F.J. Gould (b.1855), an activist in the formation of the East London Ethical Society from 1890 who for 6 years was the organiser of its Sunday School. and for 3 years from 1896 was full-time lecturer, propagandist and organiser for the Union of Ethical Societies, at Coit's instigation.¹⁵⁵ The former (the son of a Radical agricultural labourer and chapel-goer) and the latter (the son of a radical working jeweller) who had become a choirboy at the royal chapel Windsor, and later continued his education to become a schoolteacher under the patronage of the evangelical Canon Wriothsesley Russell, had both embraced the evangelical creed, Gould recounting his "conversion experience" at the age of 16 in his autobiography.¹⁵⁶ Both had later suffered crises of faith. Snell in the early 1880's at Nottingham, after hearing a Unitarian Radical speaking in the market place, realised with a shock the existence of those who rejected Biblical authority which he had accepted on pain of hell. It was the start of his own questioning of the Bible, and he now began reading works on science and evolution in particular, and it led him into the National Secular Society under the influence of Bradlaugh and especially Mrs Besant, whom he heard at the time, though

155. See their respective autobiographies: H. Snell : Men, Movements and Myself (1938) and F.J. Gould: The Life-Story of a Humanist (1923)

156. F.J. Gould op cit pp 21-2

he later wrote that his own views were more Unitarian than anything else in these years.¹⁵⁷ Gould's belief in Biblical and Church authority received its first blow from the daughter of a Quaker in 1875 whom he met on holiday, and he began to realise the need to base his views on his own authority, not an external one. Thus he confided to his diary "I find all things questioned: I must think all things for myself." In his case, too, it led him into the National Secular Society, and to a belief in Comte's religion of humanity by the 1880's. After his period in London in the Ethical Movement, he went as full-time organiser of the local Secular Society to Leicester, from 1899-1908, when he left to form a Positivist Society because he felt the former had not been sufficiently committed to the ethical ideal or to its social consequences, which for him meant the Labour Movement.¹⁵⁸ A similar but distinct movement from the old creeds to the Ethical Movement is seen in the case of another regular Ethical Societies speaker of the 1890's, W.J. Jupp, a man strongly influenced by American Transcendentalism, whose spiritual pilgrimage led him from the Congregational ministry, via Unitarian pulpits, into the Ethical Movement and the Fellowship of the New Life, followed by a further eleven years as a Unitarian and Free Christian minister before his retirement to Letchworth Garden City just prior to the First World War.¹⁵⁹ Such were typical of the recruits to

157. H. Snell op cit pp 32 ff

158. F.J. Gould op cit pp 34, 51-3, 108-9.

159. W.J. Jupp : Wayfarings (1918) *passim*.

the Ethical Societies in the 1890's.

These members of the Ethical Societies came holding either Agnostic or Theistic views. But they were united in their devotion to moral good as an ideal of human conduct, calling this their religion, whether or not they individually equated such a belief with faith in what Christians called God. They saw a practical devotion to the good as more important than metaphysical speculations as to its origin. This view was more clearly expressed in the semi-official statements of Stanton Coit and later Harry Snell as to the central beliefs of the Ethical Movement. Coit's The Ethical Movement Defined (1906)¹⁶⁰ provides a good example of this. For him the primary tenet "is that the bond of religious union should be solely devotion to the good in the world ... a certain quality of human character and conduct." If such came to be accepted as the basis of union, the old barriers between denominations and the world religions based on creed and practice would disappear, offering the greatest opportunity for ethical advance yet seen. Thus they would exclude neither Theist nor Agnostic on account of his beliefs.¹⁶¹ As Snell put it in his pamphlet :

The Ethical Movement Explained (1935) "The Ethical Movement stands for morality without theology. It elevates simple goodness to the supreme place in the world. It insists that every man shall devote his utmost to the highest, and in labour

160. In Religious Systems of the World - a collection of addresses delivered at South Place Institute (1905)

161. Ibid pp 787-93 : S. Coit : "The Ethical Movement Defined"

directed to noble ends it recognises the only true religion ... Theist and Atheist alike can unite in its service. No-one is excluded because of his personal opinions as to God, Christ, the Bible, or the origin of man. It welcomes as members all who place morality above creeds, dogma, ceremony, provided they are willing to serve the good from no other motive than that which its own inherent worth inspires."¹⁶² Thus the Ethical Movement sees "common devotion to the good, the true, the beautiful" as the true bond of the religious union of the future since "This is the only bond ... that the whole of mankind can accept ... it does not say that there is not a reality beyond experience nor a life after death, but it insists that the moral life of man is not dependent on belief in these things." Rather, it finds "the motive to right conduct within the heart of man himself" in his conscience and reason.¹⁶³

Such an emphasis on conduct led not surprisingly to certain obvious consequences with regard to the social outlook of the Ethical Societies, as is again brought out in the writings of Coit. For as Stanton Coit made clear in an attack on individualistic "atomist" members of the Ethical Societies, in Ethics in November 1901, man's moral sense, his "inner

162. Ethics 30 November 1901 pp 609-10. Stanton Coit : "Rationalism and Ethics"

163. H. Snell : "The Ethical Movement Explained" (16pp) A somewhat similar belief is expressed in Gould's conviction of the basic devotion in "the heart of man" to "Goodness and Virtue" regardless of creed or race and his assurance that love of man to man and to nature would become the ultimate basis of human actions - a view he expressed in an article in the Sunday Review October 1882. F.J. Gould : Op Cit pp 52-4

authority "is a product of conscious social life". Thus while agreeing with the individualists that the abolition as far as practicable of external restraints on man's freedom and the cultivation of his reliance on his own "inner authority" as far as possible must be the aim of all democratic reform, he denied that this must preclude major attempts at social reconstruction. Rather, seeing society "as a living mental organism", in whose evolution the moral development of the individual was inextricably bound up, he was committed to its transformation into "an ethical fellowship" in which all man's relationships would be determined in accordance with ethical principles. Thus he was convinced, as he wrote in another article, that the basic principles of the Ethical Movement while not necessarily issuing in a belief in the State ownership of land and capital, must nevertheless tend towards the Socialist or "democratic Liberal" and Radical commitment to social re-organisation, on more just lines.¹⁶⁴ But equally, mere "mechanical changes in institutions" must have the support of "the moral consciousness of the community" if they are to issue in true ethical advance. Thus the basis of "all social reform" must be "good character and right conduct".¹⁶⁵

Snell took a similar line arguing that the Ethical Societies' insistence on the moral life of the individual "demands such a change in society as will make a perfect

164. Ibid 12 April 1902 pp 113-4 S.Coit: "Democracy and the Ethical Movement".

165. Religious Systems of the World: art cit p 789.

moral life possible". For him, "the social question is at bottom a moral question ... Under present social conditions the highest development of the moral faculties is not open to the masses. To the slum-dweller, the half-starved peasant, the sweated seamstress, and the over-worked and underpaid casual labourer, it is almost impossible". This is the familiar argument, for social reform to provide equal opportunities for moral development. But like Coit, Snell was in complete agreement that any social reform must be accompanied by individual ethical advance if it was to have lasting results. For him too, character was essential, "and all economic reform is dependent for its success on elevated standards of personal honour".¹⁶⁶

By 1900 the Ethical Movement was officially committed to the view that social evolution was essentially an ethical advance, based on the gradual modification of society and human attitudes. Such a gradualist view appealed to many, especially amongst the New Liberals, and the more middle-class, intellectual Socialists of the capital in the 1890's, who were largely to be found within the Fabian Society. Amongst prominent New Liberals involved in the Ethical Societies, J.A. Hobson and L.T. Hobhouse both served for a period as chairmen of the Ethical Union, as did the Fabian Graham Wallas.¹⁶⁷

166. H. Snell: The Ethical Movement Explained pp 14-15.

167. Ibid p 16.

Other prominent Fabians and I.L.P. Socialists included Ramsay MacDonald,¹⁶⁸ William Clarke, Herbert Burrows and Margaret McMillan¹⁶⁹, whilst among leading figures within the Ethical Union, Coit and Snell were both active Fabians, the latter serving over 20 years on its E.C.,¹⁷⁰ and William Sanders (a protege of Coit's and President of the West London Ethical Society from 1907-11) was proposed by Coit for the secretaryship of the Fabian Society, taking over on E.R. Pease's retirement at the end of 1913.¹⁷¹ For Sanders, who had been attending Fabian meetings since 1888, Fabian gradualism fitted exactly with the ethical views he had developed from Emerson and Thoreau.¹⁷² He later, like Snell, became a Labour M.P. Coit was not so lucky. He twice stood as a Labour candidate, in 1906 and January 1910, but on both occasions was defeated.¹⁷³ Gould, at Leicester, played an active part in the Labour Movement there, helping in the foundation of the Leicester Pioneer in 1901, and later serving as Labour member on the School Board and then on the City Council (from 1904-10).¹⁷⁴ Each of these leading

168. For MacDonald's ideas and links with the Ethical Movement see above pp390 ff.

169. G. Spiller op cit p 103, 116 etc.

170. H. Snell : Men, Movements and Myself p 123

171. N. and J. Mackenzie : The First Fabians (1977) p 384.

172. W.G. Sanders : Early Socialist Days (1927) pp 56 ff.

173. S. Budd op cit pp 233-4 says that after his 1906 contest Coit lost interest in purely political Socialism. He was however Labour candidate for Wakefield in January 1910 losing by a mere 519 votes to the Unionist in a seat which, owing to a local deal, Labour did not contest in December, the Liberal then winning by 116. See N. Blewett : The Peers, the Parties and the People : The General Elections of 1910 p 257.

174. F.J. Gould op cit pp 91-6.

figures in the Ethical Movement was led by his views to some degree of Socialist commitment, though the arguments which they used in support of their actions scarcely differed from those of many other groups we have been examining. The East London Ethical Society also had a notable success under F.J. Gould in attracting such working-class Socialists as Tom Mann and George Lansbury, who sent their children to the Ethical Sunday School run by Gould, in which they were taught ideals of "personal and social conduct" through stories on such topics as Courtesy, Punctuality, Courage, Order, Justice, Evolution, Helping One Another, Keeping Promises, Kindness to Animals.¹⁷⁵ Such schools, the forerunners of Socialist Sunday Schools into which many of them later merged, were a feature of most Ethical Societies, a practical consequence of the belief in the developed conscience as the root of man's ethical notions and conduct, and a deliberate answer to what many in the Ethical Societies saw as the outmoded and morally useless methods of Biblical teaching in the Board Schools.¹⁷⁶

(vii) Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools.

Outside London, especially in the industrial North, in Lancashire and the West Riding, it was the Labour Churches which grew up as a major manifestation of the changed religious outlook in the 1890s. At least 121 such congregations were

175. Ibid pp 76-7. The list of topics comes from the 11th Annual Report (1900) of the East London Ethical Society p.3. This reference I owe to my supervisor Dr. E. Royle.

176. S. Budd op cit p 246.

formed, of which 42 flourished over a number of years.

their high point came in the later 1890's (in 1895 there were 54 in existence), after which a slow decline set in, briefly stemmed in 1906, but thereafter continuing down to the outbreak of the First World War, when there were only 13 such bodies remaining.¹⁷⁷ From the first Labour Church, founded by John Trevor in Manchester and Salford on 4 October 1891, the movement spread rapidly, John Trevor's monthly Labour Prophet noticing new churches in Bolton, Bradford, Sheffield, Oldham and briefly in London (though this one barely got off the ground) by May 1892. Others in Halifax, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancaster, Plymouth, Dundee and Birmingham followed by January 1893, leading to their federation in a Labour Church Union, set up at a Conference of the Labour Churches at Manchester on 22-23 July 1893, which adopted a list of Principles and Objects drawn up by Trevor.

177. Rev. D.F. Summers : The Labour Church and Allied Movements of the late 19th and Early 20th Centuries. (Edinburgh A.D, 1958) Vol II Appendix pp 311 ff.

178. Labour Prophet May 1892 p 38, January 1893 p 8, August 1893 p 76. The Objects of the Labour Church Union were:

- "I The development of the religion of the Labour Movement
- II The realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth by the establishment of a state of society founded upon Justice and love" (Ibid)

The Principles:

- "1 that the Labour Movement is a Religious Movement.
- 2 That the Religion of the Labour Movement is not a Class Religion, but unites members of all classes in working for the abolition of Commercial Slavery.
- 3 That the Religion of the Labour Movement is not Sectarian or Dogmatic, but Free Religion, leaving each man free to develop his own relations with the Power that brought him into being.
- 4 That the Emancipation of Labour can only be realised so far as men learn both the Economic and Moral Laws of God, and heartily endeavour to obey them.
- 5 That the development of Personal Character and the improvement of Social Conditions are both essential to man's emancipation from moral and social bondage". (Ibid, February 1892 p 16)

The variations in sizes of membership and attendance at these churches, as with the Ethical Societies in London, paralleled such differences among individual churches and chapels of the traditional denominations. Thus Halifax boasted an average attendance of over 500 at its services, Plymouth 250, Oldham 300, of which least 100 attended regularly, and Manchester and Salford over 300 regular attenders.¹⁷⁹

Huge variations might occur in attendances at a particular church if a well-known speaker was billed to attend. The Bolton Labour Church with as few as 30 regular members in its congregation, could attract perhaps 400-500 for a major name in the Labour Movement such as Snowden, Hardie, Enid Stacy or Margaret MacMillan. The same was true in Manchester, Hyde and elsewhere.¹⁸⁰ There was a danger here, which didn't go unnoticed, that the churches might merely become useful additional platforms on Sundays for Socialist propagandists without any distinct life of their own, a danger all the greater because of the especially close ties between them and newly-formed I.L.P. branches in many Northern towns.¹⁸¹ It was a point which John Trevor and a later successor as chairman of the Labour Churches Union (in 1898), James Sims, continually urged member churches to guard against,¹⁸² especially after the

179. Ibid January 1893.

180. Labour Church Record July 1900 p 2.

181. For the links between Labour Churches and the I.L.P. see above pp306 ff

182. eg Trevor in his editorial in Labour Prophet June 1898 p 188, or James Sims' Presidential Address to the L.C.U. Conference June 4-5 1898, Labour Prophet July 1898 p 195 and August pp 202-3. Sims had good reason to point to these dangers after a recent experience as chairman of the Bolton Labour Church. It had been begun by the local I.L.P., who later voted to abolish it, Sims and a number of stalwarts being forced to move to new premises to keep the body alive. Ibid April 1898 p 171

experience of the November 1894 conference, when the General Secretary of the L.C.U., Fred Brocklehurst, who had also become Financial Secretary of the I.L.P., was defeated by the narrow margin of 11 votes to 9 on the proposition that the Basis and Principles of the Union, which guaranteed its identity, be scrapped and replaced by a single statement, effectively subordinating it to the I.L.P., which was to have read "The Labour Church Movement is a union of all those who, by organised or individual effort, are emphasising or developing the moral and ethical aspects of the Labour Movement. The Annual Conference is the outward expression of this union of spirit, purpose and work".¹⁸³

There were other problems too, which beset the Labour Churches during their brief existence. Firstly, only 2 churches ever actually owned their premises, the Watford Labour Church, and the William Morris Labour Church at Leek, housed in the former Friends' Meeting House refitted by Larner Sugden, (a secularist disciple of Morris and architect of Leicester Secular Hall). Significantly, these churches survived longer

183. Ibid December 1894 p 171. Brocklehurst was a former theological student and a candidate for the Anglican ministry before he became involved in Labour Churches. His continuing religious commitment is clear from the course of 8 lectures he gave on "Christ and Socialism" at Bolton Labour Church at the beginning of 1895 (Ibid February 1895 p 47). His actions stemmed not from any lack of religious conviction, but rather from his growing preoccupation with I.L.P. politics. He in fact retired from the General Secretaryship at the following Conference in November 1895, and thereafter confined his activities to the I.L.P. S. Pierson's comments on the clash between him and Trevor should therefore be read in this light. Church History 29 (1960) pp 463-78 S. Pierson: "John Trevor and the Labour Church Movement in England 1891-1900".

than any of their much larger counterparts.¹⁸⁴ A second drawback of the Labour Churches, for their members, was their inability except in rare cases to carry out the important "rites of passage" such as baptism, marriages and funerals. Only the Leeds Labour Church was apparently ever registered for marriages.¹⁸⁵ This was obviously unsatisfactory to religious members of these churches' congregations, who were presumably driven back to their former denominational allegiances for such occasions. But the central weakness of the Labour Churches was undoubtedly their lack of a trained pastorate. For with no organisation of ministers, local churches were thrown totally on their own resources and might collapse if one or two prominent members died or left the area. This problem was raised at the 1899 Conference, but the discussion proved highly contentious when Trevor suggested that it would be impossible to provide adequate spiritual and pastoral teachers without setting aside men as full-time ministers. To many, this seemed to be the first step to a return to the denominational organisations they had reacted against, where, in all too many cases within the non-conformist chapels, the wealthier members, who largely paid for the minister, had effective control over his utterances and power to make his position untenable if he incurred their disfavour - as had

184. For the Leek Labour Church, opened 13 December 1896, see Labour Prophet January 1897 p 9. Designed internally by the architect, I.L.Per and friend of Morris, Larnier Sugden, it was small, seating 200-300. Ibid October 1897 p 124. For the building at Watford, Clarion 29 August 1902 p 7 W.H.Syme: "The Labour Church Union."

185. International Review of Social History 3 (1958) pp 445-60 K.S. Inglis : "The Labour Movement" p 452. There was an attempt to rectify this deficiency at the 1905 Conference which provided that the E.C. draw up "a form of ceremonial adapted for the use of Labour Churches on the occasion of births, marriages and burials or cremations". Clarion 10 March 1905 p 7. But by now the movement was already in decline. One M.P. however remembered having his children "named" at Labour Church services, though he later came to believe that there should either be a proper christening or none at all. Ben Turner About Myself (1863-1930) (1930) p 239

happened to Trevor himself at his Manchester Unitarian Chapel after he had begun to espouse the Labour Church ideal.¹⁸⁶ Alternatively, it would give too much authority to a minister, who would "want to boss the show", as one delegate put it. Nothing was therefore resolved except that Trevor continued to invite younger men from the churches to spend some time together with him in study and meditation at his home in Horsted Keynes.¹⁸⁷ Exactly the same problem had arisen in the Ethical Societies, Coit setting up an Ethical Preachers' Guild in 1913 to train speakers for the Ethical Societies. But again there was no organised circuit or any paid lecturers. It was a common feature of such movements and accounted in great part for their organisational weakness and makeshift appearance.¹⁸⁸

The first Labour Churches had been set up as a result of the lack of sympathy, within the non-conformist denominations particularly, for the growing Labour Movement and for working class concerns in general. This reflected partly the class composition of many congregations - thus a Manchester working man told John Trevor that although he liked his sermons very much, he had left his Unitarian Chapel because of the condescension of the more "respectable" members towards him.¹⁸⁹

186. J. Trevor: My Quest for God (1897) pp 24 ff.

187. Labour Church Record July 1899 pp 62 ff, virtually the whole of the Conference Report was devoted to this issue.

188. S. Budd : op cit p 235.

189. J. Trevor : op cit pp 241 ff.

Partly too, it was due to the close links of many ministers with the Liberal Party - as in Bradford, where the formation of the Labour Church came as a direct result of the opposition of the non-conformist churches to Ben Tillett's candidature in the 1892 Election; 12 local ministers had appeared on the Liberal platform but none on his own. As a result Fred Jowett of the Bradford Labour Union and Tillett, began the Bradford Labour Church, which was soon to provide a welcome for a congregation of over 5,000 at its service to mark the inuagural conference of the I.L.P. held in Bradford in March 1893.¹⁹⁰

In form, their services closely paralleled those of most other nonconformist churches. There was a Labour Church Hymn Book (September 1892) which contained, among its 89 entries, hymns dealing with personal ethics such as that Victorian favourite "Be kind to thy father", and others by Longfellow, J.R. Lowell, and Kingsley, together with Chartist Hymns, Edward Carpenter's "England Arise!" (a favourite at Socialist gatherings into the 1920's) and others with such Utopian themes as "Have you heard of the Golden City" by Felix Adler, etc.

190. K.S. Inglis : Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (1963) pp 227-8. Inglis has a useful chapter on "Labour Churches" (pp 214-49), though he places the decline in the ideals and outlook which created them at least 2 decades too early, and blames this, rather than organisational weakness, for their collapse.

There was even that overt working-class answer to the National Anthem, "God Bless the Working Man".¹⁹¹ The most noticeable feature of its contents was the total absence of any hymns referring to salvation, or the atonement, which continued to dominate most other selections of hymnbooks at this time. Services consisted of hymns, readings, a talk, and some form of prayer, usually spoken, concluded by a form of dismissal. The Manchester Church ended with a Benediction: "May the strength and joy of God's presence be with all who love their brethren in sincerity. Amen".¹⁹² Other churches followed a similar pattern, giving a religious atmosphere which differed only slightly from many Socialist mass meetings and was ideally suited to the essentially religious conception of the Socialist message of most leading propagandists. Indeed, as late as January 1924, on the eve of the First Labour Government's accession to office, the victory meeting at the Albert Hall followed this same format, at the centre of which was an unmistakably religious address by MacDonald.¹⁹³ It was part of the legacy of nonconformity to British Socialism, of which the Labour Churches formed an important part.

191. Labour Church Hymn Book (1892) nos. 62,49,63,1,4,13,12. It also contained Ebenezer Elliott's "When wilt Thou save Thy People?" a favourite of Conrad Noel's which he managed later to have included in The English Hymnal.

192. Labour Prophet June 1895 pp 88-9: J. Trevor (editorial) "Starting a Labour Church" and cf the discussion on the place of prayer in Labour Church Services in the report of the 6th Conference 1898 in Ibid July 1898 p 194. There were problems, however, at services when swollen audiences came to hear well-known Socialist speakers, disrupting proceedings by leaving after the address. Ibid June 1895 pp 88-9.

193. M.A. Hamilton "Iconoclast". J. Ramsay MacDonald (1923-1925)(1925) pp 39-31.

But the Labour Churches did not consist just of ex-nonconformists. There were many former Anglicans too, Fred Brocklehurst or Tom Groom for instance, the latter for several years secretary of Birmingham Labour Church. He was an ex-member of the G.S.M., many of whose priests regularly spoke at Labour Church meetings. Another convert, R.A. Beckett, who was briefly editor of the Labour Prophet during one of Trevor's illnesses, was the son of an Anglican clergyman, who had become a Socialist through reading F.D. Maurice, and later a Unitarian lay preacher, before finding his way into the Labour Church. What such recruits had in common, though, was not just their revolt from the class-bias of their former churches, but their common theological liberalism, not to say unorthodoxy.¹⁹⁴ The same was true of the nonconformist recruits, few of whom retained any evangelical orthodoxy. Trevor's pilgrimage from being a strict Calvinist Baptist, through a crisis of faith to Unitarianism and thence to what he called "Free Religion" and the Labour Churches was a typical case, paralleled by such other leading Labour Churchmen as J.H. Belcher, a President and Treasurer of the L.C.U., who had trained for the Presbyterian ministry before becoming a minister, first of the Congregationalists and then of the Unitarians, and who called himself a "Pantheist".¹⁹⁵ There were others too such as D.B. Foster, President of the L.C.U. from 1902, a former Wesleyan local preacher, briefly associated with the Tolstoyan movement and Leeds Brotherhood workshop

194. A point not sufficiently brought out in K.S. Inglis art. cit. from which these examples are taken.

195. See above pp 308-9 A prominent member of the I.L.P.'s N.A.C. his obituary is in Labour Leader 1 March 1912 p 142.

before discovering in the Labour Churches a home for an ethical and mystical religious faith which had passed beyond Christianity;¹⁹⁶ Percy Redfern, another Tolstoyan, who later passed into the Church of England, finding his home in an immanentist Catholic Modernism not far divorced from that of the old G.S.M.¹⁹⁷; or S.G. Hobson, a former Ulster Quaker of a strict Puritan background, who later did much in the Socialist Quaker Society to spread Guild Socialist doctrines.¹⁹⁸

Such men found in Trevor's "Free Religion" a reflection of their own beliefs, permeated as it was, by quotations from the American Transcendentalists and Edward Carpenter, published monthly in the Labour Prophet, which reached a circulation of 6,000 by December 1894. This compared not unfavourably with the 8,000 or so circulation of Hardie's Labour Leader in the same period, and was considerably greater than that of the Socialist periodicals of the 1880's which

196. See D.B. Foster : Socialism and the Christ (1921). For his connection with the Tolstoyans see above. For his views while President of the L.C.U. see his 'Labour Church Notes' in Clarion eg 3 October 1902 p 3. In the first he opposed Baptism as a service for the Labour Churches because their religion was distinct from the Christianity of the Churches for which Baptism was a sacrament. He took the term 'Christ' to mean 'The Ideal Man', the true self in each man. Therefore he did not accept Jesus as God or as an authority. Rather, as he said in his letter it is "the sense of goodness" in man himself which is "my authority" and "by which I appreciate the goodness of Jesus" which "urges me to live my own life faithfully, and not to be an imitator of others; that I am capable of perfection, and am called upon by my sense of the good to follow it ever; that the kingdom of heaven is a condition of right relations amongst men".

197. See P. Redfern : Journey to Understanding (1946)

198. See S.G. Hobson : Pilgrim to the Left (1938)

scarcely reached 2,000¹⁹⁹ copies each.

The heart of Trevor's message to the Labour Churches was similar to that of D.B. Foster described above. Basing his religious faith on man's "inner authority", his own inward experience of God - which was for Trevor the heart of religion - he deprecated the concentration of the Christian Churches on events that had occurred 1800 years earlier.²⁰⁰ Thus "the historic churches mostly declare that God was on this earth nearly nineteen centuries back." Whereas the Labour Church declares "that God is at work, here and now ... and that the religion of today consists in co-operating with the divine energy which is still operating on our planet."²⁰¹ For Trevor, "The problem is not to recover Jesus. That is a problem for the student and the historian; but it has no place in the life and religion of a living people, save as an interesting historic phenomenon from which we may learn something. The problem is to get at God, to so develop the spiritual faculties of man that ... God may be found and trusted as the great underlying and energising authority,

199. Labour Prophet February 1892 p 16, noted an increase to 4,500 from the 2,000 produced for the first issue in January. May 1893 p 38 stated it as 5,000 and December 1894 p 168 as 6,000 per month. For a comparison with the circulation figures of Labour Leader see above p 300 and n. 11. and for Justice and Commonweal see C.Tsuzuki : H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism pp 77 and 108. The maximum circulation of Justice in this period seem to have been c 4,000 in 1893.

200. Labour Prophet February 1892 p 12 editorial.

201. Ibid September 1894 p 120

reality; and when found, loved as the True, the Beautiful,
and the Good."²⁰²

Trevor was at heart a mystic, and his own religious outlook was grounded in mystical experiences, two of which he described in My Quest for God (1897), which the eminent American William James used as examples in his study of The Varieties of Religious Experience (the Gifford lectures 1901-2).²⁰³ Religion was a quest for communion with "That Power and that Principle ... incarnated in you and me."²⁰⁴ "The Over-Soul" - a term of Emerson's also used by Trevor²⁰⁵ - which is at the same time man's own "real being". Such is the "supreme fact" of life, the "most fundamental ... real" thing in life.²⁰⁶ It is the basis of true self-knowledge and personal growth, and in the pursuit of such solitary moments of communion alone does a man gain a sense of proportion in all his other acts of life.²⁰⁷ In this lies "the expansion of man's whole nature, the continuous development of all his faculties, the progressive realisation of all that he is."²⁰⁸ The development of this spiritual faculty is "What the Labour

202. Ibid April 1895 p 57.

203. J. Trevor : My Quest for God (1897) pp 256-7, 267-70.
W. James : Varieties of Religious Experience (1971
Fontana edition) pp 382-4.

204. Labour Prophet August 1896 p 126 from "The Labour Church in England", Trevor's unspoken address prepared for the International Socialist Congress in London July 1896. It was later issued as Labour Prophet Tract No 4.

205. Ibid October 1894 p 133 J. Trevor : "What is the Labour Church For?"

206. Ibid October 1895 p 154.

207. Ibid June 1892 p 44 (editorial).

208. Ibid January 1892 p 4 (editorial).

Church is For.²⁰⁹ Mere ethics, and mere social reforms are not enough, and while the Labour movement remains "only secular in its ends, only material in its objects, and only ethical in its development, it will be doomed to sterility. It may get laws passed and reforms inaugurated only to find that it has no power to develop a higher and better life out of the new conditions."²¹⁰

The Labour Church therefore had a quite distinct role to play in the bringing about of the Socialist Ideal. It was this which formed the core of Trevor's objections to Brocklehurst's attempts to subordinate the Labour Church to the political movement, as his attack on him in the Labour Prophet makes clear. For Trevor, as for many other religious Socialists, "Social reorganisation is only of permanent value as it brings with it the opportunity of living a higher and nobler and freer life." This was where the Labour Church had an unique and indispensable role. Its task was "to teach the individual how to live the fullest and best life now, and to inspire him in his efforts towards it."²¹¹ Its work could not be subsumed under that of the political movement because a necessary corollary of social advance was individual ethical and religious advance.

Trevor believed he saw "God" in the Labour Movement - working through it, as once he had worked through Christianity,

209. Ibid October 1894 p 133 art cit

210. Ibid March 1895 p 44.

211. Ibid October 1893 p 100.

for the further salvation of the world."²¹² As with Emerson, he saw in human history the gradual unfolding of the Ideal, the power of the "Over-Soul" in both man's individual moral perceptions and in the workings of society, which, with the advent of democracy and the conception of human equality - man's feelings of comradeship and love and the demand for Justice - was evolving "to a higher personal and social life upon our planet". In this process the Labour Movement was the present vehicle in a "work of divine co-operation" in "the further unfolding of human powers."²¹³

With Trevor's withdrawal from active participation in the L.C.U. due to his illness and consequent removal to Sussex, and his own financial difficulties causing him to turn his attentions to his chicken farm, the journals of the movement petered out. The Labour Church Record, an intermittent scanty replacement for Labour Prophet, which had ceased publication in September 1898, ran to only 7 issues before it too stopped in January 1901. Thereafter the movement depended upon the goodwill of the Clarion, and occasionally

212. J. Trevor : My Quest for God (1897) p 241

213. J. Trevor : Our First Principle (Labour Prophet Tract No 3) esp pp 36-44.

the Labour Leader for the publication of its activities.²¹⁴

The churches were thrown back more and more on their own resources and by the 1902 Conference 5 had affiliated to the Union of Ethical Societies - a far cry from the situation at the 1898 Conference when the Ethical Societies themselves had been denied affiliation to the L.C.U.²¹⁵

In Trevor's absence it was the name of Stanton Coit which came most often to be associated with the work of the Churches, which were turning increasingly to the Ethical Movement for speakers.²¹⁶ As a result, there was a gradual shift in emphasis within the L.C.U., seen in the amendments made to its Basis and Principles at successive conferences up to 1906. The Theism of Trevor's 3rd Principle, referring to a "Free Religion" of individual personal relationship "with the Power that brought

214. For Trevor's final withdrawal and financial difficulties see Labour Church Record January 1901 p 5. The Labour Prophet whose financial losses he had originally made good himself (see his comments in the joint issue for March-April 1894 pp 40-1) had, like such other Socialist periodicals of the period as Justice or Commonweal never been self-supporting, and had in later years been dependent upon the donations secured by Rev. Philip Wicksteed, the London Unitarian Fabian minister with whom, Trevor had been an assistant from 1888-90 before moving to Manchester: Labour Prophet June 1898 p 188 editorial. The Clarion printed regular reports of the Labour Church Union from 1902-6, and the Labour Leader intermittently in the same period. Blatchford was particularly sympathetic. Trevor had been a close friend at Manchester, and they had collaborated in the founding of the Manchester and Salford Independent Labour Party in 1892. For their relations see above p 291 and n4.
215. Clarion 23 August 1902 p 7 W.H. Syme : "The Labour Church Union" and cf Labour Prophet July 1898 p 194.
216. Clarion 29 August 1902 p 7 art cit. Coit had addressed the 1900 L.C.U. Conference on "The Relation of Ethics to the Labour Movement". Labour Church Record July 1900 p 4.

him into being" disappeared, to be replaced by the statement "That the Religion of the Labour Movement is not theological, but respects each individual's personal convictions upon this question."²¹⁷ In the original 5th Principle, which had placed "the development of Personal Character" before the "improvement of Social conditions", the order was now reversed, and a new commitment added, to study "the economic and moral forces" at work in society. And there was now a definite commitment to "the establishment of Socialism - a Commonwealth founded upon Justice and Love", whereas before there had only been a commitment to study and implement "the Economic and Moral Laws of God".²¹⁸ This development had been apparent since the 1900 Conference, when the Birmingham delegate had referred to the difficulty of accommodating Theists and non-Theists within the movement; the conference had got round this by the device of "requiring adhesion to the 'moral and economic laws that may be deduced from the Fatherhood of God or the Brotherhood of Man'".²¹⁹ The Labour Churches had lost their original identity, becoming instead the meeting place for a more diffuse circle of those Socialists who sought to maintain the ethical side of the

217. D.F. Summers: op cit pp 263-4

218. Ibid loc cit.

219. Labour Church Record July 1900 p 2

movement,²²⁰ a task which, with their increasingly rapid decline, came to be filled by the Socialist Sunday Schools (S.S.S.s) which had originally begun as their offshoot, but which were to long outlive them.

The rise and decline of the Socialist Sunday Schools has been well summarised in a short article by F. Reid,²²¹ and need only detain us briefly here. Reid traces their origin in the Cinderella clubs associated with the Labour Churches, begun in Manchester by Trevor and Blatchford in the early 1890's with the aim of taking slum children for outings away from their terrible environment. From this there arose a desire to develop these children's outlooks to better fit them to help change these awful conditions when they became adults.²²² By 1904 the L.C.U. Conference had agreed that each Labour Church should have its own Sunday School, which, by the following year, were referred to as Socialist Sunday Schools.²²³ In London, the Ethical

220. See eg the comments of H Brockhouse, President of the L.C.U. in Clarion 20 July 1906 p 12, that the Labour Church role was "to present the ethical side of Socialism", that it "has nothing to do with the supernatural" or "fruitless introspection and theological dogmatising, and concentrates on this life's problems". He saw the Labour Church as a half-way house for former church and chapelgoers for whom attendance at a "purely secular I.L.P. or S.D.F. meeting on a Sunday" would be "a shock". "The Labour Church solves the difficulty, its service with hymns, reading, solos, addresses, etc ... is a concession, without loss of principle, to the susceptibilities of our one-time orthodox brethren who are gradually weaned from narrow views".

221. International Review of Social History XI (1966) 1 pp 18-47. F. Reid: "Socialist Sunday Schools in Britain 1892-1939."

222. Ibid p 22.

223. Clarion 17 June 1904 p 8, 10 March 1905 p 7. Reports of L.C.U. Annual Conferences.

Societies had already adopted a similar policy.²²⁴ According to Reid, a further impulse came out of the enthusiasm of a number of the leading I.L.P. propagandists, particularly the women, whose conception of Socialism was of a deeply religious and moral character, for the provision of Sunday Schools to teach the ethical precepts of Socialism to the children of supporters, a number of such S.S.S.s being founded in the West of Scotland in the late 1890's.²²⁵ Both Margaret MacMillan and Katherine Bruce Glasier, the latter a former member of the G.S.M., and devotee of Whitman, wrote primers to teach children the ethical side of the Socialist message. Mrs. Glasier's A Child's Socialist Reader (1902) was published by the London I.L.P., and as in all such works the central belief was propounded, that Socialism demanded both internal personal changes, and that social change was based primarily on love and brotherhood. From January 1901 the new movement had its own magazine, the Young Socialist, and thereafter grew rapidly from a mere 17 Socialist Sunday Schools to 108 by 1912, including 21 in Lancashire, 20 in Yorkshire, 18 in London and 15 in Glasgow.²²⁶ Unlike many other organisations which were badly hit by the war, the Socialist Sunday School Movement increased its numbers to over 130

224. See above p 89.

225. The chief enthusiasts were Caroline Martyn (who started the first Glasgow S.S.S. in February 1896), Katherine and John Bruce Glasier, and his sister Lizzie Glasier, for some years editor of Young Socialist, and Archie MacArthur, a friend of Hardie's who had once hoped for ordination, but later moved to a more "unitarian" outlook. F.Reid art cit pp 23-4, 37.

226. Ibid pp 26, 30. In 1900 there were 7 in Glasgow, 1 at Paisley, 1 at Edinburgh, 4 in London and 4 in Yorkshire.

securing the support of a wide range of Labour M.P.s who wrote publicly urging supporters to send their children to them as they themselves had done.²²⁷ By 1931 however, the schools were in rapid decline, a prey to the same ideological clashes which had destroyed the I.L.P. between the younger generation of Marxist enthusiasts and the old guard who maintained their belief in the spiritual nature of British Socialism; the surviving schools lingering on, according to Reid, in the hands of Socialists who substituted for the "ethics of mutual aid" the revolutionary ethics of "disciplined class-consciousness".²²⁸

In their heyday, the teaching of the Socialist Sunday Schools was of an ethical idealism - Socialism based on altruism and service was their creed. This can be seen in the "10 Socialist Precepts", in which Jennie Lee (b.1904) remembered of the school she attended in Cowdenbeath during the First World War, the pupils were word perfect.²²⁹ These Precepts taught Love

227. Clarion 15 October 1926 p 9. The 37 Labour M.P.s were: W.S. Cluse, Ben Turner, Tom S. Dickson, George Hardie, J. Westwood, Evan Davies, A. Clarke, Joshua Ritson, D.M. Graham, Wm. H. Martin, T. Loyth, W. Mackinder, R.W. Richardson, R. Smillie, J. Maxton, J. Scurr, T. Johnston, John H. Williams, James Marley, G. Banton, A.A. Purcell, A.W. Haycock, F. Montague, W. Windsor, G.H. Sherwood, Joseph Batey, T. Kennedy, Val McEntee, Tom Groves, J.E. Mills, T.E. Naylor, R. Climie, J.W. Muir, G. Lansbury, E. Thurtle, H. Snell, B. Gardner. Ibid 18 July 1924 p 8.

228. F. Reid art cit pp 39-45.

229. Jennie Lee: This Great Journey: A Volume of Autobiography 1904-45 (1963) p 42. It was run by a local miner, a blind bookseller and the wife of a trade unionist Labour M.P.

and Brotherhood, Justice, the pursuit of knowledge and the doing of good deeds, while deprecating hatred both of other classes and nations - the one Miss Lee remembered best - and insisted on the duty of work, since not to do so was to steal the fruits of others' labour.²³⁰

Other contemporary accounts give a similar impression, J.C. Welsh, another Scot and a mining M.P., wrote in his autobiographical novel : Norman Dale M.P. (1928) of his hero's organisation of a Socialist Sunday School to teach the children "to think about life and its beauty. I want them to be able to recognise its nobility. I don't want to make the mistake of the churches and teach a dogma. I'm disgusted at dogmas, for life is too beautiful to narrow it down in that way, and it is a shame to wrap young souls even in a dogma of truth. I want to establish a school that will see life as love, as beauty, as happiness, as service. That's my creed, and that's what I conceive as Socialism."²³¹ The same message was to be found in F.J. Gould's

230. Ibid p 42. They are printed in full in F.Reid art cit Appendix pp 46-7 from The Socialist Sunday School Hymn-Book (1911). Ben Turner, one of the many Labour M.P.s furious at Tory accusations of infidelity against the S.S.S.s read them in the Commons, thereby getting them into Hansard, to counter the slur. B. Turner op cit p 238.

231. J.C. Welsh : Norman Dale M.P. (1928). Its hero had in fact been driven from his Sunday School teaching at the local kirk because of the opposition of a prominent member of the congregation, the manager at a pit where Dale had helped organise a strike. Welsh, like Ben Turner, deplored the slur that the Sunday Schools taught "Marx and Class War", including in his novel an obvious "baddie" "Peter Snike", a young Marxist intriguer who came to a bad end, whom Dale defeated in his attempt to turn the S.S.S. into a forum for Class War indoctrination. Ibid pp 77,98.

stories for use at Socialist Sunday Schools, and in the plays written for them by Edward Carpenter²³² and Miles Malleeson.

Mrs Glasier, who sent her son, Glen (b. 1910) to the local Levenshulme S.S.S., recalled their performing 2 of Malleeson's plays, Young Heaven and Paddy Pools (1920) in the latter of which, Glen played the lead. The play provides another good example of the nature of the ideas of the movement. Set in World War I it tells of a little boy, Tony, wondering how it was possible that his "daddy had gone out to kill people". While thinking about this, he meets a Little Old Man, from whom he learns the secret of "the great life", "how good everything is". It was called Paddy Pools because the Little Old Man tells Tony "Have you ever noticed when the sea goes out, it leaves lots of little pools behind among the rocks?" Tony says, "Paddy Pools, yes". To which the old man replies, explaining "The water in the paddy pools is just the same as the water in the great big sea; and the life in you and me is just the same as the life that is everywhere; the paddy pools run into the great live sea; you and I can do the same".²³³ It was an outlook which fitted exactly with the message of the oneness of life because of the underlying spirit, which the Glasiers had discovered in Whitman and had made the basis of their Socialist faith.²³⁴

232. S.S.S.s performed Carpenter's Moses (1875) later reissued for them as The Promised Land, and St George and the Dragon (1895), reissued 1908 with a dedication to I.L.P. children's clubs and S.S.S.s. These taught a similar ethical idealism.

233. K.B. Glasier: The Glen Book (1949 edition) pp 40-41

234. Glen Bruce Glasier himself became a Quaker and was deeply religious. He attended several of the I.L.P. Summer Schools at Easton Lodge in the 1920's where he heard men such as Conrad Noel and especially admired Maxton, who with other leaders of the I.L.P. hierarchy came to his funeral. When he died he was already marked out as one of the brightest hopes among the younger generation. Ibid pp 19-20, 64-5.

(viii) Christian Socialism and Nonconformity.

The Labour Churches had in large measure resulted from the lack of sympathy with the social question shown by non-conformity, due partly to its class basis, and partly to its evangelical theological outlook, which did much to preclude strong social involvement. These twin weaknesses largely explain the relative dearth of involvement in the nascent Socialist Movement of the 1880s and early 1890s by members of the main nonconformist denominations: Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, though working class adherents of the chapels began to turn in increasing numbers to the Independent Labour Party after 1893, and provided the mainstay of most trade union organisations.

This dearth of nonconformist involvement was reflected in the weakness of the Christian Socialist Movement outside of the Church of England in these decades. There had been an attempt to form a non-denominational Christian Socialist Society as early as the spring of 1886. It was never large, the secretary reporting for the year 1890-1 a membership of only 116, excluding the Glasgow Branch, which was rather more successful.²³⁵ The CSS did however include a relatively high number of activists, several of whom were to play a prominent role in the Socialist Movement in succeeding decades. From its foundation it publicised its activities through the Christian Socialist (June 1883-Dec 1891) a monthly founded originally by a group of Land Reformers inspired by the doctrines of Henry George, including J.L. Joynes,

235. Christian Socialist May 1891 p 60.

R.P.B. Frost and H.H. Champion, most of whom had found their way in to the Social Democratic Federation by the beginning of 1884 when its own paper, Justice began. The Christian Socialist was then run for a while by the Rev. C.L. Marson of the G.S.M., before being taken over first by W.H.P. Campbell, the first chairman of the Christian Socialist Society (editor 1887-90) and then by the Fabian G.W. Johnson.²³⁶

The Manifesto of the C.S.S., published in May 1886, showed support for the full measures of economic Socialism + "public control of Land, Capital and all means of production, distribution, and exchange, involving the abolition of all Interest", and substitution of "production for use" for "production for profit". But unlike both the G.S.M. and the Labour Churches which based this policy largely on a belief in the immanence of the divine spirit in man, the Christian Socialist Society based it simply on "the principles taught by Christ" and "the spirit of His life". It thus provides the earliest example of that purely ethical interpretation of Biblical Christianity which became a common feature of much nonconformist Christian Socialism.²³⁷

These two characteristics, - support for full economic Socialist principles, and an appeal to their basis in Christ's ethical teaching and example - were stressed in the writings of a number of leading adherents of the new body. The Rev. Dr. J. Glasse, Church of Scotland minister at Greyfriars

236. Ibid December 1891 p 128 a note notifying cease of publication and briefly chronicling its history.

237. Ibid May 1886 p 190.

Church, Edinburgh, the first declared and leading Socialist minister in Scotland, who chaired William Morris' first Socialist meeting in Edinburgh in December 1884, and was a regular contributor to Socialist League, and later, I.L.P. funds, made this the basis of his Christian Socialist propaganda. For him, economic Socialism was at root "an ethical system and the basis of it will be found in the gospel precepts". He condemned those who concentrated on individual salvation, convinced rather that Christianity is not otherworldly, but "seeks the elevation of man" in his natural circumstances, the conditions of which at present are characterised by "drugery" and "privation", neither of which are conducive to human development. Seeing that "the environment as truly acts on the organism as the organism on it, and through this interaction social progress and individual improvements are attained", he followed Morris in his belief in : "First education, then legislation, that through both the individual may attain salvation. Such is the aim and method of Socialism, and if it differs from Christianity it is only in giving a more explicit and harmonious expression of its principles than one meets with in the orthodox creed or from the average Christian."²³⁸ A similar identification of

238. Ibid September 1889 pp 129-32: Rev J. Glasse: "What Is Socialism?", and see his obituary in Labour Leader 14 February 1919 p 2. He was also a founder member of the Fabian Society, and contributed to the Progressive Reviews (February 1897 pp 423-31) on "The Church of Scotland" and its role in social reform, referring to the tradition of social concern, derived through Knox from Plato, in the First Book of Discipline, which provided for schools, the duty of stewardship "towards the poor, and the finding of work for the unemployed, and universal suffrage of adult church members. He contrasted its continuance in the Report of the Commission on the Housing of the Poor in Glasgow, to the General Assembly, with the Scottish non-established Churches sole preoccupation with Sabbath Observance and the Liquor Traffic.

Christian principles and economic Socialism can be seen in many other writings in the Christian Socialist, for example in those of Paul Campbell, the editor, and E.D. Girdlestone who with H.H. Gore had founded the Clifton and Bristol branch in July 1886²³⁹ of which Gore became secretary and Girdlestone treasurer.

This close identification with the political Socialist movement was reflected in the speakers invited to speak by C.S.S. branches, most obviously in London. In 1887 lecturers included Herbert Burrows, William Morris, Mrs Charlotte Wilson (of Kropotkin's Freedom Group)²⁴⁰ T. Bolas, editor of The Socialist (June-December 1886) organ of the short-lived Socialist Union, the earliest non-Marxist, Parliamentary Socialist body), Laurence Gronlund (the American author of the Co-operative Commonwealth (first English ed. 1886) which formed the basis of fortnightly study meetings for the branch at Glasgow spoke on 4 occasions; and others including the Rev. S.D. Headlam and F. Verinder. The Society also held open meetings for Socialist sympathisers,²⁴¹ including one in 1887 on "The Condition of the Poor" at which there were motions in favour of public works schemes (from A. Howard, the secretary of the C.S.S. and T. Bolas) and "industrial villages" (proposed by the Unitarian Rev. Herbert

239. Christian Socialist October 1889 pp 145-7 and November 1889 pp 161-3: E.D. Girdlestone: "The What and Why of Christian Socialism". Ibid May 1888 pp 73-5: W.H.P. Campbell: "Spurious Christian Socialism".

240. See above pp 193 ff.

241. A common practice among the London Socialist Societies in the 1880's - see eg the S.D.F. meeting at Anderton's Hotel in January 1884. The same figures seem to have turned up at all of them. See above p 72 n 127

Mills, later founder of the abortive Starthwaite Colony, Westmorland, in which a number of leading Socialists were involved.²⁴²) An anarchist amendment declaring a distrust of all new governments (which was lost) was proposed by 2 Socialist League members, and another motion (from Paul Campbell and the Rev. Stewart Headlam, seeking "the reconstruction of society" on a basis including public ownership of land and capital and abolition of interest was carried "nem con".²⁴³ By 1890, as the Society came to be more closely allied with the Fabians, speakers at such meetings tended to be those involved in London Progressivism. Later names associated with the Society included Percy Alden (first warden of Mansfield House Settlement, a Congregationalist, later to become a Quaker, and founder member of the Quaker Socialist Society, a prominent New Liberal, and from 1923-4 Labour M.P.), Rev. Dr. John Clifford, a Baptist, and Margaret MacMillan, a leading Socialist propagandist, who, together with Paul Campbell, set up the short-lived London Labour Church in 1892.²⁴⁴

242. See above p 327

243. Christian Socialist February 1887 p 29, report of C.S.S. Public Meeting 25 January 1887, Essex Hall on "The Condition of the Poor", later such meetings included on 8 May 1889 one on Christianity and the Sweating System at which speakers included (Chairman) Ald. Rev. Fleming Williams, Rev. W.E. Moll and Rev. W.A. Morris (G.S.M. - latter also S.D.F.), R.B. Cunningham - Graham M.P., Rev. Charles Peach, Dr. John Clifford sent apologies; and 13 May 1891 on "Social Progress in London" with Percy Alden, Frank Smith (editor Worker's Cry and former head of the social wing of the Salvation Army), Rev. A.E. Jephson, etc. Ibid May 1889 p 65, June 1889 pp 82-3, June 1891 pp 63-5.

244. Labour Prophet April 1892 p 27, June 1892 p 48. Paul Campbell was later for some years Superintendent of Walthamstow S.S.S. See his obituary in Labour Leader 21 November 1918 p 2.

With the cessation of the publication of the Christian Socialist at the end of 1891, the Society collapsed, it had never been a large body. It had, however, had a number of branches outside London- at Bristol, Glasgow (1886), Liverpool (1887), and Leicester (1891), and had provided the training ground for a number of prominent Socialists. J.C. Kenworthy of the Croydon Brotherhood Church, the leading representative of Tolstoyan Anarchism in the 1890's, first appeared in the Socialist movement writing to Christian Socialist in an effort to gain supporters to start a Liverpool branch.²⁴⁵ The Rev. J.B. Wallace, founder of the first Brotherhood Church, was also an active member. He advocated the nationalised industrial system prophesied in Edward Bellamy's Looking Backwards, which he serialised in his own journal Brotherhood, to which readers of Christian Socialist were urged to change after the latter's demise in 1891.²⁴⁶

H.H. Gore became the first Socialist member of the Bristol School Board and a leading figure in the Bristol I.L.P. Another member, the Rev. Charles Peach, a Unitarian, won the same distinction on the Sheffield School Board,²⁴⁷ whilst others, such as Percy Alden and Dr. Clifford, through their continuing efforts in the Christian Socialist Movement, provided a continuity between the C.S.S. and its successors.

245. Christian Socialist September 1887 p 141. For his later activities see above Chapter 3 pp 273 ff.

246. He founded the Nationalisation of Labour Society to spread Bellamy's conception of Socialism enshrined in a "Declaration of Principles" produced for it by the American author. Christian Socialist August 1890 p 111. It produced Nationalisation News, which shortly merged with Brotherhood in June 1893. For the serialisation of Looking Backwards see Brotherhood January-July 1889.

247. Christian Socialist January 1890 p 6, December 1888 p 69. The Clifton and Bristol C.S.S. branch transformed itself into a Fabian Society branch. Ibid March 1891 p 35

Thereafter the attempt to maintain a nondenominational Christian Socialist Organisation can be briefly recorded. In 1893 the Christian Socialist League was set up at a meeting at the house of its secretary J.H. Belcher, who was later to be President of the Labour Church Union.²⁴⁸ Dr. John Clifford, by now the recognised leader of nonconformist Christian Socialism became President, with J. Bruce Wallace as Vice-President. The council included Percy Alden, Will Reason, Ald. the Rev. Fleming Williams and two G.S.M. members, the Revs. H.C. Shuttleworth and C.L. Marson. By 1895 the Christian Socialist League had 80 members, mostly radical clergy and Socialist laymen.²⁴⁹, and was closely indentified with the Fabian Society, virtually all its leading members belonging to that body²⁵⁰. But by 1897 it was moribund, being replaced in the following year by the Christian Social Brotherhood, founded at Mansfield House in February 1898, with Alden as Secretary and Clifford again as President.²⁵¹ This seems to have been no more successful, petering out by 1903, only to be replaced in 1909 by the Christian Socialist Fellowship, again with largely the same membership.²⁵² These latter bodies, however, coming after 1893, were less identified with political Socialism, but rather maintained a position midway between the Liberal Party and the growing independent labour movement. Indeed the Christian Social Brotherhood dropped the description "Socialist" from its title; and although the Christian Socialist Fellowship adopted it,

248. Labour Leader 1 March 1912 p 142 obituary. As secretary he helped inaugurate several branches.

249. P. d'a Jones op cit p 331.

250. Clifford, Alden, and Marson were all Fabians.

251. Brotherhood March 1898 p 127.

252. P. d'a Jones op cit p 348.

these two bodies represented Social Christianity rather than Christian Socialism.²⁵³ An attempt was made to revive the latter conception in 1909, chiefly through the efforts of the Rev. Herbert Dunnico, a young Baptist, who formed the Free Church Socialist League, including such men as the Methodist Christian Socialist, the Rev. J.E. Rattenbury, and the Wesleyan Philip Snowden. It allied itself closely with the I.L.P. but does not seem to have met with much success.²⁵⁴

As with the original Christian Socialist Society, the religious outlook of these later bodies was essentially that of Liberal Protestant ethical Christianity. Thus the aim of the Christian Social Brotherhood as stated in 1898, was "to bring the teaching of Christ directly to bear on social problems." The Christian Social Fellowship saw this to mean primarily brotherhood and co-operation, not necessarily economic Socialism.²⁵⁵ The Christian Socialism of John Clifford and Herbert Dunnico had the same basis in Christ's ethical teaching. Both men stressed brotherhood as its essence, and Clifford, in his Fabian tract Socialism and the Teaching of Christ (1895), identified Socialism with the Collectivist approach to the social question - an approach which was increasingly coming to be accepted by Socialist and New Liberal reformers alike.²⁵⁶

253. Ibid p 331 J.B. Wallace saw it as a non-denominational version of the Anglican Christian Social Union.

254. Ibid pp 348-53.

255. Ibid pp 346-7.

256. In Fabian Socialist Series I (1908) Socialism and Religion. For Dunnico's outlook see eg Socialist Christian March 1929 p 87 H. Dunnico: "Why Christians should support Labour". Both Clifford and Dunnico saw Socialism as applied Christian ethics, though in neither case is it clear how far their commitment to economic policies went.

Within the major non conformist denominations, it was much the same story, with a conspicuous lack of support for economic Socialism. But the Unitarians and Swedenborgians were exceptions, with their theological concentration on man's "inner light", which led numbers of their ministers to support economic Socialism as the working out of the principles of brotherhood and equality which that theology implied. One further denomination to produce a similar Socialist conception was the Society of Friends. In 1898, the Socialist Quaker Society was formed, with a membership who, acknowledging "The Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" as an immediate guide in each individual, feel that this implies a Universal Brotherhood, such as cannot in any sense be realised under the present competitive system of industry. They therefore hold that the means of production, distribution, and exchange, should be collectively owned."²⁵⁷ It was another body, which, although small, provided a home for a number of well-known Socialists, Percy Alden the Liberal (and later Labour) M.P., joining it in 1908, having previously left Congregationalism for the Quakers,²⁵⁸ and two other prominent members, S.G. Hobson and Isabella O. Ford, both prominent I.L.P.ers the former having also served on the Fabian Executive Committee (1900-10) and the latter on the National Council of the I.L.P. (1904)²⁵⁹. Its magazine Ploughshare provided a useful forum for

257. Ploughshare Vol I No 1 February 1916 p 35 for an account of the S.Q.S. See P. d'a Jones op cit pp 368 ff.

258. ed J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville Dictionary of Labour Biography III (1976) pp 3-4.

259. S.G. Hobson : Pilgrim to the Left (1938) pp 22, 27-8. He had helped found the S.Q.S. with his friend Alfred B. Thorne. Labour Leader 10 March 1905 p 589.

Methodism, so often referred to in clichés about its influence on the Labour Party, was singularly lacking in support for Socialism, as the biographer of Rev. Samuel Keeble, (1853-1946), "the one minister within the Wesleyan Church" to give expression to Socialist views, makes clear.²⁶¹ Keeble's indebtedness to the immanentism of authors such as Thoreau, F.D. Maurice and T.H. Green, and the ethical evolutionary outlook to which these led him, together with his interest in the mediaeval English mystical tradition, are sufficient indication of the origins of his outlook in sources far removed from the Methodist tradition itself.²⁶² His articles, in magazines such as Great Thoughts, the Methodist Times, and his own Methodist Weekly (1900-3), a collection of which he later published as Industrial Day-dreams (1896), showed a keen interest in Socialist theory from Proudhon to Marx, concluding in a section on "the Christian Criticism of Socialism" in which, while ruling out Revolution (i.e. physical force), Free Love and Atheism, he advocated the Socialist ownership of industry as the only means of remedying the injustices caused by capitalism, and of replacing its basis in "selfish competition" with one of "brotherhood" and "co-operation", in which individuals, at present often treated merely as "drones" would have equal opportunities to develop their capacities to the full in "love and service" instead of the "hate and rivalry" of the present - Socialism for him demanding a "new

260. Thus in 1916 it contained articles by Fenner Brockway, Clifford Allen, F.W. Pethick-Lawrence, Arthur Ponsonby, C.R. Buxton, Francis Meynell, Alfred Salter, etc.

261. Maldwyn Edwards : S.E. Keeble (1949) p 84.

262. Ibid pp 32-4, 37, Maldwyn Edwards : Methodism and England (1943) p 176.

ethics" as well as a changed economic system.²⁶³ It was an argument which appealed to many nonconformist Socialists, among them Philip Snowden, who later wrote to Keeble of his own indebtedness to his writings in his conversion to Socialism.²⁶⁴

Keeble's ideas resulted in 1909 in the founding of the Sigma Club, the only Christian Socialist organisation to emerge from Methodism, whose Objects stressed the same twin concerns with the individual and society and their basis in Christ's ethical teaching. It was, however, couched in the more traditional evangelical language of nonconformity, reflecting a certain moralism such as even Keeble, in his emphasis on issues such as "Drink and the Social Question",²⁶⁵ had imbued from the much-vaunted "Nonconformist Conscience" of the period. Nevertheless it was definite in its support for economic Socialism: "Believing that our Lord's teaching concerning the Kingdom of God on Earth necessitates both a regenerate, individual life and a new social order, we the undersigned ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist Church ... avow our conviction that the promotion of a Christian civilisation requires the evolutionary socialisation of the chief means of production, distribution and exchange."²⁶⁶ Sixty-five signed, among them the

263. S.E. Keeble: Industrial Day-Dreams (1896) esp pp 97-105 "The Christian Criticism of Socialism".

264. Maldwyn Edwards : S.E. Keeble p 90. Industrial Day-Dreams itself however, was not an initial success. Of an original print of 475, Keeble himself had to buy up 267, though they were eventually sold. K.S. Inglis: Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (1963) p 295.

265. S.E. Keeble : op cit pp 213-8: "Drink and the Social Question".

266. Quoted in Maldwyn Edwards: Methodism and England p 195.

Rev. J.E. Rattenbury, the only other well-known Wesleyan Socialist in Labour circles.²⁶⁷

The Catholic Church too, with Papal condemnations of Socialism, maintained an official hostility to Socialism as incompatible with both Christianity and Church authority. Nevertheless, a number of Catholic Socialist Societies were formed, the most well-known, in Glasgow by John Wheatley, his brother Patrick and a group of about 15 others, which met first at the Wheatleys' house in 1906. It was soon attracting over 200 to its weekly meetings at Templeton Hall, despite attacks made on it by the Catholic Glasgow Observer, the Catholic Truth Society, and Wheatley's own parish priest.²⁶⁸ Wheatley defended his viewpoint in a pamphlet The Catholic Working Man (1909) and in the columns of Forward, the Glasgow I.L.P. weekly founded in 1906. These efforts have been claimed as doing much to win over the Catholic working-class vote to the I.L.P. in the West of Scotland. Wheatley's own outlook, though left-wing, was non-Marxist, and as with most other appeals to Socialism from Christianity, essentially moral and ethical in nature.²⁶⁹

By July 1908 the Catholic Socialist Society had spread to other centres in West Scotland and there were further proposed groups in Salford, Liverpool, Leeds, Middlesbrough and Walworth (London).²⁷⁰

267. Ibid pp 195 ff.

268. R.K. Middlemass: The Clydesiders (1965) pp 36 ff and in New Blackfriars May 1973 pp 218-25; P.J. Doyle: "Religion, Politics and the Catholic Working Class" esp p 221.

269. P.J. Doyle art cit p 221.

270. Labour Leader 24 July 1908 p.471 J.A. Hanson : "Catholicism and Socialism. The proposed Catholic Socialist Society".

These met with similar clerical opposition, the Leeds Society being disbanded after the Bishop of Leeds issued a Pastoral Letter condemning its members for spreading opinions contrary to papal teaching, lacking loyalty, giving scandal, and endangering their immortal souls and ordering them to desist from their "un-Christian and uncatholic work" on pain of his solemn, public repudiation of their society.²⁷¹ A similar experience met J. Fogarty of the Manchester Society, who was narrowly defeated as an I.L.P. candidate for the city council in 1908. He wrote to the Bishop of Salford for support for the society, but received instead a further condemnation. Even so, Catholic working-class support for Socialism grew, Catholic Socialist Societies flourishing in Liverpool, London and Manchester by January 1909,²⁷² among whose members were well-known Catholic Socialists as J. Morrissey; James Sexton (Labour M.P. St. Helens 1918-31), the well-known I.L.P. propagandist in Liverpool; and Henry Somerville of Leeds - and there were many other working-class Catholics prominent in I.L.P. and S.D.F. branches, resulting in the 1920's in a sizeable contingent of Catholic Labour M.P.s.²⁷³

The chief impetus towards Socialism from within the churches in the early years of the century came from R.J. Campbell (1867-1950) who spread what he called The New Theology

271. P.J. Doyle art cit pp 221-2

272. Labour Leader 1 January 1909 p 4 "The Catholic Church and Socialism".

273. Ibid 24 July 1908 p 471. For the Catholic M.P.s and their background see above chapter 7. pp563-7. Joseph Toole of Salford, a member of the S.D.F. was another who was ostracised. his candidature for the Board of Guardians was condemned from the pulpit of his own parish church. J. Toole: Fighting Through Life (1935) p 100. Another leading Catholic Socialist was John Lister, squire of Shibden Hall, Halifax, the first Treasurer of the I.L.P. See above pp 317-8

(1907) (the title of the book in which he outlined his views)

from his pulpit at the City Temple, London, and through its newspaper, the Christian Commonwealth. This New Theology was in fact the immanentism which provided the basis for so much Socialism. It was, however, new to nonconformist orthodoxy, which was outraged at the propagation of what were deemed heretical doctrines from the premier Congregationalist pulpit in England, and the ensuing controversy ensured a wide currency for Campbell's ideas.²⁷⁴

Campbell's background was unusual. He represented the third generation of ministers in his family, which had originated in Ulster where he grew up. He was sent to his grandparents in Ulster until the age of 13 because his health was too delicate for him to remain in the industrial North where his father was a United Methodist minister, and he was deeply influenced by Ulster Presbyterianism. Being a great deal on his own, he early developed a "mystical temperament" communing on long walks with Nature, leading to a lifelong "craving for a super-intellectual union with Deity" such as he found described in the great mystics from Plotinus (his favourite) through to the Idealists and Romantics of the 19th Century and leading, as he himself admitted in his autobiography A Spiritual Pilgrimage (1916) to a tendency

274. W.S. Smith : The London Heretics 1870-1914 (1967) pp 207 ff
P. d'a Jones op cit pp 422 ff. The Congregational Church Union banned him from activities connected with that denomination outside his own pulpit at the City Temple in 1907..

towards "pantheism" in his later writings.²⁷⁵

By way of a not unusual progression from Grammar School pupil to pupil-teacher and teacher, Campbell went up to Christ Church Oxford in 1892, by now a confirmed Anglican, with the intention of becoming a priest of that denomination. There he came under the influence of the Liberal Incarnationalist ideas of Lux Mundi (1891) striking up a lasting friendship with its editor Charles Gore, then head of Pusey House, a centre for Christian Socialist undergraduate activity in those years.²⁷⁶

Many years later, in 1915, Gore received him back into the Church of England, where he continued his ministry until his death in 1950. In 1895, however, he chose Congregationalism, partly because he felt that becoming an Anglican priest would imply a denial of the validity of his father's and grandfather's ministries and partly because of doubts regarding the relation of Christian doctrine to his own sense of inner authority. Congregationalism, requiring no doctrinal subscription on the part of its ministers, provided a way out.²⁷⁷

In the years which followed, his sermons showed considerable tension between, on the one hand his professed evangelical insistence on such doctrines as Sin, man's fallen nature and his consequent need for salvation, issuing in a predestinarian atonement-centred

275. He cited especially Kant and the German Idealists; Edward Caird, T.H. Green, Bradley, the British Idealist; Wordsworth and the Romantic Poets; Plato and the Neoplatonist tradition; the Greek Fathers; and the Pragmatists William James and F.C.S. Schiller R.J. Campbell: A Spiritual Pilgrimage (1916) pp 11-12, 23, 95, 101-5.

276. Ibid p 50.

277. Ibid pp 67-8.

theology; and on the other, the development of ideas based on his mystical experiences. The change which this wrought in his outlook can be traced in his writings, which appeared regularly after 1898. These show a gradual shift in emphasis to a testing of Christian doctrines by appeal to man's reason and "inner light" which he came to see as the "Divine within us, the source of "the true, the beautiful and the good", prayer being the means by which man communed with "the Unseen", "the Higher Soul who speaks within us".²⁷⁸ Gradually Evil lost its place in the centre of his redemptionist theology, the Fall being reinterpreted as man's awakening to self-knowledge, Sin as his awareness of his imperfection - a necessary stage in his moral ascent - until he came to define religious faith as "not the blind acceptance of external authority, but trust in the internal authority" by which all else must be tested.²⁷⁹

This outlook he eventually expressed in coherent form in The New Theology. In it he stressed God's immanence in man as "the deepest springs of his own personality", the recognition of human brotherhood being based on a realisation of that same nature in one's fellow beings. The goal of each individual life was thus the self-realisation, as far as possible, of this "Divine self", which is recognised perfectly achieved in Christ, the archetypal, perfect man, and therefore God.²⁸⁰ Evil was regarded as negative, the atonement redefined as at-one-ment - the achievement of moral perfection, complete inner communion - and salvation seen not as an escape

278. R.J. Campbell : A Faith for Today (1900) pp 9,25,33,313-7. As with the Americans he stressed withdrawal and the need to be alone for such communion, which he saw as essential for a right sense of proportion in work and a true appreciation of his fellows. R.J. Campbell: City Temple Sermons (1903) pp 33 ff.

279. cf eg The Restored Innocence (1898) pp 66-9 with The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought (1900) pp 3-29 passim.

280. The New Theology pp 22, 95, 177-8.

from hell, but rather as the self-realisation of the individual through self-sacrificing love, Hell being rejected as incompatible with a God of love.²⁸¹

The social consequences of this view he expressed in Christianity and the Social Order (1907), in what was, by now, a familiar argument amongst religious Socialists. Under the existing system, "the individuality of the average man is cribbed, cabined and confined". Charity is no solution. Nothing less than the complete reorganisation of society on a collective basis, abolishing private ownership of capital, would suffice to provide an environment in which man could develop his capacities to the full in an attitude of mutual service. He backed up his argument by an appeal to Christ's own teaching of the Kingdom of God, which he saw as "a Commonwealth of social justice and brotherhood".²⁸²

On this basis Campbell formed his League of Progressive Thought and Social Service, with himself as President, and the Rev. F.R. Swan, a convinced Christian Socialist, as Organising Secretary. By September 1908 it boasted over 1,000 members and 24 branches, and attracted a number of leading Socialists including Philip Snowden, Beatrice Webb, and the young A. Fenner Brockway.²⁸³ Prominent Socialists among its Vice-Presidents included Ethel and Philip Snowden, the Rev. John Glasse and

281. Ibid pp 168, 198-9, 211.

282. Christianity and the Social Order pp 57, 73 ff, and esp Ch 7: "Socialising of Natural Resources".

283. Report in Christian Commonwealth 23 September 1908 p 902. Another activist was the Former Labour Church Union President, D.B. Foster, and it was hoped to co-operate with the Anglican Church Socialist League, which had a similar outlook. Ibid 22 April 1908 p 522.

Margaret MacMillan.²⁸⁴ R.J.Campbell himself joined the I.L.P.²⁸⁵

In May 1910, however, the League was renamed the League of Liberal Christian Thought and Social Service in token of a further shift in Campbell's thought to a primary concern with theology, a later offshoot being his Order of Pioneer Preachers, a residential community of young men, one of whom was the Rev. R.W. Sorenson, who went on to become the Unitarian minister of Walthamstow Free Christian Church from 1916, and Labour M.P. for Leyton West (1929-31; 1935-50) and was a leading figure in the Christian Socialist movement between the Wars.²⁸⁶ A wider influence can be detected in the popularity of Campbell's New Theology amongst the younger non-conformist clergy in Wales after the Revival (1904-5) which had itself been characterised by a strong emphasis on brotherhood and a social awareness resulting from a definitely immanentist/mystical outlook. These younger ministers, unlike their seniors, adopted both the New Theology and Socialism, providing a base in the chapels of South Wales of support for an I.L.P. Socialism which became more ethical and less militant in outlook as a result.²⁸⁷

(ix) The influence of Social Christianity to 1918.

R.J. Campbell's immanentist theology and espousal of Socialism were, however, exceptions within the major non-conformist churches, and prior to his attempts, such views

284. Ibid 9 October 1912 p 34

285. P. d'a Jones op cit p 422. He served on the Fabian E.C. 1908-9.

286. Daily Herald 25 July 1929 p 9 Rev. D.F. Summers op cit Appendix Vol p 729.

287. British Journal of Sociology Vol 3 (1952) pp 242-59
C.R. Williams: "The Welsh Religious Revival, 1904-5."

usually led their holders outside orthodoxy into the Ethical and Labour Church Movements, or even into Secularism. More typical of nonconformity was a concentration on sin and the atonement, and such consequent moral issues as Temperance and attacks on gambling, which made up par excellence the "Nonconformist Conscience" as expounded by its best-known proponent, the Wesleyan Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. To a degree Hughes was influenced by the newer trends, expressed in his enthusiasm for Kant's distinction of Reason and Understanding, and his liking for T.H. Green, whose Oxford lectures he attended and of whom he wrote that he was "the most splendid Christian that I ever knew."²⁸⁸ But his traditional evangelicalism was clear in his opposition in 1901 to the admission of Unitarians into the National Church Council of the Evangelical Free Churches because of their denial of the atonement, and in his insistence that while prepared to see Jesus as "a perfect example of what we ought to be", this could only be secondary to Jesus as Saviour.²⁸⁹ Thus he maintained the traditional theology of eternal punishment (i.e. Hell) against liberalising influences using his position as President of the Wesleyan Conference to order an eminent Wesleyan theologian, Dr. Beet, to withdraw from sale an offending work in which he had denied that doctrine on moral grounds. Hughes insisted on the primacy of scriptural authority over and above man's moral sense.²⁹⁰

His political outlook, seen in his Gladstonian liberalism, reflected these religious pre-occupations. Thus while he

288. D.P. Hughes: The Life of Hugh Price Hughes (1904) p 134

289. Ibid pp 456-9, 465.

290. Ibid pp 601-3

called Jesus the "greatest social reformer the world has yet known", and while he was a democrat, keen on the aspirations of working-class trades unionists which culminated in the entry of the Lib-Lab M.P.s into Parliament, his chief preoccupations were with social purity. His belief in Prohibition because, according to his daughter, he realised the working classes to be incapable of moderation in their drinking habits, provides one example of this. On moral grounds he attacked Dilke, Parnell and even the Liberal Premier, Lord Roseberry, for his horse-racing interests; while his Imperialist belief in the civilising/educative of the Empire - since the subject races were clearly as yet unfitted for self-rule - provides further proof of his attitude of moralising condescension.²⁹¹ Yet with it went a deep concern for the plight of the labouring classes, demonstrated in his support of measures for the improvement of working conditions, health and housing.²⁹² But whatever this outlook might be called it was not Socialist.

It was, rather, characteristic of many of the central concerns of Nonconformist Liberalism in the last decade of the 19th Century, and as such, had a wide influence on many recruits from this tradition into the Labour Movement, first through the I.L.P. - Hardie and Snowden both show strong elements of these traits - and later, with the growth of trades union support for the Labour Representation Committee in the wake of Taff Vale, in the widespread accession of

291. Ibid pp 81, 172, 177, 351-3, 555.

292. Ibid p 361.

former Liberal trades unionists of chapel backgrounds with their strong moral and Self-Help principles, of whom Arthur Henderson is perhaps the archetypal example.²⁹³

Typical of working-class nonconformity was the P.S.A./Brotherhood Movement which emerged during the 1890 s. This was initially an attempt, by holding "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" discussions on social and other topics of interest, to woo back alienated working-class members of the churches. It grew into a nationwide federation, and embodied the social outlook of non-conformity. Its organ, The Leader (originally called the P.S.A. Leader) maintained a keen interest in Temperance, and in such worthy attempts at educational self-help as the W.E.A., its President, F.B. Meyer, continually urging closer links with the Labour Movement because of the need to leaven it with Christian principles.²⁹⁴ It maintained links with Liberalism, Lloyd-George and Asquith both taking an interest, and such New Liberals as Alden and F. Maddison addressing its branches;²⁹⁵ and with Labour, Hardie leading its 1910 Mission to Belgium²⁹⁶ and other Labour

293. It was Henderson, who, opposed by Tillett, succeeded in getting the Labour Party to adopt the 9 points of the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches. S. Koss: Nonconformity in British Politics (1975) p 146.

294. The issue for January 1898 carried a list of prominent social reformers including John Clifford, W.T. Stead, the President of the National Women's Temperance Union in the U.S.A., Gladstone and Hugh Price Hughes. For the W.E.A. see a circular signed by Rev. S.O. Barnett, T. Burt, M.P., D. Shackleton M.P., Sir Oliver Lodge, etc. in the Leader January 1907 p 18. For Meyer's remarks Ibid May 1907 pp 106-7 "Our President on the New Age" speech at A.G.M. of Yorkshire P.S.A. Federation.

295. Ibid January 1907 p 10, February 1906 p 20 lists P.S.A. men in Parliament and regular P.S.A. speakers among the new M.P.s

296. Ibid June 1910 pp 165-72.

activists such as Henderson, Will Crooks, J.H. Thomas and Frank Smith writing for The Leader.²⁹⁷ Prominent members included W.C. Steadman, G.J. Wardle, M.P., G.R. Thorne M.P., H. Twist M.P., and such future M.P.s as the Rev. J. Barr, President of the Glasgow Brotherhood Federation and convenor of the United Free Presbyterian Temperance Society.²⁹⁸

The outlook of its leading activists is seen in the views of other future M.P.s such as William Ward, Chairman of the E.C. of the London District Federation, for whom the Bible was the fount of his social reformist inspiration; and Arthur Sherwell, M.P. for Huddersfield, who believed that any genuine social reform could only be the outcome of Christian principles. These men were "social christians" rather than Christian Socialists.²⁹⁹ Few of them would have disagreed with Harry Twist (Congregationalist preacher and Labour M.P. for Wigan, 1910) in his belief that the three movements destined to "redeem" mankind were Temperance, the Brotherhood Movement and the Labour Movement,³⁰⁰ nor with the emphasis put

297. Ibid April 1907 p 75, June 1907 pp 126-7, March 1919 p 39, August 1919 pp 114,115-6 etc. Henderson's son David was Association Secretary of the London P.S.A. Brotherhood Federation. Ibid February 1911 p 57. Arthur Henderson himself, in 1915 became President of the Brotherhood Movement: E.A. Jenkins: From Foundry to Foreign Office (1933) p 256.

298. Ibid July 1911 p 212.

299. Ibid April 1907 p 93.

300. Ibid October 1910 p 292.

on self-help, temperance and pride in a man's work as the chief means of of the working-classes' self-betterment, in Will Crooks' article on "What the P.S.A. Stands For".³⁰¹

Another attempt at reaching the working-classes led to the Settlement Movement. By 1913 there were 27 Settlements in London alone.³⁰² These were houses where young men (and more rarely young women) usually from the Public Schools and Universities, came to spend a period living in a working-class area in an effort to bridge the gap of understanding between the classes. In most cases their activities centred around social and relief work, running clubs and giving lectures for the benefit of local residents. A number of Settlements had close links with the New Liberalism and Labour, and provided for many young men their initiation into social reform movements. From the foundation of the first settlement, Toynbee Hall in 1884, others soon followed, among the more prominent the Wesleyan Bermondsey Settlement whose Warden was the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett, a Labour sympathiser;

301. Ibid June 1907 pp 126-7

302. There were a further 12 in the rest of England and 5 in Scotland, but not all of these were definitely religious. K.S. Inglis op cit pp 155-74. At least 2 of these, Mansfield House and University Hall can be directly attributed to the influence of T.H. Green on Oxford undergraduates, both being established in his memory, and Toynbee Hall, named in memory of Arnold Toynbee a pioneer settler much influenced by Green's ideas.

the Congregationalist Browning Settlement in Walworth under the Rev. F.H. Stead whose conferences on Labour and Religion, held annually after 1910, attracted the leading Christian figures in the Labour Party as speakers;³⁰³ the other Congregationalist Settlement Mansfield House whose first Warden, Percy Alden, began his own involvement in politics there as a West Ham Borough Councillor from 1892 and a member of the Labour Group from 1894;³⁰⁴ the Unitarian Settlement University Hall under its first Warden

303. See eg. G.N. Barnes and others: The Religion in the Labour Movement (1919) an account of the 1919 conference (earlier conference proceedings were also published as separate volumes). In 1919 speakers included G.N. Barnes, the former Labour representative in the War Cabinet, W.C. Adamson, Leader of the Labour Party (1912-22), who was in fact too ill to attend, Bishop Gore, George Lansbury, Arthur Henderson and a number of invited non-Christian Socialists. The general tenor of the conference was one of Socialism based on the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man, and the ideals of service embodied in the Sermon on the Mount (points expressed by Lansbury and reiterated by Gore), and a belief in the evolution of society to a higher ethical plane as part of God's purpose of the gradual moral advance of men, presaged in Christ, the Perfect Man (F.H. Stead's view), esp pp 49-56, 68-75, 85-6. Other conferences attracted similar speakers eg 1910: J.R. Clynes, P. Snowden, W. Hudson, J.K. Hardie, Will Crooks, etc. The Leader May 1910 p 132.

304. I.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op cit III pp 3-4.

and founder, the Fabian, Rev. P.H. Wickstead; and the Anglo-Catholic Oxford House, whose first Warden the Rev. J.G. Adderley, a Catholic Modernist and Socialist in outlook and close friend of Charles Gore, later became one of the leading Anglican Socialist supporters of the Labour Party, being preferred by MacDonalld when Prime Minister to an influential City church and a prebendary stall in St Paul's.³⁰⁵

But it was Toynbee Hall, for many years under the Rev. S.O. Barnett, a Broad Churchman and Liberal, who mixed an espousal of Social Reform with moralism towards working-class habits much as Hughes did, which became a leading meeting-place of Progressive elements in London throughout its existence.³⁰⁶

There could be found many of the leading names of the New Liberalism and Socialist Movement. Regular visitors included such Liberals as R.B. Haldane, J.A. Murray MacDonalld, Frederic

305. T.P. Stevens: Father Adderley (1942) esp pp 13 ff, 44, 60, 68, 88 ff. In fulfilment of his principles he founded an Anglican Franciscan Order, the Society of Divine Compassion, in 1894, a small group of priests living in relative poverty in Plaistow, tramping around the countryside on missions without any money, begging food and shelter as they went. Ibid pp 21-7.

306. S.A. Barnett : Canon Barnett: His Life, Work and Friends (1918) eg Vol I. pp 75-6, 84, 171, 198. Vol II. pp 229-41, 280-3.

Harrison, Corrie Grant, Noel Buxton, Ernest Aves, J. A. Spender, J. St. Loe Strachey, C.P. Trevelyan, and the Conservative social reformer Sir John Gorst, who regularly stayed there when Parliament was in session.³⁰⁷ Former Residents and Associates elected to Parliament in 1906 included many of the foregoing plus George Lansbury, Percy Alden, Stopford Brooke, W.C. Steadman and Herbert Samuel among many others, and in 1910 included in addition, H.B. Lees-Smith, Austen Chamberlain, Philip Morrell, the Hon. R.D. Denman³⁰⁸, Ramsay MacDonald, Herbert Burrows, Ben Tillett, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Margaret Bondfield and J.A. Hobson, had all been invited at various times to address its meetings.³⁰⁹ Amongst other well-known residents, Clement Attlee, future leader of the Labour Party had come to it from his school's settlement, Haileybury House, to be Secretary of Toynbee Hall (September 1909-August 1910), his second period in residence;³¹⁰ William Beveridge was Sub-Warden (September 1903-February 1907);³¹¹ R.H. Tawney was resident at various times for a total period of over 4 years;³¹² other residents for shorter periods included Stanton Coit (3 months in 1886), William Temple (1907 and 1908), Stephen Hobhouse, G.D.H. Cole (1914), R.W. Postgate (1915) and Capt. W. Wedgwood Benn (1918).³¹³ What is striking about this list is the large number of

307. J.A.R. Pimlott: Toynbee Hall: Fifty years of Social Progress 1884-1934 (1935) pp 53, 64. Toynbee Record passim.

308. See the list in Toynbee Record January 1906 and December 1910.

309. J.A.R. Pimlott op cit pp 66, 152-3; Toynbee Record passim.

310. Toynbee Record October 1909 p 3, October 1910 p 4.

311. Ibid October 1903 p 5, December 1905.

312. Pimlott op cit p 288 in October 1903, November 1906, May 1908, January 1909, January - April 1913.

313. S. Budd op cit p 233; Toynbee Record January 1907 p 48, April 1914 p 110, October 1915, December 1918.

recruits to Labour in the period after 1918 which it included from the former ranks of the New Liberalism, and the number of leading Socialists of the later generation who began their initiation into Socialist politics there - including the 2 chief authors of the Welfare State, the author of The Beveridge Plan and the Prime Minister under whom it was implemented.³¹⁴

The growth of interest in the social question within the churches also led, if not to an identification of Christianity and Socialism, at least to the setting up of societies within most denominations to study the social question in a manner reminiscent of the Fabians. Thus there was a Friends' Social Union set up in 1904 - though this seems to have been at least in part in reaction to the S.Q.S. which to many went too far. But the new body included such members of impeccable social reformist views as George Cadbury, Seebohm Rowntree, and Edward Grubb.³¹⁵ P.H. Wickstead was instrumental in the formation of a Unitarian and Free Christian Union for Social Service in 1906.³¹⁶ S.E. Keeble, as well as founding a Christian Socialist body had also been chiefly responsible in 1905 for the founding of the Wesleyan Methodist Union of Social Service, of which he became chairman, serving it until its demise in 1931. Among its 3,000 members was Arthur Henderson.³¹⁷ But the first, and leading such body was

314. Those who later became Labour M.P.s included: Haldane (House of Lords), Noel Buxton, C.P. Trevelyan, P. Alden, H.B. Lees-Smith, the Hon. R.D. Denman, Capt. W.W. Benn.

315. P. d'a Jones op cit pp 368 ff.

316. P. d'a Jones op cit p 403.

317. Maldwyn Edwards: S.E. Keeble pp xvii, 69; Maldwyn Edwards: Methodism in England p 192.

again, as in the case of the Christian Socialist organisations, Anglican - the Christian Social Union, founded in 1839 chiefly at the instigation of Charles Gore, the influential editor of Lux Mundi, and his close associate Henry Scott Holland, with Bishop Westcott of Durham. (a Platonist Tory Socialist) as President. In its aims and methods it deliberately modelled itself on the Fabians. Thus while claiming "for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice" it had no ready-made view as to what such Christian social principles would constitute, confining itself to the commitment "to study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time."³¹⁸ As a result it was able to boast a membership which reached 6,000 in 1906, including the support of a majority of Bishops. A substantial impact on such legislation as the 1901 Factory and Workshops Act and the 1909 Trade Boards Act has been claimed for it, but the evidence produced is purely conjectural and not

318. Fabian Tract 78 : J. Clifford: Socialism and the Teaching of Christ (1905 re print) Appendix "Christian Socialist Societies".

319. See eg D.O. Wagner: op cit pp 266-9; J. Oliver: The Church and Social Order (1968) p 10. which are based on H.A. Mess : Factory Legislation and its Administration 1891-1924 (1926) pp 188-9. Mess's case is little more than argument from association. The London Branch C.S.U. Research Committee with the co-operation of the Women's Trade Union League having submitted 2 reports to the Home Office on working conditions of women in a number of industries and having run campaigns against the dangers of "phossy-jaw" in the match industry and lead poisoning in the potteries, legislation such as certain clauses of the 1901 Factory and Workshops Act and the 1909 Trade Boards Act were attributed by the C.S.U. to its own efforts (see its organ, the Economic Review 1905 pp 349 - 52 Constance Smith: "The work of the C.S.U. London Research Committee"). That a group of Liberal M.P.s centred on Sir Charles Dilke, whose niece Gertrude Tuckwell, secretary of the Women's Trade Union League and secretary of the C.S.U. Research Committee had been the leading campaigners on these issues, and had pressed in the House of Commons for such reforms is indisputable. But it is rather to the efforts of Miss Tuckwell, Dilke, and his associates J.G. Talbot and H.J. Tennant, Anglicans whose social concern had led to their membership of the C.S.U., that any credit for such reforms would have to go, even if (except in the case of a successful minor amendment to the 1901 Bill for Tennant) direct influence on Government Legislation by this group could be definitely substantiated, which at present it cannot. Rather, the C.S.U. was one means whereby such people could achieve a widespread publication of their views, and as such was used as a propagandist platform for the moulding of opinion. See eg the various reports in Commonwealth of the Campaigns against red phosphor in matches and lead glazing in the potteries in the years immediately leading up to the 1901 Act eg August 1898 pp 237-41; September 1898 p 273, February 1899 p 40-2; April 1899 p 108, September 1898 pp 267-9, etc.

The importance of the C.S.U. lay rather in the opportunities it provided for discussion amongst earnest social reformers of the New Liberal and Socialist persuasions. Among its Parliamentary members were Sydney, Noel and C.R. Buxton and C.F.G. Masterman.³²⁰ The Webbs patronised the C.S.U., writing in its paper, the Commonwealth and addressing its meetings, as did Will Crooks and other Labour figures. Ramsay MacDonald for a while wrote the Commonwealth's Labour Notes,³²¹ and the New Liberal economist J.A. Hobson provided a monthly article.³²²

320. C.S.U. London Branch Annual Report and List of Members (1912) pp 37, 53.

321. Commonwealth February 1896 B. Webb : "How Women obstruct Women's Advancement"; April 1896 pp 128-9. J.A. Hobson: "A Living Wage" (and thereafter monthly); June 1896 p 240 notice of meeting London C.S.U. 16 June to be addressed by S. Webb; July 1896 pp 263-4 S. Webb: "The Clergy and the London County Council"; January-August 1897 J.R. MacDonald: "Labour Notes" - from September by Joe Clayton, another prominent I.L.P.er

322. Of G.S.M. members, Dearmer, Adderley, F.L. Donaldson, all served on the C.S.U. Executive. Dearmer was Secretary of the London Branch and later Vice-Chairman, Adderley for some years published his own magazine Goodwill which attracted such Socialist contributors as MacDonald etc. Adderley maintained his Socialism with his Liberalism retaining his membership of the National Liberal Club together with that of the Labour Party until the Club finally banned Labour Party members from its own membership on 31 December 1918, see T.P. Stevens op cit p 88.

The C.S.U. itself contained most of the Socialist clergy of the G.S.M., as well as many others, of whom Gore, Adderley and Holland are examples, calling themselves "Christian Socialists" while remaining Liberals.³²³ This demonstrates the much more fluid boundaries which existed between the Liberal/Labour Parties up to the 1918 Election, before which time Labour contested only 55 seats in 1906, 77 in January 1910 and 56 in December 1910 - in most cases, deals between Liberals and Labour ensuring the minimum of 3-cornered contests. Thus, the phenomenon, seen both amongst avowed Christian Socialists and in these christian social bodies, of Liberals and Labour co-operating freely and unselfconsciously, and of proclaimed Socialists still supporting the Liberals, was hardly surprising. The dilemma of whom to support simply did not exist until after 1918, especially in London where the Progressive Alliance provided a unifying force.

The changed religious outlook by the end of the century had therefore produced three main trends. Firstly there was that which manifested itself in the various religious and ethical bodies which saw in Socialism a religious or ethical ideal, the social fulfilment of their religious or ethical principles. Secondly there was the development of a parallel movement, represented especially in New Liberalism, to a more just, but not necessarily economically Socialist-based, society, resulting from much the same religious conceptions. Thirdly, in the moralism of the nonconformist churches in particular, which they coupled with a growing involvement in the Labour Movement and an advocacy of social reform, was that identification with Socialism of such Liberal issues as Temperance and moral regeneration of character, which characterised the speeches of

so many of Labour's working-class advocates. The differences between these three traditions proved crucial to the development of British Socialism.

(1) Marxism and the Social Democratic Federation

The extreme weakness of the Marxist social democratic tradition within British Socialism during its earlier decades which was still remarkable to outside Socialist commentators like Wertheim as late as 1929, is perhaps its most immediately surprising feature. True this situation was changing rapidly in the 1920s and especially in the 1930s with the influx of younger men enthused by the apparent successes of the Russian Revolution and imbued with the doctrines of Karl Marx. But in the first four, and possibly five, decades of its existence, the British Socialist Movement owed much more to ethical and religious idealism (not Methodism) than to Marx.

Throughout most of this period (certainly until the formation of a separate British Socialist Party in 1916) the only theoretically Marxist-based Socialist body with any pretence to a national organisation was the Social Democratic Federation, hereafter referred to as the S.D.F.¹ The failure of Marxism to have any substantial impact on early British Socialism, except in a negative way, was largely the failure of the S.D.F.

1. Both the Socialist Labour Party (founded 1903 and confined to Scotland) and the Socialist Party of Great Britain (founded 1904) were later offshoots of the S.D.F. and represent the efforts of the second generation of British Marxism. William Morris' Socialist League (1884-91) based itself more on Anarchist than Marxist principles, and is dealt with accordingly in Chapter 3.

It was, however, as a result of the efforts of the pioneers of the S.D.F. that the growing Socialist Movement in Britain in the 1880s was introduced to such of the principal ideas of 'Scientific' Socialism' as it did pick up - in the form of serialisations of Marx and the European Socialists in Justice, the organ of the S.D.F., and in cheap pamphlets, Yet even here, the extremely limited extent of the venture is glaringly apparent. Few British Socialists penetrated beyond the general grasp of the Theory of Surplus Value and broadly Socialist view of history popularised in Hyndman's England For All (1883) of which if not Marx, certainly Engels strongly disapproved.² It was not until after 1917 that a more penetrating scrutiny of the Marxist legacy became to any significant extent more widespread.

Hyndman, the founder and acknowledged leader of the S.D.F. until his death in 1921, can hardly be regarded as revolutionary in the programme which he adopted after reading Marx. Indeed, from his article in the Nineteenth Century of 1 January 1881, "The Dawn of a Revolutionary Epoch" until his death, Hyndman often appears more the Disraelian Tory Socialist than a follower of Marx's revolutionary doctrines, and in this, to some considerable extent, the S.D.F. followed him. Having read Capital on a business trip to America in 1880 in which he first saw the labour unrest which was resulting from the depression, Hyndman watched with foreboding the growth of Socialism in France and Germany

2. cf. eg. J.K. Hardie From Serfdom to Socialism (1907) discussed above.

and urged immediate reforms to forestall a revolutionary situation in Britain.³ England For All took much the same line. Palliatives rather than Revolution were its central concern. It was more an appeal to the bosses than a bid for leadership of the working-class movement, and indeed, the top-hatted and frock-coated figure of the public school and Cambridge educated M.C.C. batsman H.M. Hyndman throughout his political career seems somewhat incongruous amongst the London and Lancashire unskilled labourers from which the S.D.F. drew the bulk of its membership and support.

England For All began with the standard comparisons between conditions in the late 19th Century and an idealised, mythical late mediaeval England in which "Those even of the poorer sort lived upon beef, pork, veal and mutton every day." Villeinage was over, and wage-slavery was well in the future. It was a land of "free men who tilled their own lands." and "could speak their own minds freely to all" in contrast to "the degrading servility" of the modern farm labourer.⁴ Enclosures, fuelled by the Dissolution of the monasteries, which he described as "the greatest injury inflicted upon the poor which our history records"⁵ destroyed the independent peasantry, converting the mass of the population into mere propertyless wage-slaves. In this, Cobbett,

3. Hyndman came to regard this article as inadequate by the standards of his later Socialism. H.M. Hyndman: Record of an Adventurous Life (1911) p 226. However, his acknowledgement of continued hopes of the Fourth Party, his lifelong admiration for Disraeli and his public-school view of leadership as expressed in that same work (pp 21, 232, 409-10) suggest a somewhat closer continuity of his views than he cared to admit. Cf C. Tsuzuki: Hyndman and British Socialism (1961) p 34.
4. H.M. Hyndman: England For All (1973 ed) pp 7-10.
5. Ibid p 14.

Thorold, Rogers, Thornton and Fawcett were agreed, and to Hyndman it fitted neatly with his reading of Marx. But if the people had been expropriated, was it Hyndman's policy that the expropriator should in turn be expropriated? Well, eventually. Meanwhile local authorities should be given powers of compulsory purchase of land, especially in the cities for housing.

But if his attitude to the land question was hardly revolutionary, neither was his attitude to industrial capitalism. His chapters on 'Labour' and 'Capital' asserting Labour as the source of value and capital as the 'surplus value' in effect stolen from the labourer, conclude with a call for an eight hour day, free compulsory education, the provision of decent working-class housing by local authorities and cheap transport to work, and a plea for a "higher ideal" than mere profit in the employment of capital.⁶ It is not therefore surprising that Marx found his central economic theories somewhat out of place in the work.

Marx's own writings were only gradually becoming available in English translations by the mid-1880s. Hyndman had read Volume 1 of Capital in the French edition, as had such other early Socialist theorists as J.L. Joynes (he had discussed it with his friend Henry Salt at Cambridge in the late 1870s), E.B. Bax (1881), and Aveling (1882). Others such as Edward Carpenter and William Morris had come to Marx's central economic theories indirectly, through Hyndman himself, in the former

6. Ibid pp 84-6.

case through reading England For All in 1883, and in the latter through attending Hyndman's public lectures on the same theme earlier that year.⁷

The first volume of Capital did not appear in English until 1887, although the first ten chapters appeared in serialised form in To-Day (From October 1885-May 1889) translated by Hyndman,⁸ and Wage-Labour and Capital translated by J.L. Joynes was serialised in Justice (from 13 December 1884) and republished as a pamphlet. In 1888 The Communist Manifesto was published. At the same time, the S.D.F. published other important Socialist works, showing a much wider range of inspiration than Marx. Justice serialised Kropotkin's Appeal to the Young, translated by Hyndman (23 August to 11 October 1884). Other translations published that year included Laselle's Working-Man's Programme and Bakunin's God and the State.⁹ J.L. Joynes' Socialist Catechism,

7. H.M. Hyndman: Record of an Adventurous Life pp 209-10; S. Winsten: Salt and His Circle (1951) p 38; C. Tsuzuki Op Cit p49 Tsuzuki: Eleanor Marx (1967) p 91; E. Carpenter: My Days and Dreams (1916) p 115; Justice 16 June 1894; W. Morris: "How I Became a Socialist".
8. Hyndman's translation appeared under the pseudonym "John Broadhouse". Chapters 1-9 were published in Bellamy's Library No 13 as Marx's Theory of Value Complete (1893) which ran through 4 editions by 1908. The S.D.F. issued a 5/- cheap edition of Capital Vol I and in 1897 a Swann Sonnenschein edition of the first 9 chapters appeared for 1/-. K. Willis: "The Introduction and Critical Reception of Marxist Thought in Britain 1850-1900". History Journal 20 (1977) pp 417-59. Justice 13 December 1884 p 3.
9. Adverts Justice 19 July 1884 p 8, 23 August 1884 p 8 and lists of Socialist books and pamphlets. Ibid 18 October 1884 p 5.

embodying the main points of Marx's theories, appeared in 1885 as another 1d pamphlet, and quickly became the basis for discussion and study groups at branch-level in both the S.D.F. and the Socialist League.¹⁰ These works, with Hyndman's England For All, provided the main source of early Socialist theory in England.

It soon became clear that Marx's own major writings such as Capital were far too complex to have more than a very limited appeal. For Justice (26 January 1884) the real need was for a popular exposition rather than a translation of Capital since its "great difficulty ... will always keep the book, whether translated or not, more talked of than read by the majority of people."¹¹ As the article continued,

10. See eg. Commonweal 18 December 1886 p 304. Glasgow Branch Socialist League meeting notice for 19 December 1886 advocating study of Joynes' Socialist Catechism Ch 6,; Bloomsbury Branch similarly took a chapter per meeting for discussion. Commonweal 20 November 1886 p 272; "This method of teaching the economics of Socialism ... proved very satisfactory."
11. Justice 26 January 1884 p 3 "Marx's Capital" and cf eg William Morris' exasperated outburst "Truth to say, my friends, I have tried to understand Marx's theory, but political economy is not in my line, and much of it appears to me to be dreary rubbish. But I am, I hope, a Socialist none the less. It is enough for me to know that the idle class is rich and the working class is poor, and that the rich are rich because they rob the poor. That I know because I see it with my eyes. I need read no books to convince me of it." J.B. Glasier: William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (1921) p 32. Whether actually said or not it sums up a common viewpoint among many early Socialists.

the two important contributions of Marx to Socialist theory were his value theory and his economic view of history and it was these points on which Socialists had to be clear. The more complex mathematical proofs and economic arguments were of far less consequence. And indeed, it is upon these two points that most Socialist writing on the subject concentrates. Amongst the early Socialist leaders, Aveling, the mathematician, stands out as the one exception. He tried to provide a detailed exposition of Marx's economic ideas in a series of articles of ever-increasing complexity in Commonweal (April 1885 on) entitled "Scientific Socialism" which formed the basis for his unreadable Student's Marx (1891) which, according to Tsuzuki was more difficult to understand than Marx's original exposition.¹²

It was, in fact, in the two areas already mentioned (ie the economic basis of history and the value theory) that Marx's ideas contributed to Socialist theory in Britain. As each of the leading Social Democrat theorists noted, the importance of Marx's contribution to the development of Socialist thought lay not so much in the originality of his opposition to capitalism as in the way his theories provided a scientific demonstration of the Socialist case and pointed the way forward. His Theory of Value explained why mere palliative reforms which left the basic structure of ownership of industry unchanged were doomed as a means of genuinely

12. C. Tsuzuki: Life of Eleanor Marx p 251.

improving the lot of the labouring classes, while his explanation of historical development, as the result of changes in the economic structure of society, provided what was felt to be an unassailable scientific basis for hopes of the coming co-operative commonwealth.

On this much few Socialists were willing to disagree. The current Radical view of history hardly differed in its basic outline, nor did Marx's Labour Theory of Value seem more than an obvious commonsense extension to Industry of what Henry George had been preaching concerning the Land, whatever George's own protestations on the matter.¹³ Certainly George's Progress and Poverty, from its first appearance in England in 1882 was far more widely read than Marx. It sold over 100,000 copies in its first two years alone and became the most quoted economic work amongst the emergent Socialist and Labour Movements. It was the Land Issue rather than Marx's theories which first initiated economic discussion in both Radical and Socialist circles in the 1880s. This much was recognised in the publications lists of the Socialist bodies. Hyndman himself re-printed a pamphlet by Thomas Spence: Nationalisation of the Land (1775) with notes on the land question in 1882.¹⁴

13. See eg. H.H. Champion in Justice 19 January 1884 pp 4-5.

14. Justice 18 October 1884 p 5 list of Socialist publications.

It was Henry George's Land Campaign which led to the first major influx of new converts to the Socialist Movement. Henry George's theories came to form the economic basis of the Socialism of the G.S.M. from 1884. They led too to the foundation of such bodies as the English Land Restoration League, the Land Nationalisation Society and to the foundation of the Land Reform Union and of its organ, The Christian Socialist¹⁵ in June 1883 by a group of four enthusiasts who were to make a considerable contribution to the early development of Socialism in Britain.- H.S. Salt, J.L. Joynes, R.P.B. Frost and H.H. Champion. The latter three, attracted by its support of Irish Land Reform, also joined the Democratic Federation as it then was, in the January of the same year.¹⁶ According to Hyndman "there

15. Despite its title it showed absolutely no discernible Christian influence on its ideas at this time.

16. Christian Socialist: July 1883 Supplement pp II-IV. Speakers at the meeting included Helen Taylor, G.B. Clarke, the Rev P. Wickstead (the Unitarian minister whose influence converted the Fabians from Marx's Value Theory to Jevonian Marginal Utility; led Arnold Toynbee to visit the East End and thus indirectly to the start of the Settlement Movement and supported John Trevor in the founding of the Labour Church Movement), the Rev. S.D. Headlam and Herbert Burrows. Frost became secretary and Champion, Joynes, Headlam, Helen Taylor and Sidney Olivier were elected to the Committee. Later the body renamed itself the English Land Restoration League, and in 1886 The Christian Socialist under yet another editor, the Rev. Charles Marson, became the organ of the newly-formed Christian Socialist Society.

could not have been a more valuable set of enthusiastic recruits to the movement."¹⁷ Champion quickly became the Federation's Secretary, and Joynes and Frost served on its committee.

Before the influx of these new recruits, the Socialist element in the Democratic Federation was small, it had been set up originally in 1881 as a pressure-group co-ordinating the Radical opposition to Gladstone's Irish policy of coercion and to demand reforms. It was supported by the Radical press and such leading Radicals as Professor Beesly, the veteran Positivist and former chairman of the First International, the land nationaliser J. Morrison Davidson, Herbert Burrows, Helen Taylor the step-daughter of J.S. Mill, and the Irish M.P. Justin MacCarthy. At an early stage it even appeared likely that it would attract the support and perhaps leadership of Joseph Cowen, M.P. for Newcastle.

17. Salt apparently did not join, although he attended several meetings, and wrote in the early numbers of Justice. His interests lay chiefly elsewhere, and he soon discovered the Fellowship of the New Life and the Fabian Society. H.S. Salt: Company I Have Kept (1930) p 72. The group had, according to Hyndman, found themselves in sympathy with Democratic Federation members at a public meeting in November 1882 at which the Democratic Federation defeated the speaker the Rev. Lewery Blackley who was advocating compulsory working class contributions to be taken out of wages to finance a pension scheme. H.M. Hyndman: Record of An Adventurous Life pp 304-6.

However, at its second conference in June 1883 it adopted a broadly Socialist programme based on that of the Labour Emancipation League, a body largely composed of exiled foreign revolutionaries from the Rose Street Club, and a smaller British contingent of veteran Chartists, former members of the defunct First International, and a few younger members who had come under their influence. This led to the immediate withdrawal of the Radical Clubs and other Radical sympathisers leaving the S.D.F., as it became in January 1884, firmly in the hands of the Socialists.¹⁸ Amongst this Rose Street contingent were a number of revolutionary anarchists soon to be responsible for one of the earliest major splits in the Socialist Movement. At the beginning of 1884, however, the S.D.F. appeared well placed to become the political organisation for Socialists, with the adherence of such other important figures as E.B. Bax, who soon proved Britain's leading Social Democrat theorist, the already well-known William Morris, whose personal stature, no less than his money provided a welcome boost to the Movement, and Edward Carpenter who became England's leading Socialist poet and who, while not joining the S.D.F., provided the necessary £300 to launch Justice, Britain's first Socialist newspaper

18. For its early history see M.S. Wilkins "The Non-Socialist Origins of England's first important Socialist Organisation" in International Review of Social History IV (1959) pp 199-207. Hyndman himself paid for its offices and a secretary. Few expected the body to survive long. H.M. Hyndman: op cit p 255. E.P. Thompson: William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary (2nd ed 1977) p 286.

on 19th January 1884.

Neither of these two latter recruits to the Socialist Movement could be regarded as orthodox Social Democrats, either with regard to the means by which they sought a social transformation or in their different visions of the ideal Socialist Society. They were both very definitely not State Socialists, and each, in his own way, opposed that growth of mass industrialisation to which orthodox Social Democrats looked for the provision of wants in the new society. Carpenter was a Simple Life advocate. To him Marx's analysis of capitalist ownership and production for profit pointed the way to that revolution in ownership and control which he realised was essential to the liberation of the labouring masses for the pursuit of that ideal. In their State direction of Labour, Citizen Armies etc. could play no part. He remained essentially a libertarian, and so while providing financial aid to the S.D.F. as the then sole political Socialist Organisation, he could not join it.¹⁹ Morris, however, did although his own unique brand of Socialism resulted from more an aesthetic revulsion at the destruction of craftsmanship by mass production, which he believed only a revolutionary change in the ownership of industry and property could halt. He joined the Federation early in 1883 after attending Hyndman's public lectures on Practical remedies for Pressing Needs.

19. E. Carpenter: op cit p 115.

(ii) Scientific Socialism

At the beginning of 1884, underlying the apparent unity of the British Socialist Movement behind the S.D.F., were a number of fundamental divergences of opinion. Firstly, amongst the (largely foreign) revolutionary contingent the fundamental division between Anarchists and State Socialists continued as a legacy of the earlier split in the defunct First International. Through their own, separate distinct, aversions to overmuch concentration of power in the hands of the State during the period of Socialist transition, both Morris and Carpenter tended more towards the former, as their contributions to Socialist theory soon came to show. Secondly, the existence, in the G.S.M., of a distinctly Christian Socialist body with a definite theological basis to its Socialism, and the activities of several of its early leaders in the organisation of the Socialist agitations in the mid-1880s, brought the issue of the Socialist attitude to religion to a head in the very earliest stages of the Movement. Finally, with the foundation of the Fellowship of the New Life towards the end of 1883, and of its offshoot the Fabian Society at the start of 1884, there already existed a nucleus of articulate propagandists of a type of Socialism at once Utopian and ethically based, hence consciously cautious and reformist, changing only as fast as human nature could evolve, where perhaps many of the S.D.F. leadership expected a more sudden and abrupt Socialist transformation. Each of these issues may be seen to have been the major topics of debate among the British Socialists of the 1880s, and the differing standpoints

taken determined the structural organisation and direction of British Socialism for a generation. The S.D.F. leadership's maintenance both of a Secularist, non-religious bias, and a State Socialist position in the strict Marxian tradition, denied it the widespread support necessary for a mass political party and severely restricted its role within the British Socialist Movement.

Two of these issues - those of the role of the State and of the relationship of Socialism to religion - can be seen causing serious dispute among Socialists as early as January 1884. In that month, a meeting was held under the auspices of the Democratic Federation, of all those who had taken part in Socialist propaganda in London in the previous months. As Hyndman, who acted as Chairman, explained, the intention was for them to meet informally and discuss those issues on which there was disagreement in the hope of understanding each other better and finding common ground. The Democratic Federation E.C. members were present, together with many other leading Socialists. The Rev. Stewart Headlam of the Guild of St. Matthew, Edward Carpenter, Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling and many early Fabians were also present.

Hyndman began the discussion by outlining Marx's Labour Theory of Value. It provided the explanation for the existence of mass unemployment and over production, in a society which lacked even the basic necessities of life. For if capital were surplus value (the difference between money received for goods

after overheads had been met and the amount paid in wages) then here lay the cause of economic depression: it resulted from the surplus value stolen from the wages of the producer by the Capitalist. As a result wages were too low to provide enough demand for the goods produced, and the result was a glutted market followed by cuts in production necessitating loss of jobs or unemployment. The only solution to this anarchy resulting from capitalism was the abolition of the capitalist system and its replacement by a system of common ownership of the means of production to be used for the benefit of all. The question which the meeting had to consider was "how this great revolution was to be brought about".²⁰ But it was on precisely this issue that opinion was divided.

James Murray, the veteran Chartist, proposed a motion in favour of seeking the establishment of Socialism through Parliament, by means of universal suffrage, proportional representation, and the payment of M.P.s in order to gain a majority for the necessary measures.²¹ He was seconded by H.H. Champion who accepted the need for political reforms, but only as a means to social reforms. In themselves political reforms were of no use. But, noting the existence of the class war under the existing system, Champion added his belief that the possessing classes would not surrender their control peaceably, merely because it was the democratic

20. Justice 19 January 1884 p 7

21. In effect this motion was in support of the existing programme of the Federation. Cf Justice 19 January 1884 p1 Democratic Federation Programme.

will. There would probably therefore have to be a struggle.

Andreas Scheu opposed. Parliament was of no use. The only course was Revolution. A motion to this effect was therefore put as a counter proposal. Here, then, was a clear difference of strategy. In the early days of the Federation these two opposing views were able to coexist. To Hyndman they were not mutually exclusive. Winding up the debate therefore, he stated his conviction that all could unite in opposition to the present middle-class House of Commons which was "an utter failure and a fraud", and merely "represented the interests of the oppressing classes". Hence there was a need for "organised revolutionary propaganda in the poorest parts of our industrial cities." On the other hand it was clear that under Socialism there would still be the need for the democratic will to be effective, and this would necessitate some sort of Parliament or convention, even if major issues were submitted for a direct vote through a referendum. The Federation's political programme, including such methods as adult suffrage, would therefore still be necessary, for there was common agreement on the need to democratise every department of the State in order to end its use as an "instrument of class domination" for ever. Revolutionary propaganda and a programme of immediate political reforms could therefore exist side by side according to Hyndman. Like Champion he did not expect the propertied classes to give in

"to peaceable remonstrance and organised voting" without a fight, and if necessary he was himself ready "to fight for that ideal".

"But there could not be true Socialism without a majority of Socialists, and their first object must be to educate countrymen and countrywomen to the necessities of the situation!"²²

Hyndman was clearly trying to keep both groups together by blurring the issues. In reality, however, the course of action he was proposing was in direct contrast to that of the revolutionaries. For he was urging 1) educating the masses to see that Socialism was the only real cure for social ills; capitalism, dependent on surplus value being withheld from labour, being incapable of solving poverty and unemployment which were its own direct consequences; and 2) pursuing that same Socialist goal through Parliamentary means, first by securing the necessary political reforms to make democracy a reality, and then through the election of a Parliamentary majority backed by popular opinion in favour of a Socialist transformation. Revolution was replaced as a necessary step towards Socialism by an estimation that force would probably be required to repel a capitalist attack on the democratic will. His "compromise" soon proved unacceptable to the revolutionaries. To the Social Democrats the Federation's commitment to a programme of political and social reforms little more advanced than those advocated by the radicals was "mere palliatives" or "opportunism". It seemed possible that Hyndman was intending to use the growing support for Socialism as the means

22. Ibid 19 January 1884. p 7

for his own personal ambition - perhaps a seat in Parliament or Government. Thus it was not long before the Socialist Movement split over Parliament or Revolution.

On the second question at issue amongst the Socialists, that of religion, an equally serious difference of opinion was apparent. Stewart Headlam raised the question of the admission of priests to the Democratic Federation. Apparently certain members of his Guild of St Matthew had been refused membership. It was Bax who defended this action. Christianity was "one of the enemies they had to combat and therefore (he) was not in favour of admitting priests as such among Socialists."²³ It is necessary to examine in much more detail the reasoning behind this attitude, which can only be understood in the light of the Social Democrats' attitude to Christianity, and to this we shall return. Here it is necessary only to note that it resulted in a rather unpleasant display of hostility to the Christian Socialists present at the meeting.

On both these issues it was ultimately the Social Democrats (ie orthodox Marxists) whose opinion prevailed within the S.D.F. In the early years, however, suspicion of Hyndman drove the majority of their leading theorists into the Socialist League with Morris. But with the return of the majority to the S.D.F. fold the breach was healed and it was the S.D.F. which survived as the representative of Social Democratic thought in Britain.

The proliferation of different types of organisations each claiming to represent Socialism made it essential for Social

23. Ibid 19 January 1884 p 7.

Democrats to be clear on their own attitudes to these different viewpoints. But the tone of their side of the debate did nothing to enhance their position within organised Socialist opinion, nor did it help foster the necessary spirit of common purpose and co-operation amongst the already fragmented and small Socialist bodies.

An early definition of the State Socialists' objections to these other outlooks is to be found in Bax's article "Unscientific Socialism" (To-Day March 1884) in the course of which the main outlines of Social Democracy emerge. As the title makes clear, Bax's main object was to show that only the Socialist theory of which he was a representative was truly scientific and therefore practicable.

The main interest of the 'Christian Socialists' of the Guild of St Matthew at the time was in the possibility of reviving schemes of co-operative production. This had of course been the main concern of the Christian Socialists of 1848, to whose ideas the G.S.M. regarded itself as heir. But (foreshadowing later objections to Guild Socialism) co-operative production was, to Bax, nothing more than "collective capitalism" based on the same motives of self-gain as capitalism itself. Its spread would therefore be a hindrance to Socialism, and not an aid. Secondly, such a system, in which the proceeds were shared by the producers in any particular factory, could not but lead to a collective selfishness in which the profit motive

of the individual capitalist would now be shared by the workforce as a whole. Competition would still be as great as ever. Production would still be for profit and not for use. And therefore the Socialist goal of the reduction of labour to the minimum and the consequent freeing of man from slavery to the machine, so that his time could be devoted to more pleasurable and rewarding pursuits such as art and culture, would be as far off as ever.²⁴

Such organisations as the Fellowship of the New Life²⁵ which Bax dubbed "sentimental Socialism" he saw as utterly impractical. Their appeal was mainly to "young people of the well-to-do middle-class" who had lost faith in orthodox Christianity, but had retained its individual ethic with their introspective emphasis on ideals of personal holiness. "The whole movement is born of the morbid self-consciousness of our Christian and Bourgeois civilisation run to seed." As a result all that members of such bodies actually do is to meet in drawing rooms and pass resolutions supporting their belief in man's higher nature which may well be "enter-taining, beautiful, ennobling for a short spell" until inevitably such bodies "die of inanition."²⁶

24. ToDay March 1884 pp 194-6

25. Bax actually referred to the "Brother of the Higher Life" or "Communion of Noble Aspirations", but the target of his remarks is obvious.

26 Ibid March 1884 pp 199-200.

The setting up of Utopian communities was equally futile to Bax. Here he was especially hostile since their failure served only to discredit the name of Socialism. At best they represented the "pre-scientific" stage of Socialism: "select little bands going into the backwoods and forming colonies, undeterred by the numberless wrecks of shattered hopes they see around them." Noting their usual 'religious' or 'sentimental' basis, for him they represented a tradition from the primitive communistic practice of the early Christians or Essenes. And they showed no evidence of advance since those days. In fact Bax was not at all sure that they had any more real title to the use of the word "Socialist" than a monastic community. In many cases in America such "communistic societies" were in reality none other than religious sects. Besides, Socialism in its "modern scientific sense" was not a "coming out of the world", but rather "a transformation of the existent conditions of society throughout the civilised world". Here Bax took his stand on the scientific certainty of the coming of Socialism as a result of the evolution of society. The modern industrial system is its "essentially antecedent condition". Modern Socialism, therefore "is no Utopian scheme or theory of what a model society might be, but claims to be a deduction of what the outcome of our great capitalistic civilisation must be sooner or later, unless social evolution is to be arrested by dissolution."²⁷

27. Ibid March 1884 pp 200-1

It was precisely because Anarchism would so arrest social evolution by its avowed goal of "social dissolution", that it was such a threat to Social Democrats' hopes. Bax made clear that his real objection was to the Revolutionary Anarchist, and "none of your sham Bourgeois individualists" whose conception of individual liberty is "the liberty of themselves and their class to 'exploit' those below them without restriction, under the guise of freedom of contract." The object of his attack was the "thoroughgoing" libertarian who would "resolutely destroy all organisation whatever, however salutary". This attitude he saw as a great threat, for if capitalism were destroyed or its development set back, perhaps for some decades, rather than transformed, the laws of social evolution would necessitate "the whole intervening period ... to be gone over again." And he used the popular biological metaphor of the time, likening the development of society to the growth of a simple organism which develops through subdivision. To destroy a major part of social organisation would mean that the social organism would simply recombine on lines belonging to a lower stage of the old economic development." But this does not mean that Bax rejected revolution as such. For him such a view was "bourgeois prejudice". "On the contrary, we recognise the teaching of history that no great change has ever taken place without a convulsion or series of convulsions." His objection was rather that the goal of revolution to the Socialist was not what it was to the Anarchist. In the latter case it was merely destructive, while in the former it was constructive - the seeking of the transformation of the organisation of society which then was used as an instrument of class oppression.

but which could be used for the common benefit. Anarchism, with its explicit demand for the destruction of all social organisation would result in a drastic setback for man in his struggle with nature, including the natural (ie merely animal and brutal) in man²⁸, which instincts need restraint and hence necessitated some form of organisation. Bax, therefore, in common with the bulk of Social Democrat thought, firmly rejected any libertarian faith in the natural moral perfection of man, and with it, of course, the Anarchist vision of the future.²⁹

It is clear that Bax's "scientific Socialism" was in reality "State Socialism", for it sought a change in the purpose for which state organisation and industrial production were run. Social organisation was to be transformed to serve the common good, and not merely the interests of the few. In common with the Anarchists it was accepted that any such drastic change in control could result only from violent revolution. But the nature of that revolution was to be very different. For the Anarchist, social organisation in itself was an evil to be destroyed. For the Revolutionary Socialist it was rather the purpose to which that social organisation was put that was to be changed. This necessitated gaining control over all such

28. Bax was clearly unable to shake off completely his evangelical heritage.

29. Ibid March 1884 pp 201-4.

institutions, in contradistinction to the Christian Socialists, whose co-operative production was not Socialism at all; and to the sentimentalists, with their emphasis on changing man from within; and to the Utopians, who in reality merely opted out. State Socialism was thus the only form that truly Scientific Socialism could take.

(iii) The Social Democrats' attack on Christianity

Five out of the thirteen pages of Bax's article were however, taken up with an attack on the 'Christian' aspect of Christian Socialism i.e. on Christianity itself. That attacks on religion took up so much of the energies of the early Social Democrats may appear at first surprising, but it is nevertheless the case. Throughout its history until its demise in 1923 Justice, in particular, kept up a steady barrage of such attacks. In the early years, these were directed chiefly against the priests of the Guild of St. Matthew and the members of the Fellowship of the New Life. Later it was the leadership of the I.L.P. and Labour Parties which came in for such attacks. To the S.D.F. it would seem that every compromise of Socialists with the system, every Socialist setback could be laid at this door. Christianity and Socialism were incompatible. No Christian could be a "real" Socialist, therefore no true Socialist could be a Christian.

The explanation for this lies partly in the inherited ideas from Marx. The close association of many leading church-

men with the establishment and with the preaching of an "otherworldly" message of salvation and rewards in the next life, rather than in this, was obviously a source of anti-clerical attitudes. But the strongest motivation for attacks by Social Democrat theorists on Christianity appears, from their own evidence, to be their individual revulsion from the claustrophobia of mid-century evangelical puritan attitudes under which several of them seem to have suffered in childhood, Bax, Hyndman, Aveling - and among later recruits, Annie Besant - all had reacted at some stage in their lives against the evangelicalism of their family backgrounds.

Hyndman, the Cambridge-educated son of a wealthy Conservative, Low Church barrister, had been appalled by what he saw of the cynical exploitation of Fijian natives by Wesleyan missionaries in the 1870s. Thenceforth, for him, Christian missionaries were mere pretexts for exploitation, and he later moved a censure motion on the explorer Stanley at the Royal Geographical Society for his part in the shooting of African natives.³⁰ Thenceforth, for Hyndman, the sincerity of professing Christians was always in doubt.

It was, however, Aveling and Bax who in the early years dominated the Socialist/Christian debate. Both had suffered a restrictive puritan upbringing, and it was to this experience that they returned, again and again, in their writings on the subject. Bax seems to have suffered the worst. His parents

30. Hyndman: op cit pp 136-40, 165-6. Together with a Colonel Yale he issued a pamphlet attacking Stanley's activities.

were comfortably-off Calvinistic Baptists, strict Sabbatarians to whom theatre-going was a sin. Much of his earlier reading was restricted to evangelical works, and since he was privately tutored at home, there was little chance of escape. Above all he came to hate the snobbish hypocrisy and sickly sentimentality of the then current evangelical piety, and he hated Sundays "the horror of the tedium" of which "inflicted more or less the whole of the latter portion of the week."³¹ Undoubtedly, however, for him the greatest emotional damage was done by the predominant emphasis on the terrors of hell and the devil which gave him horrible nightmares and a great fear of the dark.

31. E.B. Bax: Reminiscences and Reflexions of a Mid and Late Victorian (1918) pp 13-23 sets out these various childhood experiences. He particularly recalled his dislike for the aria "O Rest in the Lord" from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" which typified what he regarded as "the artificial, even where genuine, bourgeois emotional 'sweetness' of the 'place of worship' and the family parlour with its anti-macassars and tea-urns of the English mid-nineteenth century" typical of the comfortable, futile world he had known, first at Brighton and (after 1864) Hampstead. Ibid p 17. Much of the middle-class attachment to evangelical orthodoxy he saw as mere hypocrisy. In particular he noted the privately-expressed reasons of many who had joined in the public outcry against Bishop Colenso because they feared that the growth of rationalism and decline of traditional authority could only lead to an end to a proper respect for persons and property. Ibid p18.

"At the age of eight or nine it only required a very little suggestion to make me go to bed in abject fear of the appearance of a ghost, the devil, or some other unpleasant supernatural figure, out of the darkness by the bedside."³² It was a common experience of the period. John Trevor, founder of the Labour Churches had suffered an evangelical background before rejecting it, as had many other leading Socialist figures such as Carpenter and MacDonald. Unlike these, however, who turned to a more ethical and mystical creed, in Bax it produced a determination to fight against a set of beliefs whose "foulness and follies" as he saw them, "poisoned and warped" the characters of otherwise "doubtless excellent, good-hearted people."³³

In this respect, Bax was perhaps the most personally bitter of the three, although Aveling, who in 1881 had been sacked from his teaching post at the London Hospital for his secularist views, also had good reason for his prejudices.³⁴ Of those who were instrumental in establishing the position of the S.D.F. on the religious question, Hyndman alone stood out against too explicit a condemnation of Christianity, preferring a more agnostic to a militantly atheist position, but on this he was clearly overruled.³⁵

32. Ibid p 23

33. Ibid p 20

34. C. Tsuzuki: Eleanor Marx pp 88-9

35. Ibid pp110 ff.

One of the more unfortunate consequences of this militantly secularist approach was that a great deal of energy was expended on attacks aimed at other, religious, elements within the Socialist Movement, whose only result was to harden further the divisions which had already emerged. No attempt was made at any sort of understanding between them. When Christians who were also Socialists were not having their Socialist convictions called into doubt, they were having the legitimacy of their position within Christianity questioned. Thus Bax accused the G.S.M. priests of no longer being Christians. - "our Neo-Christian friends" he called them.³⁶ To him they had altered the doctrines of Christianity out of all recognition. In true Marxist style he regarded them like the Positivists who had gone before them merely as a phase in the transition from traditional Christian ideals and morality to the new social ethics which was developing as the economic transition of society towards Socialism took place.³⁷

Neither Bax nor Aveling could find any justification for Christian Socialism in the life and teachings of Jesus. To Bax, Jesus' message was "one-sided, introspective and individualistic."³⁸, and the usual social interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount he regarded as "deliberately exaggerated and introspective precepts presented with a social colouring which did not originally belong to them."³⁹ Aveling was more direct,

36. ToDay March 1884 p 196 E.B. Bax: "Unscientific Socialism"

37. Ibid March 1884 pp 198-9

38. Ibid March 1884 p 196.

39. E.B. Bax: The Real, the Rational and the Alogical (1920) p 171

recalling that it was Jesus who insisted "the poor ye have always with you", and wondering how Christian Socialists could explain that away.⁴⁰

On the philosophical level the new religious outlook came in for similar attacks. Aveling, noting that the Rev. Charles Marson, a leading G.S.M. protagonist for Christian Socialism, had attempted to redefine the word "religion" as "a belief in the ideal", pointed out that this was "to attempt to unwrite history. The word never has had this meaning."⁴¹ The erection of a perfectly natural appreciation of the human qualities in one's fellow men into an ideal was quite understandable, but to fail to recognise it for what it was, and to endow a mere abstraction with the qualities of deity was an absurdity. However, without the aid of any such reference to ideal standards of value, Aveling himself was reduced to falling back on the Utilitarian principle of 'the greatest good of the greatest number' seen purely in terms of the hedonistic pleasure and pain principle.⁴²

40. His Italics. To-Day January 1884 p 35

41. To-Day March 1884 p 178: E. Aveling: "A Rejoinder". This article followed an attack by Rev. Charles Marson Ibid February 1884: "Christianity and Capitalism - A Reply" pp 125-33 in which Marson accepted Aveling's arguments against evangelicalism but pointed out that the Christian Socialist position of the Guild of St Matthew was quite different.

42. "That which tends to the increase of the former, to the diminution of the latter for the whole mass of feeling things is right and ought to be. That which tends to the diminution of pleasure, to the increase of pain for the whole mass of feeling things is wrong and ought not to be. Now the horrors of modern life, while they give pleasure indirectly to a favoured few, give on the whole an enormous quantity of pain to the mass of mankind and therefore they ought not to be." Ibid pp 182-3.

To the leading theorists of the S.D.F. the clearing away of religious superstition was a preliminary, which was essential, freeing men's minds from a morbid concern for the salvation of their own individual souls in the hereafter, so that they might turn instead to the salvation of society in the present - Socialism. The new creed was presented as "Science" in deliberate contrast to the religious superstitions of the past. In Justice such articles as Bax's "Socialism and Religion" or Hyndman's "The Social Democrat's Ideal" set out the new beliefs. Without the divine sanction man would soon come to realise that the meaning of his existence could no longer be left to a world beyond the grave. It would have to be found here and now. No longer could men be fobbed off, when demanding their legitimate rights, by spurious appeals to acceptance of their divinely-sanctioned lot. The new outlook of Scientific Socialism, as Bax put it, "brings back religion from heaven to earth". Instead of looking beyond the present to another world it concentrates man's efforts in this one, "to another and a higher social life in this world". It is in this that the Socialist finds all the religion he needs - "in the reconstruction of society in the interest of all ..."⁴³

To Hyndman, such an ideal was more unselfish than that of Christianity since, for the non-believer there could be no hope of consolation in a future life; there could only be the satisfaction which comes of personal subordination to the cause of the happiness of future generations which he would never live to see.

43. Justice 21 June 1884 p 2

"And so when we, the small men of our time, pass unregarded to the rest of the tomb, this holy consolation shall close our eyes in their never-ending sleep - that though our names may be forgotten, our memories will be ever green in the work that we have done and the eternal justice we have striven for." It was here that the 'scientific' nature of Socialism was so important psychologically, for it replaced the credal certainties of the old religion with the equally unassailable beliefs of the new. Hyndman expressed a common feeling amongst many 'scientific socialists' as he wrote of his own dedication to the movement. "I could not work on without the continual assurance and scientific certainty that such future happiness cannot but be ..."⁴⁴

(iv) An Alternative Socialist Ethics

With the passing of a belief in God and hence of the possibility of an absolute ethical standard by which human actions could be measured, it became necessary for 'scientific socialists' to define a rational ethical basis for human conduct. A social morality had to be defined which could replace the sin-orientated individualism of the past. This Bax called "Humanism", which to him was "only another name for Socialism."⁴⁵

46

The fundamental premiss on which the "New Ethic" was based was that the concept of personal morality only had

44. Justice 29 December 1921 reprint of article 11 October 1890

45. Justice 26 January 1884 p 7

46. The title of the first essay in E.B. Bax The Ethics of Socialism (1890)

meaning in so far as it could be viewed in terms of its social consequences. According to Bax, its chief proponent, the new ethic "sees moral wrong in no action that has not definite anti-social consequences." This was anti-Puritanism in its most extreme form. The "unhealthy" and "repressive" nature of Evangelical Christianity's concentration on 'sins of the flesh' was contrasted with the "joyous, nay ... sensuous" ideal of "the Pagan Socialist."⁴⁷ One consequence of this reaction to mid-Victorian moralism was that by their open rejection of traditional moral standards, Social Democrats laid the whole Socialist Movement wide open to charges of sexual immorality and vice, to which no appeals to the "natural" needs of man provided a wholly convincing answer.⁴⁸

The most serious weakness of the Social Democrat position, as its opponents were quick to point out, was that although the regarding of moral acts solely in terms of their social consequences may have removed one problem (the unnecessary preoccupation with sin) it had created a new dilemma for Socialists which was potentially equally dangerous. For if the social good became the sole measure of the morality of individual actions, what happened when the conscience of the individual clashed with the prevailing wishes of society? The Social Democrat answer to the problem was to deny the very existence of the problem by insisting that the "meaning

47. Justice 4 May 1912 p 10 "The Pagan Socialist" and E.B. Bax: The Ethics of Socialism pp 7 ff.

48. Social Democrat August 1899 pp 236-7.

and function of conscience is, in the last resort, the identification of individual interest with social interest."⁴⁹ The issue remained unresolved, to the extent that in 1917 Justice could allow one of its readers, F.J. Gould, in his article "The Quaker Peril" to deny any appeals to individual conscience against the wishes of the State.⁵⁰ It was precisely this totalitarian potential of the Social Democrat position, however much the S.D.F. leaders might insist otherwise, which led many British Socialists quickly to distinguish between their view of Socialism and 'State Socialism'⁵¹ Such differences helped determine the relative standpoints and composition of membership of the different Socialist bodies for a generation, effectively, at least, until the outbreak of the First World War.

49. E.B. Bax: The Real, The Rational and the Alogical p 72 and cf "The Will of the Majority" in E.B. Bax: The Ethics of Socialism pp 120-8 in which he argues on this basis against Prohibition or legal persecution of practising homosexuals.

50. Justice 27 December 1917 p 2

51. See eg. J.K. Hardie in Labour Leader 4 January 1896 p 3.

(v) The Social Democratic Federation and its Political Outlook

Within the S.D.F. it was men such as Aveling and Bax who dominated the theoretical debate. Bax above all was the Social Democrats' "philosopher", as Morris dubbed him, and Hyndman amongst others agreed with the assessment, even if at times he found Bax's writings difficult reading.⁵² Herein, indeed, lay the problem. For undoubtedly there was a wealth of difference between the careful expositions of Bax and the great mass of political debate both within the columns of Justice and at S.D.F. branch level.

Amongst the ordinary S.D.F. membership attitudes were born out of their social environment. The average S.D.F. branch member, as later reflected by their representatives in the House of Commons, came from the ranks of the unskilled - the men who formed the backbone of the New Unionism of the 1890s - dockers, gasworkers, labourers. These were the men immediately below the skilled artisans who formed the backbone of the old craft unions, working-class Liberalism, the chapels and the I.L.P. And their attitudes were consequently quite different.

The bulk of the S.D.F. branches came either from the East End of London or the slums of Burnley, Oldham, Manchester in industrial Lancashire. Their membership largely comprised those two elements which Charles Booth identified as predominating in such areas around London - Catholic labourers (often of Fenian

52. Morris called him "the philosopher of the movement" E.P. Thompson: op cit p 315. For a similar appreciation by Hyndman see Justice 26 September 1918 p 7 - review of E.B. Bax: Reminiscences and Reflections of a Mid and Late Victorian and F.J. Gould: Hyndman. Prophet of Socialism (1928) p 74.

backgrounds), and the non-churchgoing poorer working class. But above all, such men were rebels against their social environment and the economic system from which it had resulted. Hostile and suspicious against social improvers and middle class charity, they were naturally drawn towards a creed which stressed class struggle and the essential need for the working classes to rely on their own efforts and trust no others - especially not "respectable" reformers and their allies among the skilled working class, as the New Liberals, the Fabians and the I.L.P. leadership came to be seen.

S.D.F. members were often hard-headed, hard-talking, hard-drinking no-nonsense men, with little time for the complex manoeuvrings essential in politics and which (as carried out by the I.L.P. leadership) provided Labour with its first foothold in Parliament as a result of the secret deal between MacDonald and Herbert Gladstone of 1903. To any hint of an alliance with Liberalism the S.D.F. was implacably opposed, and it was deeply suspicious of any similar alliances with Nonconformity or of accepting the help of sympathisers in the Established Church. Working people had to be the means of their own salvation, relying on no outside help, and especially not allying themselves to the puritan moralism of nonconformist radicalism. Jack Jones (after 1918 M.P. for West Ham: Silvertown), a Catholic, was typically representative of this outlook within the S.D.F. with his open dislike of what he termed "these temperance fanatics" and his

feeling for Edward Scrymgeour (Independent Socialist M.P. for Dundee and twice promoter of a Prohibition Bill) as a "decent chap suffering from a horrible and quite incurable complaint."⁵³

Fighting Through Life (1935) the autobiography of another S.D.F. M.P., Joe Toole, also a Catholic, provides a particularly clear example of typical S.D.F. attitudes and their origins in a local environment steeped in poverty and the struggle of bare subsistence. From his earliest years in the slums of Salford, he recalled the number of times as a boy, that he signed the pledge because "they gave us a three-penny tea-party, so we were all delighted to sign as many times as we could wangle it."⁵⁴

His interest in Socialism seems to have been first aroused by the outdoor propagandist meetings in Trafford Road, then a popular Socialist pitch. As a youth he got a 'thick ear' for asking too many questions, and set out to read Marx and other writers. It was clearly a rough area, and there was none of the I.L.P. morality here, - on one occasion the S.D.F. branch found itself broke after it had gambled all its funds on a sure tip-off which came last.⁵⁵ This type

53. Jack Jones: My Lively Life (1928) pp 25 and 97.

54. According to his autobiography he was still a loyal S.D.F. member at the time of his election to Parliament in 1923. He recalled his surprise then at winning since the S.D.F. branch was down to about 12 members and thinking of packing up. J. Toole: Fighting Through Life (1935) p 151. He was not included in the lists of officially sponsored S.D.F. M.P.s published by Justice however.

55. Ibid p 34.

of down to earth working class outlook, provided an area of support for the S.D.F. which the I.L.P. was never able to attract. It was another culture altogether.

The difference in social backgrounds of the membership of the S.D.F. and the I.L.P. inevitably produced quite distinct views of Socialism. In particular the aggressive class-consciousness and often militant secularism of S.D.F. branches scared-off a number of would-be recruits to whom such attitudes were not at all to their liking. This bias within the membership of the S.D.F. was hardly surprising, given the nature of much of its propaganda.

Amongst its early leadership only Herbert Burrows (who also maintained his Radical and Fabian affiliations) had any definite religious beliefs. He followed Annie Besant into Theology, and his Ethical Socialist views reflect this. The remainder of the S.D.F. leaders, from such of its middle-class pioneers as Hyndman, Joynes, Aveling and Bax to such rising working-class activists as Harry Quelch, Jack Williams or H.W. Lee, regarded themselves as either atheist or agnostic, and often coupled this with a definite antipathy towards organised Christianity in all its forms.⁵⁶

56. One result of this was the peculiarly secularist nature of the funerals of the S.D.F. leaders. See eg the obituary notices of Herbert Burrows in Justice 21 and 28 December 1922 and cf of those of Quelch Ibid 20 September 1913, Williams Ibid 8 November 1917, Hyndman: Ibid 1 December 1921 and Irving: Ibid 7 February 1924.

It was this anti-religious aspect which appears to have been the chief cause of a number of speedy withdrawals from its ranks by relatively new recruits who found its brand of Socialism not at all to their liking. This seems to have been especially true in the 1890s in London where the S.D.F. was, for many years, the only Socialist organisation with a network of local branches. One such example of this trend is Margaret Bondfield, a young activist in the shop-assistants' union, a Socialist and devout Congregationalist, newly arrived in the London of the 1890s from Devon, in her late teens. Expecting to find in the S.D.F. that spirit of Socialist idealism in which she herself believed, she found instead a mood of bitter antagonism towards capitalism and an emphasis on the need for a "bloody class war" for which, as she recalled it, Harry Quelch, its leading working-class activist, was preparing by drilling local branch members in his back yard. She quickly left the S.D.F. for the more congenial atmosphere of the London Fabians.⁵⁷

Others who did have definite religious convictions such as Tom Mann and Pete Curran, turned their energies towards the Labour Churches (in which both were leading figures in the 1890s) and to the I.L.P. In the case of George Lansbury, his period as an S.D.F. activist corresponded with his years of religious doubt and agnosticism. On rejoining the Church of England in 1903, he also transferred his allegiance to the I.L.P.⁵⁸ But

57. M Bondfield: A Life's Work (1948) p 48.

58. Labour Leader 17 May 1912 pp 315-6. G. Lansbury "How I Became a Socialist".

perhaps the single most important of all these defections was that which occurred in 1887 of a young man aged only 20 who had already, in 1885, moved in S.D.F. circles in Bristol and had gone on to found his own branch of the S.D.F. in his home town of Lossiemouth on his return there later in that same year - James Ramsay MacDonald, who as a Socialist theoretician, Party organiser and Parliamentary leader played the single most important role in the shaping of the Socialist Movement of his generation. Already, within the Bristol S.D.F., MacDonald had criticised the moral tone of the Socialism put forward by Justice. It was a message to which he returned again and again throughout his later writings - that Socialism, which was based on the spirit of brotherhood and demanded an ever-increasing growth in man's ethical commitment to his fellows, could never arise from the doctrines of class-hate and selfishness which remained the core of the popular appeals of the S.D.F.⁵⁹ At the heart of the antagonism between the S.D.F. and the I.L.P. throughout their later existence, which underlay the failure of each successive attempt at Socialist Unity, was this fundamental difference in Socialist belief.⁶⁰

Here was a fundamental clash of attitudes rather than a dispute between rival theoretical versions of Socialism. This was brought out in the blunt language of Justice with its frequent attacks on the "jobbers and robbers of Capitalism",⁶¹ and its appeals to

59. D. Marquand: Ramsay MacDonald (1977) pp 17-19. To Day March 1887 pp 66-70 J.R. MacDonald: "A Rock Ahead" and cf his views half a century later in Forward 27 March 1926 p 9.

60. For an S.D.F. account of these see Justice 7 October 1911 p 4.

61. Jack Jones M.P. in Justice 15 September 1921 p1.

the workers to be wary of that "middle-class State Socialism of intrigue and corruption" which it feared could result if the efforts of the Labour Party leadership had its way.⁶²

In numerous articles the old I.L.P. and Labour leadership were pilloried both individually and collectively - Hardie, Snowden, Henderson included, but especially MacDonald whom Justice clearly came to regard as Labour's 'evil genius'

Typical of such attacks were the series on Labour's leaders by "Thersites" which Justice ran in the early months of 1913. MacDonald especially came in for severe criticism as Labour's "real leader whoever may have nominally, for the time being, filled that office" and whom the S.D.F. regarded as chiefly responsible for the thwarting of "true" Socialism.⁶³

Taking the Labour Party as a whole, however, to Justice its "besetting sin" was its "Puritanism"¹¹ - as expressed in the support given to the Government in all its discreditable attacks administrative as well as legislative, upon the few liberties of the British workman. To Justice "the ideal of both the Liberal and Labour Parties appears to be a working-class fairly-well housed, fairly-well clothed, fairly-well fed, but kept in custody all its working hours and under lock and key when asleep; without liberty, its whole life spent either in work or sleep, with an occasional interval of delirious ecstasy spent, under strict police supervision, in a little Bethel listening to the inspiring eloquence of Arthur Henderson, Will Crooks or Philip Snowden" -

62. Justice 24 November 1921 H.M. Hyndman: "Social-Democracy and Wagedom" I

63. Justice 11 January 1913 p 2 "Pilloried Parliamentarians: J.R. MacDonald" by "Thersites".

in other words the creation of that Servile State⁶⁴ with which the enemies of Socialism were increasingly associating it.⁶⁵ Such a view inevitably doomed all attempts at pre-War Socialist Unity to failure amid mutual recrimination and suspicion.⁶⁶

In fact the S.D.F. view of the mechanics of the Socialist State rested on principles fundamentally opposed to those of the I.L.P. They resulted from that deep seated working class fear of middle-class domination already described. In essence Social Democrats proposed "direct democracy" in deliberate contrast to the concept of representative democracy enshrined in the British Parliament and supported by the leadership of the I.L.P. and Labour Parties. As early as June 1884, Hyndman provided an outline of the new system in a Justice editorial⁶⁷ Nearly half a century later Justice was to be found putting exactly the same case.⁶⁸ Its essential features were the ab-

64. The title of a book by Hilaire Belloc (1912) which began a notable controversy.

65. Justice 11 January 1913 p 2 art cit

66. See for example the evident reluctance of British Socialists to unite in 1913-14 despite the efforts of the International Socialist Bureau (Justice 26 July 1913 pp 4-5, 9 August 1913 p 2 and 9 April 1914 p 7). As Herbert Burrows remarked on the latter occasion "it is no use emulating Sir William Harcourt and crying 'We are all Socialists now' Let us speak plainly and formally acknowledge we are not. We do not even agree on what the Co-operative Commonwealth means, or on the first steps to be taken to bring it about."

67. Justice 14 June 1884 p 4 H.M. Hyndman: Editorial: "Our Republic".

68. Ibid 1 December 1921 p 3 H.M. Hyndman: Social Democracy and Wagedom II

olition of all non-elected bodies and the transformation of the House of Commons into an assembly of regularly elected paid delegates chosen by proportional representation of a universal adult suffrage without any Presidential powers of veto, and with all major decisions put to the masses through a regular system of referenda. Thus were the interests of the working classes to be protected against the establishment of any new middle-class elite of self-appointed Socialist 'leaders'.

In theory, at least, the S.D.F. constitution aimed at precisely the same thing within the movement itself. As Hyndman liked to point out, his role within the Federation was merely to chair its executive committee. He was not Chairman of the S.D.F. itself, since democratic bodies ought not to want personalities.⁶⁹ In practice, however, the S.D.F. developed a leadership exactly as other parties had done, Hyndman himself coming to be referred to as "the Chief" although he continued to pay lip service to the delegate principle. The clearest demonstration of this came in 1911 when the S.D.F. 'merged' itself in the so-called British Socialist Party, intended by Grayson and Blatchford (whose newspaper, Clarion promoted the venture) to unite the previously divided Socialist elements of the I.L.P. Clarion Clubs and S.D.F. into one body. Its membership nearly doubled as a result of the publicity campaign, the S.D.F. was effectively reborn as the B.S.P., nearly doubled in membership, but with Hyndman and the S.D.F. 'old guard' still

69. Ibid 19 January 1887 p 7 H.M. Hyndman at meeting of London Socialists, Anderton's Hotel.

firmly in control.⁷⁰

In 1914, on the outbreak of War, this new body demonstrated another element in the makeup of S.D.F. attitudes which had been evident from its earliest days - its extreme patriotism in which, although nominally on the left wing of British Socialism, it differed significantly from its I.L.P. brethren which it regarded as being well to the right. At first sight, this phenomenon appears perhaps one of the most surprising features of the movement in Britain, - that here was the apparent left of Labour siding with the Conservatives against their remaining Socialist colleagues and the bulk of the Liberals. Yet the strength of such attitudes cannot be denied. Hyndman himself can perhaps be explained away as an ex-Tory Imperialist, admirer of Disraeli, who never quite broke away from his background⁷¹. But the support which he received in this view from the bulk of S.D.F. branches cannot be so simply dismissed, although admittedly, in this respect they were merely following the bulk of their working-class brothers. Nevertheless, in other respects, such as its particularly forthright brand of Socialism, the S.D.F. had, until then, invariably been on the side of a minority. The answer may well lie again, in the particular social composition of the S.D.F. membership.

The rapid acceptance, by the British working classes, of the need to go to war with Germany in the summer of 1914, demonstrates the strength of the patriotic viewpoint amongst working people.

70. Justice 7 October 1911 p 5

71. C.Tsuzuki: H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism passim

This was especially true of those elements from which the S.D.F. drew the bulk of its support. Its reasons are not hard to discover. Growing up in an environment in which the necessity of struggle even merely to exist was an inescapable lesson of early childhood, inevitably led to a very different conception of Socialism to that which even the skilled chapel-going artisan and trades union aristocracy could afford to maintain. To those who were used to fighting against society for their most basic rights, the concept of fighting for one's country was an essentially simple one to grasp. Hence the strength of working class patriotic feeling whenever British interests appeared to be threatened as evidenced by attitudes both at the time of the Boer War and in the succeeding decade.

The areas in which the S.D.F. were strong were not those in which the I.L.P. found it easy to take root, nor were they the areas in which working-class Liberalism was particularly strong. Neither Lancashire nor London had provided much evidence of Liberal success before 1906. In that year the results of a number of constituencies indicated the greater ability of Labour to win over working class votes than the Liberals. In Lancashire this seems particularly true, both at Preston, where the Labour candidate topped the poll well ahead of his Liberal running-mate, and at Blackburn where Snowden won the second seat, pipped by only 9 votes by the leading Conservative, with the Liberal a poor fourth.⁷²

72. Reformers Year Book (1907) pp 30, 33.

There is strong evidence that Socialism was drawing the support of not just former Liberals, but also of substantial numbers of working class former Conservatives from the results of the referendum amongst its leadership conducted by Clarion at the end of 1898. Of those prepared to back candidates of a non-Socialist Party for tactical gain 1060 were willing to support the Liberals (with 3276 definitely opposed to such action) compared to 590 who expressed their preference for the Conservatives (with 3438 opposed). A total of 3240 were prepared to support either, and 2410 opposed supporting any candidates other than declared Socialists, out of a total poll of 8885.⁷³

Socialism's appeal thus cut across the traditional bounds of political allegiance among the working classes. One obvious beneficiary of this was the S.D.F. whose refusal to identify itself with the Nonconformist Liberal - I.L.P. campaign to raise working-class morality by the restriction of drink and gambling, enabled it to appeal to a sector of the workingclass to which I.L.P. Socialism could not. This helps explain the otherwise peculiar geographical distribution of membership of the S.D.F.

S.D.F. Socialism, then, reached a class which Socialism in its other forms could not reach. Because of this its message was inevitably restricted in scope, and formed a quite distinct element within British Socialism. In terms of size, the S.D.F. was at no time able to rival the I.L.P. Even at its peak in 1911 it had only 11,313 recorded members in 343 branches, and certainly up to 1898 at no time did its membership reach much more than

73. Clarion 3 December 1898 p 389.

2,000.⁷⁴ Justice too, with its small circulation and continual financial difficulties was never a serious rival to either Labour Leader or Clarion, the 'big two' amongst the Socialist papers of the pre-War era. Yet the influence of the S.D.F. cannot be written off so lightly. It was the earliest of the political Socialist bodies. In a real sense it helped start the movement, even though almost at once British Socialism began to develop in a very different direction.

74. Figures from C. Tsuzuki: H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism Appendix B pp 284-5.

The mid 1880 s and 1890 s saw a profusion of groups more Anarchist than State Socialist in their ideals. Broadly speaking they can be divided into 2 main groups. Firstly there were the "Libertarian Socialists" of the Socialist League and the Freedom Group, centered around William Morris and Peter Kropotkin respectively, these were based mainly in London, but had offshoots in the provinces, in the case of the Socialist League, the most important being the Glasgow Branch, of which J Bruce Glasier was the leading light. Secondly a number of idealistic communities were founded, of a distinctly religious nature, owing their inspiration primarily to the growth of popular idealism in late Nineteenth Century. Such groups included the Fellowship of the New Life, of which the young MacDonald was an enthusiastic member, and the Tolstoyan community at Purleigh which grew out of the Rev. J.C. Kenworthy's Brotherhood Church at Croydon. But undoubtably the foremost exponent of this Idealist creed was Edward Carpenter, poet, mystic, homosexual, simple lifer, and founder of Sheffield Socialist Society. Allied to such ideas was the Humanitarian League, founded by a friend of Carpenter, H.S. Salt.

In addition to these main bodies, there were other less well-known enthusiasts, who chronicled their activities and ideas in a number of short-lived periodicals of the time, the more noteworthy of these being Henry Seymour's Anarchist (March 1885 - August 1888); Torch "A Revolutionary Journal of Anarchist Communism" (1894-6) edited by two daughters of the pre-Raphaelite friend of Morris, D.G. Rossetti; Liberty (January 1894-December 1896) edited by James Tochatti, former member of the by then defunct Socialist

League; Alarm the organ of another London group - "The Associated Anarchists" - which ran for 10 issues intermittently, (26 July - 12 November 1896); and finally Commonweal revived by D.J. Nicholl on his release from imprisonment for his connection with the Walsall anarchists which ran for 14 issues (13 of them as a two-sided broadsheet) stoutly defending its author's sanity and attacking all quarters.

Of these, Torch, Alarm and Liberty were eclectic, representing all sides of Anarchist thought from the Christian Pacifism of Tolstoy to the support of "physical force".¹ Henry Seymour's Anarchist however, moved rapidly to the advocacy of individualism, fundamentally differing from Anarchist Communism in Seymour's

1. This is of course a simplification. The Torch saw the need for violence to overthrow capitalism but nevertheless published articles by Tolstoy, though preferring simple Altruism to Christian Creed. Broadly it favoured Morris, Kropotkin and Bakunin, dubbing the I.L.P. "the Salvation Army of the Labour World" Torch (18 April 1895) and referring to the S.D.F. as "the insignificant but rising gang, grandiloquently styled by its admirers 'the only Socialist organisation in England'", run by "Boss Hyndman" (Ibid 18 May 1895). The Alarm on the other hand definitely opposed violence and was anti-war though supporting strikes and other forms of "revolutionary economic activity" as necessary to change the system, it advertised Morris's pamphlets for sale. But of these journals Liberty was the most substantial, allowing free discussion on the religious and physical force questions and containing articles by Morris, Shaw, Henry Seymour, J. C. Kenworthy, Thomas Bolas (founder of the Practical Socialist another short-lived journal of 1885), Tolstoy and one of Carpenter's poems. Its "Manifesto" argued in its first issue in support of force as necessary to change society, but believed "Anarchy" would permanently end violence, for which it cited Kropotkin. (Liberty No 1 June 1894 p 2).

insistence that each man was entitled to the product of his own labour, in clear opposition to the view of Kropotkin of "from each according to his abilities; to each according to his needs", which Seymour saw as "a denial of justice".² Indeed his arguments tend more towards an ideal of equal opportunities for individual ownership of one's own means of production rather than common ownership: "Every capitalist must become a laborer and every laborer a capitalist"³ as he put it. Thus after an initial support for Kropotkin's Anarchist-Communism, he came to argue that the principles of Anarchism and Communism were diametrically opposed, and his own position tended towards a Spencerian Individualism.⁴ As a Freethinker he felt individual freedom of action to be the

2. H. Seymour The Philosophy of Anarchism (1887) p 3. Published in the Anarchist December - February 1886-7.
3. Ibid p 16 and cf 2 letters by Seymour to Liberty September 1894 p 67 and October 1894 p 79 which argue the same point.
4. In fact he regularly cited Spencer in support of his views. H. Semour Op Cit p 4. When Kropotkin first settled in England Seymour opened the pages of Anarchist to the Freedom Group subtitling the magazine " a journal of Anarchist Communism" and declaring himself "converted to Kropotkin's ideas" (G. Woodcock and I. Avakumovic: The Anarchist Prince (1971 pp 205 ff) But this was short-lived and in April 1888 p 7 Anarchist carried an article by Seymour proclaiming his rejection of Kropotkin because Communism and Anarchism could not be synthesised.

logical corollary of freedom of thought, and included Atheism in his Anarchist Catechism, also arguing conversely "the logical issue of Atheism is Anarchism."⁵

On the other hand, Commonweal under Dave Nicholl moved in the opposite direction, and despite Nicholl's own background as a man of independent means,⁶ came to glory in the colourful romanticism of pure proletarianism, as expressed in such articles as "Wot is Soshierlism?" produced under the psuedonym of 'Old Smitem'.⁷ These articles were, however, the work of a man whose sanity had clearly been shaken by his prison experiences, and he died aged 59 in a Poor Law infirmary, a tramp for the last 15 - 17 years of his life, wandering "homeless, and often foodless, the London streets in wintertime, helped, as far as possible, by those who remembered what he had been."⁸

Colourful though such figures may have been in the Socialist world of the late Nineteenth Century, Nicholl, and his like, played

5. Ibid December 1885 p 3 and January 1 1886 p 1.

6. E.P. Thompson : Op Cit pp 507-8.

7. Commonweal No. 3 June 12 1898 p 1 WOT IS SOSHERLISM? A later issue he devoted to an attack on the hypocrisy of a Government which seized copies of the Socialist Havelock Ellis' studies of sexual inversion yet tipped off that other friend of Albert Edward's who got into trouble through a misplaced affection for telegraph boys and would 'ave been in jail now only the Marquis of Salisbury gave 'im the tip to clear out of the country.' (Ibid VII October 23 1898 and cf No IV July 1898). The last 3 issues of Commonweal Nicholl devoted solely to Freemasonry, seeing it as the mediaeval forerunner of Socialism, and of which Wat Tyler was a prime example. (See esp May 1900 p 1).

8. Justice 6 March 1919 p 8.

little part in the real debate that was going on amongst Socialists as to the nature of their creed. To this debate, the main contributions were, on the one hand Kropotkin and Morris, with their ethical agnosticism and their ideals for a Libertarian Socialist future, and on the other, the various Utopian idealists whose inspiration was definitely religious, and whose ideas were first fully developed by Edward Carpenter. Although stemming from different sources, much of their thinking was complementary, and formed a major inspiration for later Socialists, especially among the more working-class early leadership of the I.L.P.

(i) The Libertarian Socialists and their ideas: Morris and Kropotkin

It has become somewhat of a cliché to argue that the Anarchists were a small unrepresentative sect few in number and without influence, isolated from the mainstream of English Socialism by their belief in assassination. The Socialist leaders' repudiation of "anarchist outrages" is taken as evidence of this, and the Second International's final expulsion of them at the 1896 London Congress is taken as their final rejection by the Socialist Movement. Their ideas are regarded in isolation and studied separately as "Anarchism" in opposition to "Socialism", as though the two creeds were diametrically opposed, and it were possible to draw a firm line of distinction between them. Yet such was not evident in the English Socialist Movement of the 1880s and 1890s. William Morris, whose ideas are claimed by modern writers of each camp⁹ sits unhappily astride both, repudiating "the propaganda by deed" philosophy of

9. Eg E.P. Thompson: Op Cit passim sees him very much in the Marxist tradition, while G. Woodcock: Anarchism (1963) places him firmly in the Anarchist camp.

those who displaced him in the Socialist League, but

retaining his fundamental belief in the libertarian ideal.¹⁰

Indeed, far from the split in the Socialist League at the

1890 Conference being a simple case of Anarchists displacing

Socialists, it was in fact the activities of a particular sort

of Anarchist which was at issue. Kropotkin's Freedom Group,

which had up to that time co-operated closely with Morris'

Socialist League¹¹ found its new leadership definitely uncon-

10. See eg Carl Quinn : "In Memoriam:William Morris" in the Alarm 11 October 1896 p 1 and Kropotkin's tribute in Freedom November 1896 p 1-2 in which attention is rightly drawn to News from Nowhere as "perhaps the most thoroughly and deeply Anarchistic conception of future society that has ever been written". It is however clear that at the end of his life Morris withdrew somewhat from active participation in the Socialist Movement due to his realisation that his hopes of an imminent uprising of the masses against a capitalist society was too optimistic. For his disillusionment and therefore reluctant acceptance of the much slower methods of palliatives and Parliamentary Socialism see eg his talk to the Freedom Group "on Communism" 10 March 1893 (Freedom May 1893 pp 26-7)

11. There is an enormous amount of evidence in support of this, much of it in G. Woodcock and I. Akumovic op cit pp 205 ff. and in E.P. Thompson op cit esp pp 505 and 566 ff. For the first two years of its publication (October 1886 - July 1888) the type for Freedom had been set up by Morris' permission in the Socialist League printing office (Freedom December 1900 pp 49-50 "A brief history of Freedom") and in 1888 the Socialist League lent the Freedom Group its hall for its first series of public discussions. Issue 3 of Freedom contained the information that it was obtainable "for enclosure with Commonweal " from the Socialist League offices (December 1886). Freedom in common with most of the Socialist journals ran at a considerable loss, and when therefore in March 1893 2 lectures were given in support of the Freedom Publication Fund, the speakers were P. Kropotkin: "Anarchism"; W. Morris: "Communism" (Freedom January-February 1893 p 4).

genial and joint activities ceased.¹² Such was not surprising given Kropotkin's own dislike of violence.¹³ In fact, on this, as on many other issues, Morris and Kropotkin found themselves in substantial agreement.

There was, however, a notable change in the Socialists' relations with the Anarchists in the months following the discovery of the bombs being made by the Walsall Anarchists in the Spring of 1892 in preparation for an attack upon the Tzar. As early as November 1888 Annie Besant had condemned the public visit to London of the widow of one of the Chicago Anarchists, Mrs Parsons, to commemorate the first anniversary of their execution, arguing that any association of Socialism with bomb-throwing could only serve those who wished to destroy the movement in Britain.¹⁴ Neither the Fabians nor the S.D.F. would take any part in the visit. Now, there was a definite change in the reception of Anarchists

12. G. Woodcock and I. Akumovic op cit p 217

13. Freedom April 1893 pp 22-3 report of P. Kropotkin's lecture on Anarchism 5 March.

14. In the Link No 43 24 April 1888 p 1. A Besant "Socialism and Dynamite". There was at least some justification for this fear on the part of Socialists. When Henry Salt went to the headmaster of Eton in 1888 to resign his post as an assistant master because he had become a Socialist Dr Ware was horrified "Then blow us up, blow us up! - there's nothing left for it but that" New Leader 29 June 1923 p 12 H.S. Salt "Public Schools v Socialism".

by outside bodies. In November 1893 the South Place Institute committee decided henceforth to refuse to rent their hall to Anarchists.¹⁵ One local I.L.P. branch cancelled its invitation to an anarchist speaker when it discovered the title of his talk because members feared being associated with "Bombism".¹⁶ John Burns, a regular attender at Freedom Group meetings from the late 1880s, who at that time despite his membership of the S.D.F. had stated his support for the "Free Communist" ideal, was another who distanced himself from any possible connection with the anarchists. In his New Year message to his Battersea constituents in 1894 he saw working class anarchists as "either the mentally dwarfed, the physically weak, or the morally deficient", and its middle class advocates as cut off from working class realities. For him, Anarchism was "unjustly connected with labour". And besides, he had a seat to hold.¹⁷

15. Freedom April 1814 p 24.

16. Ibid December 1896 p 124 although the same article announced an open Anarchist Conference on 28 November in the Leeds Labour Church under the auspices of the Leeds Educational League, apparently a joint body of Anarchists and I.L.P.ers. They had also invited as future speakers Hubert Bland, Edward Carpenter and Kropotkin.

17. Freedom January-February 1894 p 3 and cf Ibid August 1888 p 92. At a meeting on July 13 opened by Kropotkin on "Work and the distribution of Wealth" Burns reportedly said that "Social Democratic tactics are only useful as they make for Communism." and that "He only differs with Communist-Anarchists in looking upon Social-Democracy as a stepping-stone to Communism". This declaration of his own Parliamentary ambitions "for propaganda" however somewhat irritated his audience.

Such was by no means the universal reaction. At the 1896 Congress, at which the Anarchists were expelled, Hardie the I.L.P. leader and Tom Mann protested in vigorous terms when Fred Brocklehurst another L.L.P.er described the libertarian Socialists as a "mob". For Hardie, the organisations which were being banned "were Socialist organisations". Their use of the term "anarchist" was as the only available means of distinguishing themselves from "Parliamentarians". They did not object to other Socialists seeking parliamentary election, but they did object to having Parliamentary action "thrust on them."¹⁸ As for their being a "mob", Hardie could only reply that "This 'Mob' includes Leo Tolstoi, Pierre Kropotkin, William Morris, Elisee Reclus, Domela Nieuwenhuis, Louise Michel, Edward Carpenter, J.C. Kenworthy, and many another honoured name."¹⁹ He himself often noted his indebtedness to their ideas. In fact, the British delegation was one of the 18 nations to vote for exclusion, after a British delegates' group meeting went against the Anarchists by 223 to 104, the S.D.F. delegates voting en

18. Hardie in Labour Leader 5 September 1896 p 309.

19. Hardie Ibid 15 August 1896 p 255.

bloc for exclusion, and the I.L.P., though split, largely for their admittance.²⁰

This widespread sympathy (outside the S.D.F. at any rate) for the ideas of Morris and Kropotkin is reflected

20. There were about 475 members of the British delegation including 120 S.D.F., 115 I.L.P., 22 Fabians, 5 miscellaneous Societies, 3 Labour Church and 185 Trade Union delegates. (Conference Record No 4 29 July 1896 p 3 report of G.B. credentials committee.) However this to some extent masks the influence of the Socialist bodies, Herbert Burrows of the S.D.F. representing the Match Makers Union and Eleanor and Edward Aveling and Will Thorne amongst the Gas Workers delegates, etc. (see list of delegates Ibid No 7 1 August 1896 pp 1 and 4). Prominent I.L.P.ers opposing Hardie and Mann included J.R. MacDonald and his future wife Margaret Gladstone, Enid Stacy and her future husband the Rev. P.E.T. Widdington, Shaw Maxwell, Joseph Burgess, Edward Aveling, etc. (see Ibid No 4 29 July 1896 p 3 and No 5 30 July 1896 p 3) However, several of these were not I.L.P. delegates. MacDonald was at the Conference as a Fabian, Miss Gladstone for the Women's Industrial Council, and Aveling's membership of the I.L.P. was hotly disputed. Those supporting the Anarchists held a protest meeting at the Holborn Town Hall at which Hardie and Mann were the main speakers. J.C. Kenworthy, Kropotkin, Carpenter, Ben Tillett, G.B. Shaw, J. Morrison Davidson and other sympathisers also spoke, and William Morris and Robert Blatchford sent letters of support. (Ibid No 4 29 July 1896 p 4, Justice July issue No 2 29 July 1896 p 3, Reynolds News 2 August 1896 p 4).

also in the attitude of progressive liberal opinion to their ideal of society, The influential journalist A.E. Fletcher, commenting on the Congress' decision, definitely preferred the "Anarchist-Socialists" in comparison with the "State Socialists" because of the former's emphasis on the moral side of the social question and their belief in "the need for a higher principle to ennoble the higher society." By contrast the 'State Socialists' seemed to see it merely as "a question of voting and engineering the way to this or that small advantage."²¹ It was in fact the moral aspect of Socialism which gave it its wider appeal, in particular amongst young radical Liberals.

Though the moral aspect of Kropotkin's and Morris' ideas commended themselves to many of those in the I.L.P. and Liberal Parties who shared their ethical turn of mind, on the more practical side both S.D.F. and Fabian speakers criticised the Libertarian ideal as being based on a too optimistic belief in human nature. A series of discussion meetings in 1888 and 1889 saw fundamental disagreement arise over the question of work under Socialism. Put simply, Kropotkin and his followers believed that the impulse to create was natural and healthy, therefore there was no need either of coercion or incentive in a free society, rather was it the case that capitalism, in bringing with it slums, poverty and degradation, had stifled at birth this creative instinct amongst the masses. Any loss of production resulting from the abolition of incentive and constraint would therefore

21. New Age 6 August 1896 p 289 edited by A.E. Fletcher: "Socialists and Anarchists in Congress".

be more than compensated for by the increase in creative power of the industrial classes freed at last from the brutalising effects of disease, lack of education, over-long hours and monotonous, mechanical jobs.²² Charlotte Wilson argued precisely this case at a discussion meeting between the Fabians, the S.D.F. and the Freedom Group in June 1888. Under the new system, she argued, idleness would be treated as a disease left over from capitalism, and the idler would be treated by his fellows "as an afflicted brother, whom in a spirit of equality and true human sympathy they desire to invigorate and restore."²³ This seemed hopelessly inadequate to other Socialists present, and at this and subsequent encounters the Libertarians met with the objection that there would still be a need for some form of organisation to decide upon the work to be done and to iron out inequalities caused by such natural factors as the difference in yield from poorer or better soils; while Herbert Burrows spoke for many who believed that given human nature some form of compulsion would

22. See eg Freedom July 1888 pp 85-6: "Work". For exactly the same arguments by William Morris see: "The Dull Level of Life" (Commonweal April 1884 p 4) and "The Reward of Genius" (Ibid 25 September 1886 pp 205-6).

23. Ibid July 1888 pp 87-8. Active in the discussion group were Annie Besant, G.B. Shaw and Sidney Webb for the Fabian Society, Herbert Burrows, Binning and White (S.D.F.) T. Pearson, W. Wen and P. Kropotkin (Freedom Group).

still be necessary to ensure that essential work was done.²⁴

Neither Morris's nor Kropotkin's influence can be measured in terms of the size of the organisations which centered on them. The highest membership claimed for the Socialist League was only 700 (in 1887), and fully paid up membership was far lower.²⁵ The transfer of the Labour Emancipation League from the S.D.F. brought branches in Mile End and Hoxton, Southwark and Moorgate,²⁶ and there was Aveling's group at Bloomsbury²⁷ and Morris' own local branch at Hammersmith.²⁸ Outside the capital there were branches in Leeds, Bradford, Manchester, Oldham, Leicester, Lancaster, Birmingham, Norwich, Croydon and even Dublin.²⁹ But none of these was particularly strong, their importance being rather that they provided small groups of Socialist pioneers inspired by Morris' ideas who were to play an important role in the later Socialist organisations, in particular the I.L.P. This is notably the case

24. Ibid September 1889, pp 43-44 Debate 25 August 1889 Altruistic Club Clerkenwell Green between John Turner (Anarchist-Communist) and Herbert Burrows (S.D.F.) chaired by J. Morrison Davidson; and cf Annie Besant Ibid July 1888. This was the view also of Stepniak, another well-known Russian exile (in a lecture to the Fabian Society 21 October 1892 and elsewhere) who found Kropotkin's Anarchism far too sanguine about human nature and his model for society, like Bakunin's (based heavily on the experience of Russian peasant communities) inapplicable in industrialized societies such as Britain.
25. See H. Pelling: Origins of the Labour Party pp 229 and 44 n2 and cf L. Thompson The Enthusiasts (1971) pp 65 ff. Morris in 1888 and 1889 wrote to Bruce Glasier offering to pay the Glasgow Branch's affiliation fees to ensure their two delegates' votes against their opponents at annual conference.
26. The L.E.L. affiliated at once to the Socialist League February 1885 p 7 and withdrew in 1888 (E.P. Thompson op cit p 509)
27. Later to become the Bloomsbury Socialist Society (in 1888)
28. Which seceded in November 1890 to become the Hammersmith Socialist Society.
29. List based on E.P. Thompson op cit p 414. For the Lancaster Branch, not mentioned by Thompson see Commonweal 19 February 1887 p 63.

with men such as Tom Maguire in Leeds, F.W. Jowett at Bradford and Bruce Glasier from Glasgow, these latter two key national leaders in the I.L.P.³⁰

Outside London, Scotland provided the other main sources of strength for the Socialist League, with branches in Glasgow, Edinburgh and later Aberdeen.³¹ Kropotkin, making his first lecture tour of the North and Scotland in the winter of 1886-7, found the ground already well prepared by the Socialist League.³² In 1890 Freedom noted "In Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow, there are many Anarchists, and as many more Socialists who believe with William Morris that 'it is the business of Socialism to destroy the State and put Free Society in its place' - which appears to be pretty much the same thing as Anarchism".³³ The Freedom Group remained small, however, and remained centred on Kropotkin and Mrs Wilson in London, where it had been founded on the Prince's arrival in March 1886.³⁴ It was in fact the

30. For Maguire see in ed A. Briggs and J. Saville Essays in Labour History (1960) pp 276-316 E.P. Thompson "Homage to Tom Maguire" and E.P. Thompson op cit p 560.

31. The Glasgow Branch of the S.D.F. split on the formation of the League, the majority of its numbers (55%) forming the latter. The Edinburgh Land and Labour League became the Edinburgh Branch of the Socialist League with 52 members. (Commonweal February 1885 p 8 and March 1885 p 16). For Aberdeen see Ibid 8 October 1887 p 328.

32. Freedom December 1886 p 11. The tour was a considerable success, at Newcastle he addressed a meeting of over 4,000 while at Aberdeen the young Snowden heard him address the local Socialists on his mutual aid theories. (P. Snowden: An Autobiography (1934) p 48).

33. Freedom June 1890 p 25 : "Anarchism in Scotland" Of 6 S.D.F. branches in Scotland prior to the creation of the Socialist League there was now only one very small group in Glasgow. Clearly it was the more Libertarian creed which was gaining popular appeal.

34. G. Woodeock and I. Avakumovic op cit pp 204-5.

Socialist League which provided Kropotkin with his main audience at first, Morris welcoming him as a speaker at the Commune commemoration in that year, and offering facilities for the production of Freedom. From then on, Kropotkin became a regular speaker at major events organised by the League, and other Socialist groups.³⁵ Through his friendship with Morris, he met and influenced others such as Rossetti's daughters, W.B. Yeats, and Oscar Wilde, whose own Soul of Man under Socialism³⁶ reflects much the same tradition of thought. Given this closeness between Morris and Kropotkin, the eventual fusion of the remnants of the League with the Freedom Group in 1895 was not particularly remarkable.³⁷ But by

35. He was again speaker at the Commune commemoration in 1887 (Freedom April 1887 pp 25-6) when he drew the lesson from the defeat of the Commune that since even excellent men elected to positions of authority failed on that occasion the future lay rather in awakening working people to independent co-operative action rather than through elected bodies. On that occasion the young J.R. MacDonald was also a speaker (Commonweal 26 March 1887 p 104). Through the Dock Strike of 1889 on which he spoke he became a friend of Tillett and Mann until he left England in 1917. (G. Woodcock and I. Avakumovic p 233).

36. In Fortnightly Review February 1889.

37. This did not of course apply to the more extreme Anarchists of which Nicholl is an example. For the fusion see G. Woodcock and I, Avakumovic op cit p 241.

now with the rapid advent of the I.L.P. in the provinces, it was in this latter body that many of those most influenced by Kropotkin and Morris were to be found, while the remnants of the Anarchist organisations themselves faded in to relative obscurity. After 1890, Morris had withdrawn from much of his former activity in the Socialist Movement, although the Hammersmith Socialist Society until his death in 1896 provided a meeting place for young enthusiasts of all schools of thought within the Movement in London. Kropotkin after moving to Bromley in 1894 similarly withdrew, preferring to devote his energies to writing and making only occasional appearances. It was through their writings that both men came to leave such a lasting impression on the Socialist Movement in Britain.

Although Morris and Kropotkin both had a similar belief in the libertarian ideal of Socialism, they approached this from different standpoints. Morris was born in 1844 the son of a Low Church businessman. As a young man in conflict with the industrialised mass culture he saw around him, he rejected both it and the evangelical ethic. At Oxford he was drawn to the High Church by its sense of beauty and at one period seriously considered entering the ministry. At the same time he was already becoming attracted on the one hand to the emphasis on human and artistic values in the writings of Ruskin and Carlyle, and on the other to the Christian Socialism of Kingsley and F.D. Maurice³⁸ At first this led him into the Pre-Raphaelite

38. E.P. Thompson op cit esp pp22-40.

Movement with its nostalgia for a romanticised mediaevalism which in reality had never existed, but whose influence remained with Morris all his life,³⁹ colouring his Utopian vision of life under Socialism in News from Nowhere, and forming the milieu for his most widely noted work A Dream of John Ball, set amid the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.⁴⁰ But first the publicity surrounding Henry George, and then the early activities of the Democratic Federation attracted him, and after attending Hyndman's lectures⁴¹ he joined the Federation in January 1883. It was at this point that he began to come into contact with the theories of Marx, and, as he himself later noted, was particularly attracted by Marx's

39. J.R. MacDonald in ed A Rickett: Prophets of the Century (1898) noting this, remarked that "he had always more affection for Thorold Rogers's over-coloured picture of labour in Mediaeval England than for Marx's economic elaborations in Das Kapital; the development of the machine and man's subjection to it made him more furious than the clearest demonstration of the iniquity of 'surplus value'" and felt that "his twentieth century was the thirteenth born again" (op cit pp 265 and 266)
40. A Dream of John Ball appeared first in serialised form in Commonweal 13 November 1886 - 22 January 1887. News from Nowhere (first serialised in Commonweal January - October 1890) was occasioned by his reading the American Edward Bellamy's Looking Backwards whose picture of centrally organised Socialism of mass production horrified him.
41. See above pp 145-6

explanation of historical developments in Capital though "I suffered agonies of confusion over reading the pure economics of that great work".⁴² In fact, what Morris saw in Socialism was an explanation for the development of modern civilisation, and a practical means of working for its destruction and replacement by a society far less concerned with industrial production, in which the artistic and creative talents and craftsmanship, which were his own greatest concern, could flourish.⁴³

This antagonism towards modern industrial production characterised Morris' writings on Socialism. Glasier recalled him at an open-air meeting in Coatbridge relaying to a miner who asked him if he wanted to abolish mining, that society could exist adequately on less than half the current coal production since so much of it went merely in the production of shoddy and unnecessary goods, and citing the period before the industrial revolution as a time of far greater leisure and happiness among the people.⁴⁴ The use of machines to shorten hours and so

42. W. Morris "How I Became a Socialist" (Justice 16 June 1894) reprinted in ed G.D. H. Cole William Morris Collected Writings (1974 edition) pp 655-9.

43. "Apart from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilisation" and he refers to "my hope of its destruction ... of its supplanting by Socialism" ("How I became a Socialist" Ibid p 657)

44. J.B. Glasier : William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (1921) p 81-2

provide greater leisure instead of the multiplication of material wants became his constant theme, in lectures such as How We Live and How We Might Live (1887) or The Aims of Art (1887), and in News from Nowhere (1890). The alternative as Morris saw it would be an even greater dehumanising of the masses, and a greater than ever enslavement to the machine, while "the earth's surface will be hideous everywhere save in the uninhabitable desert; Art will utterly perish ... Science will grow more and more one-sided ... useless ... All will get lower ... and man will be an indescribable being - hopeless, desireless, lifeless ..." until the occurrence of "some terrible cataclysm" which would return man to the primitive stage from which he would begin this circular development again unless "some accident, some unforeseen consequence of arrangement, makes an end of us altogether."⁴⁵ For Morris the only alternative to this inevitable result of the continuing development of capitalist production was Socialism. By revealing Surplus Value as the root of the conflict of labour and capital and, through its retention as profit, the reason for unemployment as a result of insufficient purchasing power on the part of the workers, the Marxist analysis of industrial production showed that the means of ending this pursuit of ever-higher production and profit, with its accompanying booms and slumps, lay in the system of distribution. If production were fairly distributed it would be easily possible to provide for the material needs of

45. W. Morris "The Aims of Art" in Collected Works Vol. 23 pp 95-6.

all.⁴⁶ But unless production for use replaced production for profit, then the system of 'wage slavery', of the competition amongst labour for a decreasing number of jobs, and the competition between nations for new markets, leading inevitably to war, would continue. To Morris this endless pursuit of higher production and new markets was pointless. For what were man's needs? For Morris these come down to five simple but related things: health, education, leisure, an opportunity to do useful work, and a decent environment in which to live and work.⁴⁷

A major fear of Morris's was that the working classes would be side-tracked from demanding a complete change in the system by spurious social reforms. It was this case which he argued forcefully in several lectures in 1885 and 1886. In Socialism and Politics he made clear his opposition to mere Parliamentary reforms. These could have no other aim but the preservation of the present system. For him the Factory Acts were merely a "palliation" of abuses to quieten public outcry and allow the system to continue. His main fear was that by means of such

46. W. Morris "How We Live and How We Might Live" (Collected Works Vol 23 pp 3-26 esp pp 5-15 and cf W. Morris: "Why Not?" (Commonweal 12 April 1884 p 2) "Where are the material means to come from for bringing this about? Fellow-workers, from the millions of surplus value wrung out of your labour by the 'organisers of filth'".

47. "How We Live and How We Might Live" W. Morris: Collected Works (1963) vol 23 esp pp 15 ff.

concessions or "palliatives" the system could be preserved almost indefinitely through a gradual and continuing widening of those classes committed to the system as already seemed to be happening with the aristocracy of labour. Such a development would make Socialism, in the sense in which Morris understood it, further off than ever. For this reason, Socialists should definitely reject participation in Parliamentary politics. Instead, they should concentrate their efforts on educating the working classes "to make Socialists",⁴⁸ to create a network of Socialist associations throughout the country which would form the nucleus for future Socialist advance.

He put these arguments most forcefully in his article, A New Party. What he foresaw was no less than the breakup of the old political divisions and the formation of a single party of property out of the Tory Party and the Liberals shorn of its Radicals and Land Nationalisers. Its aim would be the "upholding our present economical and social conditions", and it would do this through a programme of practical philanthropy with one hand whilst putting down industrial unrest with the other - a policy reminiscent of

the Tory paternalism of Carlyle, Kingsley and Disraeli.⁵⁰

48. W. Morris: "Socialism and Politics" Commonweal Supplement July 1885 p 61. His italics.

49. W. Morris : "A New Party" Commonweal Supplement September 1885 p 85.

50. "The party which this instinct (for such it is) will form will not deal in sensation, it will be peaceful, considerate, philanthropical; it will rally to it all 'reasonable' and 'practical' men who have to do with public matters; it will doubtless make large concessions to the cries of distress which will swell year by year, and so gather to it more and more the 'good' men of the comfortable classes, while it will put down coolly and remorselessly anything which wears the token of danger. It will in a word, govern us .. And outside this party, what will there be in Parliament to resist it? Nothing but a scattered discontent, which will be helpless there, discredited by all respectable persons, who will point to the good deeds of the 'party of order', and, protest most energetically against any interference with those who are so busy making people happy and contented". Ibid - his italics.

In a lecture to the Fabians he voiced the fear that genuine State-Socialists might easily and unwittingly become the "cat's paw" of such a party.⁵¹ He disliked Fabian Essays for their concentration on a too mechanistic view of the changes necessary to bring about Socialism. For him Socialism meant more than merely using Government to bring about economic equality. It involved "a complete theory of human life ... including a distinct system of religion, ethics, and conduct."⁵²

Morris saw no benefit for the workers in the mere replacement of their slavery to the capitalists by slavery to the state bureaucrat. In another popular lecture The Dawn of a New Epoch (1886), Morris therefore warned against "the tyranny and waste of bureaucracy" which could be avoided only if the State were replaced by "The Federation of Independent Communities", "their federation being for definite purposes: for furthering the organisation of labour, by ascertaining the real demand for commodities, and so avoiding waste; and for organising the distribution of goods, the migration of persons."⁵³ But in every sense these communities would be "free", "managing their own affairs by the free consent of their members", while the central organisation would merely safeguard them in the carrying out of their new Socialist principles until "at last those principles would be recognised by everyone

51. W. Morris: "Whigs, Democrats and Socialists" (Lecture to Fabian Society Conference 11 June 1886) Commonweal June 26 1866 pp 97-8 and 3 July 1886 pp 106-7.

52. Quoted in E. Thompson op cit p548 who argues much the same interpretation of Morris' views. And for Morris' insistence that Socialism "tears with it its own ethics and religion and aesthetics" see eg "The Hopes of Civilisation" (in Collected Works vol 23 p80).

53. W. Morris "The Dawn of a New Epoch" Collected Works Vol 23 p 139.

always and instinctively, when the last vestiges of centralisation would die out" as was clearly the case in the society he envisaged in News from Nowhere.⁵⁴

Morris' view of the State and its functions was precisely that of the Anarchists. For him it was not the potentially positive aid to freedom through its welfare functions that it was to T.H. Green and the Liberal left. Rather, he viewed it in its more traditional, negative role as policeman and protector of the rights of property. With the abolition of private ownership of capital this function of the State would cease to exist. Instead, each man would find the means of production freely available to him and would be able to produce enough to satisfy his own needs. He would be his own employer, and could please himself whether he worked longer hours (or shorter) than average in order to satisfy any particular material desires. But Morris insisted that such labour would "be free from all compulsion except the compulsion of Nature, which gives nothing for nothing ... the very essence of it is freedom, and the abolition of all arbitrary or artificial authority."⁵⁵

54. Ibid pp 139-40

55. Ibid p 134. Reviewing Annie Besant's Modern Socialism in Commonwealth (10 July 1886 p 47) Morris, referring to himself as a "Communist", objects to Mrs Besant's definition of Socialism as the public ownership and control of the means of production and raw materials. To him this is not true Communism but "only an initial and imperfect form of it". For Morris that part of "the means of production" which individuals "use for satisfying their personal needs" "no Communist would meddle with". "What each takes from the common store for his personal needs he will use as he pleases, so long as he does not turn it into an instrument of compulsion for the exploitation of the others". It is the distinction between State ownership of production and Free Communism or no ownership.

Neither would there be much benefit in Socialism if man were still a slave to the machine. For Morris, Socialism aimed at the total extinction of drudgery.⁵⁶ "Machines would be limited to their proper role of freeing man as far as possible from mechanical tasks."⁵⁷ Machine production would therefore be able to provide the necessaries of life at the cost of far less labour than at present, so freeing man for greater leisure and the exercise of individual creative talents.⁵⁸ This latter he characterised "useful work". It would be education's task to foster and develop such talents, in whatever direction they might lie, whether in "science, literature, the handicrafts, or the higher arts".⁵⁹ He accepted that this would probably not result at once from Socialism. At first "machinery will go on developing", until the point was reached when the mass of workers would "no longer fear starvation as a penalty for not working more than enough." At that point, their necessary wants satisfied, they would "begin to find out what it is that they really want to do", and would come to rediscover the personal satisfaction accompanying individual labour and craftsmanship. Accordingly, mechanical work would be reduced as far as possible, as men came to see that happiness lay not in an aimless materialism "multiplying their needs", which was in reality "ignorance". Instead, "They will discover, or rediscover rather, that the true secret of

56. W. Morris "The Dull Level of Life" (Justice 26 April 1884 p 4)

57. W. Morris "The Aims of Art" (Collected Works Vol 23 pp 86 ff)

58. Justice 26 April 1884 p 4 and "How We Live and How We Might Live" Collected Works Vol 23 p19

59. Justice 26 April 1884 p 4.

happiness lies in taking a genuine interest in all the details of daily life, in elevating them by art..."⁶⁰ Morris believed the creative impulse to be central to human nature. Its satisfaction, once the constraints under the capitalist system of poverty, fear and degradation to the level of a machine were removed, would provide the only motive force necessary for man to work. The arguments for incentives and coercion were therefore irrelevant. In fact, once given the chance to exercise his own capacities, the individual would find the experience "so exceedingly pleasant to him that it will only be by main force that you will prevent him from exercising them."⁶¹

There would of course still be a number of necessary jobs which it would not prove possible to make pleasant. Coalmining and iron and steel production were two such industries. But these, he was convinced, could be manned by volunteers working for a limited period only. Such volunteer work, having been seen by all to be necessary to the community would present no problems since there would always be enough public-spirited individuals willing to serve the community for a period. Perhaps it would prove possible to concentrate most heavy industry in one area so as to leave the rest of the country free from its concomitant filth.⁶²

60. "The Aims of Art" Collected Works Vol 23 pp 93-4 .His italics

61. W. Morris "The Reward of "Genius"" (Commonweal 25 Sept 1884 pp 205-6).

62. "How We Live and How We Might Live" (Collected Works Vol 23 p 20) and W. Morris and E.B. Bax : Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome (1893) p 312. This latter work based largely on the authors' joint articles "Socialism from the rootup" in Commonweal owed most of its conception of a decentralised libertarian Socialist society as the true goal of Socialism to Morris.

A similar taking in turns would apply within the smaller local factories which Morris envisaged, in a series of articles in Commonweal in the spring of 1884, in which he offered his own picture of "Work in a Factory as it Might Be."⁶³ His main aim was to return a human dimension to the factory, to make labour pleasant. The factory he envisaged would be light, roomy, airy, amply ventilated with a minimum of noise!, and as pieces of architecture "beautiful after their kind, and surrounded by trees and gardens... in such factories labour might even be made, not only no burden, but even most attractive; young men and women ... would go to their work as to a pleasure party ... labour may be so arranged that no social relations could be more delightful than communion in hopeful work; love, friendship, family affection, might all be quickened by it."⁶⁴ The factory would become a focal point in the community. Children would come and be educated in it, and there would be opportunities for craftsmanship and recreation too. The machines would be used only for the provision of useful goods, hence reducing the hours of labour - what Morris called "machine-tending" to a maximum of 4 per day which would "cease to be a burden, would in fact be a kind of rest from the more exciting or artistic work."⁶⁵ At the heart of all his writings on Socialism, lay this fundamental desire to make work pleasurable. Unless this was possible there

63. In 3 parts in Justice 17 and 31 May and 28 June 1884, and in another article "Why Not?" which preceded them. Ibid 12 April 1884.

64. "Why Not?" Ibid 12 April 1884 p 2.

65. "Work in a Factory as it Might Be II" Ibid 31 May 1884 p 2 and see part III Ibid 18 June 1884 p 2.

would always be the need for authority and restraints on human freedom⁶⁶

These same points Morris hammered home in A Summary of the Principles of Socialism (1884) produced in collaboration with Hyndman for the Democratic Federation. It is a curious work, by its very inconsistencies declaring the widely differing approaches of the two authors. But it was clearly Morris who was responsible for the section urging (in notably vague terms) the "communising of exchange and the means of production" to free labour from "useless toil", machinery doing most of the drudgery, allowing the "greater part" of productive labour to become "voluntary, reasonable and pleasurable" instead of, as at present, "a compulsory, degrading and unhappy struggle for existence." In direct conflict with this came the suggestion immediately following - obviously Hyndman's - that under "nationalisation", industries such as "shipping" and "railways", could easily continue after the revolution to operate with the minimum dislocation under their existing officials - which betokens

66, "The Dawn of a New Epoch" (Collected Works Vol 23 p 138)
"unless we find some means to make all work more or less pleasurable, we shall never escape from the great tyranny of the modern world."

hardly any change at all!⁶⁷

The Manifesto of the Socialist League, annotated by Bax and Morris, . . . drawn up at the time of the split with the S.D.F.,⁶⁸ fully endorsed Morris' own arguments, in opposition to what was seen as a "State Socialism" which would merely continue "wage slavery" even under the "fullest development of the representative system". Instead, it urged the standard Anarchist demand for the abolition of all laws enforcing contract, so allowing the growth of "the decentralised voluntary

67. H.M. Hyndman and William Morris : A Summary of the Principles of Socialism (1884) pp 55 and 58. There are also compromises between the two men notably over universal suffrage (on which Hyndman was keen) and, which being the aim of the Federation is commended; "not that the vote will force them from economical oppression, but because in this way alone is a peaceable issue possible for the possessing classes". While at the same time all "Forms of Government" are condemned along with the more usual "political devices, party arrangements" (p 57). In fact, as is suggested by the presence of the signatures of all the Committee, the work is the result of compromise, loosely worded to allow of differing interpretations especially with regard to the extent of the role of the State as opposed to free local associations.

68. 30 December 1884. It was issued in pamphlet form early in 1885.

organisation of production which we hope to see take the place of the present Hierarchy of Compulsion."⁶⁹ By 1893 this had come to mean, in effect, Guild Socialism, the "federal principle", which would operate on two planes for the purpose of administration. In terms of geographical situation it would take the "township as the lowest unit", while industrially there would be "the trade or occupation organised somewhat on the lines of a craft guild." At the centre there would be a strictly limited "Federal organising power" responsible for the "administration of production" - the wording is significant - which would include the "collection and distribution of all information as to the wants of populations and the possibilities of supplying them, leaving all details to the subordinate bodies, local and industrial", and also responsible for the safeguarding of society against local reversions to exploitation.⁷⁰

It has often been argued that in the last years of his life, Morris was disillusioned at the lack of progress towards his ideal, and returned at the last to an acknowledgement that Hyndman's policy within the S.D.F. was right after all. His words in support of Hyndman's Burnley candidature in the 1895

69. Annotated by W. Morris and E.B. Bax: Socialist League Manifesto (1885) esp pp 7 and 13-14.

70. W. Morris and E.B. Bax: Socialism its Growth and Outcome (1893) pp 291-2.

General Election are often taken as evidence of this.⁷¹
But his reluctant acceptance of Parliamentary methods in
the changed circumstances of the 1890s did not denote any shift
from his own libertarian view of what Socialism should be.
Hardie's election in 1892 and the advent of the I.L.P., served
to convince him that working class opinion was already de-
cided, and he would abide by it, "although it goes against
my own theories to urge Socialists to become M.P.s"⁷² But

71. Based on Hyndman's own account in Reminiscences of an Adventurous Life (1911) pp 361-3. At Burnley he had said "In 1884 Hyndman and I had a great quarrel and I have to say this: that he was quite right and I was quite wrong."

72. W. Morris "Communism" (Freedom May 1893 p 27). In a passage reminiscent of another in A Dream of John Ball he continued "The intention of a movement is, after all, the most important thing: the actual development of a thing is always very different from our conception of it". and cf with: "I pondered all these things, and how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name." ("A Dream of John Ball" in ed G.D.H. Cole: op cit p 24). This is the underlying message of the "Dream", of man's struggle for freedom and fellowship against tyranny, in whatever age forming the basis for the long conversations in the church at night between the stranger and priest.

it was true that his own hopes for a speedy end to the commercial system had been dashed. In the original flush of enthusiasm the issue had seemed so clear-cut, his solution so obviously reasonable, that there seemed little more to do than preach his message and the working people would rise up and end their own slavery. Now he admitted that the social revolution seemed a long way off. "Some, perhaps, myself included, did believe in the inevitableness of a speedy change in society, but alas! we must remember how hard other tyrannies have died ..."⁷³ Now, instead, the way forward seemed to lie via the much more mundane developments of local government,⁷⁴ which, carried to their logical conclusion, would "starve out" the national bureaucracy by the "delegation" of existing powers to "municipal and local bodies" until "the political nation" gives way to a "federation of local and industrial organisations".⁷⁵ But (though the methods may have changed) the ideal remained the same.

73. Freedom May 1893 p 27. For a similar acceptance of this much slower development towards Socialism see W. Morris and E.B. Bax op cit p 230 and cf with his lecture "Feudal England" published in Commonweal 20 August - September 1887 (re-printed Collected Works Vol 23 p 58) "A few years of wearisome struggle against apathy and ignorance; a year or two of growing hope - and then who knows? Perhaps a few months, or perhaps a few days of the open struggle against brute force, with the mask off its face, and the sword in its hand, and then we are over the bar.

Who knows, I say? Yet this we know, that ahead of us, with nothing betwixt us except such incidents as are necessary to its development lies the inevitable social revolution, which will bring about the end of mastery and the triumph of fellowship."

74. Local authorities, County and District Councils had been created by the local Government Acts of 1888 and 1889.

75. W. Morris and E.B. Bax op cit (1893) p282.

Prince Kropotkin, born in Russia in 1842, held similar libertarian views regarding bureaucracies or government by elites, whether democratically elected or not.⁷⁶ But his own particular contribution to the Socialist debate approached the problem from a different standpoint, that of ethics, and his own conception of the new society was based on his passion for practical science rather than on art and craftsmanship. This interest in science had developed while he was a student in the service of the Tzar, and had led him in 1862, to choose a commission in Siberia where he could take time off from administrative duties to pursue his geographical enquiries. It was here that he began to observe the behaviour of wildlife, noting the co-operation amongst members of the same species in their battle for survival.⁷⁷ His own liberal dislike of autocracy was intensified by his investigations into the Siberian penal system, one of several factors leading to his resignation from the army (1866), his involvement in the liberal Chaikovsky Circle, his advocacy of a

76. e.g. see his lecture : "Communist-Anarchism" given at a Freedom Group meeting 15 March 1888 (Freedom April 1888 pp 73-4) which places its hopes for a future society on "free associations of labourers" and dismissed the Comtian vision of a "socialism" under the rule of a new scientific elite as a threat to liberty. "It would be worse than the present" For a typical Freedom Group view cf Alfred Marsh (Ibid November 1888 p 8) who criticised S.D.F. members for looking down on the mass of people "as being very low down and incapable of doing anything to regenerate their lives. Everything was to be done for them by a select few."

77. P. Kropotkin Mutual Aid (1902) pp VII ff.

Proudhonian rejection of the State, and his subsequent imprisonment (1874-6). He escaped and went into exile, first amongst Anarchist groups in Switzerland and France (1877-83) and then, following a further period of imprisonment, in France (1883-6), in England which he reached in March 1886 and where he remained until the March Revolution of 1917.⁷⁸

For Kropotkin "Anarchism is religion". Its "aim is an ideal ... the farthest off state of common life we can see to aim at ... the conception of a society that is at once free in every member and unanimous in the whole." It was in the true sense a religious ideal, precisely because no other scheme of society so nearly fulfilled the aspirations of humanity "... it is, in outline, the most that Humanity can ever hope or think to be. Hence Anarchism is a religion."⁷⁹ It was "an immense movement, chiefly economical in its origins, but deeply ethical in its substance" the aim of which was "to remodel life in such a way that a new page in the ethical life of mankind may be opened."⁸⁰ It was thus that he saw Socialism, as "a great moral current".⁸¹

79. Freedom January 1887 p 15: "Anarchism as Criticism and Religion: An Epilogue" He went on to talk of "the devotee" "worshipping", this ideal, which "compels his entire devotion". Earlier, talking of anarchist ideals he had likened them to stars as a means of navigation, as something to steer by: "Unattainable, yes. Beyond reach, like the sun, moon, and stars; but you cannot sail the ship without them ... The true Anarchist is at least a navigator. His eyes are set upon the ideals that are above reach." (Freedom December 1886 p 11).

80. P. Kropotkin: Ethics (1924) p 8

81. Ibid p 231.

Believing neither in God nor the supernatural, and regarding much of Christian teaching concerning man and sin as too pessimistic in its view of human nature,⁸² Kropotkin was convinced of the need for a new, rationally and scientifically acceptable, religion which rejected the dogma and supernaturalism of earlier religions, and was therefore acceptable to all - a universal religion. For this reason he sympathised with Tolstoy in his attempt to strip away the dogmatic accretions of the Christian religion and return to the spiritual teachings of Christ, with all their social implications, from which the Church had deviated through its alliance with Government.⁸³ But whereas Tolstoy had seen God as the source of that "universal spirit" in man which guides him to a "higher life" of "equality and of friendly relations with all men", Kropotkin, seeing this same tendency in mankind, preferred to regard it as coming from within man's own nature, from that "Mutual aid Principle" which he had observed throughout the animal kingdom between members of the same species.⁸⁴ The importance of this principle he spelled out time and time again in his lectures and pamphlets for the Socialist movement, and

82. See eg Freedom January 1888 pp 83-4 "Reason Worship"

83. P. Kropotkin: Russian Literature Ideals and Realities (1905) pp 149-56 and Ethics (1924) pp 118 ff. This latter argument parallels that of many Christian Socialists, who saw in the alliance of Church and State after Constantine precisely the same subversion of Christianity's true ideals. See eg. C. Gore: Christ and Society (1928) pp 93 ff.

84. P. Kropotkin: Russian Literature, Ideals and Realities p 152 and cf with his Anarchist Morality (1921) pp 11-12. The -Kantian "Categorical Imperative" is yet another name for this same principle.

they formed in particular the basis for the pamphlet Anarchist Morality⁸⁵ and his major contribution to the evolution debate, Mutual Aid. A Factor in Evolution, published in 1902, but based upon a series of articles which appeared in the Nineteenth Century between 1890-96.⁸⁶ It was in this latter work that he sought to refute the Neo-Darwinian view of Evolution, as occurring through the competition and struggle for survival amongst individuals of the same species, leading to the survival of the fittest. To Kropotkin, such a view, when applied to human society, clearly reinforced existing social prejudices amongst the comfortable classes of society as they viewed the poor, and whatever their authors' intentions, provided powerful support for laissez-faire principles.⁸⁷

Kropotkin's observations in Siberia and since, had convinced him that there was little evidence of struggle amongst members of the same species - quite the reverse in fact - and that when such struggle did occur, usually in times of acute shortage of food when starvation confronted each individual, the result was to leave the survivors

85. In its 9th edition in 1921

86. He wrote regularly in the Nineteenth Century, having been introduced to its editor James Knowles (probably during a brief visit to England in late 1881) by H.M. Hyndman, G. Woodcock and I. Avakimovic. op cit p 185-6

87. Kropotkin's Nineteenth Century articles were originally prompted by T.H Huxley's Struggle for Existence and its Bearing Upon Man (1888) to which they formed a reply.

physically exhausted and severely weakened. Therefore it was clearly not the way of evolution.⁸⁸ Instead, his own observations confirmed by other researchers,⁸⁹ led him to a conviction that evolution operated rather by a process of mutual aid, those species surviving which were best able to adapt co-operatively to their environment.

This voluntary mutual aid principle he saw as a "natural faculty", or "instinct".⁹⁰ It was the foundation of morality in man, but in itself it was amoral, instinctual, a "need" implanted by nature in the individual to cooperate for the "preservation of the race".⁹¹ This principle operated throughout all animal societies. In each species he found that animals appeared to have an emotional need to associate with their own like.⁹² This led to "feelings of solidarity" "with the whole race" and hence to the "feeling of sympathy" towards fellow beings.⁹³ This feeling was "the undoubted origin of our ethical conceptions",⁹⁴ for through the process of the "imagination" the individual puts himself in the place of another and understands what he would feel in the same situation. The teachings of all the major religions were

88. Mutual Aid pp VII-IX

89. He was drawn to a detailed study of the subject by writings in support of the mutual aid principle by Professor Kessler, which he came across in 1883. Ibid p X

90. Ibid P XIII and Anarchist Morality p 19.

91. Anarchist Morality pp8 ff and cf Mutual Aid pp13-14.

92. Mutual Aid p 54

93. Anarchist Morality pp16-17

94. Mutual Aid p 300

rooted in these feelings, and, as was the case of primitive Christianity, found their original support among the humbler groups in society, where the mutual aid principle was a necessary part of everyday life.⁹⁵ Whether we attribute this mutual aid feeling to supernatural or merely biological causes it remains the fundamental motive force amongst sentient beings. On this, Kropotkin believed, Christians and non-Christians alike could agree. It could therefore provide a sure basis for our ethical conceptions of the world,⁹⁶ and for the future organisation of society.

But Kropotkin made clear that this was not pure altruism leading to co-operation amongst members of a species. Rather, it arose from an acceptance through experience that the individual and the group/species could prosper only when there was a harmony of interest between them. To Kropotkin this was a scientific fact, revealed by his own researches into the workings of the animal as well as the human world. Within the individual there were both feelings of altruism - an awareness of the needs of the community which could lead to sacrifice of individual interests - and of egoism - the urge to subdue others for his own ends. In mankind these two motive forces seemed often to be at odds. Therefore the truly human society was one in which the two were synthesised and harmonised. It was precisely because many men knew from within their own natures of

95. Ibid p 299

96. Ibid p 298

the existence of these two, apparently opposing tendencies, that they in practice (regardless of professions of faith) rejected the ideals of Christianity, or for that matter of Communism, as being too altruistic and therefore impractical. Anarchist morality transcended this division of altruism and egoism by its demonstration that each was wholly dependent on the other.⁹⁷

It was these two principles that Kropotkin saw as having been at work throughout recorded history. Law contained both elements. On the one hand it enshrined general customs, the observation of which were necessary for society's continued existence (such as 'Do not kill'); on the other it also contained elements introduced by ruling castes, motivated by the desire to dominate. The property laws fall into this latter category and the history of warriors and priests testified to the strength of this egoistic urge in mankind to dominate.⁹⁸ The State was but the "machine" or instrument which ruling elites had "slowly elaborated in the course of history to mangle liberty, to crush the individual, to seat oppression on a legal basis, to lead the brain astray in accustoming it to servitude..." - this latter function having been fulfilled so admirably by the Church since its alliance with the State.⁹⁹ For Kropotkin there was thus a very clear dividing line between the State and Society. The one was an artificial tool of the

97. Anarchist Morality p 34

98. P. Kropotkin: Law and Authority (1921) esp pp 6-10, 16.

99. The State : Its Historic Role p 40-41.

few for the oppression of the many. The other was natural, not only to man, but throughout the animal kingdom.¹⁰⁰

Kropotkin's view of history was therefore sharply differentiated from that of the Marxists. The heroes were the same, but their motives and achievements were regarded in a somewhat different light. History was seen as the field of conflict between these two opposing forces in man's nature. In the earliest societies - at first those of the tribal communities of hunters, then after the migrations, the first settled agricultural communities - the communal principle predominated in such institutions as hunting in common, and the dividing of the killed prey, or the common possession of land and its produce. Intercourse between communities had led inevitably to voluntary association to common projects and the development of a common identity. But was caused by the desire to dominate, had led to the gradual rise of a warrior class and a class of wise men, who began to assume greater and greater authority, resulting in Europe in the rise of Feudalism.

At this point his differences with Marx begin to become apparent. For in such events as the struggle of the towns with the nobility and royal governments to maintain their liberties from outside interference, or the peasant uprisings in the 14th Century with the Communist-Anarchist preachings which inspired them, Kropotkin saw a conscious movement for the

100. Ibid pp 3-6.

restoration of the freedoms of an earlier society. It was an upsurge of the old "federalist spirit" against which the Church and Roman Law had struggled since the 12th Century. The Hussites, Anabaptists, and others, in their appeal to the voluntary communism of Christianity, drew inspiration from this common source.¹⁰¹ Within the towns, the guilds represented another aspect of this mutual aid spirit, being based on the idea of brotherhood and involving such responsibilities as the duty of the guild members to provide for widows and children of a deceased member. Hence they provided hospitals too. In fact, they acted in all respects as a dutiful family. And they were voluntary.¹⁰² Within the countryside, the continued existence of village communes, meeting as in France as late as 1787 under the village elm to apportion lands and taxes, and for matters of common administration, further testified to the existence of this spirit. They were eventually destroyed with the freedoms of the towns, by a conscious act of state. And he specifically took issue with the Marxists, attacking those "scientific" historians who saw in this growth of State authority at the expense of the Communes the inevitable consequence of underlying economic developments.¹⁰³ In fact, the reverse was the case, for in 18th Century Europe, with the control of industry, as in France, under

101. Ibid esp pp 14-25. To Kropotkin few historians, with the exception of J.R. Green and William Morris, understood the true nature of this struggle. Ibid p 14

102. Mutual Aid pp 170 ff. The State: Its Historic Role pp 26 ff.

103. P Kropotkin: The State: Its Historic Role (1911) pp 29-30.

the control of State officials, commerce was dead and the cities in decline. In clear agreement with Morris, he argued that the arts and science which had flourished under freer conditions, were now dead.¹⁰⁴ The two occasions on which the mutual aid principle had been given fullest reign - the Greek Cities, and the Mediaeval Cities - had also seen the two greatest periods of cultural advance. Even the Industrial Revolution, based as it was on the power of steam, was a necessary consequence of the discovery in the 15th Century of atmospheric pressure and its properties, after which it could only be a matter of time before a means of harnessing it were found.¹⁰⁵ However, what Kropotkin called the "ethical consequences" of that revolution, had been quite different.¹⁰⁶ On the one hand the State had allowed the appropriation of the heritage of the accumulated efforts of past generations (in the clearing of forests, development of roads, towns and the gradual development of science and technology to produce the modern machine). All this had become the property of the few, whereas it was in justice the inheritance of all humanity. As a result while the rich squandered their surplus cash on unnecessary luxury, the masses were poorly housed, clothed and fed. Both Malthusians who blamed overpopulation, and Spencerians who blamed underproduction, were clearly wrong,

104. Ibid pp 20, 28, 35.

105. Mutual Aid pp 296-7.

106. Ibid p 297.

since Government figures themselves showed productive capacity to be increasing faster than population.¹⁰⁷

The fault lay quite simply in the system of ownership.

On the other hand, the development of the bureaucratic state had led to a widespread indifference to the plight of the poor, for whereas under the Guild system it was the duty of each man to help his brother in time of illness or distress, now he would simply be pointed in the direction of the nearest Poor Law institution, or subjected to the patronising offices of the "charity" of the comfortable classes.¹⁰⁸

But the mutual aid instinct was too fundamental to be completely suppressed and Kropotkin took encouragement from signs of its resurgence among the working classes, as seen in Owenism, the Co-operative Movement in the North, the growth of Friendly Societies with social functions very like those of the Guilds, and in those experiments in voluntary communistic living amongst small groups of dedicated Socialist enthusiasts which were such a feature of England in the closing years of the Nineteenth Century.¹⁰⁹

107. P. Kropotkin: Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles (1913) pp. 11-12.

108. Mutual Aid p 227.

109. Ibid pp 266 ff. Kropotkin admitted much of the truth of the Socialist objection to the Co-operative Movement as "co-operative ego-tism" but from his own visits to the North he was convinced that large numbers of dedicated co-operators were motivated by this great instinct for mutual aid and concern, which formed the basis for their own almost religious enthusiasm in the co-operative ideal, but for the existence of which they would not be involved in it (Ibid pp 271-2) With regard to Utopian Communities he criticised their members for often ceasing to take part in the wider Socialist movement, noted their propensity for failure due to petty disputes and the lack of experience of agricultural life on the part of their members, but believed that they could be successful around large cities if they concentrated their efforts on market gardening. Freedom March 1893 p 14. But he visited the Clousden Hill settlers near Newcastle, contributed to their funds, as did the Hammersmith Socialist Society and H.W. Nevinson the journalist, who was notably influenced by anarchist sentiments and maintained a friendly interest in their and others' efforts. Ibid March 1896 p69 "The Free Communist and Cooperation Colony" Ibid August 1897 p88 Clousden Hill Farm or Ibid November 1898 p 75 "Leeds Brotherhood Workshop"

influence of the State in the suppression of all initiative and the creation of a practical servitude of mind as well as of body. It was against the devitalising effect of modern institutions that the Anarchist-Socialist was to organise. This achievement of a free and equal society could not come through State Socialism. This would merely provide a society of unfree equals.¹¹⁰ Socialism was not just a question of economic adjustment. It involved the "remodelling in their entirety all relations among men ... In every street ... hamlet ... group ... you must awaken the creative, constructive, organising spirit, in order to reconstruct the whole of life in the factory, on the railroad, in the village, in the stores, in taking supplies, in production, in distribution." This demanded the "full and free exercise of popular genius" and could not therefore be done within the "pyramidal scale of organisation that constitutes the essence of each State" which by its very nature in the delegation of individual responsibility to others, led to the "crushing" of all individual initiative, "free grouping and free creation" and the imposition of one standard "which must necessarily be that of the mediocrity."¹¹¹

The aim of society had to be the "full and complete liberty of the individual" and the "free development of all his faculties".

110. The State: Its Historic Role pp 39-40

111. Ibid pp 40-41

Kropotkin's belief in the mutual aid principle as fundamental to mankind underlay his belief that upon the removal of restraints (i.e. the Law), the vast majority of mankind would act in a socially responsible and useful way. From those with anti-social tendencies there was little to fear provided men opposed to them their own "social passions". Common experience would soon teach the soundness of the principle "Do unto others"¹¹² The moral censure of public opinion would be all the deterrent necessary to the criminally inclined. There would therefore be no need for prisons, whose effect on the criminal was probably adverse, merely providing him with contacts with others of similar inclination and giving him further reasons for resentment against society. The same argument naturally applied to flogging and the use of the birch; while capital punishment was condemned as an atrocity. The very concept of punishment was to Kropotkin an outmoded relic of a former barbarism; and moral

112. Anarchist Morality pp 25-7

support would take its place.¹¹³

But for all his

self-professed "scientific" approach to the study of

man's nature, and his admittance of the contrary instinct,

many of Kropotkin's conclusions were clearly based on his

own idealistic belief in the power of human altruism, a

trait notably present in what was probably his most widely-

read pamphlet, An Appeal to the Young.¹¹⁴

113. Freedom contains many articles on such matters eg September 1887 "Justice in England"; October 1891 "Judicial Atrocities". In December 1887 Kropotkin was lecturing at Walsall and Birmingham on the moral influence of prisons (Ibid January 1888 p 62) And see also his Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles pp 32-5 and Law and Authority esp p 21 which agreed that 1) hanging is no deterrent
2) murders vary according to whether there are good or bad harvests and therefore reflect human misery and frustration
3) most crimes against property are motivated by the hope for gain - the same also which underlies capitalism, and cannot therefore be eradicated within a capitalist society. Mutual Aid pp 132-3
114. Translated into English by H.M. Hyndman and published both as a pamphlet, in Justice 2 February 1884 p 2 and also in Today July 1888 pp 285-300. In it Kropotkin's whole appeal was directed to the "altruism" to which he several times referred, though denying it as over-idealistic in later writings. In practice, though, it remained a fundamental presupposition of his thought.

But if Kropotkin's mutual aid theories led him with Morris to an advocacy of the abolition of restraints and hence, in opposition to the State Socialists, to a reliance upon the spontaneous efforts of freed humanity, his conception of that future society was rather different. Morris' theories on art had led him to an ideal in which the role of the machine was minimised and individual creativity was satisfied in a return to the older craftsmanship. Kropotkin agreed that industrialisation had led to men being made "mere servants to some machine",¹¹⁵ but his solution was, by means of technical education, to enable workers in industry to understand fully the nature of the industrial processes in which they were involved so that, like the craftsmen of old, they would be fitted to introduce their own improvements and modifications to the machines they managed. This, he felt, would restore initiative to the factory floor, and thus re-humanise industrial production. The inherent problem in modern industry was not so much the machine itself, as the division of labour to which it had given rise. In particular there had developed a rigid caste distinction between the brain worker and manager on one hand, and the manual worker on the other. It was this distinction which he sought to break down by means of an "integrated education" to produce men and women suited to an "integration of labour" "where each individual is a producer of both manual and intellectual work."¹¹⁶ Schools were to provide an education for

115. P. Kropotkin: Factories, Fields and Workshops (1899) p 2.

116. Ibid esp pp 4-7.

all up to the age of 18 or 20 regardless of birth. There were to be "concentric courses", building up from the simple to the more complex as the child grew older, and in particular in the last 4 years, concentrating on science and technology and providing all with basic skills in woodwork, casting, and even the skills of the smithy and engineering workshop. The earlier years were to be devoted to providing a broad comprehension of Nature and the development of human societies, together with preparation for the more practical training which would predominate in the latter years. And in place of any religious education there was to be a deliberate attempt to foster and inspire what Kropotkin referred to as "feelings of solidarity". Such a practical training had been pioneered at the Moscow Technical School, and its success had prompted other similar schemes in Chicago, Boston and at Gordon's College, Aberdeen. Without such a basic education he could see no hope of liberating the working man from servitude to the machine.¹¹⁷

In other respects however, his ideas were strikingly similar to Morris's. There would be sufficient production if all worked 5 hours a day. Equally there could be retirement from any formal necessity to do manual work at 40, so providing the freedom for the individual to pursue his own interests from then on. In addition, much of the agricultural work, being seasonal, could be done in rotation with factory production,

117. Ibid esp Chapter 8 "Brain Work and Manual Work"

the latter shutting down for periods in the Summer during the harvest. This would be made possible by the advent of electricity which would enable small factories to be sited in rural villages providing a balance of indoor and outdoor work. Large scale production could be broken down into its component parts for this purpose, there being no longer any necessity to maintain several processes within the same building. This, coupled with a much greater concentration on agriculture to produce self-sufficiency in food, would lead to the abandonment of the city slums and a healthy life and environment for all.¹¹⁸

(ii.) Religious Anarchism: Edward Carpenter and the Simple Life Ideal

Religious Anarchism was a peculiarly English movement which developed against a background of popular religious idealism in the later 19th Century. The foremost of its exponents in the 1880s and 1890s was Edward Carpenter. His influence upon the coming generation of English Socialists was immense, as the testimony of many of them shows. A friend of Morris and Kropotkin, it was Carpenter who advanced the £300 necessary for Hyndman to launch Justice and Carpenter himself was a regular contributor to To-Day and was in great demand as a lecturer for the leading Socialist bodies up and down the country. He spoke regularly at meetings organised by the S.D.F., Socialist League, and Freedom Group and later, when the I.L.P. emerged in the North, he was in great demand as a speaker at their meetings and at Labour Church services. Amongst I.L.P. leaders he especially influenced J.B. Glasier, and in the winter of 1890, the latter's

118. Ibid esp Chapter 3 "Agriculture".

future wife, Katherine St John Conway, who read Carpenter's pamphlet England's Ideal, which she was given from the Bristol Socialist Society's bookshelf. On Carpenter's death she recalled¹¹⁹ Whitman's Leaves of Grass and Carpenter's Towards Democracy as being "for many of us inside and outside the political Socialist movement ... a kind of Twentieth Century Old and New Testament ..." ¹²⁰ She was by no means alone in this view. Fenner Brockway, (born 1888), who joined the I.L.P. in North London in 1907, recalled in an obituary in

119. In ed. G. Beith: Edward Carpenter. In Appreciation (1931). Amongst other contributions were E.M. Forster, R.F. Muirhead, Mrs Havelock Ellis, and J.R. MacDonald, then Prime Minister, whose own contribution shows perhaps the clearest appreciation of Carpenter's thought. It had been as a result of a £5 donation from Carpenter that the Bristol Socialist Society had begun its small library of Socialist writings, when in 1885 the young J.R. MacDonald then briefly resident in Bristol had been made the Society's librarian and put in charge of selecting the books. D. Marquand: op cit p 17.

120. Another Socialist pioneer, Joseph Clayton had the same recollection of Socialism in the 1890s. "there was comradeship, social equality, brotherhood. The influence of Whitman's Leaves of Grass, of Edward Carpenter's prose writings was considerable." J. Clayton: The Rise and Decline Of Socialism in Great Britain 1884-1924 (1926) p 88. Katherine and Bruce Glasier spent their honeymoon of 4 days with Carpenter at his home of Millthorpe in 1893. ed G. Beith op cit p 88.

the New Leader (5 July 1929) how Towards Democracy was read at Socialist gatherings, and he too referred to it having been regarded in those pre-war years as the "bible" of the Socialist movement,¹²¹ Robert Blatchford of the Clarion preferred Civilisation: Its cause and Cure, another popular pamphlet by Carpenter, and also, (a point worth noting in regard to Blatchford's later involvement in religious controversy) From Adam's Peak to Elephanta, telling of Carpenter's visit to a Hindu Guru in Ceylon, and his attraction to Hindu mysticism.¹²²

Carpenter's place in the Socialist movement was, however, more on the periphery, among the ethical idealists of the Fellowship of the New Life and the Humanitarian Society, of both of which he was a member, rather than among the more directly political Socialist organisations. His influence was exerted through his writings (for Carpenter was essentially a writer and a philosopher rather than a politician) and in his practical advocacy of the Simple Life ideal. At his own smallholding at Millfield, near Sheffield (where he moved in 1883) he created a retreat from the industrial urban world around him, much as his hero Thoreau had created his retreat at Walden a generation earlier. Millfield became a sort of Mecca for English Socialists, though Carpenter came to regard their continual arrival up the

121. Quoted in S. Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks: Socialism and the New Life. The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis (1977) p 115.

122. Ibid p 116.

valley as the coming of the tidal "bore" in more than
one sense of the word.¹²³

Carpenter's popularity stemmed primarily from the fact that he expressed so well the common experience of his generation in his rejection of the self-centred ethic both of the capitalist and of the comfortable bourgeois Christian with their concentration on their own individual salvations. He sought instead, outside organised Christianity, the inspiration of an ethical and idealistic religion, based on the common religious experience of mankind, rather than on any narrow doctrinal orthodoxy. Carpenter, as well as any contemporary, articulated in his writings the feelings and aspirations of a whole generation, much as Whitman, Emerson and Thoreau, whose names are so often connected with that of Carpenter and others in this country had done for young Americans. On the fringe of religious orthodoxy, he found himself speaking to meetings of Theosophists, Ethical Societies, and later, R.J. Campbell's Progressive League, to all of which Carpenter's insistence on the mystical and ethical core of religion naturally appealed.¹²⁴

However, there was one topic on which most of his Socialist followers could not follow him, for Carpenter was a practising

123. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Among Savages (1921) p 87.

124. Edward Carpenter: My Days and Dreams (1916) pp 254 ff. Annie Besant had come to speak at the Sheffield Socialist Society on several occasions with Kropotkin, and stayed at the 'Commonwealth' Cafe which Carpenter had provided as their meeting place. So it is not surprising to find him speaking for Theosophists in Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, etc. Ibid p 254 ff.

homosexual, living openly if discreetly for much of his life at Millfield with his friend George Merrill. Many of his writings reflected his own idea of male love, with titles such as Homogenic Love (a privately circulated pamphlet printed by the Manchester Labour Press in 1895), The Intermediate Sex (1909) and a sociological study Intermediate Types Among Primitive Folk (1914).¹²⁵ It is clear that this underlay his own belief in the mystical nature of comradeship which was at the heart of all his Socialist teaching. Indeed, the publishers Fisher Unwin realised as much when, at the height of the Oscar Wilde scandal in April 1895, they refused to publish Love's Coming of Age, embodying Carpenter's views on male love and stopped the sale of Towards Democracy, much of the poetry of which becomes clearer in this light.¹²⁶ But although this aspect of life cannot be ignored, it is for his mystical belief in humanity and in the essential goodness of all creation and the Socialist creed

125. However Carpenter could be deliberately misleading about his own sexual inclinations adopting for example in The Intermediate Sex a prudish attitude to "abuses" in Public Schools, referring to the "self-abuse" of masturbation and sex between boys as "the greatest abuse of human rights and decency" Ibid p 50. He argued in public for what he called "The Homogenic Attachment" of male love, but against the very sexual expression of it which he allowed himself in private. For his private views see S. Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks op cit pp 75 ff.

126. E. Carpenter : My Days and Dreams pp 196-9. Towards Democracy was not a great success at first. The book itself expanded from its original 110pp to 507 by its final edition in 1905. Of the first edition (1883) of 500 copies, only 40 were sold when the 2nd edition appeared (1886). Of this 1,000, only 700 were sold before the 3rd edition appeared in 1892. It was printed at Carpenter's own expense and sold only 200 copies on average per year to 1895. After 1896 this number had fallen to only 100 p.a., leaving over 4,000 still to be sold. Ibid pp 191-9. In 1901 Carpenter "found myself in the street with nearly a ton of Towards Democracy, about 900 copies. The Labour Press had collapsed." Carpenter to Salt in H.S. Salt: Company I Have Kept p 100n1.

By Carpenter's death in 1928 however, the final edition of Towards Democracy was in its 15th impression; My Days and Dreams in its 4th edition; Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure had reached its 16th edition by 1924; England's Ideal was in its 9th edition; The Art of Creation was in its 6th edition, and his other major works similarly. He had in fact become a cult figure as the tributes to him on his 70th birthday in 1914 demonstrate. For other publication figures see C.Reddie: Edward Carpenter 1844-1928 (1932) passim. For the address to Carpenter on his 70th birthday (composed by Henry Salt) see S. Winsten op cit pp132ff. Signatories included Rabindranath Tagore, H.G.Wells, Bertrand Russell, Lawrence Housman, Israel Zangwill, John Galsworthy and W. B. Yeats.

of the Simple Life to which it gave birth, that he is rightly remembered, even today, amongst those Socialists whose memories go back before the Great War. These ideas were given their main circulation in the poetry of Towards Democracy and especially in two early volumes of his collected Socialist essays, England's Ideal and Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure¹²⁷, while the roots of his philosophy are most clearly expounded in the relatively more demanding The Art of Creation (1904)¹²⁸.

Born in 1844, Edward Carpenter spent his early life in Brighton. His father was a barrister whose large family (there were 6 sisters) led a typically comfortable existence, the chief feature of which, according to Carpenter's autobiography, My Days and Dreams, was its domestic boredom and artificiality. With six or seven servants, there was quite literally "nothing on earth to do" - a problem which especially affected his sisters, and to which he continually alluded in his later Socialist writings, in which the needless

127. Both take their titles from the principle essay in each, with which we shall in fact be chiefly concerned. England's Ideal reprinted in 1885 in 22 pp from Today May 1884 was reissued in 1887 (148 pp) with other essays. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure (1889) was similarly expanded with the addition of other essays up to 1906.

128. It had, however, somewhat surprisingly reached 6 editions by 1929. See note 126.

drudgery of the industrial masses was shown merely to imprison the 'comfortable' classes in their own wealth.¹²⁹ His mother's Scottish puritan views led her, according to her son, to a suppression of any demonstration of human affection as sinful - causing Edward many problems in his own later life.¹³⁰ But it was his father whose influence on Carpenter's intellectual development was most crucial, the latter referring to it as "a priceless debt". For his father's religious outlook clearly provided the starting point for his son's. He was a Broad Church Anglican, a friend of the Rev. F.W. Robertson, who was often in the house, and an admirer of F.D. Maurice. He had derived this outlook ("a kind of Broad Church mysticism", Edward called it) from reading Coleridge, with whom he was also acquainted, and later broadened out under the influence of Eckhardt Tauler, Kant, Fichte and Hegel, "into a religious and philosophical mysticism without much admixture of the Broad Church at all."¹³¹ His later letters to his son, dealing with such matters as his conviction that underlying the natural life and functions of plants and animals there must be a conscious,

129. E. Carpenter: My Days and Dreams p 32. and cf Desirable Mansions (1883) p 1 his earliest Socialist pamphlet which, reprinted from Progress June 1883, opens with a contrast between the cheerful activity of the servants in the kitchen and the boredom and pallor of the family in the drawing room. It is also the underlying argument of Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure.

130. My Days and Dreams pp 15 and 42.

131. Ibid p 38.

directing mind, show the extent of their intellectual communication.¹³²

From the age of 14 Edward had the notion of taking orders. Between College and University, he spent some months at Heidelberg, attending science lectures and coming under the influence of the liberal school of German biblical scholarship. At the same time, he recalled, his religious feelings were being aroused by the beauty of nature, notably at sunsets and on long walks alone. At Trinity Hall Cambridge he was 10th wrangler in the Mathematics tripos in 1868, and stayed on as a clerical Fellow, being ordained by the then Bishop of Ely (who had considerable doubts as to his orthodoxy), and serving as curate at St Edward's in Cambridge, where F.D. Maurice became his incumbent. But he had growing doubts as to his position within the Church, occasioned especially by his awareness of the hypocrisy of many of his parishioners in their conformism, and his own increasing inability to stand up and recite in church the creeds and passages from the Bible, knowing as he did that although he might be able to interpret them in a symbolic and allegorical sense, his hearers in the congregation were merely being confirmed in a literalistic Christian outlook which to Carpenter was more superstition than religion. But to renounce his orders meant the loss of his Fellowship, and this he was only able to do after several years of doubt and uncertainty, leaving Cambridge

132. Ibid pp 39 - 40 - from a letter to him by his father 1873.

for the last time in the summer of 1874. In the autumn he began a new existence, lecturing for the University Extension scheme in the industrial towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire, coming into contact with the working class movement for the first time. In 1882, on the death of his father, he inherited £6,000 and bought a smallholding of 7 acres at Millfield, outside Sheffield, where he was to spend the rest of his life.

In the years at Cambridge and between 1874 and 1882, Carpenter's own philosophical outlook was gradually taking shape. His earliest published essay, The Religious Influence of Art¹³³ showed the essential Platonism of his religious outlook. The world was the reflection of God's mind. Hence the material was sacramental of the spiritual. The "divinity in us" recognised its kinship with both Creation and the Creator in moments of intense religious feeling, when there occurred "a deep communion with the spirit of all power and truth, whom to know is eternal life."¹³⁴ This being was a "something which is beyond, though ever present in, the sphere of everyday life; something which cannot be easily expressed at all, never clearly, which yet we feel to be akin with our deepest consciousness."¹³⁵ The emphasis here, as throughout his writings was on "communion", "feeling". It was through

133. The Burney Prize Essay of 1869 at the University of Cambridge.

134. E. Carpenter: The Religious Influence of Art (1870) pp4-8, 43

135. Ibid pp 1-2.

the emotions, through religious experience alone, that God could be known, and not through intellect. The true goal of life was a closer and closer communion with God, the divine spirit which lies at the heart of our own beings. The pursuit of material goals, of the sensual, of pleasure for its own sake, was empty and could not fulfil the yearnings of the heart.¹³⁶ These themes Carpenter was to develop in his later writings.

Meanwhile he was discovering a new source of inspiration and support in the ideas of Walt Whitman whom he came across in 1868 or 1869 in Rossetti's new edition of his poems. Inspired by the American's emphasis on comradeship based on the divinity within man, which to Carpenter was so much more satisfactory than the austere transcendental asceticism of Plato, up to then his main inspirer, he obtained a copy of Democratic Vistas and later, when it appeared, Leaves of Grass and struck up a correspondence with the American leading to his first visit to him in 1887, when on the introduction of a Leeds Unitarian minister, the Rev. W.H. Channing, he also met Emerson, James Russell Lowell and Oliver Wendell Holmes. In 1883 he first read Thoreau's Walden which summed up for him the ideal of the Simple Life for which he had been searching. So, like other pilgrims from Britain, on his second visit to Whitman, he

136. Ibid. pp 43, 50-1.

visited Walden Pond and bathed in it.¹³⁷ Of the leading English Socialists Carpenter was the most closely acquainted with the American Transcendentalists, and through his constant references to his indebtedness, did much to popularise them in Socialist circles, while his own writings expressed essentially the same ideas.

This is particularly noticeable in Carpenter's quasi-mystical view of the nature of "true democracy", Carpenter believed that underlying the material world was a universal mind or spirit, the source of all human notions of truth, beauty, goodness, justice and love.¹³⁸ Man was made aware of their existence in moments of intense feeling by virtue of the immanence of the Universal spirit (or God) within his own self. For Carpenter it was this fact of the immanence of God in man which was the basis for democracy. The modern spirit of Demos, resting as it did on "universal greed", in itself a denial of man's true self, was not the Democracy of which Carpenter wrote. It was its antithesis and on this he was at one with Carlyle. "The true Democracy has yet to come ... Here in this stage the task of Civilisation comes to an end ... the bitter experience that man had to pass through

137. My Days and Dreams pp 30, 64-5, 87-8, 116-8. For details of his visits to America see Days With Walt Whitman (1906) based largely on 2 articles in Progressive Review February and April 1897. Whitman apparently found Emerson (as Carpenter had found Plato) too austere, referring to his "Bloodless intellectuality" while Emerson was revolted at the emotional feeling of Leaves of Grass. Ibid pp 163-4, 175, 186-7.

138. cf The Art of Creation Ch 7: "Platonic Ideas and Heredity" esp pp 120-1.

is completed; and out of this Death and all the torture and unrest which accompanies it, comes at last the Resurrection. Man has sounded the depths of alienation from his own divine spirit ... he has literally descended into Hell; henceforth he turns, both in the individual and in society, and mounts deliberately and consciously back again towards the unity he has lost."¹³⁹ For "true Democracy" was "not an external government at all but an inward rule."¹⁴⁰ It was in fact "Freedom", the internal realisation of the identity of the Self with the Universal Spirit, and through this man's realisation of his essential "Equality" with all other individual human beings. When man came to this realisation he would be truly free - free from his petty jealousies and selfishnesses, and free from the alienation of man from man, and man from his own true self, to which the pursuit of false material ("sensual") goals had led.¹⁴¹

Thus the essentially religious nature of Carpenter's contribution to English Socialist thought becomes clear. Up to then, the Socialist writers had all placed their

139. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure pp 55-7.

140. Ibid p 57.

141. eg The Art of Creation Ch 5 "Self and its Affiliations" esp pp 82-3 and cf Towards Democracy pp 9 and 108-9.

primary emphasis upon bringing about a social and political change by educating a majority of the population to see its advantages. Although such appeals had often been couched in ethical terms, on grounds of justice, nevertheless, it had been social change rather than any individual change of heart which had been seen as the main means of achieving the Socialist goal. With Carpenter, this emphasis was reversed. His pamphlet England's Ideal was but one conscious attempt to redress the balance. For him it was the ideals and the motives of the individual which were the main factors determining the direction of social development. Political structures, "schemes" of social development were really "only the expression and result of things which lie deeper."¹⁴² Society was corrupt because its ideals were corrupt. At the heart of it lay the motive force of Capitalism itself, the profit motive, based on personal greed and selfishness. But even this was no more than a reflection of the universal ideal current among all sections of society "to get as much and to give as little as they can."¹⁴³ However, it was carried to its most extreme by the wealthy whose idleness and concept of "gentility" was "hopelessly corrupt" and "incompatible with Christianity".

Their incomes, through shares and dividends, rested on the receipt of the fruits of the labour of others, while giving nothing in return. Their wealth, based as it was upon depriving others

142. England's Ideal p 3

143. Ibid p 7. His italics.

of the product of their own labour, inevitably resulted in the impoverishment of that productive class whose produce they had appropriated. The very existence of the West End therefore of itself created the conditions of the East End, and it was pointless to talk, as philanthropists often did, of abolishing the one without the other.¹⁴⁴

But such a change in society could only result from a change in individual attitudes. If such a change occurred, "Society would begin to undergo a magical transformation". Schemes of reform, laboriously produced by Royal Commissions, would no longer be needed because the new ideal "would revolutionise the nation from within, and new forms would spring from it as naturally and infallibly as the systematic beauty of a plant springs from the simple and undivided seed,"¹⁴⁵

144. Ibid pp 8-10. The influence of Marx is obvious. In his reference to rent and dividends as the appropriation of the product of the labouring classes we have Marx's Surplus Value Theory, to which Carpenter admitted his indebtedness in a subsequent essay: "Modern Money-lending and the Meaning of Dividends - a Tract for the Wealthy" in England's Ideal (1887 edition) pp 23-44. He had first come across the theory in 1883 in H.M. Hyndman's England For All and, as he made clear in his autobiography, saw in Marx's economic analysis a practical explanation of the workings of the existing economic system. My Days and Dreams pp 114 ff.

145. England's Ideal pp 41-5.

For Carpenter such a change seems to have been the inevitable result of human evolution, and it was this argument which formed the theme of Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure. . . Civilisation as it then existed was but one stage in the evolution of mankind. Animals, having no self-consciousness, did not experience the sense of alienation, strife, disunity - the feeling of "loss of unity" - which was man's lot. But neither did they have any self-awareness, or freedom of thought or action. An animal operated on the level of instinct, unconsciously obeying "the law of its being". This was man's lot too until a point in his evolution, represented in his mythology by the Fall, when he first became aware of himself as a separate individual with his own feelings, desires, needs. In the story of Adam and Eve it was the point at which man partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that "the Fall" occurred. But it was necessary if man was to rise higher.¹⁴⁶

Man's hearkening back to a Golden Age, to a Garden of Eden, before the strife within his own nature began, resulted from his awareness of his own deeper self - the divine aspect of his nature, from which his mere mortal, physical self had somehow become separated by his desires and the pursuit of the gratification of his senses.¹⁴⁷ The pursuit

146. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure pp 42-5, and cf The Art of Creation Ch 4: "Three Stages of Consciousness", in which the same argument is developed, the growth of the human brain being argued to be the result of the process.

147. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure pp 27-32 and 49-50.

of man's individual material ends, bringing him into conflict with his fellows, led inevitably to the growth of governments and classes as the need for restraint became accepted. Civilisation was thus the product of the Fall. Based on property it resulted from man's attempt to find satisfaction in material possessions. But this pursuit of false ends merely led man to greater alienation from his fellows, and from his true self, and resulted not in fulfilment but emptiness and suffering.¹⁴⁸ Eventually, as man realised his error from bitter experience, he would at last listen to the promptings of his deeper self, and rediscover, now on the higher plane of self-consciousness, the unity he had lost.¹⁴⁹

It was this message, Christian in its essence, that was found in Towards Democracy, and no doubt accounted for its popularity amongst Socialist idealists. It was ex-

148. Ibid pp 46-53 "The institution of Government is in fact the evidence in social life that man has lost his inner and central control, and therefore must resort to an outward one." Ibid p 53.

149. Ibid pp 56-7

pressed also particularly clearly in the poem

After Long Ages, written in 1883-4, in which he argued the classic case for the way of dispossession as the only means of achieving a right relationship with material possessions. But, as he made clear, it was not asceticism for which he argued, it was not the denial of material possessions that he sought, but rather their right relationship to man :

"This is the order of Man and all History,
Descending he runs to and fro over the world, and dwells
(for a time) among things that have no sense.

Forgetful of his true self he becomes a self-seeker among
shadows.

But out of these spring only war and conflict and tangling
of roots and branches

.....

Till, bewildered and disgusted, finding no rest, no peace,
but everywhere only disappointment,

He returns (and History returns) seeking for that which is.

Toilsome and long is the journey; shell after shell, envelope
after envelope he discards.

.....

Then all those things which heave vainly tried to detain him -

When He comes who looks neither to the right nor the left for
any of them,

Not being deluded by them but rather threatening to pass by
and leave them all in their places just as they are. -

Then they rise up and follow him.

Though thorns and briars before, in his path they are now
become pleasant fruits and flowers,

(Not till he has pit them from him does he learn the love
that is in them)

Faithful for evermore are they his servants - and faithful
is he to them -

and this world is paradise."¹⁵⁰

The pursuit of the mere material stood as a barrier to man's realisation of his true self. Civilisation was in a sense a "disease". Taking the traditional religious equation of "health" with "wholeness" or "unity", Carpenter asked how could man rediscover that lost unity, and find that health in mind and body which modern, civilised man so clearly lacked? The property motive had acted on man, not only drawing him away from himself and his fellows, but also leading to the growth of urban industry and the life of the cities - an "artificial" and unhealthy existence reflected in the pallid complexion of the city dwellers cut off from nature and the natural healthy exercise of their bodies. There had, therefore, to be a return to a more natural way of life, a simplification of material wants resulting in a migration from industry back to agriculture and a restriction of technology to the satisfaction of human needs rather than the multiplication of wants. Under Carpenter's Socialism the norm was for each man to be given a cottage and enough land - $\frac{1}{2}$ acre for a family of 5 - to grow

150. Towards Democracy (1911 edition) pp 234-6

his own vegetables. His other needs could be supplied with his earnings from working in the communal workshop, or, if his talents lay elsewhere, in the school, design room, etc. Citing his own experience at Millfield, this practical idea formed the substance of Carpenter's message to Socialist groups up and down the country, adding yet another version of the Socialist ideal to the growing debate within British Socialism.¹⁵¹

The change that was necessary, according to Carpenter, in order to bring Socialism about, was primarily an internal change, a change in individual attitudes, rather than one in social structure. Change in the latter would result from, not cause, change in the former. The State, which had been necessitated only by the need to restrain individual aggressive and acquisitive instincts, would cease to be necessary when such a change came about. What would emerge would be a society based very much upon that mutual aid principle at which Kropotkin had arrived from a very different direction. Socialism would be essentially voluntary,

151. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure pp 58 ff and cf "The Simplification of Life" in England's Ideal (1887) pp 79-99, which was "A Paper to the Fellowship of the New Life" delivered in January 1886. One complementary aspect of his message in both the above was his plea for the consumption of less meat and more vegetables because meat stimulated nervous energy. He had himself become a vegetarian for this reason in the years 1879-1883 (not on moral grounds). See My Days and Dreams pp 100-1.

and work and other social activities would be carried out by voluntary associations, or guilds, as Morris had argued. An intermediate collectivist stage, as the means of effecting the transfer of industry from the Capitalists to common ownership, would probably be the first stage, but voluntary Socialism would be the end product. When asked to picture the change as he saw it occurring, this was Carpenter's answer, in pamphlets and articles stretching over most of his Socialist career, from his contribution to the collection of essays Forecasts of the Coming Century (ed. A.R. Wallace, 1897) to his own volume of articles, Towards Industrial Freedom (1917).¹⁵²

Carpenter's plea was primarily for "a complete change of Heart", "a new spirit of social and individual life".¹⁵³ Man had only to "think for a minute of his own inner nature" to see that "the only society which would ever really satisfy him would be one in which he was perfectly free, and yet bound by ties of deepest trust to the other members" and it was not hard to see that the condition for the existence of such a society was necessarily "that he should trust and care for his neighbour as well as himself."¹⁵⁴ It was this belief,

152. Non-Governmental Society (1911) republished as Chapter 5 of Towards Industrial Freedom, contains large passages taken word for word from his article "Transitions to Freedom" in ed A.R. Wallace Forecasts of the Coming Century (1897) pp 174-92.

153. E. Carpenter: Towards Industrial Freedom pp 49 and 15 Carpenter's italics.

154. ed: A.R. Wallace: op cit p 186 Carpenter's italics.

in the necessity of a "change of heart" which underlay much of the Socialist writings of the period, and which was fundamental to the thinking of a variety of religious and ethical groups.

(iii) Religious and Ethical Socialist Groups up to the First World War

One of the most interesting aspects of the Socialist Movement in Britain in its early years was the numerous small groups of idealists, who, basing their ideas on sources such as the ethical teaching of Jesus, or that of the American Transcendentalists, or Tolstoy, set out to realise in their own lives that spirit of brotherhood and equality which to them underlay the Socialist message. There were Thoreau Societies and Whitman Groups in the North;¹⁵⁵ as well as Labour and Brotherhood Churches;¹⁵⁶ there was even a "Society for the Recognition of the Brotherhood of Man", based in London at first, but soon with branches in the main provincial centres.¹⁵⁷

155. S. Winsten : op cit p 123.

156. See above Chapter I pp 89 ff.

157. Founded in April 1893, by July there were 11 branches outside London, in Ashton-under-lyme, Bristol, Birmingham, Darlington, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Southsea, Somerset, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Its membership included A.E. Fletcher (Editor of The New Age), Miss Colenso, J.C. Kenworthy, J.B. Wallace, John Trevor, and the Rev. John Glasse (the leading Edinburgh Christian Socialist). Editors of its organ, Fraternity, included Caroline Martyn and Frank Smith (formerly of the Salvation Army), and one of its later contributors was Katherine St John Conway. Fraternity February 1896 front cover; June 1896 pp 148-9, report of A.G.M.; June 1897 pp 76-7.

In addition there were various communitarian experiments on the land, both of a purely socialistic nature and others such as the Hollesley Bay Colony in Essex established by the Salvation Army¹⁵⁸ or the colony for the unemployed at Hollesley Bay in Essex set up by the Popular Guardians under Lansbury in 1904). But undoubtedly the chief developments in the field were the Fellowship of the New Life (1882-98), and the Tolstoyan movement of the 1890s and later; while in addition, and fulfilling a slightly different role, was the Humanitarian League, whose campaigns for more humane treatment of criminals, servicemen and animals, attracted the support of a wide spectrum of social reformers, including virtually all the early leading I.L.P.ers.

There was considerable overlapping of membership between these various bodies. J. C. Kenworthy, the leading Tolstoyan Anarchist, was pastor of the Croydon Brotherhood Church, a regular Labour Church lecturer, a member of Kropotkin's Freedom Group and, from 1894, a committee member of the F.N.L., Henry Salt, the founder of the Humanitarian League, had connections throughout the Socialist Movement. A friend of J.L. Joynes from their Eton days, he had married his sister, was a close friend of Edward Carpenter, and was an original member of both the F.N.L. and its offshoot the Fabian Society. Others followed a similar pattern, and on the demise of the F.N.L., leading adherents such as its founder W.J. Jupp, past secretary J.R.

158. But it is worth remembering that its chief advocate was Frank Smith the transfer of whose chief activities to the I.L.P. followed immediately upon its suppression by the Salvation Army hierarchy.

MacDonald and Percival Chubb, transferred their activities to the London Ethical Societies.

These various bodies, therefore, although individually distinct, can be seen to be part of a wider movement of social and ethical idealism, which characterises much of the Socialist world in the Britain of the late and immediately post-Victorian years. Their ideas permeated all the more strictly political Socialist organisations, as their leading advocates were called upon to address local branches of the S.D.F., I.L.P., and the Fabians. A brief glance at the weekly lists of meetings published in the Socialist press confirms this view. For example, in 1896-7 speakers at Bow and Bromley S.D.F. included the Rev. Stewart Headlam, the Rev. Percy Dearmer, and G.W.E. Russell, leading Anglican Christian Socialists; George Bernard Shaw, J.C. Kenworthy (who lectured on Tolstoy) and a lecture by Arthur Sherwell on Whitman.¹⁵⁹ The interest in Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau, Tolstoy, Carlyle, is strikingly illustrated by the lists of books recommended for Socialists, which appeared from time to time in the leading Socialist magazines of the day, and by the snippets of quotation from authors which adorned the pages of many a Socialist weekly. The Labour Annual, published by Joseph Edwards from 1895, with portraits and biographical sketches of such authors was but one amongst a whole range of such periodicals. The same could be

159. Reynolds News 19 January 1896, 17 May 1896, 14 February 1897, 14 March 1897, 2 May 1897, 23 May 1897.

seen in Clarion, Labour Leader, Reynolds News, and The New Age.

These developments were essentially a product of the changing religious attitudes of the late 19th Century. The appeal of such groups was primarily an ethical and idealistic one. The chief emphasis was upon the individual practice of one's ethical faith in everyday living. A society based on true brotherhood and equality could come about only as a result of a revolution in individual attitudes and personal relationships. Upon this belief all of these various groups were agreed. In conscious opposition to the more economic Socialism of the S.D.F. and the Socialist League, and later that of the Fabians, these ethical Socialists upheld their ideal. In Today Percival Chubb and Sidney Oliver each attacked "the scientific Socialist (so-called)" of the S.D.F. for ignoring the ethical aspect of the struggle.¹⁶⁰ Chubb's The Two Alternatives is a particularly clear statement of the ethicists' argument.

Whilst being firstly an attack on the "revolutionists' " view of Socialism from the standpoint of a "constitutionalist" believing in Parliamentary reform, Chubb's underlying arguments were based on the belief that without a fundamental change

160. P. Chubb: "The Two Alternatives" Today September 1887 p 71 and cf Oliver's arguments in Today August 1886 pp 47-55 and September 1886 pp 109-114 "Perverse Socialism".

of attitudes, the Socialist ideal was an impossibility. Although accepting the desirability of a revolution in property relationships, to Chubb such a transformation of the social system could result only from the conscious efforts of individuals acting in concert, convinced of the desirability of Socialism as an ideal. One therefore had to start with man. The revolutionary greatly underestimated the task facing him. Socialism could not result miraculously from economic collapse. The result of any such economic collapse would in fact depend upon the then current popular social attitudes. The change from the present preoccupation with "low mammonism and materialism" to the Socialist ideal would therefore be very slow and arduous.

It can be seen therefore that Chubb's gradualism was based upon his assessment of the length of time it would take fundamentally to change individual attitudes. For him, Parliamentary legislation was but a reflection of current opinion. An advance in Socialist opinion would find its immediate response in fresh legislation. The key to Socialist advance was therefore the education of the individuals social attitudes. It was necessary to appeal to man's "central moral and religious impulses". "Men are not deeply touched by economic considerations; they are touched in quite the wrong way by crude appeals to varied self-interest." It was therefore the ethical ideal of Socialism which its followers had to uphold. Marx and his associates might have provided the necessary technical

analysis of society, but the inspiration to Socialism lay deeper than economics. Socialism was in fact the outcome of a much wider "humanist movement" reflected in the ideals of writers such as Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Carlyle, Ruskin, Shelley, and the younger Swinburne, whose plea was against ugliness and drudgery, and for a society whose first aim was the free and full development of the potentialities, personalities, and abilities of its individual members.¹⁶¹

A similar viewpoint was held by the I.L.P. leadership, MacDonald especially, himself a leading figure in the F.N.L., whose chief objection to the Manchester School of economists was that they based their conclusions on a one-sided view of human nature, only recognising man's greed and selfishness and ignoring that other, equally important, side of man which was capable of love, aesthetic and other higher feelings. His ethical objections to laissez-faire were thus based on the same view of human nature as was Chubb's dislike of mere economic Socialism with its appeal more to man's sense of grievance than to his sense of brotherhood.¹⁶² But this ethical outlook could also lead to a decisive break with collectivism, as happened in the case of some Tolstoyans, who, having placed their hopes for human society on an individual change of

161. Ibid September 1887 pp 69-77

162. Seedtime January 1895 pp 4-6 J.R. MacDonald: "Economic Deficiencies (of the Manchester School)". And cf Ibid p 15 J.R. MacDonald's review of his friend J.A.Hobson's The Evolution of Modern Capitalism, in which he praises Hobson's ethical approach to economic problems. Hobson was also an F.N.L. member.

heart, which by its very nature could not be imposed from outside, resolutely opposed all forms of State intervention, even for socially ameliorative purposes, as being coercive and an infringement of individual freedom. This was roughly the position of J.C. Kenworthy, and it was expressed particularly clearly in a little magazine with the rather odd title of The Crank, a successor to the rather short-lived Tolstoyan in which State Socialism was seen as nothing less than slavery to officialdom.¹⁶³

What these different groups had in common was not a particular political solution to the problems of society. It was not their economic analysis of Capitalism which brought them together. Rather it was in their belief that the root cause of social wrongs lay in man's own personality, in his lower instincts of selfishness, pride and the desire to dominate that they found common ground. But believing, as they also did, in man's capacity for love, compassion, his innate sense of justice and truth, and his sense of beauty, they sought a remedy for social ills in the cultivation of

163. The Crank Vol 4 1906 pp 50-52 and Vol 2 1904 pp 164-6. Carrying the Civil Disobedience of a Thorean to its logical conclusions, he refused to serve on a coroner's jury in 1906 in case its verdict led to criminal proceedings, because "as one who believes it good to endeavour to extend goodwill to all men, I sincerely object to participate in work that has such an object for its efforts as punishing." The Crank January 1906 Vol 4 No 1 pp 1-2. Such naive but nevertheless total commitment to idealistic principles characterised much of the Tolstoyan movement.

"character", and sought, both by example and preaching, to appeal to those 'higher instincts' and to reawaken that sense of human fellowship which stood in direct opposition to modern business life.

In most cases the foundation of their faith in man was religious. Man contained within himself the seeds of divinity. He was capable of ultimate perfectability, which when it came would be both the Kingdom of God on earth, and the practical realisation of the Socialist ideal. They were in conscious opposition to the outworn evangelical outlook of their childhood memories, with its emphasis on man's innate sinfulness resulting in a pessimistic conviction of the inevitability of human suffering amid appalling social conditions. They rejected its message of hope for the converted few in a world beyond the grave in favour of the practical application of Christ's ethical teachings to modern life, believing that this way led to the social salvation of the many in this life.

Many of the leading figures in the movement reflected this transition of thought in their own lives: Carpenter's religious rejection of orthodoxy; W.J. Jupp's spiritual pilgrimage from Calvinism and the Congregational ministry to Unitarianism and the Ethical Movement; and the essentially similar route travelled by J.C. Kenworthy into his Croydon pastorate of the Brotherhood Church. MacDonald followed a similar path from strict Presbyterianism to a form of nature

mysticism, which constituted the basis of his political creed .¹⁶⁴ J.F. Oakeshott, MacDonald's successor as secretary of the F.N.L., came of Radical Nonconformist stock.¹⁶⁵ Amongst those whose activities spanned the F.N.L. and the Fabians, Sidney Olivier's father was an Anglican clergyman,¹⁶⁶ and E.R. Pease, for many years secretary of the Fabian Society, derived his ethical/religious outlook from his Quaker allegiance.¹⁶⁷

Even Henry Salt, who at first might appear to be exceptional in his involvement in the Rationalist Press Association and with G.W. Foote's Progress, can be seen in his writings to maintain the same basically ethical outlook, agnostic though he may be in regard to the existence of God and life after death. The son of an Anglican, he derived a great deal of his early social awareness from his tutor the Rev. Kegan Paul and, while he was at Cambridge, from F.D. Maurice whose services he attended every Sunday.¹⁶⁸

164. See above Chapter 4 pp 385 ff.

165. Labour Annual 1815 p 183

166. Ibid 1895 p 184

167. That a similar religious pedigree can be traced for nearly all the leading Fabians has been well established both by Willard Wolfe: From Radicalism to Socialism (1975) and by N. and J. Mackenzie: The First Fabians (1977) whose analysis of the ethical and religious basis of much of early Fabian social thinking is especially valuable.

168. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Among Savages pp 44-5 "we were drawn to him by the obvious impression which he gave of quiet sympathy and strength. At a time when the revolting doctrine of eternal punishment was still widely held, his humanising influence must have been very valuable within the church." Ibid p 45.

His devotion to Thoreau and the American tradition generally indicates sufficiently his place within that same current of thought. It was an outlook which united such traditional denominations as Quakers and Unitarians with the Brotherhood and Labour Churches on the fringes of Christianity, and which shaded into the teachings of Theosophy, the Ethical Societies (to which many Labour Churches in their later years affiliated), and even, in some cases, Spiritualism, with which Kenworthy, Hardie and (after his wife's death) even Blatchford sympathised.

The earliest major product of this intellectual outlook was the Fellowship of the New Life. This is usually described in passing merely as that body of rather "unpractical idealists" which gave way to the Fabian Society, and thereafter drifted into oblivion.¹⁶⁹ Or, alternatively, it is seen as a prime example of a "substitute faith" to which those whose old evangelical certainties had been destroyed by Darwinianism and Biblical Criticism clung in the decades spanning the late Victorian and Edwardian eras - a sort of halfway house in the

169. The reference is to Lord Elton: The Life of Ramsay MacDonald (1939) p. 61. Later writers have followed the same line of argument eg. A.M. McBrier: Fabian Socialism and English Politics 1884-1918 (1966) pp 1-3. For him its importance lies in that its over-Utopian and individualistic hope for the transformation of society through the perfecting of individual character led to a split off of the more practical and Socialist inclined members who "right from the start ... were rather sceptical of the practicability of its founder's methods." Ibid p 2.

transition from Christianity to a secular world outlook.¹⁷⁰

The evangelical background of its early leading advocates is adduced in support of this view; but the use of a value-loaded term such as "substitute faith" gives a misleading impression, implying that it was in some sense phoney, a substitute for "genuine" religious belief. The Socialist ethos of the 1890s was predominantly and genuinely religious while that of the 1930s was far less so. In the later period there was a falling off in such things as working class parents sending their children to Sunday School and a decline in Nonconformity, but only in rare cases was this due to any loss of faith on the part of those who had previously held it. The change occurred between different generations, not within one generation which slipped from faith to substitute, and finally to no faith at all. There is no evidence that any of those pioneers of the F.N.L. who are seen as such obvious examples of the beginning of the decline of the religious spirit gave up their "substitute faith" in later life. Indeed the autobiographical statements of such men as Ramsay MacDonald, W.J. Jupp, or Henry Salt (to take but three examples) suggest precisely the opposite. Rather, in later life they reaffirmed their earlier beliefs and deplored the fact that the younger generation of activists had lost sight of what they still regarded

170. For this argument see Willard Wolfe Op cit esp pp 13 ff and Chapter 5 "The Founding Fabians: The Ethical Road to Socialism and its Tributaries."

as the only possible foundation for a truly Socialist outlook.¹⁷¹

171. see eg. J.R. MacDonald's review of W.J. Jupp's Wayfarings in Socialist Review October - December 1918 p 320. "Those of us who have grown up with the Socialist movement, and the ethical movements which accompanied it, will read Wayfarings ... with special interest ... Mr Jupp was one of the small company who formed the little circle around Thomas Davidson the 'wandering scholar', from which the New Fellowship and the Fabian Society came, and in his pages he reminds us of the spiritual sources of the movement - Thoreau, Whitman, Edward Carpenter, Emerson; the love of nature, the revolution in science, the New Hegelianism". Throughout the 1920s he was a regular critic of what he saw as a growing creed of materialism in the I.L.P. see eg Forward 25 June 1927 p 8 J.R. MacDonald: The Creed of the I.L.P.: where he lamented that the "chapter in our Socialist faith ... which considers the artistic and spiritual life of man ... is not read so often as it used to be". The new creed which saw Socialism purely in terms of economic and material welfare was alien to his whole way of thinking. referring to this new materialism he says "that has not been the position of the I.L.P. and because it was not its position, it drew round it one of the finest bands of self-sacrificing and successful propagandists who ever preached a gospel. They believed in positive things; they had visions of a harmonious society; economics as the sole doctrine of Socialism was abhorrent to them; it was life they cared for, and life divorced from beauty and worship they believed could inspire nobody. Their attack upon Capitalism was not only because the present distribution of wealth was unjust, but because the present quality of life was inhuman. They knew that they could drive home their economic arguments best by ethical and aesthetic considerations. The discontent they sought to raise was not mundane, it was divine. The capture of economic citadels was only incidental to the possession of spiritual ones." And cf W.J. Jupp: Wayfarings: A Record of Adventure and Liberation in the Life of the Spirit (1918) esp his description of the F.N.L. in Chapter VII "Utopias and Illusions" which he clearly saw as the highspot of his life, and H.S. Salt: Company I Have Kept pp 70, 79.

In reality, the F.N.L. was the product of the genuinely religious spirit of the period.¹⁷² The Fellowship of the New Life emerged as a formally constituted body out of a series of informal meetings of a small group of like-minded friends held in one of their number's rooms in the winter of 1891-2. Its chief author was Percival Chubb, a former Anglican, who had come under the influence of Thomas Davidson, a type of modern mystic who spent much of his time in early 1882 in retreat at the Rosminian monastery in Domodossola,¹⁷³ Chubb had connections with a small group of middle class radicals drawn together by J.C. Foulger's Modern Thought who met for regular discussions and called themselves the Progressive Association, the object of which was to promote "the moral awakening which is itself the occasion for all political and social improvement"¹⁷⁴; its members included E.R. Pease and Frank Podmore, and its secretary was Havelock Ellis, later notorious as a writer on sex psychology,¹⁷⁵ who had been converted from orthodox Christianity to the creed of altruism by James Hinton.¹⁷⁶ Through Chubb,

172. N. and J. Mackenzie op cit pp 21-7 makes this point.

173. For Davidson see W. Knight Memorials of Thomas Davidson: The Wandering Scholar (1907).

174. Ibid p 21.

175. Among its speakers were William Morris and H.M. Hyndman see T.F. Eagleton Nature and Spirit: A Study of Edward Carpenter in his Intellectual Context (Cambridge PhD 1968) p 16.

176. N. and J. Mackenzie op cit p 21 W.J. Jupp Wayfarings pp 65-6 According to Jupp, Hinton's influence provoked a current "cult of Altruism" amongst early members of the Fellowship.

the members of the Progressive Association were brought into a wider circle which examined the possibility of founding a religious brotherhood devoted to a communal life of simplicity and service. Chubb's room-mate, William Clarke, a radical journalist and later a leading Fabian, was also attracted. In Cambridge in the early 1870s Clarke had been a friend of Herbert Burrows, whose own activities spanned the Fabians, the S.D.F., and Radical politics, and he was yet another of those whose politics cannot be separated from this mystical religious outlook.¹⁷⁷

177. See the introduction by Herbert Burrows to ed H. Burrows and J.A. Hobson: William Clarke: A collection of his writings with biographical sketch (1908) Burrows saw him as "essentially a religious man" whose religion in his later years "was that of Wordsworth, Emerson and Whitman". Originally an orthodox evangelical, at university he and Burrows "spent much of our earlier time together ... in ... mutual reconstruction". They founded a Unitarian Church in Cambridge together, but, finding Unitarianism as a creed too narrow, Clarke "rooted and grounded himself in Emerson", while Burrows only came to the same position after some years of agnosticism. According to Burrows, Clarke's comment on Emerson's religion stood for his (Clarke's) own views too: "His Soul is the Universal Soul, the Eternal Spirit that men have named God. That soul stands in living relation to our personality, its life overflows into our own. Or rather, it is our life, and without it we have no real life at all. We are organs of that Soul, and we only live in so far as we are. It is a Power making for righteousness, but it knows if we obey its laws. It works over our heads, indeed, but it also works in and through us, whether we resist or co-operate. Emerson enjoins sympathetic co-operation with a living, pure, rational purpose, and he may be said to find in that co-operation the whole duty of man ... " (Ibid pp xxviii - xxix).

In addition, there was Maurice Adams, a friend of Chubb's who had rejected traditional orthodoxy and begun attending W.J. Jupp's Free Christian and Unitarian Church in Croydon. Through him came Jupp himself,¹⁷⁸ who rapidly became the spiritual mentor of the group, which eventually reconstituted itself under the somewhat grandiose title of the Fellowship of the New Life. Its object was "the cultivation of a perfect character in each and all" and "the subordination of material things to spiritual things."¹⁷⁹ Jupp recalled that most of its early adherents were also strong sympathisers with the new Socialist movement which was emerging at the same time. "Some of them were active members of one or other of the societies engaged in Socialist propaganda, but they all felt the need for something more than the political and economic change for which these societies were contending. They saw that an inward and spiritual reform was not less important than drastic changes in outward and material conditions. For them, as they said, 'the first of all reforms was self-reform'. They dreamed it possible, by means of intimate association and comradeship, to realise at once, at least in part, their ideal of a communal life wherein the antagonism of personal ambition and self-seeking should have no place, the spirit of competition

178. W.J. Jupp Wayfarings p 63 described Adams as 5-6 years his younger, a kindred spirit and lifelong friend, who took great pleasure in walking alone and communing with nature. Jupp described their relationship as growing, over the years, "into a mystic communion of soul, deep and sacred as life itself".

179. Quoted in W.S. Smith The London Heretics 1870-1914 (1967) pp 134-5.

for material ownership being supplanted by that of emulation in service, and the well - being of all regarded as the honour and pride of each. They held it as a first principle of ethical idealism to order their conduct in such wise that, if all conduct were ordered thus, a true and justly regulated society would exist.¹⁸⁰

But there soon emerged a growing difference of opinion between those who placed their emphasis on "personal" reforms and others who, after some months of dispute, broke away to form the Fabian Society which was concerned primarily with "political" reforms. This split took place at a meeting on 4 January 1884. Thereafter, though with considerable overlapping of membership, the two societies went their separate ways, though, given the conscious indebtedness to the F.N.L. of such men as MacDonald (a future Prime Minister) or his friend J.A. Hobson (whose economic theories had great influence in Socialist and Radical circles in the early part of the 20th Century) it is not always obvious which body, the F.N.L. or the Fabians, played the greater part in shaping Socialist thought. For the necessity of "a change of heart" has remained one of the tenets of the English Socialist tradition.

The Fellowship of the New Life was never a large organisation, its membership varying from 95 in 1893 (including

180. W.J. Jupp op cit pp 83-4 the early members included Edward Carpenter, Henry Salt, H.H. Champion, Hubert Bland and Frederick Keddell, which latter 3 were chief instigators of the Fabian split. See N. and J. Mackenzie op cit pp 25-7.

15 recruits that year) to 115 in 1896. Its magazine, Seedtime, however, attracted such writers as Salt, Havelock Ellis, Carpenter, MacDonald, J.F. Oakeshott (a member of the Fabian EC), Corrie Grant (later a Liberal M.P.) and Herbert Rix (assistant secretary of the Royal Society), and had a circulation of some 700-800 copies per issue.¹⁸¹ The Fellowship remained a small body of activists, very like the Fabians in their early years. It did make one attempt at communal living - at a house in 29 Doughty Street, where MacDonald lived for a year in 1891-2 in company with Sidney Olivier, a female anarchist, a Russian lady and her daughter, and Edith Lees, upon whose marriage to Havelock Ellis, MacDonald took over the secretaryship. As a result of personal tensions, however, the experiment was not a success.¹⁸²

For its members, the F.N.L. fulfilled one very important function. Writing in Seedtime on its 10th anniversary, MacDonald, its then secretary, stated his conviction that in its emphasis on individual moral reform, and its concern for ethics, the Fellowship had provided a home for those for whom the old creeds and dogmas had become meaningless. They could unite instead "in a common mental attitude; an effort towards a common goal." Ethics freed from Christian dogma, religion freed from theology and rooted instead once again in the experience of the individual would become the new foundation for mankind's future progress. Believing in "the ethical factor in social evolution"¹⁸³ - that

181. Seedtime July 1893, October 1892, July 1896.

182. G. Elton op cit p 65.

183. Seedtime October 1892 pp 1-3 J.R. MacDonald: "The New Fellowship".

social progress depended upon an enlarging of man's ethical consciousness - members of the Fellowship turned their attention to education, through which they hoped to instill ideals of co-operation and service in place of the competitive spirit engendered by the examination system. This initial impetus led towards the founding of Abbotsholme by Dr Cecil Reddie, one of the Fellowship's members; with Bedales, to which MacDonald later sent his son, Malcolm, following soon afterwards. In the religious practice at Bedales the ethical emphasis was seen particularly clearly. Sunday morning Church attendance was voluntary, and most boys chose to go for walks or write letters instead. But in the evening the school gathered for a service run very much on Ethical Society or Labour Church lines. There were hymns, readings and an address on a topic relating to their common life, but these were not of the orthodox Christian variety: "Nothing doctrinal, however, beyond the mereist Theism, is taught or implied - the sole aim apparently being to excite to noble feeling and to clean, honest and manly living."¹⁸⁴ It was, in fact, yet another manifestation of the ethical religion so prevalent at this time.

The Tolstoyan movement to some extent shared the same tradition. The Tolstoyan, the short-lived organ of the London Tolstoyan Society (November 1902-June 1903), ran a

184. Seedtime October 1896 pp 9-11 E.D. Girdlestone: "A Nursery for Citizens and a Paradise for Boys". And cf C. Reddie's views on education in To-Day October 1888 pp 114-20, November 1888 pp 140-8, December 1888 pp 171-8, January 1889 pp 9-15, February 1889 pp 48-52.

series of "Flashes of Light" featuring Thoreau, Emerson and Carlyle; and another series on Christian Mystics including George Fox and Swedenborg.¹⁸⁵ But as the name implies, the main inspiration of the movement came from the writings of Tolstoy, whose ideas grew popular within the religious anarchist wing of the English Socialist movement from the early 1890s.

The special impetus behind this development came from J.C. Kenworthy, a former nonconformist businessman whose own conversion to Christian Anarchism had led him to sever his business connections and devote his efforts instead to the work of the Brotherhood Church, firstly, under J. Bruce Wallace in the East End and later as pastor of his own church in Croydon. Kenworthy was another of those whose original evangelical Christianity had slowly given way to a belief in the primacy of Jesus's ethical teachings coupled with an interest in mysticism. His interest aroused by Henry George's Land Campaigns, he came to Socialism in the 1880s via Ruskin and Carlyle, and, as with so many others, his chief concern was with a moral revulsion against "mammonism" - the business practice he had himself experienced from the inside - and with what he saw as the urgent need to replace it with a commercial practice based, as Ruskin had demanded, on applied Christian ethics. To Kenworthy it was impossible to reconcile current business attitudes

185. The Tolstoyan November 1902-June 1903. Its editor F.E. Worland was a particular devotee of Emerson - see e.g. F.E. Worland: "Emerson" in Crank October 1905 pp 296-303.

and Christianity. Men who were perfectly honest in their private lives and social dealings, applied totally contrary criteria in their business relations. To him this was especially noticeable in the use to which legal contracts were put. The morality of business practice seemed quite irrelevant to businessmen as long as what they were doing was technically within the law. Laws intended for the protection of the weak were used for precisely the opposite end. In particular, a legalistic insistence on monetary payment of debts seemed to him to cut across the very meaning of Christ's words: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive those who are indebted to us". Human relationships could not be reduced to cash terms. For Kenworthy the only solution was the complete overthrow of existing practice. "That prayer, truly made, is for the abolition of all laws and powers of coercion by which debts are secured and collected."¹⁸⁶

On reading William Morris he had been struck by the writer's emphasis on fellowship. In Kropotkin he had discovered a similar view to his own with regard to Law and Government. But it was in

186. J.C. Kenworthy: Tolstoy: His Life and Works (1902) pp 213-4 Kenworthy's wording of the Lord's Prayer and his italics. This was apparently in 1888 for in Saint George (the journal of the Ruskin Society, Birmingham) Vol No 1 pp 202-7 J.C. Kenworthy "Purleigh Colony" wrote that in that year he realised that "Forgive us our debts" had to be taken literally, so he became an Anarchist.

the writings of Tolstoy that he discovered not only a political outlook similar to his own, but also the same understanding of Jesus's ethical teachings and the practical consequences of their application to society. On what turned out to be his last business trip to America in the winter of 1890-1, he began reading Tolstoy for the first time. In My Religion, What is to be done, and the Kreuzer Sonata he discovered "a mind working on my own lines but in advance, with a wider and maturer discussion."¹⁸⁷ It decided him upon his next immediate course of action. He gave up his career and went to live at Mansfield House, immersing himself in the work of the settlement.¹⁸⁸ Resulting from his experiences there he wrote The Anatomy of Misery (1893) and From Bondage to Brotherhood (1894) which marked the start of his advocacy of a Christian Anarchist solution to the social problem.

In these books, the outline of his thinking became clear. With Tolstoy, he believed "that mankind is the creation of a God who is Love, and that love and service to one another are the only relations in which man can exist happily."¹⁸⁹ The replacement of the existing commercial system by a society based upon the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount would in truth be the creation of the Kingdom of God on Earth, but at present,

187. J.C. Kenworthy: Tolstoy: His Life and Works pp 12-13

188. W.H.G. Armytage: Heavens Below (1961) Chapter: "Tolstoyan Communities" has a good description of Kenworthy's activities at this time.

189. J.C. Kenworthy: Tolstoy: His Life and Works pp 28-9

the existence of Governments and an industrial organisation resting on force and compulsion rather than individual freedom and consent prevented just such a development of loving and serving relations between men. For "entire freedom of action for all" was "the only possible condition" in which such relationships could exist. Without "perfect freedom" there could never be "perfect morality",¹⁹⁰ for if the Kingdom of God were truly 'Within You' - if by man's very nature it were possible for him to discover that love and truth were the only satisfying motives for action - then the existence of a State based on force could only hinder the coming about of the realisation by man of his true nature.¹⁹¹

It was this belief that man could only come to a realisation of his own true self in a society in which all compulsions were removed that underlay Kenworthy's own writings. The Anatomy of Misery was a plea for the reform of individual opinion and conduct in opposition to the collective solution to social ills through compulsory State intervention, albeit with the weight of majority opinion behind it. All forms of compulsory taxation were unnecessary and indeed immoral, since those services which were genuinely desired by people (such as Trade Unions, Churches etc) were paid for voluntarily by the people themselves. State Education "so-called" was particularly attacked for the dangers of regimentation implicit in it; and in opposition to an extension of the sphere of State activity, the co-operative ideal,

190. Ibid pp 120-1

191. Ibid p 164.

because of its voluntary nature, was upheld as the surer way of social progress.¹⁹²

From Bondage to Brotherhood made the same points more forcefully. The task facing mankind was to "end the reign of Selfishness and bring about the reign of Love."¹⁹³

"Scientific" Socialists who looked to a tinkering with society as if it were a mere machine as the means of bringing about their ideals, had failed to appreciate that "what we really have to do, before we can produce the least change for the better in the machinery of society, is to create a new spirit in men, Social Democrats ... with their precise cast-iron economic theory ... batter the intelligences of men whose consciences need resurrecting."¹⁹⁴ Socialists had in the first instance to make such an appeal by their own example in living according to the principles they preached.

Again it was the voluntary nature of all such activity which was stressed. In a detailed analysis of what was actually involved in the practical application of the principles of the Sermon on the Mount this aspect predominated, in such acts as non-resistance to evil and love towards enemies, or his insistence on abstention from the use of the law to enforce

192. The second edition of The Anatomy of Misery makes this viewpoint even more explicit, containing an appendix in which Kenworthy echoes Kropotkin's call for a Bill to abolish all existing laws relating to debt and contract, and the creation of a co-operative system of production based on social ownership. op cit pp 101-4.

193. J.C. Kenworthy: From Bondage to Brotherhood (1894) p 66.

194. Ibid p 67. His italics.

judgement and punishment on others.¹⁹⁵ The State had to be abolished and a voluntary society based on "Brotherhood" take its place.¹⁹⁶ Again there was the ideal of co-operative production based on common ownership. But now it was thought likely to be through the Trade Unions - voluntary organisations whose members already called each other "brother" - that the change would come, perhaps as the result of a seemingly apocalyptic General Strike, "when the people learn the power of united passive resistance to oppression" and "the meek shall inherit the earth, and the poor shall receive the Kingdom of Heaven."¹⁹⁷ But if such was the ultimate hope, the immediate way forward remained the spreading by personal example of "the new spirit", by "framing and executing plans of business organisation", and by "reducing principles and preaching to complete practice in our deeds."¹⁹⁸

In the case of Kenworthy himself and his immediate followers, the practice of their beliefs led to the foundation of the earliest of the Tolstoyan Colonies at Purleigh, Essex (1897-9) which grew out of the Croydon Brotherhood Church. The naive enthusiasm of these colonists often has to be encountered to be believed. One such colonist, E. Ames, writing in the Tolstoyan about the Leeds Brotherhood Workshop, which owed its inspiration directly to the ideas of Kenworthy, provides

195. Ibid pp 105-6

196. Ibid pp 123-8

197. Ibid p 135

198. Ibid p 137

a typical example of this frame of mind.

At first, the Leeds Brotherhood Workshop was an attempt to run a small engineering workshop, owned by one of their number, D.B. Foster,¹⁹⁹ on free communistic lines. Each man did the work he was most suited to, and drew freely on "the common cash box". It was an attempt to practice "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs". There was a weekly business meeting at which decisions had to be arrived at unanimously, it having been decided at the start that the business would proceed on the basis of common consent alone.²⁰⁰ At first the system worked reasonably well, but there was soon a split between those whose ideal was basically that of a profit-sharing co-operative workshop, and those who wished to have absolutely no truck with the external commercial system. Four of these more absolutist members therefore broke away, two going to the Purleigh Colony, two to another at Whiteway, to see for themselves how the colonists there organised themselves. Their chief discovery was that in each the use of money had been completely abolished. According to Ames this proved the crucial turning-point. "It was not so much a solution

199. For Foster's connection with the experiment see Labour Annual 1898 p 198.

200. Another colony, Clousden Hill Farm, set up largely under the influence of Kropotkin and Morris, encountered the obvious difficulty with this practice "one member frequently blocking the business". See Reynolds News 31 October 1897 p 1 and cf Ibid 17 October 1897 p 1.

as a complete clearing away of all the troubles.

Here was an end to all complicity in buying and selling and the mechanical relations it involved ..."

the four idealists therefore accepted the invitation of a sympathiser to settle for a while at Blackburn where they continued their old work, offering their services freely according to "need" and being duly taken advantage of. Finally they decided that the only way to avoid contamination from the outside world was to live a life of total self-sufficiency.

By now numbering twelve, the group moved to Purleigh the earlier colony having since collapsed, and embarked on their new life away from the "artificialities of town life" in an environment where they could attain a truer "spiritual relation to life". Using the colony as a base, they travelled around the area "without provision" rather like the original Christians, spreading their ideas and offering their services freely, and relying on hospitality for food and shelter. At the time of writing the article, however, they had suffered a severe setback to their ideals in the form of £150 Poor Law Relief, necessitated by a period of three months imposed quarantine, resultant upon their having caught smallpox from a tramp to whom they had shown hospitality. For the colonists, only one solution to the problem was consistent with their ideals. "After having, in a moment

of weakness, accepted their assistance, we saw the inconsistency of receiving support through officials out of compulsory taxation. The only way out of the compromise was to acknowledge the expenditure as a debt and hold ourselves responsible for it."²⁰¹

This was fairly typical of the outlook of these communities. The first act of the Whiteway colonists on gaining ownership of their land was to burn the title deeds. Their pure "communism" extended to the free lending of their tools to any who asked for them. Writing on the colony, in the not unaptly titled magazine The Crank²⁰², J.C. Kenworthy seemed genuinely surprised that "People came from the neighbouring villages, and asked for hoes and spades, taking them away and rarely bringing them back." Their open hospitality was likewise taken advantage of. "In the autumn, when the crops were in, many people came to stay or dropped in at meal times. In the winter the visitors dropped off, and the colonists tightened their hunger-belts and lived upon the green potatoes their guests could not eat." Not surprisingly after such experiences, the Whiteway colonists decided to parcel out their land in individual plots and gave up putting their produce in a common stock. They had become, in the words of one reviewer, like "a cleansing agent" which was "made dull and used up in its work".²⁰³ Other colonists met

201. Tolstoyan No 6 April 1903 pp 217-25 E.Ames : "The Brotherhood Church"

202. The Crank was the successor to Tolstoyan and was also edited by F.E. Worland.

203. Crank June 1904 pp 15-18. J.C. Kenworthy took a similarly idealistic line in his article in Saint George (The journal of the Ruskin Society Birmingham) Vol 1 No 4 pp 202-7 "The Purleigh Colony"

similar experiences.

However, naive though they often were, they were not without influence on the wider Socialist movement.

H.T. Muggeridge, an active I.L.P.er and later a Labour M.P., as a member of the Brotherhood Church, was one of those who had contact with the Tolstoyan colonists.²⁰⁴

Indeed, in Croydon between the late 1890s and the First World War it must have been hard to avoid it. The Clousden Hill Farm colony, set up with the encouragement of Kropotkin and Morris and not purely Tolstoyan, had a somewhat longer life (1893-7) than most attracting such guests as the Glasiers, Tom Mann, H.W. Nevinson and Harry Snell, and receiving regular coverage in the Clarion and Freedom.²⁰⁵ I.L.P.-ers in particular seem to have been susceptible to the appeal of the colonial experiment. D.B. Foster of Leeds Brotherhood Workshop, himself a businessman and Wesleyan local preacher, was a leading figure in the local I.L.P. and Labour Church. S.V. Bracher, who had advanced the money for Whiteway, later became a leading journalist on the Daily Herald and produced that paper's biographical sketches of Labour M.P.s in the 1920s.²⁰⁶ Others too, were sympathetic. Hardie referred to Kenworthy's work in his appeal for the admission of Anarchists to the 1896 Socialist

204. see a hostile account by his son Malcolm Muggeridge: The Green Stick (1972) esp pp 39 ff.

205. W.H.G. Armytage Op cit pp 312-5 and also Freedom March 1896 p 69.

206. Ibid pp 35 ff.

International Conference.²⁰⁷ Thus although naive
and not perhaps very large in terms of total membership²⁰⁸
the movement was not without its importance in the development
of Socialist thinking in England. As with other types of
Libertarian thought, Tolstoyan Anarchism was primarily a
further corrective to collectivism in its emphasis upon
the essentially voluntary nature of the Socialist ideal.
At no time would a Tolstoyan countenance compulsion or the
use of force. And the spread of this principle, founded in
the Tolstoyan case on a religious belief, proved a powerful
factor in the later growth of religious pacifism amongst many
Socialists at the time of the First World War.

Tolstoy's own works in particular found a regular place
amongst lists of reading material for Socialists. Popular
editions of many of the smaller pamphlets and short stories were
made available by the Free Age Press, the successor to the
Brotherhood Press, set up originally by J.C. Kenworthy, to
whom Tolstoy had given his English publishing rights after
reading The Anatomy of Misery, which had greatly impressed
him. His short stories, many of which were later collected

207. See above p 196. Kenworthy dedicated the 2nd edition of
The Anatomy of Misery (1900 Clarion Press) "to my friend
KeirHardie, whose conduct in and out of Parliament, known
to me these eight years, persuades me that we partake of
the one spirit and are largely united in our aims."

208. The Labour Annual lists 7 colonies in 1897, 8 in 1899 and
6 in 1900. Most had no more than a handful of members.
Labour Annual 1897, p 154; 1899 p 115; 1900 p 115; about half
of these were specifically Tolstoyan, but the rest were not
notably very different. Their history was also fairly uni-
form, and a tendency to speedy collapse as a result of in-
ternal dissensions.

under the title Twenty-Three Tales, seen to have appeared often as encouraged reading, and through them, with their simple moral message, the religious idealism of love of neighbour and human brotherhood was further disseminated.²⁰⁹ Some of Tolstoy's works were serialised in the Socialist press, New Age carried several such works, and Resurrection received its first ever publication in Clarion²¹⁰

Although the Humanitarian League, (1891-December 1919) was not strictly a Socialist organisation, it drew largely upon the support of Socialists influenced by the ethical idealism of the time. This was particularly noticeable in the case of its chief instigator and for 24 years secretary, Henry Salt. Himself a member of the F.N.L. and the Fabians, Salt's conception of Socialism owed much to the influence of such English libertarian thinkers as Godwin and Shelley and also to the American Simple Life advocate, Thoreau.²¹¹ He had been

209. See eg the advertisement of the Brotherhood Press on the back cover of J.C. Kenworthy The World's Last Passage: A Story (1896) and The Free Age Press adverts in eg New Age 28 April 1901 p 760 and 22 May 1902 p 327.

210. The New Age carried eg Tolstoy's The Root of the Evil (21 February 1901 - 28 March 1901), extracts from his letters (18 April 1901) Forty Years (5 December 1901-6 January 1901) To the Working People (30 October 1902-4 December 1902). Resurrection was serialised in the Clarion (25 March 1899-3 March 1900) as was his Life and Teachings of Jesus - The Lord's Prayer (8 August-19 September 1896) and Thou Shalt Not Kill (22 September 1900)

211. Amongst his many publications are an edition of Godwin's Political Justice (1890), and biographies of Shelley (1888) and Thoreau (1890). He was also particularly interested in the poetry of such other radical freethinkers as James Thomson, Richard Jeffries and the Socialist poets Francis Adams and John Barlas, producing biographies and editions of their works. See H. S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages pp 83 ff and Company I Have Kept pp 72-80.

introduced to the ideas of the two former by the Rev. C. Kegan Paul, a friend of F.D. Maurice, and a biographer of Godwin, who had prepared him for Eton. Thoreau he read much later, at the suggestion of W.J. Jupp, shortly after joining the F.N.L.; the impact of Walden, he later recalled, being "an epoch, a revelation", especially in regard to Thoreau's doctrine of "humaneness" and "goodness" as life's motive force.²¹²

Born in 1851, Salt came from a comfortable background, and passed through the not unusual experience of Eton, followed by King's College Cambridge. Then he was offered a teaching post at his old school, to which he returned in 1875 for 9 years, finally leaving, at the end of 1884 on account of his Socialism, and in support of his friend, J.L. Joynes.²¹³ His ideas had been moving in the direction of both Socialism and Freethought from an early age. The Christian Socialists, F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley, were regular visitors at the Rev. Kegan Paul's vicarage and, while he learnt from Kegan Paul that it was reasonable to have doubts, Maurice - who took a special interest in him at Cambridge and whose church he regularly attended - appealed to him because of his "humansing influence" and rejection of "the revolting doctrine of eternal punishment."²¹⁴ Although

212. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Among Savages pp 76-87. The Humanitarian League later proclaimed its indebtedness to Thoreau by organising a Thoreau Centenary Meeting in Caxton Hall. See Humanity August 1917 p 47.

213. See above p 194 n 14. To celebrate his resignation he and Joynes rowed down the Thames to Oxford, visiting Morris at Kelmscott House. S. Winsten : Salt and His Circle p 49. He and Joynes had been at Eton together (where the latter's father was a master) and at King's, before returning to Eton to teach. Salt later married J.L. Joynes' sister, Kate.

214. S. Winsten: op cit p 23 H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages p 45.

Salt himself came to hold an agnostic position concerning life after death, and moved away from Christianity, many of his underlying philosophical convictions, such as his continual emphasis on "Love" and his belief in the kinship of man and all creation, showed the strong influence of the Platonism of these early Christian Socialists.²¹⁵

He had discussed Socialism with Joynes both at Cambridge and after, but, as he recalled it, it was on a walking trip in the Lake District with W.H. Riley (a disciple of Ruskin and leading member in the latter's co-operative farming experiment at St George's Farm, near Sheffield) that he was first fully struck by the Socialist ideal of Society. He came to know all the leaders of the Socialist movement in London, but it was to the F.N.L. and later the Fabian Society that he turned, attracted by their moral emphases, and agreement with his own growing commitment to the ideal of a

215. See eg his conclusion about the future of mankind in H.S. Salt op cit pp 224-6, or his criticism of Jeffries for his view of nature as alien to man, and his rejection of an evolutionary purpose in the Universe. Salt preferred Wordsworth's view of nature. Today June 1888 pp 163-8 H.S. Salt "The Story of a Heart". The same can be seen in the conclusion of The Heart of Socialism (1928) p 62 where he cites in support of his own views the lines of the Tolstoyan Ernest Crosby (a member of the League):-

"No-one could tell me where my soul might be.

I searched for God but God eluded me.

I sought my brother out and found all three."

natural simple life. He had by now become a vegetarian and on leaving Eton took a small cottage in the Surrey countryside where he could grow much of his own food.²¹⁶ In much of this his activities paralleled those of Edward Carpenter, who became a close friend of Salt and more particularly of his wife, Kate whose lesbianism seems to have found an especially sympathetic response in Carpenter's own homosexuality.²¹⁷ Salt's next few years were concerned mainly with writing books and articles on such figures as Godwin, Shelley, and Thoreau, which appeared at regular intervals from the late 1880s. In their composition and through his contacts with the Socialist movement his own views became clarified, bringing him, after conversations with friends and sympathisers, to form the Humanitarian League in 1891. The object of the League was to uphold those ideals of humaneness to which Salt, in company with many others, had become deeply committed.

In his Socialist writings, Salt was always careful to stress both the libertarian aspects of the Socialist ideal, and its ethical basis. His articles in To-Day on Godwin and Jeffries, for example, were a conscious attempt to draw attention to ideas which he thought of great importance to Socialists. Thus he noted Jeffries' belief that technological developments and increasing production

216. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages pp 73-6

217. S. Rowbotham and J. Weeks: op cit pp 97-8.

would not lead to human happiness or self-fulfilment; in fact only a fraction of the work now done was really necessary. The direction of human evolution should rather be towards moral perfectibility,²¹⁸ a point on which Jeffries and Godwin were agreed. It was Godwin's conviction of the possibility of man's moral perfectibility which Salt stressed in his writings on the latter. Godwin believed that the way forward was through man's intellectual enlightenment, and education should seek the free development of the intellect rather than any imposition of received "truths". As men became wiser, so they would become more just - an argument akin to Plato's that all wrongdoing was the result of ignorance. The ownership of private property, leading as it did to the subservience of the many to the few, and consequently to the restriction of opportunities for self-development to a few at the expense of the many, was clearly unjust and to be replaced by common ownership. But violence and coercion, the weapons of the property owners, could have no place in a reformation aimed at ending oppression. It had to be voluntary, and since truth must ultimately prevail, if men were taught to think for themselves, the evils of the existing system would become apparent to them and would cease to be tolerated.²¹⁹

Despite obvious similarities with both the Tolstoyans and Morris, Salt's own views were more those of the Parliamentary

218. To-Day June 1888 pp 163-8. H.S. Salt "The Story of a Heart".

219. To-Day July 1887 pp 13-23. H.S. Salt "William Godwin".

reformer than of the Anarchist. But in his commitment to the Humanitarian League's policy of disseminating knowledge of cruel practices, whether against animals or men, in the belief that public moral outrage would lead to their eventual abolition, he clearly followed Godwin in his faith in education as the chief weapon of the reformer. His own deeply-held belief in the underlying ethical nature of the Socialist ideal he reiterated towards the end of his life in his I.L.P. pamphlet The Heart of Socialism (1928). For him "the spirit of Socialism is something much more than an economic or political doctrine. It is a great moral and humanitarian force."²²⁰ In its economic policy, Socialism sought only the abolition of the private ownership of capital, the means by which men have power over their fellows, not the confiscation of all private possessions, as many opponents would have it. Socialism sought therefore the enhancement of individual freedom, not its suppression, for freedom could not be separated from economic equality. But equally, in a democratic society, freedom could not be imposed from without; it could only grow from within. What was needed was "a change of heart", and the rate of progress towards the Socialist ideal was dependent upon just such a growth in man's ethical awareness. "To the growing sense of brotherhood... must we look for an escape from the terrible tangle in which

220. H.S. Salt The Heart of Socialism pp 21-2.

our social system has become involved by a long course of self-seeking; and without this change of heart neither religion, nor science, nor statesmanship, will avail to liberate us from our bondage."²²¹

The Humanitarian League was founded on the belief of Salt and others that such a change of heart must affect all aspects of life. Inhumanity and lack of love or compassion, in whatever sphere of man's relationships, whether in his dealings with animals or his fellows, if allowed to pass unchallenged, would inevitably brutalise man in all his relations. Thus for many supporters of the League, such causes as penal reform, the abolition of blood-sports, vivisection and all forms of corporal and capital punishment, and even the replacement of meat-eating - which was, after all, the killing of animals merely in order to eat them - were all based on a common ethical and humane standard.²²² Not surprisingly therefore, many of those connected with the Humanitarian League were those to whom the prime appeal of Socialism was its ethical principles. Amongst leaders of the Labour movement, Salt singled out as especially closely connected with the League, Hardie, MacDonald, Clynes, Glasier, and Lansbury.²²³

221. Ibid pp 61-2

222. See eg. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages pp 243-4

223. Ibid p 216. Hardie chaired the 1895 Conference of the League and asked various Parliamentary questions relating to corporal punishment and the provision of facilities for beagling in the Navy out of public funds. For reports of this see Humanity July 1902 p 33, January 1903 p 85, May 1906, p 37, June 1906 p 45, July 1903 pp 133-4.

In addition there were prominent figures of the F.N.L. and Ethical movements such as W.J. Jupp, Sydney Olivier, J.A. Hobson and Stanton Coit; Brotherhood Church leaders such as J.B. Wallace and J.C. Kenworthy; Christian Socialists such as the Revs. John Clifford, A.L. Lilley and Conrad Noel; well-known radicals such as G.W. Foote, Herbert Spencer and Professor Francis Newman; journalists such as A.E. Fletcher, H.E. Massingham and H.W. Nevinson; literary figures such as George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, W.M. Rossetti and Laurence Houseman; and a substantial number of leading figures in the I.L.P. whose Socialism epitomised this ethical tradition, including many of its leading women such as Caroline Martyn, Margaret MacMillan, Enid Stacy and Katherine Bruce Glasier; finally there were many other leading Socialists with an ethical outlook, including George Bernard Shaw, Edward Carpenter, Annie Besant and Herbert Burrows (both Theosophists), May Morris, Robert Blatchford, the Countess of Warwick (who joined the Humanitarian League in 1904 to end the murderous "feather fashion" amongst ladies of society) and E.B. Bax, a rare supporter from the S.D.F., whose leader, Hyndman, wrote the League off as "faddist".²²⁴

224. Hyndman's views, and indeed those of the bulk of the S.D.F. membership were, on a number of issues, the antithesis of the Humanitarian League's version of Socialism. He was a firm believer in capital punishment on utilitarian grounds and regarded the heyday of Socialist vegetarianism as the "bread and roots period" being convinced that it was vegetarianism that caused the early death of J.L. Joynes and others. H.M. Hyndman: Record of an Adventurous Life pp 53-4, 85 and 306.
Names from lists in Humanitarian League Annual Reports 1896-1912, and Humanity 1895-1919.

Apart from members of the S.D.F., the other noticeable absentees were those Labour M.P.s of a more traditional, nonconformist, evangelical outlook. Those who believed in the Old Testament emphasis on the maintenance of Righteousness and on judgement and the punishment of evil-doers; in the Commandments and in "an eye for an eye ... " rather than a blanket appeal to forgiveness and love regardless of the offence, regarded the League's activities askance. The Commons debate on the clauses of the 1913 Criminal Amendment Bill relating to the use of corporal punishment resulted, for example, in Snowden and Henderson voting with those in favour of corporal punishment, but with Lansbury and the bulk of I.L.P.ers against it.²²⁵

To some extent, the appeal of the League was to sentimentality. Thus Stanton Coit argued in the pages of The Ethical World against meat-eating on the grounds that a proper regard for and love of cows as individuals would make one too sad at their deaths to countenance eating them.²²⁶ The same sentiment was shared by John Kenworthy.²²⁷ Although there were more factual publications dealing with such matters as slaughter-house conditions, there were also many others like Salt's own little book on animals he had known: The Story of My Cousins; while the Rev Conrad Noel's Autobiography expressed a not altogether orthodox Christian belief in the

225. Humanity March 1913 p 117.

226. Ethical World 7 May 1898, quoted in H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages. Coit lectured to various Ethical Societies on the subject. See eg. Humanity October 1895 p 57.

227. In ed H.S. Salt: The New Charter (1896) - reprints of lectures to the League pp 1-24, J.C. Kenworthy: "The Humanitarian View: Social Conditions and the Treatment of Animals."

immortal souls of animals he had known.²²⁸

Vegetarianism was, another major part of the League's message, which was spread abroad through its Humane Diet Department, of which Tolstoy was an honorary member and contributed a pamphlet. Gandhi attributed his own conversion to vegetarianism to Henry Salt and the League,²²⁹ and there were for many years weekly teas held by the League at a London vegetarian restaurant, where many of the leading figures in the movement, such as Shaw, Carpenter, Olivier and while he was in London, Gandhi could be found.²³⁰

The League made little progress in its campaign for the Rights of Animals, but in other areas it met with some notable success. After a ten year campaign, the pack of Royal Buckhounds was dispersed in 1901; naval floggings were abolished after a series of exposures of the gory details and the trivial nature of the offences for which trainees could be caned and birched; and there were other successes with regard to beagling, aided no doubt by such satirical ventures as the Brutalitarian, whose single issue as "a Journal for the Sane and Strong" aroused some amused comment in the press, or The Beagler Boy whose 2 issues in 1907, produced by "two old Etonians" with the professed aim of "saving a gallant school sport

228. Conrad Noel: An Autobiography (1945) p 20.

229. H.S. Salt: Company I Have Kept p 138.

230. Ibid p 137.

from extinction" received the enthusiastic support of not only Sporting Life and Horse and Hound, but also of The British Medical Journal which thought that its readers "would be glad to have their attention directed to the new sporting organ."²³¹

On a more serious note, members and sympathisers were kept informed of the various campaigns in the League's two journals, Humanity, (a monthly March 1895-January 1919), and the Humane Review (a quarterly April 1900-April 1910), both edited throughout by Salt. By these means, the League did much both in the eradication of many cruel practices and in increasing the awareness of the Socialist movement about the humanitarian aspects of their creed. In this latter, its appeal to an ethical view held widely amongst Socialists of the time was of paramount importance, for it served as a reminder that the coming of a humane society ultimately depended upon the willingness of individuals to work to that end in all aspects of life.

231. H.S. Salt: Seventy Years Amongst Savages pp 174-6.

CHAPTER 4: THE SPREAD OF WORKING CLASS SOCIALISM: THE CLARION
AND THE I.L.P.

i) Introductory: The propagandist effort

The early 1890s, which saw the birth of the Independent Labour Party (1893), the beginning of the Labour Church, and the first issues of Blatchford's Clarion, marked a new departure in British Socialism. For the first time there was a serious attempt to secure the election of working-class representatives on municipal bodies and in Parliament, committed to Socialism. Of the Socialist organisations founded in the 1880s only the S.D.F. had contested elections, but it was unable to attract widespread support outside London, and such parts of Lancashire as Burnley and Oldham. British Socialism in its earlier years had been made up largely of small bodies, often centred around one or two notable leading figures, such as William Morris with his Socialist League, and later Hammersmith Socialist Society, or Kropotkin with his Freedom Group. Such leaders tended to be middle class, with a university education, (the S.D.F., with Hyndman, Bax and Aveling being no exceptions) and most of these organisations were London-based, or originated there.

The new movement of the 1890s was different in two respects. Firstly it was centred on the industrial North of England. Secondly, few of its leaders - in its earlier years at any rate - could be described as anything other than working-class, though they clearly belonged to that section of the working classes

known as the aristocracy of Labour, as was the case of the four men who came to dominate the leadership of the I.L.P for so many years, Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald, Bruce Glasier and Philip Snowden.¹

The early history of the I.L.P. is well known². It was formally constituted at its first conference, at Bradford in January 1893, when it adopted a constitution with a definite Socialist object and a strongly ethical flavour:

"The object of the Socialist Movement is the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth.

By Socialist Commonwealth is meant a state of society in which the struggle and competition for individual gain will give place to co-operation for the collective good, and the highest well-being of each will be realised in the highest well-being of all.

To this end the private appropriation of the means of labour and production, which results in the undeserved enrichment of the few and in the undeserved poverty, overwork, and waste of life for the many, will give place to the collective ownership and use of land and capital, in order that the public services and the general industry and provision of wealth may be carried on by the State, municipalities, and industrial associations, for the common and, as far as possible, the equal welfare and happiness of all."³

1. Hardie (1856-1915) who spent 16 years down the mines of Lanarkshire, before becoming a union official, was born and grew up in a one-roomed colliers' cottage, starting his first job, as an errand boy, aged 7. MacDonald, (1866-1937) and Snowden (1864-1937) both owed it to their parents (in the former his Mother a farmworker; in the latter his father an old Radical and Chartist factory hand) that they remained at school long enough to become pupil teachers, MacDonald thereby securing jobs such as assistant to a Bristol vicar and later secretary to Thomas Lough a future Liberal M.P. before embarking on a perilous existence as a journalist and Socialist lecturer, Snowden becoming a clerk in the Civil Service until a spine injury in 1897 forced his premature retirement. Glasier (1859-1920) grew up on an Ayrshire farm before becoming articled to a Glasgow Architect. See K.O. Morgan: Kier Hardie: Radical and Socialist (1975) pp 4 ff; D. Marquand: Ramsay MacDonald (1977) pp 1 ff; P. Snowden: An Autobiography (2 Vols 1934) I pp 37 ff; L. Thompson: The Enthusiasts (1977) pp 19 ff.
2. The best account remains Henry Pelling: The Origins of the Labour Party 1800-1900 (2nd Edition 1975) esp. Chapters VI and VIII.
3. quoted in J. Bruce Glasier: The Meaning of Socialism (1919) pp 223-4.

There had been a growing demand for an independent working-class party from the late 1880s, resulting particularly from the conspicuous failure both of the Liberal Party in Parliament to take up social reform and of local Liberal Associations to select trades unionists as candidates even in predominantly working class constituencies. In Scotland, this had already led to the Lanarkshire miners putting up Keir Hardie in opposition to the official Liberal candidate in the mid-Lanark By-Election of 1888, and to the foundation of the Scottish Labour Party later that year under the leadership of Hardie, Shaw Maxwell and R.B. Cunninghame-Graham, the aristocratic Socialist M.P. In England a similar impulse had resulted in several independent Socialist organisations in the north, in Bradford, Newcastle and the Colne Valley, and in Manchester where the Manchester and Salford Independent Labour Party was set up in May 1892 on the initiative of John Trevor of the Labour Church and Robert Blatchford, who became its first president.⁴ H.H. Champion's Labour Elector (1888-1894), as its title suggests, provided further impetus to the new departure. Champion, a former artillery officer, had, as treasurer of the S.D.F. been responsible for the 'Tory Gold' scandal of the 1885 General Election. In 1887 he had turned his attentions to the Labour Electoral

4. See eg. J. Burgess in The Clarion: 22 October 1909 p 5. Blatchford and Trevor met soon after the latter came to Manchester in 1890 and became firm friends. Blatchford spoke at the second meeting of Trevor's Labour Church (11 October 1891 - it opened on 4 October), contributed regularly in the early days of Labour Prophet, praising its work in his own publications, and securing Trevor to write articles for the Clarion on the Labour Church. The meeting to form the Manchester and Salford Independent Party was held in the Clarion offices after Trevor had appealed for support for the undertaking at the Manchester May Day demonstration that year. See L. Thompson: Robert Blatchford: Portrait of an Englishman (1951) pp 76 ff.

Association, which had resulted from the T.U.C. Conference of 1886, but the Lib-Lab leadership of the T.U.C. secured his exclusion in 1888. As a result, he too became an active advocate of an independent organisation, and his paper came to provide a voice for the leaders of the New Unionism which emerged from the London Dock Strike of 1889, Mann and Tillett both writing for it.

The immediate cause of the formation of the I.L.P. as a national party, was the initiative of Joseph Burgess, editor of the Workman's Times, who in April 1892 invited those of his readers who were willing to participate in the formation of their own branch of an independent Labour Party, to send in their names, and he would publish them and put them in touch with each other as a means of starting the branches.⁵ By September over 2,000 names had been received and a number of branches had been founded. In September 1892 at the annual T.U.C. Conference, Hardie chaired a meeting of the opponents of the official Lib-Lab line, to set up an arrangements committee to organise a conference to found the new party, and on January 13-14 1893 the first national conference of the Independent Labour Party was held in Bradford, 120 delegates being present. As Pelling has shown, their places of origin provide a good indication of the geographical strengths and weaknesses of the new movement. Apart from 11 delegates from London and representatives

5. Burgess wrote his own version of events leading to the formation of the I.L.P. in a series of weekly articles in The Clarion (10 September 1909-14 January 1910) which provide many of the details alluded to above.

from Plymouth and Chatham, Wales and Ireland and Southern England were without representation. Over one third of the delegates came from the woollen producing area of Yorkshire alone. Much the same picture emerges from the 1895 I.L.P. Directory, which lists over 300 branches, of which 100 were in Yorkshire, over 70 in Lancashire and Cheshire, over 40 in Scotland, (mainly around Glasgow) and 30 in the London area, the remaining 60 being mainly in the north-east and midlands, with Wales, Ireland and Southern and Eastern England virtually unrepresented.⁶

At the formation of the L.C.C. in 1889 the Labour and Socialist Movements within London had become effectively carved up between the S.D.F. on the one hand and on the other the Progressive Alliance which provided an electoral organisation at municipal level for most remaining radicals and moderate Socialists.⁷ It was not until the years immediately preceding the

6. H. Pelling: op cit esp pp 109,117,163.

7. It is significant in this context that Frank Smith, future Labour M.P. (1929) and the I.L.P. candidate for Sheffield Attercliffe in 1894 and a close friend and confidante of Hardie, who had rooms in his house, secured his own election to the L.C.C. as a Progressive in 1898 provoking considerable abuse from A.M. Thompson ("Dangle") Blatchford's right-hand man, in 2 articles in The Clarion "exposing" his Liberal links and demanding how he could have been put forward at Sheffield as "Independent Labour" candidate. See Clarion 30 April 1898 p 137 and 11 June 1898 pp 188-9 the latter entitled "Frank Smith and the Tainted Progressives."

the 1906 Election that the I.L.P. began to make any real inroads in the capital. Even after then, London Labour politics retained their largely secular and more overtly class-conscious flavour. Elsewhere, however, the I.L.P. prospered, to become the largest mass Socialist organisation thus far in Britain, affiliating to the newly-formed Labour Representation Committee on the basis of 13,000 individual members in 1901, and providing from its own members 15 of the 29 Labour victors in 1906. With successive increases in Labour representation, the I.L.P. contingent also increased, (with the exception of 1918 when the "pacifist" leaders of the I.L.P. all met defeat) to 147 out of 288 in 1929.⁸ In sheer numerical terms, then, it was the I.L.P., and the movements and publications associated with it, which provided the political education of most of the Parliamentary Socialists in Britain at least until 1931. The I.L.P. contribution to British Socialism is therefore of prime importance.

8. The membership of the I.L.P. likewise continued to grow, reaching a new peak of 30,000 in 1918; 46,000 in 1920, and at its highest, 56,000 in 1925, before the Maxton split with the Labour Party which destroyed it. Figures from the Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 35 (1962) pp 62-74: A. B. Marwick: "The I.L.P. in the 1920s" esp pp 63 n6, 64 n1 and p 72. Pelling op cit Appendix A p 229 puts the actual annual fee-paying membership of the I.L.P. in the years up to 1911 at a maximum of 10,720 (1895) and a minimum of 5,145 (1901). For those Labour M.P.s who were members of the I.L.P. see Labour Leader 19 January 1906 p 507 and 26 January 1906 p 519. Only 7 of these were sponsored solely by I.L.P. branches, the others being elected under Trades Union sponsorship. A similar proportion applies to later figures. For 1929 see L. Thompson: The Enthusiasts (1971) p 236 and H. Pelling: A Short History of the Labour Party (1972) p 64. In 1929 only 36 had been sponsored by I.L.P. branches.

It is no simple matter to determine the precise nature of I.L.P. Socialism, for two chief reasons. Firstly because there is no one set creed which can be presented as "I.L.P. Socialism", rather, there are several distinct strands of thought each widely advocated by one or more of the leading propagandists of the I.L.P. Secondly, the I.L.P. did not develop in a vacuum. Inseparably connected with its organisational growth was the pioneering work of the Clarion Vans, Cycling Clubs, the Clarion Fellowship, and the Labour Churches, the latter providing a clear religious Socialist atmosphere, while amongst the chief reading material of its supporters was the Clarion the clearly-preferred choice of the membership who seem to have shared Glasier's view that Hardie's Labour Leader was dreary "rubbish"⁹ Whereas it is impossible to discover amongst the recollections of Labour M.P.s and pioneers one single reference to the Labour Leader as an important influence on the development of their Socialist ideas, there are numerous references to Clarion,¹⁰ A comparison of the two chief periodicals' relative circulation figures tells the same story. At the end of 1904, the time at which Labour Leader passed from Hardie's ownership to the I.L.P., its circulation

9. Letter c. 1902 quoted in L. Thompson op cit p 138

10. G.N. Barnes and J.L. Clynes looking back in the 1920s on their youth both stressed the importance of Clarion in their early political development seeing it primarily as the weekly source of colour and enthusiasm in an otherwise drab industrial working-class world. Clarion 19 December 1921 p 11 G.N. Barnes "Labour and the Clarion"; Ibid December 1928 p 15; J.R. Clynes "Looking Backwards". Among those who acknowledged their indebtedness were J.S. Middleton, General Secretary of the Labour Party and Robert Williams, General Manager of the Daily Herald. (Clarion December 1927 p 19; December 1928 p 5).

of 13,000 compared with the Clarion's 52,000, and, although the fortunes of the Labour Leader improved under Glasier's editorship, to 43,000 in 1909, this was still little more than half that of Clarion for the nearest comparable date (May 1908) when its circulation was fluctuating between 80-90 thousand copies per week.¹¹ Indeed from its first issue of 40,000 copies in January 1891, at no time did Clarion's circulation fall below an average of 34,000 and after 1895 over 40,000 copies per week.¹²

Blatchford's influence is shown too in the success of his four most popular books. Merrie England (1896) published in a cheap 1^d edition, easily the most widely read of any Socialist work in Britain, sold 750,000 copies in a matter of weeks, sales eventually exceeding 1,500,000.¹³ Britain for the British (1902) sold over 250,000, and God and My Neighbour (1903) and Nöt Guilty: A Defence of the Bottom Dog (1906) each sold over 150,000.¹⁴ No other Socialist author could claim such a demand for his works. By comparison, the circulation of the Socialist and Anarchist periodicals of the 1880s and early 1890s,

11. Figures for Labour Leader in L. Thompson op cit p 155. According to Glasier it stood at between 8-10,000 in 1904. Ibid p 138. Clarion regularly published its circulation in the pre-war years. see eg Clarion 1 January 1904 p 1, 1 May 1908 p 1, 8 May 1908 p 1.
12. A.N. Lyons: Robert Blatchford (1910) pp 96-7. The increase in the mid-1890s followed the publication of Merrie England.
13. Clarion 29 April 1927 p 7. L. Thompson: op cit p 33 says 2,000,000 but this probably included sales in the U.S.A. See A.N. Lyons op cit p 97.
14. Clarion 29 April 1927 p 7.

many of which were short-lived and none of which - not even Commonweal or Justice - were ever even remotely financially viable, seems almost insignificant, reaching at most a few thousand supporters, and usually far less.¹⁵

But if Blatchford proved the staple reading for the growing working class movement, it was a small group of well-known Socialist orators who could draw the crowds, and as Pelling rightly points out, it was their efforts not least which created the grass-roots branches of the new party.¹⁶ In lectures to Labour and Working Men's Clubs, to I.L.P. branches and Labour Churches, and, after its formation in 1900, to local meetings of the Clarion Fellowship¹⁷ and on pioneering

15. See above esp p 99 n 199

16. H.Pelling: Origins of the Labour Party pp 155-6

17. The Clarion Fellowship came about at the suggestion of the Rev. Cartmel-Robinson, a regular correspondent of Clarion and member of its board, that there should be opportunities for Clarion readers to meet regardless of strict party affiliations at social gatherings. As a result on 6 October 1900 the first meeting, a dinner in London, attracted 330 Clarionettes to hear 7 speakers including Cartmel Robinson, Blatchford and Will Crooke. The provinces followed rapidly, Sheffield, Birmingham and Manchester being the first, followed rapidly in December by a further 9, (3 in Yorkshire, 5 in Lancashire and Nottingham); 11 in January (with the exception of Derby and Leicester and Dundee, the remainder being again in the industrial north); 12 in February including 5 more in Scotland, Shrewsbury and 2 in South Wales, leading to the calling of a conference to organise the fellowship on a national basis in April at Bakewell. The dinners themselves attracted large numbers. In December at Bradford over 200 listened to Margaret MacMillan and F.W. Jowett, and the next day there were 2 public meetings held in the Labour Church Hall at which Councillor E. Hartley and Gertrude Tuckwell (niece of Sir Francis Dilke) spoke. That same month there were 200 at Nottingham, 504 at Liverpool and 230 at York, where the speakers included Snowden, Glasier and Hardie, and the following day there were again 2 public meetings. It was the first time Blatchford had heard Snowden, and he found his oratory "impressive." Clarion 1 September 1900 p 329, 10 November 1900 p 360, 24 November 1900 p 377, 8 December 1900 p 392, 22 December 1900 p 405; 30 March 1901 p 100 and 13 April 1901 p 117 and see L. Thompson op cit pp 158 ff. J. R. Clynes and J.S. Middleton future General Secretary of the Labour Party were amongst others actively involved in the provinces.

forays into uncharted areas on the summer Clarion Van tours which became a major annual commitment for the propagandists; after 1896, a relatively small number of enthusiasts spread the Socialist gospel.

The reports of tours of the Clarion Vans provide perhaps one of the more interesting insights into Socialist propaganda methods in the years up to the War. The first van tour, from 13 June to 26 September 1896, lasted 15 weeks with at least one meeting every night and more at weekends covering an area from Chester through Cheshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland, finishing up in Hartlepool. Julia Dawson, a member of the Clarion staff who led the tour reported afterwards that copies of Merrie England, Looking Backwards and the Clarion, as well as Fabian, Clarion and Land Nationalisation leaflets, were "given away by the thousand" in addition to the many sold;¹⁸ the balance sheet for the 1898 tours published in Clarion refers to the sale of 89½ dozen Looking Backwards, 12 dozen Merrie England, together with hundreds of copies of pamphlets, while "the amount given away from the van could scarcely be estimated."¹⁹ In 1897 with, for the first time, 2 vans in operation (a new horse-drawn van having been specially built by subscription as a memorial to the well-known Socialist propagandist Caroline Martyn who had died in Dundee in 1896 at the age of 29) a

18. Labour Annual 1897 pp 184-5 Julia Dawson: "Clarion Women's Van "

19. Clarion 19 November 1895 p 376. Clarion Van Balance Sheet. Their italics

tour from Bristol of Gloucestershire, Monmouth and South Wales was undertaken. The first meeting, in Bristol, attracted a crowd of over 2,000 and 1,000 copies of Merrie England were sold in 2 days.²⁰ It was, no doubt, continuing efforts on this scale which account for the circulation figures of Clarion and some of Blatchford's books.

Glasier's succession to the chairmanship of the I.L.P. in 1900 in place of Hardie, resulted in somewhat closer links between the I.L.P. and the Clarion, and from 1900 onwards leading members of the I.L.P.'s National Administrative Council could be found taking part in the Van Tours. Glasier himself spent one month with the van in Scotland that year, while Ramsay MacDonald and his wife lectured from it for a week.²¹

20. Labour Annual 1898 pp 86-7 Julia Dawson "Clarion Van". The other van was used for the base of a Girls' Camp in the countryside near Stockport, for children from the Manchester slums.

21. Clarion 5 May 1900 p 38. For the week spent in the Van by J.R. and Mrs MacDonald Ibid 8 August 1900 p 262. Efforts were not always rewarded with success. Glasier reported 1,000 people at the Glasgow meeting in 1900, but at Johnstone although 500 turned up the only questioner was a Freethinker "who wanted to object to anybody but Freethinkers entering the earthly paradise," while at Beith "not a solitary ... man ventured to speak to us, or look as if he distinguished us from common street vagabonds." They sold 1/3d worth of literature and collected 1/7d in Beith, while at Steventon, a town situated near to Noebel's Explosive Works arrival coincided with celebrations marking the relief of Mafeking. "A few dozen" working men came to hear them speak but "a local capitalist, however, in a deplorable state of intoxication thought fit to intervene with the charitable object of preventing said working men from being led astray by our false and alluring doctrine. Three times he charged our platform with his stick, very nearly dividing it in twain with one of his blows. On making his fourth assault, he unluckily for himself got into conflict with a working man, who tackled the bully vigorously, so that the latter went home a sadder and less presentable and, I hope, a wiser man. Thereafter our meeting proceeded in profound quiet and good order." Reports by J.B. Glasier Ibid 19 May 1900 p 154, 26 May 1900 p 162, 2 June 1900 p 170.

In 1901 the I.L.P.'s N.A.C. sent the Clarion a message of thanks and goodwill for the success of the vans that year, and further messages of goodwill (and some donations) came in from other leading sympathisers including the Countess of Warwick, G.J. Holyoake, Walter Crane, Hubert Bland, Professor A.R. Wallace, J. Morrison Davidson, Stanton Coit and a number of clergy including the Revs. John Clifford, S. Barnett, Stewart Headlam, Henry Scott Holland, Percy Dearmer, James Adderley, and J. Cartmell Robinson. Richard Bell M.P. sent his best wishes as did John Burns who hoped for "the success they deserve in spreading the light."²² In that year Stanton Coit spent 2 weeks with one van in North East England and Hardie spoke from the other in Old and New Cumnock, his home in Lanarkshire. Others who later worked with the vans included Will Crooks, Phillip Snowden, G.N. Barnes and the Rev. R.J. Campbell.²³

The Clarion Vans, then, were an important part of the Socialist propaganda effort from the late 1890s to the First World War. Through the tours, not only was Socialism spread to parts of the country where it had scarcely been heard of before, but also, as with the Clarion Fellowship, I.L.P.ers, Fabians and S.D.F.ers were often drawn together in the common effort of advertising and organising for the van's meetings.²⁴ As a result of the vanners' efforts, members of the lapsed I.L.P. branch at Cronhouse, Ayr, promised better things to Glasier during the 1900 tour, telling him their recollections of past days when their enthusiasm had been stirred by such speakers as Katherine St John Conway, Caroline Martyn and Keir Hardie²⁵; new branches of the I.L.P. were formed²⁶ and old ones revived.

22. Ibid 11 May 1901 pp 145-6 and 18 May 1901 p160.

23. On the 1907 tour of South Wales, MacDonald was again on the tour. Ibid 26 July 1907 p 6

24. A point Julia Dawson noted in her report of the first van tour. Labour Annual 1897 pp 184-5

25. Clarion 2 June 1900 p 170

26. Labour Annual 1897 pp 184-5.304 *

But even more important for the development of the movement in its earlier years were the regular advertised meetings of the I.L.P. branches, and of the Labour Churches to which the leading propagandists of Socialism went round, in many cases on a full-time basis, during the rest of the year. In this way the names of such itinerant propagandists as the aforementioned Caroline Martyn and Katherine St John Conway became household names in the Socialist Movement, and their efforts contributed substantially to the growth of the I.L.P. Others included Enid Stacy, Conrad Noel, J.R. MacDonald, Hardie, Snowden and Glasier and their experiences are quite instructive. Philip Snowden, for example, began lecturing full-time for the I.L.P. in January 1896, eking out a living from the average 30/- per week that he received on average in lecturing fees, until his election to Parliament in 1906.²⁷ Caroline Martyn, in June 1894 staying with Joseph Burgess in Manchester because she was due to speak there at the Labour Church on the Sunday night wrote home " I am engaged tonight, three times on Sunday, and every evening next week except Friday, and then I am engaged up to the end of September."²⁸ This sort of pace was normal, as the recollections of Conrad Noel of his own travelling a few years later testify,²⁹ and as late as June-September 1921, Katherine Bruce Glasier gave 78 lectures to I.L.P. branches in 3 months.³⁰ Such activities inevitably took their toll on the health of the lecturers. Hardie had to be sent on a cruise

27. C. Cross : Philip Snowden (1966) p 5 and P. Snowden: An Autobiography I p 79

28. Lena Wallis: Life and Letters of Caroline Martyn (1898) p 42.

29. C. Noel: An Autobiography (1945) pp 48-56, 77, 81-2.

30. L. Thompson: The Enthusiasts p 233

for his health after a breakdown in 1907, and both Enid Stacy and Caroline Martyn died young in the midst of their propagandist activities. The incessant travelling, lack of sleep and often appalling accommodation with which they were met made such breakdowns inevitable. Low fees made hotel accommodation impossible, and the abject poverty of their hosts ensured that the hospitality that was available was often very poor. Caroline Martyn said of her Scottish tour in the Spring of 1895 "The Labour movement is principally confined to the poorer classes - few middle-class people would invite a Socialist lecturer into their homes - and often I sleep in the same room as the Mother and some of the children, and occasionally in the same bed, the Father having turned out for me - or rather I do not sleep for I cannot."³¹

Often, on Sundays, the meetings in many of the industrial towns of the north were organised by the Labour Churches.³² Their importance in the early development of the I.L.P. has been questioned by K.S. Inglis³³ largely on the grounds that, as they received no mention in the reminiscences of the early I.L.P. leaders - all of whom spoke at meetings under their auspices - they were regarded as little more than a convenient

31. Lena Wallis op cit p 46. Bruce Glasier's diaries provide a similar view of his own lecturing experiences in the period 1900-10 with the unhealthy, overcrowded housing conditions of many of his hosts again in the forefront.

32. See above p 91

33. K.S. Inglis: Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (1963) p 243

way of holding I.L.P. meetings on Sundays without incurring the wrath of Sabbattarians. But such an argument would be equally dismissive of the Clarion Van Tours and of Hardie's Labour Leader since they do not receive a single mention in the autobiographical reflections of the early leadership either. Indeed, as we have noted, the Labour Church formed a distinct element in the religious world of the late 19th Century, and owed at least as much to powerful currents of religious thought among the skilled working class as they did merely to the wish of the I.L.P. stalwarts to hold Sunday meetings of the Party in disguise.

The links between the Labour Churches and the I.L.P. in the years before the First World War were very close. That this resulted in many cases in a virtual identity of the two bodies is undeniable, especially as the N.A.C. of the I.L.P. in August 1894 had urged local branches "wherever practicable" to "run a Sunday meeting on Labour Church lines."³⁴ But this was hardly surprising given the many links between the early members of the N.A.C. and the Labour Churches. The most obvious case of this is Fred Brocklehurst, General Secretary of the Labour Church Union (January 1893–November 1895), elected to the N.A.C. at the February Conference of the I.L.P., becoming its Financial Secretary a year later. Of the other early leaders another, F.W. Jowett (I.L.P. chairman 1909–11), was President of

34. Quoted in the Rev D.F. Summers op cit p 159, from Labour Prophet September 1894 p 129.

the Bradford Labour Church, which he had helped to set up in disgust at the support of local Nonconformist clergymen for the Liberal Candidate in East Bradford in the General Election of 1892, against Ben Tillet the Independent Labour candidate, and also a keen advocate of the Labour Church Movement.³⁵ Also in 1892 Joseph Burgess, whose initiative had helped create the I.L.P., was involved with W.H. Paul Campbell and Margaret MacMillan in forming a short-lived Labour Church in East London.³⁶ Hardie opened the Dundee Labour Church;³⁷ Snowden was an active member of the Keighley Labour Church in 1895 until his duties as an I.L.P. lecturer called him away; Tom Mann, the first organising Secretary of the I.L.P. who retained his links with the Churches until well after the War, opened a number of new churches; while the list of Labour Church lecturers produced as an Appendix to the Rev. D.F. Summers' thesis includes many others of the more familiar names in the Socialist movement of the time.³⁸ In 1895 G.J. Wardle served on the committee of the Labour Church Union;³⁹ and the Rev. J. H. Belcher, founder of the Plymouth I.L.P. and a member of the N.A.C. for several years up to 1912 had served as President

35. The Bradford Labour Church under Jowett's chairmanship played host to an audience of 5,000 including most of the members of the newly elected N.A.C. at a service held on Sunday 15 January 1893 to mark the founding conference of the I.L.P. which was taking place that weekend at Bradford. Labour Prophet February 1893 p 16 Tillet, a popular speaker at Labour Church meetings had told Trevor when he came to address an early meeting of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church that he had been hoping for just such a religious development among the working classes for the previous two years. Ibid February 1892 p 18.

36. Ibid March 1892 p 17, June 1892 p 48.

37. Ibid November 1892 p 7.

38. Rev. D.F. Summers: op cit Appendix Volume pp 510-21. It includes in addition over 60 such figures as W.C. Anderson, Margaret Bradfield, Pete Guran, Victor Grayson "But for ... (whom) ... many of the churches would be penniless." Ibid p 514 quoted from Birmingham delegates' report of 1909 L.C.U. Conference.

39. Labour Prophet December 1895 p 188.

and in 1905 Treasurer of the Labour Church Union.⁴⁰

Such close links brought with them the obvious danger that the activities of the local Labour Churches would become increasingly subordinated to the needs of the political side of the movement, at the cost of the loss of their own individual identity (a danger made greater by the lack of any real unifying organisation or trained pastorate amongst the Labour Churches). And in many of the Labour Churches such was obviously the case. Trevor himself was well aware of the dangers and urged Labour Churches to maintain their distinctive role and separate organisation. "The Labour Churches are in danger of considering the I.L.P. to be their only sphere of operations" he warned. They were unnecessarily restricting their influence if they neglected the "vast mass of advanced religious thought at present outside the political party."⁴¹

40. Labour Leader 1 March.1912 p 142 obituary; and cf Ibid 10 March 1905 p 588:Report of Labour Church Annual Conference, for his election as Treasurer. Belcher, who was proud to call himself a "Pantheist" had hoped to become a Presbyterian minister, but his increasingly liberal outlook led him instead to become a Congregationalist minister, and then, after 8 years absence from the pulpit, minister of the Unitarian Church in Plymouth.

41. Labour Prophet Editorial July 1895 p 104.

At Bolton, the local I.L.P., which had earlier responded to the N.A.C.'s request for local branches to hold Sunday meetings "on Labour Church lines", later decided to discontinue them. The result was the establishment of a Labour Church run independently of the I.L.P. by a few stalwarts led by their Chairman, James Sims, who as President of the L.C.U. after 1896 devoted much of his efforts to securing the independence of the Labour Churches from I.L.P. dominance.⁴²

The rapid rate at which new Labour Churches appeared and disappeared suggests that the Bolton experience may not have been untypical.⁴³

42. Ibid April 1898 p 171 for details of the Bolton Labour Church and cf K.S. Inglis: 'The Labour Church Movement' in International Review of Social History 3 (1958) p 458 for Sims' later attitudes. In Leeds, on the other hand, the Labour Prophet complained of the aloofness of the local I.L.P. whose membership would have nothing to do with the Labour Church, and entertained "dark suggestions about the term 'religion'". Ibid October 1895 p 146. And See Above p 91 n 182.

43. cf Rev D.F. Summers op cit Appendix Vol p 311.

ii) Socialism as Altruism, an Agnostic Approach.

The existence of the Labour Churches testifies to the strong belief amongst British Socialists that their Socialist faith was essentially a matter of religion, an attitude that was by no means confined only to Christians or even Theists, although most of the leading propagandists fell into one or other of these 2 categories. Agnostics used the term freely too, as in the case of E.B.Bax, the leading theorist of the S.D.F.⁴⁴ Robert Blatchford, another agnostic, saw Socialism as essentially a matter of Altruism, and proclaimed it as The New Religion (the titles of 2 pamphlets he published in 1898).⁴⁵ Bruce Glasier, whose own agnostic Socialism was heavily indebted to Morris' emphasis on fellowship and service, collaborated with his wife, Katherine St John Conway, to produce another pamphlet entitled The Religion of Socialism: Two Aspects (1895), and he reaffirmed the same viewpoint at the end of his life in The Meaning of Socialism (1919).

44. In 1887 he published a volume of his essays entitled: The Religion of Socialism.

45. Reprinted from his article of the same name in Clarion, 18 April 1896, p. 124, and 25 April 1896, p.133.

For both Blatchford and Glasier, the Socialist hope was based upon an instinctive sense of brotherhood and fellowship among men. Hence their attacks on what they both believed to be the dangerous doctrines of the economic Socialists of the S.D.F. whose emphasis on the class war and appeal to sentiments of selfishness and greed amongst the working classes could never form the basis of a Socialist society. As Blatchford insisted "even supposing it possible for a mob of selfish individuals to carry the position of the classes, what could it avail? Could that mob of selfish men and women be formed into an unselfish community of Socialists?"

The answer was obvious. Without the social "sentiment of human love, Socialism could not last." "Reduced to a mechanical system of cold justice and economic organisation, it would be almost as hateful, and much less endurable than the anarchy which now prevails." A Socialism deprived of the motivating force of altruism would be as unsatisfying to the human spirit as the society it replaced. It would be a mere "substitution of collective ownership for the private ownership now in vogue. That kind of Socialism will never win the love or rouse the enthusiasm of the people. That sort of Socialism is not worth fighting for. I for one would not waste an hour or lift a hand in the service of such a bloodless, soulless, inhuman

creed."⁴⁶ Based on a similar belief is Glasier's distinction of 2 types of Socialism, the one, represented by Hyndman and the S.D.F., a "half-Socialism" making only a "temporary and conditional appeal, and that not to the higher social but to the more groundling and selfish instincts of the race"; the other to which he was first attracted as a young man by William Morris "true, universally and for ever".⁴⁷

Blatchford, looking back over the great measures of social reform of the past century - the Factory Acts, the Lifeboat Movement, advances in hospital care and a growing concern against cruelty towards animals and children evidenced by the emergence of the S.P.C.A. and S.P.C.C., saw the common motive force behind them as the sentiment of "Altruism" which was "fast becoming the most powerful impulse in social

46. Clarion, 18 April 1896, p. 124, R.Blatchford, editorial.

47. J.B.Glasier: William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (1921), p.30. Relating the impact of the first time he heard Morris speak, at meetings in Edinburgh and Glasgow on 13 and 14 December 1884, he wrote of the latter that "As we listened, our minds seemed to gain a new sense of sight, a new way of seeing and understanding why we lived in the world, and how important to our own selves was the well-being of our fellows. His ideas seemed to spring from a pure well of idealness within himself ... No such an address had ever been heard in Glasgow before; no such single-minded and noble appeal to man's inherent sense of rightness and fellowship towards man." Ibid, pp.26-7.

evolution."⁴⁸ It was "the strongest instinct in man's nature", identical in fact with the "religious instinct" of traditional Christianity which would now emerge as the basis of "The New Religion", "of passionate love for humanity ... of service and sacrifice - a religion of Altruism,"⁴⁹ upon which the new Socialist society would be built. The immediate task Socialists should set themselves, therefore, was the spread of the Altruistic sentiment, for upon its growth would depend the evolution of society towards Socialism.⁵⁰

For Glasier, it was the ethical aspect of Socialism that was paramount, and which gave it a place among the higher religions. Indeed, in that sense, "Socialism ... is religion - not that part of religion that relates to our beliefs concerning God, immortality, and the meaning of the unseen universe, but that part, the all-essential, practical part of it, that concerns the right state of our present lives, the right state of our relation to our fellows, the right moral health of our souls."⁵¹

48. Clarion, 18 April 1896, p.125,art .cit.

49. Ibid., 25 April 1896, p.133, Nunquam, The New Religion. Nunquam was Blatchford's pseudonym.

50. Ibid., 18 April 1896, p.124,art .cit.

51. J.B.Glasier: The Meaning of Socialism (1919), pp. 225 and 229-30.

To the earnest agnostic, for whom the old certainties of the orthodox Christian creed had lost their potency, Socialism offered a practical alternative, and it was this view which Blatchford sought to legitimise over many years through the pages of the Clarion and in God and My Neighbour. Thus in an article "Here and Hereafter", published at the end of 1897, he examined the arguments in favour of a belief in an all-powerful, loving and merciful God. The argument by which the existence of God was derived from Nature, in which Blatchford saw so much suffering, he speedily dismissed. Similarly there was no evidence of life after death. In both cases man might hope, but could never know. "Deep down" in his "secret soul", he felt he probably did believe in a God, as he "rather hoped" for a life after death, but he couldn't know for sure. Therefore the only reasonable course of action was to accept those limitations on his knowledge and consider the more practical issues of life on this earth. In the face of so much human suffering in this world it was idle to speculate indefinitely about matters of which there could be no certain knowledge.

"I know nothing of God or Heaven, or a hereafter. I leave these things to the future, without anxiety or fear. But poverty, ignorance, vice, bad drains, robbery, cant, lies, greed, and stupidity, these things I know to exist, I know to be bad, and I believe to be alterable.

The other worlds are beyond our reach and beyond our ken, but this world is ours: we live here. Let us then quit searching for what is hidden and attend to that which we can see. Let us leave Heaven to the saints, and hell to the lost, and give our attention to Shoreditch and Oldham and the Black Country."⁵²

In God and My Neighbour he added, for the benefit of his Christian readers, his belief that "if there is a Father in Heaven, He is likely to be better pleased by our loving and serving our fellow-creatures (His children) than by our singing and praying to Him, while our brothers and sisters (His children) are ignorant, or brutalised, or hungry, or in trouble."⁵³

Such then were the basic beliefs of agnostic disciples of the Religion of Socialism as expressed in the I.L.P. The extent of the influence of such views was demonstrated in the First World War, when many I.L.P. Conscientious Objectors went before the Tribunals insisting that "Socialism"

52. Clarion, 24 December 1897, p.421.

53. R.Blatchford; God and My Neighbour (1903), p.191.

was their religion and the ground of their conscientious objection to the War.⁵⁴ But though the creeds of Christianity might be denied, there was nothing in the Agnostics' definition of Socialist ethics which in any way clashed with those of the Socialist Christian. Indeed the moral appeal to altruism could scarcely fail to strike a sympathetic chord amongst most Christian hearers. Thus, whatever their denominational backgrounds or their beliefs concerning God or life after death, the I.L.P. was able to provide a home for all who sought through Socialism the alleviation of human suffering and a more just social order.

iii) The I.L.P. and the New Religious Outlook.

Amongst the leaders of the I.L.P., in addition to the agnostic Glasier, were to be found Hardie and Snowden, both lay preachers in their early manhood, whose essentially non-conformist Socialism we shall be examining in some detail; and MacDonald, unorthodox perhaps, but with a deeply religious outlook. Indeed the prevalence of religious Socialists on the N.A.C. is one of the most striking features of the I.L.P. Another Non-conformist, F.W. Jowett, we have already mentioned. John Lister, the first Treasurer of the

54. See above, Ch.5, pp. 460-1 , for a development of this point.

I.L.P., was a practising Catholic,⁵⁵ his successor, T.D. Benson, was founder of the Swedenborgian Socialist Society in 1895 and of its journal Uses.⁵⁶ Tom Mann, and Fred Brocklehurst, the first secretary and financial secretary respectively, had both considered ordination as Anglicans before turning to politics, and both propounded a definitely Christian Socialist outlook in their speeches, and writings.⁵⁷ There

55. See Labour Leader, 8 March 1912, p.156. Letter of Joe Burgess concerning later activities of members of 1893 N.A.C. Lister's main interest by 1912 was the Catholic Industrial Schools.
56. Ibid., 20 June 1912, p.397. T.D. Benson: "How I Became a Socialist".
57. See Labour Annual, 1895, pp. 163, 178-9, for biographical sketches of Brocklehurst and Mann. For a statement of Mann's religious Socialist position see Tom Mann: A Socialist's View of Religion and the Churches (1896, Clarion Pamphlet) in which he sees Altruism as the basis for Socialism. Another who had been early influenced by Swedenborgianism, he remained throughout a keen supporter of the Labour Churches and contributed to Labour Prophet, see e.g. January 1892, pp.5-6, T.Mann: The Labour Movement. Is it Inspired With an Ethical Principle? Brocklehurst delivered a course of 8 lectures on "Christ and Socialism" in the winter of 1894-5. Labour Prophet, March 1895, p.47. He later moved from the I.L.P. to support for Tariff Reform, standing as a Unionist candidate for Prestwick in December 1910. Labour Leader, 8 March 1912, p.156, Joe Burgess letter.

was also the ex-Congregationalist turned Unitarian minister, the Rev. J.H. Belcher, and in addition, from 1908, the Rev. W.E. Moll, an Anglo-Catholic Socialist priest, who represented the North East division of the N.A.C. and had been active in the foundation of the Church Socialist League in 1906.⁵⁸

Amongst the women propagandists of the movement this religious commitment is even more striking. Katherine St John Conway, Caroline Martyn and Enid Stacy, the 3 best-known of the women Socialist lecturers of the 1890s, all for a time members of the N.A.C., Miss Conway in 1893, Caroline Martyn (1896) and Enid Stacy (1894), were all members of the Guild of St.

58. For Rev. W.E. Moll, see P.d' A. Jones: The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914 (1968), esp. pp. 436-8. He was not the only figure to be prominent in the I.L.P. A former curate of his, Rev. Conrad Noel, unsuccessfully stood twice for election to the N.A.C., in 1909 and 1910. Labour Leader, 9 July 1909, p.441; 1 April 1910, p.197. In 1912 Noel joined the British Socialist Party.

Matthew and preached its brand of Christian Socialism.⁵⁹ Of other women prominent in the movement, Margaret MacDonald adopted a religious outlook closely akin to her husband;⁶⁰ Margaret McMillan, the first woman I.L.P. member

59. Church Reformer, January 1891, p.20; April 1892, p.91. Miss Conway was elected a member in January 1891, Miss Martyn in March 1892. Enid Stacy and her brother Paul, later the Rev. Paul Stacy of the Church Socialist League, had become members earlier. Another rather later prominent I.L.P. Socialist and suffragette, Mrs. Charlotte Despard, was also a member of the G.S.M. Labour Leader, 13 June, 1912, p.380, Mrs. C. Despard: "How I Became a Socialist". Like Caroline Martyn, she joined under the influence of Rev. W.A. Morris, Vicar of St. Ann's Lambeth and champion of the Labour Gasworkers. Through him, Mrs. Despard had first joined the Battersea S.D.F. "the only Socialist society I then knew" of which Morris was chairman, later joining the I.L.P. when its influence began to be felt in London.
60. For Margaret MacDonald's religious development see J.R. MacDonald: Margaret Ethel MacDonald 1870-1911 (privately printed and circulated 1911) and far preferable to J.R. MacDonald: Margaret Ethel MacDonald (1912), a longer, more rambling, less personal account produced for the movement, which however ran through 6 editions and 9 reprints. (See: Ed. L. Middleton: Women in the Labour Movement (1977), p.30. She moved from orthodox Anglicanism to a rejection of Hell, and, adopting a Universalist position, gave up Sunday School teaching because of opposition from the Vicar. With a strong sense of prayer, she especially liked F.D. Maurice.

to be elected to the Bradford School Board (in 1894) had been a close associate of Paul Campbell, editor of the Christian Socialist in the early 1890 s in London, and devoted much of her later efforts to the teaching of Socialist ethics in the Socialist Sunday Schools Movement in which many other prominent women I.L.P. ers were involved;⁶¹ and Isabella O. Ford, member of the N.A.C. in the early years of the century was a Quaker of similar outlook to Carpenter and Whitman, both her personal friends.⁶²

It was the religious appeal of Socialism which these women propagandists stressed. Recalling their influence, Hardie stressed their moral appeal, remembering Caroline Martyn's "deeply spiritual nature", "the emotional appeals of Katerine St John Conway" and "the quick wit and clear reasoning" of Enid Stacy.⁶³ Caroline

61. See esp. Labour Leader, 11 July 1912, p.444, Margaret McMillan: "How I Became a Socialist", and in ed. L.Middleton, op.cit, pp. 44 ff. The Socialist Sunday School Movement also attracted the labours of the Glasier family, Carolyn Martyn and other prominent I.L.P. ers. See International Review of Social History, XI (1966), No.1, pp.18-47: F.Reid: op.cit.
62. In ed. L.Middleton: op.cit, p.23. Whitman sent her and Carpenter the first edition of his complete works in one volume on publication.
63. Labour Leader, 14 May, 1912, p.7, J.Keir Hardie: "The Moral Basis of Socialism".

Martyn in particular, partly no doubt on account of her early death, was often mentioned as an important influence on young Socialists. W.C. Anderson, as a young apprentice in Aberdeen, recalled her address as stirring;⁶⁴ and George Barnes, describing her as "A Saint of Socialism" remembered first hearing her in the mid 1890s at a cold and wet open-air meeting in winter in a Lancashire industrial town, when "The contrast between the real and ideal had never been brought so vividly to my mind."⁶⁵ Her cousin's account of her life brings out her own "always deeply religious" nature⁶⁶ and shows some of the religious and social influences at work in the late 19th Century, leading many to abandon traditional orthodoxy for a new religious and social outlook.

64. Ibid, 25 July 1912, p.476, W.C. Anderson: "How I Became a Socialist".
65. Ibid, 16 February 1912, p.105, G.N. Barnes: "A Saint of Socialism: Carrie Martyn: A Reminiscence". He had recently visited her grave.
66. Lena Wallis: op.cit, esp. p.81.

From a comfortable, middle-class, Conservative, Anglican home in Lincoln she had at first followed her parents' views, teaching in several private girls' schools and becoming a dame of the Primrose League, until, taking a post in a Reading Boarding School, she became aware of the prevailing social conditions. Under the influence of a Radical Unitarian aunt, with whom she was then living, she came to espouse Socialism and joined the Fabians. On becoming governess of a Wandsworth orphanage in 1891, and attending the Rev. W.A. Morris's church, she joined the Guild of St. Matthew. She much admired Stewart Headlam's sermons; and basing her Socialism on the New Testament, she began moving increasingly in Socialist circles. She joined J.B. Wallace's Brotherhood Church (which in November 1892 she described as "the Labour Church which I attend"⁶⁷, where she met J.C. Kenworthy, eventually devoting herself full-time to preaching on behalf of the movement. Her own bent of mind being sacramental and ritualistic, she came to appreciate especially Edward Carpenter's Towards Democracy,⁶⁸ and

67. Ibid, p.37.

68. Ibid, p.43. After a visit to Carpenter, she wrote of the book "the more I read the more I love it", especially for its advocacy of a "life of complete and perfect comradeship".

preached a strongly immanentist creed in which, at the heart of humanity and Nature was the "eternal good" making men "living Bibles". Evil was but an illusion, the absence of God's Love: "our work is to aid the work of creation by advancing human development along the line God has revealed - Love - which includes liberty, equality, brotherhood - physical, mental and spiritual."⁶⁹

Katherine St John Conway's development provides a further example of a similar process away from orthodoxy and towards a non-doctrinal immanentism with Socialism as its political counterpart, but whereas in Caroline Martyn's case her early death cut the process short, in Mrs. Glasier (1867-1950) the process was complete. In her case, her father's influence on her religious opinions was liberalising, for he was a former Anglican vicar turned Congregationalist minister because of the greater freedom allowed him to preach his (at the time) heterodox views, including a moral repudiation of traditional

69. Ibid, p.87.

teaching about the existence of hell,⁷⁰ and an espousal of Darwin's theories of evolution as further proof of God's design.⁷¹ At Newnham College Cambridge, on a Classical Scholarship, (1886-9) she read widely, including such authors as Carlyle, Ruskin and Plato, and taught a Sunday class of working men, using works by Thoreau, Emerson and Westcott, in a scheme run by the College Principal, under whose influence she became a High Churchwoman. Appalled by the illiteracy and servility she found in these classes, she argued, at the College Debating Society, the need for a change in the economic system, and 18 months later, in November 1890, by which time she had become Classics mistress at Redland High School for Girls, she joined the Clifton and Bristol Socialist Society, the day after the Society had organised a procession of impoverished striking women cotton workers to

70. Katherine recalled hearing as a little girl her father preaching in his church at Walthamstow the impossibility of truly good people being happy in Heaven in the knowledge that fellow beings were in Hell. Labour Leader, 18 July 1912, p.462, "How I Became a Socialist". Later, at first alarmed by his daughter's Socialist opinions, he came to be converted to it himself and on his death was engaged in a row with members of his congregation over his changed social outlook. See K.B.Glasier: The Glen Book, p.83.

71. L.Thompson: The Enthusiasts, p.59.

enter All Saints Clifton, the wealthy ritualistic Church Katherine attended, during Sunday High Mass.⁷²

The Clifton and Bristol Socialist Society, at that time counted among its members Enid Stacy and her brother Paul, Dan Irving and H.H. Gore.⁷³ Gore and the Stacy s (who also attended All Saints, Clifton, but whom she had not previously met) were also members of the Guild of St. Matthew, which Katherine joined in December, and of the Fabian Society, which she also joined, attending the Fabian Annual Conference as a delegate in 1892 with Paul Stacy.⁷⁴

72. Ibid, pp. 61 ff. The incident at All Saints Clifton has recently figured prominently in S.Yeo: "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-96" in History Workshop Journal 4 (Autumn 1977), esp. pp. 11-12, where it is used, highly misleadingly, as representative of a genuine religious "conversion experience" to Socialism.
73. For a brief history of the Clifton and Bristol Socialist Society, see Justice, 10 April 1824, p.6. There is a longer account in S.Bryher: An Account of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol (1929).
74. L. Thompson, op.cit, pp.67-9; Labour Leader, 18 July 1912, p.462, art.cit. For H.H.Gore's membership of the G.S.M. see Church Reformer, April 1890, p.89.

For a brief period from November 1891 she lodged with the Irvings, teaching in a Board School. For a few months in the winter of 1892-3 with Enid Stacy and Dan Irving she was a member of the abortive Socialist community at Starnthwaite Cumberland, organised by a Unitarian minister, the Rev. Herbert Mills, but she left it after the eviction of several members including Irving and Enid Stacy, in April 1893. She then turned her attention full-time to lecturing for the I.L.P. on the organising committee for whose foundation conference she had sat as the Fabian representative. In June 1893 she married Bruce Glasier, after which their careers were both closely bound up with the I.L.P. until his death in 1920 and her resignation in 1932.⁷⁵

Her rapid involvement in the Socialist Movement in the early 1890's is reflected in her intellectual development. At Cambridge she had been influenced by High Church Platonism and immanentism, and was using works by Westcott, at the time the most respected and widely-read Anglican exponent of the Christian Platonist and

75. L.Thompson, op.cit, pp.70-1,76-7,237-8; also see Church Reformer, October 1893, pp. 274-6, A.H. Gore: "The Fiasco at Starnthwaite" for a description of its breakup.

Socialist position, and by Emerson, whose underlying emphasis on the Unseen had similar roots. She herself attributed her move away from a traditional denominational allegiance to her disgust at her Vicar's hostility to the Bristol cotton lassies who had invaded his church. It was after this that she joined the Bristol Socialists. Now, for the first time, she was introduced to the writings of Carpenter and Whitman, the latter's Leaves of Grass from that time on becoming her "special 'scripture'," parts of which, she felt, best expressed her own religious beliefs.⁷⁶ From that time on she maintained as her creed the belief (practically identical that that of Whitman and Carpenter) that "In every human being there dwells the angel self, the perfect son or daughter of God. The realisation of that self is the purpose of life on earth, and the way to that realisation lies through the effort to realise or bring out the angel self in each and all our fellows by striving to realise or win with and for them the conditions of Heaven on Earth - the glorious freedom of conscious Sons and Daughters of God."⁷⁷ Eventually, in the 1920's she found a

76. In particular his "Song of the Universal" and "Towards the Unknown Region", H.B.Glasier, op.cit, p.82.

77. Ibid, p.89.

home for her beliefs in the Quakers, probably the denomination with the least emphasis on doctrine and the most on prayer and the immanence of God in Man.⁷⁸

Her development was a common one among religious Socialists of the time. In the I.L.P. it appeared in its most developed form in Ramsay MacDonald's voluminous Socialist writings. In essence it represented a disregard of theology or doctrine and a primary concentration on religious experience, on feeling, or intuition rather than logical reasoning, and was quite distinct both from the Nonconformist Christian Socialism of Hardie and Snowden, with its strong retention of traditional evangelical language and concepts and from the agnostic Socialist's rejection of any belief in God, as expressed in the writings of Blatchford and Glasier.

iv) Socialism and the Fostering of Creative Talent.

Both Robert Blatchford and J.B.Glasier were heavily derivative in their thinking, owing a great deal in particular to the litertarian

78. In their emphasis on the "inner light".

tradition of Morris and Kropotkin. The similarity in ideas between Blatchford and these fathers of the British Socialist tradition throughout the pages of the Clarion and in his most popular works is striking, and is borne out by his own references to their writings. Much of the importance of Blatchford's journalistic contribution to the growing mass movement therefore lay in his unique ability to present these ideas in a clear, simple and readable form, and in the immense boost to their circulation which he gave. The regular Socialist reading public was transformed from an audience of a few thousand to tens of thousands, and the total circulation of the new ideas in the 1890s and early 1900s reached over one million.

Blatchford's most popular works and the clearest statements of his views, Merrie England (1894) and Britain for the British (1902) were reprints of series of articles in the Clarion. These show the extent of this derivation. In both there was the traditional Socialist explanation as to why wealth was concentrated overwhelmingly in the hands of a small unproductive class while the labouring classes, the actual producers of that wealth, received

barely subsistence wages. The explanation, of course, was that the remainder was expropriated by the landowners and Capitalists in Rent and Interest - the traditional Marxist Theory of Surplus Value seen so often in the earlier Socialist writers. It therefore followed that only a Socialist solution could really improve the lot of the working man, by the people becoming their own landlords and capitalists through social ownership of land and capital.⁷⁹ Blatchford argued that much of the surplus wealth taken by the few went for the production of unnecessary luxuries for the idle class, which, in addition to the production of shoddy goods for the many, caused an unnecessary burden of work for the labouring classes, who were forced into a life of monotonous, mechanical drudgery in the factories. Nor could it be argued by the wealthy that in spending their incomes on luxuries they were

79. Merrie England (1894), pp. 57 ff. Britain for the British (1902), esp. Ch.2: "What is Wealth?". The title of the latter is based on his view that "Today Britain does not belong to the British; it belongs to a few of the British." Ibid, p.84.

helping the working classes by providing work for those who would otherwise be unemployed.⁸⁰ "What the people want is food and clothing and shelter and leisure not work. Work is a means and not an end. Men work to live, they do not live to work."⁸¹ What was needed, therefore, was a careful assessment of men's physical needs and the organisation of production for their satisfaction, in other words, production for use, not profit, "the idea being to get the best results with the least labour."⁸²

80. The Countess of Warwick's stated justification for holding a "splendidly lavish" ball in Warwick Castle in 1895. Blatchford attacked this extravagance in the Clarion, causing her to travel to London, confront him in his office, demanding an apology; but she left virtually converted to Socialism, which she espoused for the rest of her life. Frances, Countess of Warwick: Life's Ebb and Flow (1929) pp. 89-91.
81. Merric England, p.90, and see Chs. 2 and 20, dealing with luxury, waste and drudgery, esp. pp. 16-17, 21, 90,156.
82. Ibid., p.12.

For Blatchford "the best things of life ... are all cheap; that is to say they can all be got with little labour." And in this category he included "knowledge, art, recreation, friendship and love".⁸³ For the pursuit of each, man must be freed from the drudgery of modern industrialism which has led to a stultification of the senses and the pursuit of excitement and escapism through gambling and drink.⁸⁴ Urging his readers to buy Carpenter's England's Ideal, Morris' Signs of Change, and Thoreau's Walden,⁸⁵ he advocated the simplification of wants, the use of mechanisation in the production of necessities to free men as far as possible from mechanical tasks, and the maximum opportunities for individual craftsmanship and creativity. Clothes would be simple and beautiful, foods would be wholesome and natural, and there would be a general return to agriculture

83. Ibid, p.19.

84. Ibid, pp. 155-6.

85. Ibid, pp. 12 and 19.

and the countryside.⁸⁶ Within the towns there would be an emphasis on trees, gardens, fountains and wide streets, and houses would be roomy and detached. There would be "public dining halls, public baths and public wash-houses "to free housewives from drudgery, and public provision of sports, recreational, educational and cultural facilities and the education of children, including music, athletics and arts, so that in time "the people" would "become their own artists, actors, musicians, soldiers and police."⁸⁷

The similarity of his vision of the ideal Socialist State to that of either Carpenter or Morris (with the exception of his continuing "patriotism" and emphasis on the need for national defence, a product of his 6 years' service in the

86. In ed. A.Reid: The New Party (1894), R.Blatchford: "The New Party in the North", pp.11-34, Blatchford states the abolition of the factory system and the development of agriculture as 2 chief aims of the "New Party" , pp. 30-31.

87. Ibid, pp.40-44.

army as a young man⁸⁸) is particularly striking, and further borne out by his later vision of an "English Utopia", The Sorcery Shop (1907). In this work an elderly retired Conservative Colonel (sympathetically portrayed) and a moralistic Liberal industrialist (who denies the evidence of his own eyes because fallen man is too sinful for Socialism to work) are taken by a wizard to see a Manchester transformed by Socialism along the lines

88. As was pointed out by his biographer, L. Thompson: Robert Blatchford: Portrait of An Englishman (1951), p.9, Blatchford in his own autobiography devoted 76 pages to his 6 years in the army and only 16 to the years 1893-1910, the height of his Socialist activities. For Blatchford, the army taught the value of collective action and "the religion of esprit de corps", R. Blatchford: My Eighty Years (1931), p. 37, and his experiences formed the basis of two semi-autobiographical novels: A Son of the Forge (1894) and Tommy Atkins of the Ramchunders (1895), a collection of short stories: Tales for the Marines (1901) and My Life in the Army (1915). It left him with a strong belief in the need for the maintenance of Britain's defence forces, leading him in 1904 to support the clamour for a reform of the Army and setting up of a General Staff (see the series of articles in Clarion, 3 June 1904 - 8 July 1904), and to advocate the expansion of the Navy to meet the potential threat from Germany after 1909 (R. Blatchford: My Eighty Years, pp. 224-8). But his "Jingoism" as his critics insisted on calling it, like Hyndman's, in no way lessened his commitment to Socialism, though it was of an insular rather than internationalist brand, indeed it is best expressed in articles on the Boer War: Clarion 27 May 1899: "The great Jingo Revival"- an attack on the nationalistic and militaristic outburst against the Boer Republics as being led by reactionaries, and 21 October 1899, "The South African War", in which after stating his disapproval of the war and his past opposition to it, he agrees as an Englishman that with England at war, his first thought must be for his country's speedy victory. And this attitude of "my country right or wrong" he was to maintain throughout his life.

described above. In this latter, the parallel with News from Nowhere is especially obvious, with a definite absence of any central government, or legal system, and its dependence on custom and its voluntary observance, together with an educational system in which all subjects are taught on an entirely voluntary basis - a boy learning to be a mason for example could also develop his full potential in music, painting or more intellectual pursuits as well.⁸⁹

His arguments in Merrie England against the profit motive as the chief inspirer of men, and his belief that the creativity of genius and skill is its own reward and motive, also closely parallel Morris' arguments. Citing the examples of inventors, poets, scientists and philosophers down the ages, many of whom received scant financial reward for their efforts and many of whom died in poverty, he rejected the view of human nature of the political economists as a one-sided "bloodless,

89. R. Blatchford: The Sorcery Shop: An Impossible Romance (1907). The absence of laws and their replacement by customs voluntarily observed seems derived from Kropotkin, cf. above, p.231. In his editorial in Clarion 3 January 1819, p.5, he stated Morris' conception of society in News From Nowhere to be his ideal.

soulless abortion".⁹⁰ Besides, under Socialism, with everyone receiving enough for his needs there would be no point in giving him more. "He cannot use it. He is already more blessed than the workman, for his talent is a boundless source of pleasure to him, and his work is a gratification and not a task."⁹¹ Society then would rather honour a man for his talents by allowing them the free exercise than by incentives of material gain, whereas at present most men are not free either to develop their capacities to their fullest capability or to exercise them in creative, rewarding employment.

Blatchford regarded himself as an "Ideal Socialist" in distinction to a "Practical" (or State) Socialist, having as his vision a society in which money is abolished and each receives according to needs and contributes his labours in the work best suited to his talents. But he accepted that "practical socialism" would have to come first, with further municipalisation of public utilities and state ownership of industry and land. At first, the people would have to continue receiving wages for labour and paying for what they consumed, but eventually they would become free for each citizen to use according to his own

90. Merrie England, pp.113, 136 ff.

91. Ibid, p.140.

requirements, as were the roads, parks and public libraries already.⁹² Only a society organised on such a basis could be regarded as truly just since it alone conformed to man's true situation. The Individualist argument that labour was entitled to the whole of its own product was based on a false understanding of man's place in society. That some men were able to develop their talents as artists, scientists, etc. depended on others working to produce food, clothing and the other necessities of life. Man could not therefore be regarded in isolation, nor indeed, could his skills be regarded as his own property since they were in large measure derived from the collective knowledge of mankind, the result of men's labours and discoveries throughout the centuries.⁹³

92. Ibid, pp.100 ff. and p.44.

93. Ibid, Ch.IX, The Self-Made Man, pp. 71-8, in which he graphically illustrated his moral by a story of 3 monkeys in a tree reaching down for an apple in a river. The third monkey, holding on to the other two, got the apple. "Now, if that third monkey who reached the water over the bodies, and by the aid of the other two, were to claim the whole of the apple as his! Would you call that fair?" (p.78).

For Blatchford, with his patriotism and distrust of foreign nations, the central problem in the creation of a Socialist Britain in which industrial drudgery would be limited, was how to make Britain self-sufficient in foodstuffs. Only then would Britain be freed from the necessity of developing industry for exports to pay for imported food. In Merrie England he argued that only through the scientific development of British agriculture and a return to the land would Socialism, as he conceived it, be possible.⁹⁴ Britain for the British, drawing on the evidence of Belgian agricultural production averages in Kropotkin's Factories, Fields and Workshops, he was able to provide comparative proof of its possibility. With the exception of tropical and other foodstuffs not able to be grown in the British climate, he argued, Britain could be self-sufficient in food, making a Socialist Britain possible.⁹⁵

With its emphasis on a revived agriculture and craftsmanship, Blatchford's Socialism was closely akin to the libertarian tradition in British Socialist thought. But the means by which

94. Ibid, Ch. IV, "Can England Feed Herself?", pp. 28-36.

95. Britain for the British, pp. 110-8, "Can Britain Feed Herself?".

he believed such a Socialist society would come about reflects the change which had come over British Socialism as an evolutionary view of Socialism came to dominate the thinking of the new mass movement which was growing up in the 1890 s. Blatchford was a committed evolutionary Socialist, basing his hopes, in Merrie England, on the coming of a universal franchise, the education of public opinion in Socialist ideals, and their subsequent concrete application through Parliamentary legislation, carried out by representatives of Labour committed to Socialist policies. With one brief aberration it was a policy he was to maintain throughout his journalistic career,⁹⁶ seeing his own

96. Merrie England, pp.106,197-8. Britain for the British, pp. 148 ff. In 1913, briefly carried away by the new Syndicalist theories and the industrial unrest of the time, he urged the revolutionary education of the masses to develop their class-consciousness in preparation for the coming General Strike (e.g. Clarion editorial, 17 October 1913, p.1). But this owed as much to his dislike of the Labour Party leadership's close links with the Liberal Party which he felt made a mockery of independent labour representation. Thus, with the defeat in 1918 of the I.L.P. leaders whom he had blamed for this policy, he returned to an advocacy of Parliamentary social reforms, condemning the Bolshevik Revolutionary alternatives and the Syndicalism he had earlier espoused. Clarion, 3 January 1919, p.5. He expressed the same view at the end of his life, cf. R.Blatchford: What's All This? (1940), pp.1-5.

special contribution as the teaching of Socialist ideals, while leaving practical politics to the I.L.P.⁹⁷

Glasier's indebtedness to the same libertarian tradition is equally apparent, hardly surprisingly, given his close relationship with Morris from 1884 until the latter's death in 1896. It was with Morris, Kropotkin and Carpenter that he stayed on honeymoon with his wife in June 1893, and during his own period of editorship of the Labour Leader (1904-9) reprints of Morris became a regular feature of the journal.⁹⁸ Glasier's

97. Blatchford's own view: R.Blatchford: My Eighty Years, p.200.
98. L.Thompson: The Enthusiasts, pp.84,141. Glasier referred to the influence of those early Socialists on the movement in Labour Leader, 5 January 1912., p.4, J.B.Glasier: "Towards Socialism in 1912", seeing their writings as "the prophetic core of Socialism", citing particularly Morris' "How We Live and How We Might Live" and his poem "The Day is Coming"; Kropotkin's Appeal to the Young and Carpenter's England's Ideal.

articles and speeches and later books testify to the influence of Morris' conception of Socialism on him, justifying Hardie's description of him as our "Anarchist-Communist-Socialist-Fabian-poetic Bruce Glasier."⁹⁹ Amongst the leadership of the I.L.P. , it was Glasier above all who represented this particular tradition, which forms the basis of his view of The Meaning of Socialism (1919), written on his deathbed, the only comprehensive statement of his Socialism that he wrote.

Glasier had first become interested in Socialism through reading of the activities of the Russian Nihilists in an article in the Contemporary Review in 1879. He was soon after drawn into the agitations of Davitt's Land League, which he joined with Shaw Maxwell, whom he had met at the Glasgow Freethought Hall. At one of the League's meetings he first heard the new economic Socialist doctrines expounded by H.M. Hyndman, and shortly after aided in the formation of a Glasgow branch of the S.D.F. in 1884 which on the split between Morris and Hyndman followed the former, becoming a branch of the Socialist League. Thenceforth he became a close protégé and ally of Morris, supporting him against the Anarchists in

99. L.Thompson, op.cit , quoted p.111 from Hardie's opinion in 1898.

the League, and later contributing regularly to Morris' Hammersmith Socialist Record, and after his marriage in 1893, keeping him informed of the progress of the I.L.P. into which he had been drawn by his wife, an original member of the N.A.C. to which he was himself first elected in 1897.¹⁰⁰

The arguments of The Meaning of Socialism even more than those of Merric England closely follow Morris. Again there is the Labour Theory of Value, and the argument that only through the socialisation of the means of production can the surplus value appropriated by the capitalist and landowner be returned to the worker.¹⁰¹ There are again the arguments against the need for monetary incentives and the belief that genius and skill finds its own reward in creativity,¹⁰² and moreover that the possession of any such skills

100. For Glasier's early development see L.Thompson, op.cit, especially Chapters I and II. For Glasier's own account, see Labour Leader, 10 May 1912, pp. 299-300, J.B.Glasier: "How I Became a Socialist".

101. J.B.Glasier: The Meaning of Socialism (1919), pp 21 ff. Like Morris, he distinguishes personal property, e.g. tools, homes etc., which is allowable under Socialism, and the means of exploiting others, which is not, pp. 125 ff.

102. Ibid, p. 88 ff.

result from man's place in society, and inheritance from past developments, and therefore cannot be regarded as his own private possession.¹⁰³ Like Morris, too, from whose Useful Work and Useless Toil and How We Live and How We Might Live, he quotes extensively in support of his opinion, Glasier laid down 4 basic criteria for work under Socialism. It must be 1) useful, 2) not exhausting, 3) varied in nature, 4) in pleasant surroundings; and he went on to agree too that 4 hours' work per day should be easily enough to provide for material necessities, leaving the rest free for leisure and the pursuit of crafts, cultural, scientific, sporting and educational activities.¹⁰⁴ As with Morris too, the new Socialist society would involve a simplification of wants and a return from the factories to individual craftsmanship and the countryside. For like Morris whose "Socialism was, indeed, largely the outcome of his abhorrence of the modern factory system which reduces men and women to mere industrial units - pegs on the great grinding wheel of Capitalism"¹⁰⁵, Glasier saw

103. Ibid, pp. 74 ff.

104. Ibid, pp. 94-8.

105. Labour Leader, 10 July 1908, p.433, J.B.Glasier: "Towards Socialism: Are Smallholdings Desirable?", and cf. The Meaning of Socialism, pp.87, 160.

Socialism as the demand "that society shall be so transformed as to furnish for all its members a fully human life"¹⁰⁶ in which there was "the greatest possible freedom of initiative" in the self-development and exercise of a man's individual capacities and skills. Morris' vision of society in News from Nowhere was therefore much to be preferred to the regimentation of the "industrial army system" of Bellamy's Looking Backwards, than which "no more fatal misconception of what Socialism is ... can be imagined." It was symptomatic of the S.D.F.'s false view of Socialism in distinction to that of the more libertarian I.L.P. that for a while its aims had included the organisation of production by means of "agricultural and industrial armies under State control."¹⁰⁷

106. J.B.Glasier: The Meaning of Socialism, p.XI, J.H.Hobson's view of Glasier's Socialism.

107. Labour Leader, 10 July 1908, p.433,art .cit. According to Glasier, "Had William Morris believed that Socialism meant a system of industrial armies and the obliteration of cottage farming and cottage industry, he would have turned Tory irrevocably". Hence News From Nowhere, Morris' counterblast to Looking Backwards, Glasier's article was a reply to the views of I.L.P. correspondents arguing against smallholdings as contrary to Socialist principles, and seeing agricultural collectivism as the sole possible Socialist policy. For Glasier, smallholdings fulfilled all the necessary Socialist criteria in that they involved no exploitation and allowed maximum individual freedom , Carpenter writing the following week in full agreement. Ibid, 17 July 1908, p.452.

Glasier was therefore clearly a libertarian, and his ultimate ideal was the same as that envisaged in News From Nowhere, of a society in which there would be an end to the wages system and each would contribute according to his ability and receive according to his needs.¹⁰⁸ But he accepted that the most likely intermediate stage would be a form of state ownership and payment of wage rates determined by ability,¹⁰⁹ wages only being abolished as more and more public utilities and necessities eventually came to be provided "free".¹¹⁰ Like Morris, too, in his earlier years he had believed this change would come about most probably through Revolution, as his earlier poems and utterances testify, but with his involvement in the I.L.P.

108. The Meaning of Socialism, p.70. As with Blatchford it therefore followed that if everyone received enough for his needs under Socialism, there would be no need specially to reward genius which would be receiving enough anyway. Ibid,p.86.
109. With educational equality of opportunity this might result in greater competition for intellectual employment such that it would be easier to find artists, actors, editors, doctors, lawyers and scientists than e.g. bricklayers, or miners, so that the differentials of today might be reversed with manual skills being paid more than intellect. Ibid, pp. 64 ff.
110. Ibid, pp.68-9. The first of these would probably be water, electricity, transport, medical services, school meals, Old Age Pensions and child endowments.

in the 1890 s he came to adopt an evolutionary belief in reform through Parliament, backed by Socialist public opinion.¹¹¹

On the other hand, in his educational ideals and in his definition of Socialism as being the social application of the principle of "mutual help and collective effort" which could be traced throughout human society, in family love, friendship, in the Co-operative and Trades Union Movements, in early Christianity and amongst religious communities, he owed much to Kropotkin to whose journal Freedom he had contributed occasionally.¹¹² In his educational

111. See e.g. such earlier poems as "When Revolution Comes" (1888) and "We'll Turn Things Upside Down" (1891); also J.W.Wallace's Introduction to the posthumous collection, J.B.Glasier: On the Road to Liberty (1920). In 1893 at a meeting of Hammersmith Socialist Society his support for revolution in his talk was embarrassingly attacked by Katherine L.Thompson: op.cit, p.86. But in later years he was embarrassed by this phase and sought to minimise his adherence to such views , e.g. in William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement (1920). For an account of this see E.P.Thompson: William Morris (1977,ed.), Appendix II, pp. 741-50, "William Morris, Bruce Glasier and Marxism: 1. John Bruce Glasier."

112. e.g. Freedom, May 1893, pp.31-2, "Obituary of James M.Brown" by J.B.Glasier, or his letter, Ibid, September 1889,p.39, in support of Morris' belief in devolved authority in a Socialist society.

ideals this debt is particularly obvious in his rejection of traditional academic values in favour of a much more technical education, in which the children, having been taught the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic plus the rudiments of history, literature and science, should be allowed free access to the town workshops, laboratories, libraries etc., and encouraged to develop their skills according to inclination.¹¹³

Belief in the Mutual Aid principle was especially popular amongst agnostic Socialists, and it was an argument used extensively by Blatchford in God and My Neighbour and Not Guilty: A Defence of the Bottom Dog, in which it was clearly identified with the altruistic principle which he had earlier referred to as "the most powerful impulse in social evolution", where lay the root of the social reforms of the

113. The Meaning of Socialism, pp. 107 ff. He regarded it as "unnatural" and "almost ... monstrous" to confine children in schools to book-learning "when their whole being cries out for physical activity, and when their arms and fingers should be acquiring deftness and skills for work and handicraft." Ibid, p.112 and cf above Ch.3, pp.233-4 for the similarity with Kropotkin's views as expressed in Factories, Fields and Workshops (1899).

19th Century.¹¹⁴ Here, however, citing on the evidence of Kropotkin's Mutual Aid, the importance of the principle throughout the animal world, in the concern of parents for their young, in friendship, tribal loyalties and even patriotism, Blatchford was concerned by its use to disprove scientifically the "Christian" view "that men are born bad".¹¹⁵ This viewpoint he regarded (as he made clear in Merrie England) as a threat to Socialism, which could only be justified on the principle that man was basically capable of perfectibility, or at least of considerable progress towards it.¹¹⁶

Brought up in Congregational and Anglican Sunday Schools in the mid-century, Blatchford identified Christianity throughout his life with the evangelical doctrines he had been taught then,¹¹⁷ and which he had rejected at the age

114. See above pp. 313-4.

115. Merrie England, p. 114.

116. Ibid, p. 113.

117. A point made by several friendly Christian Socialist critics of God and My Neighbour. See e.g. the Rev. Conrad Noel in Clarion, 23 September 1904, p. 1, and 28 October 1904, p. 5 or the Methodist Rev. J. E. Rattenbury: Robert Blatchford's New Religion (1909).

of 9 as untrue, immoral and incomprehensible.¹¹⁸ To Blatchford, man was basically in the process of moral evolution towards the good.¹¹⁹ The greater part of his badness was the result of his social environment. "Man is innately more prone to good than to evil; and the path of his destiny is upward ..." In this process, environment was crucial: "Environment can move mountains. There is a limit to its power for good and for evil, but that power is almost unimaginably great."¹²⁰ Heredity was the other factor chiefly affecting a man's behaviour, and in Not Guilty Blatchford used this belief in the effect on character of heredity and environment as the basis for a Determinist humanitarianism

118. Clarion, 4 December 1897, p.389, R.Blatchford reviewing John Trevor's Quest for God.
119. Platonic ideas were a major early influence on him. An army friend, Sergeant Norris, told A.M.Thompson in 1882 that Blatchford read Emerson at breakfast, Plato during the morning break, and had a complete set of Carlyle by his bed. In A.M.Thompson's son, L.Thompson: Robert Blatchford: Portrait of an Englishman (1951), p.28.
120. R.Blatchford, God and My Neighbour, pp.195-6, and cf. Merrie England, p.114.

which rejected the justice of punishment for criminals. He accepted though that there was a need for their detention for the protection of society, but he regarded them as "unfortunate" rather than "bad" and in need of help and understanding rather than punishment.¹²¹ For these reasons he attacked the moralism of many practising Christians, singling out R.J.Campbell's pronouncements especially as betraying a complete lack of understanding of the problem.¹²²

But Blatchford's contribution to the debate on Socialism and Religion is interesting from another point of view. Many others, such as Carpenter, MacDonald, Trevor or the

121. R.Blatchford: Not Guilty: A Defence of the Bottom Dog, pp. 19 ff. Citing the medical evidence of Dr.Lydston: The Diseases of Society, he argued many criminals had different shaped brains to normal members of society, also to those of primitive man with smaller foreheads and a greater part at the back "where the baser animal parts" are. Ibid, p.79.

122. Ibid, pp. 126-30.

proponents of the Catholic Socialism of the Guild of St. Matthew, also rejected the evangelical view of Christianity, but retained an often mystical, immanentist belief, usually the result of their own individual religious experiences, as the basis for their Socialism. Blatchford, like E.B.Bax, rejected religion completely when he rejected evangelicalism. He, in fact, had had no religious experience, and found descriptions of such totally incomprehensible - a point which became obvious in his review in Clarion of his friend John Trevor's Quest for God, and in his inability to understand what prayer was. His own words bring out this lack of comprehension best. Speaking of Trevor's book he said:

"It is an intensely human book, and for its humanity I like it. But outside humanity I cannot go. I'm of the earth earthy. So long as Trevor is revealing himself, or narrating his trials, joys, griefs, and blunders I can follow and understand him. But when he grows mystical, and goes sailing away into a dim immensity of bodiless abstraction - seeking God - I am a lost mutton.

I have nothing with metaphysics, nor theology, nor visions. I want facts, evidence. I do not in the least understand Trevor's idea of God. What manner of God was our good friend seeking, and what manner of God does he claim to have found? What does he mean when he speaks of God?

The first time I met John Trevor we had a long argument about the efficacy of prayer. But nothing came of it. He, being by nature self-distrustful and diffident, longed for something to lean upon; I, with my self-confidence and pride, preferred to trust to my own strength - or weakness. Now, after five years, I find that John holds still fast to his belief - and I to mine ... The stars speak to me as they speak to Trevor ... but they speak a different language I cannot find John Trevor's God ..."123

Thus with the rejection of traditional Christianity as unprovable and often obnoxious, Blatchford rejected all religion as unprovable, and all belief in God as unknowable. He maintained the same position in his review of R.J.Campbell's New Theology, in which he saw the only real difference between himself and Campbell as that "Mr.Campbell calls Nature God. I call Nature Nature." Otherwise, in Campbell's rejection of the doctrines of the Fall, Atonement, Virgin Birth, Divinity of Christ

123. Clarion, 11 December 1897, p.397 - the 2nd of 3 articles on Trevor's Quest for God (also 4 December 1897, p.389, and 18 December 1897, p.413) and of God and My Neighbour, pp.80-1, where he sees prayer as providing emotional release and arousing man's altruistic feelings, "so (he) rises from his knees in a sweeter and calmer frame of mind." A practice Blatchford rejects as harmful to self-reliance.

(a misunderstanding of Campbell's position made by many churchmen too), the infallibility of the Bible, Hell, and the traditional teaching of sin, seeing it instead as selfishness, and, therefore, selflessness (i.e. altruism) as morality and salvation, Blatchford thought himself and Campbell in complete agreement!¹²⁴ For with the rejection of any authority of the Bible or Church, and with the denial of the possibility of any knowledge of God through religious experience, there was left only the authority of a man's individual reason, which was incapable of solving any of the metaphysical questions as to the origin or purpose of man and the universe.¹²⁵ Agnosticism was therefore Blatchford's only tenable position.

As a result, having no absolute source of moral values, he justified altruism in these later writings as a scientifically proved major factor in evolution, which had survived as the increasingly dominant feature of man's character because it "is better than selfishness."¹²⁶

124. Clarion, 29 March 1907, p.1.

125. God and My Neighbour, pp.1-3.

126. Ibid, p.160.

And he eventually adopted a position closely akin to the "Humanism"¹²⁷ of Belfort Bax in which morality is equated with social conduct, the only tenable position left open to him. A man's action was only immoral if it "needlessly injures a fellow creature." Though on this basis such questions of personal morality as drunkenness were included, since a man clearly injured others as well as himself if by his inability to control his habit he made himself "a less useful member of society"; for then "He takes more from the common stock and gives back less."¹²⁸

Blatchford regarded his rejection of dogmatic Christianity in favour of a practical religion of altruism as "religious" rather than "irreligious".¹²⁹ Although in God and My Neighbour and Not Guilty he sought to make a direct attack on Christianity, he continued to profess his belief in the ethical teaching of Christ, to which he had proclaimed his indebtedness for its emphasis on altruism and

127. A term he uses of his own beliefs, Ibid, p.189.

128. Not Guilty, pp. 39-40.

129. God and My Neighbour, P.VIII.

love of neighbour in Merrie England.¹³⁰

It was the supernatural side of Christianity he could not understand. Though, in God and My Neighbour, he sought to minimise the uniqueness of Christ's teachings, seeing them as largely derivative, and often less clear than those of Buddha, for whom he expressed a new-found regard;¹³¹ yet it was an essentially Christian ethic, even if emptied of any supernatural authority, which lay at the heart of his own Socialist vision.

The immediate cause of the God and My Neighbour articles was Blatchford's discovery of Ernst Haeckel's Riddle of the Universe, which he reviewed in Clarion (23 January 1902). It was from this source that he derived his Determinism, based on heredity and environment, and his "scientific" rejection of the Genesis Creation stories in favour of evolution.¹³²

130. Merrie England, p.77.

131. God and My Neighbour: "Christianity and Ethics", pp. 157-63.

132. cf. E.Haeckel: The Riddle of the Universe (English edition, 1900, translated by J.McCabe), esp. Chapters V and VII.

But it was no conversion. Blatchford's rejection of the supernatural had come much earlier, and was based on a personal incomprehension of religious experience rather than any conversion by the claims of science. His espousal of Determinism, too, owed little to the claims of science. It rested on the belief that "the Christian theory of free will and personal responsibility" was a major support of the Individualism which underlay both the economic system, with its corollary in the sufferings and degradation of the working classes, and the moralism of the non-conformist conscience which could conceive of "no visible remedies beyond personal denunciation, the prison, and a few coals and blankets."¹³³ Blatchford's espousal of Haeckel's "Scientific" rejection of these points was merely the rationalisation of a deeply held, and much earlier hostility to the way in which Christianity supported the existing system.¹³⁴

133. God and My Neighbour, p.143.

134. See his pamphlet 3 Open Letters to the Bishop of Manchester on Socialism (1894), his attacks on the middle-class moralism of magistrates' treatment of working class offenders in In Dismal England(1899), pp. 156-69.

Blatchford's own creed is perhaps best summed up in his version of "the true account of the end of the Pilgrim's Progress" - a book he had apparently known virtually by heart from age 10 - contained in a volume of essays, Impressions (1897). Arriving alone at the gates of Heaven, Christian is stopped by the angel, who asks where are his family and neighbours? Christian replies that he had foresaken them to follow God, to which the angel retorts that he had come out of mere self-love and fear of Hell. "The Prince, whom thou dost affect to follow, died to save others; but thou hast lived to save thyself." "Only in serving others can a man save himself ... Thou shalt not enter this Kingdom, for it is the Kingdom of Love, and none may pass this gate save those who love their fellow-men. But thou lovest only thyself, wherefore by thyself shalt thou dwell, for ever and ever, amen!"¹³⁵

135. R. Blatchford: Impressions (1897) pp. 83-7, "Christian at the Gate". The similarity of Blatchford's condemnation of Christian Individualism and Moralism to that of Guild of St. Matthew preachers is striking, see e.g. above, p.19.

Such sentiments, expressed in books such as God and My Neighbour, may have brought some criticism,¹³⁶ but they also brought much support. Most of the defenders of Christianity whose replies to Blatchford's articles filled the columns of Clarion for 6 months from 29 January - 5 August 1904, agreed with nearly all of Blatchford's criticisms, both of traditional theology and the practice of the majority of churchmen, and saw little in his altruistic teachings that was incompatible with the Christianity they held.¹³⁷ And certainly there was

136. e.g. Arthur Henderson in a speech at Sheffield challenging him to produce a better book than the Bible, Clarion, 14 February 1908, p.1.

137. The articles of the defenders of Christianity were later published as The Religious Doubts of Democracy (1904), edited by George Haw, to whom Blatchford had given control over the weekly columns allotted to the debate in Clarion. See e.g. the views of Rev.C.L. Marson (G.S.M.) who identified Blatchford's altruistic instincts with man's instinct to love which he saw as implanted in man by God, citing Plato concerning the source of such instincts. The Rev. J.Cartmel-Robinson argued much the same, op.cit, pp.16,27. The Rev.Conrad Noel had 2 copies of God and My Neighbour, which he liked for its attack on evangelical Christianity - one for himself, and one for lending. See Clarion, 28 October 1904, p.5.

nothing in the controversy which harmed Clarion's sales which leapt from a previously static 41,000 in January 1903, when Blatchford's first article appeared, to 53,500 by the end of the year,¹³⁸ strong evidence of the interest in religion in Socialist circles. But then these were years of considerable religious debate in the movement; Glasier recalled one evening after a meeting of the N.A.C. (c.1901) "our sitting round the fire, when MacDonald, Snowden, Jowett, Benson and myself drifted into making some sort of a confession of our early religious experiences and our beliefs concerning God and the immortality of the soul."¹³⁹ On W.C. Anderson's death in 1919 Philip Snowden recalled a similar occasion when, after another N.A.C. meeting, he and Anderson walked home together talking about their own beliefs in immortality and the

138. Circulation figures printed weekly in Clarion, e.g. 20 February 1904.

139. Labour Leader, 28 September 1916, p.6. J.B.Glasier: "Memories and Reflections".

possibility of the survival of individuality
after death.¹⁴⁰

Glazier had in fact himself rejected the strict Presbyterian Calvinist views of his youth at the age of 17, giving up his intention of training for the ministry after a year spent struggling with "sleepless nights in the torture of doubt" occasioned by his first contact with the scientific theories of Darwin, Tyndall and Huxley. His own rather mystical bent was never altogether satisfied by the scientific agnosticism which he thenceforth adopted as his creed until, in his last years, he came, like his wife, to a mystical immanentist view of the

140. Ibid, 6 March 1919, p.2. It was a phenomenon not confirmed merely to N.A.C. members. Even in the relatively secular atmosphere of the Stepney branch of the I.L.P., Clement Attlee recalled the "great theological discussions" that took place amongst members. C. Attlee : As It Happened (1954), p.37.

world, closely akin to Whitman and Carpenter.¹⁴¹ Unlike Blatchford, he never completely threw off the presuppositions of this earlier Calvinist phase, as is shown by his belief that Socialism involved "the conversion, or redirection of selfishness from a low, savage, self-centred impulse into a social impulse", whereby the individual would come to realise the identity of his own interests with those of the community as a whole, selfishness itself being incapable of extinction - a view not dissimilar from the Calvinist belief in man's sinfulness.¹⁴²

141. For the nature mysticism of his earlier poems and his struggle with rationalism, see e.g. "The Oracles of Night" in On the Road to Liberty. His early religious development is described in the introduction by J.W. Wallace and in W. Whiteley: J. Bruce Glasier. A Memorial (1920), esp. pp. 25 ff. For Glasier's own view, cf. Labour Leader, 10 May 1912, pp. 299-300, J.B. Glasier: "How I Became a Socialist". His Socialism, he believed, came mainly from his boyhood wanderings across the Ayreshire hills, tending sheep and thinking about "religion and how and for what the world was made."

142. Labour Leader, 5 January 1912, p.4. J.B. Glasier: "Towards Socialism in 1912."

v) Socialism as a Moral Crusade: the Influence of Nonconformity Within the I.L.P.

Probably the strongest tradition of thought within the I.L.P. came from the nonconformist chapels, out of which many of the local activists came. Amongst the leadership of the I.L.P. this strand is best represented in Keir Hardie and Philip Snowden. With many similarities to the "Nonconformist Conscience", in its attitude to issues such as the Drink question and the emphasis placed on "character", and in its use of the traditional evangelical language of sin and personal regeneration, of atonement and salvation, it was in essence a plea for economic Socialism as the practical application of the principles of Ethical Christianity to society. In its practical programme and in its language it differed little from much of the more social Radicalism of the Liberal Party, providing much common ground for Parliamentary co-operation in the early years of the 20th Century between the 2 parties.

In their speeches and writings, Snowden and Hardie show all the main characteristics of Nonconformist Socialism, and both, as major Socialist propagandists, were its best-known exponents in the movement. Neither could be regarded as original in his ideas. Both were propagandists rather than theorists, and it is therefore to reports of their speeches and minor pamphlets that we must turn for their teachings. Neither was a prolific writer, Hardie's only substantial Socialist writing being the highly derivative and disappointing From Serfdom to Socialism (1907) , and Snowden's, his Labour and the New World(1921), of which only the section on Guild Socialism shows any originality of thought.

Both Hardie and Snowden were nonconformist lay preachers, Hardie of the

Evangelical Union, a Scottish denomination,¹⁴³
Snowden a Wesleyan; though Hardie by the
1890 s had become highly disillusioned at the
lack of social concern and hypocrisy in
denominational Christianity.¹⁴⁴ Both remained

143. It had been formed after a secession of supporters of Dr. James Morrison, expelled from the United Presbyterian Church for teaching the four "heretical doctrines" (1) That God loves all men; (2) That Christ died for all men; (3) That the Holy Spirit strives with all men; and (4) That all men may be saved if they will, that their damnation does not depend upon God, but upon themselves " - a sort of liberal evangelicalism. The Church was particularly strong amongst the working-class of the industrial West of Scotland. D. Lowe: From Pit to Parliament (1923), p.19.
144. See e.g. his pamphlet "More About Overtoun" (1899), the second of two that year exposing the religious hypocrisy of Lord Overtoun, a churchgoing factory owner and active supporter of Lords' Day Observance when it was a question of allowing Glasgow trams to run on Sundays to enable working people to go out into the country on what was usually their only day off work, but who forced his own employees to work a 7 day week on pain of loss of 2 days' wages. Quoted in ed. Emrys Hughes: Keir Hardie's Speeches and Writings (1888 - 1915) 3rd ed. 1928, p.92 . The deeply personal nature of such attacks resulted from his experience of being sacked as a 9 year old errand boy by a Nonconformist baker, because through the illness of his brother he had twice arrived a few minutes late in one week. It left him with a permanent suspicion of professions of Christian "charity" by the propertied classes. See e.g. K.O. Morgan: Keir Hardie, Radical and Socialist (1975), p.5.

active: Hardie led the P.S.A./Brotherhood Movement's mission to Lille in 1910 to spread Christian Socialism;¹⁴⁵ Snowden was, from June 1909, a member of the editorial board of Christian Commonwealth, and he and his wife both served as Vice-Presidents of the Rev. R.J. Campbell's Progressive League.¹⁴⁶

Snowden, who joined the I.L.P. in 1895, attributed his conversion to Socialism to the articles of Rev. S.E. Keeble, the prominent Wesleyan Christian Socialist, in Great Thoughts which he first came across in 1893 while convalescing from the spinal injury which, in 1891 had ended his employment as a civil service clerk, and left him a cripple for the rest of his life.¹⁴⁷ Born in Cowling, in the West Riding, in 1864, the son of a Radical pro-Chartist weaver and Wesleyan - it was the only chapel in the village, the alternative was the Anglican Church to which the working classes did not go - his parents kept him at

145. Labour Leader, 3 June 1910, p.351.

146. Christian Commonwealth, 30 September 1908, p. 919; 20 October 1909, p.40; 9 October 1912, p.34.

147. Letter P.Snowden to Rev. S.E.Keeble, 26 February 1912 quoted in Maldwyn Edwards: S.E.Keeble (1949), p.90.

school, for the last 3 years as a pupil-teacher, until the age of 15½. His father was then thrown out of work, the family had to move to Nelson, and Philip became an office clerk, before entering the Civil Service. At the time of his conversion to Socialism he was a convinced Radical, a Wesleyan preacher and Sunday School teacher, a teetotaler (he had taken the pledge while at school), and President of the Cowling Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society, all of which influences greatly contributed to his own form of nonconformist working-class Socialism, in which the doctrines of self-help and mutual improvement remained to the fore. Because of his illness there was little he could do except read, and he had been asked to read up the new doctrines of Socialism so that he could give a talk on them at the Cowling Liberal Club. It was this, according to his Autobiography (1934), which began his interest in the new movement. He was soon drawn into the I.L.P., at first joining the Keighley branch with some of his contemporaries from the Cowling Liberal Club. By January 1895 he was arguing in the

local Keighley News against Thrift and Temperance as adequate means of improving working-class conditions without a change in the economic system, and he was lecturing on "The Religion of Socialism" to local I.L.P. branches and Labour Churches. His conversion was complete.¹⁴⁸

Hardie 's development from a Scottish background of working-class nonconformity and self-help Radicalism was similar. Born in 1856 in a one-roomed miner's cottage in Legbrannock, Lanarkshire, and having no formal education, he taught himself to read, with his mother's help, practising reading Pilgrim's Progress by lamplight while working underground as a trapper. He had been an errand boy from the age of 7, and was then 16 years in the mines before becoming secretary of the Hamilton Miners'

148. The best account of his early life is in his own Autobiography (2 vols. 1934), I pp. 8 ff. and cf. Colin Cross: op.cit, pp.1-9, and C.E. Beddifer Roberts: Philip Snowden. An Impartial Portrait, (1929), pp. 1 ff.

Association in 1878 - a familiar pattern in the lives of nearly all the miners' M.P.'s.¹⁴⁹ Brought up an Atheist (his parents were readers of Bradlaugh's National Reformer) he was "converted" in 1878 by a local minister whom he had met at the Hamilton Good Templars' Lodge (he had taken the pledge earlier, at his mother's instigation). As a result he joined the local Evangelical Union, becoming a preacher at street corners and visitor of the sick. Moving to Cumnock in 1881, he became a member of Cumnock Congregational Church, until, in 1884 he led a walkout of 38 members in protest at the forced resignation of their minister for his radical social views by a number of the wealthier members of the congregation. They set up an Evangelical Union Mission, with Hardie as its President. It was the last time he was a regular member of any congregation, though he harangued the 1892 Congregational Union Assembly for their lack of social concern.¹⁵⁰

149. See Appendix.

150. Labour Prophet, November 1892, p.84.

By 1887 he had become disillusioned with the Liberal Party, and with the encouragement of Engels, Eleanor Marx and Aveling, whom he had met in London early that year, opposed the Lib-Labism of Thomas Burt and the other miners' M.P. s at the 1887 T.U.C. Conference. He therefore offered himself as an independent labour candidate at the Mid-Lanark by-election in 1888 in the firm belief that the working-classes could only look to themselves for any genuine attempt at the improvement of social conditions, and helping in the formation of the Scottish Labour Party the same year (it merged with the I.L.P. in 1893). Finally, elected as independent Labour member for West Ham in 1892, he was drawn into the attempt to form the I.L.P., presiding over the 1893 Conference, and

becoming its President a year later.¹⁵¹

Although adopting a "State Socialist" position from the late 1880's and the rudiments of the Marxist analysis of rent

151. For Hardie's early development, see K.O. Morgan: op.cit, pp. 4 ff. and the arguments of F.Reid's "Keir Hardie's Conversion to Socialism" in ed. A. Briggs and J.Saville: Essays in Labour History (1970), pp. 17-46. Reid's basic argument that from 1887-92 Hardie was a secular Marxist, having dropped religion after 1884, and only reviving it in a deliberate opportunist ploy to gain Nonconformist votes at West Ham in 1892 and thereafter, is not convincing and based on little except the dearth of evidence of Hardie's religious convictions from his writings in the intervening years. But the articles Reid cites, dealing largely with matters of trade union organisation, provided little opportunity for the expression of his religious views, which cannot on that basis alone be regarded as non-existent. His speeches in Parliament similarly, after 1892, do not refer to his religious beliefs either, but to argue from such evidence that he was irreligious in this period too would be to fly in the face of hundreds of examples of his speeches outside the Commons demonstrating precisely the opposite - evidence, the non-existence of which for the period 1888-92 proves little.

and interest under Capitalism,¹⁵² Hardie retained much of the thought patterns of

152. See e.g. his attack on Henry George for not realising that interest robs the factory worker of the product of his labour as much as rent does the agricultural labourer, and his advocacy of State Socialism as the only remedy, In ed. E. Hughes: op.cit, pp. 16-18 (from Labour Leader, May and July 1889). His later ideas and opposition to the endeavours of the Anarchists from the 1896 Socialist International Congress suggests a shift away from this view, but he retained a great admiration for Marx and Engels, keeping a portrait of the former prominently displayed in his London rooms, and excusing their hostility to Christianity as due partly to the reactionary nature of continental clericalism in their day and also to the secular spirit of the age in which they wrote, as reflected in other leading thinkers such as Spencer, Mill, Huxley, Tyndall and Darwin. In a series of articles in Labour Leader in August 1910 on Marx's life and work, he even referred to him as "at heart a poet" heavily influenced by the Utopianism of Saint Simon and others (despite Marx's attacks on them). Engels and Eleanor Marx had both joined the I.L.P. in its early days and followed its progress with enthusiasm he noted, and Marx he was sure "would have found its membership congenial". Labour Leader, 24 December 1898, p.419; 3 June 1910, p.351; reviews of J. Spargo: Karl Marx. His Life and Work, 12 August 1910, p.505, 17 August 1910, p. 54, 24 August 1910, p.537.

nonconformist radicalism. Thus his praise for a sermon he had heard in 1885 for its belief that God seeks the repentance and salvation of all "the fallen" was echoed in his 1892 speech to the Congregational Union Assembly, the central argument of which concerned the need for an improvement in those social conditions which were a major impediment to individual regeneration.¹⁵³ This was the gist of his message in his attacks on Lord Overtoun in 1899, where, referring to his own record of temperance and religious work he asserted "I have great faith in the power of Christ's Gospel ... as a regenerating force over the hearts and lives of men, and because of this I want it to have a fair chance to do its work ..." - an argument not dissimilar to that used by General Booth in justification of his Darkest England scheme, and one which Hardie was to use again and again in his

153. His 1885 view quoted in F.Reid: D.Phil.Thesis, pp.81-2. Report of 1892 speech in Labour Prophet, November 1892, p.84.

political speeches to the end of his life.¹⁵⁴

For Hardie, therefore, Socialism was the necessary means of providing an environment in which individual regeneration could take place. It was the necessary corollary of the message of individual salvation to which he had been converted as a young man and to which he remained committed throughout his life.

Attitudes within the I.L.P. to the Drink question provide further evidence of the strength of Nonconformist influence amongst many working class Socialists. Throughout the early years of the Labour Party, too, Drink was a major concern. On his election to the chairmanship of the Parliamentary Labour Party in 1906, Hardie secured a pledge

154. Ed. E. Hughes: op.cit, p.92, and cf. Hardie's speech at Merthyr during 1910 rail strike urging his audience "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth who died to save your souls" to fight against a social system which was "defacing God's image in you", etc. Ibid, pp. 146-7.

from the M.P. s not to touch alcohol while in the precincts of the House of Commons,¹⁵⁵ and the Drink issue figured prominently in his speeches. He was not alone. As late as 1921, Snowden was writing sympathetically of the American experiment in Prohibition, though in Britain he continued to favour the Local Option. In 1908, he had written a 200 page book on the subject - Socialism and the Drink Question, abbreviated as an I.L.P. pamphlet, Socialism and Teetotalism (1909).¹⁵⁶ It was a matter of central concern to many Labour M.P. s, both those who retained their

155. Nan Hardie Hughes, in a biographical note of her father in ed. E. Hughes: op.cit, pp.XI-XII.

156. P.Snowden: Labour and the New World (1921), Ch.X: "Drink", esp. pp. 246-7: During World War I, despite his critical view of the War, he agreed to serve on Lloyd George's Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) as one of the two Labour representatives, and evidently considered the War a good opportunity for introducing stricter regulation of drinking, P.Snowden: Autobiography, Vol.I, esp. pp. 379-81.

links with nonconformity and many whose religious beliefs had lapsed. Almost all the Scottish Labour M.P. s regarded the issue as crucial to Socialist advance, and as late as 1924 the Scottish Divisional Council of the I.L.P. could still vote in favour of total Prohibition by a margin of 2 to 1.¹⁵⁷

Before his conversion to the Socialist economic analysis of the causes of working-class poverty, Hardie had argued (as late as 1886) that a major factor was the amount of working-class incomes spent on drink.¹⁵⁸

But his acceptance of rent and interest as the real culprits altered his view only to the extent that drunkenness became a "symptom" rather than in itself a "moral disease", together with such other vices as "gambling,

157. Christian World, 10 January 1924, p.5.

158. In ed. A. Briggs and J.Saville, op.cit, p.33.

immorality and profligacy."¹⁵⁹ The abolition of all such vices and the raising of standards of morality and social purity as a central Socialist concern were thus taken wholesale from nonconformist radicalism into the emerging working-class Socialist movement. Snowden's views indicate this same transition. In Socialism and Teetotalism he also argued that drink was as much a symptom as a cause of working class poverty. But that could be no excuse for moral laxity on the part of Socialists who could not afford to indulge in a practice which only "wastes their meagre means, ruins their minds and bodies, and lessens their power to fight for better conditions." This was especially true of those who were to lead the Labour Movement. Of these, especially high moral standards were to be demanded. "Those who are going to lead

159. Labour Leader, 17 April 1897, p.125. Estimating National Income at £1,450 m. p.a., he agreed that the working classes spent no more than £90 m. on drink, whereas at least £730 m. went to landlords and capitalists in the form of rent and interest.

others must have learnt to master themselves." Socialism and moral purity were thus inextricably interwoven.¹⁶⁰

Snowden's writings typify the moral preoccupations of nonconformity of his day. His Christian Socialism, too, embodied the then current arguments of nonconformist Socialism and provides perhaps the clearest statement of this outlook. The title of an article he wrote for the Labour Prophet in April 1898, "The Two Salvations", is indicative of the indebtedness of his views to the evangelicalism of his early manhood. It was, however, a modified evangelicalism, for, under the influence of parents who themselves disbelieved in Hell on moral grounds, and his own failure to achieve a "conversion experience" during a religious revival meeting at the age of 8, he had come to believe that the true meaning of

160. P.Snowden: Socialism and Teetotalism (1909), pp.5-6. Drink, he saw as a threat to the healthy development of the race, citing British and American medical evidence linking parental drinking habits to mental deficiency in their children.

salvation was salvation from sin itself rather than its consequences (i.e. Hell).¹⁶¹ This view, typical among liberal nonconformists, and lying at the root of the moralism of the "nonconformist conscience", led Snowden to see "the two salvations" as both individual and social. Thus he argued, "It is the conditions under which the people are compelled by our industrial system to live which inevitably breed the class of people whose character we so much deplore. To change these conditions, which are preventing the individual regeneration of the masses, is the social salvation which it is necessary to preach and put into practice as the complement to the preaching of individual salvation." And it was Socialism alone which could provide a practical solution to the social

161. Labour Prophet, April 1898, pp. 169-70: P.Snowden: "The Two Salvations". His Autobiography suggests it was at the age of 12, and that his father sent him home to bed. But his memory may have been at fault. He recalled his mother's bluntly practical rejection to her Calvinist Baptist brother-in-law's views: "You say that God loves us as we love our own children. Do you think I would put one of my children into hell fire? No! not how bad he'd been." P.Snowden: An Autobiography, I, pp. 20,29.

problem, and which alone conformed to principles of Christian justice.¹⁶²

But it was his popular Socialist address The Christ that is to Be, given throughout the country on his lecturing tours, and reprinted several times as an I.L.P. pamphlet which provides the clearest statement of the basic tenets of nonconformist Socialism. It too was a call for a social as well as an individual interpretation of Christianity, but one based on an appeal to Christ's life and teaching as an example of the highest potential in man. According to Snowden, the appeal of Christ's ethical teachings was quite independent of any dogmatic beliefs, or even of any belief in the actual historicity of Christ himself. Scientific discoveries might change man's view of the world, modern Biblical researches might modify or even completely transform man's understanding of the Biblical narratives, yet the principles Christ taught and lived remain eternally valid in the experience of mankind.

162. Labour Prophet, April 1898, pp. 164-70, op.cit.

These principles, "the foundation of Christ's teaching", could be summed up "as the law of sacrifice, the saving of the individual life by losing the individual life in the common life ... proved by scientific discovery and by all human experience to be the fundamental law of life, the law by which the mother rears her child, the law which holds and binds men together in society." Human history showed that mankind had advanced not through competition, selfishness and conflict, but through love, association, and co-operation, and by the willingness of individuals to sacrifice themselves as Christ had done for what they knew to be right. It was, in essence, the same argument as that of Kropotkin in support of "mutal aid" as the prime factor in evolution, only Snowden gave it a Christian as well as scientific basis. And as with Blatchford, with his "religion of altruism", so Snowden believed this to be the "religion of the future ... of the common life", recognising the unity of all men. "We have, by historical development, reached the stage when we are entering on a new historical era, when the dominating ideal shall be not

individualism, but the social ideal, not the idea of man as an independent individual, but the idea of the individual as a member of the social body ... The political democracy, dominated by the social ideal, will be the coming of Christ to rule the nations in righteousness."¹⁶³

Being largely the application of already held religious ideals to social life, this type of Socialism was conceived by its holders as a part of their religious faith rather than as a set of practical policies or economic theories, on which aspects they tended to be characteristically vague and woolly. It was a tendency summed up in Hardie's expressed belief that speculation on the exact form of Socialist institutions was unnecessary. When the need arose such problems would resolve themselves. Meanwhile what was needed was to make Socialists.¹⁶⁴ Socialism was thus conceived of as leading to a society in which men would be motivated by the ideals of service, love and brotherhood rather than as being merely

163. P.Snowden: The Christ that is to Be (n.d.) passim.

164. J.K.Hardie: From Serfdom to Socialism, p.96.

a system of economic organisation. It was here that many I.L.P. ers parted company with the S.D.F. whom they felt regarded common ownership of the means of production as an end in itself instead of being but "the economic expression of the spirit of Socialism" and a means to an end, that end being Socialism, a complete way of life rather than any mere economic system.¹⁶⁵

Thus "the true test of progress is ... the elevation of a people as a whole" rather than just accumulation of wealth, and "the ideal industrial system" was not necessarily the most efficient, but "that which produces the largest number of healthy, whole-souled,

165. Hardie in ed. Hughes, op.cit., p.109, in criticism of the S.D.F. whose "propaganda of class hatred" he felt could never bring true Socialism, and cf. Snowden's similar rejection of appeals to class hatred in Socialism and Syndicalism (1913), pp. 77-8.

well-ordered human beings."¹⁶⁶ Judged by such criteria, 19th Century British laissez-faire Capitalism clearly fell far short

166.

Hansard, (4th Series), Vol. XCII, 23 April 1901, Col. 1176-80. Labour Leader, May Day Supplement, 29 April 1910, p.3, and cf Snowden's view that the production of wealth isn't an end in itself and that the purpose of labour and wealth production should be to "make the largest number of noble and happy human beings". P.Snowden: The Living Wage (1912), p.166. Snowden's own conception of such a society was largely coloured by that of Morris, a favourite author. See, e.g. his description of his ideal in The Christ that is to Be, pp. 15-16, whereas Hardie tended towards (his own words) "Free Communism", when men would be motivated solely by Altruism and there would no longer be any need for restraint or State organisation; but he accepted it was no more than a vague hope. Labour Leader, 8 June 1895, p.2; 4 January 1896, p. 3 and cf. Hardie's views in ed. A.Reid: The New Party, p.380.

of the ideal and needed replacement. On this all schools of Socialist thought were agreed. It was on the question of practical reforms that men such as Hardie and Snowden were so weak, hence the tendency of Labour in Parliament to become little more than an adjunct of the Liberals, with many of whose policies after 1906, rooted in a similar nonconformist background, they largely sympathised.

vi) Socialism as the Goal of Ethical Evolution:
the Writings of J. Ramsay MacDonald.

A rather different tradition is represented in the writings of Ramsay MacDonald, almost universally recognised by his contemporaries as political Socialism's most outstanding intellectual figure, Parliamentary strategist, the effective architect, through his secretaryship of the L.R.C. after 1900, of Labour's Parliamentary representation, and first

Labour Prime Minister.¹⁶⁷ Through his writings and speeches, it was MacDonald above all who gave to the new party a coherent philosophy of evolutionary Socialist advance through Parliamentary reform.

MacDonald's ideas, as he himself recognised, were in that same tradition of American Transcendentalism and British Neo-Hegelianism, which was a source of inspiration to many Socialists and New Liberals

167. e.g. Hardie's assessment of him as the Socialist Movement's "biggest intellectual asset", in G.Elton: The Life of James Ramsay MacDonald, q.p. 149 from a report of 1909 I.L.P. Conf., and of Attlee's view on his death, Hansard (5th Series), Vol. 328, col. 1804, regarding him as "one of the three or four men most responsible for the creation and development of the Labour Party". On his effective control of policy even his bitterest critics were agreed, e.g. Justice, 11 January, 1913, p.2: W.R. MacDonald by "Thersites", attacking the pro-Liberalism of one who "has succeeded in imposing himself and his ideas upon the Parliamentary Labour Party in a quite extraordinary fashion".

For a similar estimate by Lansbury, cf. Justice, 7 December 1912, pp.6-7.

from the 1890's onwards.¹⁶⁸ He was himself a member and onetime secretary of the Fellowship of the New Life, a Fabian (and E.C. member 1894-1900), active in the Ethical Societies, and for many years secretary of the Rainbow Circle (he was still a member in 1911)¹⁶⁹ in all of which bodies Socialists and New Liberals met and discussed freely. And it is not without significance that a number of those who came from these circles into Parliament as Liberals in 1906, found their way into the Labour Party, and into Labour Governments led by MacDonald, a man with whom they had shared

168. Socialist Review, October-December 1918, p.320. J.R.MacDonald reviewing Wayfarings, the autobiography of W.J.Jupp, a leading member of the Fellowship of the New Life recalled "Thoreau, Whitman, Edward Carpenter, Emerson; the love of nature, the revolution in science, the New Hegelianism" as "the spiritual sources of the movement".

169. Second Chambers in Practice: Being the Papers of the Rainbow Circle Session 1910-11(1911), MacDonald gave a paper.

and discussed ideas of social reform over more than two decades, and with whose outlook they had much in common. MacDonald's Socialist writings thus provide a link between the two main elements which combined to make Labour the second party in Britain between the Wars - the working-class Socialists and trades unionists of the pre-war Labour Party and the middle-class Socialists, Fabians and ex-Liberals who came into the Party in large numbers after 1918.

Born in Lossiemouth , the illegitimate son of a farmworker, in 1866, MacDonald first became involved in the Socialist Movement while working as an assistant to an Anglican vicar, running a church youth club in Bristol in 1885. There he joined the Bristol S.D.F., a rather uncharacteristic branch, acting as its librarian after Edward Carpenter had donated £5 for the purchase of books.¹⁷⁰ He had been

170. D.Marquand: Ramsay MacDonald (1977), pp.16-17.
G.Elton: op.cit, pp.43-8. The Branch, which owed far more to the ideals of Carpenter or Morris to those of Hyndman and the London S.D.F., seceded in December 1885 to become the Bristol Socialist Society, which later included Katherine St John Conway and the Stacy s as members.

introduced to Socialist ideas by his "Dominie" (schoolmaster), an "Auld Kirk Tory" to whom he had become assistant at the age of 16, some 3 years before going to Bristol. He had lent MacDonald some copies of the Christian Socialist in which J.L. Joynes and other early members of the S.D.F. had written, and it stirred his imagination.¹⁷¹ Having found the S.D.F. uncongenial, in London, in 1886, he joined the Socialist Union, a shortlived body whose members had seceded from the S.D.F. in 1885 over the Tory Gold scandal.

171. G.Elton, op.cit, p.33. According to this schoolmaster, before he left Lossiemouth, MacDonald had "developed a strong interest in politics, notably Socialism". L-N Le Roux : J.Ramsay MacDonald. Sa Vie, Son Oeuvre et Sa Pensée (1919), pp.13-14. For a few months, back in Lossiemouth in 1885-6, MacDonald founded a local S.D.F. branch which died when he left for London.

172. He was on the editorial board of its shortlived organ the Socialist (July-December 1886). It contains one of the earliest expressions of his views, an article attacking the superior, patronising attitude of comfortably-off West End ladies, living off incomes stolen from the poor they professed to be helping, involved in charitable activities in the East End, and arguing the need for the economic justice of Socialism as the only real solution to society's ills, Ibid, Vol.I, No. 2 August 1886, p.10, J.R. MacDonald, "Philanthropists' Troubles".

Through his old schoolmaster, MacDonald had also been introduced to the works of Emerson, Carlyle, Thoreau and Ruskin.¹⁷³ In London, from 1886, MacDonald began to attend the South Place Ethical Society, beginning a long association with the Ethical Movement, and in 1890 joined the Fellowship of the New Life, both movements being inspired by the ideas of the British Idealists and American Transcendentalists. Although from a background of Scottish Presbyterianism and Radicalism, an early interest in science had caused him to question the traditional creeds, and by the age of 12 he was asking at the Free Kirk Sunday School how Elijah's chariot could have ascended into Heaven since its wheels had only air to grip.¹⁷⁴ But a basically religious

173. See Footnote 171 above. G.Elton,op.cit.,p.33.

174. Ibid, p.38: He retained his interest in science, studying in his spare time for a scholarship at the South Kensington Museum in 1887 until his health collapsed and he had to give up the idea.

nature found a merely negative criticism of traditional orthodox beliefs unsatisfactory, and he came to believe with Emerson that each "new generation of men should take up an original relation to the Universe ... We have to make our own individual relationship with the Universe." 175

He was also much interested in the writings of the 17th Century mystic, Emmanuel Swedenborg, for their insistence on man's "inner light" as the source of morality and religious beliefs, and came himself to believe that "the unseen" speaks "directly" to the human heart and not through the intellect. The essential part of religion therefore was direct personal communion with "the unseen", from whose presence within ourselves our notions of "justice, mercy and righteousness" are derived and by whose presence in our fellow

175. Forward, 29 June 1918, p.2. Speech at a U.D.C. meeting in Glasgow recalling his indebtedness to Emerson for his religious ideas.

men we recognise them as brothers.¹⁷⁶

This quest for communion with "the unseen" remained with MacDonald throughout his life, prompting regular lone walking expeditions on deserted moorsides and numerous articles recounting such feelings as his sense of "the Eternal, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable" while inside Saint Sophia, Constantinople, or his sense of "the prayer of the imperfect yearning for perfection, of the dependent and passing trusting to the Omnipotent and the eternal" in the darkness of the Saxon Church at Bradford on Avon.¹⁷⁷

176. For a full statement of these views, see e.g. Ethical World, 2 July 1898, pp.418-9, J.R.MacDonald: "The Protestant Succession", and in B.Sacks: J.Ramsay MacDonald (1952), pp.133-5, an unpublished essay by MacDonald: "on Religion the Conduct of Life and Man's Relations to the Unseen". For similar reasons MacDonald noted his indebtedness to Carpenter in ed. G.Beith: Edward Carpenter: In Appreciation (1931), pp.132-5.

177. Many such descriptions are published in 2 volumes of his collected essays: Wanderings and Excursions (1925) and At Home and Abroad (1936), the introduction to the latter arguing the importance of such experiences for his political beliefs.

These twin attitudes, of rejection of past dogmas as meaningless, and a concentration on individual religious experience and the inner light as the source of man's moral values, were, as we have already noted, prevalent amongst numbers of progressive, mainly middle-class, intellectuals in the late 19th Century, particularly in London in the circles in which MacDonald was spending much of his time. The Liberal, Haldane, and Beatrice Webb, held similar views, and they were basic to the assumptions of many of those most actively involved in the Ethical Societies, and the New Fellowship; MacDonald's friend, the economist J.A. Hobson, providing yet another example of this outlook.¹⁷⁸ In such cases they usually corresponded with socially progressive or more definitely Socialist (although invariably evolutionary) political beliefs. Typical of this outlook were the reasons MacDonald gave as to "Why I am a Socialist" in the Puritan (1899). "Progress in civilised

178.

See above, pp. 78, pp. 81 ff.

communities", he explained, "arises from moral not from material causes." Social evolution was thus the result of man's innate moral sense. And "the end" of this moral progress was a society in which there would be "the highest liberty of the individual". For MacDonald as for others of this viewpoint, however, liberty was defined in a positive sense, not as the mere absence of restraint, but as a positive inward state "of moral relationship to others". The traditional policies of Radicalism - a democratic franchise, religious equality, free trade and elementary education - having won individual liberty in the negative sense of freedom from restraint, had proved inadequate in this latter sense. A new conception of liberty, which would be both moral and social, was therefore necessary, and it was this which Socialism could provide.¹⁷⁹

179. The Puritan, Vol.1, pp. 634-8. J.R.MacDonald: "Why I am a Socialist". For another statement of this viewpoint, see in ed. Stanton Coit: Ethical Democracy (1900), pp.60-80, J.R.MacDonald: "The People in Power".

It was these assumptions of the aim of Socialism, shared with many New Liberals who did not necessarily go all the way in support of its economic policies, which MacDonald brought into the Socialist Movement, when he finally gave up his hopes of a restructured Liberal Party as the vehicle of a progressive alliance of reformers, Socialists and Labour, and joined the I.L.P. in July 1894.¹⁸⁰

Within the Movement, apart from his lecturing and administrative duties, which increased considerably with his election as secretary of the newly-formed Labour Representation Committee in 1900, MacDonald

180. G.Elton, op.cit, p.68-9. MacDonald's letter to Hardie, 15 July 1894, applying for membership, states his long-held agreement with the aims of the I.L.P. but his belief until then that the Liberal Party offered the best means of achieving them. In Labour Leader, 28 July 1894, p.2, and cf. D.Marquand's view, op.cit, pp. 32 ff.

devoted much of his energies to questions of Socialist theory. He edited the I.L.P.'s "Library of Socialist thinkers," in which his own Socialism and Society (1905) and Socialism and Government (2 volumes, 1909) appeared. He founded and edited the Socialist Review (1908-1926)¹⁸¹ in which many of his articles appeared, and also wrote regularly in Labour Leader and Forward, the Scottish-based I.L.P. weekly, in addition to much occasional writing elsewhere. The main outlines of his Socialist theories he set out in the two works mentioned above plus Socialism (1907), The Socialist Movement (1911) and Socialism: Critical and Constructive (1921).¹⁸²

181. From 1912-1914, while MacDonald was Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, Glasier acted as editor, MacDonald resuming the editorship on the outbreak of war and his consequent resignation from the Party leadership.

182. He also produced works dealing with current topics of dispute in the Movement, such as Syndicalism (1912), The Social Unrest (1913), Parliament and Revolution (1919) and Parliament and Democracy (1920) - this last dealing with Guild Socialist ideas.

In these works, Macdonald's underlying aim was to provide for the Socialist Movement, in conscious opposition, as he himself stated, to the Marxist economic determinism and class war attitudes of the S.D.F., "a statement of Socialism which would deal with the deeper processes of social evolution, and not merely with surface appearances, and which would be in accordance with conceptions of human solidarity on a moral plain, and not merely of sectional conflicts on an economic level."¹⁸³ It was an attitude completely in

183. In Labour Leader, 29 September 1905, p.307, J.R.MacDonald: "Socialism and Society: A Reply to My Critics". His rejection of Marx was not, as stated in the introduction to ed. B.Barker: Ramsay MacDonald's Political Writings (1992), p.33, due to MacDonald's lack of "an analysis of labour" and his consequent "focus on industry rather than labour and capital". With Glasier, Hardie and other I.L.P. ers, he rejected it on ethical grounds, because Marx's own rejection of moral idealism as the motivating force behind social advance "gave no ground for hope that Socialism would be an improvement on existing conditions". Labour Leader, 29 September 1905, p.307, op.cit., and cf. his objections to Marx in J.R. MacDonald: Socialism and Society (1905), esp. p. 101. Barker's own Marxist bias leads him to completely misunderstand the ethical roots of MacDonald's evolutionary Socialist theories.

accord with his earlier beliefs, and provides the key to a proper understanding of his theory of evolutionary Socialist advance, and one which he reiterated throughout his Socialist writings.¹⁸⁴

Underlying the conflicts and advances in society throughout human history had been the conflict between the human spirit and the economic and social organisation of the day, between man's sense of the ideal (a product of the working of the "unseen" within man) and the reality of the injustices and shortcomings of daily life. To MacDonald it was the workings of "the divine idea which is unfolding itself by the movements and conflicts which form the subject matter of human history", which in the

184. See his Preface (July 1924) to the 2nd edition of Socialism: Critical and Constructive, emphasising the importance of the human spirit as the motive force behind social change.

past had inspired movements such as the early Christians, the friars, the Münster Anabaptists, and all such who had been fired by a vision of the Kingdom of God on earth. Today that spirit had returned in the hopes of the modern Socialist Movement.¹⁸⁵

Together with Morris and many other Socialists, MacDonald's primary objection to industrial Capitalism was its dehumanising effect on labour. Mechanisation, and the increasing division of labour, may have led to greater efficiency of production, but it had had the effect of reducing craftsmen to mere machine hands, "a deterioration of human qualities". Thus in Socialism he took the example of the boot and shoe industry in his own constituency, Leicester, to show how mechanisation had had the effect of reducing once self-sufficient craftsmen to mere slaves

185. Constructive Quarterly, December 1913, Vol.1, No.4, pp. 711-18. J.R.Macdonald: "Religion and the Labour Movement", and cf. MacDonald's views in ed. W.Forbes Gray: Non-Church-Going. Its Reasons and Remedies (1911), pp.57-69.

of machines and the men who own them, since, divorced from access to the necessary machines, the worker is now no more than "an unskilled labourer". Mechanisation had therefore led to "a serious limitation of liberty" for the individual worker, for whereas "the man who makes whole things can be the master of himself; the man who makes part of one thing must be a slave to someone else." But MacDonald's solution, unlike Morris's, was not a return to craft production. Such would be to go backwards, not forwards. Rather, he put his faith in the abolition of private Capitalist ownership, together with its dangers of exploitation of labour, and its replacement by social ownership. Under the new system, with production for use and not for profit, with the elimination of competition and therefore of waste, and with further technological advances, labour would not have to face uncertainty and unemployment. Instead it could look forward to greater leisure opportunities in which men could each develop their own individual tastes and capacities, which, crushed and physically

exhausted under Capitalist exploitation,
men were in no physical or mental condition
to do.¹⁸⁶

Accepting that machine production had
come to stay, MacDonald was careful to make
clear his belief that under Socialism it would
be used not for ever increasing production
for its own sake, but for the fulfilment of
needs. Above all, the aim of Socialism was
"liberty" in the sense that "every man should
be regarded as an end in himself and not as a
means to another man's end." Socialism
therefore set out to give each man "an equal
right ... to self-development."¹⁸⁷ In a very
real sense, as he stated in Socialism and
Government, it is the responsibility of the
State to "force the individual to be free."

186. J.R.MacDonald: Socialism (1907), esp. pp.
64-73, 87, 92, and cf. a similar view in
J.R.MacDonald: The Socialist Movement (1911),
pp. 178-85.

187. The Socialist Movement, p.XI, Socialism and
Government (1909, 2 Vols.) II, p.157.

And he envisaged as his ideal for the ultimate development of human society, an existence closely akin to the libertarian visions of Morris and Kropotkin, in which man, in fulfilment of his moral nature, would come totally to obey the dictates of his own "inner light" and, therefore, restraints no longer being necessary, the State and its laws would cease to exist. Such an ideal, however, was a long way off, and though it might inspire, it was not to be confused with reality. The future perfections of humanity "must grow from its present imperfections, and the task of the social reformer who works for permanent results is to begin improving with the material which he has at hand. Ideals are only valuable when they are used for the practical purpose of regenerating the existing realities."¹⁸⁸

In Socialism and Society MacDonald attempted a realistic appraisal of the forces in society

188. Socialism and Government, I, pp.1-2,7, 11.

making for such progress and the difficulties facing the reformer who sought to hasten their advance. His chief aim was to make the Socialist Movement aware of the impossibility of bringing about a Socialist Utopia overnight, and it was for this reason that the organic metaphor was employed. The Socialist reformer could not start like a painter with a clean canvas and create his new society out of his own head. He was far more limited in his opportunities than that. Instead, he found himself in an already existing society at a particular stage in a constant process of development which he could neither stop nor ignore. If he was to accomplish any part of his aims, therefore, he had to recognise the extremely limited nature of his own power to change society for his own ends, and seek to understand and harness the forces within society making for social progress.

For MacDonald, the chief lesson to be learnt from history was "not the free play of the individual will in determining the character and direction of human activities, but

the almost absolute control of the social organism." On rare occasions individuals may have modified that organism. And here MacDonald cited "the soldier, the preacher, the thinker, the inventor, the organiser of industry." But on the whole, modifications of the "structure of society" with a "consequent change of the functions which individuals are called upon to perform", which was, after all, the daunting task which the Socialist had set as his ultimate aim, usually were the result rather of "many small changes ... than a few great alterations." Thus the way forward was likely to be long and slow.¹⁸⁹ And in this progress there were 2 chief forces at work. Firstly there was technological advance which modified patterns of production and therefore life-styles. Secondly, there was that moral force which was the source of men's ideals and of "the disquietude and discontent of individuals who demand from Society better moral results than Society in its existing constitution can give". It was this second force which MacDonald saw as the predominating

189. Socialism and Society, esp. Ch.2: "Society and the Individual", esp. pp. 19, 22, 43, 44.

influence of the future with the coming of democracy, and of man's increasing success in the battle for survival and the control of nature.¹⁹⁰

For MacDonald, "Socialism without a fine public spirit will not work." For him "the essential purpose" of the Socialist Movement was the "putting an end to an 'acquisitive society' and establishing in its place one of co-operative service."¹⁹¹ Capitalism existed because of the acquisitive instinct in man. Under a democracy it would be replaced only when the Socialist instinct of service overcame that instinct in man. In this process of evolution towards a Socialist morality, however, democracy itself played an educative role in that it demanded of the individual just those

190. Ibid, pp. 22-3, 37.

191. Forward, 8 September 1923, p.1; 27 March 1926, p.9. Such arguments formed the staple of his attack on those in the I.L.P. leadership in the 1920 s who believed "Socialism in Our Time" could be legislated into being in a matter of weeks.

very qualities of participation,
responsibility and service on which the
future advance of society would depend.¹⁹²
Hence in The Socialist Movement he could look
forward to the slow, but nevertheless
inevitable evolution towards the Socialist
goal, as "changed opinions and outlooks ...
have a steady and uninterrupted influence on
administration and legislation. What cannot
be done at a ballot box in a democracy
cannot be done at a barricade."¹⁹³ This
outlook also offered accommodation to those
social reformers who were not, as yet,
completely convinced of the need for the full
package of Socialist measures but who might
wish to travel some considerable way in the
collectivist direction. To them, MacDonald's
message was clear: "under democratic government
we can never have more Socialism at any given
time than human nature will stand, and that

192. J.R.MacDonald: Character and Democracy (1908),
p.13, and cf. his essay "The People in Power",
reiterating the same viewpoint in ed. S.Coit:
Ethical Democracy (1900), pp.60-80.

193. The Socialist Movement, p.111.

settles the question."¹⁹⁴ Although infuriating many left-wing critics, therefore, MacDonald's deeply cautious, evolutionary Socialist outlook, attracting widespread moderate support, eminently suited him to his role in the transformation of Labour from a mere sectional interest into the second party in the realm, and the only viable vehicle of social reform after the First World War.

194. Socialism, p.108.

CHAPTER 5:

THE REALIGNMENT OF THE LEFT - LABOUR'S RISE TO GOVERNMENT

i) Introductory: Social Radicals, Socialists and party politics before 1914

In 1900, the setting up of the Labour Representation Committee, out of which the Labour Party was born, passed virtually unnoticed by the press. Yet in little more than two decades, Labour had replaced the Liberals as the major political party of the Left in Britain. Growing working-class disillusion at the Liberal Party's refusal to adopt trade union candidates had been a significant factor in the development of independent labour politics since the early 1890s, yet as late as 1914 there seemed little likelihood of Labour seriously challenging the Liberal's leading position on the Left. Although there were tensions in the relationship, the Liberal-Labour alliance, with Labour remaining very much the junior partner, seemed accepted by both as a fact of political life for the foreseeable future.

The extension of the franchise in 1918, by increasing the working class vote, undoubtedly helped Labour improve its position, but without the substantial transference of party loyalties to Labour both of most of the leading exponents of the New Liberalism, and also, of a sizeable proportion of former Conservatives, Labour's rise to power could not have taken place. Its occasion was the break-up of the Liberal Party under the strains imposed on it by the exigencies of total war, but the substantial transfer of progressive allegiances to Labour was greatly eased by the essential similarities of political outlook between the Socialism of the Labour Party and the Social Radicalism of various groups

outside it. This chapter seeks to trace the process whereby its adherents transferred their political allegiance to Labour in the years following the outbreak of war in 1914.

The setting up of the Labour Representation Committee at a Conference of Trades Union and Socialist delegates held on 27 February 1900, to which the Labour Party traces its origins, marked a growing acceptance among trades unionists of the weakness of Labour's impact on legislation despite its numerical strength within many constituencies. The Taff Vale judgement shocked many trades unionists with its demonstration of their vulnerability within the law. Although the Lib-Lab policy of many of the old guard of the TUC, and in particular the miners' unions, had resulted in the appearance of a number of working-men MP s for the first time in Parliament, their impact on the mass of the Parliamentary Liberal Party had been slight. Labour issues remained well down the list of Liberal priorities.¹ Working-class candidates were finding great difficulty in being selected as Liberal candidates, despite the support of trades councils and union branches. Wealthier members of local Liberal Associations, by threatening to withdraw funds, often effectively vetoed such candidatures - Ramsey MacDonald's rejection by the Liberals at Southampton as their second candidate in the 2-member seat just prior to the 1895 Election despite his obvious working-class support being but one more example of this process.² In his case it led him into the ILP. Others swallowed such disappointments and retained their traditional

1. A.K. Russell: Liberal Landslide: The General Election of 1906 (1973) pp. 65 ff and esp. p. 65 fig. 1.

2. For an account of this see D. Marquand op cit pp. 35-7.

loyalties, though hardly without some disillusionment. George Edwards, son of a farmworker and full-time organiser of the Norfolk Agricultural Workers Union, retained a wary Liberal allegiance despite finding on his nomination as a Lib-Lab County Council candidate in 1892, that the leading local Liberals both nominated and actively supported the Conservative candidate against him. He remained a Liberal until his union affiliated to the Labour Party in 1918, when he became the candidate for Norfolk South, the seat he represented in Parliament after 1922.³ The result of such continuing affronts came in the decision of the TUC. to support moves to set up a committee to co-ordinate Labour representation in alliance with the ILLP, the Fabians and the SDF. who had a long commitment to industrial reforms and labour representation.

The history of the next decade, of the secret agreement between the Liberal Chief Whip and the Secretary of the LRC to secure a free run for 30 Labour candidates in predominantly working-class seats and the close association of the Labour MP s after 1906 with the Liberal Government,⁴ would all tend to suggest that the LRC, at least in the first instance, was seen more as a pressure group on the Liberals than as a

3. G. Edwards: From Crow-Scaring to Westminster (1922). Having expected full Liberal support he was greatly disillusioned. He wrote (p. 61): "I lost faith in their sincerity. It was evident they were not prepared to assist the working men to take their share in the government of the country. The contest was turned at once into a class contest. Many of the leading Liberals, as well as the Tories, expressed their disgust at a working-man having the audacity to fight for a seat on the Norfolk County Council against a local landlord."

4. In this respect it is significant that the Liberal Year Book up to 1918 was still listing all Liberal and Labour MP's together under the one heading in alphabetical order with only an asterisk to distinguish Labour from Liberal. W.T. Stead's article in Review of Reviews Vol. 33 (1906) pp 563-82 makes no distinction between LRC. and Lib-Lab MP's lumping them all together as Labour members.

definite rival, and certainly until 1918, when Labour fielded 361 candidates, its reluctance to enter 3-cornered fights except where local associations were adamant appears to confirm this impression. Thus in 1906 of 56 contests, 31 were straight fights with Unionists, in January 1910, 51 out of 78, while in December 1910, after the reduction of the Liberals to dependence on Irish and Labour support in January, in only 11 of the 56 contests where there were Labour candidates did Liberals and Labour fight each other, the most frequent result of such disunity being a Unionist victory.⁵ Thus rarely before 1918 were electors asked to choose between the 2 parties, although Liberal-Conservative alliances were also increasing in local elections - in Bradford for example - to keep Labour out in the years immediately ^{prior} to 1914.⁶

In London, too, the Progressive Alliance usually succeeded in harnessing the efforts of Liberals, Fabians and even prominent LLRers such as Frank Smith in common opposition to the Tory-Anglican alliance of Moderate Reformers, though this again was beginning to break down with the increasing intervention of Labour candidates in LCC elections after 1907.⁷ The alliance of Liberals and Labour in London in the 1890's is well illustrated by the case of Percy Alden the Radical Lib-Lab MP for Tottenham North (1910-18) and Labour

5. A.K. Russell op cit p. 203; Neal Blewett The Peers, The Parties and the People: The General Elections of 1910 (1972) pp 241, 265.

6. see C. Cook "Labour and the Downfall of the Liberal Party" in ed. C. Cook and A. Sked Crisis and Controversy (1976) pp 38-65 which argues that there was a steady decline in Liberal fortunes and resurgence of Conservatism in the major towns and cities to 1913 together with some rise in the Labour vote. In Bradford it seems the Lib-Con alliance resulted in the Liberals losing their working-class radical support to Labour.

7. Paul Thompson: op cit pp 225 ff.

MP for Tottenham South (1923-4) who was elected to the West Ham Borough Council in 1892, and two years later joined the Labour Group of which he remained a member. He was one of the many who had hoped for a permanent alliance of Liberals and Labour and in 1927 he supported Lloyd George's Yellow Book. As a member of the Fabians (he was on its EC, 1903-7) and of the Rainbow Circle, from the late 1890's, the two chief bodies in which progressive social reformers of all shades of opinion met to share their ideas, he was typical of a large number of Socialists and Radicals whose allegiances straddled the bounds of strict party politics, many of whom, from the SDF theorist E.B. Bax to Anglican clergy such as Rev J.G. Adderley, happily combined a Socialist outlook with membership of the National Liberal Club, the 15 member committee of which, in 1892 included no less than 7 Fabians, including Webb, Olivier, Pease, Wallas, J.F. Oakeshott and H.W. Massingham.⁸ Indeed the Fabians, were typical of a wide tendency amongst the London left-wing intelligentsia of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras in their oscillation between seeing the potential of a rejuvenated Liberal Party as the vehicle for the social transformation they desired, and in their disillusionment with the reality of Liberalism in office (both in 1892-5 and after 1906) seeking rather a realignment of the left and the creation of a new party based on an alliance of working-class trades unionists and socialists of the ILP, together with themselves and their sympathisers freed from the impasse into which the old Liberalism had led them.

8. M.S. Wilkins: The Influence of Socialist Ideas on English Prose Writing and Political Thinking 1880-95 (Cambridge Ph.D. Thesis, August 1957) p. 179

The pre-war Labour Party, with its strongly working-class and nonconformist Lib-Lab trades unionist rather than Socialist complexion, appeared no more likely to gain the full support of Liberals of the intellectual Left than the ILP had done on its own in the 1890's. With the exception of the ILP Socialists MacDonald, Hardie, Snowden, Curran, Jowett (elected 1906) and Lansbury and Tillet (1910), together with the SDFers O'Grady (1906) and Thorne (1910), its MPs were indistinguishable from their Liberal counterparts, save in their working-class origins. Indeed, after the adhesion of the Miners to Labour in 1909 and hence of their MPs who had been previously elected under Liberal auspices, the Lib-Lab complexion of the Labour Party was strengthened rather than weakened. Until 1922 its MPs were solidly working-class, and remained almost as solidly wedded to largely traditional Liberal Party values. MacDonald's election to the leadership in 1911 came about more because of his exceptional intellectual capacities and organising skills than because he was representative of the general run of Labour MPs. His own leadership recognised, until the War split Liberalism, the futility of Labour attempting to break out of the Lib-Lab alliance. For the realities of electoral contests showed the potentially catastrophic results to Labour of Liberal opposition in seats it then held - the loss of Hanley and N.E. Derbyshire in 1912 and 1914 to Liberals indicated that clearly enough.

Up to 1914, the Labour Party therefore offered no real policy alternatives to the programme of Liberalism that might have appealed to intellectuals of the Left. Nor indeed,

with its maximum contingent in a General Election before 1918 of 78 (in January 1910) did Labour offer any electoral alternative at all to voting Liberal in the vast majority of the 560 seats outside Ireland for those who, whatever Liberalism's failings, saw in post-Salisbury Conservatism the implacable opponent of real measures of social reform.

Throughout the period from the 1890's until the Liberal Party finally split owing to the tensions created by the First World War, there was a feeling amongst the intelligentsia of the left that a realignment of their forces and the creation of a new democratic party combining Left Liberals, Socialists and trades unionists was not only necessary but imminent. This common attitude affected not only disillusioned "New Liberals" but leading figures in the Labour and Socialist world as well. A.M. Thompson's call in the Clarion for a "new progressive party" to unite the Socialist forces, lampooned in Frederick Rolfe's Hadrian VII (1904),⁹ was matched, according to Beatrice Webb by J.R. Macdonald's attempts to secure an agreement between the ILP and the Fabian Progressives for the 1895 elections to the LCC.¹⁰ MacDonald continued his connections with progressive Liberalism after joining the ILP, and, shortly after taking up his job as secretary to the new Labour Representation Committee, he wrote in the Echo of his hopes for the cooperation in opposition to the Boer War of Radicals and the ILP leading eventually "to a new Party which will absorb all sections working for progress."¹¹ In the meanwhile, the Liberal-Labour agreement, giving Labour

9. Fr. Rolfe Hadrian VII (1978 Paladin edn) esp pp. 142 ff.
10. B. Webb: Our Partnership pp 121-2
11. G. Elton: Op cit pp 109-10

candidates a free run in 30 seats, which MacDonald negotiated with the Liberal Chief Whip was a step towards such a unification of progressive forces.

Similar attitudes expressed themselves amongst religious Socialists and progressives. John Trevor, the Labour Church leader, likewise hoped to see a new alignment on the left. Writing in the Labour Prophet in September 1895, he looked forward to the party of the future, combining all the progressive forces: "The main body of the party will be evolved from the present Liberal Party Of such a party the ILP should form the left wing, leaving it to the SDF to represent the doctrinaires and revolutionaries."¹² The Guild of St. Matthew was divided between those who wanted it to commit itself to the emergent Labour Party, and others, such as Headlam, who insisted that Socialism was best served through seeking to strengthen the left wing of the Liberals. Much the same debate went on amongst the Anglican leaders of the Christian Social Union in the later 1890s^{as} as reported in Commonwealth, a magazine which managed to secure the talents of both left Liberals and ILP Socialists. Thus in January 1897 amid much talk of an imminent realignment occasioned by the emergence of Labour, it carried "an appeal of Liberal Churchmen to the Liberal Chief Whip" over the signatures of Scott Holland, C.W. Stubbs, Gore, Adderley, the Deans of Lincoln and Durham, and many others. Arguing that of the policies of the Old Liberalism, only disestablishment was left, and they would accept that if the people desired it, the statement continued with a plea for a new social policy

12. Labour Prophet Vol IV p. 136

devised in alliance with the forces of labour: "The questions before us are now primarily social ... it is a social policy we want and a leader who believes in it ... Yet it is with Labour that official Liberalism appears to be out of touch; the very growth of the ILP is a symptom of it. The rich Liberal capitalist is not necessarily more in sympathy with the workers than the rich Tory capitalist. Parliament is still made up for the most part of wealthy men; nor does official Liberalism show much readiness to concede a fair share of representation to Labour men. This is suicidal and unjust."¹³ Eighteen months later Scott Holland's 'Notes of the Month' expressed his doubts whether traditional Liberal reliance on Dissent and the Celtic fringe would "ever allow the Liberal Party to be really Progressive, really social."¹⁴ Indeed, at the Bradford Church Congress in 1898 the Liberal Churchmen's Union split precisely over this question between those who wished to throw in their lot with the ILP and others who still hoped to convert Liberalism to a social policy. But patience with the Liberal Party was wearing thin, and even the strongest supporter of the latter approach, Rev Dr T.C. Fry (Head of Berkhamstead) admitted that Liberalism stood "at the parting of the ways". Months later, on the resignation of Harcourt, he was arguing that if the Liberals failed to seize the opportunity of a new leadership to adopt a new social policy, then social reformers would have no option but to unite with the ILP.¹⁵

Despite such misgivings until 1918 the bulk of such churchmen, whatever their doubts, continued their traditional

13. Commonwealth January 1897, p. 58

14. Ibid August 1898, pp. 240-1

15. Ibid November 1898 p. 348 and Feb. 1899 pp. 38-40

allegiance, and could be found active on Liberal platforms, even in opposition to Labour candidates in 1906, though where Labour ran in straight fights against Conservatism their support was sincere enough. The G.S.M. held a special meeting to celebrate the emergence of the Labour Party and the Baptist leader John Clifford joined in the congratulations to Hardie on his 50th birthday in October 1906, but a month later, Scott Holland supported the Liberal candidate in the Huddersfield by-election in his narrow victory over T. Russell Williams the Labour Party candidate.¹⁶ Even so, while the allegiance to Liberalism of such supporters amongst the intelligentsia of the left was maintained, it was no longer automatic, but rather somewhat tenuous and aloof. They were part of that larger group which found itself somewhere between Liberalism and Labour in party loyalties, but quite definite in their ethical belief in the ideals of Socialism.¹⁷

Their chief difficulty, as J.A. Hobson noted in 1899 was that the Labour Party was by definition as well as complexion sectional and therefore unattractive to many middle-class left wing sympathisers, however much they might despair of the Liberal Party.¹⁸ It was a criticism re-echoed virtually on the eve of War by the Nation in its editorial "A Halt in the Labour Movement" which, while in wholehearted support for the "moral power" of the I.L.P.'s message and its "Radical-Socialist" aims, was nevertheless "frankly sceptical" amid the legal complexities of the modern state "as to the power

16. Labour Leader 2/11/06 p. 379; 30/11/06 p. 441

17. M. Freedon: The New Liberalism (1978) pp. 25 ff. Noting the many similarities between the ideals of New Liberals and Socialists he argues both resulted from the same intellectual climate though he sees it as "basically a Liberal one" (p. 145)

18. Ibid p. 152

of a Labour Party, cut off from resort to middle-class brains and culture, to fight its way through the immense tangle of relationships on which such a society rests." Rather, the Nation hoped to see it become the vanguard of social policy through its demands on a Liberal ally which had the necessary expertise.¹⁹ It was precisely such anxieties regarding Labour as a potential party of government which the opening up of membership to individual workers whether "by hand or by brain" in the Labour Party's new constitution in 1918, seen at the time as opening up the Party to the intellectuals, sought to alleviate: though, in the last analysis, it was probably only the Parliamentary Liberal Party's own self-destruction during the War which brought such a transference of allegiance about.

Nevertheless, a number of prominent young Liberal politicians from the 1890s onwards found their Socialist and Labour sympathies leading them also to hope for an eventual realignment, or at the least a transformation of Liberal Party attitudes. Among such men were some who later found themselves prominent in the emergent Labour Party. Their difficulty in the 1890s (as Beatrice Webb noted in her diary in July 1894) was that, while the Liberal Party showed little signs of moving towards collectivism, the LLP was as yet a non-starter as a vehicle for political power and therefore social change.²⁰ She was not therefore altogether

19. Nation 18/4/14 pp. 81-2: "A Halt in the Labour Movement"

20. B. Webb: Our Partnership (1975 ed.) p. 117. Seeing the possibilities of using the LLP to force Liberalism to more constructive social thinking - "the surgeon's knife" - she regarded it as "as yet more a thorn in the side of the Liberals than an effective force on our side".

displeased at the Liberal rout of 1895, seeing it as leaving the Fabians free "to begin afresh on the old lines - of building up a new party on the basis of collectivism" - though she remained undecided; as did many other left wing intellectuals in the 1890 s, as to whether such a new party would be "within the Liberal organisation or outside it."²¹ In this hesitant, somewhat hedging attitude towards the alternatives of either trying to work through official Liberalism and by capturing it for social reform, or of seeking a new alignment arising from official Liberalism's demise, Beatrice Webb's outlook typified the attitude of much of London Progressivism in the late 1890 s. For the present, however, there was no alternative to the Liberal Party no matter how disillusioned with its performance the social reform lobby might be.

R.B. Haldane seems regularly at this time to have poured out his disillusionment to the Webbs at the way the Liberal Government was going. . And he was by no means alone. Of a similar persuasion she noted "Herbert Samuel, Charles Trevelyan, Bobby Phillimore, Bertrand Russell; all rich men of the upper or middle-class, and MacDonald, Martin, Macrosty of the lower middle-class"²² as well as the Liberal journalists H.W. Massingham and L.T. Hobhouse, while in 1898 leading Progressives including Lowes Dickinson disowned the Liberal Party leadership in the LCC Elections of that year.²³ Canon Barnett of Toynbee Hall noted in a letter to his brother

21. Ibid pp 127-128

22. Ibid p 128

23. Ibid pp 116, 128, 144-5

(28 Jan 1905) a conversation that morning with C.P. Trevelyan, who believed the future would see the New Liberalism and Labour coming together as a new united force for social progress; though as yet the New Liberalism, while growing stronger, had still to gain real influence in the Liberal Party.²⁴ Nevertheless it was through the Liberal Party that such men still sought reform - a position well indicated by the attitude of another New Liberal, J.C. Wedgwood, who, in a debate with an ILP representative at Hanley in October of the same year explained that his refusal to join the ILP was based not on any lack of sympathy with its Socialist aims, but rather because he believed that those Socialist ideals were most likely to be fulfilled through the Liberal Party.²⁵ This was the attitude of many of the younger social radicals on the eve of the great landslide of 1906, though as MPs they were to maintain a distinctly critical attitude towards its performance in Government. Another prominent young Liberal, William Beveridge, summed up the views of this circle at that time in conversation with the editor of the Morning Post. "I told him of course that in party politics I was certainly not a Conservative, and that in speculative politics I was a bit of a Socialist."²⁶ The New Liberals' adherence to the Liberal Party was clearly tenuous rather than wholehearted. Their political realism might have ensured their continuing loyalty to the Liberal Party, but their sympathies were often more with Labour.

24. Quoted in S.A. Barnett op cit Vol. II, p. 192

25. Labour Leader 6/10/05 p. 324

26. W. Beveridge Power and Influence (1953) p. 33

C.F.G. Masterman, one of these new Liberal recruits to Parliament and a leading populariser of the new social radicalism, was appalled at the lack of interest within the Government in social reform issues, describing in a letter (12 Feb 1908) "the Nation lunch where we all mourned over the Government and predicted a gloomy future."²⁷ Shortly afterwards, he was writing, "Those Labour people are the salt of the earth; better men than we are ..."²⁸ It is significant that these critics all had strong connections with the wider movement towards social reform belonging to organisations whose aims were shared by Progressives, Socialists and Labour alike. Thus Masterman, through the CSU, and Beveridge, as deputy warden of Toynbee Hall, where he first met the Webbs and Tawney, had close ties with the Socialist and Labour leadership in London.²⁹ Others had close Fabian affiliations even if not all were actually members, while a significant element of the new social radicalism was represented in the Rainbow Circle, where Socialists and Liberals came together to share ideas on social reform. The Fabian Society and the Rainbow Circle were both largely intellectual middle-class discussion groups standing on the fringes between the emergent Socialist Movement and the

27. L. Masterman C.F.G. Masterman. A Biography (1939) p. 97

28. Ibid p 100. 21 Feb 1908

29. W. Beveridge, op cit pp 19 ff, 35. A close friend of Tawney and colleague in University extension work, Beveridge was very much part of intellectual Socialist circles in the early 1900's, dining with Masterman and Churchill, (the latter unsuccessfully cultivated as a Webb protege) and skiing at Christmas 1907 with that other young Fabian Socialist, Rupert Brooke, Ibid pp 65-6. Such close personal connections were typical of intellectual circles of the period, and no doubt did much to break down the traditional party boundaries between Liberalism and the Socialist Movement.

Liberal Party and they indicate most clearly the trend of thought towards an evolutionary ethical Socialism, often indistinguishable from its counterpart within overtly Socialist bodies, associated with which were a significantly high proportion of those New Liberals of 1906 who, after World War I were found occupying prominent positions within the first Labour governments of the 1920 s.

ii) Fabian Socialism

The Fabian Society had originated with that religious impulse towards an ethical reform of individual conduct and social relations, which characterised much of the thinking of the early Socialist Movement - though its more "scientific" and proletarian Marxist critics of the SDF regarded it as mere "bourgeois sentimentalism".³⁰ Indeed, like its parent the ENL, the Fabian Society was essentially a drawing-room discussion group of comfortable middle-class intellectuals, strong in debate, but unreliable in their support of the wider movement outside of their own small society. In terms of membership the society was small, counting perhaps 130 members after 5 years of existence in 1889, and affiliating to the IRC in 1900 on a claimed membership of only 861.³¹ It showed the new popularity of Socialism after the 1906 landslide, its membership rising from 885 in 1905 to a peak of 2015 in 1907-8 after which it rapidly declined. That this small membership and emphasis on discussion was to a great extent due to a deliberate policy on the part of its

30. For the Fabian Society's origins within the ENL, see above Ch. 3 pp264ff ; Ch. 2 pp.161 ff deals with SDF criticisms of this outlook.

31. H. Pelling: Origins of the Labour Party p. 229 Appdx. A.

London leadership is clear from the fate of the proposals of an enthusiastic new recruit to the Society, Annie Besant, to involve the Fabians more fully in the political struggle by the setting up of branches in the provinces and running of Socialist candidates. This proposal (in effect aiming at the transformation of the Fabians into a political party) was effectively nullified in November 1886 by the setting up within the Society of a separate Fabian Parliamentary League for those in favour of political action, thus enabling the society proper to continue its discussions as before. With little support from the old guard, within a year the League was dead, and thereafter Annie Besant lost interest in the Fabians, being drawn more into the orbit of the SDF and New Unionism until her involvement in Theosophy sent her on a new mission to India.³² Provincial societies were, however, to develop in the early 1890's as a result of the publication of Fabian Essays (1889) and the subsequent lecture tours undertaken by its authors. There were 12 provincial societies in 1890, rising to a peak of 72 at the start of 1893. By 1900 only 4 provincial societies, with a total of 153 members, and 4 University societies, with a total of 87 members and

32. The Fabian executive had agreed to draw up a plan for provincial branches after a proposal by Annie Besant at the members' meeting 5 Feb 1886. Nothing came of it, and after her own election to the executive she ran into a concerted policy of obstruction and delays which effectively killed any chances of the scheme getting off the ground, only Bland was enthusiastic in her support, Webb leading the opposition. For her account see Our Corner (which she edited), "Fabian Society and Socialist Notes" which first appeared in the March 1886 issue esp. March 1886, pp 187-92; Sept. 1886, pp 252-3; December 1886, p. 317. The last "Fabian Notes" appeared in August 1888; and cf P. Thompson op cit p. 139 and N. & J. Mackenzie The First Fabians (1977) pp. 81-4.

associates, remained,³³ though the parent London body had reached 811.³⁴ The majority of the provincial branches, it seems, had merged into the LLP following its foundation in 1894, the London society being not noticeably concerned at their departure.

The Fabian leadership did not therefore see their society as a potential political party in opposition to established ones. Rather they saw it as a sort of "think tank" (to use a term from recent history) supplying through their Tracts, the existing parties with new practical proposals for social reforms, and statistical surveys of existing abuses. Thus they sought to influence radical opinion of the day, the Webbs in particular seeking out and cultivating aspiring young Liberal politicians and journalists, such as Haldane and Massingham in the 1890 s, and such figures in the Socialist Movement as the young Ramsay MacDonald, who served on the Fabian EC. from 1895 until his resignation with others in protest at the society's ambivalent attitude to the Boer War.³⁵ Sidney Webb served on the EC. of the London Liberal and Radical Union from 1889, and was an active member of 3 local Liberal and Radical Associations in 1888 - Holborn, Westminster and London University. Even the volatile Shaw became involved in this permeative exercise, sitting on the EC. of the South

33. A.M. McBriar: Fabian Socialism and English Politics 1884-1918 (1962) pp 165-7.

34. H. Pelling op cit p. 229

35. 15 members resigned in opposition to the Boer War, including J.F. Green (also an EC member), G.N. Barnes, Pete Curran, Walter Crane, H.S. Salt, Mrs J.R. MacDonald and Mrs Pankhurst. E.R. Pease: History of the Fabian Society (1925) p. 133.

St. Pancras Liberal and Radical Association, and like Webb, doing his part in securing its support for the Newcastle Programme of social reform, which the Liberal Party adopted at its 1891 conference.³⁶

In 1892 not only were 7 of the 15-member committee of the National Liberal Club prominent Fabians, but 50 of the club's members were also.³⁷ Amongst prominent figures in London Progressivism, the Rev S.D. Headlam of the Guild of St. Matthew (an active member from the early 1880's and EC member after 1901), the Rev John Clifford, the Baptist leader, and numbers of other Christian Socialist clergy, including the Rev Percy Dearmer, secretary of the London Branch of the Church Social Union, were all active Fabians. It was not therefore surprising that the Fabian leadership throughout the 1890's and the earlier years of the new century were to be found amongst Progressive candidates and councillors on the LCC, the School Board and the vestries. Webb represented Deptford for the Progressives on the LCC from 1892 until 1910, Headlam and Wallas sat on the School Board, and Shaw served first as a vestryman (from 1897) and then, after St Pancras became a borough in 1900, as a councillor. In 1904 he was defeated as a Progressive candidate for St Pancras in the LCC elections that year. Until 1910 Fabian candidates for the LCC uniformly stood as Progressives, and as late as 1919 the 6 Fabians standing divided equally between Labour and Progressives.³⁸

36. McBriar op cit pp 234 ff; H. Pearson: Bernard Shaw (1948 Book Club Edition) p.184

37. M.S. Wilkins op cit p. 176 76.

38. For an account of Shaw's activities see H. Pearson op cit pp 186-90.

Hence, despite the Fabians' temporary estrangement from the Liberal Party in Parliament, signalled by the manifesto "To Your Tents O Israel!" which appeared in the Fortnightly Review (1 Nov 1895), written by Shaw and Webb, the Fabian Society in its electoral allegiance seems to have been much more closely aligned with traditional London Radicalism than it does with the emerging independent labour movement. The Webbs were not hopeful of the ILP's prospects as a vehicle of reform in its earlier years, although a number of the Fabian recruits who had joined in 1890-1 in the aftermath of Fabian Essays, including Hardie, Joseph Burgess, Pete Curran, Ben Tillett and the Pankhursts were amongst the founders of the ILP, and though later Fabians were to include MacDonald, Snowden, and then, in the early years of the century a number of younger recruits to the ILP, such as Attlee, Brockway and Susan Lawrence. The Webbs remained doubtful, as late as March 1911 Beatrice still confiding in her diary her unsureness whether the lead to social reform would come from the Labour or the Liberal Party.³⁹ In fact, although the Fabian Society had affiliated to Labour in 1900 at the foundation conference of the LRC, the Fabian leadership had maintained its ambivalent attitude, somewhere between Liberalism and Labour, virtually until the outbreak of War, maintaining links with the progressive younger element in Liberalism, amongst whose MP s elected in 1906, were Leo Chiozza-Money, Percy Alden, Athelstan Rendall and Josiah Wedgwood, all of whom were Fabians.⁴⁰

39. B. Webb Our Partnership p. 472-3

40. Reformers' Year Book 1909 p. 151

Nevertheless, the Fabian Society had strong links with the Socialist and Labour Movements. It sent 20 delegates to the 1896 Conference of the Socialist International, including Shaw, the Webbs, Bland, Pease, Olivier, MacDonald, the Rev Percy Dearmer and Will Crooks.⁴¹ It had been involved in the "Socialist Unity" talks which had led to the joint Manifesto of English Socialists issued on May 1st 1893, even though, as E.P. Thompson suggests, this may have been only a half-hearted gesture for the sake of appearances - certainly the Fabians were the first to withdraw when plans for a united Socialist party were mooted -⁴² but it was affiliated to the Labour Party with a seat on its national executive. In December 1913 when in another attempt to impose unity on the British Socialist Movement and to heal the division between the SDF and the Labour Party which had caused such embarrassment at Socialist International meetings, the Socialist International executive insisted on meetings between the rival bodies, it was to Sidney Webb of the Fabian Society - the smallest of the Socialist organisations in England - that they turned for a chairman acceptable to all sides. This led to the Fabian Society at last definitely committing itself to Labour. Webb appeared on the Labour Party's NEC from 1916,⁴³ as a member of which, with Henderson, he had much to do with the drafting of the new constitution of 1918 which paved the way for the substantial defection of Liberals to Labour.

41. Conference Record 1 Aug 1896, p. 1

42. E.P. Thompson: op cit pp. 605-8

43. N. & J. Mackenzie: op cit pp. 392-3, 397-8

The ambivalent position which Fabian Socialism maintained between the major Socialist organisations on the one hand and London Radicalism on the other, from the early 1890 s until the eve of the First World War, came about as a reaction to the Socialist agitations of the mid 1880 s, and the development of the distinctive Fabian position can be traced in the articles of such early Fabians as Podmore, Pease, Chubb, Bland and Shaw in To-Day which Bland edited from 1885. These articles set out the distinctive Fabian organic, evolutionary and ethical view of the development of society by means of gradual political reforms and changed individual attitudes towards the Socialist goal which was then set out by the Fabian leadership in Fabian Essays (1889), and which characterised their thinking thereafter.

This outlook sprang from two chief sources, idealism and practical experience. The original founding members of the Fabian Society, chief among whom were Podmore, Pease and Bland, had placed a strong emphasis on individual ethical reform, having been drawn towards Socialism in 1883-4 through their ethical idealism. The SDF with its subordination of moral questions to social reorganisation and its consciously revolutionary tendencies, condoning violence if necessary to attain its objectives, could not be squared with the Fabians' ethical position, but neither could the ENL position with its largely exclusive concentration on the perfecting of individual morality as the way to the social ideal, satisfy them either. Thus Bland and Pease, who were at first members of the SDF were unable

to commit themselves wholeheartedly to its brand of the Socialist message; but equally, as members of the ENL, they felt bound to insist on the need for social as well as individual reforms, thus provoking the split in the ENL, which led to the setting up of the Fabians as a distinct body. While participating in the joint discussion meetings of Socialist organisations, and joint ventures in support of free speech of the 1880s, therefore, by their insistence on both the moral reform of individuals and reformation of the social/economic structure of society, the Fabians from the first occupied a distinctive position within Socialism.⁴⁴

Their practical realism, which to some extent was a consequence of this, in reaction to such events as the break-up by police of the Trafalgar Square demonstration on Bloody Sunday 13 November 1887 (which convinced Shaw as many others of the futility of talk of mass revolution) was equally distinctive. By this time the society included Shaw, Webb, Olivier and Wallas, who had known each other prior to joining, the Civil Service experience of Webb and Olivier having made clear to them the possibilities of peaceful reform through legislation and State action.⁴⁵ In the North, such an outlook led to the ILP. But in London, where the working class radical clubs and associations, many of whose members were active in the Free Speech agitations of 1887

44. N. & J. Mackenzie op cit and W. Wolfe: From Radicalism to Socialism (1975), the two most recent studies of the influences on the early Fabians are agreed on this dual aspect (individual and social) of the reform they believed necessary to bring about the Socialist ideal, e.g. in E.R. Pease's attitude to the SDF in N. & J. Mackenzie op cit p. 21 or Olivier's and Wallas' insistence on this dual aspect, ibid pp. 58-60; and in the attitude of Podmore, Pease and Bland insisting on the need for social as well as personal reform which led to the ENL split. Wolfe op cit p. 159

offered a fertile source for converts to a policy of Socialist gradualism through legislation, there seemed to the Fabians a distinct possibility of capturing the existing Radical political machine for Socialism without the need to create a new Party.⁴⁶ Hence the involvement of leading Fabians in the London Liberal and Radical Associations, and, after local government reform, within the Progressive majority on the LCC, which seemed to offer a major opportunity for social reform experiments.

Thus Fabian energies were channelled into constructive local government activity some 5 years before the ILP. through its councillors became involved in similar problems in the North. The difference, of course, was that the ILP. was a Party, which the Fabians, given the unique London situation, never attempted to be. Nevertheless, it was to Fabian expertise that ILP. councillors often turned, and a chief Fabian function soon became the publication and distribution of Tracts on every aspect of local government from The Municipalisation of the Gas Supply (Tract 32 1891) and Municipal Tramways (Tract 33 1891) to A Labour Policy for Public Authorities (Tract 37 1892) or Parish Council Cottages and How to Get Them (Tract 63 1895).⁴⁷ Later Tracts, on subjects ranging from How Trade Unions Benefit Workmen (Tract 104 1900) - possibly their most successful

45. (from previous page) For Shaw's experiences on Bloody Sunday and the lessons he drew from it see H. Pearson: op cit pp. 80-6.

46. e.g. the views of the anonymous Fabian author of "The Present Crisis in the Socialist Movement" in To-Day, June 1887, pp. 159-70, esp. p. 166-9.

47. For a full list of Fabian Tracts published to 1920 see McBriar op cit p. 170.

pamphlet⁴⁸ - to the need for Old Age Pensions, or the benefits obtainable under the Workmen's Compensation Act, showed the gradual widening of the Society's field of enquiry into national issues; though in addition there were Tracts on aspects of Socialist theory, the more popular reaching circulations running into tens or even hundreds of thousands.⁴⁹ Total annual sales of Tracts and Leaflets in the period 1904-8 ranged from just below 50,000 in 1904-5 to slightly above 250,000 at their peak in 1907-8, and similar figures of the same magnitude are suggested for the mid 1890 s.⁵⁰ Thus, though their membership was small, the Fabians reached a much larger audience through sales of their literature. It was here, especially in their work in disseminating useful information to local councillors and political organisations that much of the real value of their work lay.

Rejecting revolution in favour of gradual reform, the authors of Fabian Essays (1889) set out their theories of social evolution in justification of their commitment to peaceful progress through political change. Sidney Webb's contribution on the historic aspects of Socialism traced its influence in the Factory Acts, and such-like governmental involvement in industry, and the growth of local government functions in public transport, parks and municipal libraries.

48. According to McBriar, op cit pp. 171-2 it sold over 138,000 copies within 2 years of publication continuing to be heavily in demand even during the First World War.

49. Ibid pp. 172-4

50. Reformers' Year Book (1909) p. 150: McBriar op cit p. 170.

Each extension of such activity was another stage in the evolution of the "social organism" towards Socialism which the coming of democracy had made inevitable. Socialism was merely the extension of that principle of political equality implied by democracy to the economic system. Socialism was therefore the logical extension of Radicalism, as could be seen in the emphasis on social and economic issues in the new programme of Radicalism set out in the Star (8/8/88), with its demands for the minimum wage, an 8 hour day, reform of education and the Poor Law and new relief schemes for the unemployed, the further extension of municipal activity, especially in the sphere of housing, the taxation to extinction of rent and interest, and universal adult suffrage. To Webb, this current Radical programme "embodied the whole of the immediately practicable demands of the most exacting Socialists."⁵¹

The other Essayists took up the same arguments, Shaw's essay "Transition" following on from Webb's analysis of the growth of socialistic legislation, and seeing in the 1888 Local Government Act the opening of new stages in socialist advance through growing municipal activity. This would come first, he argued, in the form of an extension of municipal activity to provide work for the unemployed as a result of growing middle-class humanitarian revulsion at their plight and fears of further rioting. Since local authorities would have to pay fair wages, this would spell the end of sweated industries as their workers would prefer to move into municipal employ. Such increased local government

51. Fabian Essays (1962 edn.) 2. S. Webb: "Historic!" pp.62-81

activity, causing massive new expenditure, would most easily be financed through a tax on land values, the first step towards land nationalisation. Finally, profitable municipal enterprise, offering better working conditions than private enterprise, would naturally supersede it through the normal processes of competition.⁵² Although few would have agreed with Shaw's ultimate scenario, clearly municipal activity had come to offer major opportunities for Socialist experiment.

Other essayists took up the evolutionary argument, both William Clarke and Annie Besant noting the scientific nature of Socialism as the analysis of the existing trends of social evolution thereby enabling the Socialist "to consciously co-operate with the forces at work, and thus render the transition more rapid than it would otherwise be."⁵³ While Olivier and Wallas took up the individualist objection to Socialism, arguing rather that Socialism was the rational outcome of Individualism since it was the only system which would guarantee the conditions necessary for the fullest personal development of each individual rather than of just the privileged few.⁵⁴ For Bland, the coming of democracy and the ballot box rendered the cries of other Socialist organisations for Revolution an "absurdity". He was

the only essayist to note the crucial distinction between State control and Socialism, insisting that it was less what

52. Ibid 7. G.B. Shaw: "Transition" pp. 210 ff.

53. Ibid 6. A. Besant "Industry under Socialism" esp. p. 185

54. Ibid 4. S. Olivier "Moral" 5. G. Wallas: "Property Under Socialism". esp. pp. 138, 182-3.

spheres of activity the State was involved in as "the end for which it does it" - in the case of Socialism, "for the equal benefit of all" - a point which otherwise went virtually unrecognised in the Socialist Movement until the experience of State Control of industries during the First World War brought home the dangers to the working-classes of state power in the hands of militarists and reactionaries. Bland's contribution also stood out in his analysis of political developments and his sole insistence on the need for a separate "definitely Socialist Party" in opposition to a Conservative Party which had been won over to laissez-faire individualism and a Liberal Party whose sham Radicalism was no more than a tactic to stave off genuine reform. But in his outright condemnation of what he referred to as "permeation" amongst the Essayists he was in a minority of one.⁵⁵

The overall impression on socially-minded young Radicals of Fabian Essays must therefore have been largely favourable. The essays suggested the possibility of a new departure in politics, of an era of peaceful, deliberate social change, meeting the objections of Socialists and Trades Unionists to the evils of the existing social system without the necessity of any drastic, sudden upheaval. They were therefore immediately popular, the first 2 editions, each of 1,000 copies at 6/- each (and therefore clearly intended for the comfortable classes) were immediately sold out on appearance; and within one year 20,000 of a cheaper 1/- edition had been sold. By 1897, 33,000 had been sold, a figure which jumped with renewed interest in Socialism after 1906 causing a

55. Ibid 8. H. Bland: "The Outlook" pp. 238-53.

reprint of 10,000 copies in 1908, of which 8,000 were sold in 4 months.⁵⁶ By comparison with Blatchford's Merrie England with its one and a half million copies, its circulation was small, but as a work for an intellectual rather than a popular readership, there can be few of the leading figures in the Radical and Socialist circles of the 1890s - 1900s who were unaware of its main conclusions.⁵⁷ In its underlying assumptions of ethical and organic evolutionary progress it was typical of a far wider movement of thought in these decades.

Fabian Essays themselves, being largely confined to the practical question of how Socialist change might come from existing trends within the social structure, give only a hint of the underlying ethical faith of the Essayists, though Bland's essay once again is notable for his insistence on Socialism as the ideal of a "cleaner, braver, holier life of the future"; and Olivier and Wallas advocated Socialism as the social environment necessary for the full and equal development of the individual. As Webb noted, to a great degree man is dependent for his outlook on the social organism into which he is born, for from it he derives most of his attitudes.⁵⁸ It was not therefore possible to separate questions of personal

56. McBriar op cit p. 175

57. The extraordinary lack of popularity of Fabian Essays beyond intellectual circles is borne out by the replies of the 45 respondents to W.T. Stead's questionnaire to the 51 Labour and Lib-Lab MPs elected in 1906. Only 1 Lib-Lab member - W.C. Steadman - (himself a Fabian), and 3 Labour members - James O'Grady, Will Thorne and T. Summerbell - mentioned Fabian authors as influencing their socialist thinking, and of these only O'Grady and Thorne the latter a staunch SDF man, specifically referred to Fabian Essays. Review of Reviews June 1906, pp. 568 - 82: "The Labour Party and the Books that helped to make it".

58. Fabian Essays p. 89

morality from the social question, and if the Essayists held strong views on the need for a Socialist transformation, they were equally committed in their belief that no such transformation was possible without a parallel reformation of individual attitudes.

Thus even the agnostic Sidney Webb, perhaps the least affected by the prevailing religious concentration on the ethical aspect, insisted on altruism as the only possible basis for the Socialist society which could rest only on "the general recognition of fraternity, the universal obligation of personal service, and the subordination of personal ambition to the common good."⁵⁹ Indeed, in his contribution to Fabian Essays, his belief in democracy as the new force for Socialist progress was based on a belief in the growing strength of the Socialist ethic amongst the masses, leading to their demands for the desired social reforms, the speed of which would depend on the advance of that Socialist spirit.⁶⁰ From the Quaker Pease's praise of Carpenter for his mystical faith in man in Towards Democracy, to the Positivist Olivier's attack on the SDF's lack of recognition of the need for a change of heart - a "new social religion" - as much as a change of social structure,⁶¹ the Fabians were united in their emphasis on the ethical as well as the purely structural. This was of course most obviously

59. W. Wolfe op cit pp 188 and 214.

60. Fabian Essays pp. 66-7

61. To-Day August 1886, pp. 37-46 E.R. Pease: "Towards Democracy, a note on Edward Carpenter"; August 1886, pp. 47-55 and September 1886, pp 109-114 S. Olivier: "Perverse Socialism".

the case with those members who had been drawn into setting up the Fabian Society from within the Fellowship of the New Life - Podmore, Pease, Bland and William Clarke; but it applied scarcely less to Webb, Olivier and Wallas, all influenced by the Positivist 'Religion of Humanity', whatever their position on Theism. Wallas indeed, in his links with the religious but non-doctrinal Toynbee Hall and the Unitarian Settlement, University Hall, demonstrated a practical commitment to that religious idealism which his "intense respect" for Oxford Idealism suggests.⁶² Annie Besant and Headlam, fit much the same tradition, as indeed does Bernard Shaw in his rejection of materialism and belief in the Life Force working through evolution towards the ethical perfection of man.⁶³ Beatrice Webb, with her undenominational religious mysticism, to her the inspiration of her socialist faith,⁶⁴ represented a similar outlook.

Large numbers of the early Fabian recruits and sympathisers had similar ethical faiths. H.W. Massingham, briefly a member of the Fabian executive, based his "Collectivist Radicalism", as he preferred to call it, on a Unitarian reinterpretation of Christianity not as vengeance, but as the gospel of divine love.⁶⁵ MacDonald, with his Ethical

62. W. Wolfe op cit p. 229. Olivier also had connections with Toynbee Hall, see N. & J. Mackenzie op cit p. 60.

63. H. Pearson op cit pp 234-6, 373, 441.

64. See above Ch. 1, p27 n17 In her diary for 18/12/1915 she referred also to plans for a work setting out her and Sidney's faith - "What is Socialism?" and noted "A change of heart and the application of the scientific method will be the essential condition of success in reconstruction." ed. M.I. Cole: Beatrice Webb's Diaries 1912-24 (1952) p. 51

65. A.F. Havighurst: Radical Journalist: H.W. Massingham (1860-1924) (1974) pp. 12, 16, 50.

Society links, held similar views. And similar ethically-based faiths underlying their commitment to social reform can be seen in such leading New Liberals as J.A. Hobson, a prominent member of the London Ethical Society with Clarke and MacDonald; the Idealist philosopher as well as politician R.B. Haldane; and L.T. Hobhouse, with his insistence on Mind as the evolutionary force in human progress.⁶⁶

iii) Social Radicalism within the Liberal Party

This similarity of ethical concerns is well brought out in the attitudes of leading members of the Rainbow Circle. A discussion group which deliberately limited its membership to 20 (later rising to 30 as many of its members became MP's and so attended less often), it had been founded originally by William Clarke, the Emersonian and Fabian Essayist together with J.A. Murray MacDonald, who as an MP after 1906 was a leading advocate of the New Liberalism. At first it met at the National Liberal Club, moving for a while to the Rainbow Tavern, Fleet Street, from which it took its name, and thereafter from January 1895, at the house in Bloomsbury Square of Sir Richard Stapley, its President from 1897. Meetings consisted of papers given by members followed by discussion, one series of which, for the period Autumn 1910 to Spring 1911 was published.⁶⁷

66. J.A. Hobson: Confessions of an Economic Heretic (1938) p. 57; R.B. Haldane: Autobiography 1856-1928 (1929) esp. pp. 343 ff; for L.T. Hobhouse see M. Freedon op cit pp. 85 ff.

67. See introduction to Second Chambers in Practice: Being the Papers of the Rainbow Circle. Session 1910-11 (1911) and cf the account in J.A. Hobson: Confessions of an Economic Heretic (1938) pp. 95-6

The aim of the Circle was to help on the development of a coherent political theory of social progress, based, as its 1894 Prospectus showed, on 3 main assumptions:

1. The decline of Philosophical Radicalism and its laissez-faire counterpart in the Manchester School of Economists.

2. The transition instead to a "New Radicalism" or "Collectivist Politics".

3. The need for a clear comprehension of the ethical, economic and political basis of this newer politics and its practical applications.⁶⁸

A short-lived journal, edited by Clarke, the Progressive Review (5 issues - October 1896 - February 1897) in its first issue set out the main conclusions of the group thus: "Seeing the chief need of the day as a reform of the social, economic and moral conditions of life, Clarke's introductory editorial went on to lament the current low state of Liberal social thinking, which the society sought to combat. "The Liberal Party has wellnigh done the work which it was fitted to accomplish by its traditional principles and its composition, and ... in its present condition it is utterly powerless to undertake the new work which now confronts it." The old Radical equation of Liberty with laissez-faire was no longer adequate. Liberty had to be seen as more than just the mere absence of restraint. Rather it was to be seen as the creation of the social conditions necessary for the fullest possible development of the individual in both his

68. Second Chambers in Practice p. VI

material and moral life. In this the State was seen to have a new role which demanded "an enlarged and enlightened conception" of its functions "which shall be limited only by the power of the conscious organisation of society to assist in securing for its members the fullest opportunities of life." The role of the State must therefore be seen not just as that of a mere policeman but in addition "contributing direct aid and support to individuals in their struggle towards a higher physical and moral life."⁶⁹

With its redefinition of Liberty in positive terms and its reappraisal of the role of the State in securing this, and in its overriding emphasis on the development of the individual in both his material and moral aspects, Clarke's article closely parallels the later conclusions of the Idealist philosopher and Liberal T.H. Green,⁷⁰ but nowhere is this indebtedness brought out more clearly than in R.B. Haldane's "The New Liberalism" which appeared in the second issue. It was a masterly summary of the main tenets of the new outlook, which Haldane himself called both "Progressive" and "New Liberalism", an outlook which he noted, formed the creed "of a growing number of the younger Liberals" but which, while strong in London, had met with little response in Liberal circles in the Celtic fringes or North - a tendency he viewed with some apprehension.

Haldane's conception of Liberalism bore striking resemblances to the faith of many of the leaders of the Socialist world. For him it was essentially "an affair of

69. Progressive Review Vol. 1, No. 1, Oct. 1896, pp. 1-10 "Introductory".

70. cf above ch. 1, pp.50 ff for an assessment of Green's thought.

the spirit", changeless ideals and principles rather than their manifestation in the practical policies of any particular generation. For Haldane, citing Green, this was rooted in "the principle of liberty" or "freedom". But as with Clarke, this "freedom" was not to be conceived as "merely freedom from restraint or compulsion" but rather "a positive power or capacity of doing or enjoying something worth doing or enjoying, and that, too, something that we do or enjoy in common with others." Thus freedom could only be conceived of in relation to a good end, and at that, a social rather than an individual one. "Freedom ... is valuable only as a means to an end. That end is what I call freedom in the positive sense; in other words, the liberation of the powers of all men equally for contributions to a common good. No one has the right to do what he will with his own in such a way as to contravene this end. It is only through the guarantee which society gives him that he has any property at all, or, strictly speaking, any right to his possessions."

Such views, Haldane noted, increasingly were leading New Liberals into "close relationship" with the "advanced sections" such as the Fabians, the ILP and even some Social Democrats "which have, and, from the nature of things as they are, must have, but little direct representation in politics."⁷¹ Indeed, such a combination was reflected in the composition of the Rainbow Circle itself, whose members ranged from New Liberals such as J.A. Hobson, J.A. Murray MacDonald, Haldane, C.P. Trevelyan, Percy Alden, J.M. Robertson, and Russell Rea, through representatives of Anglican Christian

71. Progressive Review No. 2. Nov. 1896, pp. 133-43
R.B. Haldane: "The New Liberalism".

Socialism such as the Rev A.L. Lilley (and, apparently, the Revs Percy Dearmer and H.C. Shuttleworth⁷²) to Fabians such as Clarke, Olivier, J.R. MacDonald (an early secretary to the Rainbow Circle)⁷³ and the veteran Radical and SDF activist Herbert Burrows.⁷⁴

On one major issue, however, New Liberalism saw itself divided from the Socialists: Nationalisation. It was a point put forcibly within the Rainbow Circle by Herbert Samuel, who, while agreeing with the positive definition of freedom as Haldane had expounded it, wished to draw a clear distinction between State intervention in the realm of social and economic policy to achieve this end, and State ownership advocated by many Socialists - "State capitalism" to Samuel - which he saw as wholly unnecessary to the achievement of that goal of the positive freedom which society ought to guarantee to each individual to enable him to develop to his fullest capacity. It was a point which, at the end of his life, he still saw as his main objection to Socialism.⁷⁵

On the question of nationalisation of the land, there was, however, more ready agreement, chiefly as a result of the distinction made by a large element /^{within} Radicalism between Land Values - socially-created wealth, and Capital - wealth created through entrepreneurial skill and hard work. It

72. Listed in a notice by J.R. MacDonald of subscribers to the then projected Progressive Review "to do for the modern Progressive Movement" what other reviews had done for earlier phases of radicalism. Church Reformer Dec. 1995, pp. 272-4

73. D. Marquand: op cit pp. 55-7

74. Based on the lists of members in Second Chamber in Practice p. V and J.A. Hobson op cit p. 95

75. Viscount Samuel: Memoirs (1945) p. 17

was this distinction which Henry George had insisted upon in Progress and Poverty 1st English Edition (1880) and which had been implicit in much of British Radicalism thereafter. The Socialist Movement had largely developed out of the Georgeite land agitation of the early 1880's and many prominent leaders of British Socialism had entered the movement through the Land Question. These early Socialists had gone on from George's analysis of Rent as unearned increment to see Interest accruing to Capital in a similar light. Members of the Land Nationalisation Society (founded March 1881) and the English Land Restoration League (originally set up as the Land Reform Union in March 1883) which advocated the Single Tax, however, stuck much closer to George's principles, insisting that the Land Question was central to any discussion of social reform. Both organisations brought together prominent Liberal Social Radicals and Socialists in support of their common belief in Land reform, and can again best be seen therefore as bodies transcending the boundaries of Liberalism and Socialism.

The Land Nationalisation Society, the earlier of the 2 organisations, which could claim 120 supporters in the 1906 Parliament,⁷⁶ had resulted from an article published by the eminent Darwinian evolutionist and later I.L.P. sympathiser, A.R. Wallace, in the Contemporary Review (Nov. 1880) on land nationalisation as a radical solution to the Irish Question. Among the Society's early members were a number prominent also in the beginnings of Hyndman's Democratic Federation, and the early Socialist Movement including Helen Taylor, Herbert Burrows, H.H. Champion and Dr. G.B. Clarke. Others, prominent in Radical circles, included Frank Newman; two

76. Reformers' Year Book (1907) p. 207

future Liberal MP's: Halley Stewart and William Saunders; and the founder of the Owenite Ralahine Community, E.T. Craig.⁷⁷

That these 2 societies were not mutually exclusive is seen from the considerable overlap in early activists. Helen Taylor and H.H. Champion (briefly its first Treasurer) both appeared on the first committee of the Land Reform Union, another of whose original members was William Saunders, (who soon took over from Champion as Treasurer) while Dr. G.B. Clarke was one of the main speakers at its inaugural meeting and Herbert Burrows active in the ensuing discussion. The Union had originated as a small discussion group studying Progress and Poverty which had decided to set up an organisation to promote George's ideas, and in particular the "restitution of the land to the people". Its paper was the monthly Christian Socialist edited by its secretary, R.P.B. Frost. Amongst its pioneers were others well known for their later activities within Socialist and Radical circles, including its General Secretary and its Treasurer for many years, respectively Frederick Verinder and Rev S.D. Headlam, both noted for their co-operation in the Guild of St. Matthew where Headlam was Warden and Verinder Treasurer throughout its years of existence; other members including J.L. Joynes (later prominent in the SDF), the Fabians, Shaw, Olivier and the Rev P.H. Wicksteed (founder of University Hall) and two further clergymen Rev Prof. W.H. Syme and Canon H.C. Shuttleworth

77. There is a brief summary of the society's history in Labour Annual (1895) p. 127-8 Among the Vice-Presidents other names listed included Grant Allen, Michael Davitt, E.D. Girdlestone and Canon W. Tuckwell, all prominent in progressive circles of the 1880's and 90's.

both Anglicans, prominent in the CSU, and the latter also a later member of the Rainbow Circle.⁷⁸

The winter lectures to interested organisations such as Radical Clubs, Liberal and Radical Associations, ILP, SDF, and trades union branches, were given at a yearly rate of some 500 lectures from each society in the 1890s and 1900s; and in the summer, tours were made by the Land Nationalisation Society's Yellow Vans (from 1890) and the E.L.R.L.'s Red Vans (from 1891) - the precursors of the Clarion Vans. This propagandism brought together at a local level the different working-class radical and Socialist organisations both in the capital and in the provinces. Like the later Clarion Van tours, these summer campaigns aimed at the stimulation of local working-class activity, and especially the organisation of rural labourers into unions and for local elections. They met with a similar resistance from local landlords and magistrates, George Edwards, the future agricultural workers' leader and Labour MP, being amongst the lecturers of the E.L.R.L. prosecuted for obstruction at Trowbridge, Wiltshire, during the 1896 Red Van tour.⁷⁹ Although covering much the same

78. Christian Socialist July 1883 contained a 4 page supplement on the foundation of the Land Reform Union at a conference at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street (the scene of many early Socialist gatherings) on 5 June 1883. A brief history of the ELRL, as it was renamed in 1884, by Verinder appears in Labour Annual (1895) pp. 125-6.

79. Labour Annual (1897) p. 164 report of AGM. of ELRL. May 1896. Labour Annual (from 1901 Reformers' Year Book) contains useful annual reports of the activities of the two bodies.

ground, while the ELRL devoted its main efforts to the agricultural labourer, the Land Nationalisation Society's Yellow Vans concentrated more on the mining areas of the North-East and Scotland, and the industrial villages of Lancashire and the West-Riding, where the message of land nationalisation met with a ready response amongst the growing labour movement in the North.⁸⁰

The land Question was an issue on which Radicals, Socialists and Labour could readily combine. Within the Liberal Party in Parliament, especially amongst the younger recruits after 1906, Land baulked large in the sympathies of a considerable number of its more radical members, including many of those who later changed their allegiance to Labour. Prominent amongst these were C.P. Trevelyan, J.C. Wedgwood, Arthur Ponsonby, Dundas White, E.G. Hemmerdè and R.L. Outhwaite, the Liberal victor in the 13 July 1912 by-election at Hanley, a mining constituency and one of the seats previously held by Labour.⁸¹

80. eg cf reports in Labour Annual (1895) pp. 127-8 and (1897) p. 91 of the Land Nationalization Society's summer campaigns. Starting with only a simple Land and Labour cart in 1890, 1891 saw the first appearance of its Yellow Vans, chiefly in the mining areas of Northern England and Scotland. In 1896 the second of the 2 Yellow Vans toured Cleveland and the Durham and Northumberland mining areas, many miners' lodges making donations to help meet the costs of the campaign. The ELRL annual report at its May 1896 AGM recorded 580 meetings and the distribution of over ½ million leaflets. Its summer campaign saw Red Vans in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Leicestershire. The following year saw 2 vans in Essex and Leicestershire again; 1898 seeing only one Red Van in operation (for financial reasons) in the West Riding, where its chief support was the local branches of the ILP. Labour Annual (1897) p. 164; (1898) pp. 74-80; (1899) pp. 78-9.

81. for a recent study of Liberal Land Tours see R. Douglas: Land, People and Politics (1976); for account of the influence of the Land Question on the Parliamentary Liberal Party up to 1914 see H.V. Emy: Liberals, Radicals and Social Politics 1892-1914 (1973) Ch. 6 esp. pp 203 ff.

The two most recent writers on the New Liberalism, H.V. Emy and M. Freedon, both make much of the differences over nationalisation as the chief distinguishing factor between the New Liberalism and Socialism. Freedon in particular wishes to make of this an unbridgeable gulf between the vague, pervasive Socialism of the New Liberals, conceived as little more than "an ethical, humanistic conception of man in society" which thus embraced the varying ideas of Christian Socialists, Positivists, Idealists and Fabians alike, and that distinct economic doctrine which he sees as true Socialism "an ideological system - a comprehensive set of beliefs which interprets and induces political action" to which the New Liberalism was irrevocably opposed.⁸² In reality, the differences between the different brands of Socialism espoused within the independent Socialist bodies were easily as great as any differences separating Socialism from the New Liberalism. Indeed, on this question of Socialism meaning common ownership through the State of the means of production, only the SDF could really be said to be State Socialist.

The Labour Party in Parliament in these pre-war years could at no time be said to have contained more than a handful of advocates of such a thoroughgoing economic reformation. Even amongst its avowed Socialist leadership - Hardie, MacDonald and Snowden - the commitment was at the most to common ownership as an ultimate ideal; and even that ideal was ethical rather than economic in origin - the replacement

82. M. Freedon op cit esp. pp. 25-31.

of competition and the motive of individual gain (ie Profit) by co-operation and production for use. This early Socialist conception of their creed as primarily an ethical or religious ideal rather than an economic system seems to have been so close to the New Liberalism as to be wellnigh indistinguishable from it. This was true not only with regard to the Fabians, but also with regard to MacDonald's Socialist theories, in particular his insistence on an evolutionary gradualism based on gradually changing attitudes only very slowly issuing in legislation so that there could at no time be more Socialism than man in his current stage of evolution was morally ready for. In fact, in their common viewing of politics in primarily ethical rather than economic terms, as well as in their co-operation and joint participation in societies ranging from the religious to the purely secular, the New Liberals and the Socialists need to be seen (as they saw themselves) as having more in common than in what divided them. In Parliament, though in practice Labour remained dependent on Liberal goodwill for its seats and acted more as the Liberal Party's left wing than an independent party in its own right, the divide was real enough, and though many advanced Liberals had hopes of some eventual rapprochement (most probably through a leftwards shift in the Liberal Party itself and a consequent shedding of its right wing.) there was, in 1914, little sign of its coming about. When, as a result of the War, the realignment did occur, it was in very different circumstances to anything foreseen before that fateful day in August 1914.

iv) The Opposition to the War

The outbreak of War took the whole country by surprise. On 2nd August, massive crowds in Trafalgar Square had cheered the Labour leaders in their denunciations of the impending conflict and their determination to oppose it. Days later men such as Hardie and MacDonald found themselves vilified by the same crowds that had recently cheered them, and isolated even within the Labour Party, the vast bulk of which had determined on solid backing for the War effort almost without a whisper of discontent. MacDonald himself had no option but to give up the leadership of the Parliamentary Party. Alone amongst the Labour Movement, the I.L.P. and its leadership stood out in its criticism of the secret diplomacy leading to the conflict, and in its call for a negotiated settlement as soon as Germany was ready to listen. Radical opponents of the War shortly found themselves similarly isolated within the Liberal Party, facing threats of expulsion and public statements from their constituency parties disowning them, while gradually, as successive strains were placed upon Liberal I.P.s' consciences, first in April 1915 by enforced Coalition with their Tory enemies, and then by Conscription, the Liberal Party split apart. From their initial criticisms of the conduct of the preceding peace, through the long years of opposition to major aspects of the conduct of the War, many Socialists, especially within the I.L.P., and a large element of the New Liberalism, were increasingly drawn together, most obviously, of course, in the Union of Democratic Control, long recognised by historians of the period for its part in the transfer of many from Liberalism to Labour during

the War.⁸³ Unlike the Liberals, Labour preserved its unity despite differences over the War itself, to become in its timely withdrawal from the Wartime Coalition the only coherent alternative to Lloyd George's ministry; while by the co-operation of the bulk of its leadership in the war-effort, it could appeal to all those who, with victory won, sought a reconstructed social order as the reward for working-class sacrifices during the conflict. Thus Labour gained the allegiance of most former Liberal opponents of the War, without alienating patriotic support. In this way a new political alignment was formed, which, gaining strength through three successive General Elections, was to transform the political system, with the coming to power, in January 1924 of the First Labour Government, albeit a minority one.

The stages in the process by which many left wing Liberals transferred their allegiance to Labour can be followed through the pages both of Labour Leader, the LLP. organ, in which the names of such Liberals increasingly appeared from the end of 1914 onwards, and in The Nation, from its inception in 1907, the chief organ of the New Liberalism. Although with only a modest circulation (5,000 in 1909)⁸⁴, it attracted many of its leading exponents as regular contributors, J.A. Hobson, L.T. Hobhouse, J.L. Hammond, E.F.G. Masterman and Lowes Dickinson and the novelists John Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett; and three of the ablest editorial staff of the day, H.W. Massingham (editor 1907-23), H.N. Brailsford and H.W. Nevinson - the former of these two, Brailsford, was

83. cf esp. M. Swartz: The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics during the First World War (1971) and R.E. Dowse: "The Entry of the Liberals into the Labour Party 1910-20" in Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic & Social Research Nov. 1961, pp. 78-87.

84. A.F. Havighurst: Radical Journalist: H.W. Massingham (1860-1924) (1974 pp. 154-5)

to become editor of the I.L.P.'s New Leader in the early 1920s, the latter, Nevinson a friend and admirer of MacDonald from the F.N.L. days of the 1890s, was to be his aide throughout the 1924 Election Campaign.⁸⁵ The Weekly "Nation lunches" at the National Liberal Club, attended by most of the above with such other regular guests as Israel Zangwill, H.G. Wells, Arthur Ponsonby, J. Simon, P. Morrell and even the veteran R.B. Cunninghame Graham, had, since 1907, provided a forum for progressive opinions at least as influential as the Rainbow Circle.⁸⁶ The transference of the Nation's support to Labour in the 1918 Election was therefore a crucial indicator of the slide of social radicalism away from the Liberal Party to Labour.

From the first, the social question was to the fore in the arguments of those who, amid the jingoistic fervour, adopted a critical attitude to the reasons for which the War was being fought, and sought to lay down clear principles of their own for any peace settlement. In its first issue after War had been declared, in which its editorial, while lamenting the necessity, pledged its support until "German militarism" could be broken, the Nation carried 2 articles, by Lowes Dickinson and Norman Angell, in which this social dimension was brought out. Lowes Dickinson, adopting a Carlylean view of the War as the result of the falling out of rulers rather than of the masses (who would actually be the ones to kill or be killed), pledged himself to work to ensure that those motives of loyalty and service which were already being channelled for destruction,

85. H.W. Nevinson: Last Changes, Last Chances (1928) pp. 300-17 provides a good account of Nevinson's transference of allegiance from Liberalism to Labour and his own very high regard for MacDonald.

86. For lists of those connected with the Nation and its lunches see A.F. Havighurst: op cit p. 153; H.N. Brailsford: The Life Work of J.A. Hobson (1948) p. 2.

would, when peace came, be used for the reconstruction of a world based on different principles to those which had led to the present disaster.⁸⁷ But it was Norman Angell who put forward a view which was to be heard with increasing stridency as the War progressed. Entitling his article "The Unsound Foundation" he insisted that peace and the social question were inextricably intertwined, and that the War which was now about to ravage Europe was as much the result of a general defect in the social structure as it was of any failure in diplomacy. "The problem of peace is neither more nor less than the problem of so laying the foundation of civilised society that a stable and secure superstructure becomes possible. It is all one general interdependent problem. Constructive social work depends upon making peace secure; peace depends upon an educated democracy; if democracy is to survive, the general war problem must find a solution." He stressed the stark defeat which the party of social reform now faced. "Our schemes of social reform must now be shelved, Perhaps they will wait for a generation, perhaps longer. The efforts of many years of social endeavour will be nullified because, instead of marshalling all the forces of reform as to make them in some measure all parts of the army of peace, we have conceived of anti-war propaganda as a separate and limited task." The defeat of the peace party was therefore equally the defeat of social reform.⁸⁸

87. Nation 8/8/14 pp. 699-700 G. Lowes Dickinson, "The Holy War".

88. Ibid 8/8/14 pp. 700-2 N. Angell: "The Unsound Foundations"

The ILP leaders took the same line. The following edition of Nation carried a letter from MacDonald attacking Grey's diplomacy over 8 years which had enmeshed Britain in a tangle of secret alliances from which there was no escape. "He made war in Europe inevitable while pursuing what he thought to be the way of peace." The resulting conflict had "shattered our programmes of social reform" and allied Britain to Tsarist Russia, "the Power which, most of all, threatens democracy and European civilization."⁸⁹ With the NAC, adopting an anti-War declaration in accordance with this view, the ILP, as a whole committed itself to a critical attitude to the Government; by the end of October, 56 specially-convened ILP local conferences throughout the country, and 95 of the largest branches, Federations and Divisional Councils voted in support of the NAC, only 7 branches were opposed.⁹⁰

In the Nation, Bertrand Russell and the Liberal MP Arthur Ponsonby wrote in support of MacDonald's views and C.R. Buxton added his voice of dissent to the War.⁹¹ H.G. Wells while believing in the need to defeat German militarism, hoped that at last the Liberal Party would realise the utter bankruptcy of "the individualist capitalist system" and saw in the outbreak of War a great opportunity both for a "World Conference", in which America would take the lead, to "redraw every frontier" to end once and for all conflicts of race and language, "and set up a Peace League that will control the globe"; and to bring about "the most enduring social

89. Ibid 15/8/14 p. 737

90. Labour Leader 22/10/14 p. 7

91. Nation 15/8/14 p 737; 22/8/14 pp. 764, 765.

reorganisation ... /which would/ ... put the feeding and housing of the population and the administration of the land out of the reach of private greed and selfishness for ever."⁹²

Then, on 19th September a letter appeared in the Nation and, in the same week, in Labour Leader - "Conditions of a Stable Peace" - signed by MacDonald, C.P. Trevelyan, Angell, E.D. Morel and Ponsonby, announcing the setting up of the Union of Democratic Control, not a movement to stop the War, but rather to help create a "well-defined public opinion" which would insist upon "the fundamental principles which must mark the final terms of peace". These would include:

1. Plebiscites of any provinces to be transferred from one government to another allowing their inhabitants the right of veto.

2. No future treaties to be negotiated by the British Government in secret and without the sanction of Parliament. There would be new machinery to ensure this "democratic control of foreign policy".

3. Britain to adopt a new Foreign Policy aimed not at the creation of alliances in pursuit of a "balance of power" but rather the establishment of a "Concert of Europe" where decisions and debates would be public.

4. Britain would propose for inclusion in the peace settlement a "drastic reduction of armaments by the consent of all the belligerent Powers", through the nationalisation of the armaments industry and the "prohibition of the export of armaments by one country to another."⁹³

92. Ibid 15/8/14 pp 753-4 H.G. Wells "Opportunity"; 22/8/14 pp. 755-7 H.G. Wells "The Liberal Fear of Russia".

93. Ibid 19/9/14 pp. 865-6.

Almost immediately, the Labour Leader became an organ for UDC. spokesman, attracting first E.D. Morel (who had been prospective Liberal candidate for Birkenhead from 1912 until his resignation on 4th August 1914)⁹⁴ with an article (8/10/14) "Was Germany Wholly Responsible?" and then Norman Angell with the first of a series of contributions, "Towards a Permanent Peace" appearing in the issue for 23 March 1915. Henceforth both were regular contributors. Other New Liberals of a similar outlook followed suit. M. Philips Price, a cousin of C.P. Trevelyan and at the time prospective Liberal candidate for Gloucester, also a founder member of the UDC, wrote another article in support of Morel's views in Labour Leader (15/10/14).⁹⁵ Amongst the Christmas Messages to Labour Leader readers in December 1914, for the first time the names of two prominent New Liberals (both UDC founders) appeared - Arthur Ponsonby and C.P. Trevelyan, the latter placing his hopes for the future in the working classes.⁹⁶ Others followed suit in the messages carried by the paper for May Day, 1915. In addition to C.P. Trevelyan, and E.D. Morel, they contained messages from 2 further Liberal MP:s, both associated with the UDC, R.D. Denman and R.L. Outhwaite. The latter, in particular, placed his hopes for the future peace of Europe in a transformed social order. For Outhwaite, peace and true Internationalism was impossible "unless the workers of each nation destroy

94. F.S. Cocks: E.D. Morel, the man and his work (1920 p.

95. Labour Leader 15/10/14 p. 3; M.P. Price: "Was Germany Wholly Responsible?" For M. Philips Price's involvement in the UDC, see his My Three Revolutions (1969) p. 23. Up to 1914 he had been (as he saw it) typical of many Radicals on the left of the Liberal Party: "a curious mixture of Socialism in home affairs and a traditional, almost Whig, attitude to foreign affairs." Ibid p. 21

96. Labour Leader 24/12/14 p. 7.

sham democracy, based on privilege and monopoly, by destroying its foundations." Only through the dual application of the principles of "Thou shalt not steal" to economics and "Thou shalt not kill" to politics - might "social and economic conditions ... be so revolutionised as to make possible the ideal of Internationalism."⁹⁷

With the development of the Union of Democratic Control, closer ties than ever before were formed between dissident New Liberals and the Socialists of the ILP, which between them constituted its membership. Within a year of its formation, at its first AGM on 29th October 1915, it was able to report 20 branches in the greater London area alone and 61 others in the rest of the country. In addition 107 other bodies had affiliated to it including 48 Trades and Labour Councils or local Labour Parties.⁹⁸ By now it had over 300,000 members, a figure that was to more than double by the end of the War.⁹⁹ In London, the City branch of the ILP and the City and West Central Branch of the UDC felt sufficiently close in outlook to organise a joint meeting on 27 October 1915 with Glasier (ILP) and Bertrand Russell (UDC) as speakers.¹⁰⁰ It was indicative of the close ties which now existed between the 2 organisations, and which was reflected in the UDC's executive. Already, in 1915, as well as such prominent New Liberals as A. Ponsonby, C.P. Trevelyan, C.R. Buxton,

97. Ibid 29/4/15 p. 1.

98. Ibid 11/11/15 p. 10. Symbolically its morning session was chaired by J.R. MacDonald and the afternoon session by J.A. Hobson, the 2 leading exponents of Socialism and New Liberalism respectively.

99. M. Swartz op cit p. 61. The figures for November 1918 were 300 affiliated bodies and 650,000 members.

100. Labour Leader 11/11/15 p. 10

E.D. Morel, J.A. Hobson and 2 women, Helen M. Swanwick and Margaret Hells, it included F.W. Jowett of the ILP, as well as Ramsay MacDonald.¹⁰¹ By 1917 Snowden was also an EC member, as were F.W. Pethick-Lawrence and Bertrand Russell, 2 recent converts to the ILP, and the journalist H.N. Brailsford.¹⁰² With some provincial branches of the UDC being formed by local ILP branches, and a considerable overlap of members in others,¹⁰³ the position of those of its leading members who remained in the Liberal Party was increasingly coming under strain. At the end of 1915 Arthur Ponsonby's constituency Liberal Party at Stirling Burghs publicly dissociated themselves from his views. In Elland, C.P. Trevelyan's constituency party demanded his resignation from Parliament.¹⁰⁴ While at Hackney Central, the Liberal Party expelled its prospective candidate C.R. Buxton, for his views on the War.¹⁰⁵ The same issue of Labour Leader which carried news of these rebuffs to Trevelyan and Ponsonby contained a letter from an anonymous correspondent writing to say that with Liberalism dead and Radicalism "on its last legs" he was joining the ILP.¹⁰⁶ The long-awaited realignment of the left was now under way.

101. Ibid 2/12/15 p. 5.

102. M. Swartz: on cit p.225 Appendix B. There was an equally strong ILP representation on the General Council.

103. R.E. Dowse on cit p. 83 refs. to 20 ILP branches immediately affiliating to the UDC, and others such as East Ham and Sheffield forming UDC branches for themselves.

104. Labour Leader 23/12/15 p. 6.

105. V. de Bunsen: Charles Roden Buxton. A Memoir (1948) p. 51.

106. Labour Leader 23/12/15 p. 6.

By the summer of 1915, with the growing clamour for Conscription led by Northcliffe's Daily Mail, the issue which more clearly than anything else during the War threatened the root of Liberalism's professed goal of freedom of the individual was rapidly coming to a head, to reveal a Liberal Party more seriously confused and divided than at any time since the Irish split.

Fears of a possible introduction of conscription had existed amongst opponents of the war at its outset. From the autumn of 1914, pacifists of various shades were declaring their irrevocable opposition to military service. Many of these were within the ILP; and the Labour Leader, from the start of their campaign, offered itself as a forum for their viewpoint, carrying their articles, and listing prominent adherents to their cause. Chief of these amongst the older leadership of the ILP, was Dr. Alfred Salter, a founder member of Bermondsey ILP. A Quaker since his opposition to the Boer War, for him pacifism was as much a part of his religion as of his Socialism.¹⁰⁷ Of the younger men in the ILP whose Socialism inspired them to a moral opposition to the war, Clifford Allen, A.F. Brockway and J.H. Hudson were all prominent from the beginning of a movement which was to lead most of them to military tribunals and prison.

The determination of these opponents of the war was demonstrated, when, on 3rd December 1914, a letter appeared in Labour Leader, announcing the formation of the No-Conscription Fellowship, under the signatures of W.H. Ayles,

107. F. Brockway: Bermondsey Story - The Life of Alfred Salter (1949) several times refers to his "ethical inspiration" (23) and his religious conception of socialism (55). When the NCF leadership was imprisoned for their conscientious objection, Salter took over as Chairman of the NCF. Ibid p. 66.

J.H. Hudson, Clifford Allen, the Rev Langton Richards, A.S. Campbell and A.F. Brockway.¹⁰⁸ By March 1915 the NCF. organisation was complete, with Allen as Chairman, Brockway secretary, the veteran Tolstoyan socialist Percy Redfern¹⁰⁹ as Treasurer, and a committee including C.H. Norman, J.H. Hudson and A.S. Campbell. It was open to all men of military service age (18-39) who would pledge themselves not to serve if conscripted.¹¹⁰ Its leaders were at once active spreading their gospel, amongst the ILP branches - Allen for example speaking to the City ILP in March at a meeting chaired by the veteran socialist Herbert Burrows, a recent defector from the SDF in opposition to Hyndman's support of the War¹¹¹ and Brockway in August 1915 preaching from the pulpit of Kensington Baptist Church, whose minister, the future Labour MP the Rev Herbert Dunnico, was one of the first clergy listed by the Labour Leader as speaking out in opposition to the War.¹¹² By November 1915, the NCF. claimed 42 branches of a body which, according to Allen, reached a membership of close to 20,000 by July 1916, and which could muster for its 2-day Convention in April of that year, 2,000 delegates from all over Britain - from "brawny miners from the pit" and "pugnacious Scotsmen" to University graduates and London intellectuals.¹¹³ Their reasons for conscientious objection were, as Clifford Allen explained, somewhat varied, as were their backgrounds and

108. Labour Leader 3/13/14 p. 6.

109. For his part in the NCF. see P. Redfern: Journey to Understanding (1948) pp. 177 ff.

110. Labour Leader 4/3/15 p. 6.

111. Ibid 25/3/15 p. 11.

112. Ibid 12/8/15 p. 5. He was listed as an anti-war clergyman on 8/10/14 p. 5.

religious or other affiliations, but in almost every case were rooted in a common belief in the sacredness of human life. Some had definite Christian beliefs, leading them to see all warfare as opposed to Jesus' teachings, and God's Fatherhood over all men. To others, on purely ethical grounds, human life itself, quite apart from any metaphysical considerations, was held "absolutely sacred under all circumstances" while for many ILPers, their Socialist faith itself, rooted in the idea of the Brotherhood of Man, made participation in war quite unthinkable.¹¹⁴ Allen's own views tended towards the latter. Calling himself variously "Agnostic" whilst in prison and "not a Christian in the accepted sense of any denomination" on another occasion,¹¹⁵ his views were characteristic of the ethical idealism of the movement. Attacking the Tribunals' insistence on adherence to Church or theological dogma as proof of genuine conscientious objection he complained "Thousands of us younger members of the ILP do not belong to any religious denomination. To us, our Socialism is our religion and inspiration in all our efforts to serve our fellow men. Our service finds its motive

113. (continued from previous page) Ibid 4/11/15 p. 10; 20/7/16 p. 7. C. Allen: "History of the No-Conscription Fellowship". An account of its 2-day Convention in April 1916 appeared in a letter of Bertrand Russell in the Nation 15/4/16 p. 76. J.B. Wallace's Brotherhood Church, Southgate Road, where it was held was besieged by angry patriots, a number of pacifists having to be restrained from turning the demonstration into a full-scale battle. Accounts of the siege appear in B. Russell Autobiography (1967) and Francis Meynell: My Lives (1971) p. 106.

114. Labour Leader 17/2/16 p. 7 C. Allen, "The Position of the Conscientious Objector".

115. Ibid 2/11/16 p. 7.; Nation 2/6/17 p. 222.

in our belief in the worth of each human personality. Our detestation of war is rooted in our belief in the International and in the oneness of the people of all nations."¹¹⁶ Brockway, a disciple of the religious immanentism of Rev R.J. Campbell, at his court-martial at the end of 1916 expressed a similar faith from a more distinctly religious position. "I believe that mankind is in reality one; that the universal spirit dwells in all men and unites all men. I believe that human personality is sacred, because it is an expression of the universal spirit". War, being a violation of this oneness of the human race, "degrades" human personality and destroys life. Therefore he could not participate in it.¹¹⁷ Similar views bound together others, of very different religious outlooks, from the empiricist Bertrand Russell (who lost his Trinity Fellowship because of his association with the NCF) to the Quaker humanitarian, Edward Grubb, in 1915 one of the first distinguished converts from Liberalism to the ILP.¹¹⁸

Quakerism was in particular in the forefront of opposition to the War, a position which led many speakers at their 1915 Conference to praise both the founders of the NCF. (none of them Quakers) and the ILP leadership for their lead. In particular, the discussion on "War and Social Order" brought out a strong consensus on the need for a new social order with

116. Labour Leader 3/2/16 p. 6.

117. Ibid 7/12/16 p. 6: "An ILP Pacifist's Apologia. Mr. Fenner Brockway Court-Martialled".

118. Nation 15/4/16 p. 76: B. Russell op cit Labour Leader 15/7/15. Grubb soon became Treasurer of NCF. Ibid 9/9/15 p. 3. For a statement of his views see Nation 15/1/16 p. 577. E. Grubb: "The Conscientious Objector".

the coming of peace, foreshadowing the disproportionately high percentage of Quakers amongst Labour MP s elected in the 1920 s.¹¹⁹

The real test of the No-Conscription Fellowship came after the passage of ^{the} first Compulsory Military Service Act in January 1916. The effect of this legislation on the Liberal Party was catastrophic. The Act, which covered only those single men of eligible age who had not enlisted, was passed by mainly Tory votes on the 3rd Reading, 226 Liberals, Labour and Irish either abstaining or voting against, compared with only 156 voting for. The Nation, whose editorials had, since the previous August, given almost weekly warnings against conscription, bemoaned that "the Liberal Party is broken beyond the hope of immediate repair". Many Liberals who had supported the bill had done so only to preserve Asquith in power and keep the Conservatives out.¹²⁰ Although only 33 Liberals had actually defied their Party and voted against, these included many of the Party's leading Radicals - Percy Alden, Sydney Arnold, John Burns, H.G. Chancellor, R.D. Denman, Philip Morrell, R.L. Outhwaite, A. Ponsonby, A. Rowntree, Sir John Simon, H.B. Lees-Smith,

119. Labour Leader 5/6/15 p. 2 J.T. Walton Newbold (a member of the Society of Friends) reporting on their Conference.

120. Nation 22/1/16 p. 592.

J.H. Whitehouse and C.P. Trevelyan.¹²¹ Labour was equally divided, W.C. Anderson moving the Bill's rejection on the First Reading, and the ILPers voting solidly against it to produce 11 Labour votes Anti and 8 For. The Second Reading reversed the balance with 17 For and 11 Against.¹²² With MacDonald, Snowden, Jowett, Anderson, and the other ILPers solidly opposed to conscription, however, the disunity of the Labour Party as a whole was of less significance. Alone of the political parties, the ILP presented a united front in opposition to the Act.

Since the formation of the Coalition in April 1915, there had been a suspicion in the minds of many Radicals that it was only a matter of time before the Conservative presence insisted on Conscription as the price for their continued backing of the

121. Labour Leader 6/1/16 p. 3. List of the Bill's opponents on First Reading, with Party affiliations. J.H. Whitehouse, Lloyd-George's EES. up to outbreak of War had resigned the Liberal Whip on its declaration, to sit as an independent. The opposition to the Bill was largely constant, on Second Reading, with the Irish Nationalists now abstaining, the 41 opponents of the Bill (including 2 tellers) came to 28 Liberals, 11 Labour and 2 Independent Nationalists.

Labour Leader 20/1/16 p. 2. The full list of Liberal opponents on First and Second Readings was: P. Alden, S. Arnold, J.A. Baker, Sir J.E. Barlow (1), J. Burns, Sir W.P. Byles, H.G. Chancellor, W. Clough (2), R.D. Denison, Sir W.A. Gelder (1), H.J. Glassville (1), A.G.C. Harvey (2), J.M. Hogge (1), R.D. Holt, E.J. John (2), Leif Jones, J. King, R. Lambert, Sir W. Lawson (2), T. Lough, D.M. Mason, P.A. Matthews, P. Morrell, R.L. Outhwaite, A. Ponsonby, W.M.R. Pringle (1), C.G. Rees (1), A. Rowntree, Sir W. Runciman(1), A.J. Sherwell, Sir J. Simon, H.B. Lees-Smith, C.P. Trevelyan, J.H. Whitehouse, P. Williams (1), C. Williams (1). (1) or (2) refers to which division they voted in. Those without number voted in both.

122. Ibid 6/1/16 p. 3: 20/1/16 p. 2.

Government. Such an occurrence, they foresaw, would be the effective imposition of the rule of industrialists and militarists who would use their opportunity to reverse many of the gains made by the working-classes in the previous decade of reform. At the height of the Daily Mail campaign for its introduction, both Percy Alden and R.D. Denman expressed precisely these fears in letters to the Nation. For Denman in particular, "All men see that conscription is being run by the class which always hopes to gain by 'disciplining' the masses, and which has cause for alarm at the prospect of a lightly-governed working-class, habituated by a long war to socialistic administration and to the high taxation of the rich."¹²³ The Nation editorials carried the same message. Conscription would be "a grave step backwards from free democracy to autocratic militarism." With exemptions granted only (apart from C.O.'s) for work of national importance, conscription was a threat to every factory worker in the land, effectively abolishing his only safeguard against an assault on his pay or conditions - his right to strike.¹²⁴ For the Nation, conscription was a "betrayal", a "reversal of Liberalism and democracy" - a point which, citing the way in which the Munitions Act had effectively destroyed trades union rights, was hammered home in one article, emotively headlined, "A Servile State?"¹²⁵

123. Nation 28/8/15 p. 707; for Alden's letter cf pp. 705-6

124. Ibid 27/11/15 p. 317 "Conscription - A Warning".

125. Ibid 1/1/16 pp. 493, 499.

R.L. Outhwaite, a Liberal opponent of Conscription, writing for Labour Leader on the eve of the Bill's final passage through Parliament, pointed out the moral of Conscription for future social reform. For Outhwaite, conscription of the individual for military service in the interests of the war effort implied equally conscription of wealth for the same purpose. Indeed this should have long preceded any talk of conscription of individuals. Yet Land was untouched and Capital was only being borrowed, and "at a rate to make the lender richer than before", even allowing for taxation. Himself a longstanding advocate of the Land Tax, he praised the ILP's proposals for it, seeing in the ILP a home for the many disillusioned Radicals "who feel that Liberal leaders have betrayed the cause of liberty."¹²⁶

Such reasoning no doubt played a part in creating the growing influx of new members into the ILP which was occurring from the autumn of 1915. In March 1916 the annual report of the London (City) branch, the one most closely associated with UDC activities, reported a membership increase over the year from 97 to 248, with 12 new members that day, and an average 10-15 new recruits per meeting.¹²⁷ Throughout the autumn-winter of 1915-16, accounts of the City branch's success appeared regularly in the Labour Leader. Thus the 20/1/16 issue carried the news of "the largest branch meeting in the history of the branch", 61 were present and 32 new members were elected.¹²⁸ Three weeks later the story was the same -

126. Labour Leader 20/1/16 p. 5. R.L. Outhwaite : "Make the Country Ours!"

127. Ibid 16/3/16 p. 11.

128. Ibid 20/1/16 p. 11.

58 present and 16 new members.¹²⁹ At Leicester, MacDonald's constituency, a similar phenomenon was occurring. From September to the end of November, Leicester ILP reported a further 80 recruits, with 60 more in December alone, bringing the total membership of the branch from 850 at the end of August, to over 1,000 by the end of the year. At the beginning of March, Leicester was boasting a further 76 recruits.¹³⁰ For these branches, it was the largest membership increase in such a short period that they had ever experienced. It occurred in the months during which the campaign for conscription was at its height, as the first Conscription Act was passing through Parliament.

With the introduction of a second Military Service Bill in May 1916 to extend the provisions of the first Act from single men to all men aged 18-41, automatically enlisting them 30 days after its passage, the activities of the NCF took on a more serious turn. From the first talk of the possibility of conscription, writers in the Nation had been warning of the problems which would result if sincere conscientious objectors - Socialists or Quakers for example - were forced into the military on pain of being shot.¹³¹ The NCF, through spokesmen from Edward Grubb to Bertrand Russell, had made clear that the option of non-combatant work would not satisfy them either, Russell insisted on their belief in the sacredness of human life and brotherhood "even unto death"¹³² and Grubb exposed the hypocrisy of the acceptance of non-combatant work which freed others "to do what we are unwilling to do

129. Ibid 17/2/16 p. 11.

130. Ibid 24/2/16 p. 10; 2/3/16 p. 11.

131. e.g. R.D. Denman in Nation 28/8/15 p. 707.

132. Ibid 15/4/16 p.76.

ourselves."¹³³ Yet despite these warnings, the Tribunals were very loath to grant exemptions on conscience grounds. By August, according to H.N. Brailsford, only 60 Absolute Exemptions had been granted throughout the country, and of these only 25 were still valid. Even such transparently sincere opponents of the war as Clifford Allen now found themselves forcibly enlisted in the non-combatant corps because of their refusal to do any other work connected with ^{the} war effort.¹³⁴

As the 30 - day period of grace ran out, men who refused voluntarily to report to the military were arrested. Throughout June 1916, the Labour Leader carried weekly figures of arrests. By June 15, 1,061 men were in military hands, 312 had been court-martialled, and only 63 released. A week later the figure had risen to 1,259 arrested, 423 court-martialled, but still only 63 released.¹³⁶ Already it was clear that men's lives were in danger, with many C.O. s having been forcibly abducted to the Front in France, where further resistance to orders on their part rendered them liable to be shot.¹³⁷ 34 C.O. s had in fact been taken to France, and there sentenced to death by the military authorities, apparently without the Government's knowledge; and only as a result of prompt action after questions in the House, had their sentences been commuted to 10 years imprisonment instead.¹³⁸

133. Ibid 15/1/16 p. 577 E. Grubb: art. cit

134. Ibid 19/8/16 pp. 631-2

135. Labour Leader 15/6/16 p. 5.

136. Ibid 22/6/16 p. 2.

137. Ibid 15/6/16 p. 5.

138. Ibid 29/6/16 p. 4.

Summing up the situation in a letter to the Nation in March 1917, a correspondent recalled that approximately 3,000 conscientious objectors had served at least one term's imprisonment; 2,000 of these subsequently accepting some form of work of national importance, but leaving a hard core of 6 - 700 dedicated opponents of the war who were now serving their third, or even fourth prison term, including men of the moral calibre of Allen and Brockway of the NCF, many Quakers and others of similar views, such as Stephen Hobhouse, who, with a typical commitment, had himself given up wealth and social position to devote his energies full-time "to social and religious work."¹³⁹

The affiliations of C.O. prisoners tends to bear this picture out. At Walton prison, amongst the conscientious objectors there was an ILP branch.¹⁴⁰ At Dartmoor, there was a prisoners' branch of the Church Socialist League, with Charles Record, prominent throughout the interwar period in the Christian Socialist Movement as its secretary.¹⁴¹ At Wandsworth, the future Labour MP Harry Snell recalled regular visits to a group of 27 prisoners there, in his somewhat unusual capacity of chaplain on behalf of the Union of Ethical Societies, while at Wormwood Scrubbs, a Theosophist Chaplain was called in to visit the C.O. s.¹⁴² The obvious moral idealism and social commitment of such men was clearly a source of serious embarrassment to Liberal consciences.

139. Nation 10/3/17 p. 762 letter W.E. Wilson

140. C.T. Solberg: The Independent Labour Party 1893-1918 Oxon B. Litt. 1959 p. 179.

141. D.O. Wagner: The Church of England and Social Reform since 1854 (1930) p. 288, quoted from the Church Socialist (1917), p. 239.

142. H. Snell: Men, Movements and Myself (1938), p. 197 Ploughshare Feb 1917, p. 32.

v) The Emergence of the Labour Party

The enforced resignation of Asquith and the formation of the Lloyd George coalition in December 1916 had split the Liberal Party into 2 factions. Many members now despaired of its future and looked again at the possibilities of Labour as a basis for a new party of the left. In March 1917 an event occurred which drew a number of those who, supporters of the War, had not been attracted into Labour-Socialist circles through the UDC; the overthrow of Tsarism in the first Russian Revolution.

For the Nation, "the greatest tyranny in the world has fallen. The glorious news of the successful Russian Revolution will send a thrill of joy through democratic Europe". It was Parliamentarian, Liberal and Socialist.¹⁴³ Social and Radical M.P.s joined together in letters of congratulation and goodwill to the Provisional Government, welcoming its commitment to peace without conquest and a League of Nations, and agreeing that "Like you, we believe the greatest obstacle to peace today is the survival of these imperialist designs among the ruling classes of most of the belligerent nations." Among the 32 signatories were the 4 I.L.P. leaders, W.C. Anderson, F.W. Jowett, J.R. MacDonald and Philip Snowden, together with 2 other Labour members, F.W. Goldstone and T. Richardson and 26 Liberals. Of the signatories only 4 had not opposed conscription - J. Bliss, Noel Buxton, P.W. Raffan and J.C. Wedgwood. All the remainder had done so, from Ponsonby and Trevelyan of the UDC and others of like mind including Alden, H.G. Chancellor, Philip Morrell, Outhwaite,

143. Nation 17/3/17 p. 1.

A. Rowntree and H.B. Lees-Smith, to E.T. John and D.M. Mason, 2 more Liberals whom their constituencies refused to readopt in 1918 and J. King and R. Lambert, both prominent defectors to the ILP immediately prior to the 1918 Election. These letters, in which Liberals and ILPers appeared undifferentiated simply as "We, the Radical and Socialist Members of the House of Commons", were another indication of the growing association of a group of dissident Liberals with the ILP which was eventually to lead most of them into the Labour Party.¹⁴⁴

Many of these became members of the "1917 Club" of 4 Gerrard Street, Soho, which was founded chiefly at the instigation of J.A. Hobson and H.W. Nevinson in commemoration of the March Revolution and was designed to be a meeting place of Radicals and Socialists who opposed the War. In fact it survived into the late 1930 s. Open only at lunchtimes, it provided a home for a host of sympathisers. One of its younger members, M.A. Hamilton, a future Labour MP, recalled the atmosphere:

"At the 1917, in its heyday, there was no ceremony, and not much manners. Everybody talked to everybody. The 'stars' corruscated freely at lunch time; after lunch, a big circle would gather round to hear them talk - above all, to hear MacDonalld. The shabby little premises buzzed with persons united in a demand for what Bertie Russell, in his harsh incisive tones, called 'an early and dishonourable peace'.

144. Labour Leader 10/5/17 p. 10. The full list of Radical signatories was: P. Alden(1), S. Arnold (1), J. Allen Baker, Sir J.E.M. Barlow, J. Bliss (1), N. Buxton, H.G. Chancellor, W. Clough, T.E. Harvey, J.M. Hogge (1), R.D. Holt (1), E.T. John, Rt. Hon. Leif Jones, J. King, R.C. Lambert, D.M. Mason, P.A. Moltem, R. Morrell (2), R.L. Outhwaite, A. Ponsonby, W.M.R. Pringle, P.W. Raffan, A. Rowntree (1), H.B. Lees-Smith, C.P. Trevelyan, J.C. Wedgwood.

This was in fact the substance of our practical pacifism. MacDonald prevailed so far as to nip a 'Stop the War' movement, expressly so-called, in the bud; but 'Peace by Negotiation' was the battle cry under which we marshalled our oddly assorted battalions."¹⁴⁵ J.A. Hobson recalled it as "a free meeting place for 'advanced' men and women concerned with political and economic reforms, or with the new literary or artistic movements". Members who might be found there at any one time included such literary figures as Olive Schreiner and E.M. Forster. Charles Laughton, the actor, himself a Socialist was a member, as were others better known in the political and journalistic world of the time - H.N. Brailsford, Raymond Postgate, Miles Malleson, Oswald Mosley, and such well-known Socialist clergy as Conrad Noel, Godfrey Bell, J.G. Adderley and Cartmel Robinson.¹⁴⁶ MP's who were members in the 1920 s included C.G. Ammon, W.H. Ayles, Brockway, Hugh Dalton, A.W. Haycock, Herbert Morrison and former Liberals such as Noel Buxton and J.C. Wedgwood.¹⁴⁷ It was thus another of those bodies which aided the transition from Liberalism to Labour.

145. M.A. Hamilton: *Remembering My Good Friends* (1944) pp. 78-9. Not everyone appreciated MacDonald's moderation, however, Francis Maynell: *My Lives* (1971) p. 236 recalled that after the Bolshevik Revolution a group of pro-communists led by Alfred Bacharach tended to gather together in the Club, and "Ramsay MacDonald, a founder member, and the club's best known politician, was not welcome at 'the table!'"

146. Lists in F. Meynell *op cit* p. 236; J.A. Hobson: *Confessions of an Economic Heretic* (1938) p. 115; T.P. Stevens: *Father Adderley* (1942) p. 88. Stevens, another of the younger members recalled "everyone prominent in the British Socialist world might be seen there ... Politicians would greet one or all ... and go back to the House or the Trade Union offices. Ramsay MacDonald, before he was Prime Minister, held court almost every day in the smoke-room, while those of us who were young sat around entranced."

147. Listed by respondents as among their Clubs in *Labour Who's Who* (1924).

1917 also saw a further increase in membership of the ILP, which gained another 49 branches between March 1st and mid-September.¹⁴⁸ Reviewing developments over the year, the Labour Leader, in December 1917, noted amongst more distinguished recruits, Maude Royden, Bertrand Russell, Miles Malleson, and, most recently, Capt. E.N. Bennet, former Liberal MP for Woodstock.¹⁴⁹ It would seem that the Radical/ILP alliance, forged early in the War, was at last beginning to be reflected in defections from the Liberal Party to that other body. An indication of this trend is apparent in the public pronouncements of such UDC leaders as E.D. Morel and Norman Angell during the spring and summer of 1917.

For Morel, speaking to the Hammersmith UDC in May, the War had "demonstrated the inherent rottenness of society under its present selfish and short-sighted capitalistic system". "Fundamental change" was the only solution, and he saw no help for society save in organised Socialism. Although as yet he was still not ready to join it, Morel praised the ILP whose members, he conceded, made up the bulk of the active supporters of the UDC as "an ethical and intellectual force ... at work raising the democracy ... infusing it with a spiritual conception of humanity, exorcising the mob-mind."¹⁵⁰ Norman Angell, in a series of 7 articles in the Labour Leader (12 July - 30 August) was even more explicit, proclaiming Socialism "the best hope" of saving the world from destruction. Like Morel, he stressed Socialism's ethical aspect, seeing the mere

148. Labour Leader 20/9/17 p. 2.

149. Ibid 13/12/17 p. 7.

150. Ibid 24/5/17 p. 7. "A Tribute to the ILP".

economic transfer of land and capital to the State as of little value without a concomitant change in men's hearts and minds. Nevertheless he advocated some pretty drastic economic changes, basing his argument on the idea that if the conscription of men's lives were valid to defeat Germany, the external enemy of Britain, no less was its use justified with regard to the surplus wealth of the propertied classes in the fight against the internal enemy, poverty.¹⁵¹ Such statements show clearly the extent of the divide which was now opening up between many Radicals and the policies of organised Liberalism.

It was, however, the revision of the Labour Party's Constitution which was the occasion of the start of the mass exodus of Radicals from the Liberal Party to Labour. The NEC's draft, which was published in October 1917 and passed by a special conference in January 1918, allowed individual membership for the first time and, by its specific inclusion of "workers by hand or by brain", in Clause 4, offered a deliberate invitation to the middle-class Radical intelligentsia to join it. There was an immediate response, the Nation hailing it in an editorial: "The Coming Democratic Party"¹⁵² and, in a series of letters, a number of Liberal M.P.s signalled their own intentions of taking up the offer.

151. Ibid 2/7/17 - 30/8/17. N. Angell: "Shall it be a New World?"

152. Nation 13/10/17 p. 56. For the Nation, the final arrival of universal suffrage presaged in the new Representation of the People Bill seemed inevitably to lead to a strengthening of demands for reconstruction, most probably through the Labour Party, whose new constitution seemed to mark its emergence from being a mere "sect", hardly fighting in many seats and content with a small representation, to seeking to become /..

As one (anonymous) Liberal MP wrote, although "spiritually akin", Labour and advanced Radicalism had been too long separated politically. Now, with one half of Liberalism linked to reaction, and the other half weak, leaderless, and doing nothing to prepare for the task of reconstruction, Labour at least offered the possibility of radical change. "Is it to be wondered at that many of us are turning with hope to this new party, unwilling any longer to trust the healing of the wound of the world to the leader of the Ulster Rebels and the figures which surround him or to wait indefinitely whilst the leaders of the Liberal Party sit amidst the ruins of earth listening for the voices of the multitude to give them courage to begin rebuilding?"¹⁵³ Writing in agreement, "Another Liberal MP", also anonymous, and equally disillusioned with his old party, believed that this view "reflects the feelings of a considerably number of Liberal Members of Parliament" who, while owing no allegiance to Lloyd George, "have waited in vain, month after month, for the enunciation of a policy or the initiation of a new line of constructive statesmanship which might rally together the scattered and discontented forces of Liberalism." For him too, with the failure of Asquith's leadership, the future seemed more likely to lie with Labour. In the Commons, he

152. (continued from previous page)
instead a truly national party. Up to now class-dominated, Labour was at last actively encouraging middle-class membership and candidatures. Embodying, as it did "those moral hopes and ideas which are beginning to move the world", Labour, for the Nation now seemed the best hope for industrial reconstruction under a new social order, possibly in alliance with the anti Lloyd George Liberals, to drive out reaction and also restore democracy and Parliamentary control of Foreign Policy.

153. Ibid 20/10/17 p. 93, letter.

noted, there was already a "pretty close cooperation and complete sympathy between a section of Liberals and the more advanced and independent section of the Labour Party. The question to be solved in the next few months is whether this Parliamentary cooperation can extend into the electorate and bear practical fruit in the formation of a Democratic Party."¹⁵⁴

The Nation, at any rate, was in no doubt. In its issue of 2 February 1918, it greeted the passing of the new Labour Party Constitution at the January Nottingham Conference as "precisely what is wanted", opening the door to the "brain-worker" and "middle-class sympathiser": it was the "signal for a new national party."¹⁵⁵ In a marathon letter the same week, C.P. Trevelyan ("Can Radicalism and Socialism Unite?") hailed the new developments as part of "the greatest series of events in British Party politics for a generation", praising in particular Labour's Manifesto of War Aims. Until now, the Labour Party had played only a secondary role, as a pressure group pushing the Government into more progressive courses. But now, with the conspicuous failure of Liberalism either in adequate preparation for the war, in its successful conduct in preparation for an "honourable democratic peace", or in "crushing Prussianism" when it emerged at home, many

154. Ibid 27/10/17 p. 125 letter. A "Non-Pacifist Liberal Member" (of Parliament) wrote in agreement with this analysis (Ibid 24/11/17 p. 271), noting his own knowledge of substantial numbers of Liberals abandoning the Party in the constituencies, including "in many cases the most active Liberals" because of the leadership's failure to distinguish itself from the Tories over War Aims.

155. Ibid 2/2/18 p. 561.

Radicals were openly joining Labour. Others were hesitating, unsure whether the new Labour Party Constitution merely made it a better electioneering machine for what remained a working-class based pressure group, or whether it was a much bigger event "i.e. the force which, utilising the best intellect of the country, will rally men of all classes to a broad policy of internationalism and economic revolution through law". If the latter, "many Radicals ... will wish either to join ... or at least cooperate with it towards the formation of a great democratic group."

For Trevelyan, there was a large area of "solid common ground" uniting Radicalism and Labour "on the greater outlines of national policy", including not only the Foreign Policy aims of the UDC, taken up in Labour's Manifesto, nor just those measures necessary for the re-establishment of previously existing Liberties through such measures as ending the provisions of DORA, compulsory military service and other wartime controls, but also on a whole range of economic measures drastically to restructure the social order. These would range from a Capital Levy on unearned income to pay off the War Debt; a "very large tax" on land Values, which were, after all, socially created, with the eventual aim of all land passing into the hands of the community; state ownership of those industries already under State control during the war (i.e. the railways, mining and shipping); the wholesale democratisation of the management of industry to allow the workers to have "the predominant right" to determine their own conditions, and receive a fair reward for their labours; and Government intervention to lay down a "national minimum

of wages and conditions" including hours worked, in all industries. "The root of all evil is economic privilege"; the "private ownership of unearned wealth" (i.e. Land and Capital), by depriving the community of values created by itself, was "the chief cause of economic inequality". For Trevelyan, social reforms in themselves - education or welfare programmes - were only a part of the solution. It was through Labour, rather than Liberalism - that, he was now convinced, lay the best chance of achieving it.¹⁵⁶

For Philip Snowden, commenting on Trevelyan's letter in the Labour Leader, the Labour Party now had "a magnificent opportunity" to unite within its ranks that progressive element in Liberalism which, pre-war, by remaining within the Liberal Party, had prevented the Labour Party from progressing much beyond its class boundaries. Now, however, many were poised to join, and a number had already done so. At last, Labour had the chance to become a truly national force.¹⁵⁷ And indeed, several prominent figures were now changing their allegiance. In the early part of 1918, new recruits to the LLP included such men as (at last) E.D. Morel, C.R. Buxton (a former Liberal MP), Dr. Dunstan, and C.H. Wilson, son of a Liberal MP, who summed up their pain at the severing of a "life-time allegiance."¹⁵⁸ The Nation contained many letters too from the provinces, from those who either wanted an alliance of Radicals and Labour under a new name such as the (then oft talked about) new Democratic Party, or who

156. Ibid 2/2/18 pp. 566-7

157. Labour Leader 7/2/18 p. 1 P. Snowden: "Review of the Week".

158. Ibid 11/4/18 p. 6. 9/5/18 p. 1; letter C.H. Wilson in Nation 9/12/18 p. 596. Labour Leader 28/11/18 p. 2. later mentioned him as another prominent recruit that year.

were content to announce their full conversion to Labour.¹⁵⁹ Arthur Ponsonby, for example, at a crowded meeting of his constituency Liberal Party, with the opposition of only a small group of well-to-do Liberals, was readopted in early February under the title of Independent Democrat, as their candidate for the forthcoming General Election.¹⁶⁰ Elsewhere there were similar signs of the collapse of the Liberal Party machine.

The most obvious example of this was provided by the Keighley by-election campaign in April 1918. Amongst the speakers who came to support the ILP candidate, standing against a Coalition Liberal, were the Liberal MPs Arthur Ponsonby, Noel Buxton,¹⁶¹ and H.B. Lees-Smith, and Noel's brother and former Liberal MP, C.R. Buxton.¹⁶² Writing in Nation, Noel Buxton saw in this campaign ample evidence of the collapse of Liberalism in the country - with large numbers of former local Liberal Party activists working for the ILP candidate, a number of whom had already joined Labour, and many more were poised to do so - a view which drew a couple

159. see e.g. letters from M.E. Salt (Harrogate) Nation 16/2/18 pp. 622-3 and from E. Melland (Hale, Cheshire) Ibid 2/2/18 p. 676, two of many published in Nation throughout the course of 1918. A further indication of the trend amongst rank and file Liberals, according to the former correspondent, was the many thousands of readers of the Daily News who had sent off for free copies of Labour and the New Social Order - an indication of their readiness to look elsewhere than traditional Liberalism for social reconstruction.

160. Ibid 9/2/18 p. 590.

161. Noel Buxton, MP for North Norfolk, a rural constituency, had earlier signalled his disillusionment with the Liberal Party when the Coalition had set the Agricultural Labourer's Minimum Wage at 25/-, which, as he said, was an invitation to farmers to apply it as a norm. Estimating that at least 29/- a week was needed to live on, he had castigated the measure as a blatant "piece of class legislation" in favour of the farmers, effectively reducing the living standards of their workers. Ibid letter 28/7/17 pp. 430-1.

162. Labour Leader 18/4/18 p. 2.

of angry denials from local Liberal loyalists, who insisted that the defections amounted to only a handful,¹⁶³ a product of wishful thinking which the General Election shortly dispelled.

There can be little doubt that as 1918 wore on, Liberal Party organisation in the country was falling apart, with widescale defections to Labour. Particularly striking too was the defection of those prominent leaders of pre-war Christian Socialism within the churches who had, until then, despite widespread sympathies for the ILP's ideals, supported Liberalism as the only practical vehicle for social reform. Now, in 1918, Henry Scott Holland and the other Anglican CSU leaders were advocating voting Labour; and the Commonwealth came out in its support.¹⁶⁴ The great leader of Nonconformist Christian Socialism, President of the Brotherhood Movement, Dr. Clifford, chaired a Kingsway Hall meeting of 'Nonconformists in Support of Labour's Programme' on the eve of the poll, heading a bill which included the Methodist J.E. Rattenbury, Dr. Orchard and Arthur Henderson.¹⁶⁵ For the first time, therefore, in a General Election, Labour apparently had the support of these social radicals who before had voted Liberal. Their sympathies had long lain in its direction, as their close ties with the ILP and Fabian leaders before the War had

163. Nation 4/5/18 pp. 108-9 N. Buxton: "Liberalism and Keighley". For dissenting views see the 2 letters Ibid 11/5/18 p. 141.

164. Commonwealth Jan 1919 pp. 4-5; December 1918 pp. 304-8. F.L. Donaldson: "Henry Scott Holland and Labour". Another prominent Anglican Church leader supporting Labour in 1918 was Charles Gore, Bishop of Oxford, who, writing to William Temple in January 1919 stated his intention to join the Labour Party. (Gore to W. Temple 4 Jan. 1919 quoted in W. Iremonger: William Temple: Archbishop of Canterbury pp. 262-3.) Temple was also a Labour Party member.

indicated. In their attitudes and ethical ideals there had always been a general agreement. But the practical realities of electoral politics in pre-war days had dictated their inevitable division. Now, however, with the Liberal Party in ruins and Labour for the first time contesting more than half of the seats, most of this support went to Labour, in the idealism of whose policies and philosophy they found an echo of their own long-held beliefs.

As Clive Bell, another intellectual recruit to Labour, explained in Nation, it was in its idealistic philosophy that Labour's strength lay. Its appeal was essentially a moral one. "To the doctrine of exploitation it opposes the doctrine of brotherhood; to the doctrine of herd instinct the free development of the individual." Reaction, on the other hand sought rather "an enfranchisement of the meaner passions." The choice now lay between these two conflicting philosophies, in which contest "the Labour Party stands, awkwardly enough, for the best hopes of mankind ... it is the only political force that can possibly make headway against the party that stands for men's basest lusts and fears."¹⁶⁶ The widespread movement of ethical idealism which had underlain the movement for social progress in the years before 1914, transcending, as an attitude of mind, the normal party divisions between Liberal and Labour had now been captured for Labour. The

165. (continued from previous page)
Labour Leader 5/12/18 p. 2. Notice of meeting to be held on 11 December. Clifford himself stated at the meeting that he had nominated the Labour candidate for the division in which he lived, and had promised his vote in the London University Election to Sidney Webb who was standing there as the Labour candidate. Daily News 12/12/18 p. 2.

166. Nation 10/8/18 p. 497 Letter Clive Bell: "The Coming General Election".

political consequences were enormous, resulting in a large scale transference of progressive middle-class votes to Labour candidates; a process which, starting in 1918, brought Labour to office, though not yet to power, in 1924 and again in 1929 - an achievement which would have been impossible on the basis of Labour's working-class support alone.

In 1918, however, with the country gripped by anti-German feeling, opponents of the War of whatever Party stood little chance. Regarded as little more than traitors, MacDonald, Snowden, Anderson and the ILP "pacifists" crashed to defeat, largely deserted by their "patriotic" Labour colleagues. At Leicester, where MacDonald went under by close on 14,000 in a poll of 22,000, Henderson, Clynes and his other former associates were conspicuous by their absence. Only Jimmy Thomas went down to help.¹⁶⁷ Elsewhere Liberal "pacifists" fared no better, also losing to a man. The Labour MP's returned were uniformly loyalists, trades unionists, and dull. Nevertheless, with 63 MP's and 2,385,472 votes, Labour had now emerged as the third party in the State, and when, in 1922 Labour took over as the official opposition, with 142 MP's including all the previously defeated ILPers and several prominent former Liberals, the Liberal Party had finally been superseded as the party of the Left.

The 1918 General Election is interesting for the evidence

.167. Anon: The Scottish Socialists, A Gallery of Contemporary Portraits (1931) p. 65. MacDonald did however secure the assistance of a surprising ally, Col. Josiah Wedgwood, who, though he had previously disagreed with MacDonald's attitude to the War, now came to speak at his eve of poll meeting in Leicester, predicting the demise of political Liberalism and Labour's rise to the status of Official Opposition. Daily News 14/12/18 p. 5.

it provides of Liberal disarray. Thirteen prominent Radical opponents of the Government and one of its ministers in the previous House of Commons were amongst the vanguard of Liberal defectors. A number of these stood in 1918 as Independent Radicals, and it has been deduced from this that their conversion to Labour came only after their defeat and as a result of their accepting, somewhat grudgingly, that they had little choice, if they wanted to return to active political life but to join Labour, whatever reservations they might have about its policies.¹⁶⁸ This view is demonstrably a mistaken one. One of these, C.P. Trevelyan, announced during his campaign his intention to join the ILP immediately after the election, whatever the result, because of his belief that only Labour had the will to implement a "programme of Social Democracy such as I stand for in my address."¹⁶⁹ Outhwaite, immediately on hearing his result stated his intention to do the same. Having now fulfilled his obligations to his workers, he at last felt free, as he put it, formally to join those with whom he had been associated for the previous 4½ years. Thereupon, his election committee at Hanley announced their reconstitution into an ILP Branch.¹⁷⁰ Arthur Ponsonby, H.B. Lees-Smith, J.H. Whitehouse, Dundas White and even Col. J.C. Wedgwood who was at no time a "pacifist" opponent of the

168. C.A. Clive: Recruits to Labour: The British Labour Party 1914-51 (1965) The 14 were: D.H. Mason, J. Martin, R. Lambert, J.H. Whitehouse, H.B. Lees-Smith, R.L. Outhwaite, A. Ponsonby, C.P. Trevelyan, J.C. Wedgwood, E.J. John, J. King, Dundas White, E.G. Henmode and Sir L.G. Chiozza-Money.

169. Labour Leader 28/11/18 p. 2.

170. Ibid 16/1/19 p. 2. letter R.L. Outhwaite.

Government all did likewise, as did J.A. Hobson, who before the War had been the chief New Liberal theorist, and who in 1918 had stood for the Combined Universities as an Independent Democrat.¹⁷¹

Other intellectuals took the same decision, H.W. Massingham of the Nation acted before the Election and A.G. Gardiner of the Daily News took a similar stand, in opposition to the paper's owners, the Cadbury's who wanted social reform through a Lib-Lab alliance under Lloyd George.¹⁷²

Other defectors amongst former Liberal M.P.s included D.M. Mason, another of those rejected by their own Liberal Party for their stand on the War, and E.G. Hemmerde who spoke widely on Labour platforms during the campaign.¹⁷³ Another recruit to Labour in 1918 was J. Martin, a former Premier of British Columbia and Liberal M.P. for East St. Pancras (1910-18), while Joseph King and R.C. Lambert both severed their connections with the Liberals and joined the LLP. at the start of the campaign on 14 November. Announcing their decisions in Labour Leader a week later, they both stressed social reconstruction as their chief reason for turning to Labour, King announcing his own conversion to Socialism as a result of his wartime experiences of the "sufferings of the proletariat and its gain for the profiteers".

171. C.A. Clive on cit pp. H.N. Brailsford: Life Works of J.A. Hobson (1948) p. 10; Labour Leader 23/1/19 p. 5.

172. S. Koss: Fleet Street Radical: A.G. Gardiner and the Daily News (1973) pp. 247-50, 270, 281-2. H.W. Massingham had been moving in this direction since his article "A New Party of the People", Nation 9/6/17 pp. 234-40. The Nation's final advice to its readers was "Rally to Labour!" (23/11/18 pp. 209-10).

173. Hemmerde withdrew from his old seat at N.W. Norfolk to give the Labour candidate a free run against the Coalitionist. Daily News 23/11/18 p. 5. S.V. Bracher, The Herald Book of Labour Members (1923) p. 71.

He concluded, "I must belong to some party, and the LLP seems to me my spiritual home." Both men stressed the Liberal leadership's failures to safeguard basic freedoms during the War, and their partial responsibility for its outbreak because of Grey's pursuit of traditional diplomacy. Lambert too, insisted on the need for a new start, calling for the takeover of monopolies so that they could be run for the benefit of the whole community rather than a few private individuals, and for an end to the "grinding wage slavery" of "my fellow citizens."¹⁷⁴ Their views were typical of the reasons of those who were now changing the allegiance of a lifetime, as did E.T. John and Sir Leo Chiozza-Money, who both stood as Labour candidates in the seats which up to 1918 they had represented as Liberals.

Money's defection was perhaps one of the most serious of the whole campaign, coming as it did from someone whose publications - especially Riches and Poverty (1905) - had done so much to further the identification of social reform and the New Liberalism in the years of the great Liberal landslide. Coming as it did too from a member of the Government, it was doubly damaging. His reasons were similar to those of the other defectors. He had always been, so he thought, a "sympathetic and, I hope, helpful friend of Labour". He had long been a Fabian and a member of its executive; but the War "estranged the last hope ... that the Liberal Party would ever become an instrument of collective action aiming at the substitution of Industrial Democracy for the capitalist system." Now, with the Liberal Party smashed up and Lloyd

174. Labour Leader 21/11/18 p. 6.

George effectively having made himself a prisoner of the Tories, only Labour could take up the task of reconstruction.¹⁷⁵ The 1918 General Election Campaign was thus unique in the string of almost daily announcements of prominent Liberal converts to Labour which it brought. Whatever the final result on this occasion, amid the nationalistic passions inevitably aroused by the War, a shift in middle-class Radical allegiance had occurred which would not lightly be reversed. As the Nation concluded, for the first time Labour had received widespread support amongst the intellectuals, "but its new policy of fusing brain-workers and hand-workers in a common organisation has not matured" - yet!¹⁷⁶

With 63 Labour MP s (and a further 10 Labour Coalitionists) compared to the Independent Liberals' 28 and a Labour vote of 2,385,472 compared to the Independent Liberals' 1,298,808 votes, Labour had clearly arrived as a major national political force. However, if the combined Liberal vote (including the Coalitionists) is compared to the combined Labour vote, it is apparent that the Liberals were running almost neck and neck with Labour, a phenomenon repeated in 1922 and 1923. However, as a result of the first past the post system and the greater concentration of Labour votes in working-class areas compared to a more even geographical and social distribution of the Liberal vote, it was Labour which returned the largest number

175. Ibid 28/11/18 p. 2. 12/12/18 p. 7.

176. Nation 4/1/19 pp. 329-33 editorial the "Victory". New Statesman made a similar point, (4/1/19 pp. 273-5) devoting its editorial to "The Coming of the Labour Party", saw Labour's inclusion of over 90 "professional" and others of the middle class amongst its 360 candidates as another sign of Labour's takeover as the chief party of the Left.

of MR s. In 1923, running a mere 130,000 votes ahead of the Liberals, the Labour Party secured an extra 32 seats (191 to 159) and, on the defeat of Baldwin, was therefore asked to form a Government. Labour's arrival at the threshold of power had been a close run thing. A few less Labour votes in some marginal seats and a few more Liberal ones in some others, and 1924 would have seen a minority Liberal Government and not a Labour one and perhaps changed completely the nature of subsequent political developments.

When Ramsay MacDonald presented his first Labour Government to Parliament, out of a Cabinet of 20, 9 were relative newcomers to the Labour fold. The New Liberals were well represented, in the Lord Chancellor, R.B. (now Lord) Haldane; Noel Buxton (Minister of Agriculture); C.P. Trevelyan (Education); and Josiah Wedgwood (Duchy of Lancaster). The Fabians had 2 prominent members, Sidney Webb (President of the Board of Trade); and Sidney (now Lord) Olivier, Secretary of State for India. While from Conservatism came Lord Parmoor - Alfred Cripps, Beatrice Webb's brother in law - (Lord President of the Council); Lord Thomson (Air); and Viscount Chelmsford (First Lord of the Admiralty). Nearly half the Cabinet, and a high proportion of the Government as a whole, were relatively recent recruits to Labour from the other major parties, mainly the Liberals, including most notably Arthur Ponsonby (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs - an important appointment as the Prime Minister held the Foreign Affairs portfolio itself) ; Sidney (now Lord) Arnold (Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies); Sir Patrick Hastings (Attorney General), all former Liberals; and the Earl De La

Warr, an ex-Conservative.¹⁷⁷

The 1929 Labour Government presented a similar impression, with 8 former Liberal MP s in the Government, and 5 former Conservatives.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, altogether 15 former Liberal MP s reappeared in the House of Commons as Labour members in the 1920's, including many of those prominent in Radical opposition to Lloyd George during the War. Of those Radicals defeated in 1918, the 1922 General Election saw the return of C.P. Trevelyan, Arthur Ponsonby, H.B. Lees-Smith, E.G. Hemmerde, and Noel Buxton, all now as Labour members.¹⁷⁹ Others elected that year included Noel's brother, C.R. Buxton, C.H. Wilson, son of another Liberal MP and E.D. Morel, Of those who had fought against the Coupon as Independent Radicals, only one had retained his seat, in 1918, J.C. Wedgwood. He had voted with the Labour opposition from the first vote on the King's Speech, joining the Party in the 1919 Session.¹⁸⁰ C.J.L. Malone, elected as a Coalition Liberal at the same time, (oddly enough, because of his socialist outlook) joined Hyndman's British Socialist Party in 1920 and was thenceforth re-elected as a Labour MP in subsequent elections.¹⁸¹ The 1923 Election saw the return of Percy Alden as Labour MP for Tottenham South, the neighbouring seat to his old one of Tottenham North.

177. Labour Party Annual Report (1924) pp. 190-2

178. Ibid (1929) p. 271.

179. Noel Buxton had stood for re-election in North Norfolk in 1918 as a "Liberal-Labour" candidate because he felt a common purpose existed between Radicalism and Labour both in social and foreign policy. He was another of those who felt the Liberal leadership had failed during the War, leaving it to the Radicals who now had more in common with Labour to defend the cause of freedom and humanity against an increasing militarist reaction. In 1919 the local Liberal Association collapsed, and in 1922 he won back his old seat for Labour. M. Anderson: Noel Buxton A Life (1952) pp. 103 ff; C. Cook: The Age of Alignment (1975) p. 23 41.

180. Daily News 14/2/19 p. 1. Sidney Arnold, another late /..

1924 proving a landslide for Conservatism, there were few new Labour victories, and therefore no further accession of former Liberal converts. There were however two converts from amongst the Liberal MP s to Labour during the 1924-9 Parliament. W.W. Benn, Liberal member for Leith (1910-27) resigned his seat and returned to the Commons as the Labour victor at North Aberdeen (16/8/28); and J.M. Kenworthy, Liberal MP for Hull Central (1919-26) on joining Labour resigned his seat, being returned as the new Labour member for his old constituency at the subsequent by-election (29/11/26).¹⁸² The 1929 General Election, resulting in the return of 288 Labour MP. s saw the return of several more recruits from Liberalism, amongst them the former Liberal MP s Rt. Hon. Christopher Addison, a former Cabinet Minister and close

180. (continued from previous page) Radical convert to Labour joined with Wedgwood in this vote together with 6 others.

181. See above p 572.

182. W.W. Benn is an interesting case. He had withdrawn from the contest in his own seat of Whitechapel and St. George's in 1918 in support of the Labour candidate, so as not to split the Progressive vote (Daily News 26/11/1918 p. 4). But there remained obvious difficulties for him in Labour's socialist programme. Thus he wrote in Nation (9/12/22 pp. 386-7) that although Labour and Liberal were agreed on many social and foreign policy questions, Labour's proposals for State industry were unacceptable to Liberals who preferred to believe in a policy of reform of private enterprise rather than its total abolition. Kenworthy, elected as an anti-coalition Liberal in a by-election in early 1919, on a programme "practically indistinguishable from the Socialism of the day", had begun to be disillusioned with the party when it supported the Versailles Peace Treaty. His autobiography recalled that when Lloyd George returned to the Commons with the Treaty, the whole House rose to cheer, only himself, J.C. Wedgwood, Will Thorne and Neil MacLean remaining seated. He finally severed his Liberal connections and joined Labour when, during the General Strike, of the Liberal MP s only Lloyd George spoke out in opposition to the Government's hard line and suppression of free speech. According to Kenworthy, on telling Lloyd George of his decision, the elder man replied "you are quite right. If I were your age I would do the same". J.C. Kenworthy: Soldiers Statesmen - and Others (1933) pp. 155, 160ff, 213-22.

associate of Lloyd George,¹⁸³ Sir E.N. Bennett, and R.D. Denman. Other new recruits included two more sons of former Liberal MP's, P.J. Noel Baker and M. Philips Price.¹⁸⁴ But the most spectacular recruit was Sir W.A. Jowitt, elected as a Liberal MP for Preston at the 1929 General Election, who on being offered the post of Attorney-General by MacDonald, defected to Labour, resigned his seat, and was re-elected as Labour member for his old constituency.

Defections from Liberalism were thus continuing throughout the 1920's. The occasion for them might be dissatisfaction over a specific issue¹⁸⁵ or an offer of preferment such as MacDonald made to Jowitt in 1929. The motivation behind them doubtless included dissatisfaction with the Liberal Party leadership, and a degree of hard-headed calculation that Labour was becoming a more secure base for a political career. But it is quite remarkable too that in almost every instance (as testified to by many of these converts' autobiographical writings) these new recruits saw it as a natural development of their long-held faith in social progress based on the ethical evolution of man.

This common faith, shared by New Liberals, Progressives, Fabians and I.L.P. Socialists alike, was rooted in the religious and philosophical developments of the late 19th Century in which most of these men grew up. Behind the details of the different schemes for reform, from the organic gradualism

^{183.} Addison, deeply committed to a policy of post-war social reconstruction, and responsible for the 1919 Housing Act had resigned from the Government over the "Geddes Axe" policy of slashing social expenditure.

of much of London Progressivism (the Fabians, New Liberals, Ethical Societies and much social Christianity too) to the more overtly religious fervour of the ILP and its associated Labour Churches in the North, there was a common ethical belief in man's capacity for goodness, his sense of justice and his ability to love and serve his fellow man. Whether couched in the Hegelianism of R.B. Haldane, or the Christian Idealism of Stewart Headlam and R.J. Campbell; the mysticism of John Trevor or the Ethicism of Stanton Coit; it was this common set of attitudes which formed the basis of the Socialist and Progressivist hopes for the reformation of society. Above all, it was to be found pervading the political utterances of the ILP leaders, especially MacDonald, whose own activities and sympathies stretched right across virtually every aspect of the movement, and whose Socialist writings provided the acknowledged theoretical framework for much Labour thought. Though belonging to different organisations, and calling themselves by different names, Socialism and Progressive Liberalism spoke the same language, used the same concepts and, though differing on occasion over the practical means of achieving them, shared common objectives in the emancipation of the individual and in provision of the greatest possible opportunity for his self-development to his fullest

184. (Continued from previous page) M.P. Price, a cousin of C.P. Trevelyan and a founder member of the UDC had been prospective Liberal candidate for Gloucester from 1911. From 1914-22 he was abroad as a foreign correspondent, and on his return, on offering his help to the Labour Party in Gloucester, was promptly selected as their candidate, losing by a mere 51 votes. He fought the seat again in 1923 and 1924. M.P. Price: My Three Revolutions (1969) pp. 232ff.

185. As in Kenworthy's case.

capacity. For Socialists as much as Liberals, the individual was at the centre of their social thinking, and it was for his self-fulfilment that society existed. This was the starting point of all their social theories and schemes for reform.

It was, as Haldane put it to MacDonald before accepting the Lord Chancellorship in 1924, the "underlying ideal of the Labour Movement", so akin to his own deepest beliefs, which attracted him to the Party. And after the Labour Government had fallen, looking back, it was its example, spreading the Socialist ideal amongst all sections of the community, which he singled out as its chief achievement, influencing even Conservatism, so that their policies and attitudes could never be quite the same again.¹⁸⁶ Similar feelings led other Liberal defectors to talk of Labour as their "spiritual home", the one party which most represented "the best hopes of mankind".¹⁸⁷

vi) Labour's Converts from Conservatism

The ethical appeal of the Socialist message reached not only Liberal Progressives, but also a significant number of former Conservatives as well, leading some of them to support Labour in 1918 and at subsequent elections in the 1920 s. At least 25 of the 417 Labour MP s who sat in the Commons in the years up to 1931 had Conservative backgrounds, including such prominent figures as Clement Attlee, Emmanuel Shinwell, Hugh Dalton and Stafford Cripps.¹⁸⁸ It is therefore instructive

186. R.B. Haldane: Autobiography (1929) pp. 307ff; 321-3.

187. See above p. 480.

188. See attached page following.

188. The full list with dates of joining the Labour Party and age at the time was:

TABLE I

1887	age 24	T.F. Richards (Wolverhampton W 1906-1910 Jan)
1890's	age mid 30 s	T. Summerbell (Sunderland 1906-1910 Jan) Moved from Conservative to Liberal over Home Rule and thence to Labour over Labour Question.
1892	age 21	J.F. Shillaker (Acton 1929-31)
1903	age 19	E. Shinwell (Linlithgowshire 1922-31)
1904	age 19	J. Maxton (Glasgow, Bridgeton 1922-46)
1906	age 18	R.F. Jackson (Ipswich 1923-4)
1907	age late teens	C. Attlee (Stepney: Limehouse 1922-55)
1907	age 23	E. Thurtle (Shoreditch 1923-31)
1907	age 19	E.H.J.N. Dalton (Camberwell: Peckham 1924-9, Bishop Auckland 1929-31)
1907	age 31	E. Sandham (Liverpool: Kirkdale 1929-31)
1912	age 42	Miss A.S. Lawrence (East Ham North 1923-4, 1926-31)
1918	age 60	W.S. Royce (Holland-with-Boston 1918-1924)
1918	age early 20 s	John Beckett (Gateshead 1924-9, Peckham 1929-31)
1918	age 40	Major D.G. Pole (Derbyshire South 1929-31)
1919 (15 January)	age 47	Miss E. Picton-Turberville (The Wrekin 1929-31)
1921	middle aged	J.A. Lovatt-Fraser (Lichfield 1929-31, National Labour 1931-8)
1923	age 24	Oliver Baldwin (Dudley 1929-31)
1924	age 26	Oswald Mosley (Smethwick 1926-31)
1924	age 27	Lady Mosley (Stoke 1929-31)
1924	age 23	E.J. St. Loe Strachey (Birmingham Aston 1929-31)
1924	age 23	G.R. Strauss (Lambeth North 1929-31)
1930	age 41	Stafford Cripps (Bristol East 1931-48)

3 others joined Labour in the years immediately following World War I:

J.R.A. Oldfield in his teens (Essex S.E. 1929-31)

V.G. Crittall early 30 s (Maldon 1923-4)

Sir S.T. Rosbotham middle-aged (Ormskirk 1929-31,
National Labour 1931-9)

to note the different influences on them leading to their conversion. Most of these converts became Socialists in their youth or early adulthood, at an age where they were naturally questioning the assumptions with which they had grown up, and searching for their own philosophy of life. Two obvious examples of this tendency were Attlee (in 1907) and J.R.A. Oldfield (in the period around the end of World War I). Both were public schoolboys, and both were drawn to Socialism in their late teens by way of the Settlement Movement; Attlee at Haileybury House and then Toynbee Hall, Oldfield also at Toynbee Hall (he had been educated at Eton, going afterwards to Trinity College Cambridge). There, in the East End, they discovered both appalling social conditions and the social faith which pervaded the Settlements. Nine of the 25 had attended one or other of the major English public schools mainly going on to university, or in one case, the army, and in addition 3 Scots, 2 of whom came from very comfortable backgrounds had also received a university education. The 2 women on the list had also come from well-established family backgrounds, and amongst the rest, two were substantial landowners, and only five came from working-class backgrounds, one of these the son of a policeman, another the son of a marble mason.¹⁸⁹ The bulk of these converts were therefore from amongst those classes of society least likely to be drawn naturally towards Socialism or the Labour Movement. Their reasons for so doing are therefore instructive of the major influences upon this sector of society motivating a small but significant proportion of its members to change their political allegiance and philosophy.

. 189. see Appendix.

The first point which must be grasped though, is that for a substantial number of these men and women, their change of political allegiance involved no very great change of social outlook. In particular a number of them, looking back on their earlier views, recalled their espousal of Tory Democracy. Dalton and Lovatt Fraser both remembered calling themselves Tory Democrats in their youth, and Strachey experienced little difficulty in moving away from "the romantic, well-intentioned and public-spirited conservatism" of his father towards his own brand of "socialism".¹⁹⁰ In particular such men were inspired by the Tory "socialism" of Disraeli's Sybil, to which Lovatt-Fraser, Oliver Baldwin (Stanley's son) and an early working-class convert, T. Summerbell, all referred.¹⁹¹ Similar feelings motivated W.S. Royce in his movement from President of Spalding Conservative Association to Labour candidate and MP in 1917, as indicated in his explanation of his motive as being chiefly sympathy for "bottom dogs".¹⁹² Mosley's 1918 Election address as a Coalition Conservative, calling for a whole range of state paternalist

190. H. Dalton: Call Back Yesterday, Memoirs 1887-1931 (1953) p. 47; J.A. Lovatt-Fraser: Why a Tory Joined the Labour Party (1921) pp. 2-3; H. Thomas: John Strachey (1975) p. 21.

191. Lovatt-Fraser, citing Sybil referred to his earlier position as that of "a Tory of the school of Disraeli", who "considered that men of wealth and position and education were trustees of the people, and ought to make the good of the people the first object of their political action". He cited Hyndman's description of his interview with Disraeli in his Record of an Adventurous Life as proof of the Conservative leader's Socialist sympathies, op cit pp. 3-4. Oliver Baldwin: The Questing Beast (1932) p. 164 also expressed admiration for Disraeli's novels "he apparently thought of class as I did, and yet he was a Tory", and was himself most attracted to Morris' evocation of a rural Utopia in News from Nowhere. T. Summerbell's early Conservatism also owed much to Disraeli, being founded rather on intense admiration for Lord Beaconsfield than on any deep study or knowledge of Conservative principles". Pearson's Weekly 22/3/1906 p. 675.

192. C.W. Ould: William Stapleton Royce: A Memoir (1925) p.105.

measures to secure the welfare of the working-classes, from state scholarships in education to housing and regulation of conditions of employment and pay, shows clearly the nature of his later "socialist" views.¹⁹³ And the same can be said of others, for there remained in Conservatism a strong tradition, especially amongst the non-industrial classes, of state paternalism, derived particularly from Disraeli's writings in the period before laissez-faire industrialists began to take over the direction of much Conservative policy-making at the end of the 19th Century.

No doubt it was the Tory derivation of Hyndman's Socialism which helped decide Baldwin to join the SDF;¹⁹⁴ and it is significant in this respect that amongst the earliest converts, Summerbell (in the 1890 s) and R.F. Jackson (1906) both ex-Tory working-class recruits to Socialism, noted Robert Blatchford's writings as the chief factor in their conversion.¹⁹⁵

Pre-war recruits also provide examples of the effect of Socialist propagandists' meetings on impressionable young minds. Shinwell, a young Tory who had wanted to join up in the Boer War, was converted to Socialism at a Glasgow meeting when Neil MacLean told the young heckler of his ignorance of economics.¹⁹⁶ Ernest Thurtle, like Shinwell another poor working-class convert became a Socialist after a Clarion Van meeting in 1907.¹⁹⁷ Perhaps the oddest public conversion was

193. in R. Skidelsky: Oswald Mosley (1975) p. 72.

194. O. Baldwin op cit pp. 207 ff.

195. Pearson's Weekly 22/3/1906 p. 675; Daily Herald 11/2/24 p24.

196. E. Shinwell: Conflict without Malice (1955) p. 27.

197. E. Thurtle: Time's Winged Chariot (1945) p. 17.

however that of Elijah Sandham. Aged 30, a promising young Conservative councillor in Chorley, he chaired a meeting for Mrs Bruce Glasier in 1907 and afterwards publicly declared himself a Socialist, thereafter retaining his council seat as an ILPer.¹⁹⁸ Another Conservative councillor who defected to Labour, in her case because of the terrible social conditions she saw for the first time through her council work, was Susan Lawrence, Elected for the I.C.C. as a Conservative member for Marylebone, she moved to Labour in 1912 and was in 1913 re-elected as a Labour Councillor, this time for Poplar.¹⁹⁹

The largest number of conversions occurred at the end of the First World War and in the years immediately following it. Several specifically referred to their experiences during the War as the prime factor in their change of allegiance. Typical of such sentiments were those of Major David Graham Pole, a pre-war associate of Mrs Besant in Theosophy, but a lifelong Conservative, who in 1918 joined Labour and "decided to stand for Parliament". Having had no previous association with Labour or experience as a Parliamentary candidate he "chose the East Grinstead Division of Sussex - a solid Conservative seat". There he bought a house, formed his own Labour Party with himself as Chairman, and got himself adopted as Labour candidate, eventually being rewarded with a winnable seat in 1929. His reasons for doing this are interesting, and not untypical of the sentiments which motivated other former military officers who did likewise:

198. Daily Herald 20/7/79 p. 4.

199. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville: Dictionary of Labour Biography III (1976) pp. 128-32.

"I had up to then always voted Conservative but serving, as I did, with a Battalion composed chiefly of Northumberland miners, I learnt of the awful conditions under which many of them lived and worked and the totally inadequate pay they received for that work. These conversations made me decide to fight for better pay and conditions for these men if and when I got home from the war."²⁰⁰

The First World War also radically altered the views of Lord Parmoor and his son Stafford Cripps. In particular, Parmoor made it his business to secure as reasonable conditions as possible for Conscientious Objectors whom he recognised were in the main men of deeply-held religious and ethical views. He joined Labour in 1924, securing a Cabinet position in both minority Labour Governments, his son Stafford eventually joining him in January 1930 as Labour member for East Bristol.²⁰¹ Others, such as John Beckett, founder of the National Union of ex-servicemen or Miss Edith Picton-Turberville, also went Labour as a result of the War, Beckett attributed his conversion to his own wartime experiences and the influence of W.C. Anderson, the Labour Party leader;²⁰² Miss Picton-Turberville referred to her wartime experience with Margaret Bondfield of womens' working conditions and her belief that Labours' War Aims offered those "deep-seated changes" in society which were "absolutely essential to secure a better mode of life for the nation".²⁰³

200. D.G. Pole: War Letters and Autobiography (1960) pp. 180-1

201. E. Estorick: Stafford Cripps (1949) pp. 77ff

202. Daily Herald 7/11/24 p. 2.

203. E. Picton-Turbervill: Life is Good (1939) pp. 154-5.

To Miss Picton-Turbervill Labour's proposals, and the spirit of Socialism, alone were "in harmony with Christian thought and ethics".²⁰⁴ It was the same ethical appeal which had led to the conversion of public-school Socialists through Toynbee Hall and the Settlement Movement, and which had inspired Hugh Dalton and his best friend Rupert Brooke in their espousal of Socialism at King's.²⁰⁵ It can be seen too in such beliefs as W.S. Royce's, that the profit motive was divisive,²⁰⁶ or Lovatt-Fraser's attraction to the ideal of a social reconstruction "based on co-operation not competition" and his belief in the appeal of Labour's message "to the higher qualities of human nature" in the securing of a standard of life which should not just materially be comfortable but "elevating and ennobling" as well,²⁰⁷ and in Baldwin's belief in the object of human existence as being "to develop the individual soul and make it as good a one as you can".²⁰⁸ For former Conservatives and Liberals alike therefore, it was primarily the ethical appeal of English Socialism which led them into the Labour Party. In the face of often appalling social conditions many of them had come to see that Socialism did indeed stand "for the best hopes of man".

204. Ibid p. 155

205. for an account of Brooke's romantic socialism see G. Dangerfield: The Strange Death of Liberal England (1935) pp. 378 ff. For his relationship with Dalton, see H. Dalton op cit pp. 38 ff.

206. C.W. Ould op cit p. 108.

207. J.A. Lovatt-Fraser op cit pp. 6-7

208. O. Baldwin op cit p. 244.

(i) Introduction

The changes which occurred in popular religious attitudes in the latter part of the 19th Century were a major factor in determining the nature of Socialist ideas in Britain. Organisational divisions within the Socialist Movement broadly followed differences in religious and ethical outlooks. The SDF. remained deeply suspicious of all forms of Christianity and overt religious sentiment, seeing them as leading to a watering-down of the purity of true Scientific Socialism. Within the ILP. the preoccupations of traditional working-class Radicalism and Nonconformist morality merged with a form of Christian Socialism in men such as Hardie and Snowden, while others such as MacDonald held ethical evolutionary beliefs scarcely distinguishable from those of the New Liberalism. Within the Socialist Movement the development of such bodies as the ENL, the Labour Churches and, later, the Socialist Sunday Schools, testifies to the importance attached by the early British Socialists to ethics and religion, as does the involvement of many of them in organisations such as the Ethical Societies, the Humanitarian League and the various denominational Christian Socialist societies. Each of these influences contributed to the development of Socialist thinking in Britain. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the respective backgrounds and attitudes of the 417 Labour MPs who sat in the House of Commons in the years between 1906 and 1931.¹

1. This total includes 4 who voted with Labour but who were not strictly-speaking Labour MPs: Victor Grayson (Independent Socialist MP Colne Valley 1907-January 1910), Sir Owen Thomas (Independent Labour MP. Anglesey from 1918 until his death in 1923), Edwin Scrymgeour (Prohibition and Labour MP. Dundee 1922-31) and G.M.L. Davies (Christian Pacifist MP. Welsh Universities 1923-4. He stood as Labour Party candidate in 1924 and lost). In addition S. Saklatvala (Battersea North) received Labour endorsement in 1922 and 1923, but sat as a Communist MP. from 1924-9.

Various sources have been used in tracing the biographical details of the Labour MPs. Chief among these have been the many biographies and autobiographies by the Labour MPs themselves. In 1906 the emergence of Labour was sufficient of a novelty for both the Review of Reviews and Pearson's Weekly to provide pen portraits of most of the new Labour MPs describing the chief influences on their political development. For the 1922 Parliament, The Herald Book of Labour Members (1923 ed S.V. Bracher) is invaluable, as are his later sketches of newly-elected Labour MPs published in the Daily Herald after the General Elections of 1923, 1924 and 1929. Further information is provided by the two editions of The Labour Who's Who (1924 and 1927) though the details it gives are more sparse, and by C. Bunker Who's Who in Parliament (1946), which is especially useful for tracing the careers of many of the younger Labour Members who were first elected in 1929 but defeated in 1931. Many of these later returned to the House of Commons and sat in the 1945-50 Parliament. The 'Times' House of Commons Guides (1929 onwards) and Dod's Parliamentary Companion provide some additional information, but both are very sparse, especially in their coverage of Labour MPs. Remaining gaps await the completion of the Dictionary of Labour Biography of which at present 5 volumes have been published.²

A useful supplement to these sources is ^{printed in the Christian World} ~~the lists/ of Nonconform~~ ist candidates and victors at each General Election after 1918 which provides considerable additional information on the religious affiliations of many MPs. However the many inaccuracies and inconsistencies of this publication (a number of which have been reproduced in S. Koss

2. Lesser sources of information include a number of handbooks such as the Unitarian and Free Christian Year-Book (1934), the Catholic Directory (1929), the Dictionary of Welsh Biography Down to 1940 (1959) and Obituaries from the Times 1961-70 (1975). These and other sources are listed in the Select Bibliography.

Nonconformity in Modern British Politics (1975) render its use somewhat hazardous, and its evidence needs careful checking. Nevertheless the broad outlines of its statistics are clear.

Table I: Political Affiliations of Free Church MPs (From Christian World)

	Total Free Church MPs	Liberals	Total Liberal MPs	Labour	Total Labour MPs	Conservative and Unionist	Total Conservative MPs
1918	88	52 Co Lib 7 Ind Lib	133 Co Lib 28 Ind Lib	2 Co Lab 20 Lab	10 Co Lab 63 Lab	7	335 Co U 23 Con
1922	78	14 Asq 18 L.G	54	32	142	12	407
1923	118	63	155	45	191	9	259
1924	80	21	40	45	151	12	419
1929	103	32	59	63	288	5	260

As this table shows, it was the Liberal Party throughout the 1920s which was most clearly allied to Nonconformity, and although after 1924 the number of Labour Free Church MPs was greater than the number of Liberals, this was clearly due to the massive slump in Liberal representation. The Conservatives, being much more closely identified with the Established Church, had a proportionately much lower number of Free Churchmen amongst their MPs, no doubt reflecting the continued hostility of active Nonconformists to Conservatism until at least the 1930s.

Within the Labour Party in Parliament, however, it was traditional working-class nonconformity which represented the bulk of denominational affiliations. The Methodists were the largest grouping - 74 in all - followed by 26 Congregationalists, 11 Baptists, 16 Scottish Presbyterians and 2 Salvation Army members. Together with the majority of those 15 Labour MPs for whom there

is evidence of Christian affiliations but whose denominational allegiances are unclear, out of the 417 Labour MPs elected between 1906-1931, over 140 came from the ranks of traditional working-class nonconformity.

In addition to these, as Table 2 shows, there were 11 Quakers and 7 Unitarians, also nonconformist denominations but with a rather different religious outlook. Their views were often closer to those of the Labour Churches and Ethical Societies, as indeed were the views of a number of the 24 Anglicans, and those of the 4 who described themselves as Christians but felt estranged from any denominational allegiance. There were 4 Theosophists and 2 Jews. Finally, 15 can best be described as Freethinkers and 21 had definite non-religious views.

Amongst the Nonconformists there were over 70 local preachers, several others who had seriously considered the ministry as a full-time occupation, and 5 ministers: the Rev. Herbert Dunnico (Baptist); the Rev. Campbell Stephen (ordained a United Free Church minister in 1911, he resigned his ministry at Ardrossan in order to devote himself full-time to Socialist preaching); the Rev. James Barr (UFC); the Rev. Gordon Lang (Congregationalist); and the Rev. R.W. Sorensen (Unitarian). There were also many Sunday School teachers, and others who had played an active part in their local church life. Table 2 does not, therefore, merely represent notional, or passive allegiances. In the majority of cases, the religious affiliations of these Labour MPs were noted at the time because their religious activities and their political activities went hand in hand, even after their election to Parliament, when a substantial number of them still managed to combine their Parliamentary duties with local preaching duties at home. The relative absence of non-active church

Table 2: Religious Affiliations of Labour MPs 1906-31

(Listed by Parliament in which they first sat as Labour members)

	Methodists	Westleyan	Primitive Methodist	United Methodist	Welsh Calvinist Methodist	Miscellaneous Methodist	Baptist	Salvation Army	Congregational	Quaker	Unitarian	Presbyterian	Scottish Episcopal	Roman Catholics	Church of England	Miscellaneous Christian	Christian outside churches	Jews	Theosophy	Ethical Societies	Labour Church and Socialist Sunday School	Freethinker	Non-religious	Not available	TOTAL
1906		8	6	2	1	1	2	-	6	-	1	1	-	2	5	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	5	45
1910S		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
1910D		-	2	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	9
1918		7	7	1	2	3	3	-	5	-	1	1	-	2	2	4	1	-	-	1	-	-	4	19	62
1922		6	2	1	1	-	2	1	3	2	-	9	-	6	4	1	3	1	1	1	3	4	1	34	87
1923		7	3	-	-	-	1	-	3	5	2	2	-	5	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	2	5	22	61
1924		1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	15	31
1929		5	3	-	-	2	1	1	6	3	3	1	1	5	8	6	-	-	2	1	2	7	10	52	119
TOTAL		34	24	5	4	7	11	2	26	11	7	16	1	22	24	15	4	2	4	4	8	15	21	150	417

and chapelgoers amongst these men suggests that in the majority of cases it is those for whom religion played an important part in their activities that have been recorded as church members. It therefore seems probable that the group of 150 whose religious views were not recorded includes a large number for whom neither religious beliefs nor the lack of them played a significant part in their outlook or political development.

Although falling into broad categories (such as traditional nonconformist or modernist) each denomination had its own particular outlook which affected the political attitudes of its adherents. By examining each denomination in turn, the contribution to the early Labour Party of the various strands of religious and ethical thinking is brought out, together with their relative numerical strengths within the Parliamentary Party, enabling an assessment to be made of the extent of the influence of the different types of British Socialism within the Labour Party in the first three decades of its existence.

(ii) The Methodists

a) Wesleyans

The Methodists formed the largest grouping amongst Labour MPs, with 74 representatives, a majority of whom with 34 including 15 local preachers and 2 Superintendents of Sunday Schools, were Wesleyans. In addition to these 34 there were 2 who, having begun as Wesleyans, had moved into other areas of religious activity. Joseph Pointer, MP. for Sheffield Attercliffe from 1909 until his death in 1914, was a patternmaker, born in Sheffield, who for many years was a Wesleyan lay preacher until the advent of R.J. Campbell's New Theology of which he had become a follower by 1910. He was one of that minority of Wesleyans who were I.L.P.

activists, and he took the characteristic I.L.P. stance of opposition to the First World War in August 1914, as did Philip Snowden and Charles Ammon, also Wesleyans and ILPers. But such men were very much the exception. In addition to Joseph Pointer, there was one other ex-Wesleyan Labour MP, John Brotherton, MP for Gateshead 1922-3. Born in 1867, he had in early manhood become an active Wesleyan, holding such offices as Class Leader and Sunday School Superintendent. He worked as an engineer in Leeds until he lost his job on account of his trade union activities (a very common occurrence among future Labour MPs). He had led demonstrations of Leeds unemployed in 1893-4, and as an early member of Leeds I.L.P., he had been active in the foundation of Leeds Labour Church and its Socialist Sunday School, of which the latter was still in existence in 1923, and of which he had been both chairman and secretary. He gave up his Wesleyan allegiance for the Labour Church, and was the only nonconformist Labour MP listed by the Christian World under the category of Labour Church.

In both their geographical origins and occupations the Wesleyan Labour MPs mirrored the national tendency among Wesleyans. They were virtually all in skilled or semi-skilled trades, including 4 textile workers, 6 miners, and such others as a Staffordshire potter and a Somerset boot operative. There were 3 from London: a post office sorter, a gasworkers' union organiser and a shipyard worker. With few exceptions the majority were members of the older trade unions - the aristocracy of Labour³ - and were Liberal in politics and almost to a man temperance advocates, Free Traders and firm believers in Self Help. The majority had become MPs through

3. Only 5 were not manual workers, and of these, 2 - W.W. Henderson (a journalist) and A. Henderson jnr (a barrister) were sons of Arthur Henderson, himself a former ironmoulder; R. Richards, Professor of Economics at Bangor University, the son of a miner, had made his way from elementary school to Cambridge; J.H. Alpass (MP Bristol Central 1929-31) was an estate agent and auctioneer; Ellen Wilkinson was a schoolteacher, educated at Secondary School and Manchester University, though from 1915 she had been national organiser of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers.

their trade union activities, and several were convinced non-Socialists. Typical of such were John Hodge, MP. for Manchester Gorton (1906-23) and Frank Lee, the miner's MP. for Derbyshire N.E., (1922-31 and 1935-41). Hodge was a steel smelter and from January 1886 hon secretary of the newly-formed British Steel Smelters' Association. He was a Liberal Councillor in Manchester, (1898-1901) and was never a Socialist, but stood as a Labour candidate in 1906 in the belief that working men should be represented by members of their own class. He was a regular speaker at Brotherhood and Temperance meetings. Frank Lee followed the normal pattern of most of the miners' MP. s, starting on the coal face at 14, rising to the position of checkweighman at 29 and then becoming a full-time union official. He moved from support of the Liberal Party to Labour when the M.F.G.B. affiliated to the Labour Party in 1909.

Typical of the majority of Labour Wesleyans was Arthur Henderson, both in his early Liberalism and his teetotalism, his advocacy of the self-help ethic, and his "moderation" in particular shown by his belief in the community of interest between worker and boss. All of these characteristics are present in his article in the Pearson's Weekly series "How I Got On" (8th March 1906). It is worth substantial quotation as in its sentiments it was representative of the majority of those ex-Liberal trades unionist MP's who were not members of one of the Socialist organisations and whose attitudes owed little to Socialist thinking. The most crucial period in the formation of his character, he recalled, came between the ages of 16 and 20.

"A Wesleyan by persuasion, I became a lay preacher, and my work as such undoubtedly had a great influence upon my career, not only as a factor in the strengthening and development of my moral character, but in fitting me for the public life I was destined to lead.

Up till then my education had been of an elementary description, and to help me in my preaching I set to work resolutely and systematically to educate myself, attending night schools and evening classes, and reading everything I could lay hands on.

....

Then about this time I became an ardent advocate of teetotalism. I am not going to make this an opportunity for delivering a teetotal lecture, but I will say, and say with all the emphasis I can command, that the working-man who is a total abstainer stands a far better chance of getting on than even the most temperate and moderate of drinkers.

....

Well, my teetotal principles and the facility I had acquired as a speaker, brought me into some prominence and having joined the Friendly Society of Ironfounders in 1883, I began to take an active part in Trades Union work.

I am glad to say that in all my work as a temperance advocate, a preacher and an organiser, I was assisted and encouraged by my employers, who did all they could to further my endeavours for the improvement of myself and others."⁴

The total absence of anything recognisable as Socialist doctrine or sentiment in this, or indeed in virtually any of Henderson's writings is characteristic of many of the Trade Unionist Labour MP. s. But though this was true of most Wesleyans, there was also a contingent of I.L.Pers, in particular Philip Snowden, Charles Ammon and Jack Lawson, a Durham miner who was for over 60 years a Wesleyan lay preacher, and an active ILPer from 1904 when he was 23. Socialism amongst Durham miners at this date was very much the exception, Durham remaining one of the staunchest Liberal areas until the affiliation of the M.F.G.B. to Labour in 1909; and even today it is not noted for its left-wingers. Perhaps an explanation for his being different lies in the fact that he came to Durham aged 12 with his family from Whitehaven in

4. Pearson's Weekly, 8 March 1906, p.633 A. Henderson: "How I Got On".

Cumberland, which had early become an active LLP area, owing to the lack of a firm allegiance of the Cumberland miners (mainly a mixture of Irish Catholics and Primitive Methodists) to Liberalism. A further Wesleyan LLPer was Tom Snowden, a few years Philip's junior, who was a textile worker from the village of Cowling in the West Riding, and who - with the latter - started the local LLP branch.

In their origins the Wesleyans reflected the geographical strengths of working-class Wesleyanism. Eight of the MPs had Lancashire origins, and three further were from just across the Pennines in Yorkshire. Bolton, for example, returned three different Labour MPs, all cotton spinners and all Methodists, between 1906 and 1931. In 1906 it returned A.H. Gill, a Wesleyan. He held the seat until 1914. From 1914-22 Robert Toothill, a United Methodist lay preacher was Bolton's Labour MP, then in 1923-4 and 1929-31 it was held for Labour by another Wesleyan lay preacher, Albert Law. In addition 3 came from South Wales, 3 from London, 1 from Nottinghamshire, 1 Derbyshire, 2 Staffordshire, 2 Somerset, 2 Cumberland and 2 from Scotland. One of these, Edwin Scrymgeour, as an Independent defeated Winston Churchill at Dundee in 1922. He held the seat until 1931.

Although an Independent, Scrymgeour was throughout his period as member a Labour supporter and a Socialist. He fought every Parliamentary Election in Dundee from 1908 onwards, gradually increasing his vote until his victory in 1922. In 1908 his posters had read "Vote for Scrymgeour and Death to the Drink - Have done with Bogus Labour Representation and go in for Socialism." In 1929, calling himself "Prohibition and Labour" he crossed the floor to sit with Labour when the Labour Government took office. Dundee was

a 2 member seat and Scrymgeour ran in harness with an official Labour candidate, much as some Liberals had done with Labour in 1906.

His parents were staunch Tory philanthropists and Wesleyans in Dundee. Edwin went a stage further and became a Christian Socialist towards the end of the 19th century, but for him the abolition of drink was essential to the creation of the Socialist State. He created a split in the Scottish Prohibition Party because its chairman supported a Liberal leader not committed to Prohibition, resulting in the creation of a new National Prohibition Party in 1904, of which he was organising secretary. He edited its journal, The Prohibitionist. From the age of 15 he was a clerk, first in a manufacturer's office, then briefly in London, returning to the offices of the Caledonian Railway at West Station, Dundee and later at an iron merchant's. But he gave up regular employment after his election to the Parish Council in 1898. Although a Socialist, he was very much of the older LLP type, and while advocating the Capital Levy, abominated Marxism for its atheism and advocacy of violent unconstitutional action. In World War 1 he was a pacifist, and in Parliament advocated the abolition of the army and air-force both so that the money could be used for social reforms and as a step towards world disarmament. He was a firm believer in Socialist measures to deal with the pressing problems of unemployment and poverty and regarded the National Government as a "national disgrace". For Scrymgeour, his alcohol-free Socialist State would be the coming of the 'Kingdom of Christ'. He was essentially an idealist, as the following brief quotation shows:

"Votes! What matter votes? Seats! What matter seats? Character, courage, devotion to principles. These are the things that our great Leader ... Christ Himself asks us to observe when we pray that God's will may be done upon earth as it is done in Heaven."⁵

5. D.G. Southgate, "Edwin Scrymgeour, Prohibitionist and Politician (1866-1947)" in Abertay Historical Society Publication No. 13 (Dundee 1968) pp 16-22 (quotation from p.17).

b) Primitives

The next largest group of Methodists were the Primitives. Of these there were 24, of whom 15 were local preachers and 16 were miners, including Frank Hodges, General Secretary of the MEGB after 1918 and MP for Lichfield (1923-4). Born at Woolaston, Gloucestershire in 1887, he went down the mines in 1901 at the age of 14 in Abertillery. At the age of 17 he became a local preacher, and studied to be a full-time minister; but being turned down he became instead the effective leader of Britain's miners at the time of the General Strike. Another miners' MP was W.T. Mansfield, MP for Cleveland (1929-31) who had previously been General Secretary of the Cleveland Miners' and Quarrymen's Association, which had amalgamated with the MEGB, of which he became an EC member in 1926.

As with the Wesleyans, the geographical origins of the Primitive Methodist MPs reflects the regional strengths of their denomination. There were 3 miners' MPs from Northumberland; 3 from Durham including Ben Spoor (of middle-class origins but a native of Bishop Auckland, his constituency); 2 from Cleveland, W.T. Mansfield and H. Nixon, a Middlesbrough blastfurnaceman and W. Lunn, another miner and MP for Ruthwell (near Leeds) between 1918 and 1942, making 9 MPs from the North-East, 7 of them miners. From the North-West came 2 Cumberland miners; J. Gibbins, a Liverpool boilermaker, and 3 MPs from Derbyshire, 2 miners and A.E. Waterson, a railway shunter from Derby. There were also 3 Staffordshire miners; 2 from South Wales (including Hodges); a Leicestershire shoe operative, a Plymouth shipyard worker, George Edwards, founder of the Norfolk Agricultural Workers' Union and C.J. Simmons, a lay preacher in his native Birmingham from age 16, who had lost a leg at Vimy Ridge and twice been imprisoned for his anti-war activities.

With one exception none of these men had had more than an elementary education and one - George Edwards - had had no education at all, being taught to read by his wife in order to enable him to become a local preacher. Frank Hodges alone had some further education, being sent on a miners' scholarship at the age of 22 to Ruskin College, and then to the more plebeian Central Labour College.

Of the 6 Primitive Methodist Labour MP's in the 1906 Parliament, 5 were elected as Lib-Labs and became Labour when the M.F.G.B. affiliated to Labour in 1909. The other, also a miner, John Taylor, MP for Chester-le-Street (1906-1919) had been a pioneer of the ILP in Durham, and therefore refused to stand as a Liberal. He stood in 1906 as Independent Labour since the Durham miners had not yet affiliated to the LRC and applied immediately on election for the Labour Whip. Born in 1855, at Monkwearmouth, at the age of 19 he became a local preacher continuing this work until his death, 60 years later.⁶ Of the other 5 elected in 1906, 4 cannot be said to have ever been more than nominal adherents to the Labour Party. Enoch Edwards, although joining with other miners' MP's in 1909, chose to style himself Lib-Lab again in 1910, and was adopted that year at a joint meeting of Hanley Trades Council and the Liberal Association. On his death the seat was won by a Liberal in a three cornered contest. W.E. Harvey, MP for North East Derbyshire from 1907 until his death in 1914, consistently opposed affiliation of the miners to the L.R.C.; and the Derbyshire Miners' Association consistently voted against it. He himself was a Gladstonian Liberal, opposed Socialism and in 1897 had refused to speak on the same platform as Keir Hardie. Another miners' leader from Derbyshire, James Haslam, MP for Chesterfield from 1906 until his death in 1913

6. For an account of J.W. Taylor see Pearson's Weekly, 3 May 1906 p.771

was likewise an opponent of affiliation, as was Albert Stanley, MP for N.W. Staffs (1907-16). John Johnson, MP for Gateshead (1906-10) alone fought in January 1910 solely in the Labour interest - the Liberals opposed him, and he lost.⁷ In his Pearson's Weekly article (10 May 1906) he comes across as a standard Liberal, listing among major influences on him, Mill's Political Economy, Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations and Marshall's Principles of Economics. Again, he placed strong emphasis on the self-help ethic and clearly retained his evangelical orthodoxy. However, this local preacher was one of those to sign the Manifesto of the Secular Education League in an effort to avoid the old educational squabble between Anglicans and Nonconformists over control of religious instruction in the schools, which had wrecked the 1906 Education Bill.⁸ None of these 6 MP s survived in Parliament beyond 1919. By then, 5 were dead and in that year J.W. Taylor retired at the age of 64. They had been born largely in the 1840 s and 1850 s, and their formative years were before the advent of Socialism in the 1880 s.

The majority of the Primitive Methodist MP s were primarily trades unionists rather than Socialists, although a substantial

7. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville Dictionary of Labour Biography I pp 195-6. Volumes I - II especially cover many of the Labour MPs of the 1906-10 Parliament.
8. Pearson's Weekly 10 May 1906, p.787. Thus he wrote: "It is impossible to over-estimate the influence for good the Primitive Methodists I met had upon me. I found their teaching the strongest possible incentive to trying to improve myself, not only morally, but mentally.... Altogether whatever I am today is due to Primitive Methodism. And so, what between delving for coals in one sort of pit and seeking to save souls from another, the years slipped uneventfully away until 1883, when I first became officially connected with the D.M.A." For a list of other Council Members of the Secular Education League see the Freethinker 31 March 1907, pp 197-8. Although containing a number of prominent Free-thinkers, the League Council also included 26 clergy, among them Stewart Headlam, R.J. Campbell and W.E. Moll, together with a considerable number of lay preachers.

minority (7) had been active I.L.P.ers from its early years. These were the aforementioned J.W. Taylor, T. Richardson and Ben Spoor from County Durham, Thomas Cape a native Cumberland miner and early ILPer, William Lunn, from the West Riding, the heartland of the LLP, C.J. Simmons of Birmingham who had sat on the N.A.C. and Vernon Hartshorn, a South Wales miners' leader. In addition, according to Wearmouth, G.W. Shield MP. for Wansbeck, Northumberland (Feb. 1929-31), also a miner and local preacher, was a Christian who found in Socialism the social expression of his faith.⁹ Nor is there any evidence here for the view that Socialists were disillusioned Christians looking for an alternative faith. 4 of the 7 LLPers were local preachers, as was G.W. Shield - a similar proportion to that of the sample as a whole - and there is no evidence to suggest any later loss of faith on their part, C.J. Simmons for example, produced an autobiography in 1972 entitled The Soap-Box Evangelist.

Thomas Richardson, one of the LLPers from Durham, described how he had become a Socialist in an article in the Labour Leader in 1912.¹⁰ Born in 1868, at the age of 24 the Durham miners' strike forced him to consider for the first time the social and political questions of the day. This politicisation as the result of a strike is another theme running consistently through Labour MP. s' reminiscences. Richardson had devoted his studies over the previous 2-3 years to theology in order to become a local preacher, and while the strike was on, he passed the examination. He therefore felt he could turn his attention more to politics. He began attending union branch meetings for the first time, and began reading Socialist literature. The books he chose all had very much a religious appeal. There was

9. R. Wearmouth, The Social and Political Influence of Methodism in The Twentieth Century (1957) p.97.

10. Labour Leader, 31 May 1912, p.353. T. Richardson "The Conversion of a Mining Village".

Morrison Davidson's Gospel of the Poor, Clifford's Socialism (a Fabian Tract), Kingsley's works (he was especially impressed by Alton Locke) and, having begun to take Hardie's Labour Leader he always read the "Between Ourselves" column first. This was the section in which Hardie often tended to give his own religious interpretation of Socialism. From this he went on by way of Kirkup's History of Socialism to study Socialist economic thinking and became convinced of the need for an end to private ownership, which he now found "morally wrong and inevitably inflicted grave injury and injustice, not only upon the workers but also on all sections of the public outside the owning classes." There was no LLP branch in the area, so he walked to the nearest branch and heard the main LLP propagandists speak. What he stressed most at this period was his sense of isolation. "I was, so far as I then knew, without a kindred soul in the Usworth and Washington District." Durham was not very promising territory for the LLP. However with 4 others he invited Hardie to speak at an inaugural meeting of a branch in Usworth, his home village. The vast majority of the audience was openly hostile to Hardie, who spoke at Richardson's request on "Thy Kingdom Come" - "Hardie in those days, was not only a suspect, but positively disliked by the Durham miners." However, by 1904 Richardson was being elected as an LLPer on the Labour ticket to the County Council; and the Parish Council and Guardians had also been wrested from Liberal hands. This sort of grass-roots growth, reflected in local election results, is typical of the way in which Labour was gradually extending its power-base from the beginning of the century and is a much surer guide to the growth of the Labour Party than General Election results.

Among these LLPers were to be found the only Primitive Methodist Labour MP's who had opposed the First World War. Richardson was a regular Parliamentary questioner over the treatment of C.O.'s and

consequently lost his seat in 1918. Taylor and Simmons also opposed the War, and Ben Spoor became Secretary of the National Peace Council in 1921. Simmons had, in fact, fought in the War and lost a leg at Vimy Ridge. Twice during the War he was imprisoned: once for speaking on peace platforms in uniform, once for protesting against Field Punishment No. 1 ("crucifixion" - where in many cases conscientious objectors were tied to a post exposed to enemy fire for hours at a time). However one at least of these LLPers was a "patriot". Vernon Hartshorn although an LLP activist from its early years had been much influenced by Blatchford's writings (in 1923 he was "still his intimate friend."¹¹) and like Blatchford he opposed "Prussian militarism". He spent most of the War from 1915 on coal committees, and Lloyd George appointed him as a Labour representative on the South Wales Industrial Unrest Committee. In this respect, Hartshorn shared the views of the majority.

Most of the Primitive Methodist MP s were therefore very similar in their views to many of the working-class Wesleyans already discussed, owing their allegiance first to the Liberals, then, and only reluctantly, to Labour. It was not only the miners' MP s of 1906 who took this position. When the National Union of Agricultural Workers, which he had helped found, affiliated to Labour, George Edwards reluctantly transferred his allegiance from the Liberals, and stood as Labour. This was in 1918.¹² He stood in the same year for Norfolk South as Labour, lost, but won the seat

11. S.V. Bracher, The Herald Book of Labour Members (1923) p.63.

12. G. Edwards, From Crow-Scaring to Westminster (1922) pp. 201ff. He had begun to be disillusioned with Liberal professions of support for the working man in 1892 when, as Lib-Lab candidate for Cromer in the Norfolk County Council elections he was beaten by 50 votes by the Conservative local squire who had been nominated by the local leading liberal - many of the Liberal functionaries in the area defecting to the Tory in protest at a working man candidature. Ibid. p.61.

in a by-election 2 years later. W.T. Mansfield, elected in 1929, first took an active role in local Labour politics at the inaugural meeting of the Cleveland Constituency Labour Party in 1918, at which meeting he was elected chairman. There must have been many such, for constituency Labour Parties were set up only in 1918 and before that membership of the Party had been only through a union or an affiliated body such as the LLP.

c) Others

In addition to the Wesleyans and Primitives there were 5 United Methodists, 5 Welsh Calvinist Methodists, 1 Independent Methodist and 1 Free Methodist. The denomination of 4 other Methodists is in doubt. The case of J.A. Parkinson, MEGB-sponsored MP for Wigan from 1918 until his death in 1941, illustrates the difficulties sometimes encountered in trying to trace the denomination of an MP. The Dictionary of Labour Biography refers to his having been connected early in life with the United Methodist Church in Hindley Green (nr Wigan) where he was born, and then in later life with the Hope Congregational Church, Wigan where his funeral took place.¹³ Such movement between denominations in nonconformity was not uncommon, and several other Labour MPs also changed their allegiance on changing their locality. However, according to the Christian World in 1923 and 1929, he was then a Primitive Methodist.¹⁴ It therefore seemed wisest to place him amongst the "miscellaneous Methodists", as Methodism was clearly the religion of his formative years.

Of the 5 United Methodists, 3 were miners; 1 from Durham and 2 from the West Riding. The other 2 were J. Parker, a packer from Halifax 1906-18, who although being an old ILPer, supported the War and represented Cannock as Coalition Labour from 1918-22; and

13. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville, op. cit. II pp. 291-2.

14. Christian World 13 December 1923, p.6 and 6 June 1929, p.3. This is another example of the unreliability of the Christian World lists since Parkinson was not even listed in 1919 or 1922.

Robert Toothill (Bolton 1914-22). Of the Welsh Calvinist Methodists, 2 were miners. In 1918 Maj. D. Watts Morgan won Rhondda East to join William Abraham (Mabon), who sat for Rhondda West, and had been in Parliament since 1885. Mabon's background is well known. Morgan had entered the mines at 11 and been full-time General Secretary and Agent of Rhondda Miners' Federation since 1898, receiving his commission as Lieut-Col in 1914 because of his position of authority in the area. Thomas Griffiths, MP for Pontypool (1918-35) was a Deacon and Sunday School teacher at Neath, and recalled his father's persecution for his faith. From 1899-1917 he had been organiser of the Steel Smelters Union after taking a course at Ruskin College. He had been a half-timer at school. R.T. Jones (Caernarvonshire 1922-3) was secretary of the Quarrymen's union, entering the slate quarries at 13, and becoming secretary in 1908 at the age of 33. Born at Blaenau Ffestiniog he was, like several other Labour MPs from Wales, a Welsh speaker and ardent advocate of Home Rule. He was also a Prohibitionist. The remaining Calvinist Methodist, Col. G.M. Llewellyn Davies, a friend of Lloyd George, won the Welsh University's seat by 10 votes in a 5-cornered contest in 1923 as a Christian Pacifist, supporting Labour, but lost convincingly in 1924.

(iii) The Baptists

The Baptists formed a much smaller group - 11 in all, 7 of whom had Welsh origins; one was Scottish; one came from Somerset; one was a Londoner; and one, S.P. Viant, was a native of Plymouth who came to London in 1901 aged 18 and became a Baptist there through the Brotherhood Movement. Of these Baptists, 5 were lay preachers, Rev Herbert Dunnico was a Baptist Minister and one, F. Messer, was

a regular speaker at Brotherhood meetings.

The Welsh Baptists formed a coherent geographical group: 3 of them were miners - William Brace, John Williams and Will John. Brace was Lib-Lab MP for Glamorgan South from 1906. He opposed affiliation to Labour but accepted the majority decision and continued to sit until 1920 when he resigned his presidency of the South Wales Miners' Federation and his Parliamentary seat in protest at the increasing militancy in the union. John Williams, MP for Glamorgan from 1906 until his death in 1922, had won the seat as an independent Labour candidate against Liberal and Unionist opposition. He was a fluent Welsh speaker, an ardent Welsh Nationalist, and a poet, winning the Bardic title and a place in the Gorsedd circle in 1885. The son of a miner, he had entered the pits aged 11, becoming a check-weighman aged 20 and from 1897, at the age of 36, a full-time miners agent despite having been ordained a Welsh Baptist preacher.¹⁵ Will John, the miner who inherited Abraham's old seat at Rhondda West in 1920 had risen through the ranks of the union. Like Williams, he was an ardent Welsh nationalist, had also won many prizes at Eisteddfods and had been a Baptist Deacon since 1905, serving for a period as President of the Welsh Baptist Union. However, he was 17 years younger than Williams, and 13 years younger than Brace, and this may account for his activities as a young man, founding LLR branches in the Rhondda Valley. During the 1910-11 Strike of South Wales miners he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for his part in the Tonypandy riots.¹⁶

Two more of the Baptist MPs with Welsh origins were the sons of miners - the Rev. Herbert Dunnico and Morgan Jones, a school-teacher from Caerphilly. J.H. Thomas and James Wignall, the latter for 30 years local organiser of the dockers' union, Swansea, complete the Welsh group.

15. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. I pp 347-8

16. Ibid I p.195

The other 4 Baptists were D.W. Adamson, a miner and from 1917 to 1921 Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party; A.V. Alexander, born in Weston-super-Mare and for many years a clerk to the Somerset Education Committee; S.P. Viant and Frederick Messer. These latter 2 are interesting as showing some of the influences at work in London. S.P. Viant (MP for Willesden West 1923-31, 1935-50) a carpenter/joiner from Plymouth, came to London and found himself at first unemployed. Four years later, in 1905 he began attending Dr. Clifford's Brotherhood Meetings at Westbourne Park. It was evidently a major formative influence, for "the spirit of social service which he found there acted upon his own experience and turned him towards the Labour Movement."¹⁷ Thereafter he became active in his trade union and the local branch of the I.L.P. He was a lifelong Abstainer. Frederick Messer (MP. Tottenham South 1929-31, 1935-59) was also Teetotal, but in his case it was in reaction to his father's heavy drinking. Born in 1886, Frederick was 7th of 10 children. His father was workhouse master in Islington, so he must have seen the social problem very much at first hand. After an Elementary education he became apprenticed to a French polisher, joining their union in 1909. In his early twenties he became a regular attender at the West Green Baptist Mission and was a Sunday School teacher. This awakening of an interest in religion coincided with the start of his participation in politics, for in 1906 he began speaking on Labour platforms and at I.L.P. meetings, though he apparently did not join the LLP until 1913.¹⁸ His Christianity remained with him, and he regularly preached and played an active part in the Brotherhood Movement in the decade after the War. In the First World War, he was an LLP. pacifist and afterwards

17. Daily Herald 1 April 1924, p.4

18. Ibid 9 July 1929, p.9

was active in the No More War Movement.

Both these London MP s show the influence of the Baptist missions to the London working-classes. The Brotherhood Movement, in which they both played an active part, was essentially the churches' chief organisation for working-class Christians, many of whom would not attend normal services. The fact that 2 London Labour MP s were evangelised by this means in their formative years demonstrates the appeal which the churches retained throughout the Edwardian period, amongst the upper layers of the working class at least. Messer retained that working-class realism which time and again had startled the missionaries interviewed by Charles Booth;¹⁹ thus he argued "What is the good of speaking to a man about mansions in the sky when what he wants is a three-roomed house down here? What is the good of telling him he wants a change of heart when what he needs is a change of shirt or the change of a ten-bob note?"²⁰

Once again, as with the Primitive Methodists, there is no evidence that active church membership amongst Baptist MP s made them less likely to be members of "socialist" bodies. At least 5 are known to have been active in the Socialist - as distinct from the Labour - Movement before the War. Will John, Morgan Jones, S.P. Viant, F. Messer were all LLP activists. Rev. Herbert Dunnico who had been President of the Free Church Socialist League, was a Fabian and was President of Liverpool Labour Party while a minister in the city. From the evidence available, these men seem to have regarded Socialism as an integral part of their religious faith and its logical social application. Herbert Dunnico had no doubts about why Christians should support the Labour Party, and his reasoning no doubt reflected that of most of the group.

19. See for example H. McLeod, Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City. (1974) p.54 and n.

20. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II p.261

To Dunnico, the present system of industrial capitalism rested on "selfishness, greed, strife, envy, competition, upon the old pagan law of every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Yet with modern advances industry had the capacity to supply the reasonable wants of all. The explanation of why there were millions in poverty or unemployed while a few reaped the benefits, lay in the principles on which industry was organised. Labour sought to replace the present "un-christian and ungodly system" with a society based on "co-operation and service" "so that all men should have a fair opportunity to become what God intended they should be". Christianity taught Brotherhood - and this was the very foundation of Socialism. Dunnico, unlike the vast majority of his colleagues, supported MacDonald in 1931, and later sat as a National Labour MP, perhaps part of his reasons for doing so lay in his obvious sense of duty plus his total lack of economic thinking for, without explaining how, he professed the optimistic belief (in 1929) that "under a more Christian society poverty as we know it would disappear."²¹ What is apparent in his religious/political outlook, is his lack of emphasis on dogmatic considerations. He could easily unite with his Party colleagues of other creeds on (a rather vague) common ethical ground.

(iv) The Salvation Army MPs

Although only 3 Labour MP's appear to have been active members of the Salvation Army, they are sufficiently interesting to merit at least a brief mention. One of these, William Gillis, later became a member of the United Methodist Church, having been active in the Army in his younger days. He has therefore already been dealt with there, and has been included in the statistics as such. Of the other 2, Joseph Westwood, a miner (MP. for Peebles and S. Midlothian 1922-31) was the son of a Worcestershire miner. The family moving to Fife while he was a boy, he entered the pits at 14 and was active

21. Socialist Christian March 1929, p.87. H. Dunnico, "Why Christians Should Support Labour".

in the Union, becoming a union official after 16 years underground. From 1929-31 and 1940-45 he was Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, and from 1945-7 Secretary of State. He was active in the Salvation Army at Kirkaldy until the end of his life.²²

The third Salvationist was Frank Smith who, although he did not enter Parliament until 1929, when he was already 75, had been a major figure in the LLP from the mid-1890s, and might have entered the House much earlier (he fought many elections, losing his first at Hammersmith in 1892 by only 400 votes). He had been a pallbearer at Linnell's funeral in 1887, was a close friend of Hardie and sat for 18 years on the L.C.C.

He came from a lower middle-class home in Chelsea, and after a private education, had begun his own business, when he received his call to a very different career after attending a meeting addressed by a converted London bargeman and his wife. He turned to religious work at the Chelsea Mission and soon became involved with General Booth in the Salvation Army. He gave up his business connections as incompatible with a life of service to the poor. While travelling to the U.S.A. to take up an Army post there, he read Progress and Poverty and quickly saw that the Social Question was an integral part of Christianity. So when General Booth himself became interested in the social question, Frank Smith was the obvious person to be put in charge of the social wing of the Salvation Army. As a Commissioner, he ranked immediately below the General and was chiefly concerned in the preparation of In Darkest England and the Way Out, which advocated home farm colonies as a remedy for unemployment. Within 2 months of its publication he had resigned his position because of disagreements with Booth over the running of the scheme (a farm colony at Hadleigh, Essex had already been established) and Smith branched out on his own,

22. S.V. Bracher, op. cit. pp 209ff. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II p.402

becoming increasingly involved with the leaders of the Socialist Movement, with whom his work had already brought him into contact.²³ Hardie had rooms in Smith's house in Chelsea while he was MP for West Ham. Smith himself, apart from I.L.P. work, founded the Labour Army (its title in conscious imitation of the Salvation Army) which had as its official journal The Workers' Cry (an equally obvious imitation of The War Cry). In addition he succeeded Carolyn Martin as editor of Fraternity. He retained his early interest in the Land Question, organising the allotment movement during the First World War. Nor did he lose his interest in the Salvation Army, for when Bramwell Booth was deposed as General in 1930, he published at his own expense a pamphlet The Betrayal of General Booth, and he was a pallbearer at his funeral. In his religious views, he had however moved away from any simple evangelical orthodoxy, taking the view that all religions led in their different ways to the same God, and emphasising "the Divine presence" within man which he equated with "the immortality of one's higher self" which was the fundamental basis of human brotherhood, and therefore of Socialism. His chief religious activities were in connection with the Brotherhood Movement, and he spoke regularly at P.S.A. s. Being without any other denominational allegiance, it was as a Brotherhood Movement speaker that the Christian World listed him.²⁴ He was the only MP to be listed under that movement rather than by a normal denomination.

(v) The Congregationalists

The Congregationalists, who formed the second largest group of Nonconformist Labour MP's, are rather different to the denominations so far described in that they contained within their number a

23. He had already been actively involved with Annie Besant and Ben Tillett. Among his active supporters at Hammersmith in 1892 was William Morris. E.I. Champness Frank Smith: Pioneer and Mystic (1943) pp 14-15, 20, 29.

24. Christian World 6 June 1929, p.3

substantial minority of non-trade unionist and non-working class members. Of the 26 Congregationalists listed, 8 fell into this latter category. One of them, Sir Owen Thomas (MP for Anglesey 1918-23) won his seat from the sitting Liberal as an independent Labour candidate. His previous affiliations had been Liberal, he had acted as agent to two of the larger estates on the island and had been prominent in local affairs, being a past Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Anglesey.²⁵ However, his precise connection with the Labour Party is unclear. In addition to the group of 26, 2 other Labour ME's had a Congregational background, but had severed their church connections before becoming ME's. Both were also middle-class, one, F.W. Jowett describing himself in 1906 as having been formerly Congregational, but being now a Christian unattached to any sect.²⁶ The other, Percy Alden, became a Quaker in 1901. He was born in 1865 the son of an Oxford master butcher, and was a student at Balliol College Oxford, where he was deeply influenced by the Idealist philosophy associated with the College in the teachings of B. Jowett, R.L. Nettleship and the works of T.H. Green. Like many another Oxford student with a social conscience, he was drawn into the University Settlement Movement. He graduated in 1888, then studied theology at Mansfield College under Dr. Fairbairn, giving up the last year of this course to go to London in 1890 as the first Warden of the Mansfield House Settlement in Canning Town, a Congregational settlement named after the College which he had helped to found. At Mansfield House, there soon developed the usual social clubs and educational classes and also a women's hospital and a Poor Man's Lawyer service, in which capacity another future Labour ME, F.W. Pethick-Lawrence (a Unitarian) served. Through his work in the

25. For O. Thomas see Dictionary of Welsh Biography Down to 1940 (1959) p. 1150

26. Review of Reviews April 1906, p.575

Settlement, Alden became a West Ham Borough Councillor in 1892, joining the Labour group on the Council in 1894. During the 1894-5 unemployment agitation, Alden was Secretary of the committee organising relief work and, with Hardie, led a Trades Council deputation to Lord Rosebery. Like many another Christian Socialist,²⁷ in party politics he was a Radical Liberal, and represented Tottenham North as a Liberal-Labour MP from 1906-18 (he had been candidate since 1903). He first stood for Labour in 1922, sat in the 1924 Parliament, then lost his seat and by 1927 was regarding himself as a Liberal again, supporting Lloyd George's Yellow Book (which in many ways was more radical than Labour Party policy). He was one of that substantial group of social radicals, both Liberal and Labour, who worked together, regardless of party allegiance, and regarded themselves very much as part of the same movement. It was this, of course, which eased the transition of substantial numbers of ex-Liberals into the Labour Party, when the latter became a more promising vehicle of social reform after 1918. Thus he was a member of the Rainbow Circle in the late 1890s - a body which included such Socialists as Ramsay MacDonald and many of the younger social reformers from the Liberal ranks. He was also a Fabian Society member (another body which for many years was unable to decide between the Liberals and Labour) serving on its E.C. from 1903-7.²⁸ After his defeat in 1924 he turned away from active party politics and back to Christian social work, amongst other things, serving as honorary secretary of the Settlements Association.

Of the 26 Labour MPs who retained their denominational allegiance as Congregationalists, 8 were local preachers and, in addition, 3 were Deacons and 1 was a minister, the Rev Gordon Lang. Born only in 1893,

27. Alden was an active Christian Socialist. He had been a member of the original undenominational Christian Socialist Society in 1886, he was a council member of its successor the Christian Socialist League from 1894-8, and of its successor the Christian Social Brotherhood. After becoming a Quaker in 1901 he became Organising Secretary of the Friends' Social Union from 1904-11.

28. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. III pp 3-5 and P. d'A Jones op. cit. pp 334-5.

Lang was one of the younger Labour MP s returned in 1929, but he had joined the LLP while in his teens and was a convinced Socialist, as well as a man of very liberal religious views. Like many in the LLP, he opposed the War, and published some of his sermons against it. When, in the early 1920's the Christian Socialist movement was undergoing a revival and realignment, he was a founder member of the Society of Socialist Christians, and sat on its provisional committee.²⁹

By occupation, the largest group were again miners, there being 8. This included 2 Lib-Labs, who had joined Labour in 1909, and 1, Thomas Glover (MP. for St. Helens 1906-10) who had been elected under the auspices of the L.R.C. - the only miner to have been so in 1906, since only the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners' Federation had affiliated to the L.R.C. by that date.³⁰ There were 9 other trades unionists: Ben Tillett and Will Crooks were London dockers, George Barnes was a railwayman, J.R. Clynes was a piecer from Oldham, Margaret Bondfield had been a shop assistant, D.L. Mort was a steelworker from Briton Ferry, Wales, R. Young was an engineer, William Graham was a journalist and W.B. Taylor, a Norfolk smallholder, was a close friend of George Edwards,³¹ and county secretary of the National Union of Agricultural Workers.

In terms of their geographical origin, the largest group were Welsh. The 7 with Welsh origins included Sir Owen Thomas, D.L. Mort and the Rev. Gordon Lang, and 4 of the miners - T. Richards, C. Edwards, W. Jenkins³² and Gordon MacDonald, a Wigan miner, whose brother was Rev. Emlyn MacDonald, minister of Mount Zion Welsh Congregational Church, Newport.³³ Otherwise there were no very obvious geographical

29. Commonwealth, March 1924, p.71 report of the founding conference of the Society of Socialist Christians. For an example of Lang's outlook see the Crusader 12 January 1923 pp 14-15 G. Lang: "The Ethics of Socialism".

30. The Lancashire and Cheshire Miners Federation affiliated to the L.R.C. in 1904.

31. See above p515

32. W. Jenkins, miner and MP. for Neath (1922-45) a Deacon and a leading figure in the Welsh Congregational Union was also a bard and a strong Welsh Nationalist. S.V. Bracher op. cit. p.85.

33. Christian World 13 June 1929, p.3

connections: 2 were Yorkshiremen, 3 were Lancastrians, 2 came from the West country (Margaret Bondfield from Chard, Somerset where her father was a lace-maker, active Congregationalist and ex-Chartist, and Dr. Somerville Hastings from Warminster, Wilts). In addition, A.F. Brockway had been born in Calcutta, the son of Congregationalist missionaries.

The Parliamentary Labour Party after World War 1 not only rapidly grew in numbers, it also changed drastically in character with the influx of substantial numbers of middle-class members, many of them ex-Liberals or ex-Conservatives. This change was reflected in the markedly different social backgrounds and occupations of many of the Congregationalist MP's elected in the 1920's. Of the 13 new Congregationalist Labour members elected between 1922-29, 7 were definitely middle class, compared with none before the War. This clearly reflects the broadening electoral base of the Labour Party in these years, as it replaced the Liberals in most constituencies as the most likely means of defeating the Conservatives, and therefore of bringing about radical social reforms.

Congregationalists had long provided substantial numbers of Liberal MP's. It is not therefore surprising that of these 7 new middle-class members, 2 were former Liberal MP's (H.B. Lees-Smith and William Wedgwood Benn); 1 (G.W. Holford Knight, a barrister and publicist) had been a former Liberal parliamentary candidate and 1 (C.H. Wilson) was the son of a Radical MP who had sat for 27 years. In addition, Miss Dorothy Jewson, a teacher and former militant suffragette, came from a Norwich business family for which seat she sat in the 1924 Parliament. She joined the Fabians while at Girton, becoming an active social researcher and was drawn into the women's trade union movement, being encouraged to help organise sweated women workers by Mary Macarthur. For 6 years, from 1916, she was chief organiser of the National Federation of Women Workers, herself spending

3 weeks as a maid in a London hotel to check on conditions at first hand. The 2 remaining middle-class recruits, Dr. Somerville Hastings and Archibald Fenner Brockway, were both sons of Congregationalist ministers. Somerville Hastings (b. 1878), like Miss Jewson came to the Labour Party through the Fabian Society, which he joined in his early twenties. An Ear and Throat surgeon at Middlesex Hospital, he was long an advocate of a state medical service. He also joined the ILP in the early 1900s, was a Christian Socialist and a member of the Christian Socialist Movement until his death.³⁴ His wife was a Quaker and his own religious involvement included participation in C.O.P.E.C. and serving on the council of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. He served in World War 1 as a surgeon.

Brockway also had contact with the Quakers, writing for the Quaker Socialist Society magazine "Ploughshare", but in his case this arose from his pacifism. Born in Calcutta in 1888, and educated at Eltham College, at the age of 19 he was living at a mission settlement in north London when he joined the ILP. From 1911-16 he edited the Labour Leader and from 1923 was secretary of the ILP, fighting throughout the 1930's as an ILPer. His pacifism led him to become hon. sec. to the No-Conscription Fellowship (1916-20) and he later became a leading activist in the No More War Movement. From 1917-19 he spent 26 months in prison as a C.O.³⁵ His religious views were of the liberal, non-dogmatic type. Thus he was for a time sub-editor of R.J. Campbell's Christian Commonwealth and lectured on "the Religion of a Socialist" for Campbell's Progressive League (later called the Liberal Christian League).³⁶ Nor is it a coincidence that Dr. Alfred Salter and F.W. Jowett, both ILPers and subjects of biographies by Brockway, also held Socialist and Pacifist views based on a similar non-doctrinal, undogmatic Christianity. Brockway's views at this time

34. Christian Socialist September 1967, p.18 Obituary notice

35. Daily Herald 11 July 1929, p.4

36. Arthur Crecch Jones papers, Rhodes House MSS Brit Emp 5332, box 2, file 2, item 1 (I owe this reference to Mr. J. McPartlin, former lecturer at the University of Malta)

can be found in such articles as "Religion and the Social Order" (Ploughshare April 1916) which was a standard exposition of religious ILLP. Socialism such as could have been written by any of a very considerable number of leading figures in the movement.

In this article he began by stating the 2 key religious truths which, for him, underlay Socialism. These were "The sanctity of human personality and the unity of all personalities in a Universal Personality."³⁷ This was Christ's teaching, though creeds and ritual had obscured these truths and the Church had often in its acts denied them. But it was upon these 2 basic facts that society was ultimately to be based. Society had to allow each individual the opportunity to develop his personality and talents to the full, and it was the duty of the individual to do so as far as he was able, and to do so "not for himself but for service of that Greater Personality which makes him one with all men and with Nature and the Universe itself."³⁸ Present social conditions, unhealthy slums, poverty, lack of education, prevented man from realising his potential. This was the result of society being based on private profit rather than the common welfare. Therefore communal ownership and control of economic activity was essential, both to secure production for use and also to restore dignity and humanity to the worker who under the present system was little better than a slave. Industry was to be democratised. This alone would not bring about the Socialism he desired. But gradually, through "education and experience", "a new ethic" would evolve.

"I believe as time passed humanity would become conscious of its spiritual nature and its spiritual oneness. I believe men and women would come to understand that every aspect of life should be sacred and would come to consider their work and the products of their labour as the ritual through which the Universal

37. Ploughshare April 1916, p.72

38. Ibid p.72

Spirit found expression.

It is to such a social order that humanity must advance if the great truths of religion are no longer to be divorced from life."³⁹

Congregationalism tended to a more liberal and humane Christianity than most of its more évangélical nonconformist counterparts. It also tended to attract members from a slightly higher social strata than the Wesleyans and Baptists, both of which appealed more to lower middle class and upper working class self help attitudes. Thus, although in many areas Congregationalist chapels were similar in social composition to other nonconformist chapels elsewhere, there was also, amongst the Congregationalists, a stronger element of the more affluent, university-educated middle class. There was less of a struggle for economic survival amongst its members, hence there was less call for a theology of struggle as a counterpart. Certainly there seems to be a considerable overlapping with Quakerism (an even more non-doctrinal and socially respectable denomination) amongst the more middle class Labour Congregationalist MPs. Percy Alden's secession to the Quakers does not seem to have resulted from any substantial change of views. Fred Jowett's secession seems to have been due more to the support of Bradford Congregationalist ministers for the Liberals in opposition to the ILP than to his religious beliefs which were indistinguishable from those of many of the other Congregationalist Labour MPs.

C.H. Wilson⁴⁰ was sent by his father to the Friends School Kendal, Wesley College Sheffield and Owen's College Manchester, before taking over as managing director of his father's firm, the Sheffield Smelting Co. According to Bracher, in 1923 he had been for 22 years a Congregational deacon, for 24 years a men's Bible class leader, and was then

39. Ibid. p.74

40. See above p477 and n.158.

superintendent of the junior Sunday School at his local Congregational Church, while at the same time he was for 12 years President of the Friends Adult School. He joined the LLP in World War 1 through his work on behalf of Conscientious Objectors, having previously been a Liberal and a Sheffield City Councillor from 1903. In 1918 he became Chairman of Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party and sat for that constituency from 1922-31 and 1935-44, when he was 82.⁴¹

Several future Labour Congregationalist MP's actively opposed the First World War. In addition to Jowett, Brockway and C.H. Wilson, Rhys John Davies and Dorothy Jewson took the LLP position of opposition to it, Miss Jewson's view being reinforced by the death of her brother at the front. The Rev. Gordon Lang published sermons opposing the War. Margaret Bondfield and H.B. Lees-Smith (Liberal MP. for Don Valley 1910-18) were both members of the U.D.C., Lees-Smith being a committee member, hence his choice of wartime service as a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps, for which he had volunteered instead of for combatant service. His father, an Indian Army Officer, had intended him for the army, but he had resigned his cadetship, later becoming a Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford and first vice-principal of Ruskin College. He joined the LLP in 1919 after losing his seat at the 1918 General Election to a Co.NDE candidate.

The careers of C.H. Wilson and H.B. Lees-Smith reflected the common trend among ex-Liberals, critical of the conduct of the War and of British war aims, being led by humanitarian considerations into the LLP where those same principles were applied to social reconstruction. It is a trend best exemplified by the Quakers. Amongst the group of Congregational MP's as a whole, 12 had been active in the LLP before the War: G.N. Barnes, Ben Tillett, J.R. Clynes, H. Twist and Margaret Bondfield all joined in the 1890 s; Brockway, Somerville Hastings, the Rev Gordon Lang, D.L. Mort, Gordon Macdonald and William

41. S.V. Bracher, op. cit. p.217

Graham all joined in their late teens or early twenties - Brockway (b. 1885) aged 19, Mort (b. 1888) aged 18, Lang (b. 1893) while a student, William Graham (b. 1887) at Edinburgh University, Gordon Macdonald (b. 1888) aged 24 and Somerville Hastings (b. 1878) in his early twenties. Rhys John Davies (b. 1877) joined as a young man converted by Blatchford's writings. It seems likely, therefore, that LLP Socialism was making substantial inroads amongst young men, to whose idealism it appealed in the early years of the century. Those with traditional trade union backgrounds tended to be substantially older than the LLPers, though several of the early LLPers were born in the middle years of the century - Barnes (b. 1859), Tillett (b. 1860), Clynes (b. 1869), Twist (b. 1870) and Miss Bondfield (b. 1873). However, here again their conversion to Socialism occurred in youth rather than later in life. It is also significant that of these older members, only Miss Bondfield opposed the First World War - and she was the youngest. Tillett, Clynes and Barnes all played active parts in recruiting drives and Barnes eventually left the main body of the Labour Party to continue as Minister of Labour in the Coalition Government after 1918. In all this they represented very much the opinions of their age group. Similarly, of the younger LLPers, born in the late 1880s and after, only Somerville Hastings appears to have served in the War - and in his case as a surgeon - while on the other hand the Rev. G. Lang preached in opposition to it and Fenner Brockway was a leading C.O. Again this age group seems very largely to reflect the outlook of its contemporaries in the Labour Movement. With the 2 later converts, 14 of the 27 definite Labour Congregationalists were LLPers and, in addition, Will Crooks, Holford Knight and Miss Jewson were Fabians. With the Congregationalists as with other denominations there is therefore no evidence that the holding of religious opinions

was in any way incompatible with active participation in the Socialist Movement; if anything, the reverse was true. However it is true that membership of the S.D.F. and the holding of religious convictions was not always compatible. Ben Tillett and Margaret Bondfield both began their political activities in London, where the SDF had established itself as the main working class Socialist body. Both therefore joined the SDF, but Tillett switched his chief interest to the ILP, on its formation, standing for Bradford East as ILP candidate in 1895, at which time he also described himself as a "warm supporter of the Labour Church"⁴² for which he often lectured. Miss Bondfield, arriving in London in 1894, became drawn into Radical and Socialist circles and also joined the SDF, but its emphasis on class war grated on her religious faith, and she soon left it for the ILP and the Fabians, where the atmosphere was more congenial.

Between them, the activities of Ben Tillett, Margaret Bondfield and Will Crooks cover the many diverse Socialist influences in London in the late 1880's and 1890's. Will Crooks, the only native Londoner of the 3, was born in 1852 in a one-roomed home near Poplar docks where he saw poverty at first hand. His father lost an arm and therefore his job after an accident at work when Will was 3 years old. Thereafter he only occasionally found work and consequently Will's mother worked as a seamstress at home - one of the worst of the sweated trades. When the Guardians stopped their out-relief, Will spent a time in the workhouse at the age of 8. Encouraged to read by his mother, who took him to the local Congregational Church and Sunday School, his story is essentially one of self-help leading to trades union and labour activism on behalf of his own class. He represented the dilemma of London working class Progressives, being first elected to the LCC as a Progressive in 1892 he won the 1903

42. Labour Annual (1895) p.188

Woolwich by-election with Liberal support, against a Conservative. In January 1904 he therefore refused to support the ILP candidate at Norwich because he believed it would split the progressive vote. The books which made the chief impact on him were Homer's Iliad, Pilgrim's Progress, Unto This Last and Alton Locke, all of which squared easily with his old-fashioned Liberal-Labourism⁴³ with its traditional emphasis on self help, teetotalism and support for such traditional Liberal policies as Free Trade.

Ben Tillett also came from an impoverished background. After a period at sea, he came as a young man to London, where, in reaction to the hell-fire theology of the church he had been forced to attend by his step-mother, he joined the free thought movement, being captivated by the then current controversy over religion and science about which he read widely. Looking back, however, he felt that "the inherent strain of mysticism in my nature" quickly caused him to find the conclusions of Freethought emotionally unsatisfying⁴⁴ - though Bradlaugh later helped him to draw up the rules of the Dockers' Union and Annie Besant spoke with him at the Dock Gates during the strike. Through her he met Herbert Burrows of the SDF and the Fabians, whom he remembered as "dear old Herbert Burrows, an ethical teacher who exercised a good deal of influence in London Socialist and Radical circles until his death."⁴⁵ The Dock Strike of course brought help from a wide circle of Socialists and Radicals; and Socialist churchmen as well as all the familiar figures of the SDF became well known to him from then on.

Margaret Bondfield, coming to London aged 19 in 1892, was drawn into Socialist and Radical circles partly through discovering the Ideal Club, a debating club designed to break down social barriers

43. See G. Haw, From Workhouse to Westminster (1907)

44. B. Tillett, Memories and Reflections (1931) pp 77-8

45. Ibid. p.108

which met on the Tottenham Court Road where she first met Shaw, the Webbs, the Dilkes and the Women's Trade Union League activists; partly through her work for the shop assistants trade union, having worked in dress shops since the age of 14. Amongst the union officials was John Turner, a philosophical anarchist, who befriended her and through whom she met all the leading London Anarchists, Emma Goldman, Malatesta, Fred Charles and Kropotkin. But Kropotkin's influence on her, as on the English Socialist Movement as a whole, lay in his ethics and vision of a decentralised communal society, expressed in the 2 books she remembered studying at the time - Factories, Fields and Workshops and Mutual Aid. This she could blend into her existing religious view of society. Having rejected the SDF for its emphasis on the class war it is not surprising that she remembered Morris at Kelmscott House with pleasure. As she began to speak in public on Socialist platforms, she came to know the national ILP figures too. All in all, her experience in the early 1890s demonstrates the wide range of Socialist activities in the capital and the fluidity of the boundaries between the various groups.

Miss Bondfield's trade union activities did, however, bring her into conflict with her church. A Congregationalist from birth, she sang in the choir of Kings Weigh House, a 17th century independent chapel in London, but as a result of her membership of the Union executive she missed one Sunday a month. As a result a deacon of the church asked her to choose between the church and the union. She chose the union and it was over 20 years before she rejoined a church, when she came under the influence of Dr. Orchard at the same chapel. But for someone as deeply religious as Miss Bondfield's autobiography shows her to be, it was a bitter experience, even though it was one shared by a number of Socialist and union activists.⁴⁶

46. M. Bondfield, A Life's Work (1948) passim

(vi) The Quakers

From 1922 Quaker Labour members began to appear in the Commons: 2 in 1922 (C.R. Buxton and Dr. A. Salter); 5 in 1923 (Percy Alden, W.H. Ayles, G.M. Gillett, A.W.F. Haycock and J.H. Hudson); 1 at a by-election in 1926 (A.L. Shepherd, member for Darlington 1926-31) and 3 in 1929 (Dr. Ethel Bentham, Capt. W.G. Hall and P.J. Noel-Baker). In addition, Miss M.A. Hamilton came from a Quaker background on her mother's side and, although regarding herself as a Humanist until Munich, which converted her to a realisation of the need for belief in a God independent of man's own acts, her own I.L.P. Socialism and U.D.C. opposition to the War remained very much akin to the outlook of many Quakers. However, for the period in question she held no religious beliefs and is therefore listed under that heading.⁴⁷

Various reasons drew Quakers and the Labour Party together in these years. In the first place, Socialism, as expounded by its I.L.P. Parliamentary leaders, placed a primary emphasis upon the non-dogmatic religious faith that each individual contained a spark of the Divine and it was each person's duty and the duty of society to afford every opportunity for the development of this God-given personality and talents to their fullest extent, and for the service of others. A political creed put in such terms sounded very akin to the Quaker insistence on the 'inner light' and the long Quaker tradition of public service for social betterment. Thus the Socialism of the I.L.P. in particular could appeal to Quakers. Conversely too, the faith of the Quakers could appeal to the non-dogmatically minded religious social reformer such as was to be found both in the I.L.P. and amongst the Social Radical wing of the Liberal Party.

Three of the 11 Quakers listed became members of the Society of Friends in the early years of the century for such reasons. Percy Alden⁴⁸ whose own Congregational religious faith was heavily influenced by Oxford Idealism, became a Quaker in 1901. Dr. Ethel

Bentham, who, although not joining a Friends' meeting until 1920, had
47. M.A. Hamilton, Remembering My Good Friends (1944) esp pp 21, 307-10
48. See above pp 114, 133, 411-2. 536

been attending Quaker meetings since the turn of the century, was a convert from Anglicanism, in which she had grown up, despite her father being a Quaker and descendent of Jeremy Bentham. In her case the change was due to a feeling of being more at home in Quaker than Church of England services.⁴⁹ She had become a Socialist while at College in Dublin where the slum conditions appalled her. Dr. Alfred Salter, born in 1873, the other medical practitioner amongst the Quaker MPs, joined the Peckham Quakers in 1900. He was the son of an administrative officer of the Metropolitan Gas Co. Both parents were very puritan, at first attending Blackheath Wesleyan Chapel, but, on moving to Lewisham, they joined the Plymouth Brethren. Alfred himself was in the Band of Hope at 9, and addressing Salvation Army meetings at 16. But his medical studies and the reading of Darwin destroyed his Evangelical faith, and it was not for several years that his religious nature reasserted itself and he began to attend John Scott Lidgett's lectures. Through the latter's influence he went to live at the Bermondsey Settlement where Lidgett was Warden in 1898, and there he acted as the poor man's doctor. He developed a Christian pacifist philosophy based on an interpretation of Christ's life and teachings as advocating complete and absolute non-resistance. He therefore joined the Peckham Quakers with his wife, Ada, in 1900. With his friend C.G. Ammon, a Wesleyan lay preacher, he helped found the Bermondsey ILP in 1908, drawn to ILP Socialism, apparently, by its religious nature and the overt Christianity of Hardie and its other leaders.⁵⁰

The First World War was the second major factor which united Quakers and the Labour Party and, again, it was primarily the attitude of Labour's ILP leadership which was crucial. The process

49. Daily Herald 8th July 1929, p.9

50. A.F. Brockway, Bermondsey Story - The Life of Alfred Salter (1949) esp pp 31-3

was not simply one way. The opposition of such men as Hardie, Snowden and Macdonald to the War and the I.L.P.'s own official opposition, alone among the political parties, attracted many former Liberals including many Quakers who found themselves in a similar position as an ostracised minority. Such organisations as the Union of Democratic Control and then later the No Conscription Fellowship brought them together and smoothed the path for their transfer to the Labour Party during the war and in the years immediately following.⁵¹

Equally the pacifism of the Quakers appealed to many of the more religious-minded of the I.L.P. Socialists, especially any who came to an absolute pacifist position.

J.H. Hudson, a teacher, born 1881 and the son of a Socialist and Wesleyan schoolteacher, who was active in the I.L.P. and as a Labour Church lecturer, was one Quaker convert. Active in both the U.D.C. and the N.C.F., he was an absolute pacifist, and spent 2½ years in prison as a C.O. A.W.F. Haycock, born in Ontario 1882, whose father had led the Farmers' Party in the Canadian Parliament, was another active I.L.P. member. Before the war he had become associated with Norman Angell's warnings of the consequences of many of the treaty commitments already entered into, he served in France with the Friends' Ambulance and, returning to England in 1916, he spoke at meetings in opposition to conscription. He was consequently called up (a favourite method of the authorities to silence opposition) and was also jailed as a C.O.⁵² Walter Ayles, who had been for over 20 years a local preacher for both Methodists and Congregationalists, was another active I.L.P. member who became a Quaker because of the War (joining in 1919). Born in South Lambeth in 1879, he was the only Quaker M.P. of definite working-class origins, being one of five children of a railway porter and himself an engineer. He served on

51. See e.g. C.A. Cline, Recruits to Labour: The British Labour 1914-31 (Syracuse 1963) *passim*

52. Daily Herald 2nd February 1924, p.4

the NAC of the LLP. from 1912-23 and was active in his union, the A.S.E. During the War he too spent 2½ years in prison as a C.O., being active in the NCE, and later, after the War, in the Fellowship of Reconciliation.⁵³

The First World War also brought 2 further notable converts from Liberalism, Charles Roden Buxton (b. 1875) :

... briefly MP for Mid-Devon (Jan - Dec. 1910) and Philip Noel-Baker, son of a Liberal Quaker, pacifist MP. Noel-Baker was one of only three of the sample who were brought up as Quakers (the others being G.M. Gillett and W.G. Hall). Buxton, a founder-member of the U.D.C., joined the Friends and the LLP in 1917, having been sacked as prospective Liberal candidate for Central Hackney in 1915, and feeling the Church of England to be too closely associated with both jingoism and Conservative reaction to social progress. His religious views were, in any case, extremely broad in contrast to his mother's Evangelicalism and as early as 1904 he was referring sympathetically to the Quaker insistence on 'inner light',⁵⁴ and to his own dislike of conventional worship. Noel-Baker had organised the Friends' Ambulance Unit and was its first commandant. He was then an officer in the First British Ambulance Unit in Italy until the Armistice, winning the Croce di Guerra and the Mons Star. He was Lord Robert Cecil's personal secretary at Versailles when the latter was the British delegate responsible for negotiations leading to the setting up of the League of Nations. He was later associated with Henderson and Lord Parmoor in the work of the League Secretariat at Geneva.

C.R. Buxton's adhesion to Labour was as much the result of his Christian Socialism as of his attitude to the War. At Cambridge he had been influenced by Canon Scott Holland and became a close friend of Charles Masterman, another active member of that Anglican Social reform pressure group, the C.S.U. In his reading, Westcott

53. Daily Herald 8th January 1924, p.4

54. V. de Bunsen, Charles Roden Buxton: a Memoir (1949) esp p.43

and Gore influenced him towards a Johannine theology, while close contact with Edward Talbot, when the latter was Bishop of Southwark, and his own social work for the church in South London added to his commitment to social reform. He was later for several years a member of the Church Socialist League, of which his cousin, Conrad Noel, was Organising Secretary.

Like many other Christian Socialists, however, he originally saw the Liberal Party, to which he had the traditional family allegiance, as the main hope for Parliamentary reforms, but he was always amongst its social radical wing, he and his brother Noel collaborating with Masterman in the production of the latter's The Heart of the Empire and himself serving as secretary of Lloyd George's Land Enquiry in 1912.⁵⁵ His political creed was derived from his religious faith. It was essentially an evolutionary idealism very similar to that of MacDonald.⁵⁶ Thus in 1898 he wrote "If I did not believe that the world is advancing ever nearer to the ideals of the best men... I should be a Conservative.... The real foundation of Liberalism is the belief in the higher world than the world around us of palpable facts."⁵⁷ For Charles Buxton as for many of his contemporaries, the foundation for a belief in social progress was a platonic idealist conception of the nature of reality. This, for him, had stood the test of criticism and intellectual scrutiny and remained after the Biblical assumptions of his evangelical childhood had passed away.

"That there is a spiritual world underlying the outward and visible and measurable world; that this body is not 'I', but only a part or adjunct of what I call 'I'; that from this spiritual world comes guidance or illumination in the conduct of the affairs of life; that from it comes also the great and thrilling experiences of life - experiences of human affection, experiences of beauty, experiences of intellectual insight or discovery; that it is this spiritual world which we mean when we speak of the Kingdom of God; that what we call the moral law is the law of the Kingdom of God; that this moral law which may be summed up in the principle of the brotherhood of men, is not a

55. ibid pp 35 and 53. For Noel Buxton see above p.52. He remained an Anglican throughout his life.

56. See eg. pp 385ff.

57. V de Bunsen, op. cit. p.32

mere protective device, evolved by natural selection, but something which we are bound to obey; that we are capable of carrying it into practice if we choose to do so, and that our happiness and our freedom are found in so doing - something of this kind seems to me to represent the real 'creed' of vast numbers today."⁵⁸

It was a creed which could equally well be found amongst young Liberal radicals or ILPers. In the years up to the War, class background and traditional family allegiance tended to keep the majority of the socially conscious amongst the University-educated middle class within the Liberal Party, as happened in the case of the Buxtons.

Alfred Salter had faced the same problem, as another Christian Socialist. He had, as a result of his Settlement work, been elected to Bermondsey Borough Council as a Progressive in 1903, and from 1906 sat also on the LCC. For him, what mattered was social reform. Whatever means offered the most likely chance of effectiveness he would use. "I believe that the Progressive Party is the most effective instrument for social and administrative reform that London possesses, but I add frankly that, directly I discover a more efficient organisation for helping the workers and uplifting the poor, I will transfer my allegiance to it, whatever its nature."⁵⁹

Salter was another religious Socialist who found the SDF not to suit him. In 1889 at the age of 16 he had won a scholarship to study at Guy's Hospital. In the following year, when only 17, he had joined the SDF, having read Looking Backwards and Fabian Essays, and being influenced by Hyndman. At the time he regarded himself as an Agnostic, and this influenced him in joining the SDF. It was, anyway the only real Socialist force in the capital. But it did not suit his puritan sensibilities and he resigned because of "its materialist philosophy", and joined the Fabians. But their "Bohemianism", especially that of Shaw, he found morally abhorrent. It was for this reason

58. Ibid qp.92

59. A.F. Brockway: Bermondsey Story qp.27 from Southwark Recorder 2nd February, 1907

that he turned to Lidgett and moved into the Bermondsey Settlement, for here, according to Brockway "he found... the earnest ethical inspiration which was his own."⁶⁰ Ultimately he found his home in the ILP, but it is interesting to see how, for Salter at least, no other Socialist body offered any long term attraction. In this he was representative of many earnest young men who found their way into the Labour Party via that body and subsequently served as MP. s.

Of the remaining MP. s, W.G. Hall (b.1887) was educated at the Society of Friends' School, Saffron Walden. From there he went to Toynbee Hall where he became a Socialist, joining the ILP in 1905. Unusually, he enlisted in 1914, rose to Captain and was mentioned in Despatches. He became MP for Portsmouth Central in 1929. G.M. Gillett came from an old Quaker family of bankers, himself being a partner in Gillett's Discount Bank, Lombard Street but despite these City connections he was a firm advocate of the Capital Levy. For over 30 years he devoted much of his spare time to social work for the Peel Quaker Institute, Clerkenwell and this direct contact with the horrors of slum life led to his membership, as a Progressive, of Finsbury Borough Council 1900-06 and of the LCC from 1910, becoming an Alderman in 1922. An active sympathiser with C.O. s, he was nevertheless appointed to serve on a Military Service Appeal Tribunal, presumably on account of his personal social standing.⁶¹

With the exception of A.L. Shepherd, for whom there is no information available, it is possible to examine briefly the social background of the remaining 10. Of these, only W.C. Ayles, an Engineer, was definitely working-class, and had had only an elementary education. J.H. Hudson, a teacher, was also educated in an elementary school, but then went on to Manchester University; and since his father was also a teacher, he can be firmly placed as lower middle class. Percy Alden,

60. Ibid, pp 6ff

61. Daily Herald, 29th January 1924, p.4

son of a master butcher, was educated at Balliol. Alfred Salter's father was an administrative officer of the Metropolitan Gas Co. and he himself qualified as a doctor. The other doctor, Ethel Bentham, had a private education. Her father, an inspector at the Standard Life Assurance Co. ended his career as its general manager. Arthur Haycock's father was, as we have seen, a leading Canadian politician, while W.G. Hall had been to a private school. G.M. Gillett came from a respectable banking tradition, while Philip Noel-Baker and more especially C.R. Buxton, came from very well-established political families in the counties. Only W.C. Ayles (A.S.E.) and J.H. Hudson (N.U.T.) had any active trade union connections. The Quaker Labour MP's were therefore largely middle-class, well-off, and drawn to Socialism by its idealism and their sense of duty and desire for service. It was presumably that same sense of duty which caused G.M. Gillett to support MacDonald in 1931, retaining his seat as a National Labour member until 1935. It was the ILP which appealed to them most - no less than 7 joined it (Salter, Ayles, Hudson, Hall, Miss Bentham, all before the war, A.W.F. Haycock (date unknown) and C.R. Buxton in 1917). In terms of their religious affiliations, 7 of the 10 were recruits to the Quakers from other denominations - Buxton and Miss Bentham from the Church of England (though in both cases their families had strong Quaker traditions); 3 had Wesleyan connections, Hudson, Ayles and Salter, though in the case of Ayles he had also been Congregationalist and Salter's background had spanned several of the more puritan nonconformist sects including Plymouth Brethren and Salvation Army; Percy Alden was a former Congregationalist. And as we have seen, their reasons for becoming Quaker Socialists though varied, were rooted in the close affinity between the religious aspect of ILP Socialism and the Quaker religious and social tradition.

Among the Quaker MP's too, were to be found a substantial number of the more active C.O.s and most of the outright pacifists who later

sat as Labour MP's. No fewer than 3 spent considerable periods in prison, (Ayles, Haycock and Hudson). Two of these, Ayles and Hudson, were active members of the No Conscription Fellowship, a much more militant body, generally composed of younger men, than the more respectable Union of Democratic Control. And Alfred Salter, who, because of his age and occupation was not called up, was another leading NCF activist, taking over as Chairman from Bertrand Russell when the latter was imprisoned. Indeed, according to Brockway, Bermondsey ILP had 19 of its members in prison as C.O.'s in July 1916, mainly as the result of their NCF activities.⁶² In addition to these men, Gillett sympathised with C.O.'s and C.R. Buxton was a U.D.C. member and wanted a negotiated settlement, while Philip Noel-Baker devoted himself to the Friends' Ambulance Unit. Only W.G. Hall actually volunteered and fought. The Quaker Labour MP's were therefore in the forefront of those who regularly campaigned for a reduction in armaments and who embarrassed the first two Labour Governments by voting against the Army and Navy estimates.

(vii) The Unitarians

Although only 7 Labour MP's were Unitarians, the theological position of a substantial number of Labour MP's, either unattached to any denomination or members of other churches, or attached to the Ethical or Theosophical Societies, was indistinguishable from that of the Unitarians. This is again especially true of many ILP'ers. The Labour Church, which throughout the 1890's had a membership almost indistinguishable from that of the ILP, throughout the North and Midlands, had been founded by John Trevor, a Unitarian minister who drew up its first basis on Unitarian lines.⁶³

62. A.F. Brockway op. cit. p.65. According to Brockway these were mainly for the moral/religious reasons given above. But they included others as Herbert Morrison, an atheist whose reasons were based on a Marxist belief that it was a capitalist war fought to determine world markets.

63. See above pp 89ff.

The Unitarian MP s are therefore interesting and their views important, as representing a much wider movement of thought than the presence of a mere 7 of their number suggests. However, all of the 7 were major figures within the Labour and Socialist movements, perhaps the foremost being the Independent Socialist member for Colne Valley from 1907-1910, Victor Grayson. He had studied for the Unitarian ministry before turning to political activities. His Socialism had a definitely religious base and he devoted much of his time to the Labour Churches after leaving theological college.⁶⁴

Another of the Unitarian MP s, the Rev R.W. Sorensen, Minister of the Free Christian Church, Walthamstow (1916-29) was active in Battersea Labour Church, an ILPer and became a minister as a result of the influence of Rev R.J. Campbell, whose own New Theology differed in no important respects from the Unitarian position. Born in 1891 of Danish descent, he had worked in factory, office and shop before, in 1912 joining Campbell's Order of Pioneer Preachers, a residential community of young men whom Campbell led in study and preaching, and in which Sorensen remained 4 years⁶⁵ before taking up the Walthamstow appointment. He was also a lifelong pacifist, friend of Brockway, who was another devotee of R.J. Campbell (Mrs. Sorensen and Mrs. Brockway were sisters); and until his death in 1972, was a leading figure in the Christian Socialist Movement.⁶⁶

In terms of social background, only Grayson and Sorensen were working class. Sorensen's father was a silversmith. Grayson (b.1881) was the son of a Disraelian Conservative carpenter, and himself had only a Board School education before spending 6 years as an apprentice

64. "But for our esteemed comrade, Victor Grayson, many of the churches would be penniless" (Birmingham delegates report 1909, Labour Church Union Conference) From 1907-14 Grayson was a leading Labour Church lecturer. See Rev. D.F. Summers: Op.cit. Appendix

65. Ibid. pp 330, 391, 729

66. He served as Chairman of the National Press Council and in World War II was President of the Unitarian and Free Christian Peace Fellowship. He was a founder member and on the provisional committee of the Society of Socialist Christians, wrote regularly for the Socialist Christian and was a leading figure in the Socialist Christian League in the 1930 s. See Daily Herald 25th July 1929, p.9 and Christian Socialist (obituary) April 1972, p.9

in a Bootle engineering works. The other five Unitarians, however, came from very different backgrounds. Miss Arabella Susan Lawrence (b.1870) came from a Conservative background, had been educated at Newnham, Cambridge and had sat as a Conservative Moderate on the London School Board from 1900, and on the L.C.C. from 1910 as a representative of Marylebone. She became a Socialist and joined the ILP in 1912, as a result of her experiences on the L.C.C. dealing with the issue of charwomen's wages and discovering the terrible social conditions of the time. Her father was a solicitor and a grandfather and two uncles were judges. From 1913 she represented Poplar on the L.C.C. as a Labour member.⁶⁷ The remaining 4 all came from traditional Liberal Unitarian families, Josiah Wedgwood, Christopher Addison, Morgan Philips Price and F.W. Pethick-Lawrence, the latter having, with the majority of his family, followed Joseph Chamberlain, a fellow Unitarian, after the Liberal split over Home Rule. He had been prospective Liberal-Unionist candidate for North Lambeth, before resigning because of his opposition to the Boer War. Wedgwood and Addison were both Liberal M.P.s, while Philips Price, a cousin of C.P. Trevelyan, had been prospective Liberal candidate for Gloucester from 1911 until the outbreak of the War.

In all 4 cases, these converts to Labour had long records of dedication to the cause of social reform, and this made their transfer of allegiance to Labour relatively easy. Dr. Addison (b. 1869) Liberal member for the slum area of Hoxton since 1910, as Minister of Health was chiefly responsible for such measures of post-war reconstruction as the 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act, which sought to provide, through subsidies to the local authorities, a planned building of council houses to provide for the needs of each locality. In the tradition of such legislation at the time it was voluntary, and was therefore blocked at the local level by many conservative 'independent'

67. F.W. Pethick Lawrence: Fate has Been Kind (1943) pp 51-3

authorities, reluctant to spend public money on such socialistic schemes, before falling a total victim to the Geddes axe, when all local authorities were circularised to the effect that no further subsidies would be granted at all. Not surprisingly, this prompted Addison's resignation from the Liberals, and, after losing his seat to a National Liberal in 1922, he joined Labour. Col. Josiah Wedgwood (b. 1872) of the Staffordshire pottery family, was a second son. His elder brother was destined for the pottery, and he was sent to Clifton College and Dartmouth to prepare him for a career in naval engineering. Unlike most of the converts from Liberalism, he fought in the Boer War and stayed on as resident magistrate in Emelo. In 1915 he was wounded at Gallipoli, awarded the D.S.O. and invalided out. He had been a Fabian since 1909 and Liberal member for Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1906. In the years before the War he wrote several pamphlets for the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, favouring Henry George's Single Tax as a solution to the Land Question. In 1918, he renounced his Party membership and was re-elected as an Independent Radical. In 1919 he joined the ILP, subsequently retaining his seat as a Labour member until his elevation to the peerage in 1942.⁶⁸

Morgan Philips Price (b.1884) was educated at Harrow and Trinity Cambridge. He came from a long Unitarian and mercantile tradition on both sides of his family. His father, an Indian Army officer and 12 years Radical MP. for Tewkesbury, died in 1886. He himself became a close friend and admirer of Charles Dilke who sat for the Forest of Dean where the Prices had their family seat. Price himself represented the same constituency after 1935. As a member of a leading county Liberal family, Price was adopted as prospective Liberal candidate for Gloucester in 1911, resigning only in 1914 on the outbreak of War. Up to this time he was very much a typical young Radical on the Liberal left wing. He often refers in his autobiography to the

68. See C.V. Wedgwood The Last of the Radicals (1951), J.C. Wedgwood Essays and Adventures of a Labour MP. (1924) and Memoirs of a Fighting Life (1941)

radical/nonconformist origins of his political ideas - a position he characterised as "a curious mixture of Socialism in home affairs and traditional, almost Whig, attitude to Foreign affairs."⁶⁹ After school, he went on the conventional grand tour - only in his case it was to Central Asia, Mongolia, Russia, Persia and Turkey. He was, in many ways, a very conventional member of Gloucester landowning society, a keen fox-hunter, who, after 1924, ran two of his own farms and sat on the EC. of the Gloucestershire Farmers' Union. During the War, as with many other converts to Labour, he was a founder member of the U.D.C. He served as the Manchester Guardian correspondent in Russia and remained during the first 18 months of the revolution, before going to Berlin in 1919 for 5 years as Daily Herald correspondent. Having seen the disintegration of the old Tsarist order which preceded the Bolshevik takeover, he was firmly convinced of the need for the Second Russian Revolution (a position found rarely amongst Labour MP. s in the 1920 s) and he was appalled by the systematic attempts of Britain and other Western countries to destroy the Revolution. Moreover, his Russian experiences led him to develop a Marxist (economic determinist) view of history and a belief in the inevitability of class conflict, which he hoped could be resolved by Parliamentary action in Britain. But by the late 1920 s he had returned much more to the Radical traditions of his youth, moved to this in particular, as he saw it, by the inadequacy of the economic determinist theory as the sole explanation of human acts. In particular, he felt, religious beliefs and emotions were not dependent on economic considerations and were as important as a determinant of human behaviour.⁷⁰

By the time he was first elected to Parliament, Philips Price's

69. M.P. Price My Three Revolutions (1969) p.21

70. Ibid, p.256-7

views had returned to their radical nonconformist roots. In particular, his Unitarianism had reasserted itself.⁷¹ It was a very liberal creed, and he had never had the evangelicals' problem in reconciling his religion with the findings of Science. His earliest recollection of public affairs was hearing his mother, who regularly took him to the local Unitarian chapel, hold forth on the Darwinian controversy within the Churches, in which she firmly supported the claims of Science on the evolution question.⁷² Pethick-Lawrence (b.1871 and educated at Eton and Trinity College Cambridge) also recollected the early influence of a liberal outlook. His mother, who took him every Sunday to the Unitarian 'Essex Church' refused to believe in the evangelical doctrines of eternal damnation, while her brother-in-law was a strong exponent of Darwinian theories of evolution.⁷³ Pethick-Lawrence's father had died young, leaving his mother a widow at 36. The former's grandfather had been head of a successful building firm, so the family was relatively well-off, lived in Paddington and Frederick had a governess before going to preparatory school. From 1891-7 he was at Trinity College, Cambridge and there he joined the Nonconformist Union, reading papers on such matters as Gambling and the Treatment of Animals as well as on Evolution and the Theory of Punishment. His undergraduate days were, therefore, a time of religious questioning, as he began to define his own views. He was much influenced at this time by a conversation with the leading Unitarian Dr. Brooke Herford, who encouraged his questioning attitude and urged him to seek the truth. In 1895 he and his sister visited the U.S.A. and Frederick found himself sharing a cabin with Dr. Herford. On arrival he and his sister went to Concord where they stayed with Emerson's daughter

71. In 1913 in a conversation with Elgar, describing himself as a "convinced Unitarian", Price while praising the composer's *Dream of Gerontius* said he preferred to interpret the work in a Unitarian rather than a Catholic way which Elgar agreed was quite reasonable. Ibid, p.231

72. Ibid, p.208

73. F.W. Pethick-Lawrence, Fate Has Been Kind (1943) p.18

and visited the sacred spots, much as MacDonald and many other English Socialists were to do.⁷⁴ Returning to Cambridge, he went on to win a Fellowship at Trinity in 1897, using the opportunity to take a round the world voyage, but on his return he went to Canning Town, as a resident at Mansfield House, yet another MP who first was drawn into the cause of social reform through the University Settlement movement.

His social conscience had been aroused at a meeting in Cambridge at which Alden had been the speaker, and when the latter urged him to visit Mansfield House, he went on several occasions and addressed its P.S.A. meeting. He liked the place, because of its "unsectarian" atmosphere,⁷⁵ and was a resident from 1899-1901, becoming Treasurer. He was studying for the Bar at the time and acted as assistant Poor Man's Lawyer. Mansfield House, like Toynbee Hall and some of the other settlements, was actively involved in all of the various movements for social reform of the day. Through it, he came into contact with Will Thorne, Ben Tillett, Keir Hardie and other Labour leaders. As a Pro-Boer, he jettisoned his former Liberal-Unionism and was increasingly drawn into the world of London Progressivism, with its implicit alliance between Liberals and Labour. This was the political line of the Echo which he took over in 1901 and ran until its collapse in 1905. For the first 18 months, Alden was editor, and on his resignation, Pethick-Lawrence took over the position. Its other staff represented the same Liberal-Labour alliance, Brailsford writing the leaders and Ramsay MacDonald the "Labour Notes". From 1903-08 Pethick-Lawrence was responsible for the financially ailing Labour Yearbook of Joseph Edwards, which was renamed the Reformers' Year Book in an effort to appeal to a wider readership, and which, under Pethick-Lawrence's editorship, turned more towards the Liberal Party and away from the independent labour line pursued by Edwards. Between 1905 and 1908, Pethick-Lawrence

74. Ibid, p.36

75. Ibid, pp 35-6

also founded and edited the monthly Labour Record and Review to replace the defunct Echo. At the same time, at Hardie's invitation, he served on the Metropolitan District Council of the ILP, but increasingly until the War, as a result of his wife's activities (he married in 1901) his main involvement was with the Women's Suffrage movement. She had been imprisoned as early as October 1905 for her W.S.P.U. activities, though her husband secured her release for bad health. In 1912 they were both arrested with Emmeline Pankhurst for conspiracy and he was sentenced to 9 months, being released after a hunger strike. Soon after his release, both the Pethick-Lawrences were dismissed from the W.S.P.U. by Mrs. Pankhurst following their disagreement with her over her determination to adopt more violent tactics than hitherto.⁷⁶

During the War, Pethick-Lawrence was Treasurer of the U.D.C. and in March 1918 was adopted as Labour candidate for Hastings, withdrawing in November because of disagreements over his opposition to the war. But his wife was a candidate for Manchester Rusholme in 1918 while he was adopted for South Islington in 1920 and eventually won West Leicester (which had rejected MacDonald for his anti-war activities) in 1923. The Pethick-Lawrences are further examples of that trend whereby social reformers moved into the ranks of the Labour Party via in many cases the U.D.C. after 1914 and which resulted in the Parliaments of the 1920s containing substantial numbers of ex-Liberals in particular, sitting as Labour M.P.s.

In religion Pethick-Lawrence was, in common with many other social reformers, a radical. And after the War he was drawn especially to Eastern mysticism in common with other Labour members from outside the orthodox denominations. In particular he thought that the central works of Eastern religion - such works as the Upanishads or the Bhagavad Ghita - pointed to that "central conception of all deep

76. Ibid, esp. pp 89ff

religious thought... - that life is one and that our little selves are merely fragments of the great whole."⁷⁷ As he grew older he came to interpret the Forgiveness of Sins in terms of the Hindu doctrine of Karma, as both pointing to the same religious truth that spiritual growth, through man's experience of and response to events, is life's ultimate goal.⁷⁸

It is however, Victor Grayson whose Socialist and religious ideas are of most interest, partly because at the time his Colne Valley victory caused such a stir (Vic Feather was but one of many who were named after him by Socialist parents); but also, because Grayson's Socialism highlights a powerful trend of thought, especially in Lancashire and the West Riding, where the ILP had been born. One of his earliest biographers, William Thompson, characterised his Socialism as "not so much a political or sociological credo, as it is a conception of the universe" "His Socialism... concerns itself with appealing to the intellectual, idealistic, religious, moral, poetic, artistic, humanitarian and picturesque sides of life."⁷⁹ His views and his Colne Valley campaign, provide a classic description of this most dominant and central strand of English Socialism.

Grayson (b.1881 in Liverpool) was the 7th son of a Yorkshire carpenter. His parents were Disraelian Tories and he was named Albert Victor after the eldest son of the Prince of Wales. While at the local Board School he was an avid reader of 'penny dreadfuls'. He even once tried to run away to the West and, at the age of 14 (in the summer of 1896) he stowed away on a ship bound for Coquimbo but on discovery he was packed back to England on a ship bound for Tilbury and had to tramp home from there begging, seeking work and

77. Ibid, p.125

78. Ibid, pp 210-11

79. W. Thompson: Victor Grayson: His Life and Work (1910) p.151

often sleeping in workhouses on the way. After this he was for 6 years an engineering apprentice in Bootle. It was during this period in his life that he grew interested in politics and at the age of 18 he led an apprentices' strike in protest at a reduction in wages. According to his most recent biographer, he was now reading avidly works on economics, Socialist pamphlets and the writings of Emerson.⁸⁰

He joined the Men's Debating Society at the Hamilton Road Mission at Bootle and by regular attendance and participation, developed as a speaker. By now a Socialist, he began to preach from soap-boxes for local Labour groups. In these years his main interests were theology and economics. A friendly Unitarian minister secured him a place first at Liverpool University then at Owen's College, Manchester to train for the Unitarian ministry himself. According to Reg Groves, Grayson was now certain that "it was useless to expect true religion in a social system such as the present - better conditions could only come by political action."⁸¹ So while at Owen's College, he started a University Socialist Society, one of his fellow theological students recalling that all he talked about was Socialism - "it was a kind of religion with him."⁸² Gradually he devoted more and more of his time to the new gospel and finally, in January 1906, he gave up his training for the ministry to be free to preach Socialism full-time.

Very impressed by his speaking, it was he whom the Colne Valley Labour League chose to fight the 1907 by-election. Although the ILP and the Labour Party refused endorsement, Katherine Bruce Glasier, Mrs. Pankhurst and many others of the leading ILPers outside Parliament went to speak for him and both W.T. Stead and the Daily Express reporter

80. Reg Groves, The Strange Case of Victor Grayson (1975) p.13

81. Ibid, p.15

82. Ibid, p.18

noted the religious millenarianism of Grayson's Socialism. It was the first major chance for a Socialist contest against the 2 older parties since the 1906 General Election and it attracted armies of Socialist helpers amazed at the successes in 1906 and eager for further advance. Conrad Noel and a strong contingent of the infant Church Socialist League turned up, as did R.J. Campbell. Father Healey of the Mirfield Community of the Resurrection and Fr Paul Bull were also there, the former caught up in the enthusiasm recalling "Never have I seen people so moved; least of all these Yorkshire people whose main interest I always thought to be 't'brass"- never have I seen crowds so swept by waves of the Holy Spirit." Grayson's message clearly appealed amongst the working-class chapel-goers of the area, based as it was on the clear belief that Socialism was a religious ideal and not a mere political programme - not something which could be brought about quickly or without great changes in the attitudes of ordinary people. "It won't be in your time, not even perhaps in your children's time..." he told them, but it would come because it was part of the divine plan - the Kingdom of God on earth.⁸³ Clearly many agreed with him and voted for him, for he won, though very narrowly.⁸⁴

A good example of the Socialism that Grayson preached comes from his debate with the Conservative, Joynson-Hicks. Grayson began by ridiculing the Conservative claim that Socialists were atheists, denying it in his own case and saying that it was certainly not true of the overwhelming majority of English Socialists. Referring to himself as "an idealist, a theist, as one who believes in God, who counts the existence of God as part of his life and aspirations" Grayson aroused the biggest cheers from his audience when he continued:

83. Ibid, p.18

84. The figures were:

A.V. Grayson (Ind. Soc.)	3,648
Philip Bright (Lib)	3,495
Granville Wheeler (Con.)	3,227

"I am here to affirm what I feel to be the noblest possible, tangible, practicable ideal for the life we are now living. I am here to say furthermore that in doing that work, without wishing to arrogate to my movement a monopoly of Christianity, I say at least this, that instead of asking God to take us to His kingdom above we are endeavouring by every stroke of our daily labour, legislation and influence upon legislation, to fulfil the prayer of the Master and establish the kingdom of God upon this earth."⁸⁵

For Grayson, Socialism was a question of ideals, a way of living. To him, society and its institutions did not operate on truly human principles. The mere question of individual ownership was only part of the problem. It went deeper and was manifested in the way in which industry was managed. The goal was to create a truly human society in which the dignity of man was reflected in every social pursuit. To the municipalisers of tramways he urged them not to stop there. "We have socialised the ownership; it has still got the controlling individual management over it; when that is Socialised you will have a human institution."⁸⁶ It was essentially the same plea which was to be made by the Guild Socialists for the democratisation of the very structure of industry itself in addition (or apposition) to mere bureaucratic nationalisation.

Neither had Grayson much time for the Marxists. He had earlier crossed swords with the SDF in Manchester and he dismissed contemptuously what he described as "the exotics of Carl Marx" and sought instead the roots of the English Socialist tradition in the works of the English economists, quoting Adam Smith to the effect that labour was the sole producer of wealth. The writings he preferred to cite for the sources of his Socialism included instead the Fabians, Jesus's sayings and Blatchford. And in this he was truly typical of the

85. Victor Grayson MP v Mr. W. Joynson-Hicks. Debate in the Free Trade Hall Manchester 14th February 1908. Authorised Verbatim Report (Daily Dispatch) p.7. The debate was organised jointly by the North-West Manchester Conservative Association and the Manchester and Salford and Sale I.L.P.

86. Ibid, p.13

British Socialist Movement as a whole. Its was primarily a moral and ethical appeal - a religious appeal. Economic change was merely a means to an end. And that end was a new moral world, the Socialist Kingdom of God on earth.

(i) The Presbyterian and other Scottish M.P.s

Amongst M.P.s with a Scottish background¹ Presbyterianism formed the largest group, producing a hard-core group of 15² plus an even larger number of those whose origins had been in Scottish Presbyterianism but whose religious development had led them beyond its confines to other religious activity as far afield as the Ethical Movement (J.R. MacDonald), the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools (J.C. Welsh, W.C. Anderson, D. MacGregor Graham) or even Theosophy (Maj. D.G. Pole).³ There was also one sole Episcopalian, J.A. Lovatt-Fraser, a barrister and convert from Conservatism. In addition, included under other headings amongst Scottish M.P.s, were D.W. Adamson (Baptist), W. Graham and Sir R. Young (Congregationalist), E. Scrymgeour (Wesleyan), J.C. Westwood (Salvation Army) and several others whose denominational adherence is not clear, though their commitment to

1. The criteria adopted has been one of where the formative years were spent, childhood and early manhood; plus in exceptional cases, where the bulk of a man's working life has been spent if it can be shown that he participated actively in the religious life of his adopted Scottish home.
2. The figure of 13 in Table 2 above includes in addition 1 English Presbyterian, R.J. Wilson, M.P. Jarrow 1922-31, Session Clerk and Lay Preacher from age 19, b. 1865 Gateshead, a draper and former student for the ministry, active in the Brotherhood and Temperance Movements.

The 15 Scottish Presbyterians comprised 4 from the Evangelical Union: J.K. Hardie, his brothers George and David Hardie and R. Murray; 6 members of the United Free Church, the Revs. J. Barr and Campbell Stephen, Captain J.P. Hay and David Kirkwood, Kirk Elders, E. Rosslyn Mitchell, another activist and Lauchlan M. Weir a *douce* member, from a sober Calvinist background on Islay; 3 whose denomination is unknown; Robert Smillie the LLF pioneer and 2 active preachers; J.W. Muir and W.M.P. Martin; and 2 active members of the Church of Scotland, James Brown, over 50 years a Sunday School teacher, Kirk Elder and in 1924 and 1929-31 Lord High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland and Andrew Young for 40 years headmaster of a Church of Scotland School in the Edinburgh slum.

3. An account of these tendencies will be found later in the chapter.

Christianity is not in doubt (Robert Smillie, for example, and W. Wright, the latter a lay preacher of English origins who nevertheless took an active part preaching in Scottish Presbyterian churches in Rutherglen, his adopted home town). There were also 7 Scottish Roman Catholics, all of Irish parentage. Of a total of over 60 Scottish Labour MP's, at least 38 therefore had either strong denominational ties or a strong denominational background, a proportion not dissimilar to that for Labour MP's as a whole.⁴

But it was the Presbyterian element which formed the largest denominational group amongst Scottish Labour MP's, no doubt being chiefly responsible for the LLP's Scottish Divisional Conference's continued backing for Prohibition by substantial margins throughout the 1920's.⁵ Teetotalism was a powerful force amongst Scottish Labour, first seen in 1906 when Hardie proposed to the newly-elected L.R.C. representatives that they should pledge themselves to abstain from all alcohol within the precincts of Parliament, and one on which even those not otherwise noted for their nonconformist origins, such as the Clydesiders James Maxton and Tom Johnston, were equally adamant, both supporting Scrymgeour's 2 Prohibition Bills brought before Parliament in 1923 and 1931.⁶

On each occasion, it was the votes of Scottish Labour MP's which made up the bulk of the support for Prohibition (11 of 16 in 1923, 6 of 20 in Feb 1931), the remainder of votes coming largely from other

4. cf Table 2 p.503.

5. The Scottish Labour Party Conference had in 1888 carried a proposal for the total abolition of the liquor traffic, its successor the Scottish LLP. having also/so^{done} consistently since 1919. Hansard Commons (5th Series) 248 c.785 Rev. James Barr seconding second reading of Liquor Traffic Control Bill 13th February 1931.

6. Hansard Commons (5th Series) 162 c.2527-30.

Labour M.P.s with Wesleyan backgrounds.⁷ Indeed beyond Labour, Scrymgeour's Bills secured only one supporter in 1923, Lieut-Col. Sir W.J. Allen (Unionist Armagh) and three in 1931, Allen and two Liberals, Isaac Foot and Leif Jones (Camborne).

To the Scottish LLP, "the liquor traffic" was "an insidious factor in social degradation."⁸ The degree of fanaticism of the opposition of some of these Labour M.P.s to the sale of alcohol can be gauged from the speech seconding the Liquor Traffic Prohibition Bill on its Second Reading (13th February 1931) by the Rev. James Barr, M.P. for Motherwell and a minister of the United Free Church. To him, drink was the the one biggest single threat to a bright Socialist future; its prohibition the one means whereby the Socialist spirit and the ideals necessary for that new world could be assured:

"I say this, that, no matter how perfect be the social commonwealth or the social system that you put up, if you leave this dark river of death flowing through the land, it will corrupt the best social State that ever entered into the dreams of man. It will poison its communal life at its source; it will besmirch our noblest ideals; it will turn our rising sun into darkness and it will eclipse for us our new millennial dream. But, with the liquor traffic removed, we shall rear a generation ready to step in and possess the promised land - children of the new

7. The full list of Labour supporters of the 1923 Bill included from Scotland: E. Scrymgeour, G. Buchanan, G.D. Hardie, T. Henderson, T. Johnston, J. Maxton, J.W. Muir, R. Murray, Rev. Campbell Stephen, L.M. Weir, W. Wright; plus 3 Welsh M.P.'s R.T. Jones (Calvinist Methodist), R. Richards (Wesleyan) and D.R. Grenfell, and Dr. Alfred Salter (Quaker of Wesleyan parentage). In 1931 the list again included Scrymgeour and Maxton, plus the newcomer Rev. J. Barr, L. MacNeill Weir, Andrew MacLaren (R.C.) and Maj. D.G. Pole (of staunch Presbyterian parentage). In addition were again Dr. Salter, D.R. Grenfell and R. Richards, plus the London Wesleyan W. Carter, 2 further preachers of Wesleyan background J.H. Hudson and W.H. Ayles, Frank Smith (Salvation Army), H.T. Muggerridge (Croydon Brotherhood Church and Tolstoyan), the Londoners L.W. Matters and T.E. Groves and Elijah Sandham a former Lancashire working-class Tory. Hansard Commons (5th Series) 162 c.25 29-30, 248 c.841-2.
8. Quoted from 1923 resolution of Scottish Divisional LLP Conference by Barr in House of Commons speech Ibid, 248 c.786

day, 'with light of knowledge in their eyes', a loftier race, a virtuous population that will rise the while and stand guardian over our new social commonwealth, keeping it pure and unsullied and handing it down ennobled and enhanced to those who shall come after them."

In their outlook these Presbyterians very much retained the ideals and attitudes of traditional nonconformity, the same attitudes in fact which had characterised pre-war Liberalism in the Celtic fringes from which ^{Party} most support for the LLP had been drawn in the last years of the 19th century and later. It was a liberal evangelical position, much the same as that of Hardie, combining the same twin beliefs in social as well as individual salvation and regeneration, a viewpoint held by members of all the Presbyterian denominations, from Evangelical Union activists such as Hardie and R. Murray (both staunch temperance men) to United Free Church men such as Captain J.P. Hay (a former Christian missionary in Manchuria), the Rev. J. Barr and Lauchlan Weir, or James Brown of the Church of Scotland, again all temperance advocates, Brown even carrying his puritan principles to the point of giving up Sunday football as harmful to his soul.¹⁰

This is not to deny their Socialist commitment as demonstrated by the strong advocacy of the Capital Levy by Capt. Hay and W.H.P. Martin, a regular preacher or the prominent role of J.W. Muir, another lay preacher, in the Clyde Workers' Movement during the War, for which he spent 12 months in prison under D.O.R.A.¹¹ And there were many more such examples. The Rev. Campbell Stephen gave up his pastorate for the full-time pursuit of Socialist politics;¹² William Wright, a lay preacher, involved in the LLP in Yorkshire in the 1890's and for some years a Clarion vanner, whose Rutherglen campaign was marked by

9. Ibid, 248 c.786

10. A. Gammie, From Pit to Palace: The Life Story of the Right Hon. James Brown M.P. (1931) pp 62-3

11. S.V. Bracher: op. cit. pp 66, 127

12. Ibid, p.126

the number of ministers who spoke for him, had advocated nationalisation since his conversion to Socialism in the 1890 s;¹³ and Barr himself, was an activist in the Society of Socialist Christians and Socialist Christian League in the 1920 s and 1930 s.¹⁴ Nevertheless, for the bulk of these Scottish Labour MP s, issues such as temperance were at least as important as Socialism itself, and with the growth of Communism amongst some of the Scottish working-classes, it was amongst such men such as James Brown, or such other miners' MP s as D. MacGregor Graham, J.C. Welsh (both prominent Labour Church lecturers) or A.B. Clarke, that the leadership of the opposition to Communism within the Trades Unions and Labour Movement was to be found.¹⁵

The bulk of the Presbyterian contingent adopted the atonement-centred outlook of evangelical religion, but there were also those of a more liberal faith, such as Rosslyn Mitchell a man of a somewhat mystical temperament, who in his writings advocated free thought and a non-dogmatic religion of selflessness, humaneness (he opposed the birch and anti-German feeling during the War) and Socialism based on spiritual love of one's fellow men.¹⁶ Amongst Presbyterians he was an exception, others of his temperament moving outside of the denominations into the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools (as did J.C. Welsh and Jennie Lee) or into other areas of liberal religion (as attested by Major D.G. Pole's involvement in Theosophy).¹⁷ But

13. Ibid, pp 220-1, Labour Annual (1900) p.157

14. Socialist Christian May 1929 p.117, December 1935, p.94

15. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. I pp 54, 75, 133; J.C. Welsh Norman Dale MP (1929) an autobiographical novel, portrays the archetypal Scientific Socialist as a definite baddie "Peter Snike" pp 77, 98.

16. E. Rosslyn Mitchell: Impressions (1932) pp 56-8, 70, 124; Passing By (1935) pp 59, 66, 115, 254-6

17. J.C. Welsh op. cit; Jennie Lee: Tomorrow is a New Day (1939); This Great Journey: A Volume of Autobiography 1904-45 (1963); D.G. Pole: War Letters and Autobiography (1960) passim.

the composite picture of the average Presbyterian Labour MP is of a temperance advocate, trades union official (usually a miner) of many years' service, often in the ILP, and a lay preacher for whom the traditional emphasis on salvation implied social as well as individual change, in all of which respects the Scottish contingent paralleled the bulk of the English and Welsh nonconformist working-class Labour MP.s.

As in England, however, the ILP in Scotland contained a strong element of non-doctrinal, or even non-Christian religious idealism and humanism, often verging into pantheism, a position true of MacDonald and of the Glasiers in the post-war years. This point of view was well represented amongst MP.s by such people as J.C. Welsh, W.C. Anderson, J. Maxton and Jennie Lee, a child of the ILP brought up within one of the Socialist Sunday Schools where she learnt the "pantheism" which she noted was a strong part of her character. It was chiefly this outlook which, she confessed, caused her to react against the doctrines she heard expounded at the communist meetings she briefly attended in 1927 and found soulless. "I found nothing warming, sustaining in this diet of hate and mechanical Marxist cliches" she later wrote, and returned to the ILP fold within a matter of months.¹⁸ She preferred the gospel of love and brotherhood to that of hate and class struggle and on entering Parliament at a by-election in March 1929, chose as her sponsors 2 ILPers of much the same persuasion, long friends of her family, Bo Smillie and James Maxton whose emotional idealism and human warmth, as testified to by those who knew him in the movement, seems somewhat to belie more recent interpretations of him as a revolutionary materialist.¹⁹

18. Jennie Lee: Tomorrow is a New Day pp 58, 110.

19. K.B. Glasier: The Glen Book pp 62ff provides a useful antidote to a secularist view of the spirit of ILP gatherings and leadership in the mid-1920 s.

A useful impression of the intellectual influence on many a young I.L.P. convert in Scotland can be gained from the experience of W.C. Anderson (M.P. Sheffield Attercliffe 1915-18) who joined the I.L.P. in 1900 and was its chairman from 1910-13, dying in 1919 only shortly after losing his seat because of his anti-war views. In his article for the Labour Leader (25th July 1912) on "How I Became a Socialist" he traced his progress from a Radical nonconformist childhood on a Banffshire croft to his eventual conversion to the need for an independent labour party committed to Socialism, betraying a soul more concerned with poetry, nature and lone walks at sunset, puzzling out the destiny of man, than any commitment to economic formulae. In his youth he had considered becoming a minister, and had begun preaching but instead he became a freethinker whose remaining religious sympathies can be discerned in his regular lecturing for the Labour Churches in the years after the 1906 revival and in his choice of the Rev. R.J. Campbell to officiate at his marriage to Mary Macarthur in 1911. On his death Philip Snowden recalled their previous conversation once when, leaving together after an N.A.C. meeting they had talked at length about the question of immortality and the survival of individuality after death, such a preoccupation with the fundamental question of the meaning of life itself, being at the heart of much I.L.P. Socialism.²⁰

(ii) The Roman Catholics

Amongst Labour M.P.s one of the largest denominational groups with 22 members was the Roman Catholics. With one exception, Charles Mathew (M.P. for Whitechapel and St. George's from 1922 until his death in January 1923) who was a lawyer and an L.C.C. member active in the

20. Labour Leader 25th July 1912 p.476; 27th February 1919 p.2; 6th March 1919 p.2.

Catholic schools of his constituency,²¹ these Catholic Labour M.P.s were of Irish extraction, most of them growing up amidst considerable poverty in the industrial slums of Lancashire (especially Liverpool - J. Sexton, J. Kinley, D.G. Logan, T. Gavan-Duffy, J.J. Jones; Salford - J.M. Toole; Leigh - J.J. Tinker; and Manchester - W.T. Kelly) or the Clyde Valley (Glasgow - Pete Curran, A. MacLaren, J. McGovern; the Lanarkshire mining area - J.J. McShane, John Wheatley, J. Marley, J. Sullivan, H. Murnin). Of the remaining 5 M.P.s, O'Grady came from Irish Catholic parents in Bristol, J.P. Gardner came from Belfast to settle in Hammersmith. J. Scurr, another Londoner, came to Bethnal Green by way of Australia, M.J. Connolly was from Newcastle and Dr. Hyacinth B.W. Morgan was born in Grenada of very poor Irish parents, won a Grammar School scholarship and later served in the island's Civil Service before coming to England aged 19 in 1904.²² The origins of these men - 8 from Lancashire, 3 from Lanarkshire and 5 settling in London - reflects closely the chief concentrations of Irish Catholics in Britain.

As would be expected from their Irish parentage there were strong sympathies among this group with the Irish Home Rule Movement and the Land Agitation of Davitt's Irish Land League, several M.P.s coming to Socialism through their involvement in these organisations, most notably James Sexton the Liverpool dockers' leader. His father was a Fenian, in whose house arms were hidden, but the son preferred Parnell's policy of constitutional reform, becoming president of his local Irish Home Rule Association and being thus drawn into Radical and labour politics. It was through Davitt's Socialist ideas that

21. H. Gosling: Up and Down Stream (1927) pp 230-1. Gosling, a friend of Mathew took over as M.P. on his death.

22. Labour Who's Who (1924) and (1927), S.V. Bracher op. cit. Forward 15th November 1924 p.8 list of Catholic M.P.s returned at General Elections; Catholic Directory (1929) p.71 (list of Catholic M.P.s). In addition to these 22, Stephen Walsh M.P. 1906-29 (death) was born a Catholic of Irish parents in Liverpool, becoming orphaned and later joining the Church of England aged 21 under whose totals he is included Pearson's Weekly 29th March 1906 p.691

he first became involved in the new working-class movement, becoming one of the original 7 founder members of the Liverpool ILP branch and a delegate to the ILP's first Conference, at Bradford in 1893, by which time he was a convinced exponent of the Labour Theory of Value, and advocate of trades union militancy. As such, his autobiography makes no secret of his dislike of the nonconformist Right of the Labour Party.²³ Others whose first incursion into politics was with Irish Home Rule included T. Gavan Duffy in Liverpool, when aged 17; H.B.W. Morgan while he was a medical student at Glasgow University; J.P. Gardner, who was a keen supporter of Joseph Devlin; and D.G. Logan (MP Liverpool Scotland 1929-50) who took over the seat of the Irish Nationalist, T.P. O'Connor.²⁴

In contrast to nonconformist Labour MP's, only one Catholic MP, Andrew MacLaren (who supported Scrymgeour's second Prohibition Bill) appears to have any connection with temperance; the more normal reaction to the issue being one of hostility.²⁵ Equally, although several of these Catholic MP's held paid offices in the trades union movement, these were mostly in the unskilled "New Unions" such as the Dockers, of which J. Sexton was a leader in the 1889 Strike, or the Gasworkers and General Labourers and later Workers Unions, in which Peter Curran, Jack Jones and W.T. Kelly all played active roles; or if in the older unions, they were in the more militant areas where the ties with traditional Liberalism were weakest, as in the case of H. Murnin, J. Sullivan and J.J. Tinker of the Lanarkshire miners, an area which supplied much of the original

23. J. Sexton: Sir James Sexton, Agitator (1936) pp 30-2, 81-3 127-8, 142, 195-6, 272-4

24. S.V. Bracher op. cit. pp 37-8, C. Bunker op. cit. p.97.

25. See e.g. Jack Jones' comments on Scrymgeour quoted in Chapter 2, p.31. Joseph Toole's maiden speech in the Commons was also directed against the temperance movement, being in opposition to the Welsh Local Option Bill. O'Grady was another who opposed local option. S.V. Bracher op. cit. p.133

support for Hardie's Scottish Labour Party in 1888.²⁶ The Catholic MP's thus present a marked contrast both in attitudes and origins to the more traditional self-improved nonconformist trade unionist MP's, and, on the whole, they were from a lower social stratum.

Their Socialism consequently contrasted with that of most ILP converts from the mainly nonconformist labour aristocracy in its more practical and class-conscious (and less ethical) roots. Poverty was the lot of most of these Irish Catholics in childhood, and the values of temperance, frugality and self-help consequently had little appeal to them. More typical was the experience of Joseph Toole, set out in an autobiography appropriately styled Fighting Through Life (1935)²⁷. The eldest of 13 children of a Salford labourer whose family had somehow to survive on 19/- per week of which 6/- went on rent and death insurance alone (the latter was necessary enough as 6 of the family failed to survive childhood) his entire memories of early life and youth were ones of constant uncertainty and fear of unemployment (which happened regularly enough), of grinding poverty and the continued struggle to keep up with the bills. It was this experience rather than any religious or moral conviction which led him and his like to Socialism. "Heaven knows how the inhabitants of Trafford Street managed to live. Many died. I survived, but it

26. There is a notable dearth of old union activists, among the 22 Catholic Labour MP's, only 4 others having any such connections, M.H. Connolly in the Boilermaker's Union, T.G. Duffy 15 years General Secretary of the Cumberland Iron Ore Miners Association, J.J. Tinker a Lancashire and Cheshire Miners Federation Agent from 1913 (Lancashire and Cheshire being the only area to have affiliated to the LRC in 1906 producing the first Labour miners' MP, Stephen Walsh see n 22 above) and W.T. Melly one-time executive member of ASE before joining the Workers' Union.

27. Compare this or Jack Jones My Lively Life (1928) with such typical nonconformist titles as George Edwards: From Crow-Scaring to Westminster (1922) or G.N. Barnes: From Workshop to War Cabinet (1924) two of many stressing the "how I got on" theme - a title actually used by Pearson's Weekly in its profiles of the new (largely nonconformist) Labour MP's in 1906.

made me a Socialist, as it made many."²⁸

It is hardly coincidental that it was from such areas that the SDF drew much of its support, being strongest in Lancashire and the East End of London. Five Catholic Labour MP's began their political activities in the Socialist Movement through the S.D.F., Joe Toole (b.1887) in Salford in the early years of the century, Jack Jones (b.1874) and John Scurr (b.1876) in London in the 1890's and Peter Curran (b.1860) and James O'Grady (b.1866) from the foundation of the S.D.F. in Glasgow and Bristol respectively in the early 1880's. For them it was Marx's Labour Theory of Value and the harsh economic realities of working - class life rather than the Bible to which they looked for the foundation of their socialism.²⁹ A similar belligerence characterised the response of the majority to the First World War, seen by them as a necessary crusade against Prussian militarism, a line taken also by Hyndman and virtually all the SDF old guard. O'Grady in particular took a leading part in recruiting drives, being made a Captain in consideration of his services in 1918. During the War he chose to refer to himself as a "Labour Imperialist". But like others associated with the SDF he had a long militarist pedigree, being a staunch supporter of Hyndman's calls for a Citizen Army as one of the stages in the transformation of Britain into a Socialist State.³⁰ Joe Toole joined the RAE, and J.J. Tinker, another Lancashire Catholic, served in France, Gallipoli and Palestine, eventually winning his commission. J. Sexton and Jack Jones also backed the War, though

28. J. Toole: Fighting Through Life (1935) p.4. J.J. McShane was another who put his Socialism down to his impoverished background. Daily Herald 3rd July 1929, p.6.

29. cf. e.g. J. Toole op. cit. pp 80ff concerning his attempts to master Marx.

30. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II pp 286-8

the latter was also one of only two MP. s to vote against the Versailles Treaty.³¹ Indeed, amongst the Catholic MP. s with only 2 exceptions, there was a notable absence of pacifists and CO, s - the exceptions being John Scurr and A. MacLaren, both ILPers who seem to have opposed the war on moral grounds, though J. McGovern was also active in the militant Clydeside opposition to the War and J. Marley suffered a ducking in a pond by an angry crowd of patriots for his denunciation of Versailles.³²

At least 15 of the Catholic MP. s had held offices in the ILP, including the Clydesiders John Wheatley and J. McGovern (a close friend of Maxton who followed him into separation from the Labour Party); two/were members of the original NAC, Pete Curran and James Sexton; and for several others their ILP activities marked the start of their involvement in the Socialist Movement, including J.P. Gardner (b.1883) active as a young man in London and M.H. Connolly (b.1874) from Newcastle.³³ Sexton and Curran had also both been leading Labour Church lecturers in the 1890 s, Peter Curran founding the Barrow-in-Furness Labour Church in 1892, Andrew MacLaren being listed as a Labour Church lecturer in 1927.³⁴ In addition, T.G. Duffy, (b.1867) another early ILP activist based at Cleator Moor in Cumberland, had been a Clarion Vanner, J. Sexton wrote regularly for Clarion in its early days and O'Grady had founded a local Clarion cycling club in Bristol.³⁵ O'Grady was in fact unusual in that his activities spanned all the Socialist bodies, including membership of the Fabians,

31. J.M. Kenworthy: Soldiers, Statesmen - and Others (1933) pp 161-2 Kenworthy, then a Liberal, was the other one.

32. Dod's Parliamentary Companion (1929 2nd ed.) p.372, Obituaries from The Times 1961-70 pp. 508-9

33. The other ILPers were H.B.W. Morgan a London ILP. Branch Secretary, J. Marley (also London), W.T. Kelly, J.J. McShane, A. MacLaren, J. Sullivan, J. Scurr, T.G. Duffy and J. O'Grady.

34. D.F. Summers, op. cit. Appendix Vol. pp 329, 512, 517, 519

35. S.V. Bracher op. cit. pp 37-8, J. Sexton op. cit. p.188, J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II pp 286-8

in which he was unique amongst Catholic Labour MP's, the organisation being presumably too middle class and alien even to those others based in London. In fact the ILP Catholics represented on average a notably higher social stratum to those who joined the SDF, including a doctor (H.B.W. Morgan), a Headmaster and a teacher (J.J. McShane and J. Marley), a factory owner (J. Wheatley), a masterplumber turned insurance agent (J. McGovern), and an engineer turned artist (A. MacLaren) as well as several members of the labour aristocracy, producing for the ILP a clear majority of the upper working-class and above amongst Catholic MP/s.³⁶

But if there was a strong element of militants amongst poorer Catholic MP's, Catholicism also exercised a moderating influence on others. This was seen most notably in uniformly hostile attitudes of men such as John McGovern, Joe Toole and Jack Jones to Bolshevik Russia, chiefly no doubt because of its denial of such basic freedoms as the right to worship and its militantly atheist position.³⁷ Hugh Murnin was another whose views are best characterised as "moderate social catholicism". He was an active member of his church throughout his life, and his son became a Catholic priest.³⁸ Another example in

36. Others included M.H. Connolly a boilermaker; T.G. Duffy the Cumberland Iron Ore Miners' General Secretary; J. Sullivan, a miners' agent and John Scurr a Journalist, with O'Grady making 11 out of 16 ILPers, the others are unknown.

37. Times Obituaries 1961-70 pp 508-9, although earlier a militant and friend of Maxton, McGovern was a strong anti-Bolshevik, being nearly killed by Communists on one of his 2 visits to the Republic during the Spanish Civil War, which experience led him to become progressively more anti-Communist to the point of denouncing many Labour MP's as fellow-travellers or Communist sympathisers in 1959 in which year he retired from Parliament. In 1964 and 1966 he publicly supported the Conservative Party. J. Toole op. cit. pp 191-6. In his case it was his visit to Russia which disillusioned him. J.Jones op. cit. p.19 shows a particular hostility to Bolshevism too, referring to "Moscow babblings".

38. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II pp 268-9

whom moderation and Catholic activism seem linked was John Scurr, organiser of the 1925 Labour Party Pilgrimage to Rome to see the Pope, and one of those who resigned from the ILP in 1928 in protest at its left-wing opposition to MacDonald.³⁹ Although for the most part religion does not seem to have played the key role in the formation of Catholic MPs' Socialist outlooks that it did in the case of most nonconformists, it was nevertheless true that on questions relating to the Catholic Church, such as the 1930 Education Bill (effectively wrecked by Catholic and some Anglican Labour opposition) there was a remarkable degree of demonstrable loyalty, 12 of the 15 then Catholic Labour MPs voting together on the issue in direct opposition to their Party.⁴⁰

(iii) The Church of England MPs

Church of England membership amongst Labour MPs presents particular difficulties. There is no one source comparable to the Christian World for listing Anglican MPs and there were few opportunities for lay service in the Church of England equivalent to that of the elders, deacons and lay preachers of the nonconformist denominations. Therefore membership of the Church of England is less likely to be recorded than that of other churches and the figure given in Table 2 of 24 is almost certainly an under-estimation, including only those with definite Anglican backgrounds who did not desert the Church for other distinct categories. In addition to the 24 definite Anglicans, at least a further 8 came

39. Ibid. IV pp 153-6

40. J. Kinley, J.J. McShane, Dr. H.B.W. Morgan, D.G. Logan, W.T. Kelly, J. Toole, J.J. Tinker, J. Marley, J. Sullivan, J. Sexton and J.J. Jones supported J. Scurr's amendment. Those Catholic Labour MPs who did not were J.P. Gardner, Hugh Murnin and Andrew MaLaren. Hansard Commons (5th Series) 247 c.255-60

from Anglican families, though their subsequent religious development led them outside the confines of the Church of England: C.R. Buxton became a Quaker in 1917; Oliver Baldwin, Oswald Mosley, Lieut-Col. T.S.B. Williams and Arthur Ponsonby (all remained religious but passed beyond any obviously doctrinal allegiance, only Ponsonby remaining definitely a Christian; Norman Angell moved to freethought; Hugh Dalton took up a non-religious ethical outlook under the influence of George Moore; and John Strachey, was until 1922 a conventional Anglican, though he was never apparently in any way religious!)⁴¹ When referring to Anglican attitudes therefore, these 8 are not included and their views have been examined under other headings, except for the purpose of comparing denominational origins with early political allegiance.

Five were the sons of Anglican clergy: C.J.L. Malone, Lieut-Col. Dr. T.S.B. Williams, Hugh Dalton, Capt. E.N. Bennett and Sir. W. Jowitt.⁴² Dr. Williams had himself intended entering the ministry, but his father sent him to train as a doctor believing that he did not have a vocation. Others who had considered the ministry included G.D. Kelley (b.1848) and G.H. Hall (b.1881) both from working-class backgrounds, while E.N. Bennett had studied theology at Oxford, going on to become a Fellow of Hertford College and author of works on the early church.⁴³ A large number were active in leading lay positions within the church, including George Lansbury, Sir Henry Slessor (later a convert to Catholicism), Stafford Cripps, D. Williams (a choirmaster),

41. H. Thomas: John Strachey (1973) pp 4, 14 299. In addition there are other former Conservatives of known Christian views e.g. W.S. Royce whose denominational allegiances are not clear and are therefore not included here.

42. T.S.B. Williams (b.1877) was the son of the Archdeacon of Merioneth, Dalton (b.1887) the son of a Canon of St. George's Windsor, to which choir school he went, remembering also such events as a children's party at which Queen Victoria was present in 1891 when he was only 4. Hugh Dalton: Call Back Yesterday, Memoirs 1887-1931 (1953) pp 15-16; Daily Herald 2nd April 1924, p.4

43. J. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. II pp 146, 211 C.A. Clive p.153

J.H. Palin (a missionary in the 1890 s), R.F. Jackson and R.D. Denman (both members of diocesan bodies), J.M. Kenworthy (Chairman of the Labour Party Church of England Committee), Sir S.T. Rosbotham (a Lancashire businessman, churchwarden and lay reader) and Edith Picton-Turbervill (a onetime missionary to India and the first woman to preach from an Anglican pulpit after the Great War.) In addition, several had come up through the settlement movement, Attlee, Noel Buxton, Lansbury and Josiah Oldfield all having been associated with Toynbee Hall, whose post-war secretary J.J. Mallon was one of the unsuccessful Labour candidates. C.R. Buxton and R.D. Denman moved in similar circles before the War, Denman counting amongst his Oxford friends Tawney, Temple and Beveridge.⁴⁴ Noel Buxton had been an active member of the C.S.U., while his brother C.R. Buxton, together with Lansbury, Slessor and Thomas Summerbell, had all been active members of the Church Socialist League.⁴⁵ In the 1920 s and 1930 s Lansbury, Noel, C.R. and Lady Buxton and (1930 s) Sir Stafford Cripps were all prominent members of the Christian Socialist movement; and Lansbury, C.J.L. Malone and Oliver Baldwin (the latter surprisingly having joined the SDF in 1923 on his conversion to Socialism despite his definitely religious outlook) were all listed as Labour Church lecturers in the 1920 s.⁴⁶ The strong religious commitment of these Anglican Labour MP.s is therefore very noticeable and to a greater degree than with nonconformists it seems to have led them to a markedly religious Socialist position.

44. M. Anderson: Noel Buxton. A Life (1952) pp 29ff; C.R. Attlee: As It Happened (1954) pp 27ff; R.D. Denman: Political Sketches (1948) p.106; Daily Herald 12th July 1929 p.6; G. Lansbury: My Life (1928) pp 129-30.

45. Church Socialist League List of Members November 1909; H.H. Slessor: Judgement Deferred (1941) pp 87-9 V de Bunsen op. cit. p.93. C.R. Buxton had apparently accompanied his brother Noel on the celebrated occasion of his tour of London doss houses with their cousin Conrad Noel - see the latter's Autobiography p.41, M. Anderson op. cit. p.27.

46. Socialist Christian December 1935, p.94 list of candidates 1935 General Election; D.F. Summers Thesis Appendix Volume pp 510, 516 517.

The contrast with nonconformity is again noticeable in the relative absence of support for the temperance issue amongst these MP's. Only four had any such commitment, all of them amongst the older MP's in the sample. Two of these were of working-class origin, T.F. Richards (b.1863) and G.H. Hall (b.1881); the other two were E.N. Bennett (b.1868), a member of the Executive of the Temperance Legislation League and former MP for Woodstock 1906-10 and Miss Edith Picton-Turbervill (b.1872) whose temperance activities had coincided with the most staunchly Low Church, Evangelical phase of her religious development, when, Bible in hand, she went to preach the gospel of salvation to the railway navvies working in the Vale of Glamorgan in the late 1890's.⁴⁷ Indeed, there was a signal absence of trades unionists amongst the sample, accounting for only 9 MP's of the full 32, though 2 further, Lansbury (journalist) and R.F. Jackson (stone and marble mason) could be added to give a total of approximately 33% with working-class origins. Of these, 5 were elected in 1906, 1 in December 1910, 1 in 1918, 2 in 1922, 1 in 1923 and 1 in 1924. In 1929 all 11 newly-elected Labour MP's with Anglican backgrounds came from the comfortable middle-classes and above - a trend which had been noticeable since 1922.⁴⁸

47. E. Picton-Turbervill Life is Good (p.78). Noel Buxton (b.1869) a partner in the family Brewery from 1889 gave up the position in 1904 having collaborated in the writing of the chapter on "Temperance Reform" in The Heart of the Empire (1901). See M. Anderson: Noel Buxton. A Life (1952) pp 30ff.

48. The 9 trades unionists were G.D. Kelley (first General Secretary Amalgamated Soc. of Lithographic Printers 1879-1911 death); T. Summerbell, another printer who eventually founded his own business; G. Walsh, W. Johnson, R. Richardson and G.H. Hall miners; T.F. Richards from 1893 official of Boot and Shoe Operatives Society; D. Williams, Boilermaker; and J.H. Palin a railwayman. Although several of these were either definite Socialists J.H. Palin, T. Summerbell or members of the LLP; R. Richardson, D. Williams, G.H. Hall, it is amongst this group that traditional Liberal views were strongest, as seen in the attitudes of Hall and Richards to Temperance, or the hostility to Socialism of Kelley, Walsh and Johnson. Hall, although a friend of Hardie also owed more to Radicalism than Socialism and was apparently firmly on the right of the Labour Party in the 1930's.

The majority of Anglican Labour MP s therefore came from the comfortable classes, a reflection no doubt of that church's predominance amongst those sectors of society. This can be seen most noticeably in both their educational and political backgrounds. No less than 5 had been at Eton: Ponsonby, Dalton, Baldwin, Strachey and Oldfield; 2 at Harrow: Noel and Charles Buxton; 2 at Winchester: Stafford Cripps and Mosley; Attlee had been to Haileybury; Slesser to Oundle and Denman to Westminster, another public schoolboy was Hon. J.M. Kenworthy, son of a peer, Norman Angell had been privately educated in France where his family was then living, Miss Turberville had attended the Royal School, Bath, C.J.L. Malone had been to Dartmouth⁴⁹ and others with University education included Jowitt, Dr. T.S.B. Williams, and Sir E.N. Bennett. Lady Noel-Buxton came from a similar background, as apparently did Sir S.T. Rosbotham, producing a total of 21 Labour MP. s from public school backgrounds or their equivalent.

The political backgrounds of these 21 are interesting. Those from Liberal homes accounted for 10, including 8 who were former Liberal MP s. One, C.J.L. Malone was elected in 1918 as a coupon candidate but crossed the floor and joined the British Socialist Party; the others were Ponsonby, the Buxton brothers, Kenworthy, Denman, Bennett and Jowitt, the remaining 2 former Liberals being Slesser and Lady Noel-Buxton. Those originally from Conservative backgrounds accounted for 9, Attlee, Dalton, Mosley, Angell, Baldwin, Miss Picton-Turbervill, Rosbotham, Strachey and Cripps - although two of these, Dalton and Angell had both passed through a phase of Progressive Liberalism in the years up to the War.⁵⁰ The remaining 2, Oldfield and Williams have not been traced, though Oldfield's Eton background implies probably Conservatism and Williams's Welsh Anglicanism may

49. Two others of these public schoolboys, J.M. Kenworthy (Dartmouth) and Oswald Mosley (Sandhurst) had also passed through officer training. J.M. Kenworthy: op. cit. pp 9-10. C.A. Cline op. cit. p.167.

50. Hugh Dalton op. cit. pp 63ff; N. Angell After All (1951) pp 16ff.

well have implied a corresponding Liberalism. The size of the former Conservative sample is more noticeable amongst the Anglicans than amongst any other denomination, demonstrating the close links between the Church of England and Conservative political allegiance. Amongst the working-class Anglican ME's, a further 3, T. Summerbell, T.F. Richards and R.F. Jackson had begun life as Conservatives, though Summerbell had moved to Socialism via a Liberalism of the Gladstonian Home Rule type. George Lansbury's first political venture (b.1859) was as a member of the Fourth Party in the mock Parliament of the Whitechapel Christian Young Man's Association in the late 1870s, though he too passed through a phase of active Liberalism (from 1886-92) as a Ward Secretary of the Whitechapel Liberal Association and strong supporter of the leading New Liberal J.A. Murray MacDonald, a colleague of Ramsay MacDonald in the Rainbow Circle.⁵¹ Thus an abnormally high proportion of Anglican Labour MP.s had been former Conservatives, probably 10 out of 21 among the middle class representatives and 4 out of 11 of those with working-class origins, reflecting the higher proportion of Conservatives amongst Anglican churchgoers generally.

The religious views of these Anglicans largely reflected those trends in Anglicanism which promoted Christian Socialism and social christianity. In particular there is evidence of a move away from the evangelicism of their parents on the part of several of the sample. In the case of Norman Angell, this was because he could not accept many of the events described in the Bible as historical facts. He therefore rejected Christianity in its entirety for freethought under the influence of such authors as Ingersoll, Bradlaugh, Huxley and Spencer, though his religious nature was reflected in other favourite authors such as Whitman, Kingsley and Carlyle. Angell's reaction was typical of those whose rejection of Christianity was based on the

51. R. Postgate: Life of George Lansbury pp 31ff.

collapse of a literalistic belief in the Bible, now fatally undermined by the evidence of recent scientific discoveries and Biblical scholarship.⁵² Others who moved away from evangelicalism to a wider religious outlook included Oliver Baldwin (who used to lock himself in the toilet as a child to avoid going to church and at Eton refused to be confirmed) and Arthur Ponsonby (who proclaimed himself outside all sections of organised religion while admitting his own "most profound faith in the spiritual nature of man..." "I myself found religion when I left off going to church...")⁵³ Of those who remained within the Church of England, Noel Buxton at Cambridge moved from the evangelicalism of his mother to a Broad Church social christianity based on the ideas of Westcott, Gore and Farrar, hence his involvement in the C.S.U. in which Westcott and Gore were two leading figures.

Lansbury also early adopted a Broad Church position, alienated from evangelicalism by his mother's over-insistence on it; and Edith Picton-Turbervill came across Hinduism while in India as a missionary, and then felt the need to revise her earlier certainty "that salvation lay only in the acceptance of a certain theological belief in the Atonement." She started attending Quaker conferences and became a particular admirer of the Catholic Modernist and immanentist mystic, von Hugel.⁵⁴ Others, such as Attlee and Cripps, seem to have had wide social and religious sympathies from the start and a number of others demonstrated trends of religious thought similar to those familiar amongst religious Socialists of the 1880's and 1890 s, both within and outside the denominations.

Dalton, for example, came from a Broad Church background of a somewhat unorthodox nature, his father combining his own Tory Democracy

52. N. Angell op. cit. pp 8-11.

53. O. Baldwin: The Questing Beast (1932) pp 3, 36; A. Ponsonby in Prayer Book debate, 14th June 1928, Hansard (Commons) 218 cols. 1248-50.

54. E. Picton-Turbervill op. cit. pp 112, 135ff. M. Anderson op. cit. pp 25-7, 115.

with the view that "Heaven is not a place but a state of mind", a ready acceptance of the latest scientific discoveries and a friendship from undergraduate days with Edward Carpenter. His son at Eton retained a Christian ethic based on the teachings of Jesus, but gave up its metaphysics.⁵⁵ R.F. Jackson's special regard for the writings of Emerson reflects another liberal outlook, though in this case of a more immanentist nature, as does T.S.B. Williams' growing interest in Eastern religions in early manhood, demonstrating again how very different religious ideas could easily transcend denominational or other institutional divisions. C.R. Buxton's move to Quakerism for example entailed no alteration of his religious outlook,⁵⁶ which he originally derived from the piety of his uncle, Roden Noel (Conrad Noel's father).⁵⁷

Perhaps the clearest example of all these different trends is to be found in the developing outlook of George Lansbury, for a time chairman of the Church Socialist League and a close friend of Conrad Noel (whose religious ideas in many ways he mirrored) until his own death in 1940. As a young man from the East End, he lived through the Socialist agitations of the 1880s and attended Henry George's meetings and the debates which Hyndman held first with George, and then with Bradlaugh.⁵⁸ He read widely in all the usual Socialist literature of the period, from Progress and Poverty to England for All,

55. H. Dalton op. cit. pp 21-2, 54-8

56. See above Chapter 6, pp 539-41.

57. V de Bunsen op. cit. p.13.

58. He later recalled his support for Bradlaugh in his fight to be allowed to take his seat in the Commons, remembering on the occasion of Bradlaugh's second expulsion from the Commons how "we were all struggling outside the railings of Palace Yard, with Annie Besant frantically beseeching everybody to behave himself." G. Lansbury in Bradlaugh and Today (1933) p.94, speaking at the dinner to mark the Centenary of Charles Bradlaugh's birth.

News from Nowhere, Looking Backwards and even Capital, though as with many others he later wrote "The books dealing with political economy never made much impression on me. I suppose it is necessary that some people should be steeped in that kind of thing. I am only an ordinary person and... I am quite certain that those of us who possess the very poorest intellect, if we will only use it on the things we can see and understand around us, will realise the truth that Socialism stands for."⁵⁹ By 1889 he had become a Socialist and disillusioned with Liberalism as the vehicle for social change, after helping J.A. Murray MacDonald in his election campaign in 1892, Lansbury and a group of working class supporters went off to form the Bow and Bromley branch of the SDF.⁶⁰

As he later wrote, he was not a pure Social Democrat in his thinking in these years, during which, as his election addresses as an SDF candidate in Walworth in the byelection of 1894 and the 1895 General Election show, his Socialism retained a powerful ethical tinge.⁶¹ His period in the SDF coincided with a loss of religious faith, but instead of turning to economic materialism he joined the Ethical Movement, sending his children to the local Ethical Sunday School where, as his son Edgar recalled, "the disciples of Stanton Coit" tried "to imbue us with an ethical code compiled from the Koran, the Bible, the writings of the great Victorians, and the sacred books of the Chinese."⁶² By 1900 he was back in the Church of England, forsaking the SDF for the more congenial ILP, soon afterwards.⁶³

Lansbury's Christian Socialism in fact owed much to the same

59. Labour Leader 17th May 1912 pp 315-6. G. Lansbury "How I Became a Socialist".

60. R. Postgate op. cit. pp 38ff.

61. Ibid. p.48; Labour Leader 17th May 1912, pp 315-6 art cit. However in ed. G. Hall: The Religious Doubts of Democracy (1904) p.9 Lansbury did admit that there had been a time when he had disputed with Coit the need for a moral basis to the Labour movement.

62. E. Lansbury: George Lansbury: My Father (1934) p.119.

63. R. Postgate op. cit. pp 56ff.

roots which inspired Ethicism and, despite his Anglo-Catholicism, he retained a very wide outlook, as attested by his liking for such authors as Emerson and Carlyle, George Tyrrel (another strongly immanentist Catholic Modernist who had been defrocked for his views), Tolstoy and Edward Carpenter, all of whom he cited in his Socialist writings.⁶⁴

As he wrote in 1917, his chief hope was that "Some day there will be a great revival, when all the religious leaders of the world will come together and proclaim the unity of all life, of all religions that have a message of brotherhood and goodwill..."⁶⁵ It was this same sense of brotherhood which had led him to join the Theosophical Society with its message of the brotherhood of man in 1914 and it is seen too in his rejection of dogma and support of Tolstoy's dictum that "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you."⁶⁶ As he wrote in These Things Shall Be (1920), it was a change of heart rather than mere economic reformation which alone would ensure the success of the Socialist ideal. "We sweat and toil, intrigue and scheme for the wealth which, like the mirage of the desert, promises mankind refreshment and peace, and at the end realise it is only a phantom we have been pursuing. What we all need to understand is that God is in each one of us, that we are the prophets, priests and kings. The poorest, the richest, are each but one tiny part of that tremendous "Immanence" we call God, and our salvation must come not from externals but from ourselves."⁶⁷ Accordingly it remained his belief that "given the chance, the mass of people always respond to the best that is put before them."⁶⁸ Mankind, for Lansbury, was essentially good, the product of the indwelling of God's spirit in the individual human

64. Labour Leader 17th May 1912, p.316; George Lansbury My England (1934) pp 18-19, 32; My Life p.268.

65. G. Lansbury: Your Part in Poverty (1917) p.104.

66. G. Lansbury My Life, p.5, These Things Shall Be (1920) p.23, My England, pp 18-19.

67. G. Lansbury These Things Shall Be pp 9-10, 23.

68. G. Lansbury: Your Part in Poverty p.124

being and it was on this fact that he based his Socialist optimism.

His own brand of Socialism was of a somewhat militant kind, with a strong preference, born of his experience of the working of bureaucracy in the Labour Exchanges and Insurance Acts of the 1906 Liberal Government, for Direct Action and worker control of industry rather than rule by officials. Like his friends in the Church Socialist League, he backed up this view with a revolutionary interpretation of Jesus' teachings, as is seen in his 1925 ILP pamphlet Jesus and Labour. In it he argued that it was "the class war... which sent the Founder of our faith to the Cross". It was "the jeering crowd of rich men and their supporters" who shouted for his blood, not the common people who had "heard him gladly." The churches had long ago give up teaching "the revolutionary truths He came to teach. He was crucified not because He taught men about life after death. This would not have hurt either Scribes or Pharisees, Publican or Sinner; in fact the rich and the powerful then and now welcome such teaching, and will pay huge sums for its propaganda in order to keep the people quiet and contented with their man-made lot. It was the social gospel of Jesus which brought about His death."⁶⁹

(iv) Outside the Churches - the Ethical, Religious and Agnostic Humanitarian Impulse

In addition to those who belonged to traditional denominations there were others among Labour MP. s who, for various reasons, had moved outside the usual framework of the churches but whose political views, none the less, can be shown to have been clearly shaped by their religious and ethical outlooks. Among these can be distinguished 4 distinct groupings. Firstly there were those who professed themselves Christians but stood outside any particular church. Then there were

69. G. Lansbury: Jesus and Labour (1925) pp 4, 5, 8.

those who were active in the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools which continued to flourish into the 1920s and others who were Theosophists. In many cases these were men and women of definite religious convictions, somewhat wider than what would usually be recognised as Christianity. Thirdly there were members of the Ethical Societies, owing to their particular congregation an allegiance analogous to that of a denominational churchgoer to his local place of worship. Finally there was a small number who regarded themselves as agnostic humanists, but who were distinct from militant atheists.

In their essential outlook members of these different groupings held often similar ethical views, and their Socialism was largely of that familiar evolutionary ethical type found within the denominations, especially amongst Unitarians, Quakers and followers of the New Theology. The Theosophical Society and Labour Churches present a further difficulty in that membership was in neither case exclusive as was the case with normal denominations. It was perfectly possible to be a Theosophist or a Labour Church lecturer and yet remain loyal to one's own denomination. A typical example of this is George Lansbury, who joined the Theosophical Society in 1914 and was also a regular speaker at Labour Church gatherings from the same date.⁷⁰ His views as well as his activities spanned the whole spectrum of these organisations. For the purpose of Table 2, therefore, only those MP's for whom Theosophy, the Labour Churches or Socialist Sunday Schools formed the sole or main sphere of their activities, and who have not been already included under another denominational heading, are included under these headings. Others referred to in the text, whose wide ranging interests seem best classified under the general heading of Freethought (ranging from

70. Anon: An Admirer of Lenin, Mr. George Lansbury J.P. M.P., Chairman of the Labour Party in 1928 (1929); D.F. Summers Thesis Appendix Vol. p.516.

Humanists, Ethicalists, Positivists and religious-inclined agnostics through to pantheists and mystics) are included in that general category in Table 2. Those with definite atheist or non-religious outlooks come under that heading and will be dealt with last.

Of the 4 MP's classified in Table 2 as being Christians outside of any denominational allegiance, Arthur Ponsonby has already been referred to as a former Anglican. His disillusionment with denominational Christianity seems to have come about as a result of the War, provoking his pamphlet A Conflict of Opinion (1919) which was "a discussion on the failure of the Church". Of a similar persuasion was Alderman William Leach, a Bradford worsted manufacturer, described by Bracher as disillusioned with established religion as a result of the War.⁷¹

The more usual reason amongst working-class Socialists and trades unionists for their estrangement from the churches was, as in the case of John Robertson - a miner and MP for Bothwell Lanarks, a noted evangelist and temperance man - a feeling that the churches had failed the working classes in their struggle for better social conditions.⁷² The phenomenon of hostile middle-class church "worthies" and ministers ostracising Socialist and Labour activists amongst their congregations and opposing them politically has already been referred to, as in the cases of the Catholic SDF Member Joe Toole in Salford and Margaret Bondfield (because of her trades union involvement) at the King's Weigh Chapel, London.⁷³ The exodus of thousands of working-class activists into the Labour Churches of the North in the 1890s, as we have noted, had a similar motivation, the founding of Bradford Labour Church resulting initially from the nonconformist ministers' opposition to Ben Tillett's candidature in the 1892 Election.⁷⁴

71. S.V. Bracher op. cit. p.104.

72. Christian World, 7th August 1919, p.3.

73. See above p.122 n.273 for J.Toole, and cf M.Bondfield: A Life's Work (1948) p.29.

74. See above Ch.I esp p. 95.

Undoubtedly it was the reason behind F.W. Jowett's Presidency of that particular Labour Church, and his pointed reply to W.T. Stead's survey of Labour MP's in 1906, that though a convinced Christian and former active Congregationalist, he was now "unattached to any sect."⁷⁵

Experiences of a like nature led to the involvement of a considerable number of future Labour MP's in the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools,⁷⁶ including a hard core of 8 (of which Jowett was one) for whom this provided the centre of their religious activities over many years, extending from the 1890s to the 1920s, after which these aspects of the Labour movement petered out. The finest description of this process is to be found in the autobiographical novel of the Lanarkshire miner MP, J.C. Welsh: Norman Dale MP, who, from the time he was forced as a young man to give up his Sunday School work at the kirk because of the hostility of the pit manager (a prominent member of the congregation) to his union activities, apparently suffered the continual slanders of the churchgoing community about his lack of Christian views, even during his campaign for election to Parliament. The fact was that his own beliefs, as expressed at the Socialist Sunday School which he founded and ran on self-professed "Christian lines", were in life "as love, as beauty, as happiness, as service. That's my creed, and that's what I conceive as Socialism."⁷⁷ Such views, and especially a conviction of the sanctity of human life, led the fictional Dale to opposition to the War and imprisonment as a conscientious objector, a not unusual situation in which leading figures in the ILP and Socialist Sunday School movements found themselves. Jennie Lee, the one Labour MP to have actually been brought up within an ILP - Socialist

76. D.F. Summers Thesis lists a further 33 Labour MP's as regular Labour Church lecturers at some time during these years.

77. J.C. Welsh: op. cit. pp 44, 95-6.

75. Review of Reviews art. cit. April 1906 p.575.

Sunday School environment⁷⁸ recalled the Socialist precept she had been taught during the War "that those who love their own country" need not "hate or despise other nations or wish for war, which is a remnant of barbarism."⁷⁹

In Jennie Lee's case, the teaching of the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools was clearly responsible for the "pantheism" of her later outlook and her fierce opposition to Marxist incitements to class hate.⁸⁰ Indeed, in response to Tory misrepresentations, Ben Turner, another activist in both the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools, who was a textile worker and MP for Batley and Morley, read out the declaration and precepts of the Socialist Sunday Schools on the floor of the House, thereby ensuring their appearance in Hansard in order to disprove accusations of their links with Communist Sunday Schools whose "precepts... no sane man could fully support."⁸¹

Both Jennie Lee and Ben Turner came from Freethought backgrounds, the latter's father having taken him to hear all the leading figures in freethought at the Huddersfield Secular Sunday School, of which, in due course, his son became secretary aged 18.⁸² For Jennie Lee, God had to be given up in childhood as (in her father's eyes) an exploded myth, an anthropomorphic delusion. By the age of 15 she had replaced it with her own pantheism, much influenced by Wordsworth, while Ben Turner had moved to a Unitarian position, coupled with an

78. She came from a strongly freethought-LLP parentage and was sent to a Socialist Sunday School as a child. It was run by the wife of W.M. Watson, later MP for Dunfermline Burgh (1922-31) see above pp 107-8.

79. Jennie Lee: This Great Journey: A Volume of Autobiography 1904-45 (1963) p.42.

80. Jennie Lee: Tomorrow is a New Day (1939) pp 58, 110.

81. Ben Turner: About Myself 1863-1930 (1930) p.238.

82. Ibid: pp 47-8.

adherence to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount and a belief in the 'Simple Life' principles of Carpenter and Kropotkin, whom he had also heard speak.⁸³ The other Labour MP's in this category display much the same influences. F.W. Jowett was a devotee of R.J. Campbell's New Theology; W.C. Anderson, active in the Labour Churches in the first decade of this century, moved from early nonconformity to his own pantheistic freethought; H.T. Muggeridge had been an early Tolstoyan, active in the Croydon Brotherhood Church in J.C. Kenworthy's day and was later actively involved in the Society of Socialist Christians, addressing many of their meetings in the 1920's. The two MP's with the longest records of service in Socialist Sunday Schools were Wilfred Whiteley and John Brotherton, both of whom had been active nonconformists in their youth. Whiteley was a Huddersfield shop assistant, who had founded Lockwood Socialist Sunday School in 1907 and continued as its President until 1925. Brotherton was an engineer who had given up his work as a Wesleyan Sunday School Superintendent and Class Leader for the Labour Church on his conversion to Socialism. His service, from helping in the foundation of the Leeds Labour Church and Socialist Sunday School, had stretched over a similar period and included office as secretary, chairman and committee member.⁸⁴

The religious opinions of these Socialist Sunday School and Labour Church activists spanned a broad but coherent spectrum of thought from Freethought to Unitarianism. Its more marked features included an advocacy of Christ's ethics - especially those of the Sermon on the Mount - coupled with an enthusiasm for modern scientific discoveries and very often also a mystical view of creation, as in Jennie Lee's pantheism and the not dissimilar outlook engendered by the New Theology and Unitarian positions of F.W. Jowett and

83. Ibid. pp 249-51, 319

84. S.V. Bracher: op. cit. p.17, Daily Herald, 29th July 1929, p.8.

Ben Turner respectively, all of which avoided the clash of science and religion inherent in the evangelical Christianity of the mid-19th Century. It was an outlook which, according to the strength or weakness of the mystical element, could shade imperceptibly from recognisable religion on the one hand, to agnosticism on the other, and afforded a relative ease of movement from one to the other, such movement on the part of individuals being a common phenomenon. Blatchford and J.B. Glasier moved from agnosticism to a spiritual view of the universe; A.F. Brockway and Hugh Dalton moved in the opposite direction from a Unitarian/Broad Church position to ethical humanism.

Such variations make it difficult in the case of those without organisational loyalties to narrow further the categories under which they should be included, without introducing unreal and artificial distinctions which would scarcely have been accepted at the time. Nevertheless, within the broad category of freethought, a number of different influences and tendencies can be traced in the case of those 15 MP's whose views and activities seem most to merit their inclusion under this heading, the chief distinction being between those whose freethought was primarily of a religious nature and those for whom it was primarily ethical or secularist.

Of the 15, broadly speaking, 4 fall into the former category, 11 into the latter.⁸⁵ There is a striking homogeneity of backgrounds

85. Under religious freethought should be included: O.R. Baldwin, W.J. Brown, O.E. Mosley and T.S.B. Williams; Primarily secular freethinkers included: R.N. Angell, A. Bevan, E.H.J.N. Dalton, Mrs. M.A. Hamilton, F. Longden, M.J. MacDonald, J. Maxton, E.D. Morel, S. Saklatvala, E. Thirtle, S. Webb. Saklatvala Labour MP Battersea North 1922-3, Communist MP 1924-9 presents several difficulties. However his wealthy Indian background and business activities, as a Labour Church lecturer and specified recreations of "Chess and Silence" seem sufficient to merit his inclusion here rather than in the definite non-religious/Marxist category.

amongst these MP's as a whole. Of the 15, only 2 can be regarded as coming from genuinely working-class backgrounds - Bevan (a miner) and Longden (an ironmoulder turned WEA lecturer). Thurtle and Brown (clerks), Maxton (a schoolteacher), E.D. Morel (former clerk turned journalist) and Webb (a civil servant) belonged to that white-collar group on the boundary of the lower middle class, while the remaining 8 all came from comfortable backgrounds and had been privately educated.⁸⁶ In the main, then, the MP's in this category were intellectuals, largely middle-class in their upbringing and with only limited trades union links, though 5 (Bevan, Longden, Thurtle, Brown and Maxton) did have strong grass roots links with the Labour Movement.

W.J. Brown is especially interesting since his intellectual development is well illustrative of the impact of science on religious belief at the popular level through the medium of R.P.A. reprints, which were regarded as a crucial source of influence in their own development by both Norman Angell and Ernest Thurtle (and, to a lesser extent, by E.D. Morel).⁸⁷ Angell, from an Anglican family had, as a boy, been an unquestioning Christian, but while still at school he had come to regard many Christian dogmas as legendary, and had taken to reading such writers as Voltaire, Paine, Mill, Huxley, Spencer, Bradlaugh, J.M. Robertson and Ingersoll.⁸⁸ Aged 17, he lost his job as editor of an Ipswich local paper because of his rationalist attacks on General Booth and an article on "The

86. Baldwin and Dalton at Eton, Morley at Winchester, MacDonald at Bedales, Saklatvala at St. Xavier's School and College in Bombay, Angell at a French Lycee and Geneva University, Williams privately and at Edinburgh University and Mrs. Hamilton at Newnham College Cambridge.

87. R.N. Angell: After All (1951) pp 4,8; E. Thurtle: Time's Winged Chariot (1945) pp 12ff; F.S. Cocks: E.D. Morel, the man and his work (1920) p.265

88. R.N. Angell op. cit. p.8. He also read Whitman, Kingsley, Carlyle and Morris.

Mistakes of Moses", freely plagiarised from Ingersoll with whom he later spent his first evening in the U.S.A. when he emigrated there later that year.⁸⁹ Thurtle was also a Christian as a boy, but gave up his religious views at the age of 17 also after reading the 6d Reprints, and especially the works of Huxley. He found it impossible to continue to believe in life after death, and in his autobiography (1945) he stated that this was still his view.⁹⁰ However, he retained a strongly ethical outlook, noting the early influence on him of Thoreau's Walden and its "insistence upon the need for mental and spiritual integrity" and its advocacy of the simple life and he retained throughout his life a belief in the perpetual nature of society's evolution, refusing to see Socialism as any fixed state, but rather an ideal to be worked towards.⁹¹ Both these men in fact bear strong traces of the influence of the New England tradition in their thought.

W.J. Brown (b.1894) wrote his autobiography So Far... in 1943 in which he brings out very clearly the fluid nature of the line separating agnosticism and religious thought in the early years of the century. His own development began as an Anglican choirboy who had a genuinely religious experience (in his own eyes) at the age of 16 and resolved to live according to Jesus's ethics. He joined the Methodist Church in Battersea, and even seriously considered the ministry, but rejected it because he realised that his by-now equally firm Socialism would only lead to conflict with the more middle-class elements in his congregation. For him, an active advocacy of Socialism was an inevitable outcome both of the social conditions all around him and of his Christian faith. "I couldn't pray daily that God's Kingdom should come on earth as it was in Heaven without wanting to do something about it. The effective choice was between Liberalism and Socialism. I chose Socialism, I

89. Ibid. pp 1-4.

90. E. Thurtle: op. cit. p.14

91. Ibid. p.12

judge, because youth is impatient of half-measures and scornful of what it regards as timid compromise."⁹²

He was, by nature a "reformer", especially influenced by Blatchford's works and MacDonald's Socialism and Society which he read at this time. He joined the ILP, becoming quickly in turn a branch secretary and a regular speaker. Much of his remaining spare time was taken up in reading. He read popular science, and recalled the "terrific" impact of Darwin, Huxley and Haeckel. He also noted the attacks on organised Christianity of Blatchford and continental Socialists, and the use to which the churches had been put in the past in providing an opiate for the people. Finally he read widely in comparative religion, particularly Frazer's Golden Bough, which showed him that all the main features of the story of Jesus, from the Virgin Birth to his Resurrection, could be traced in the mythology of other world religions and related to the cycle of Nature. He was by now at the age of 20 an Agnostic, having had his Christian faith destroyed, but he retained his "sense of an invisible and intangible world beyond the visible and tangible" and regarded himself still as "at heart a mystic".⁹³

In fact, as he later wrote, "far from being obliged to the scientists for destroying" his earlier view of life, he "hated them for it" and retained with his vaguely religious sense an allegiance to the spiritual values he felt Jesus had stood for as "they rang true to my soul". However, he continued his reading and after a period of questioning, came to realise that science did not necessarily lead to a mechanistic view of the universe, that it was, in fact, perfectly compatible with much of the body of religious experience of mankind throughout the centuries. He therefore began reading in the other major world religions and became interested during

92. W.J. Brown: So Far... (1943) pp 48-9, 59.

93. Ibid. pp 62-5.

the 1920 s in psychical research, even to the extent of attending séances, where on occasion he met another parliamentary colleague included in his group, Oliver Baldwin, who was apparently a regular devotee of spiritualism at this time.⁹⁴

His political views were greatly sharpened by the conflict between Science and his personal religious values. For him the struggle between Capitalism and Socialism mirrored his own struggle for his religious and moral values against the amoral mechanism of what he saw as the scientists' universe. His own Socialist outlook, he saw, "was a freer, nobler, better view" of life "than that to be derived from the 'scientific' conception of man and the universe." For him "the struggle to supersede Capitalism was bound up in the repudiation of the 'scientific' view of life, that the basis of the struggle against Capitalism must be a moral basis. Socialism was to me not merely economically more efficient than, but morally superior to, Capitalism."⁹⁵ Though others might not have followed him all the way in his religious pilgrimage, few Labour MP. s would have disagreed with his conclusions here as to the moral basis of Socialism.

The remaining 3 religious freethinkers came from Anglican backgrounds, the tolerance of its Broad Church tradition no doubt allowing a more ready acceptance of the validity of the experience of other religions than was possible in the more literal Biblical forms of Christianity. Thus T.S.B. Williams developed an interest in Eastern mysticism, as did Oliver Baldwin, the title of whose own autobiography The Questing Beast (1932) indicates his preoccupation with finding a faith to satisfy himself of the purpose of his own existence, while Mosley, while imprisoned during the Second World War, developed strongly pantheistic traits.⁹⁶ For Baldwin the experiences of an Armenian prison during the revolution gave him the

94. Ibid. pp 123-6, 167.

95. Ibid. p.120.

96. See above pp575-6and notes.

faith which he professed, in a "Power of Infinite Grace and Infinite Beauty" inspiring men's lives. To him, too, Christ was the finest expression of this spirit, but he rejected such Christian dogmas as the Trinity and Bodily Resurrection. It was a Socialism based on such beliefs, together with a devotion to Tao and some Buddhism, which he took to the many chapels and Labour Churches at which he preached as a Labour propagandist in the mid-1920s.⁹⁷

The relative ease of transference from agnostic humanism to such a religious outlook can be seen too in the spiritual development of Mrs. M.A. Hamilton. Though she came from a Quaker family, she left Cambridge in 1914 "like most of my contemporaries, nominally an agnostic" with a "Humanist" belief in man's moral as well as social evolution which the apparent victory of democracy after the First World War did nothing to shake. Such remained the optimistic basis of her Socialism throughout the 1920s, but the coming of Nazism shook her belief in perpetual human progress and in man's socially-created values, which might as easily be false as true. Seeking their origin on a more fundamental level of human experience, therefore, she became convinced "that beauty, goodness, kindness, truth are not the casual creations of man's mind at a given stage of his evolutionary progress, but permanent values which reflect in man the spirit of God." However, the fact that ideals which she had previously regarded as socially-created, she now saw in religious terms clearly made no difference to her belief in the ideals themselves. They did not change, only her view as to their origin. As far as can be judged from her autobiography, her Socialism, based throughout on "the fact of human interdependence", retained its same essential character. For Mrs. Hamilton "the purpose of social organisation" remained "to help all to achieve the best that in them is: to realise the good

97. O.R. Baldwin: The Questing Beast (1932) pp 128ff, 220-4.

life". Her discovery of religion may have put her Socialist faith on a firmer basis, but it scarcely seems to have significantly altered it.⁹⁸

The other MR's whose views fall into the category of agnostic freethought had a similar ethical/humanist outlook. The youngest, Malcolm MacDonald, was a product of them.⁹⁹ Norman Angell's objections to the War and his Socialism were both primarily ethical in nature, as were the views of E.D. Morel and Ernest Thurtle.¹⁰⁰ According to both Jennie Lee and Mrs. Glasier, Jimmie Maxton's Socialism was of a similar nature, as was that of another prominent ILP rebel of the 1930's, Aneurin Bevan.¹⁰¹ Sidney Webb's Positivism, on which he based his gradualist Socialist philosophy, although belonging to an earlier generation, bore the same ethical traits, which, as the basis for the implicit assumptions of the Fabian Tracts as to the nature of social reform, had helped to shape the views of a whole generation of Socialists.¹⁰² Fred Longden, whose left wing stance is obvious in the title of his autobiography The Proletarian Heritage (1951) regarded himself as a Humanist and follower of T.H. Green's belief in the "disinterested performance of self-imposed duties." He too had moved from the Protestantism of his youth and this formed the basis of his political outlook.¹⁰³

98. M.A. Hamilton: Remembering My Good Friends (1944) pp 307-11 provides her own assessment of her changing religious outlook.

99. Ramsey MacDonald's choice of Bedales for his 2 sons is significant. As a school it was from the first linked with the ideals of the ENL, and its headmaster, J.H. Bedley, was himself an ethical Socialist of very similar "unitarian" religious views to those of MacDonald and other former members of the ENL.

100. See above Ch.5, pp 449 ff and pp 472, 588-9.

101. Jennie Lee: Tomorrow is a New Day (1939), p.124, K.B.Glasier: op. cit. pp 60 ff and 111-2.

102. See above pp 435-8.

103. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville: Op. cit. II p.241.

Hugh Dalton, by coincidence born in the same year as Longden (1887) but from a very different background, had given up his Anglicanism at Eton, though he retained Christ's ethics, and at King's Cambridge, under the influence of George Moore's Principia Ethica and Pigou's Wealth and Welfare, he formulated "my own approach from ethics, through politics, to economics". Dalton, in his early years, was in fact greatly affected by the romanticism of youth, moving in the King's circle of Rupert Brooke (his best friend) from whom he took his own early brand of Socialism, even reading from Brooke's poems at election meetings (January 1910), and himself entering politics as a result of his experiences of the First World War which had cost the lives of most of his best friends (including Brooke). This combination of romantic idealism, and a dedication to ensure a better future for humanity after the Great War, inspired many of the younger Labour M.P.s elected in the 1920s and, as in Dalton's case, led most of them into opposition to the older Labour leadership whom Dalton characterised as having "missed most of the points" of the new economic politics being advocated by Keynes and Lloyd George on the one hand and J.A. Hobson and the I.L.P. on the other and whom he characterised as "timid, nerveless old men."¹⁰⁴

It is significant that of the 15 freethinking M.P.s, 10 were second generation recruits to Socialism, being born after 1884, the year in which the S.D.F. might be said to have taken on its Socialist character. Of these, 7 found themselves amongst the left-wing critics of Labour Party policy in the late 1920s (Maxton, b.1885; Dalton and Longden, b.1887; W.J. Brown, b.1894; Mosley, b.1896; Bevan, b.1897; and Oliver Baldwin, b.1899).¹⁰⁵ Only three can be counted among the mainstream of Labour loyalists, Ernest Thurtle (b.1884), Molly Hamilton (b.1884) and Malcolm MacDonald

104. H. Dalton: op. cit. pp 39-47, 58, 63 and 100-1.

105. Plus, from an earlier generation, Angell (b.1872) and Saklatvala (b.1874).

(b.1901), the latter hardly surprisingly given his devotion to his father, which was to wreck his own political prospects and Molly Hamilton having also been a devoted supporter of MacDonald since her U.D.C. days.¹⁰⁶

There is thus an obvious correlation between the relative youth of these freethinking M.P.s, their freethought, which was a marked feature of their generation and their Socialist radicalism in the 1920s. The new I.L.P. leadership which developed in the 1920s was itself very much a product of these same factors of youth, idealism and freethinking, in marked contrast both to the more staid position of MacDonald, Snowden and the older I.L.P. leaders and to the average trades unionist M.P.'s nonconformist moralism. Not that these younger M.P.s advocated the traditional Marxist alternative. Brown spoke for many of them in his criticism of the Russian experiment as owing its more unacceptable features to a too "scientific" outlook and lack of a moral basis and its consequent disregard for individual human life.¹⁰⁷ It is this attitude which comes out also in the views of those involved in the Socialist Sunday Schools at their peak in the 1920s. J.C. Welsh's caricature in his novel Norman Dale M.P., of the young "scientific socialist", "Peter Snike", who had wanted the children of the movement taught "Marx and the Class War" brings this out forcibly enough and a similar dislike of Marxist materialism and hate was a widespread feature of the Sunday Schools as the youthful Jennie Lee had observed.¹⁰⁸

106. See e.g. M.A. Hamilton op. cit. pp 128ff. As a fervent admirer of MacDonald's she had written 3 biographies of him, 2 under the pseudonym "Iconoclast": The Man of Tomorrow. J. Ramsey MacDonald (1923); a supplement on the events of the First Labour Government, J. Ramsey MacDonald 1923-1925 (1925); and, under her own name, a rehash of these 2, J. Ramsey MacDonald (1929).

107. W.J. Brown op. cit. p.120.

108. J.C. Welsh: op. cit. pp 77, 98.

The high point of the Ethical Movement came at the turn of the century and continued down to the First World War; and that of Theosophy came in the same years. This is reflected in the age group of the adherents to these bodies, for whom they were either a key influence during their formative years, or an important sphere of activity in early manhood. All 4 of the Ethical Society activists amongst Labour MP s had been born in the years 1866-71 (MacDonald and Snell in 1866, Eldred Hallas in 1870 and W.S. Sanders in 1871).

The 4 Theosophists came from a marginally later time, 3 from the 1870's (H.R. Charleton, b.1870, Leslie Haden-Guest 1876, and D.G. Pole, 1878) and 1 from the 1880 s (Peter Freeman 1888).

They thus grew up in the decades during which the popular debate between the rival claims of religion and science were at their height and in which the common response of those for whom the old dogmas no longer rang true was to turn instead to a non-doctrinal concentration on the common religious experience of mankind and the ethics which could be deduced from it.

Both the Ethical Movement and Theosophy were responses to these influences, as the experiences of MacDonald and Snell clearly demonstrate.¹⁰⁹ Of the other two MP.s from the Ethical Societies, Eldred Hallas was elected as a pro-Government National Democratic Party candidate in 1918, but returned to Labour the following year on the former Party's breakup. He had become a pioneer of the ILP in Birmingham on moving there to take up his post at the Birmingham Ethical Church in 1906. His writings well indicate the ethical roots of his Socialist outlook: The Higher Life (1902), Theohumanism (1906) and The Religion of Democracy (1914). (Other books by him

109. See above pp 82,390 ff.

considered the Land Question, the moral basis of social reform and the role of social evolution in English history.)¹¹⁰ With these emphases on ethical and social evolution and their distinctly religious overtones, Hallas's outlook conforms to the general impression of the ideas of Socialist members of the Ethical Movement - a view further confirmed by the description of these influences at work in the autobiography of the other Ethical Society MP, W.S. Sanders. Early Socialist Days (1927) provides an interesting record of his development from humble Battersea origins to becoming an MP. Between 1906 and 1919 he was General Secretary of the Fabian Society and in 1909 became Chairman of the Council of Ethical Societies. After reading Kropotkin's Appeal to the Young, he had joined the Battersea S.D.F. in 1888 at the age of 17. This was the only Socialist body then available in that part of London to an ordinary member of the working classes, but the Marxism of the SDF did not suit him, and the Fabians (whose meetings he started attending in the same year) soon captured his allegiance. His own Socialism, as he described it, was of the evolutionary type common to the period, reinforced by a strong belief in the essential idealism and altruism of man.¹¹¹

On the central matter of the ethical basis of man's social evolution, the Theosophists had come to much the same conclusion, backing it up, however, by reference to the insights of the mystical religions of the East together with a belief in human brotherhood and the personal practice of a respect for the sanctity of all animal life, leading logically to vegetarianism.¹¹² Peter Freeman, General Secretary of the Welsh Theosophical Society, a factory owner and

110. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville, op. cit. II pp 152-4.

111. W.S. Sanders: Early Socialist Days (1927) pp 13, 33-6, 56ff.

112. e.g. Peter Freeman, a convinced vegetarian: Daily Herald 22nd June 1929 p.9 and organising secretary of the Animals' Welfare Week for Wales. C. Bunker: Who's Who in Parliament (1946) p.65.

President of the Vegetarian Society, whose pamphlet The Druids and Theosophy (1924) sought a link for the latter in the religion of the early Celts, represents perhaps the fullest influence of Theosophy on a Labour M.P.¹¹³ H.R. Charleton's Theosophy, and D.G. Pole's, went with a more usual ethical nonconformist outlook and in the former case, total abstinence.¹¹⁴ Pole's main interest, in joining the Society, was its emphasis on "the universal brotherhood of humanity" the same motive underlying both his lifelong Freemasonry and his Socialism - though no such consideration prevented his reaching the rank of Lieut-Colonel in the First World War, after which he retired with the rank of Major, by which rank he continued to be known.¹¹⁵

(v) The Non-Religious Element

The Marxist element in the Parliamentary Labour Party, never large in the 1920 s, but growing as the decade drew to a close, provided the majority of those who had severed all religious connections. Marxism has long been recognised for its qualities as a secular alternative to religion, so this correlation is hardly surprising. From 1884 until the growth of revolutionary syndicalism and industrial unrest especially in the mining districts in the years immediately leading up to the First World War, Hyndman's S.D.F. under its later titles, S.D.P. (1907) and B.S.P. (1911) had formed the main organised body of working-class secular Marxist thought in England; the Socialist Labour Party after the 1903 split fulfilling a similar, but more revolutionary, role in Scotland. After 1911, first Syndicalism, and then the growth of the Labour Colleges and Plebs League provided a new impetus to the growth of working-class Marxist militancy, attracting a new generation of young men to whom the attitudes of Hyndman and his colleagues would have appeared

113. P. Freeman: op. cit. passim.

114. Labour Who's Who (1924)

115. D.G. Pole: War Letters and Autobiography (1960) pp 161, 178ff.

anything but revolutionary, had they even encountered them - which they did not.

The S.D.F. had never been strong outside its traditional strongholds in Lancashire and East London, where it drew its support chiefly from the unskilled labouring classes in the poorer areas, and particularly the dockers and gasworkers who had led the struggle of the New Unionists for recognition at the height of the industrial unrest of 1889-90. In these struggles the S.D.F. leaders had played a major part, and much of the support given thereafter to the S.D.F. in these areas owed itself to the memory of those events. Thereafter the S.D.F. found itself in relative decline, its place soon being taken by the I.L.P. and then by the Labour Party itself, leaving the S.D.F. very much confined to Lancashire, London and a few other dockland areas such as Bristol and Southampton (the latter's 2 newly-elected Labour MP s, Thomas Lewis and Ralph Morley, returned in 1929, had both begun their Socialist training in its local S.D.F.)

On Clydeside it was the Socialist Labour Party and later the Shop Stewards' Movement with elements of the ILP, thrown together in opposition to World War I, which were to provide a similar training-ground for working-class militants in West Scotland. The growth of militancy in the coalfields in the immediately pre-war years, especially in South Wales, but also elsewhere (noticeable Northumberland) led to the Plebs League and the Labour Colleges, a deliberate attempt to provide a training for union activists which was not tainted by the subtle bourgeois undermining of working-class values and loyalties, which was the charge then generally levelled at Ruskin College. The magazine of the movement, Plebs, edited by J.F. Horrabin, one of this group of MP s, reflected this tendency exactly in the somewhat crude language of its Marxist appeals to class solidarity in the war being waged (as it saw it) against the capitalists.

Each of these 3 main sources of working class Marxism (the

S.D.F., the Socialist Labour Party and the Plebs League) can be found amongst the major influences and allegiances of the Labour MP's in this final category. Of the 21 MP's with non-religious convictions (an underestimate because of the much greater difficulty in identifying those who deliberately remained outside of any organisation) 12 had long connections with the S.D.F., including 6 who were sponsored by it, 1 (Neil MacLean) had begun his political activities in the Socialist Labour Party, 6 had been involved in the Plebs League and 2 lacked any such connections. One of these was George Dallas, an atheist most of his life, but an ILPer upon whom the chief influences had been Hardie, Blatchford, Morris and Owen, who was a moderate Labour MP in no sense identified with the Left; the other was John Strachey, a Mosley supporter in 1931 and a Marxist throughout most of the 1930's. Of these 21 MP's, 20 therefore fit a clearly-defined pattern. They were also, largely, of the second generation of Socialists, though the S.D.F. pioneers Will Thorne and Dan Irving (born 1857 and 1884 respectively) provide notable exceptions.¹¹⁶

This is not to deny that there were, of course, members of these Marxist organisations who retained their religious affiliations, as the incidence of support for the S.D.F. amongst Irish Catholics exemplifies.¹¹⁷ Of the 10 SDF-sponsored MP's listed in Justice in the 1920's, Jack Jones and James O'Grady were Catholics, Arthur Hayday was, apparently, a Wesleyan¹¹⁸ and Ben Tillett was a Congregationalist. Of the 6 agnostics or atheists, one at least (Dan Irving) had been strongly drawn to Socialism by the noticeably ethical appeal of some of its propagandists. Indeed there had always been a strongly

116. S.D.F.: D. Irving (b.1854), W. Thorne (b.1857), A.A. Purcell (b.1872), T. Lewis (b.1873), W.C. Cluse (b.1875), F. Montague (b.1876), T. Kennedy (b.1876), R.C. Morris (b.1881), R. Morley (b.1882), G. Rowson (b.1883), W. Windsor (b.1884), H.S. Morrison (b.1888); Plebs League: G. Barker (b.1858), D. Chater (b.1870), G. Daggar (b.1879), E. Edwards and J.F. Horabin (b.1884), W. Lawther (b.1899). Non-religious MP's without such connections: G. Dallas (b.1878), J. Strachey (b.1901).

117. See above pp 567ff.

118. According to Christian World, 6th June 1929, p.3. But see above p.500.

ethical element in the S.D.F.'s theoretical position, most notably in the voluminous writings of E.B. Bax, but also in the views of men such as Herbert Burrows and Hyndman himself.¹¹⁹ Such an outlook, being very much the special product of the intellectual milieu of the closing years of the Victorian era was, not surprisingly, less in evidence in the Socialism of the new militants of the immediate pre-war years. Certainly there is little sign of any such appeals to ethics in the views of the 6 Labour M.P.s who had passed through the Plebs League. Even here, however, there are exceptions. Fred Longden, the "Humanist" devotee of T.H. Green already referred to, had Plebs League connections and, in his autobiography (1951), he expressed the view that the Labour Party needed rather more of the Plebs League outlook, and rather less social reformism - though there is little trace of any interest in ethics in his views at this date.¹²⁰ Perhaps, therefore, the only real exception to the correlation of Plebs League and secular Marxist militancy is Ellen Wilkinson, in her time a suffragette and a member of the Communist Party, the National Guilds League, the Plebs League and leader of the Jarrow March, who, notwithstanding, retained her adherence to Wesleyanism, teaching for many years in a Sunday School, and giving religious lectures to the Labour Churches.¹²¹ Nevertheless, with few exceptions, Marxism and a secular outlook went hand in hand among the minority of Labour M.P.s of that outlook elected before 1931.

119. See e.g. Irving's comment on the death of Herbert Burrows: "His loving personality, his ethical presentation of the Socialist ideal, did much to enlist me in the movement, as must also have been the case with many others." Justice, 28th December 1922, p.2.

120. cf F. Longden: The Proletarian Heritage (1951) passim.

121. R.F. Wearmouth: The Social and Political Influence of Methodism in the Twentieth Century (1957) pp 250-1.

The S.D.F. group represented the distinctly more conservative and less militant element amongst this group of M.P.s, especially in the case of the 6 sponsored members, who belonged to the patriotic, pro-war group that remained with Hyndman after the more militant opponents of the War in the British Socialist Party had taken it over in 1916, turning it eventually into the Communist Party.¹²² There had always been this strongly "patriotic" aspect to the Socialism of the S.D.F. and it undoubtedly did much to make it a far less revolutionary body than it might otherwise have been, setting it from the first in opposition to the Bolsheviks whose first aim was to pull Russia out of the War. Coupled with Hyndman's conviction of the beneficial, civilising effect of the British Empire (a not unusual view amongst British Socialists of the time) the S.D.F. had also, by the mid-1890's developed a firm belief in the Parliamentary system as the means to Socialist change and a consequent disapproval of trades union militancy which did nothing to gain it industrial recruits after 1911 as it had done after the previous great upsurge of working-class militancy in 1889. There was therefore little in common between the M.P.s of the older SDF and those whose chief source of political education had been the events of 1911 onwards. In fact, notwithstanding their Marxist utterances, SDF members were distinctly on the Right of the Parliamentary Labour Party.¹²³

Will Thorne provides an obvious example of this development. Born in the slums of Birmingham in 1857, the son of a drunkard brick-maker, he began work at the age of 6. Thrown out by an equally drunkard stepfather on his mother's remarriage in 1875, he became for a while a tramp, eventually gaining employment at the municipal gas works. When he married in 1879, both he and his wife made an

122. See above p. 184.

123. See above p.p. 183 ff.

"X" on the certificate because neither could read or write. For his like, as he said, it was the "system... made us rebels", not books. He found himself an agitator long before he knew anything about Capitalism or Socialism. In 1881 he moved to London and started work at the Old Kent Road Gas Works. Here, for the first time, he came into contact with both Secularism and Socialism, often hearing Bradlaugh and the other Secularist leaders at the Hall of Science and being drawn by the debate within their ranks over the merits of Socialism into the S.D.F.; and he became S.D.F. branch secretary in Canning Town. Men of his background had little time for theorising. "Rough and blunt", he described himself in his autobiography My Life's Battles (1925), the title of which as in so many other cases evoked exactly the whole spirit of the man. His one concern was "the emancipation of the working class" from the type of slum conditions he had known most of his life and which in his case had caused the death of his first wife in 1891 from a fever contracted as a result of the defective drains which passed directly under his house. Such personal tragedies, common occurrences in such neighbourhoods, "make us dwellers of the slums a little bitter at times in our fight to secure more habitable and hygienic homes."

Men such as Thorne had little need for Socialist theorising. Hardly surprisingly, when Shaw came to address Thorne's S.D.F. branch in these early years, his audience found him too intellectual for their tastes, being unable to understand much of what he said because of the long words he used. With no education, men of Thorne's class had to struggle against the whole weight of their environment for whatever gains they might make. Thorne signed the pledge in recognition that his poverty didn't allow any squandering of his meagre resources and he taught himself to read and write, helped by Eleanor Marx Aveling. At last he was able to read the Socialist literature of

those authors whom he had already heard speak - Marx, Engels, Hyndman, Morris, Bellamy and Blatchford were amongst the main authors whose works he studied in these years. As a Socialist agitator and a gasworker, he was one of the leading figures in the forming of the Gas Workers' Union in 1889, becoming its first General Secretary. From there he went on to become the first Socialist member of West Ham Borough Council in 1891, eventually becoming Deputy Mayor (1899), Alderman (1910) and Mayor (1917-8). For him the founding of the Labour Party at its 1900 Conference, which he attended, was a proud moment for the working-classes and, although he was throughout his life convinced of the realities of the class war, he became firmly convinced of the ability to bring about all necessary reforms by constitutional means. Elected to Parliament for his own area of West Ham South in 1906 (which he held until his retirement in 1945) he was a fierce patriot, and during the First World War, as a prominent figure on recruiting platforms, became a Lieut-Colonel in the West Ham Volunteer Force.¹²⁴

Others amongst the S.D.F. group of MP.s showed many of these same characteristics. In the main they came from very poor backgrounds, Dan Irving grew up in the Birmingham slums, Fred Montague and W. Windsor in the East End, while A.A. Purcell, son of a Hoxton French polisher and Thomas Lewis, son of a Southampton dock labourer, had equally poor beginnings. R.C. Morrison, son of a railwayman, and Ralph Morley, both teachers, represented the top of the social scale amongst MP.s of S.D.F. affiliation. The rest were of distinctly working class background - W.S. Cluse, a compositor on the S.D.F.'s own presses; Guy Rowson, the son of a Lancashire miner; Herbert Morrison (briefly from 1907 a member of Brixton S.D.F.) the son of a

124. W. Thorne: My Life's Battles (1925) passim; for any early insistence on his atheism see Pearson's Weekly 5th May 1906, p.709 and Review of Reviews art cit. April 1906, p.580

policeman; and Thomas Kennedy from humble Aberdeenshire origins (who became a full-time organiser for the S.D.F. as a young man).

Several had been involved in the New Unionist unrest of 1889-90 - in addition to Thorne - Irving, Lewis and Windsor. The latter, who was only 15 at the time, was brought into the movement by his father, one of the dockers' leaders who was himself converted to Socialism by that struggle. As an SDF activist he began drilling working class recruits in his backyard in readiness for the revolution.¹²⁵

Such men had the usual strong S.D.F. dislike of the LLP's non-conformist/liberal tendencies. T. Lewis, for example, had joined the S.D.F. because he thought the LLP too sentimental.¹²⁶ Herbert Morrison's involvement in the S.D.F. stemmed from the same reasoning, and he wished to preserve the latter body from any such taint by excluding from membership all who were not declared atheists.¹²⁷ The somewhat precious religious moralism of so many labour "leaders" of the period cut no ice with men from the rough backgrounds of most S.D.F. members.

It was Hyndman's patriotic stance in the war which provided the last of the series of great splits amongst the Social Democrats. The older members, such as Thorne and Irving, had largely supported Hyndman's view of the matter, as had the others in the group of S.D.F.-sponsored MP's in the 1920's (Cluse, R.C. Morrison, Kennedy and Montague, the latter 2 serving as volunteers in the War). But others, mainly younger members, had broken with the old guard on this issue, seeing the War as the clash of rival imperialisms and the result of the capitalist system which ought not to be allowed to destroy the unity of the international working classes. Among the

125. Daily Herald, 3rd April 1924, p.4.

126. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. I p.217.

127. B. Donoghue and G.W. Jones: Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician (1973) p.16.

future MPs who took this line were Walter Windsor, who transferred to the ILP, was a member of the No-Conscription Fellowship and went to prison as a conscientious objector; and Herbert Morrison, who also opposed the War and was from 1914 secretary of the London Labour Party, to which he devoted his organisational skills for the next 2 decades.

A.A. Purcell provides the one example of a former S.D.F. activist who had remained with the British Socialist Party after it had come out against the war in 1916. Subsequently, as the B.S.P. moved leftwards, so did Purcell, supporting the foundation of the British Communist Party in 1920 and visiting Bolshevik Russia as one of the Labour Party/T.U.C. delegation earlier that same year. Purcell had been active in Mann's Industrial Syndicalist League before the War and the Guilds Movement during and after it, and thus represents one of the older members to have been influenced by the new wave of militancy after 1911. However, he remained only 2 years in the Communist Party. He resigned from it in April 1922, and was elected to Parliament as a Labour M.P. a year later. He can best be seen as a fellow-traveller, as distinct from the majority of former S.D.F. men, including some of those who left it such as Herbert Morrison and Tom Lewis, who, although broadly Marxist in their outlook, were fiercely anti-Communist throughout their Parliamentary careers.¹²⁸

The careers of most of the former Plebs League MP's followed a similar pattern to those of the SDFers. Dan Chater, from Lambeth,

128. J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville op. cit. I pp 275-9.

whose father was a former Indian Army sergeant turned labourer, and whose mother worked in the "sweated" trade of buttonhole-making, represents the same very poor element as in the S.D.F. Ebby Edwards, whose father was an atheist and admirer of Bradlaugh, shows further influence of the Secularist tradition. He was a Northumberland miner who later earned a scholarship to Ruskin, but left because he found it too academic, becoming involved in the Plebs League and the foundation of the Labour Colleges as a result. W. Lawther, also from Northumberland, a close colleague of Edwards in these activities, was another miner, as were George Barker and George Daggar, successively MP's for Abertillery, thus representing the new militant element among miners in the early years of this century. Barker was one of the militants elected to the executive of the M.F.G.B. from South Wales after the defeat of the old guard there in 1911. He was closely involved in the founding of the Central Labour College, of which Daggar was an early product. As MP's however, their former left-wing views were seldom in evidence. Neither Barker nor Daggar gave the Party whips any trouble; and when Ebby Edwards succeeded A.J. Cook as secretary of the M.F.G.B. in 1932, it was as a moderate. Only Lawther seems to have maintained his militant spirit, spending 2 months in prison in 1926 for his part in the General Strike. Nevertheless, such men are indicative of changing attitudes in the mining areas, and Lawther and Barker with this secular Marxist outlook, represent a growing element in the ILP, of which they were both members, very different to that which had characterised it in its earlier years.¹²⁹

129. Ibid I, p.37; III pp 54-5; IV p.58; Obituaries from the Times 1961-70 pp 237-8; Daily Herald 4th July 1929, p.6.

(vi) Conclusion

This brief survey of the religious affiliations and attitudes of Labour M.P.s, although by no means fully comprehensive, shows clearly the very considerable importance of religious beliefs as one of the key determining factors of political and social attitudes throughout the period before 1931. It shows also the close correlation between the social class, religious and political affiliations of these M.P.s.

The largest element amongst Labour M.P.s was that composed chiefly of skilled and semi-skilled trades unionists. That these were very largely of a traditional nonconformist outlook has been amply demonstrated, especially in regard to their attitude towards the drink question. In this they faithfully reflected the Liberalism of their former allegiance. Indeed, many were scarcely distinguishable in outlook from their Liberal counterparts and had undertaken the transference from Liberal to Labour less from any Socialist convictions than from vague class loyalties and a sense of new political realities. Although they had converted to Labour on tactical grounds, their views remained largely unaltered. However, there was a minority from working-class nonconformist trades union backgrounds who had joined the I.L.P. in the 1890s or after, and who had come to an espousal of Socialism, usually together with a more liberal religious outlook. Often, as in the case of Snowden and Hardie, they combined this with a traditional nonconformist moralism - as seen in the attitude of many I.L.P. Socialists to the Drink question. But in a number of cases such individuals were led beyond their former denominational allegiances to adopt a Socialist viewpoint which cut across such boundaries and even those which divided Theism from Agnosticism. Such individuals fall into the second group to be considered.

This group, the second largest as defined by attitudes, is chiefly represented by MacDonald whose ethically-based evolutionary Socialist

theories typified the outlook of numbers of Labour M.P.s from a range of denominational backgrounds, extending from liberal Christians of various churches including some Congregationalists and Anglicans together with the Unitarians and Quakers, through Labour Churchmen and Theosophists, to the boundaries of ethical freethought. Primarily resulting from the predominantly religious climate of the late 19th century, in which most of those who held this set of beliefs had grown up, this was very much the mainstream of British Socialism for a whole generation from the mid-1880s, transcending the Party divisions between the intellectual "Left" of the Liberal Party and the Socialist organisations, and ensuring the easy transference of substantial numbers of middle-class Social Radicals from the Liberal Party to Labour during and after the First World War. This group formed the intelligentsia of the Labour Party, was largely skilled trade unionist or middle-class in social origins, and had few links with unskilled labour.

Finally there was a much smaller third element of class-struggle orientated, secular Marxists, comprising chiefly unskilled labourers of the New Unions, whose attitudes had been formed in the tough conditions of a slum environment. Allied to these were a number of Catholic Labour M.P.s, whose adherence to the doctrines of class struggle derived from a similar social background. These 2 groups were complemented by a growing number of young militants, including the first representatives of the young Marxist intelligentsia who were to dominate much of the Socialist debate of the 1930s, and could already be seen as a developing Left-wing opposition within the Labour Party.

Such were the main lines of cleavage within the Labour Party as it developed after the First World War. But as 1931 approached, major international events occurred which radically altered the course of development of British Socialism throughout the next generation, and went far beyond the temporary split in the Labour Party caused by the formation of the National Government, in August of that year.

TOWARDS 1931 - EPILOGUE AND CONCLUSION

It is rarely possible to say exactly when one set of ruling ideas is superseded by a different one. The process is one of gradual transformation, the continuance of the old increasingly overshadowed by the new. One generation of leaders grows old and is superseded by younger men whose ideas owe their formation both to the influence of their predecessors and the changed experience of their own youth. Watersheds can be suggested, such as the syndicalist unrest of 1911-14, the War, the Russian Revolution or the experience of the First Labour Governments. Each might prove such for some individuals, while for the rest they will be just one more factor in the continuing crystallisation and reaffirmation of their views.

For the mass of men and women youth and early adulthood is the time for the pursuit of philosophies, the discovery of a purpose and meaning in life. It was in their youth and early manhood that almost all the subjects of this study settled on their life's work and formulated their differing, yet essentially similar Socialist outlooks. Sometimes almost imperceptibly over the years, sometimes over a remarkably short space of time, the dominant influences, the crucial debates and disputes of one generation were superseded by those of another. Friendships which produced the leaders of the F.N.L. and Fabians of the late 1880s, or the original Clarion writers of the 1890s, and early N.A.C.s of the Independent Labour Party, all suffered the losses of time - through death and changes in employment or residence. Such groups provided their own unique atmospheres, issues of debate, topics for searching questions and discussion often late into the night, which played so large a part in forming the distinctive opinions of their participants.

Such associations of individuals each added their own special

element to the development of British Socialism in its early years. The common experiences of men and women such as those around Rupert Brooke and Hugh Dalton at Cambridge in the mid 1900 s, or of those who had been C.O. s or the younger men of the I.L.P. in the 1920 s, provided further distinctive approaches. Each group of friends in each generation regarded past ideas from its own unique standpoint, and so transformed them. In this way British Socialism grew and developed, from its origins in the 1880's to the time when the first Socialist prime minister of Great Britain took office in 1924 and again in 1929.

Yet despite the changes, the overall features of British Socialism remained remarkably constant between 1884 and 1931. For almost all its advocates, from the pioneers of the 1880 s to many of the younger men of the 1920's, Socialism was primarily a religious faith and not merely a set of economic and social policies. For some it was the social corollary of their Christianity, for others the necessary outcome of their wider spiritual beliefs. Those such as Maxton who, as conscientious objectors during the First World War, gave as their religion "Socialism"¹ were expressing a widely-held belief in the Movement as to its real nature. From its origins British Socialism and personal religious belief and practice were closely linked, in bodies such as the Fellowship of the New Life, the Tolstoyan and other 'Utopian' communities, the Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools and Theosophy, as well as through more conventional links with the churches and the various forms of Christian Socialism.

Nor was this conviction of the religious nature of Socialism confined to Theists. Among its leading advocates, agnostics from

1. J. McNair, James Maxton. The Beloved Rebel (1955) p.61.

Morris, the young J.B. Glasier, E.B. Bax and Blatchford, whose activities spanned the 1880's to the pre-War years, to Maxton and Allen, the 2 dominant figures in the I.L.P. of the 1920 s, each stressed his personal belief in Socialism as a Religion. The boundaries of Theism and Agnosticism were far from clear or constant. As the beliefs of such men demonstrate, personal religious conviction and experience were not incompatible with varying degrees of intellectual agnosticism concerning the origins of their religious feelings and experiences.

The 1880's and 1890's were the great period for religious questioning and personal spiritual pilgrimages. These were the decades which produced the ideas of Carpenter, Trevor, MacDonald; the F.N.L., the Labour Churches and the Tolstoyan experiments, whose influence continued to permeate deeply the Socialist Movement through the many whose outlook had been formed by them. In the early 20th century, before the War, the story was not so much one of decline - the furore stirred up by Blatchford's God and My Neighbour controversy in the Clarion in 1904 demonstrates the continuing importance of the religious question to great masses of individuals - as of change. Increasing numbers of young men and women especially among the educated classes were growing up in an age in which other factors were increasingly replacing the religious quest as the inspiration of youthful idealism. The decline of philosophical Idealism at the universities, the growing fashion of Sunday leisure and non-church-going and the growing interest in science fiction in writers such as H.G. Wells, all pointed to the beginning of a change in cultural attitudes which was to become obvious in the 1920 s.

For those who retained a religious sentiment, but for whom Theism was no longer intellectually possible, Humanism with its stress

on ethical values immediately experienced within the human individual and his relationships, offered the most attractive possibility. Young men and women such as Dalton, Brooke, Allen and Molly Hamilton, all from liberal religious backgrounds, embraced it as the religion of their generation. The Humanitarian Society, the Ethical Societies and the Socialist Sunday Schools, flourished up to the War as purveyors of this ethical faith in mankind. The latter two seemed to enjoy a brief revival after the War but in the 1920's came permanent decline, as Secularisation set in.

Whether Theist or Agnostic, there had been few disagreements as to the true nature of man, or the eternal ethical ideals by which he should live - whether conceived of as divine attributes or scientifically verified determinants of the human psyche. Beauty, Truth and Goodness - in personal and social relationships, in Love, Fellowship and Service - Altruism, Mutual Aid - were seen by almost all the early Socialists as the fundamental ideals by which the human race had to live, and by which its finest examples had moulded their lives and outlooks. It was towards a society based on these ideals that humanity was evolving, whether as the result of God's purpose (as Christian and many other religious Socialists would have it) or because this alone would satisfy the human spirit.

The Socialist State was seen as both the necessary outcome of this evolution and the necessary means to its fulfilment. Such a social organisation alone would allow that full development of human capacities and self-fulfilment of the individual which was the universally accepted ideal of the Socialists in the early years of the Movement's growth. On the method of its achievement and on the practical outlines of its organisation, there were wide differences between the revolutionary at one extreme and the Fabian permeator at the other, and between the libertarian who believed in the abolition

of all laws and restraints save communal feeling and the individual ethical sense, and State Socialists who conceived of great industrial armies as necessary to the fulfilment of human material wants.

Capitalism, based as it was on selfishness and the acquisitive instinct, resulting in the horrors of slum dwellings and the exploitation of man by man was the common enemy. Socialists attacked it from their ethical position and because in it they saw the pursuit of false, materialistic goals and a stifling of the human spirit and human creativity. From Morris and Kropotkin to Hardie and Mac^Donald laissez-faire industrialism was pilloried for its tremendous waste in terms of the destruction of human potential. Almost without question, they adopted Marx's analysis of the exploitation of labour through the workings of the system of wages, profits and dividends. The Theory of Surplus Value, no matter how vaguely held, was a commonplace from the pronouncements of the S.D.F. to the assumptions underlying the New Liberal J.A. Hobson's "Underconsumptionist" economic theories, which held that unemployment resulted from lack of purchasing power on the part of the masses, clearly due to the retention of too great a part of the value of their product in the hands of the owners of industry.

For those at the lower end of the social scale, the class nature of society was immediate and inescapable, giving rise to a widespread acceptance of the idea of the class struggle, amongst the unskilled in particular - the element from which the S.D.F. drew most of its working-class membership. To skilled artisans, the labour aristocracy of the older trade unionism, conscious of their recent gains and of their position at the top of the working-classes, who made up the bulk of the membership of the I.L.P. though most continued to support Liberalism well into the 20th century, the emphasis was more on the solidarity of labour. Amongst this section, traditional nonconformist radicalism maintained a strong grip, greatly colouring the "Socialism"

of such I.L.P. leaders as Hardie and Snowden, with their strong emphasis on personal morality and moralistic attitude towards such questions as drink and gambling. It was only when the Liberal Party proved unwilling to provide adequate representation of this element of organised labour that its leaders unhappily drifted away to form separate political organisations, combining with intellectual Socialists first in the I.L.P. and later within the Labour Party. They remained, however, distinct in outlook from the mainstream of the British Socialist tradition, adopting many of its ideas, but maintaining a rather different emphasis, derived from the more pessimistic view of man found in working-class nonconformity. Indeed, there was more in common as to the underlying nature of man as between the beliefs of agnostic Socialists like Morris and Blatchford on the one hand and religious advocates like Carpenter, MacDonald and Grayson on the other than could ever be found between these latter and the representatives of traditional working-class nonconformity - a point brought out particularly strongly in the contrast between the different types of Labour MP.

However, with the advent of the Labour Party as a major force in Parliament after 1906 a change began to come over the outlook of the movement. Propaganda became increasingly centred around the activities of the moment, Labour's victories in Parliament and the Party's attitude to particular items of legislation to the exclusion, to a considerable extent, of the more philosophical aspects of Socialism. Many of those who had been involved in the early pioneering days deplored this change, though they conceded it was largely inevitable. MacDonald hoped in the 1920's that the I.L.P. would take over the role of propagandist for Socialism, returning to what he saw as "the spiritual sources of the movement" and concentrating on "making the Socialist mind and outlook."² But it was

2. Socialist Review Oct-Dec 1918 p.320; Forward 8 September 1923 p.1 Open Letter J.R. MacDonald to Clifford Allen setting out his views on the role of the I.L.P.

not to be. Despairing at Labour's failures in Parliament, the I.L.P., under the leadership of Maxton and Brockway from the mid-1920's onwards, found itself in increasing opposition to the Labour Party, becoming eventually isolated until its collapse into virtual insignificance in the 1930's.³

The chief problem that was developing for British Socialism, in fact, was the growing disillusionment, especially of its younger members, with the failure of the Labour Party in Parliament even to begin to bring about the massive changes in society which the Socialist ideal envisaged. In these circumstances, the younger left-wing element grew increasingly hostile to the older generation of Socialist leaders - especially MacDonald and Snowden - who, in their turn lumped together all their critics as impatient deviants who had failed to understand the lessons which their Socialist elders had been teaching from the earliest days concerning the need for a new socialist spirit before the ideal could be realised. Demands from the Left, in 1924 and again in 1929, for Labour to present an impossible Socialist programme to Parliament, deliberately to court defeat, so that they could appeal to the country for a full Socialist mandate, did nothing to commend their more practical proposals, such as the Living Income, to their more cautious elders, who saw in the I.L.P.'s new cry of "Socialism in Our Time", "flashy futilities" (as MacDonald put it) which, by promising more than could be realistically achieved, would breed only disillusionment and electoral defeat.⁴ To the growing younger element amongst Socialists, their imagination fired by the Russian experiment, about which very little accurate information was available - and upon whose achievements it was therefore easily

3. See eg. A.J.B. Marwick: "The LLP in the 1920's" in BIHR 35 (1962) pp 62-74 and his Oxford B.Litt Thesis 1960: The Independent Labour Party (1918-32). For an account of the I.L.P.'s demise by one who had been a strong supporter of its drift leftwards but later realised his mistake see John Paton: Left Turn (1936) passim.

4. J.R. MacDonald in Forward 27th March 1926, p.9; 21st July 1928, p.9 MacDonald's criticisms of the I.L.P. leadership on these lines were a regular feature of Forward in these years.

possible to speculate and romanticise - such an attitude on the part of the old guard seemed fainthearted if not an actual betrayal of Socialist ideals.

In 1931 this internal crisis in British Socialism came to a head. The failure of the Labour Cabinet to agree either on the necessity of spending cuts or on a viable alternative economic strategy was no less a failure of thinking of the whole Socialist Movement in Britain. It had simply not developed the economic and social policies to put its ideals into practice. The decision of men such as MacDonald and Snowden, and most of the other National Labour members to take part in a National Government cannot be ascribed to any loss of their Socialist ideals. The evidence of their own lips in the ensuing years is quite to the contrary; almost all the National Labour members of parliament retained their Socialism.⁵ It was, rather, in the absence of any policy alternative, a rare instance of putting country before Party and sacrificing their own political careers, at a time of major national crisis; it seemed the natural patriotic thing to do, and as such won mass electoral backing.

Even before the fall of the Labour Government, the crisis in British Socialism was evident, in the effective split between the Labour Party and the I.L.P., consequent on the latter demanding from its MP's loyalty to its conference decisions, and the former in reply insisting that all future Labour parliamentary candidates pledge

5. According to A. Marwick: Clifford Allen. The Open Conspirator (1964) pp 112ff MacDonald, Allen and others saw the National Labour Committee as essential to try to keep some Socialist element of representation in the National Government. MacDonald himself retained his Socialist views until his death. See D. Marquand: Ramsay MacDonald (1977) pp 670ff. Malcolm MacDonald, after loyally supporting his father until his death, left politics rather than compromise Socialism when National Labour finally collapsed, see the views of his former headmaster at Bedales J.H. Badley: Memories and Reflections (1955) pp 221-2. A comprehensive reappraisal of National Labour has yet to be undertaken.

themselves to support the Parliamentary Party's Standing Orders, which in practice meant disloyalty to the I.L.P. Throughout the later 1920's the I.L.P. had been attracting, by its left wing opposition to the Labour leadership, numbers of young pro-Communist sympathisers who, despairing of parliamentary practice, believed in the necessity and practical possibility of a revolutionary alternative. Such men, of whom a few have been noted amongst Labour MF s, were representatives of the new Socialism which, epitomised in the attitudes of the "fellow-travellers" in their pathetic belief in Soviet Russia, became the dominant strand of left-wing intellectualism in the 1930 s, as the Labour Party entered its long spell in the political wilderness.

The great tragedy of British Socialism after 1906 was its inability to develop practical policies for the implementation of its ideals. The Labour Party itself, dominated by a largely non-Socialist element of working-class trades unionists; could hardly have been expected to perform this function for itself. For this very reason, and as a result of the singular lack of achievement of the First Labour Government (with the exception of John Wheatley's Housing Act - itself the product of a Socialist), the I.L.P. under Clifford Allen in the mid-1920 s was seeking this very role as the 'think-tank' of the Labour Movement. Allen, because of his close association with MacDonalld, was the one man who might perhaps have succeeded in the dual objective of turning the I.L.P. into the expert source of Labour's practical Socialist policies and of securing its acceptance in this role. His own blend of practicality with traditional Socialist idealism was the chief feature lacking within the Labour Party in the 1920 s. With his resignation in October 1925 from the chairmanship of the I.L.P. the opportunity was lost, and that body began its rapid slide into extremism and isolation

from the main body of the Labour Movement. At the time, there was nothing else which could adequately take its place, doing the research and formulating the policies necessary for the Socialist ideal to be translated into political reality.

In the light of subsequent events, the chief difficulty of democratic Socialism in Britain, still seems to be its inability to combine Socialist idealism with practical policies. In the early decades of the Movement, it was the Socialist Ideal which predominated in the thinking of its adherents. Socialism was preached as a religion, a way of life - a belief which affected every aspect of an individual's social and personal relationships. There remained elements of this within the British Labour Party of the later 20th century, but, as critics of the 1920 s observed, since its advent as a party of government, the day to day issues of practical politics rather than the underlying Socialist philosophy, had come to dominate party propaganda. In this way something of the original idealism of British Socialism was lost.

APPENDIX Summary of Biographical Details of Labour M.P.s 1906-31

618/1

APPENDIX : Explanatory Note.

Entries are arranged alphabetically by the first Parliament in which an individual sat as a Labour Party member or (in rare cases) a supporter.

Within each entry the order is as follows. Firstly the seat(s) for which the M.P. sat. Secondly his date of birth, parental and educational background, followed by his employment, his trades unionist, political and religious affiliations and activities before becoming an M.P., each arranged chronologically. Finally a list of major influences/indications of outlook are given when known.

Dashes (-) are used to indicate a chronological progression, usually in conjunction with ages (often single numbers) or dates.

APPENDIX: Summary of Biographical details of Labour M.P.s 1906-31

Abbreviations:

i) Religious Affiliations

B	Baptist
C	Congregationalist
CE	Church of England
CS	Church of Scotland
D	Churchgoer (denomination not identified)
E	Ethical Societies
EU	Evangelical Union
F	Freethinker
FM	Free Methodist
IM	Independent Methodist
J	Jew
L	Labour Church and Socialist Sunday School
M	Methodist
ND	Non-denominational Christian
NR	Non-religious outlook
P	Presbyterian
PM	Primitive Methodist
Q	Quaker

RC	Roman Catholic
SA	Salvation Army
SEC	Scottish Episcopal Church
T	Theosophical Society
U	Unitarian
UFC	United Free Church
UM	United Methodist
UP	United Presbyterian
WC	Welsh Congregationalist
WCM	Welsh Calvinist Methodist
	ii) <u>Trade Union Affiliations</u>
AEU	Amalgamated Engineering Union
ASE	Amalgamated Society of Engineers
ASLP	Amalgamated Society of Lithographic Printers
ASRS	Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
B & DOSA	Bolton & District Operative Spinners Association
BISTC	British Iron and Steel Trades Confederation

CMA	Cumberland Miners Association
DCMA	Durham Colliery Mechanics Association
DMA	Durham Miners Association
FSI	Friendly Society of Ironfounders
GW & GLU	Gas Workers and General Labourers Union
LSC	London Society of Compositors
NALGO	National Association of Local Government Officers
NSMA	North Staffordshire Miners Association
NUC	National Union of Clerks
NUGW	National Union of General Workers
NUR	National Union of Railwaymen
NUSMW	National Union of Scottish Mine Workers
NUT	National Union of Teachers
P & TCA	Postal and Telegraph Clerks Association
SWMF	South Wales Miners Federation
UPMA	United Pattern Makers Association
YMA	Yorkshire Miners Association

iii) Other common abbreviations

Abst	abstainer
Ald	Alderman
app	apprentice
ass	assistant
assoc	associate(d)
b.	born
B of G	Board of Gaurdians
Bd	Board
br	branch
cand	candidate
ch	chairman
Ch	Church
co cllr	county councillor
CO	Conscientious Objector
conv	converted
D.O.R.A	Defence of the Realm Act
educ	educated
Elem	elementary
Gen	General

V.C.

V.P.

W-M Coll

Xt(y)

Xt Soc

Vice-Chairman

Vice-President

Working Men's College

Christianity

Christian Socialist

1929	
1924	
1923	
1922	
1918	
1910 D	
1910 J	
1906	

Jenkins J.H.

W

Chatham. b. 1852 Pembroke, S of shipwright and W local preacher. App shipbuilder 16 - T.U. activist - Cllr 1890. Founder Cardiff Lord's Day Obs Soc. Infls: Soc Xty.

Jowett F.W.

L

Bradford W/E. b. 1864. Bradford. 1/2 timer 8 - over-looker 18 - manager 27. Rad - Soc. Cllr 1892. Trades C & I.L.P. Sec. ex - Cong - Pres Bradford Lab Ch. W.W.I. Pacifist. Xt. Infls: Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris, Carpenter.

Kelley G.D.

CE

Manchester S.W. b. 1848 Lincs. Village Sch - pupil teacher. App printer - 1st Gen Sec A.S.L.P. 1879 to death. V-P Lab Electoral Ass 1888-90. L.R.C.1900 Land Nat, anti-Soc.

MacDonald J.R.

E

Leics/Aberavon/Seaham. b. 1866 Lossiemouth illegit. Kirk Sch - pupil teacher to 18. Clerk/journalism. London 1818 S.D.F. 1886, F.N.L. 1890, Rainbow Circle Sec 1890s, Fab. E.C. 1894-1900, I.L.P. 1894, N.A.C. 1896, L.R.C. Sec 1900. Ethical Socs.

Macpherson J.T.

FM

Preston b. 1872 London S of T.U. activist. Steel works 12 - app - smelter - T.U. activist - org - ass sec Steel Smelters Society - 1 yr Ruskin Coll. Lab Ch lect 1908. Infls: Ruskin, Carlyle, Spencer, Darwin.

1929									
1924									
1923		/							
1922		/							/
1918		/		/				/	/
1910 D	/	/		/	/			/	/
1910 J	/	/		/	/			/	/
1906	/	/		/	/	/		/	/

RC O'Grady J. Leeds E/SE. b. 1866 Bristol Irish R.C. Sch to 10. app furniture maker 15. Active 1892 Dock Strike Pres Trades C, Cllr 1897. Founder local Clarion Cyclists. S.D.F. & Fab. Infls: Carlyle, Darwin, Haeckel, George, Marx, Morris, Fab. Essays.

UM Parker J. Halifax/Cannock. b. 1863 Lincs. West Sch to 12 To Halifax 19 - warehouseman/packer - Trades C - Cllr 1897, I.L.P. local sec & N.A.C. WW.I. Pro War. Self Imp Soc etc. Infls: Carlyle, Ruskin, Emerson, Shelley, Whitman, Carpenter.

D Pointer J. Sheffield Attercliffe. b. 1875 Sheffield. Sec Sch to 14. app pattern maker - U.P.M.A. activist 20 on - Ruskin Coll 24 months. I.L.P. 1900, Cllr 1908, Fab. 1910. W lay preacher - R.J.C.'s New Theology. Total Abst.

CE Richards T. Wolverhampton W. b. 1863 Wednesbury S of Cons 1/2 timer 11 - Boot. & Shoe Ops Soc 1885 - V.P. 1892 - Pres 1897. Cllr Leicester 1894. Socialist 1897 on. Temperance. Infls: N.T., Ruskin, Dickens

Roberts G.H. Norwich. b. 1869 Norfolk poverty. Nat Sch. App printer 1883 - T.A. activist - org 1894, Socialist 1886 on, I.L.P. Lab Ch lect. 1909. Sch Board. Infls: Dickens, Darwin's Evol Theory, Morris, Whitman.

O'Grady J.

Parker J.
(CoLab 1918)

Pointer J.
(by-election 1909
d. 1914)

Richards T.

Roberts G.H.
(CoLab 1918, Ind Con 1922)

1929									
1924									
1923									
1922									
1918	/								
1910 D									
1910 J	/		/			/	/		
1906	/		/			/	/	/	

D
 Newton/Hanley. b. 1868 Prestcot Lances,
 Rad N.C. Parents. Elem educ. Grocers'
 ass 12 - Comm trav 28 Nat. Am U Shop
 Ass Pres 1902. I.L.P. Pres St Helens
 Lab Ch. P.S.A., Cong, Ind M activist.
 W.W.I. "superpatriot" & by 1923 Con-
 servative. Infls: Bible, Carlyle,
 Chartist literature.

Seddon J.A.
 (Co N.D.P. 1918)

W
 Clitheroe. b. 1863 Rossendale. Dame
 Sch, ½ timer T.U. activist - victim-
 ised - Sec Darwen Weavers Ass 1894.
 Lib Cllr 1894. Teetotal. Moderate
 anti-Soc. Shared lodgings with A.
 Henderson 1906 on.

.Shackleton D.J.

W
 Blackburn/Colne Valley. b. 1864.
 Cowling (W.R.) S of Rad. weaver.
 Elem ed - pupil teacher to 15.
 Civil Service clerk - crippled 1891.
 Lib conv to Soc, founds I.L.P. branch
 & full-time I.L.P. propagandist 1896
 on. N.A.C. 1898. Teetotal. W & Lab Ch
 lect - assoc of R.J. Campbell. Infls:
N.T., Rev S. Keeble, Morris, Carpenter,
Fab. Essays.

Snowden P.

CE
 Sunderland. b. 1861 Seaham. S of miner.
 App printer 13 - later own business.
 T.U. activist - Trades C sec 1890, Cllr
 1894. Con admirer Disraeli 18 - Home Rule/
 Land Q Lib - Soc, I.L.P., C.S.L. E.C.
 Infls: George, Blatchford, Fab Tracts
 Xt Socialist.

Summerbell T.

1929									
1924									
1923									
1922									
1918		/		/		/		/	
1910 D		/		/		/		/	
1910 J		/		/		/		/	
1906		/		/		/		/	

PM
 Chester-le-Street. b. 1855 Monkwearmouth,
 Errand boy 9 - app blacksmith - mine
 mechanic - T.U. branch sec - D.C.M.A.
 Gen Sec 1897-1923. Cllr & First Ch
 local U.D.C. 1899. I.L.P. activist.
 Refused to stand as Lib 1906 (D.M.A.
 sponsors - not yet aff L.R.C.). Conv
 Xt 19 & over 50 years local preacher.
 Xt Socialist.

Taylor J.W.

(Ind Lab 1906, resigned
 seat 1919)

NR
 W.Ham/S.Plaistow. b. 1857 Birmingham.
 No educ. 12 hr day age 7 - labouring
 jobs - illit (taught by E. Marx). Lon-
 don 1881 - Rad Clubs 1883, S.D.F. 1884
 Gas Workers' leader 1889 & Gen Sec N.U.
 G.W. & G.L. Cllr 1891. W.W.I. Pro- Hy-
 ndman. Atheist background & early infl
 Bradlaugh, Marx. W.W.I. recruiter -
 Col W. Ham Volunteer Force.

Thorne W.J.

CE
 Ince. b. 1859 Liverpool Irish. Orphan-
 age/Ind Sch. Miner 14 - checkweigher -
 agent 1901 - V.P. M.F.G.B. 1923. Opp-
 oses Class War Socs. W.W.I. pro-Coalition
 until 'just peace', Infls: Gladstone,
 boyhood hero, Bunyan, Mill, Carlyle,
 C.E. 21 though childhood R.C.

Walsh S.

W
 Stockport. b. 1865 Newhall Leics. Wesl
 Sch. 1/2 timer 8 rail clerk 15-30 - A.S.R
 S. activist. W local preacher & S.S.
 teacher 18; Broth Mvt post W.W.I. Edits
 Keighley Lab J 1893-7. Lab Ch lect
 1906 on. Infls: Kingsley, Carlyle,
 Ruskin.

Wardle G.J.
 (Co.Lab 1918
 resigned 1920)

Wilkie A.

Dundee. b. 1850 Fife. Elem educ. App shipbuilder 13 - founder & Gen Sec Ass Shipwrights Glasgow 1882 - T.U.C. Parl Cttee. Newcastle 1890s, Cllr & Sch Bd.

Wilson W.T.

Westhoughton b. 1858 Westmorland. app joiner - joins T.U. 1877 & activist - Chair Amalg Soc Carpenters and Joiners 1897 on. - founder Bolton Trades Fed.

(d. 1921)

ii. Miners' M.P.s
(aff 1908)
Lib-Labs 1906.

Abraham W.

WCM

Rhondda/w. b. 1842 S of miner. Miner & T.U. activist 1870s on. First Pres S.W.M.F. 1899-1912. Moderate. Strict Calvinist, lay preacher. W.W.I. V-P. Br Workers' L 1916 - resigned 1918.

Brace W.

B

Glamorgan S. b. 1865 elem educ mines 12 - T.U. activist - Pres S.W.M.F. to 1920. Former Welsh Nat Lib Ass V-P. Opposed S.W.M.F. aff to Lab P 1908. Lay preacher Total Abst.

(resigned 1920)

Edwards E.

PM

Hanley. b. 1852. N. Staffs S of miner. P.M. Day Sch. Mines 9. Treas N.S.M.A. 1875. Treas M.F.G.B. 1889, Pres 1904. Lib Cand 1900. 1910 jt adoption Trades C & Lib Ass. Nominal Lab. Infls: Free Trade, Bible, Friendly Soccs.

(d. 1912)

1929									
1924									
1923									
1922									
1918	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1910 D	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1910 J	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1906	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Richards T.
(resigned 1920)

C
Monmouth W/Ebbw Vale b. 1859 Ebbw V.
Br Sch. Mines 12. Ebbw V M.A. founder
& Sec 1884 - agent 1888. S.W.M.F. Gen
Sec on founding 1898-1931 death. Cllr
1895. Supps Lib V I.L.P. 1904. Deacon
and lay preacher.

Stanley A.
(d. 1916)

PM
Staffs N.W. b. 1862 Shrops. Elem educ
2 yrs only. Mines 11 - agent 22 - M.F.
G.B. E.C. Gladst Lib. Anti Soc. From
14 & to death active local preacher.

Wadsworth J.

C
Hallamshire. b. 1850 Yorks, Elem educ.
Mines 12 - checkweigher 1888 - V.P.
Y.M.A. 1888 - Pres 1903 - Gen Sec 1905
- 21 death. Active Cong.

Williams J.
(d. 1922)
Ind Lab 1906

B
Gower. b. 1861 Aberaman. Br Sch. Mines
12 - checkweigher 20 - agent 1897. Or-
dained preacher. Welsh Nat. Bardic
Prize 1885. Opp 1906 by Libs and U.s.
Infls: Mill, Ruskin, George, Westcott,
J.B. Wallace, Bellamy.

1929	
1924	
1922	
1918	/
1910 D	/
1910 J	/
1906	/

b) M.P.s first elected
1910 J

Sutton J.E.

(lost 1918, won
by-election 1922)

Manchester/E/Clayton. b. 1862 Manchester
Elem Educ. half-timer 7, mines 14 -
checkweigher - agent 1910 Bradford Miners'
Sec 20 yrs. First Lab Cllr Manchester.
I.L.P.

Thomas J.H.

(Nat Lab 1921)

Derby. b. 1874 Newport, raised by Tory
Grandmother. Nat Sch to 12, Errand boy
evenings 9, railway 15 - T.U. activist
18 - A.S.R.S. org - Ass Gen Sec 1910 -
N.U.R. Gen Sec 1917-31. Opp to Class
War Socs. W.W.I. recruiting sergeant.

Twist H.

Wigan. b. 1870 Lancs S of miner, orph-
aned 8. Educ Wes Day Sch to 10, mines 11
- checkweigher 28 - agent 36. Founder
member I.L.P. Lay preacher from youth.
Xt Soc. assoc R.J. Campbell.

c) M.P.s first elected
1910 D

Adamson D.W.

Fife W. b. 1863 Dame Sch. Mines 11 -38
T.U. activist - ass sec Fife, Kinross,
Clackmannan M.A. 6yrs - Gen Sec; Ch
Parl Lab P 1917-21.

1929	/	/	/
1924	/	/	/
1923	/	/	/
1922	/	/	/
1918	/	/	/
1910 D	/	/	/
1910 J	/	/	/

Anderson W.C.
(by-election 1915)

L

Sheffield Attercliffe. b. 1877 Findon Banffs, S of Crofter/Blacksmith. N.C. Rad home Elem educ. App chemist Aberdeen 16. Infl Tom Mann Aberdeen N by-elect 1896 to read Soc bks and attend meetings Land Nat - I.L.P. 1900, N.A. C. 1908, Ch 1910-13. W.W.I. on U.D.C. Cttee. Lab Ch lect 1907 on. Early N.C. & preaches - Freethinker. Infls: Merrie England 18, J.M. Davidson.

Finney S.

PM

Staffs N.W./Burslem. b. 1857 Burslem. P.M. Day Sch, pit top 10, underground 12 - T.U. activist - Pres N. Staffs Miners Fed 1888 - Sec/agent 1912. Cllr 1903 P.M. paents and self considered ministry 24, local preacher all life.

Goldston F.W.

Sunderland. b. 1870. Sunderland. Elem educ & Coll Isleworth. Teacher - N.U.T. E.C. 1904-10, Gen Sec 1920s. Fab.

Lansbury G.

CE

Bow and Bromley b. 1859 Whitechapel childhd, S of navy. Elem educ. Coal-heaver 14, Australia 1884-6 works in & Inherits f-in-law's timber firm 1895 Soc agit 1880s - fenians - H.G. - Soc Lib Ward Sec 1886-92 - founds S.D.F. branch 1892. I.L.P. 1903. Founds Daily Herald 1911 - editor 1913. Broad C of E - Ethical Agnost (Children to Eth S.S.)-C of E. Xt Soc 1900 on. Founds C.S.L. branch - Pres 1911 - close friend and same views as C. Noel. Theos 1914. Teetotal. Infls: Morris, Bellamy, etc.

(fought and lost by-election 1913)

1929	
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1910 D	

d) M.P.s first
elected 1918

Ammon C.G.
(by-election 1922)

W
Camberwell N. b. 1872 Southwark S of Rad
toolmaker. Elem educ. Bottle factory 11,
P.O. sorter - T.U. 1893. I.L.P. 1893,
forms Bermondsey Branch with A. Salter
1908. W.W.I. U.D.C. E.C., N.C.F. Parl Sec
1916. L.C.C. 1919. Lay preacher Broth Mvt
speaker. Total Abst. Xt Socialist.

Banton G.
(by-election 1922)

D
Leicester E. b. 1856, Leics childhood. Elem
educ. App Cabinet Maker - T.U. - Amalg Soc
Cabinet Makers - Pres - later owner Coal
Merchants firm. Founder Leics I.L.P. 1894 &
Pres 1894-1909. Cllr 1895 on. Pres Leics Lab
P 1910 on. Xt Soc & Pacifist W.W.I.

Barker G.

NR
Abertillery. b. 1858 Hanley. Nat Sch. Milk
boy 8, mines 10, Army 1876-83, China 1902-8.
Miner - agent - S.W.M.F. E.C. 1898. Militant.
I.L.P. Supps Central Lab Coll 1909, Plebs L.
Moderate M.P.

Bell J.

Ormskirk. b. 1872 Darlington S of miner. Elem
educ, then mines. Sec Oldham Weavers Ass.

Bromfield W.

Leek. b. 1870. Textile worker - T.U. - Gen Sec
Amalg Soc Textile Workers & Kindred Trades.

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1924	/								
1923	/								
1922	/	/		/		/		/	/
1918	/	/		/		/		/	/

Brown J. CS Ayrs S. b. 1862 Ayr. Elem educ. Mines 12 - T.U. branch sec 18 - Pres Ayrs Miners U 1895 - Sec 1908 - 18. I.L.P. 1899. Active Churchman. Prohibitionist. Anti-Communist.

Cairns J. PM Morpeth. b. 1859 Northumberland. Colliery Sch, Mines 12 - active T.U. official. PM local preacher youth on. Supps ind lab idea. W.W.I. recruiter. (d. 1923.)

Cape T. PM Workington b. 1868 Cockermouth. S of miner. mines 13 27 yrs - strike leader 15 - branch Pres 27 - agent 1908 - C.M.A. Sec 1916. Early I.L.P. 1910. Lay preacher, Chapel Steward youth on. Xt Socialist.

Carter W. Mansfield. b. 1862 S of brickmaker. Miner - T.U. activist - founded branch Notts M.A. 1899 - Pres 1909 - full time official 1910.

Davies A. Clitheroe. b. 1871 Stockport. operative spinner of Hollingworth - T.U. activist - on E.C. of Hyde Operative Cotton Spinners Association.

Davies E. M Ebbw Vale b. 1876 Miner - T.U. agent 10 yrs. I.L.P. Sunday School officer, active M. Chur. Temperance. (by-election 1920)

Davies R. J. WC Westhoughton. b. 1877 Glam. S of roadmender, lived in tithe barn. 3 yrs farm lab, 10 yrs mines led miners' choir fundraising 1898 strike. Manchester. Co-op - full time agent Amalg U Co-op Empls Cllr. I.L.P. Lab Ch lect 1920s. Mchstr Welsh Cong choirmaster, Local Preacher. Soc. Infl: Blatchford.

Davison J.E.
(resigned 1926)

Smethwick. b. 1870 Smethwick. Elem educ. at Sheffield. Bootshop, boiler-maker, iron foundry sand artist 21 yrs. T.U. - official - V-P F.S.I. Night Sch qualified sanitary insp. Visited U.S.A. 1921 study Prohibition.

Edwards C.

C Bedwellty. b.1867 Radnorshire. Educ Nat Sch. Mines 14 - T.U. agent. Cllr. Chairman local ch diaconate.

Edwards G.

PM Norfolk S. b. 1850 Norfolk. No educ, taught to read by wife. S of agric lab - period workhouse - farmwork 6 - T.U. activist 1870s on - victimised - 1889 Dist Sec Norfolk Agric Lab U - 1890 full-time org. Rad Lib 20s - E.L.R.L. vanner 1896-Lib to 1918. Local Preacher 1873. Infls: Henry George.

Gillis W.

UM Penistone. b. 1859 Naval Warship Black Sea S of Petty Off, dies. Stepfather agric lab Norfolk. Farmboy 7 - in Arch's Union 1870s - to Sheffield - rly engine greaser - mines 14 - 48 yrs - checkweigher 32 - T.U. activist - Y.M.A. E.C. Cllr. Youth S.A. later U.M.

(by-election 1921)

Graham D.M.

Hamilton b. 1867 Hamilton. Mines 11 - checkweigher 26 - Scots Miners' pol organiser 41 until M.P. Early Lib - I.L.P. 1894 after strike v. Lib owners. Lanarks M.U. Gen Sec 1918-23. Moderate 1920s Lab Ch lect 1920s.

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1918	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Graham W. C Edinburch C. b. 1887 Edinburch childhood. Civil Service Clerk - journalist 12 yrs - econ & law degrees Edinb Univ 1915, 1917, Cllr 1913. I.L.P. & Edinb Univ Fab Soc.

Greenwood A. D Nelson. b. 1880. editor Lab Journal, Leeds 20s Active W.E.A. econ lecturer Leeds Univ. Civil Servant to 1920. Xt Soc. Active C.S.M. 1920s-30s.

Grenfell D.R. Gower. b. 1881 nr Swansea. Mines 12 - Glam Co Tech Classes - colliery manager's cert 24 - S.W.M.F. agent 35. Radical mother. Prohibition advocate. Infls: Tolstoy, econ bks.

Griffiths T. WCM Pontypool. b. 1867 Elem educ - ½ timer steel works - Ruskin Coll 33 - Steel Smelters U org 1899-1917. Cllr S of staunch Nonconformist father - persecuted - son Deacon and S.S. Teacher from youth.

Grundy T.W. Rother Valley. b. 1864 nr Rotherham. Ragged and Wesl Schs farm 10, mines 13 - T.U. activist - local org C. M.A. 1884 on - checkweigher. 1895, Sch Bd 1893, Lib Cllr 1900, First Lab Mayor Rotherham 1915.

Guest J. W Hemsworth. b. 1867 nr Barnsley. S of farm lab. Ch Sch Mines 14 - T.U. activist - Yorks M.A. 1894 - V.Pres 1906. Lab Co Cllr 1901. Early Socialist. S.Sch Superintendent.

Hallas E. E Birmingham Duddleston. b. 1870 Stainland (W.R.) S of Chartist millworker. Elem educ & evening class. Eth Ch org B'ham 1906. Founder B'ham and Dist Municipal Empls Ass 1910 - Pres. Active I.L.P. & B'ham Lab Ch post 1906. Cllr 1911. W.W.I. Ch Br Workers Nat L 1916 Elected N.D.P. M.P. 1918, rejoins Lab 1919.

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1918	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Jones J.J. RC W. Ham Silvertown. b. cl 1874 Tipperary C. poverty, Liverpool 11 - delivery boy, docks, labouring. To W. Ham 1897 - victimised for T.U. activities. G.W. & G.L.U. member 1896 on - full-time Gen Org to 1923. S.D.F. 1896 - Prison 14 days 1897 S.D.F. speaker Nelson. Anti Temperance. Anti Bolshevik. Pro-Hyndman W.W.I.

Jones T.I. Mardy- (by-election 1922 resigned January 1931) B Pontytridd. b. 1879 S of Miner killed age 6. Board Sch - miner - T.U. activist - Ruskin Coll 2½ yrs I.L.P.

Jones M. B Caerphilly. b. 1885 S of miner. Sec Educ, Univ Coll Reading School teacher. I.L.P. N.A.C. W.W.I. N.C.F. - C.O. prison. Xt Soc, member Christian Socialist League 1930s.

Kennedy T. NR Kirkaldy Burghs. b. 1876 Aberdeenshire. railway clerk S.D.F. 1899 - full-time Scottish org - Nat Org - Gen Sec 1923 Carion Vanner 7 yrs, W.W.I. army 1915 on. Leading S.D.F. propagandist. Marxist.

Lawson J.J. W Chester-le-St. b. 1881 Whitehaven Nat Sch. Durham mines T.U. activist - Ruskin Coll 1906. 2 yrs - 1911 check -weigher. Socialist 23, joins I.L.P. - activist. Co Cllr 1913 on. Lay preacher 20 on. Infls: Clarion, Lab Leader & other Soc Literature 20 on. P.P.S. to MacDonald

Lunn W. PM Rothwell (W.R.) b. 1872 Rothwell S of miner. Mines 12 T.U. branch Ch 19 - checkweigher 27. Helps found Rothwell I.L.P. 1893 strike. Sch Bd 22 - Cllr 1903-18. Fabian 1890s on. P.M. activist & Temperance.

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1918	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

MacLean N. NR Glasgow Govan. b.1875 Mull. T.U. activist. Helps form Partick branch S.L.P. 16. Friend of H.M.H. I.LP.Organiser Scottish C.W.S. I.L.P. refuse reselection 1929. Lab M.P. to 1950.

Malone Col. C.J.L. CE (CoLib 1918 B.S.P. 1920. By-election 1928) Leyton E/Northampton. b. 1890 S of clergyman. Private Schools and Dartmouth. W.W.I. air forces. 6 mths prison D.O.R.A. 1920 Lab Ch lecturer 1928.

Mills J.E. Dartford. b. 1882 Freemantle (Aus). Plymouth boyhood. S of dn insp Water Police. Elem & Higher Grade. Paper seller 10 (home needs money) errand boy, app engineer London. A.S.E. actiyist 20 on - branch officer - shop steward. I.L.P. 1905 Alderman 1919. Daily Herald Russ Corresp 1919-20.

Morgan Maj. D.W. WCM Rhondda E. b. 1867 Shewen Glam. Elem educ. Mines 11, - T.U. activist - Gen Sec and agent Rhondda Miners Fed 1898-1920. Co Cllr 24 years, Qualified mine manager. 1900-14 mining engineer. W.W.I. to Lieut-Col. Welsh Speaker.

Myers T. (by-election 1919) Spen Valley. b. 1871 Mirfield. Elem educ. Pit & textiles, glassblower 15 yrs. Cllr 16 yrs. I.L.P. activist since 1893. Active T.U.

Naylor T.E. (by-election 1921) Southwark S.E. b. 1868 Clerkenwell. Elem educ. W-M Coll. errand boy 12, compositor - Sec London Soc Comps 1906 on. Writes Daily Herald. Early I.L.P.er

Onions A. (d. 1921) W Caerphilly. b. 1858. Shrops, S of miner. Ch Sch to 10½, mines 13 T.U. activist - checkweigher 1887 - branch sec 1888 - agent 1898 on. M.F.G.B. E.C. Moderate. Loses seat 1911. First ch Risca U.D.C., 18 yrs Co Cllr. Local Preacher 24 on.

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M
 Parkinson J.A.
 Wigan. b. 1870 Nr Wigan. S of colliery manager. Educ U.M. Sch 1/2 timer 10, full-time 12, T.U. member 17 - checkweigher 1910 miners agent 1917. 1906 Pres Ince Div Lab P, Cllr 1908. Youth U.M. - P.M. - Cong.

CE
 Richardson R.
 Houghton-Le-S. b. 1862 W. Auckland (Durham). Nat Sch pit 9, T.U. 17 on. - 32 yrs Sec local branch. E.C. D.M.A. 1897-1919. Co Cllr 1901-25, Cllr 1904-22, B. of G. 1904-22. I.L.P. active churchman.

D
 Roberts F.O.
 Bromwich W. b. 1879 nr Northampton. Elem educ. App compositor 13, sec Northampton Typog Soc 1909-18 & Trade C. 1909-20. Union N.E.C. First Sec N'hampton Lab.P. 1915-18 I.L.P. activist - Pres N'hampton I.L.P. 1916. Brotherhood Speaker.

ND
 Robertson J.
 (by-election 1919. d. 1926)
 Bothwell. b. 1867. Elem educ - mines 11 - checkweigher - N.U.S.M.W. agent 1893 - V.P. 20 yrs then P. N.U.S.M.W. I.L.P. 1893 - activist. Evangelist estrnged from denom Xt for lack social concern. Infls: Land agit 1880s - George, Ruskin, Carlyle. Total Abst.

Rose F.H.
 (Ind Lab 1918 d. 1929)
 Aberdeen N. b. 1857 Lambeth app engineer A.E.U. 1878 - T.U. org Ire & Lancs 1893-1900. Journalist 1900 on, founds N.U.J. Infls: W. Morris type libertarian Socialism.

D
 Royce W.S.
 (d. 1924)
 Holland-w-Boston. b. 1858 Spalding, S of millwright. Commercial Sch to 14. App joiner 1872, London 1876 G.P.O. 3 yr contract S.A. railway building 1876 - saves. £200. Partnr Constr firm. Boer War to England Wealthy. Spalding farmer/largw landowner. Con cand 1910 J&D Pres Unionist Ass 1910-18. Tariff reform, bottom dog; rail nat; religious all life. Infls incl Carlyle, Emerson.

1929	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
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1918	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Sexton J.

RC

St Helens. b; 1856 Irish Liverpool. Glassworks 9 yrs at sea, Calif ranch 1868-79. Liverpool 23. Docks - accident, no compensation - active Dockers U 1889 on. Pres local br Irish Nat L. ex-Lib. I.L.P. founder. Lab Ch lect 1894 on. Wrote in Clarion 1890s. Infls: George - Marx - I.L.P.

Shaw T.

Preston. b. 1872 Colne Elem & Tech Schs, 1/2 timer 10 - T.U. activist 21 on, E.C. Amalg Weavers Ass, retired 1921 appointed 2nd International Lab Ch lect 1928.

Short A.

Wednesbury. b. 1882 Gloucester. Elem educ, app boilermaker active T.U. - official - Sheffield Cllr 8 yrs. Grays Inn 1920, called to Bar 1923. Barrister.

Sitch C.H.

Kingswinford Staffs. b. 1887 Nr Chester S of T.U. activist & Bapt. Elem educ. Shop ass 13, Ruskin Coll 18 supp by Chain makers Ass (father S Staffs Sec) - T.U. Org 20 on. succeeded father as Gen Sec 1923. Lib Cllr 1913 - left for Lab on L-G Coalition 1916. U.S.A. 1921 study Prohibition.

Smith W.R.

Wellingborough/Norwich. b. 1872 No-rwich. Printer's boy 12-app boot factory. T.U. activist - Norwich br Boot and Shoe Ops U 1892-1916. Nat org 1916-24. Trades C. Pres 13 yrs, Cllr 13 yrs. Lab Ch lect 1914,

Spencer G.A.

W

Broxtowe Notts. b. 1873 Ashfield S of miner. little educ. Pits 12 - checkweigher - Pres Notts M.A. Local Preacher to late 1920s. I.L.P. 1900 W.W.I. pro-war. Ind M.P. last years.

1929	/								
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Young Sir R.

C
 Newton-Le-W. b. 1872 Glasgow. orphaned 7½,
 Industr. Sch. shopboy 12, app engineer 14 -
 T.U. activist - Ruskin Coll 1903-5. Ass Gen
 Sec'A.S.E. 1908 - Gen Sec 1913-18. Active
 speaker Society of Socialist Xts 1920s on.

e) M.P.s first elected
 1922:

Adams D

Newcastle/
 W. b. 1871 S of shipowner. Educ Science & Art
 Sch & Armstrong Coll. App engineer - A.S.E. 1902-
 Member to death. City Cllr 1902 on. Ch Newcastle
 Lab P 1903 on. I.L.P., Fabian, Partner D. & T.G.
 Adams Shipowners. 1917 Club. Temperance.

Adamson W.M.

Cannock. b. 1881 Kilmarnock. App patternmaker -
 T.U. activist - I.L.P. organiser Coventry 1910.
 Workers' U org Black Country 1912 on.

Alexander A.V.

B
 Sheffield Hillsborough. b. 1885 Weston-s-m. Elem
 educ, office boy 13, local Govt clerk 17. Sec Som-
 erset br N.A.L.G.O. Active Co-op - sec to Co-op
 Parl Cttee 1920-2. W.W.I. Pt to Capt; Local Pr 23 on
 active Xt all life.

Attlee C.R.

CE
 Limehouse. b. 1883 S of Solicitor. Educ Haileybury
 & Univ Coll Oxford Barrister 1905, active Settlement
 Movt - sec Haileybury House 1907, Toynbee Hall 1910,
 Poor Law Reform & Soc propagandist 1911, L.S.E. lec-
 turer Soc Sci 1912. W.W.I. Maj; Fab & I.L.P. 1907;
 Socialist. Infls: settlements, Ruskin, Morris. Con-
 servative 1903.

Barnes A.J.

E.Ham S. b. 1887 S of docker, app gold & silversmith
 T.U. Co-op & I.L.P. 21 on. Own business.

1929	/							
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Batey J. PM
 Spennymoor. b. 1867 nr Gosforth. S of miner educ colliery Sch, mines 12 - checkweigher 20 yrs - miners agent 1913. S. Shields. of G. 1894-1915, Cllr 1896 on. Nat of mines adv. 1907 first Lab J.P. Co. Durham. Lab P active establ local org 1918.

Bell J.N. (d. Dec 1922)
 Newcastle E. b. 1865 Islington. Bd Sch. Farm labourer - T.U. Sec 1888 Nat Amalg U of Labour. V-Pres T.U.C. Gen Council 1921.

Broad F.A.
 Edmonton. b. 1874 Bd Sch to 13, 3 days grocer boy 10 on. Sci instr maker 16 - Sc Instr Makers Soc & I.L.P. 19 - T.U. branch Pres 21 - S.I.M.S. Nat Pres to merger A.E.U.. W.W.I. U.D.C. member. activist "Humanitarian" esp re animals.

Brotherton J. L
 Gateshead. b. 1867. Elem educ, ½ timer 10 app engineer 16 Leeds - A.S.E. 21 activist - branch sec 31. Vic-timised. Leader unemployed demos 1893-4. Active West S.S. superintendent, Class Leader young man - becomes Soc & active founding Leeds Lab Ch 1893 & Soc Sunday Sch - Sec & Ch I.L.P.

Buchanan G.
 Glasgow Gorbals. b. 1890 Gorbals. Elem educ, Pattern-maker - T.U. activist - I.L.P. - Cllr 1918-23. Pro-hibitionist.

Buckle J. (d. 1925)
 Eccles. Boot and Shoe Operative - T.U. on N.E.C. First Lab Cllr Leeds 1904.

Burgess S.
 Rockdale. b. 1889 Ipswich. Elem educ & milk delivery boy after Sch 10. App engineer, joins I.L.P. & victimised, period U.S.A. - engineer A.E.U. W.W.I. prison 3 days shop steward munitions strike. Lab Ch lect 1923.

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Gosling H.

Whitechapel & St. George's. b. 1861 Lambeth S of lighterman. Elem educ, app to father 14, lighterman to 1993 - official Amalg Soc Watermen, Lightermen & Bargemen - Gen Sec to 1910 - amalg-Pres Transp W. Fed. Active Dock Strike. L.C.C. Ald & Cllr 1898 on. (Prog) L.C.C. Lab Leader 1923.

Greenall T.

Barnworth (Lancs) b. 1857. S of miner & T.U. activist Work 8 on Mines 11 on - T.U. activist - agent 1889. Pres Lanc & Chesh Miners Fed 1908-29.

Groves T.E.

W.Ham Stratford. b. 1884 Stratford. S of engine driver. Elem educ, G.E. Rly Tech Inst - app G.E. coach builder - Ruskin scholarship 1907-10 - L.C.C. tramways builder - studies - lecturer Econ/Soc. Cllr 1916 on. Prohibitionist.

Hall G.H.

Aberdare. b. 1881 Glam. S of colliery ostler. Mines 12 - T.U. activist - checkweigher 30. Considers Church 19 then politics. Active C of E all life - Total Abst. I.L.P. activist, Ch Merthyr Lab P 1910-15 Lab Cllr 1908 on.

Hardie G.D.B.

Glasgow, Springburn. b. 1860, younger brother J.K.H. Orig I.L.P. member, wrote for Lab Leader etc. Partner Glasgow Engineers firm. Pacifist, active religious. Prohibition.

Hastings Sir P.G.
(retired 1926)

Wallsend. b. 1880 s of solicitor. Educ Charterhouse, trains engineer, serves 2 yrs Boer War ranks, Bar 1904, Q.C. 1919. 1918 seeks adoption as Lib, joins Lab 1919.

Hay Capt J.P.

Glasgow Cathcart. b. 1876 Coatbridge. Educ Glasgow & London Univs. Christian Missioner Manchuria 1906-15, returns to fight in W.W.I.. War experiences lead to Lab P resigns mission, joins I.L.P., active propagandist. Total Abst. U.F.C. Elder.

Hayes J.H.
(by-election 1923)

Liverpool Edge Hill. b. 1887 s of police Sgt Wolverhampton. Elem educ steel works 13 - Tech/Sci classes spare time. Metrop Police 20 - Sgt 24. Gen Sec Police & Prison Offs U - leads 1919 strike.

Hemmerde E.G.

Crewe. b. 1871 s of prominent banker. Educ Winchester & Univ Coll Oxon. Bar 1897 K.C. 1908 Lib M.P. 1906-10, 1912-18. Refused Coupon, Lab 1920 Land Taxer. W.W.I. opponent.
Glasgow/

Henderson T.

Tradeston. b. 1868 Fife. Elem educ, work 11, app cabinet maker. Belfast friend of Connally. Glasgow Cllr 1919. Prohibitionist.

Herriotts J.

Sedgfield. b. 1873. Tredegar s of miner. Durham age 5. Elem educ, pupil teacher - mines. T.U. activist - checkweigher 1900 on. I.L.P. 1890s on. Co Cllr 1907-10, Ch Bp Auckland Lab P W.W.I.

Hill A.

Leicester W. b. 1866 Welwyn. Elem educ. shoe industry 13 on. Active T.U. Local Preacher 19 on Leics Cllr 18yrs.

Jenkins W.

Neath. b. 1871. Mines 12 - T.U. activist - checkweigher - agent. Bard and Welsh Nat Cong Ch Deacon. Glam Co Cllr

Johnston T.
(Dundee Dec 1924-29)

Stirling & Clackmannan W/Dundee. b. 1882. Kirkintilloch s of licensed grocer. Educ Lenzie Acad & Glasgow Univ. Journalist & founder/editor Forward 1906. I.L.P. activist Sc Bd age 21 then Cllr. Ch Glasgow Univ Soc & Lived Univ Settlement. Prohibitionist. Opposed W.W.I. - Glasgow branch U.D.C. founder member.

Jones R.T.

Caernarvonshire. b. Blaenau Ffestiniog 1874. Slate Quarry 13 - joins Quarrymens' U 16 - Sec 1908 on. Home Ruler, Prohibitionist. S. Sch teacher.

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1923	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1922	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Kirkwood D. UP Dumbarton Burghs. b. 1874 Glasgow s of Presb Rad labourer. Elem educ, message boy 12, app engineer 14' - A.S.E. activist 20 on - victimised. Soc Lab P early 1900s, I.L.P. 1914 as anti-war, founder members Glas-gow branch U.D.C., active Clyde shop-stewards Movt. U Presb Elder, Temperance. Infl to Soc E. Bellamy Looking Backwards.

Leach W. ND Bradford C. b. 1870. s of Bradford worsted manufacturer Later inherits business. I.L.P. 1895, Cllr 1907, edits Brad Pioneer 1915-9. Anti-Vivisection. 1917 Club. W.W.I. antiand left establ churches over it.

Lee F. W Derbyshire. N.E. b. 1867. Mines 14 - T.U. activist - checkweigher 29 - Ass Gen Sec Derbys M.A. Lib to M.F.G. B. aff to Lab P 1909. Lay Preacher, S Sch Superintendent, Choirmaster.

Lowth T. Manchester Ardwick. b. 1858 Billingborough Lincs. Elem educ. railwayman 23 yrs - T.U. organiser 20 yrs - Sec Gen Railway W U - 1913 amalg, Ass Sec N.U.R. Manchester 17, I.L.P. Lab Coll Governor.

McEntee V.L.T. Walthamstow W. b. 1871 Dublin s of doctor & Prot Orange -man, Carpenter/joiner - to London 29. T.U. activist 22 on. Irish Lab Rep Cttee first Sec. Leads Lab maj gp Walthamstow U.D.C. W. Morris Inst member.

MacLaren A. RC Burslem. b. 1863 Glasgow Irish. RC Sch app engineer - to London 1913 artist. Land Values Movt, I.L.P., U.D.C. W.W.I. Co. Infl: H. George, Buckle, Bakunin, Marx. Lab Ch lect 1927, Prohibitionist.

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Poplar S. b. 1861 s of Dagenham agric lab victimised as activist Arch's T.U. 1/2 time farm 9, full time 14. Carman in Poplar 18-34 - Gen Sec Carmen's London T.U. 1895. Poplar Lab League 1887 (later became I.L.P.) Active Dock Strike Cllr : 6 wks prison Poplarism.

Whitechapel & St George's b. 1872 s of Lord Justice. Educ Oratory Sch Birmingham, Trinity Hall Cantab - Bar 1897. L.C.C. St George's (Prog) 1910 on. Atheneum Club. Active R.C. Slum Schs & relief wk in 1912 Dock Strike.

Glasgow Bridgeton. b. 1885 Glasgow s of Unionist & Presb teachers. Educ Hutcheson's G.S.-pupil teacher 15 - Glasgow Teachers' Training Coll & Univ 1902. Teacher Bridgeton 1905 - active T.U. Early U to 1903, I.L.P. 1909 on W.W.I. C.O. Infls to Soc: Boer War Pacifism; George, Kropotkin, Blatchford, Marx.

Carlisle. b. 1876 Ramsey (Hunts) Elem educ, sorting clerk telegraphist Crewe to 1914. T.U. activist - edits Postal & Teleg Record to 1920 then The Post.

Dundee. b. 1873 France. Educ Bedford Mod Sch. Clerk shipping firm L'pool 17 - discovers W. African slave condits 1900. Campaigns v Congo atroc, with Dilke 1904 forms Congo Ref Ass. Journalism - anti-war 1913 on Founder U.D.C. 6 mths prison D.O.R.A. 1917. I.L.P. Mar 1918. Lab Ch lect 1924.

Tottenham N. b. 1881 Aberdeen s of railwayman. Elem & Sec Educ. Teacher. Cllr 1914 on. W.W.I. private S.D.F. & Co-op Party.

March S.

Mathew C.J.
(d. 1923)

Maxton J,

Middleton G.

Morel E.D.
(d. 1924)

Morrison R.C.

RC

F

F

NR

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Muir J.W.

P

Glasgow Maryhill. b. 1879 Glasgow s of shoemith. Elem educ app engineer - T.U. activist, edits Worker, organ Clyde shop stewards' Movt, W.W.I. 12 mths prison D.O.R. A. 1916. I.L.P. activist 20 on. Lay Preacher - Xt Soc. Prohibitionist.

Murnin H.

RC

Stirling & Falkirk Burghs. b. 1865 Bathgate Irish. Elem educ, mines 9 T.U. activist - checkweigher 30 - agent 36. Pres N.U. Scot Mineworkers 1920. Early active United Irish L. Moderate Social Catholicism - only son a priest.

Murray R.

EU

Renfrewshire W. b. 1869 Barrhead s of employee of R. Owen New Lanark. Elem educ, ½ timer 9 then brass furnisher - Journalist active N.U.J. jt edits Scottish Co-operator. Rad conv to Soc by J.K.H. - I.L.P. activist. active E.U. Church, Prohibitionist.

Nicholl R.

Renfrewshire E. b. 1889 s of engineer & T.U. Sec. Educ Glasgow Univ. Teacher. Pres Univ Socialist Soc, I.L.P. activist opposes Air Estimates 1924.

Oliver G.H.

Ilkeston (Derbys) b. 1888 Bolton. Elem educ, app engineer A.S.E. 21 - Chief Convenor Shop Stewards Rolls Royce Cllr 27. Infl teens: Marx Capital, Webb Industrial Democracy.

Paling W.

Doncaster b. 1883. Elem educ, mines 12 - T.U. 14 - br cttee 22 on. Notts Univ 3 yrs mining scholarship. Student & occasional teacher Central Lab Coll.

Parker H.

Hanley b. 1864. ½ timer 10, mines 12 - winding engineer 22 yrs - T.U. - activist - Sec Nat Org Engineer - men & Firemen. Cllr 14 yrs. Lay Preacher.

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Ponsonby A.A.W.H.
(peerage 1930)

ND Sheffield Brightside. b. 1871 gt Gramson Earl Grey. Eton & Balliol. onetime page to Q. Victoria. 9 yrs Dipl Service, Lib Central Ass 1903-6. Lib M.P. 1906-18 - adv Rad. W.W.I. U.D.C. founder - disowned by Dunfermline Burghs Lib P. Loses 1918 as Ind Dem, joins Lab P Dec 1918. Active religious, outside denominations.

W Potts J. Barnsley. b. 1861 Bolton S of miner. Mines 11 - checkweigher 28 - miners' agent 1915. Lib 1890s. Cllr. Local Preacher, Temperance.

W Richards Prof R. Wrexham. b. 1884 Oswestry s of miner. Elem educ - Univ Coll Aberystwyth - Cambridge Univ Prof Economics Bangor Univ Coll. Welsh culture enthusiast. Prohibitionist.

Riley B. Dewsbury. b. 1867 Halifax. Woollen factory 9-14, app bookbinder. Huddersfield 1897, own business master bookbinder 1900. S.D.F. & E.L.R.L. Red Van lecturer 1880s. I.L.P. founder member N.A.C. Sch Bd 1897, Cllr, Trades C Sec 1897-1910.

W Ritson J. Durham. b. 1874 Farlam Cumberland s of agric lab turned miner. Mines 12, Sunderland police 20s 8 yrs returned to mines. T.U. activist - D.M.A. E.C. - checkweigher 1912. Cllr 1912 on. Active Wesl.

Robinson W.C. Elland. b. 1861 Carlton (Yorks). Elem educ, factory 10, active 1878 Cotton Strike aged 17 - Gen Sec Ass Amalg Beamers, Twisters and Drawers 1889 on. B of G 9 yrs.

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Saklatvala S.

F

Battersea N. b. 1873 Bombay wealthy Parsee. Educ St Xavier's Sch & Coll Bombay, Nephew Sir Ratan Tata, London 1915 on. Clerk London office Tata Ltd. Lib - B.S.P. - remains when became Communist Party. Lab P endorsed 1922 & 3 although C.P.; C.P. M.P. 1924-9 Lab Ch lect 1923 & 8. 1917 Club.

Salter Dr A.

Q

Bermondsey W. b. 1873 Greenwich, s of admin officer Metrop Gas Co & Puritans. Educ Roan Sch, Guys Hospital 1889. Lived Bermondsey Settlement 1898 on. Poor man's doctor. Cllr Bermondsey 1903, L.C.C. 1907 (Prog). Founder Bermondsey I.L.P. 1908. Early read Darwin & lost Evan faith - S.D.F. 1890 - Fabians - Boer War pacifist. Quaker 1900. Regular chapel Preacher and Xt Socialist. Member Soc Xt L. 1930s. Prohibition. W.W.I. N.C.F. Sec 1916. Infls Soc: Looking Backwards, Fab Essays, Hyndman, Bible.

Scrymgeour E.
(Ind Socialist & Prohibition)

W

Dundee. b. 1866 Dundee s of Wesl Tory philanthropists. Elem educ, Clerk 15 on. - gave up work after 1898 elected Parish Cllr. 1904, org sec Nat Prohib Party & edited Prohibitionist. Xt Soc on left of Lab P, but anti-Marx. W.W.I. anti-war.

Shinwell E.

J

Linlithgowshire. b. 1884 Spitalfields poverty. Little educ, errand boy 11 clothing trade, intermittent work, T.U. activist, Trades C rep 22, Tory conv by Neil MacLean 19 - Soc full-time T.U. work. Militant.

Smillie R.
(by-election 1923)

P

Morpeth. b. 1859 Belfast - Scot parents - early Glasgow timer 10, Clyde shipyard 15, mines 17 - checkweigher 22 - Pres Scottish Miners' Fed 1894 - Pres M.F.G.B. 1912 -21. Early Soc infl: J.K.H. & Bi ble. Sch Bd 1887, Parl card 1894 on.

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Keighley. b. 1878 s of Ind Army Officer. Educ Ald-
 enham Military. Coll & Woolwich - resigns & Queen's
 Coll Oxon Fellow, founder & V-Principal Ruskin Coll.
 Lib M.P. 1910-18. W.W.I. opponent, U.K. activist loses
 as Ind Rad 1918, joined I.L.P. 1919. Active Cong.

C

Smith H.B.
 Lees -

Pontefract. b. 1886 nr Barnsley. Elem educ, orphaned
 15, mines to support brothers, T.U. activist - victim-
 ised - checkweigher - Y.M.A. official. I.L.P.

Smith T.

Woolwich E. b. 1886 Sutton-on-Trent. Elem educ, plough
 boy 12, app French polisher to 1890, Woolwich agent C.
 O.S. 1890-5 - L.S.E. scholarship - Hutchinson lect -
 U Eth Socs Sec. Early Soc, I.L.P. Infl Bradlaugh to
 Sec then Eth Socs. Lab Ch lect 1912.

E

Snell H.
 (peerage 1931)

Glasgow Camalchie. b. 1884 Caithness. Educ Glasgow Univ
 1911 ordained U.F.C. minister Ardrossan. 1920 resigned
 for Soc propaganda, taught. Qualified barrister. Early
 I.L.P. revol Xt Soc. Prohibitionist.

UFC

Stephen Rev C

Glasgow St Rollox. b. 1863 Glasgow slum. s of hairdresser.
 Elem educ, app to father 14 - be came proprietor 2 shops
 S.D.F. late 1880s, Fab & Scot Lab P 1891 (merges I.L.P.
 1895). Cllr 1909 on.

Stewart J.
 (d. 1931)

Bothwell/Lanarks N. b. 1866 Cambuslang Irish Scot. Elem
 educ. Mines 12 - T.U. activist - checkweigher 27 - T.U.
 agent 41. Pres Lanarks Miners U. I.L.P., Cllr, Co Cllr,
 Sch Bd.

RC

Sullivan J
 (by-election 1926)

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Tout W.J. Oldham/Sowerby. b. 1869 Exeter, Burnley childhood. Mill 1/2 timer 10 - weaver - active T.U. - Sec Todmorden Weavers Winders Ass - E.C. Amalg Weavers Ass.

Trevelyan C.P. Newcastle C. b. 1870 Educ Harrow & Trinity Cantab. Lib M.P. 1899-1918 - adv Rad, Rainbow Circle, W.W.I. U.D.C. founder, lost as Ind 1918, joined I.L.P. 1918. Conv Soc -ialist.

Turner B. L Batley & Morley. b. 1863 Holmfirth (Yorks) s of Secular -ist. Dame & Nat Schs. Mill 1/2 timer 10. - T.U. activist, founds branch Gen U Textile Ws 20 - active org Leeds Gas workers 1890 strike. - T.U. off. S.D.F. 1886, Fabs 1889, I.L.P. activist 1893 on. Teetotal. Infl: Secularism - adv Rad - Soc. Read Morris, Carpenter, Kropotkin etc. Leeds Lab Ch & S.S.S. activist.

Wallhead R.C. Merthyr. b. 1870 London. Elem educ, railway clerk, decorative craftsman. 1906 worked Lab Leader, 1908 on full time I.L.P. propagandist. N.A.C. 1909 on, ch 1920-3. W.W.I. C.O. 4 mths prison. Cllr.

Warne G.H. ND Wansbeck. b. 1881 Northumberland. Elem educ, mines 12 until M.P. I.L.P. 22, Cllr 16 yrs. Infl: Evolution, Shelley, Keats, Burns, Carlyle.

Watson M.W. Dunfermline Burghs. b. 1874 Elem educ. Mines 12 - T.U. activist - Fife & Kinross Miners Ass - Ruskin Coll 2 yrs 1906-8 - T.U. official. Conv Temperance & Socialism 20.

Webb S. F Seaham. b. 1859 London s of accountant & Rad. Evang Mother. Private Schs & Germany, Birkbeck Inst. Civil Service 1882 external Law degree. London Univ 1884. Fab 1884, 1891 full-time research, L.C.C. 1892 on. (Prog). Early positivist. Lab P. W.W.I. Evolutionary Socialist.

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Williams T
 Don Valley. b. 1888 Blackwell (Derbys) s of miner.
 Elem educ Mines 11 - active T.U. - branch cttee 20 -
 checkweigher 1915 - T.U. official. W.W.I. joined I.L.P.
 & B.S.P. conv Socialist. Infls: Merrie England, Jack
 London Iron Heel.

C
 Wilson C.H.
 Sheffield Attercliffe. b. 1862 s of Rad Lib M.P. Educ
 Friends' Sch Kendall, West Sch & Owen's Coll Manchester.
 Man Dir Sheffield Smelting Co (father's firm). Cllr
 1903 on. W.W.I. C.C. sympathiser. I.L.P. 1918. Cong
 Deacon S.S. superintendent. Soc Xt L 1930s Xt Pacifist
 & Socialist.

P
 Wilson R.J.
 Jarrow. b. 1865 Gateshead. Private educ. studied for
 ministry then app draper. - N.U.D.A.W. E.C. 40 yrs.
 Cllr 16 yrs. Lay Preacher 19 on. Brth Mvt & Temperance
 Speaker. Roker Presb Ch Session Clerk & Durham Pres-
 bytery member.

D
 Wright W.
 (d. 1931)
 Rutherglen. b. 1862 nr Lincoln s of agric lab. Elem educ
 farm lab then mines 12 - active S Yorks Mines strike 1893
 I.L.P. 1893, I.L.P. Org S. Wales 1898. Scottish C.W.S.
 propaganda agent 1906-12. Lecturer. Clarion Vanner 1897
 on. Lay reader 1897, preaches. Prohibitionist. Pro Mines
 Nationalisation.

f) M.P.s first elected
 1923:
 Q
 Alden P.
 Tottenham. S. b. 1865 Oxford s of master butcher. Educ
 Balliol & Mansfield Colls Oxford. Leaves latter to found
 Mansfield House Settlement (Cong), Warden 1890-1901. Cllr
 1892 (Lab from 1894). Active Xt Soc Soc 1886-92, Xt Soc
 L 1894-8. Xt Soc Broth 1898 on. Quaker 1901 - Hon Warden
 Mansf H Org Sec Friends Soc U 1904-11. Rainbow Circle
 1890s. Fab E.C. 1903-7., Lib-Lab M.P. Tottenham 1903-18
 (lost to Co C.). Infl: T.H. Green & Oxon Idealism.

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Ayles W.H.

Q

Bristol N. b. 1879 S. Lambeth s of rly porter. Elem educ, factory 13, app engineer 14 - T.U. & victimised 18 - to Birmingham 1899 - 3 yrs Dist Sec A.S.E. - Bristol A.S.E. work to 1921. B. of G. 27 on, Cllr. I.L.P. organiser 1908, B.A.C. 1912-23. W.W.I. C.O. 2½ yrs prison active N.C.F. Cong & Meth Local Preacher, Q 1918. Soc of Soc Xts, Xt Soc L activist 1920s on.

Baker W.J.
(d. 1930)

Bristol E. b. 1876. P.O. Telegraphist. - P.&T.C.A. activist - Parl Sec - Ass Gen Sec U.P.W. London Trades C E.C., Fab, I.L.P.

Bondfield M.G.
(by-election 1926)

C

Northampton/Wallsend. b. 1873 Chard (Somerset) d of foreman lacemaker, Cong & Chartist. Elem educ, pupil teacher, app shop ass 14 - London - active T.U. - ass sec Shop Ass U 1898 - Women's T.U. League Org Sec 1911, - Adult Suffrage Soc 1906, S.D.F., I.L.P., Fab 1890s. N.A.C. 1913. W.W.I. U.D.C. Lab Ch lect 1907-10, Soc of Soc Xts 1920s, estranged Cong, ostracised for T.U. activities, 1890s - W.W.I. Deeply religious. Teetotal.

Church Maj A.G.

Leyton E./Wandsworth C. b. 1886 Stepney s of compositor/T.U. father & schoolmistress mother. Educ St Thos Charterhouse Univ Coll London. Teacher E London Schs, N.U.T. activities. W.W.I. Major (D.S.O., M.C. etc). 1931 on. Nat Lab cand.

Clarke A.B.
(by-election 1929)

Midlothian N. b. 1868 s of butcher - Elem educ - Mines - early T.U. activist (ass with J.K.H.) - Sec Mid & E Lothian M.A. 1919.- Pres Scot M.A. 1932-40 (d). I.L.P. founder member, anti Communist.

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Climie R.
(d. 1929)

Kilmarnock. b. 1868 Kirkintilloch s of miner. Elem educ - app engineer - A.E.U. activist - full time org Workers U - circ agt (Scotland) Daily Citizen. Cllr 18 yrs.

Cluse W.

NR

Islington S. b. 1875 Islington s of chef. Elem educ, ½ timer 11 - app compositor 15, 20 Cent Press (S.D.F.) - London Soc Comps 1896, Islington I.LP 1896 - active to 1914, S.D.F. 1900 - W.W.I. supps Hyndman - on E.C. to 1930s. W.W.I. R.A.M.C. Cllr 1919 on.

Compton J.

Manchester Gorton. b. 1881 N. Ireland. Elem educ - office boy 11 - app coachmaker 14 Glasgow - T.U. activist - Nat U Vehicle Builders br sec 1906 - Scot Dist Sec 1908 - Nat Org 1912 - Gen Sec 1915 - 23. Manchester Cllr 1919, Lab Ch lect Gorton.

Cove W.G.

Wellingborough/Aberavon (1929 on). b. 1888 Rhondda. Elem educ mines 12, pupil teacher 17 - Exeter Univ Coll - teacher - T.U. activist - N.U.T. V-Pres 1921, Pres 1922.

Crittall V.G.

Maldon. b. 1884 Braintree s of manufacturer. Educ Upp-ingham Sch - 6 yrs Ger & U.S.A. Steelworks. 1910 on. family business - Managing Dir. All employees T.U.

Davies Col. G.M.L.
(Xt Pacifist)

D

Welsh Univs. b. 1880 Liverpool - Educ Liverpool - volunteer Officer - Bank Manager - Sec Welsh Housing Trust - W.W.I. resigned business career for F.O.R. work - prison for Xt Pacifist preaching.

Dickinson T.S.

Lanark. b. 1885 Cleland. Elem educ, ½ timer 10 - various jobs - reporter Scotsman 21 - journalism then on. N.U.J. Glasgow br Pres - E.C. I.L.P. - neighbour Smillie - Ass edit Forward.

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Dukes C.

Warrington. b. 1881 nr Stourbridge. Elem educ, errand boy 11 labourer 17 on. - T.U. activist 17 on - br off 20 - full time off 1912 - Gen Sec Nat U Gen W. I.L.P. 1906, W.W.I. C.O. prison.

Egan W.H.

Birkenhead. b. 1896 poverty - 33 yrs ship-yards - 25 yrs Boilermakers U br off. Birkenhead Trades C Sec 1910 - full time Sec Trades C & Lab P 1919. Leader Lab gp on Council.

Gardner B.W.

W Ham Upton. b. 1865 nr Colchester, to W Ham 3. Docks 12 - T.U. activist - 1889 Gasworkers & Gen Lab U - 1892 spokesman wage claim - sacked. Leader unempl agit 1893. Works for Labour Leader 1894-6 - docks - W Ham Socialist Bakery Sec full time 1902 on. Cllr 1906, W.W.I. C.O. sympathiser.

Gardner J.P.

RC Hammersmith N. b. 1883 Belfast. Educ Xt Bros Sch. Early active Hammersmith I.L.P. Ch W London Fed 8 yrs - Cllr 1919.

Gibbins J.
(by-election 1924)

PM Liverpool W. Toxteth. b. 1888 Toxteth Sec Liverpool Br Boilermakers Soc - active churchman - W.W.I. R.N.R.

Gillett G.M.

Q Finsbury. b. 1870 Islington s of Bankers & Qs. Private educ. partner Gillett's Discount Bank, Lombard St. 30 yrs. Vol Soc work Peel Q Inst Clerkenwell. Finsbury Cllr 1900, L.C.C. 1910. W.W.I. C.O. sympathiser but also member Military Service Appeal Tribunal.

Gould F.

W Frome b. 1879 Midsomer Norton s of miner & T.U. Elem educ boot boy 12, boot factory 16 - T.U. br sec - 1920 - unempl - 1921 Lab P Div agent first local Lab Cllr, Lay Pr- eacher, Soc of Soc Xts 1920s, Infls: Blatchford, Theology,

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Guest Dr L.H.
(resigns 1927)

W Southwark N. b. 1876 Oldham s of doctor, Repub & Sec-
ularist. Youth train's in father's practice, Hulme.
Owen's Coll & London hospital-1900-2 'S. Africa -
Southwark children's dr 1902 on. W.W.I. org Red Cross
field hospitals - M.C. (rescues wounded under fire)
Socialist by 18, Fab E.C. I.L.P. Theos.

Hastings Dr S

C Reading. b. 1878 Warminster S of Cong Minister. Educ
Wycliffe Coll Stonehouse Gloucs & London. Ear &
Throat surgeon Middx Hosp, W.W.I. R.A.M.C. Surgeon
Capt. Found's Soc Medical Movt, Soc 20s on. - I.L.P.
& Fab, Soc of Soc Xts Cttee 1920s on.

Haycock A.W.F.

Salford W. b. 1882 Ontario s of leader Farmer's
Party Dominion. Parl; Univ educ. Various empl Br
Columbia - to br org sec F.P. Cttee of M.P.s (Lib-
Rad- founded N. Angell - W.W.I. Friends Ambulance,
1916 spoke v Conscriptio n - jailed C.O. I.L.P. ac-
tive Clarion Club, 1917 Club.

Henderson A.
(Jnr)

W Cardiff S. b. 1893 Newcastle s of A.H. Educ Centr
Sch Darlington, Qu's Coll Taunton., Trin Hall Cantab.
Barrister 1921. WW.I. private - Lieut. Active Wesl,
Peace advocate, moderate.

Henderson W.W.

W Enfield. b. 1891 Newcastle s of A.H. Educ Queen Eliz
G.S. Darlington. Lab P.H.Q. work 1907 - Daily Citizen
edit sec 1912-14, 1919-21 Lobby Corresp Daily Herald,
Assoc Ed Brotherhood Outlook 1919 on. Pte Sec Rt Hon
J. Hodge (Min of Lab) 1917,

Hodges F.

PM Lichfield. b. 1887 Woolaston (Gloucs) Elem educ. Mines
1901 Abertillery - Ruskin & Centre Lab Coll 22 - Agent
1912 - M.F.B.G. Gen Sec 1918 on. Local Preacher. 17,
rejected for ministry after study.

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Hoffman P.C.

Essex S.E./Sheffield C . b. 1878 Stratford (Essex)
 s of City of London Silk Mercer, Sch Stepney, Ware-
 housemen, Clerks & Drapers Sch Purley. - app draper
 - shop ass - T.U. activist & victimised. Full-time
 Shop Ass U org 1904.

Hudson J.H.

Huddersfield. b. 1881 Flixton Lancs, s of Soc, Wesl
 Teacher. Elem educ & Manchester Univ - Teacher - N.U.T.
 activist - I.L.P. propagandist, Lab Ch lect 1912.
 U.D.C., Co-founder N.C.F., absolute pacifist 2½ yrs
 prison C.O. Prohibitionist.

Isaacs G.A.

Gravesend/Southwark N. b. 1883 Hoxton poverty, s of
 printer. Elem educ, printer 12 on - N.A.T.S.O.P.A.
 Gen Sec 1909 on. W.E.A. activist, Cllr, first Lab
 Mayor Southwark 1919, Temperance.

Jackson R.F.

Ipswich. b. 1880 Ipswich s of Stonemason & Con, Elem
 educ - stone & marble mason. 1906 founder Ipswich I.L.P
 first Lab Cllr 1911-21, Soc of Soc Xts 1920s. Active C.
 of E. Infls: Blatchford, Shaw, Emerson, Wells, Dickens.

Jewson D.

Norwich. b. 1884 d of old Norwich business family. Gir-
 ton Coll Cantab - Teacher to 1916 - Nat Fed Women
 Workers Chief Org to 1922 (sweated trades). Early Fab
 and Socialist. W.W.I. pacifist.(esp after brother killed)
 Suffragette.

Law A.

Bolton. b. 1872 Elem educ, ½ timer 11-14 mill, full-time
 14 on. - active T.U. Pres Bolton Op Spinners Fed 1916-8,
 1920-2. Pres Bolton Trade and Lab C, and Lab P. Local
 Preacher since youth.

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Lawrence A.S.

U

E Ham N. b. 1870 respectable legal family, & cons.
Educ Newnham Coll Cantab. London Sch Bd 1900, L.C.C.
Marylebone 1910 - conv to Lab 1912 - re-elected Poplar
L.C.C. 1913 - Poplar Boro Cllr - prison Poplarism 1921.
Nat Fed Women Ws org, Fab, I.L.P.

Lawrence F.W.P.

U

Leicester W. b. 1871 S of London businessman. Educ Eton
& Trinity Coll Cantab - Grand Tour - Bar. Lives Mansfield
House 1899-1901 marriage - Poor Man's Lawyer. Boer War
anti. Edits Echo 1902-5, Lab Rec & Rev 1905-7. Adv Radic-
al. Wife & self Prison Suffrage demo. W.W.I. U.D.C.
Treas. Lab P 1922. Supps Capital Levy - strong rel views.

Lindley F.W.

Rotherham. b. 1878 Rotherham, Elem educ, shopboy 12 -
app woodworker - Amalg Soc Carpenters and Joiners activist
- br offs - N.E.C. - full-time org. Founder member Roth-
erham I.L.P. 16.

Mackinder W.
(d. 1930)

ShIPLEY. b. 1880 Hull. Elem educ, ½ timer 10 Bradford Mill,
full-time 13. - T.U. activist - Sec Wool, Yarn & Warehouse
Ws U 1914 (Bradford) - Yorks Div Org 1920. Bradford Cllr.

Harley J.

RC

St Pancras N. b. 1893 Shotts (Lanarks), s of miner. Elem
educ pump boy 13 - Scholarship to St Aloysius Coll Gl-
asgow - St Mungo's Acad - Hammersmith Teachers Training
Coll. Founds Teachers Lab L. I.L.P. & Lab P speaker London.
Opp Versailles & mobbed by crowd.

Martin W.H.P.

P

Durbarntonshire. b. 1886 Durbarntonshire, G Sch Educ, Ch-
artered accountant/Public auditor. I.L.P. 1901 age 15,
Ch Dunbartons Fed 1905. Ch Scot. I.L.P.. Sec Forward
Publ Co. Prohibitionist, preacher.

1929	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1924	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1923	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Montague F. NR Islington W. b. 1876 Clerkenwell, No educ, sells papers on street then 11 yrs shop ass - journalism - clerk Amalg U Building Trade Ws. Magicians Club member. S.D.F. 1894 on - Nat E.C. 1924; I.L.P. 1895 on. - member first Metrop Council I.L.P. - Org I.L.P. Kent & Surrey 1907-9, N London later. Clarion Vanner. W.W.I. Pte-Lieut Islington Ald.

Morrison H.S. NR Hackney S. b. 1888 Brixton s of policeman. Board Sch - errand boy 14 - shop ass - journalist. 1912-5 circulation man Daily Citizen - Sec London Lab P 1914 on, pt time then full time. Brixton I.L.P. 1906, S.D.F. 1907 - rejoined I.L.P. & Sec S London Fed 1910. Infls: Darwin, Marx, Kropotkin, Macdonald. Atheist.

Nixon H. PM The Wrekin. b. 1874 Middlesborough S of ironworker. Elem educ ironworks 13 - Nat U of Blast-furnacemen lodge off 17 - Dist Sec Midlands - Gen Sec. Cllr. P.M. activist.

Palmer E.T. Greenwich. b. 1878 Croydon s of shopkeeper. Elem educ - shop ass - Prudential Insurance agent 21 - first Hon Sec Prudential Staff U - 1913 full-time.

Perry S.F. W Kettering. b. 1877 Stockport s of millworkers. Elem educ 1/2 timer 10 - operative cotton spinner - Pres Stockport O.C.S. Ass 21 - Trades & Lab C V-Pres 12 yrs. Co-op P Sec 1918. Lay Preacher & Broth Mvt.

Purcell A.A. N,R Coventry/Forest of Dean. b. 1872 Hoxton s of french polisher - Educ Keighley Elem Sch - 1/2 timer 9 - app fr polisher 20 (Hoxton) - Gen Sec Amalg Soc F.P.s 1898. To Manchester c 1900 - Trade C member to 1922 - Pres 1910-1 & 1917-9, Salford Cllr 1907-12. S.D.F. & I.L.P., S.D.F. Parl cand 1910, W.W.I. B.S.P. opp H.M.H. - anti-war. Communist Party member 1920-22.

1929	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1924							
1923	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Raynes W.R. W Derby. b. 1871 Staffs s of blacksmith. Elem educ - 11 'sells papers after sch - 13 lace factory Derby - leads boys strike - sacked - app painter - starts own business. I.L.P. 1893, edits Derby Democrat. First Lab Cllr Derby 1911 & Mayor 1920. Lab Ch lect 1914. Gives up business to org Derby Lab P 1915.

Romeril H.G. St Pancras S.E. b. 1881, Educ Castle Hill Sch W. Ealing - Rly clerk 15 - T.U. activist - Rly Clerks Ass Pres 1912-6. I.L.P. 1906 - Ealing br sec - W London Fed Ch - Metrop Dist C Ch.

Samuel H.W. Swansea W. b. 1881 Elem educ - tinsplate works 12 - mines 17 - T.U. activist - Barrister 1915. Ass Sec Swansea Lab Ass, I.L.P. propagandist.

Samuels M.T. J Barnard Castle. b. 1888 Newcastle. Elem educ & 9 mths Newcastle G.S. App cabinetmaker 14, 3 yrs clerk - 17. Solicitor 1915, Bar 1922. Newcastle City Cllr. I.L.P. Jewish Bd of Deputies.

Scurr J RC Mile End. b. 1867 Brisbane, to Br 6 mths. Educ various schs inc King's Coll Sch. - Journalist. S.D.F. late 1890s. Fab, I.L.P. & Poplar Lab L - Sec 1897. W.W.I. Pacifist, 1928 MacDonalдите resigns I.L.P. Devout R.C.

Sherwood G.H. Wakefield. b. 1877 Barnsley s of miner. Elem educ - shoe factory 11 - railway 12 - number taker Rly Clearing House 1893-1923. N.U.R. activist - Sec Wakefield 'br 1900-23. Cllr 1906 on.

Smith B Rotherhithe. b. 1897 East End - trains H.M.S. Warspite - 7 yrs R.N.-invalided out - laundry - Hanson Cab driver. T&G.W.U. activist.

1929		/	/	/	/
1924		/	/	/	/
1923	/	/	/	/	/

- Spence R. Berwick & Haddington. b. 1879 Airdrie, Glasgow 6 - Elem educ - later Scot Lab Coll. As boy, tannery - app engineer - T.U. activist A.E.U. - Pres Clyde-bank Trades & Lab C. Lib to 1907 then I.L.P.
- Stamford T.W. Leeds W. b. 1882 Cambridge s of Rly porter. Elem educ to 12, app bookbinder Bradford - T.U. activist - 12 years br ch Bookbinders & Machine Rulers T.U. Bradford Trades C Ch 1920-3, Cllr 1912-22, ch Bradford I.L.P. 1915-8 W.W.I. Ch Peace-by-Negotiation Cttee.
- Thurtle E F Shoreditch. b. 1884 New York State, Br parents. To Br 2, mother widowed, poverty. Little educ - sells newspapers as boy - steelworker Monmouth - unemployed 19, Clerk London - N.U.C. activist - ch London Dist Cttee. W.W.I. pte - Commissioned - wounded, became anti-war. Voted Cons 1905, conv by Clarion Van 1907. Fabian, married G. Lansbury's d. Agnostic.
- Tinker J.J. RC Leigh. b. 1875 Little Hulton, s of Lab activist. Elem educ mines 10, underground 12 for 27 yrs. - T.U. activist - agent 1913 on. Lancs & Cheshire Miners Fed. W.W.I. served Fr, Gallipoli, Palestine - commissioned. Cllr 1919.
- Toole J. RC Salford S. b. 1887 Salford poverty, s of Irish lab. R. C. Sch, 1/2 timer. - scavenger boy 12 - ironworks & various employment - Clerk - Pres Manchester br Nat U Clerks - Manchester Guardian Traveller post W.W.I. W.W.I. R.A.F. Early S.D.F. M.P. Infl Soc propagandist meetings.

1929

1924

1923

Varley F.B.
(d. 1929)

Mansfield. b. 1885 s of miner. Elem educ, errand boy
11 - mines 12 - scholarship Sheffield Univ 3 yrs pt
time 19 - Colliery Managers Cert 1st Cl 1906 - Check-
weigher 1917 - full time T.U. official 1919. V-Pres
Notts M.A. 1913 on. Co Cllr 1919.

Viant S.P.

Willesden W. b. 1882 Plymouth. Elem & Higher Grade.
Schs - app carpenter/joiner. - T.U. activist - London
1901. Paddington Trades C V-Pres, I.L.P. propagandist,
London Lab P E.C. Cllr. Bapt. Infl Dr Clifford - Broth
Mvt. Total Abst.

Williams Lt-Col T.S.B.

Kennington. b. 1877 s of archdeacon Merioneth - consid-
ers Ch - f sends to study medicine Univ Edinburgh. Lieut
Medical Service Indian Army. Interest in Eastern Rels.
W.W.I. wounded, retired army 1920. Joined Lab P. Fab,
1917 Club.

Windsor W.

Bethnal Green N.E. b. 1884 Bethnal Green slums s of docker
prominent 1889 strike & Conv Soc. Father drilled S.D.F.
recruits for rev in back yard. Walter joined S.D.F. 15 -
soon br sec - lost job 20 agitator - W.W.I. transferred
to I.L.P. N.C.F. prison as C.O. Cllr 1919. Br sec N.U.
G.W. , Trades C Sec, Lab P Pres.

Young A.

Glasgow Partick. b. 1850 Edinburgh - messenger boy 9 -
app compositor. Age 21 Ch Scot Training Coll Edinburgh -
Teacher 23 N. Canongate Sch (slum area), 40 yrs - later
headmaster Canongate. Scottish Lab P activist, active ex-
posing slum conditions.

g) M.P.s first elected 1924

Baker J.

Wolverhampton Bilston. b. 1867 Stockton s of brick-maker. Bd Sch - worked iron foundries, engineer shops, brickyards, locomotive driver, Englinemen's U org 1898 - Gen Sec 1907 - on amalg, Ass Sec B.I.S.T. Cllr 1906-10.

Barr Rev J.

UFC

Motherwell. b. 1862 Ayrshire. S of farmer. Educ Kilmarnock Acad & Glasgow Univ. Trained for ministry Glasgow Free Ch Coll - Minister 27 on, Glasgow Lib Land Tax -er - Home Rule - Conv Soc, I.L.P. activist. W.W.I. founder member U.D.C. Soc of Soc Xts 1920s. Prohibition -ist.

Beckett J

Gateshead/Peckham. b. 1894 Con City family. Officer cadet W.W.I. army, discharge 1917. War experiences - Conv Socialism, Infl W.C. Anderson. Hackney Cllr, wrote Lab Leader Soc Rev, Daily Herald. Founds Nat U ex-Servicemen. Later Fascist.

Bellamy A.
(by-election 1928
d. 1931)

Ashton-u-L. b. Wigan. Educ Manchester Bd Sch. Rly engine driver T.U. activist - Pres A.S.R.S. 1911-13 amalg, 1st Pres N.U.R. 1913-17. Pres Stockport Trades C 11 yrs.

BennW.W.

C

Aberdeen N. b. 1877 2nd s of Baronet. B.A. London 1898, Lib M.P. Tower Hamlets St George's 1906-18, Leith 1918 on. W.W.I. Capt Gallipoli, seaplane pilot - C. de Guerre, L.. d'honneur, D.S.O., D.F.C., Resigns seat 1927 on joining Lab P. Religious, unorthodox.

Bennett W.
(by-election 1929)

Battersea S. b. 1873 Somerset, educ Bath G.S. & Metrop Coll Pharmacy, Kennington, Chemist Devon, Surrey many yrs. Lect Econ. & Soc History. Founds Mid-Devon Constituency Lab P 1904 active Lab P Bristol & Guildford - Sec Guildford Trades & Lab C. B. of G.

1929

1924

Bromley J

Barrow. b. 1875. Elem educ - engine driver - T.U. activist - Gen Sec A.S.L.E.F. 1914 on.

Cbves S.
(d. 1928)

Hanley b. 1864 N. Staffs s of miner. Potteries 12 - app T.U. activist - official - full-time org - Gen Sec Pottery Ops T.U. 1916. Cllr many years.

Connolly M.H.

RC

Newcastle E. b. 1874 ½ timer 9 - 12 shipyard app - T.U. active Boilermakers U Tyne Dist org, & on E.C.

Dalton E.H.J.N.

F

Peckham/Bp Auckland. b 1887 Windsor s of Canon, but Univ friend Carpenter. Educ Rugby, Kings Cantab. - L.S.E. thesis 1911-4. W.W.I. officer - post-war politics to end wars. L.S.E. lect 1919-35. Infls: Rupert Brooke, Principia Ethica, Pigou from Tory Dem to Soc 1907. Fab, I.L.P. 1908. Helped Rad Libs and Lab candd 1910.

Dalton Mrs F.R.
(by-election 1929)

Bp Auckland. M.P. 4 mths to enable husband to take over seat.

Day Col H.

Southwark C. b. 1880 Author and producer of Revues. Chairman Mutual Property Ins Co. L.C.C. Member Eccentric & Embassy Clubs

Dennison R.

Birmingham Kings Norton. b. 1879 Glasgow. Educ Science Sch - work 10½ on. Ass Sec Iron & Steel Confed.

Hirst W

Bradford S.. b. 1868. Sec Brād & Dist Br Nat Fed Building Trade Ops. Pres Bradford City Co-op Soc.

1929

1924

Hollins A.
(by-election 1928)

Hanley. b. 1876 Burslem. Educ Ch Sch & Wedgewood Inst Burslem
- City & Guilds Pottery/Chemistry Certs - Gen Sec Nat Soc of
Pottery Ws. Stoke Cllr & Ald.

Kelly W.T.

RC

Rochdale. b. 1874 Manchester Irish. Elem & Tech Schs - app
engineer - active 1897 lockout - T.U. offices A.S.E. - Ind-
ustrial Off Workers U. I.L.P. Lived London.

Kenworthy J.M.
(by-election 1926)

CE

Hull. b. 1886 s of Lib P & C. of E. Peer. Publ Sch, Navy:
1902-23. Feb 1917. W.W.I. pro Wilson 14 Pts. Anti-Co Lib Cand
1918, elected 1919 by-election Hull C. Joins Lab 1926 after
Libs supp Govt v General Strike. Resigns seat & wins by-election
as Lab.

Lee J.

L

(by-election 1929)

Lanarks N. b. 1904 Fife s of miner & I.L.P. Local Sch & Edinb
Univ - schoolteacher. Soc Sunday Sch pupil - pantheism & Soc
by 15. I.L.P.

Longbottom A.W.

UFC

(by-election 1928)

Halifax. b. 1883 Halifax Elem & Sec Schs - Rly Clerk 1898 -
Cllr 1912, Mayor 1923. Socialist

Mitchell E.R.

F

Paisley. b. 1879 s of Sec of Evangelisation Soc, London. Educ
Hillhead High Sch & Glasgow Univ - L.L.B. - Solicitor for
Forward (I.L.P.) Cllr 1909-25, Lib Cand 1910. W.W.I U.D.C. V
Lib Rel Views. Active Churchman .

Mosley O.E.
(by-election 1926)

F

Smethwick. b. 1896, Paternalist Con background. Educ Winchester
& Royal Military Coll. W.W.I. Cavalry - R.F.C. Co C M.P. Harrow
1918 Ind 1922-4. Lab 1924. Disillusioned post W.W.I. failure to
keep promises to servicemen. 1930 on New Party - Fascism.

1929	/
1924	/

Palin J.H.

CE Newcastle. W. b. 1870 Lambeth - work 12 - app joiner - Rly 21 - T.U. activist - A.S.R.S. offices - 1921 on T.&G.W.U. off. I.L.P. 1896 Bradford - later Pres - N.A.C. 1913. Cllr 1904 on. W.W.I. volunteer - Sgt light rly co. R.E. - Yard Master Ypres. C. of E. Mission speaker early 1890s, active churchman.

Shepherd A.L.
(by-election 1926)

Q Darlington. b. 1884. Kings Norton (Worcs). Teacher. Ed Birmingham Univ.

Shield G.W.
(by-election 1929)

PM Wansbeck. b. 1876 Coanwood (N'land). Elem educ - mines - Checkweigher - Trustee Northumberland Miners Ass. & Sec N'land Aged Mineworkers Homes Ass. Co-op Soc Pres. Co Cllr 1919-28. Local Preacher & Socialist.

Shiels Dr T.D.

Edinburgh E. b. 1886 Edinburgh s of photographic business owner. Post W.W.I. Medical student. Graduated 1924. Founds Edinb Fab Soc & Pres 2 yrs. Cllr W.W.I. officer - M.C., Belg C. de Guerre.

Slessor H.H.
(peer August 1929)

CE Leeds S.E. b. 1883 London. Educ Oundle & St Paul's. Bar 1906, Silk 1924. Standing Counsel to Lab P 1910 on. Lectures Industr Law London Univ. Fab, I.L.P. 1907. Fab E.C. 1910-12. Pros Lab Cand 1913. Developing Anglo-Cath - C.S.L. Cites Aquinas & Ch Fathers in Election Addresses - eventually RC 1940.

1929

1924

Penistone. b. 1883 Lancs - ½ timer 11 - Scholarship to Sec Sch - Clerk 13 on. Ruskin Coll 1912 - London Univ - B.S.C. Econ. W.E.A. tutor S Yorks & for Miners & I.S.T.C. 2 yrs jt Principal Int Ws Coll Denmark. Lay Preacher, Disarmament advocate.

IM

Smith R.

Lincoln b. 1885 Hulme s of joiner/organ builder frm Lincs - to Lincs 7 - Elem educ to 13 - office boy/shp ass. - Shop Ass U member 1909-own business 1912. Founds Lincoln I.L.P. 1906, Pres then Sec Trades C. Cllr 1913 on, first Lab Mayor 1920. 1920 1 yr Ruskin Col.Nationalisation' advocate.

Taylor R.A.

Stockport. b. 1880. Educ Ashton-u-L Ch Sch. - Rly Clerk - Lab Cand 1918 on.

Townend A.E.
(by-election 1925)

Stourbridge (Worcs). b. 1879 Nelson. Elem Sch, Night Sch - ½ timer 10 mills - s of Cotton Ws - Edinb Univ 1903 - lay preacher - minister. W.W.I. exemption as clergy - refused to exercise it & 2 yrs prison C.O. Journalist/propagandist. Soc of Soc Xts 1920s on. ch No More War Mvt. Xt Pacifist & Soc.

D

Wellock W.
(by-election 1927)

Middleborough E. b. 1891 Manchester - Sec Sch Manchester & Manchester Univ - Teacher - Nat Org Nat U. Dist & Allied Ws 1915 on. Women's Suffrage 1917 Club. Plebs League, period Communist Party. Lab Ch Lect 1925 on. Brother Wesl Minister, self Sunday Sch teacher & v religious.

W

Wilkinson E.

h) M.P.s first elected 1929

Addison Dr C

U Swindon. b. 1896 Lincs. Educ Trin Col Harrogate. Prof St Bartholomew's Hosp 1901 - distinguished medical career. Lib M.P. Hoxton 1910-22, 1st Minister of Health, resigns Lib over Geddes Axe.

Aitchison C.M.
(by-election 1929)

U Kilmarnock b. 1882 S of Rev J.Aitchison, Falkirk, educ Falkirk High Sch, Edinb Univ - Scottish Bar 1907. Nat Lab 1931.

Alpass J.H.

W Bristol C. b. 1873 - agric lab - Org Gloucs Farmers U to W.W.I. Auctioneer/Estate Agent. Gloucs Councillor 1908-29. Lab pioneer 1890's. Broth Mvt speaker.

Angell R.N.

F Bradford N. b. 1872 S of Lincs J.P. Educ privately, Lycée St Omer-Geneva Univ - U.S.A. 1891 - W Coast ranching/mines to 1897 - Journalism - 1898 Paris corresp U.S. papers - 1905 edits continental edn Daily Mail. Author: Grand Illusion 1911 U.D.C. founder member. 1917 Club. Joined Lab P 1920. Secularism/youth

Arnott J.

/ Hull S.W. b. 1871 Kincardine. Elem educ, 13 Middlesborough blacksmith app. A.S.E. activist - br ch - 1905 Ruskin Coll - full-time I.L.P. org Yorks - Leeds Cllr 1913 on, Mayor 1925. I.L.P. 1892 on.

Baker P.J. Noel-

Q Coventry. b. 1889 S of Lib Q Pacifist M.P. Educ Bootham Sch York Fellow King's College - V-Principal Ruskin Coll 1914. W.W.I. commandant Friends Ambulance Unit. L. of Nations Secretariat.

Baldwin O.

F

Dudley. b. 1899 S of S. Baldwin. Educ Eton to 17 - 1916 W.W.I. commission. - 1919 Colonel Armenian Army - Prison Turkish & Bolshevik. - to Britain & Conv Socialist. S.D.F. 1923 on, Lab Cand 1924 - propagandist & Lab Ch lect etc to 1929. Indep 1931 - Socialist critic of Lab Govt. Interested Tao/Buddhism, Infls: Disraeli, Marx, Morris, Blatchford.

Bennett Capt. E.N.

CE

Cardiff C. b. 1868 S of C. of E. clergyman. Educ Oxford Univ - Theological Fellow Hertford Coll. P of G. Lib M.P. Woodstock 1906-10. W.W.I. Capt., joins I.L.P. 1916. Close assoc E.D. Morel 1906 on. Land Nationaliser. Temperance & Psychic Research. Nat Lab 1931.

Benson G.

Chesterfield. b. 1889 S of T.D. Benson, Swedenborgian & I.L.P. Treas. Educ Manchester G.S. to 17 - becomes head estate agents firm - I.L.P. speaker while at school. Foreign Affs specialist. W.W.I. C.O. Prison.

Bentham Dr E.

Q

Islington E. b. 1861 S of Q. J.P. Gen Manager Standard Life Ass Co & descendant of Jeremy Bentham. Educ Alexandra Sch Coll Dublin & Hospitals London, Brussels, Paris. Med Pract Newcastle 1896. Senior Med Off N. Kensington 1909 - founder baby clinic, I.L.P. Fab E.C., Women's Suffrage, 1st Lab Cand Newcastle B.C. 1907, 13 years Kensington B.C. Conv Soc through Dublin slums, Attended Q meetings Newcastle, joined 1920.

Bevan A.

F

Ebbw Vale. b. 1897 Elem educ - mines until respiratory disorder - T.U. activist - Ch Lodge 19 - Miners' agent. Cllr 1922 on. Ch Div Lab P & Trades C.

Bowen J.W.

Crewe. b. 1876 Nr Swansea. Elem educ - postman 13 on - active T.U. - Gen Sec U.P.W. 1920 on. Co-op, 1917 Club.

Brockway A.F.

Leyton E. b. 1888 Calcutta S of Missionary. Educ Eltham Coll- lives N London Mission 19 - I.L.P. 19 - editor Lab Leader 1911 -6 N.C.F. Sec 1916-20. W.W.I. prison C.O. 28 mths, 1917-9. Org Sec I.L.P. 1922, Sec I.L.P. 1923. 1917 Club. Unitarian outlook, moved left W.W.I. on.

Brooke W.

Dunbartonshire. b. 1897 S of wool sorter Carlton (Yorks) Sec Ed -uc - office boy - Amalg Soc of Dyers - Chief Clerk head office - 3 yrs London Lab Coll 1919-22 - Amalg Soc Dyers & Bleachers official. I.L.P. in teens, Bradford Cllr 1925 on. & Pres Bradford Lab P. Regular churchgoer.
Bolton.

Brothers M.

b. 1870 Blackburn. Elem educ - mill 10 - Weaver & Card-room Oper- ative - period Canada rly - Tech Sch studies - Cert 1st Class Spinner. Sec N.E. Lancs Card & Blowing Room Ops & Ring Spinners Ass - Cllr - founder member. Blackburn Lab P.

Brown C.

Mansfield. b. 1884 - hosiery factory - lect Nat Lab Colls (Mid- lands) 1925 on. I.L.P. speaker 1909 on. - Pres Mansfield Div Lab P. 1919 on. Cllr 1925-9.

Brown W.J.

Wolverhampton. W. b. 1894 Battersea slum. Educ G.S. Sandwich to 14½ - clerk, Civil Service 16 on - GenSec. C.S.A.Ss Clerks Ass 1917 -42. I.L.P. teens - Sec Clapham br 1914. W.W.I. opponent. 1931 Ind. signs New Party Manifesto. Socialist. Methodist ministry - Science & Rationalism - Mysticism. Infls: MacDonald, Blatchford, Xt Ethics.

Burgess F.G. York. b. c 1880 - railway 1890s on - porter; ticket collector, guard - to 1919 - 17 yrs br sec N.U.R. Maidstone - cartoonist Railway Review. T.U. Org 1919 on.

Buxton Lady N (by-election 1930) CE Norfolk N. d of ret'd Maj, married N Buxton 1914 - active Soc Xt L 1930s, & Lab M.P. Norwich 1945 on.

Caine D. Hall Liverpool Everton. b. 1872 Keswick S of novelist, Pre-Raphaelite & later I.L.P. Isle of Man boyhood - actor, producer, journalist - Director Readers Library Publ Co, Joined Lab result of soc condits. Nat Lab 1931.

Cameron A.G. Widnes. b. 1876 Oban. Elem educ - carpenter/joiner - Amalg Soo C.&.J. (London) 1913 - Asss Gen Sec 1915. Lab P N.E.C. 1913 on.

Carter W. W St Pancras S.W. b. 1865 Derbys S of miner - mines 12 - Midland Rly 20 - Kentish Town 25 on - T.U. activist - sacked & reinstated 1908 - N.U.R. official 1909 - Org Sec N.U.R. 1911-28. Active Wesl. Prohibitionist.

Chater D NR Hammersmith S. b. 1870 Lambeth poverty - irregular educ 8-12, Clerk 12 on. Conv Soc 1905. Clarion Vanner, Ilford Soc P (merges into I.L.P.), Plebs L CoCllr, Ilford Lab P ch 1924. Wesl youth then agnostic.

Clarke J.S. Glasgow Maryhill. b. 1885. little educ - sailor - wild beast show, jockey period Africa, journalist I.L.P., regular contribs Forward, edits Socialist Worker etc. Lab Colls, Russian sympathiser.

Cocks F.S. Broxtowe. b. 1882 author & journalist. Close Assoc Angell & Morel pre-W.W. I. U.D.C. London Sec. Rad Lib to 1914 - then I.L.P.

Cripps S. (by-election 1931)	CE	Bristol E. b. 1889 Educ Winchester & Univ Coll London. Barrister 1913. W.W.I. with Red Cross, France. Con, follows father into Lab P 1930. Active churchman.
Daggar G.	NR	Abertillery. b. 1879 Cumbran, S of miner Rad & T.U. Educ Br Sch - mines 11 - T.U. activist - Scholarship Central Lab Coll 1911 - V-Ch local lodge - agent 1921. Anti-war, on Centre-Left.
Dallas G.	NR	Wellingborough. b. 1878 Glasgow, S. of shoemaker, elem educ - mines 12 - clerk 1899 - shop ass 1900 - Sec Shop Ass U Glasgow Area - own shop Motherwell - Gen Org Sec Scotland I.L.P. 1908 - org Workers' U Home Counties 1913 on. Conv Soc 16, joined Xt Soc L. Infls: Hardie, Blatchford, Morris, Owen. Atheist.
Davies D.L. (by-election 1931)		Pontypridd.
Denman R.D.	CE	Leeds C. b. 1876, Educ Westminster & Balliol. Private Sec to S Buxton 1905 On. - Lib M.P. Carlisle 1910-18. Social Radical - resigned Lib P 1924 over defeat of Lab Govt. Active churchman.
Edmunds J.E.		Cardiff E. b. 1882 S of teacher - Trained teacher Cardiff Univ - taught Cardiff Elem Schs 17yrs - 1920 Workers U org Cardiff - I.L.P. 1904 - active speaker - Ch Welsh Div Co I.L.P. - Sec & Pres Cardiff Trades & Lab C. B.of G. 12 yrs. W.W.I. Pacifist.
Edwards E.	NR	Morpeth. b. 1884 Northumberland, S of working-class Secularist, elem educ - mines 12 - active T.U. - Ruskin Scholarship 23 - too academic left after 10 mths - active founding Lab Colls & Plebs L - 1912 local miners' lodge Pres - V-P M.F.G.B. 1930 - Pres 1931. Moderate.

Evans H. (by-election 1931)	Gateshead. b. 1868 Burton-u-Trent. Educ Regent St Poly - Civil Service 1894 - Pensions Insp - later Insp-Gen Min of Pensions. W.W.I. Major. Lab Cand 1928 & 1929.	/
Forgan Dr R	Renfrewshire. W. b. 1891 Son of Rev R Forgan D.D., Educ Aberdeen G.S. & U & Univ Cambridge. Qualified Medic - W.W.I. Medical Officer, France - 1921 on. Med Off Lanarks. I.L.P., Cllr (Glasgow) 1926. New P 1931.	/
Fraser J.A.L-	Lichfield. b. 1868 S of wealthy Disraelian Con - Educ Trinity Coll Cantab, Bar 1891. Cllr Barry 1905, Cardif 1907-12. Con Prosp Parl Cand Glasgow Bl- ackfriars - withdrew. Joined Lab 1921.	SEC
Freeman P.	Brecon & Radnor. b. 1888 London. Educ Haberdashers Sch. Man Dir U.R. Freeman & Co Cardiff (Tobacco Manu) B of G (Hoxton) 21 - Cardiff City Cllr & Glam CoCllr 1926-30. Fabian, vegetarian, Gen Sec Welsh Theos Soc, org sec Anim- als Welfare Wk for Wales.	T
Gibson H.M.	Mossley. b. 1896 Manchester poverty. Co-op Dir Manchester, I.L.P. speaker - attended econ & soc hist classes Holyoake House. Religious Socialist. Infls: mother.	D
Gill T.H.	Blackburn. b. 1885 Hutton Cranswick, (E. Yorks), S of Stationmaster. Educ Bd Sch & Driffield G.S. - Rly clerk 15 - York 1904 - Rly Clerks Ass 1907 - Pres 1919 on Pres Yorks Trades C.	/
Gossling A.G.	Birmingham Yardley. b. 1878 London. Educ Westbourne Park Schs - joiner to 1925 - T.U. activist - full-time org Amalg Soc Woodworkers 1925 on. I.L.P 1903.	/
Hall J.H. (by-election 1930)	Whitechapel & St George's. b. 1877 London - Lay Preacher 1919 on. Sunday Sch Superintendent, Christian Endeavour Pres. - Active T.U. over 40 yrs.	D

Hall Cpt W.G.	Q	Portsmouth C. b. 1887 Herefordshire, educ Friends Sch Saffron Walden. Bank Clerk - lived Toynbee Hall, there conv to Soc - I.L.P. 1905 - activist. W.W.I. Capt mentioned Despatches.
Hamilton M.A.	F	Blackburn. b. 1884 Manchester d of Prof of logic. Educ Newnham Coll Camb - Economics 1st - writes for Economist then Common Sense 1914.- 20 - intermittent journalism to 1929 - Lib - Rad, founder member U.D.C. Humanist moving to Unitarian outlook 1940.
Hardie D. (by-election 1931)	P	Rutherglen. b. c1860. brother of J.K.H.
Henderson J. (by-election 1931)		Manchester Ardwick. b. 1884 Railwayman - T.U. activist - N.U.R. Pres 1933 on. First Lab Mayor Carlisle 1927.
Hicks E.G. (by-election 1931)		Woolwich E. b. 1879 Elem educ, later polytechnic - bricklayer - Nat Org Op Bricklayers Soc 1912 - Gen Sec 1919. First Gen Sec A.U.B.T.W. Co-op. Pres T.U.C. 1926-7.
Hopkin D.	D	Carmarthen. b. 1886 Glamorgans of farm lab - Village Sch - pupil teacher - Scholarship Carmarthen Training Coll - Teacher. Cambridge 2 degrees - Barrister 1924. Joins Christian Socialists 1912, Fab 1913. W.W.I. Major.
Horrabin J.F.	NR	Peterborough. b. 1884 Peterborough. Educ Stamford G.S. & Sheffield Sch Art Metalwork designer Sheffield Telegraph 1906 - Yorks Teleg & Star 1909 - Daily News 1911 on. Editor <u>Plebs Mag</u> (Lab Cols Mvt) 1914-32.
Jowitt Sir W.A. (by-election 1929)	CE	Preston. b. 1885 s of V of Stevenage. Educ Marlborough & New Coll - Bar 1909. Lib M.P. 1922-4 & Preston 1929 - app Att-Gen 1929 joined Lab P, fights & retains seat. Nat Lab 1931, rejoined Lab 1936.

Kinley J. RC Bootle. b. 1877 Liverpool. Hairdresser. Cllr 1910 on.

Knight. G.W.H. C Nottingham. S. b. 1877 London - educ London Univ & Middle Temple Bar 1903 - Treasury Cllr 1911. Lib Cand Bromley 1918, loses & joins Lab. Fab 1917 Club. Writes Fortnightly Rev & Daily Herald. 1931-5 Nat Lab M.P.

Lang Rev G. C Oldham. b. 1893 Monmouth - Educ local G.S. & Cheshunt Coll (Cong training). I.L.P. before enters ministry - active propagandist - founder member Soc of Soc Xts & Cttee 1920s. Xt Pacifist W.W.I. Leaves ministry for wider pol wk.

Lathan G. Sheffield Park. b. 1875 Norwich S of tanner. Sec educ - Rly Clerk in E. Anglia to 1912, then full-time Chief Ass Sec Rly Clerks Ass. Pres R.C.A. 1907-12, Pres Norwich Co-op Soc 1907-12.

Law A. Rossendale. b. 1876 Yorks S of rly signalman. Elem educ - $\frac{1}{2}$ timer mill 10 - rly 1893 on. Eng. ine driver - active N.U.R. I.L.P.

Lawrie H.H. Stalybridge & Hyde. b. 1879 Rochdale S of boot & shoe merchant - dies 11 & H.H. sent to work - newspaper boy - starts own business with mother. - Org Workers U - Nat Org 1922. S.D.F. 1896, I.L.P. soon after.

Lawther W. NR Barnard Castle. b. 1899 Choppington Northumberland, educ Colliery Sch - mines 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ - checkweigher 1919. Cent Lab Coll 1911-2. Plebs L. 2 mths prison General Strike. I.L.P. Durham CoCllr.

Lees J. Belper b. 1884. W. Rainton Co Durham S of miner. Elem educ - mines 12 - T.U. activist - Ruskin Coll 1913-14 - Miners Agent 1919. I.L.P. teens - N.A.C. 4 yrs. W.W.I. C.O., Org Nat Council Civil Libs.

- Leonard W.
(by-election 1931)
- Glasgow St Rollox. b. 1887. Elem educ Glasgow & Manchester. - cabinet maker - Canada - Woodworkers U Fin Sec (Vancouver) to 1913. W.W.I. Sgt Cameron Highlanders, Winnipeg. - to Britain - Lab Sec Scottish Lab Coll to 1920 - T.U. org 1921 on.
- Lewis T. NR
Southampton. b. 1873 Southampton S of dock lab. Elem educ - shop boy 11 - active forming Dockers U & Brit Seafarers U brs - Hon Pres Br Sec 1911-21 - Friendly Soc Officer 1900s on. S.D.F. 1890s to 1914. - E.C. 9 yrs - Atheist. Teetotal. 1st Lab Cllr 1901.
- Lloyd C.E.
Llandaff & Barry. b. 1884 S of Newport draper. Bd Sch & G.S. - Solicitor's office boy 14 - reporter - editor, Cardiff daily newspaper - Bar 1926.
- Logan D.G. RC
(by-election 1929)
Liverpool Scotland. b. 1873 Liverpool Irish. Educ St Anthony's & St Sylvester's Schs & privately - pawnbroker - Gen Sec Pawnbrokers' Ass Approved Soc. Cllr 1920 on.
- Longden F. F
Birmingham Deritend. b. 1887 Ashton-u-L poverty. Tory father. Elem educ to 13 - iron-moulder 13-28 - Friendly Soc Iron-founders member 1907 on. - Ruskin Coll 1912-4. I.L.P. activist 16 on. - N.A.C. 3 yrs 1920s - on Left. W.W.I. 2 yrs prison U.D.C. org Birmingham. Infls: T.H. Green & Marx.
- MacDonald G. C
Ince. b. 1888. Elem educ - mines 13 - T.U. activist - Ruskin & Central Lab Colls - Agent 1924. I.L.P. 1912 B of G Wigan 1920 on. Cong lay Pr-eacher, brother minister.
- MacDonald M. F
Bassetlaw. b. 1901 Lossiemouth S of J.R.M. Educ Bedales & Queens Oxon. - Journalist - manager publ co 1929. L.C.C. 1928. Nat Lab M.P. 1931 - Socialist.

McElwee A. Manchester Hulme. Official Scot Section Woodworkers' U.

McGovern J. (by-election 1930) RC Glasgow Shettleston. b. 1887 Glasgow S of Irish steelworker. Elem educ - app plumber. I.L.P. W.W.I. active anti-war. Militant Soc. Staunch R.C. & anti-Communist. Cllr 1929.

McKinlay A.S. Glasgow Partick. b. 1889 S of sailor. Aged 8 boy soloist Denistoun Amateur Minstrels. Elem educ - joiner - sea - active T.U. - 16 yrs Clyde Dist Cttee Joiners - 7 yrs Ch. I.L.P. - br Ch.

McShane J.J. RC Walsall. b. 1882 Lanarks Irish S of miner. R.C. Schs - app engineer 14 - night Sch - wins place Glasgow Univ Training Coll - Teacher - Headmaster R.C Sch W. Lothian 1909 - Walsall 1922. - N.U.T. activist. I.L.P. B of G

Manning Mrs E.L. (by-election 1931) Islington E. b.c 1890 Educ St John's Sch Bridgewater & Homerton Coll Cantab. - Teacher - N.U.T. activist - Org Sec - Pres 1930.

Mansfield W.T. PM Cleveland. b.c 1890 Yorks, Educ Easington & Staithes Elem Sch - mines 13 - checkweigher 1908 - Gen Sec Cleveland Miners & Quarrymen's Ass. Cllr 1911 CoCllr 1919. - Became Lab at inaugural meeting Cleveland Div Lab P when elected Ch.

Marcus M. Dundee. b. 1897 workingclass parents Edinburgh. Educ George Heriot's Sch & Univ Edinburgh. L.L.B. - worked Solicitor's office while at Univ to pay upkeep. - Solicitor. Lab P speaker - Cllr 1926.

Markham S.F. Rochester & Chatham. b. 1898 S of insurance agent. Elem educ - messenger boy 14 - rly - enlists 17, W.W.I. - Field Commission - France - post-war Indian Army, Wadham Coll Oxon B.A. in 9 mths - B. Litt Sec to Sir S Lee biog of Edward VII - on death cptes it himself. - Sec L.S.E. survey on poverty 1929. Bucks CoCllr 1928. Nat Lab M.P. 1935-45.

Marshall F.
(by-election 1930)

Sheffield Brightside. b. 1883. Elem educ S. Anston Yorks - T.U. off
Sheffield Cllr 1919, Ald 1926. Named house "Millthorpe" after Carpenter's

Mathers G.

Edinburgh W. b. 1886 Roxburghshire. Educ Village Sch - Rly 13 - rly
clerk - 1907 to Carlisle, superintendent's office - joined Rly Clerks
Ass 1908, helps found Carlisle br - Edinburgh 1921. I.L.P. Chair Car-
lisle br W.W.I., Pres Lab P & Trades C. Cllr 1919. Active R.C.A. &
I.L.P. Edinburgh. Home Ruler: Teetotal.

Matters L.W.

Kennington. b. 1881 Adelaide. Educ State Schs - printing office 13 -
Parl reporter 19 - T.U. pioneer W. Australia - worked on papers in Canada
U.S.A., Japan - some yrs editor Buenos Aires Herald. Trooper S.A. War.
I.L.P. London Lab P., Workers U. Prohibitionist.

Melville Sir J.B.
(d. 1931)

Gateshead. b. 1880s Le Havre S of Det Supt W. Melville - Bar - W.W.I.
Major, Gallipoli Despatches. Fabian pre-W.W.I.. K.C. 1927 - Att Gen 1929.

Messer F.

Tottenham S. b. 1886 Islington S of workhouse master. Elem educ - French
polisher 12 - joined fr polishers U 1909 - activist - Industr Orthopaedic
Soc Gen Treas 1917 - Gen Sec 1922 - full-time org (S area) Manor House
Hosp 1924. Spinal disorder from birth. I.L.P. 1913 - activist - Ch S.
Tottenham Lab P 1920 - CoCllr 1925. Bapt early 20s on - preacher - P.S.A.
& Brthh'd Mvt. W.W.I. Pacifist - Disarmament advocate. Teetotal. Infls:
Bible, Bellamy, Kingsley, Tawney.

Milner J.
(by-election 1929)

Leeds S.E. b. 1889 S of Leeds Coroner. Educ Easingwold G.S. & Leeds Univ
- solicitor in father's practice. W.W.I. Major - M.C., wounded, Joins Lab
P end of War - Ch Leeds Lab P 1926. Cllr 1923. Soc Xts.L speaker 1930s

Morgan Dr H.B.W.

RC

Camberwell N.W. b. 1885 Grenada S of Irish poor. Scholarship to G.S. -
Local Civil Service - to England 19 - Glasgow Univ Medic - W.W.I.
R.A.M.C. - post-war practice Greenwich, Camberwell, Paddington. Irish
Home Ruler - I.L.P. br Sec - Pres local Lab P.

Morley R.

NR

Southampton. b. 1882 Educ Chichester Mod Sch & Southampton Univ Coll -
Teacher - T.U. activist - Southampton Teachers Ass Pres - Nat Fed Class
Teachers Pres 1929 - Trades C Ch - Soc 1906 - S.D.F. Southampton br sec
1907-11 & contribs Justice. I.L.P. 1919, br Ch 1929.

Mort D.L.

C

Eccles. b. 1888 Briton Ferry. Elem educ - shop ass 12 - steelworks -
T.U. activist - Br Iron Steel & Kindred Trades Ass br sec 1915 on. I.L.P.
1906 - br ch - N.A.C. 1929. Cong local preacher 16 - Soc Xt L speaker
1930s.

Moses J.J.H.

PM

Plymouth Drake. b. 1873 Dartmouth S of shipwright. Elem educ - $\frac{1}{2}$ timer 9 -
shipyard app 16 - Royal Dockyard age 22 until 1929. T.U. activist - Cllr
- 1st Lab Mayor of Plymouth 1926. Lay Preacher.

Mosley Lady C.

Stoke. d. of Lord Curzon. b. 1897 - m. Oswald M 1920 & joined Lab with him
1924. Studied L.S.E. New Party 1931.

Muff G.

D

Hull E. b. 1877 Bradford. Elem educ - mill 10 - Rad activist 15 - founder
Young Lib Movt, Pres Yorks Young Lib Fed 1908-18. Ind Lib Cand Bradford S
1918. Joined Lab 1920. I.L.P. Cllr 1923. Lay preacher since youth. Broth
-erhood Movt.

- Muggeridge H.T. L
 Romford. b. 1864 Penge S of undertaker, abandoned family when H.T.
 12. Educ St John's Sch Penge - office boy 12 - City of London Coll -
 Company Sec in City over 50 yrs. Fab 1892, later S.D.F. & I.L.P. -
 active in all at same time. Socialist propagandist. Edit Croydon Cit-
izen 1905-7, Cllr 1911-29. Croydon Brdth Ch & Lab Ch. Soc of Soc Xts
 speaker 1920s. Prohibitionist. Infls: Tolstoy, Kenworthy, Lowes Dick-
 inson, Tawney etc.
- Oldfield. J.R.A. CE
 Essex S.E. b. 1900 Kent mansion. Educ Eton & Trinity Coll Cantab - then
 on Lives Toynbee Hall - became Soc. Cllr & B of G 1925, L.C.C. 1931 on.
- Phillips Dr M
 Sunderland. b. 1881 Melbourne, d of lawyer. Univ Educ then to England -
 L.S.E. research student - Economics doctorate - full-time Lab Movt 1908 -
 investig work for B.W. during Poor Law Com. - Sec Nat U Women's Suffrage
 Socs - Lab P org 1911 - Chief Women's Officer 1918 on. Fabian.
- Pole Maj D.G. T
 Derbyshire S. b. 1878 Edinburgh S of merchant navy capt, Educ Edinb Schs
 & Univ - Solicitor 1900. Serves S.Africa, W.W.I. - wounded & retired 1916.
 Con until then, joined Lab P 1916 - concerned for men after War. Ch Scot
 family - joined Theos Soc 1907 & legal advisor to A. Besant 1913 - death.
 Attended R.C. services W.W.I. Prohibitionist.
- Price M.P. U
 Whitehaven. b. 1884 Gloucester S of landowner, Unitarians and Lib M.P.
 Educ Harrow & Trinity Coll Cantab. Widely travelled - Corresp Mehr Guar-
dian Russia 1914-8, - Corresp Daily Herald Berlin 1919-23. Farms own est-
 ate Gloucester 1924 on. Rad Lib - Prosp Lib Cand Gloucester 1911 - resigned
 1914. Founder member U.D.C. (with cousin C.P. Trevelyan) - I.L.P. 1919 -
 Lab Cand Gloucester 1922-4. Practising Unit - Infl to left by Marxist det-
 erminism 1918 on - returned to Soc Rad late 1920s.

Quibell D.J.K.

Brigg. b. 1879. Elem educ - farm - app bricklayer - master builder/
Contractor Scunthorpe - Bricklayers T.U. 1899 on. I.L.P. early 20s.
Cllr & CoCllr. First Lab Ch Scunthorpe Town Council.

Riley F.F.

Stockton. b. 1870s. Pioneer postal Clerks Ass - acting Gen Sec 1918
-20 - Ass Sec U.P.W. 1920-6. Leicester City Cllr 13 yrs, Lab Cand
Leicester S 1918, Stockton 1922-4.

Rosbotham Sir S.T.

CE

Ormskirk. b. 1864 Bickerstaffe - Chairman Threshing Machine Co & Coll-
iery Co, Farmer & 20 yrs Ch Ormskirk Branch Lancs Farmers Ass. CoCllr
then Ald, 1895-1929, Parish & Dist Cllr. Former Conservative. Nat Lab
M.P. 1931-9. Churchwarden & licensed lay reader.

Rowson G.

NR

Famworth, Lancs. b. 1883 nr Manchester S of miner. Elem educ - mines
12 - active T.U.-L ab Colls student - Miners' Agent 1923. CoCllr 1919-
23. S.D.F. 1907.

Sanders W.S.

E

Battersea N. b. 1871 S. London working class - little educ - S.D.F.
1888 on Battersea. Fab 1888 - Org Sec & Gen Sec 1906-19. Leader Lab &
Prog P Battersea Vestry - Lab P N.E.C. 1913-15. Sec Battersea Lab L.
Sec Metrop Dist C I.L.P. - Dep-Chief Admin Section I.L.O. Articles in
Ethics, New Age, Lab Leader, Chair Council of Ethical Soccs.

Sandham E.

Liverpool Kirkdale. b. 1876 - early Con, & Con Cllr Chorley - Conv to Soc
by K.B. Glasier meeting - became I.L.P. Cllr - 1910 on. Treas then Ch
Lancs Div Council I.L.P. - Lancs Rep N.A.C. - on Left W.W.I. opponent. Ch
Lancs & Chesh Fed Trades & Lab Cs 7 yrs. Prohibitionist. I.L.P. Cand 1931.

- Sawyer G.F. Birmingham Duddeston. b. 1871 Cuddesdon Oxford - farm lab sacked for Rad views - rly porter - guard. Agric Lab T.U. - then A.S.R.S 1900 on - N.U.R. - active 1911 strike - arrested under D.O.R.A. for speech 1926 Gen Strike. Birmingham City Cllr & B of G.
- Shillaker J.F. Acton. b. 1870 Holborn S of policeman - journalist, T.P.'s Weekly 14 yrs then D. Herald. Dep Regional Dir Min of Pensions (North) 1919-23 - Lab P research staff 1923 on. Conservative conv during T.U. strike involvement 16 on - Islington Lab P 1892 on - activist - Acton Cllr 1906-12.
- Simmons C.J. PM Birmingham Erdington. b. 1893 Birmingham working-class - W.W.I. lost leg Vimy Ridge - twice prison - speaking on peace platforms in khaki & protesting against Field Punishment No 1. I.L.P. Midlands Council Ch - N.A.C. City Cllr 7 yrs - dep leader Lab gp. Lay Preacher 16 on.
- Sinkinson G. Berwick & Haddington. b. 1874 Kendall poverty - Elem educ - mill $\frac{1}{2}$ timer Barrow-i-F 10-14. Supps Pete Curran, Barrow 1895. - To Glasgow - joined Clarion Scouts & I.L.P. - Edinburgh, head store-keeper engineering firm - Ch Edinb I.L.P.
- Smith A. (d. 1931) Sunderland. G. London. App Thames Lighterman - London Cab driver - pioneer Cab Drivers' Union 1894 - Pres 1906 on. Later T. & G.W.U. national official Middx CoCllr & U.D.C. Cllr.
- Smith F. SA Nuneaton. b. 1854 Chelsea. Private educ - business career. Age 21 conv by bargeman at E. End Mission - gives up career for social work in S.A. - became head S.A. social services wing - leaves and founded Workers Cry & Labour Army - adv Rad politics. Editor Weekly Dispatch 1895, Fraternity 1897 - acted as sec to J.K.H. until his death - full-time Rad Soc & Rel work. L.C.C. 1892 - (Prog) 18 yrs, I.L.P. & Brotherhood Movt speaker - I.L. P. Parl C&nd 1893 on. Prohibitionist.

- Snowden T. W 1875 Cowlings (W.R.) S of textile workers - 1/2 timer
10 - own business Bingley 28. Helped found I.L.P. Cowling - starts
Bingley branch - met in his warehouse - First Soc & Lab Cllr Bingley
1911-29, CoCllr 9 yrs. Active Wesl.
- Sorenson Rev R.W. U 1891 Highbury S of silversmith - worked first in factory
office, shop, - joined R.J. Campbell's Prog L & 2 yrs Order of Pioneer
Preachers 1912 - pastorate Walthamstow Free Christian Ch (U) 1914 on.
Founder member & Cttee Soc of Soc Xts 1924 on. Active Battersea & E.
Ham Lab Chs. I.L.P., Cllr Walthamstow & Essex Co. W.W.I. Pacifist later
Nat Ch Peace Council. Infls: New Theology, News from Nowhere. Wife sister
of Mrs A.F. Brockway.
- Spero Dr G.E. 1894 Dover. Private tutors, London Univ, London Hosp & Royal
Dental Hosp. M.C.R.S. W.W.I. Surg-Lieut - destroyers & minesweepers - in-
valided out 1918. Author/journalist. Lib M.P. Stoke Newington 1923-4.
Changed to Lab 1925.
- Strachey E.J. NR 1901 s of editor Spectator & Con, C of E.Educ Eton &
Magdalen Coll Oxford where conv Soc 1922 - journalist writes New Leader -
joined I.L.P. 1924 - editor Soc Rev, Miner, supp Mosley on econ grounds
- New Party 1931 - anti-Fascist rejoined Lab P. Non-religious.
- Strauss G.R. 1901 S of Con M.P. later conv to Lab P. Educ Rugby - in bus-
iness - metal merchant. Conv to Lab 1924, L.C.C. 1925.
- Taylor W.B. C 1875 Thetford. Elem educ - farm 14 - Saddler - smallholder
(400 acres) - County Sec Nat U Agric Workers. Cllr & B of G - Ch Lab gp
Co Council from formation 1918. Cong Lay Preacher & Deacon - close assoc
George Edwards M.P.

West F.R.

Kensington N. b. 1892 Huddersfield. Elem educ - $\frac{1}{2}$ time mines - textile mill Bradford - clerk. Qualifies Teacher - Schoolmaster with L.C.C. 1920-9. Soc Pamphleteer & speaker from youth.

Whiteley N.

Birmingham Ladywood. b. 1882 Huddersfield S of textile worker - Elem educ to 12 - warehouse 13 - print trade - 18 yrs provision brokers office - Shop Ass U 1906 - local offices. 1904 Soc speaker - helps form I.L.P. branch 1906, Sec 15 yrs - Pres Huddersfield I.L.P. Fed 1916-8. Founder Lockwood Socialist Sunday Sch 1907, Pres to 1925. W.W.I. C.O. Religious activist from youth.

Williams E.J.
(by-election 1931)

Ogmore (Glam). b. 1890. Elem educ - mines 12 - T.U. activist - Sec to Gt Western Collieries 1909-13 - Lab Coll 1913-5 - checkweigher 1918 - Miners' Agent 1919-31. Sec Pontypridd I.L.P. - Lab Coll lecturer. N.C.F. Sec.

Winterton G.E.

Loughborough. b. 1873 Leicester - Elem educ - pupil teacher - Training Coll Isleworth - Teacher London Dockland - Sec W. Ham N.U.T. - Temperance org - People's Suffrage Movt org - journalist & lecturer. Lay Preacher. Member Soc Xt L 1930s.

Wise E.F

Leicester E. b. 1885 Bury St Edmunds poverty d of father. Scholarship G. S. & Sidney Sussex Coll Cantab - Civil Service to 1923 - app econ adv to All-Russian Central U of Consumer Coop Soc. I.L.P. N.A.C. 1927 on - chief instigator Living Wage Policy.

Young R.S.

Islington N. b. 1891 nr Manchester, Rad family - Early Soc Age 19 to S. America - worked passage to N.Z. - establs local br N.Z Lab P. 1920 on Marylebone - 1st Ch revived I.L.P. branch. Soc of Soc Xts speaker 1920s on.

Turberville E CE

The Wrekin. b. 1872 S of Colonel Indian Army/Landowner Glamorgan, Con
C of E. Educ Royal Sch Bath - Evang conversion 1895 - trained for miss-
ionary - London slums - India.1900-8. Y.W.C.A. to W.W.I. - appalled at
factory condits women munition workers - Jan 1919 joined Lab P. Regular
Preacher chapels etc.

Vaughn D.J. W

Forest of Dean. b. 1873 Tredegar S of builder. Elem educ - building trade
- be came building contractor. Early adv Rad - Co Cllr Monmouth - later
Lab - platform speaker. Wesl Local Preacher 1896 on. - Circuit & Society
Stewards. Member of Soc of Soc Xts 1920s.

Walkden A.G.

Bristol S. b. 1873 Middx Educ Merchant Taylors Sch, Ashwell Herts. - rly
clerk 16 on - various depts: Yorks, Cambridge etc. Gen Sec Rly Clerks Ass
1906 on. Fabian.

Walker J.

Newport. b. 1883 Glasgow. Elem educ - steel smelter - T.U. activist -
Ruskin Coll - Steel Smelters Soc 18 yrs. I.L.P. 1904 on. Cllr Glasgow
1913 on.

Wallace H.W.

Walthamstow E. b. 1885 Manchester. Elem educ - postal messenger 13 - T.U.
activist from youth - Pres Mchr Postmen's Fed - Ch Postmen's Fed 1918
then Ass Sec U.P.W. I.L.P. propagandist from youth.

Watkins F.C. D

Hackney C. b. 1883 St Pancras. Elem educ - Rly Clerk - active T.U. - Soc
activist from teens Preaches Free Ch pulpits.

Welsh J.

Paisley. b. 1881 Paisley, grew up Bridgeton. Elem educ - Cinematograph Ex-
hibitor 1910 on - Pres Cinema Exhibs Ass. I.L.P. from 1890s - Glasgow
City Cllr 1913 on.

a)

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Daily News
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Link
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- Emerson R.W. (introduction P.Chubb) Select Writings (1888)
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- " Nature, The Conduct of Life and other Essays (1908 Everyman ed.)
- Fraser J.A.Lovat Why a Tory Joined the Labour Party (1921)
- Freeman P. The Druids and Theosophy (Glasgow 1924)
- George H. Progress and Poverty (1911 Everyman)
- Glazier J.B. The Meaning of Socialism (Manchester 1919)
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