

price one penny, and a pamphlet called "Socialism," a reply to the Pope, price one penny, which will be useful. The last-named pamphlet is by Robert Blatchford, and can be had at the *Clarion* office.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRACTICAL SCHOOL.

Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots. Their land also is full of idols: they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.—*Isaiah*.

As I said in my first chapter, the problem we have to consider is:—

Given a country and a people, find how the people may make the best of the country and themselves.

Before we can solve this problem, we must understand the country and the people. We must find out their capacities; that is to say, what can be got from the country; what it will yield; and what can be got from ourselves; what we can do and be.

On these points I differ from the so-called practical people of the Manchester School, for I believe that this country will yield a great deal more of the good things of life than the people need; and that the people can be much happier, healthier, richer, and better than they now are.

But the Manchester School would have us believe that our own country is too barren to feed us, and that our people are too base and foolish to lead pure, wise, and honest lives.

This is a difference as to facts. I will try, presently, to show you that the facts are in my favour.

You, Mr. Smith, are a practical man; you have reason and judgment. Therefore you would do a pleasant thing in preference to an unpleasant thing. You would choose a healthy and agreeable occupation in preference to an unhealthy and disagreeable occupation. You would rather live in a healthy and agreeable place than in an unhealthy and disagreeable place. You would rather work four hours a day than twelve hours a day. You would rather do the

things you would like to do, and have the things you wish for, than do the things you dislike to do, and lack the things you wish for.

You live in Oldham, and you are a spinner. If I ask you why you live in Oldham, and why you work in the factory, you will say that you do it in order to "get a living."

I think also that you will agree with me on three points: Firstly, that Oldham is not a nice place to live in; secondly, that the factory is not a nice place to work in; thirdly, that you don't get as good a living as you desire.

There are some things you do, which you would rather not do; and there are some things you wish for and cannot get.

Now suppose we try to find out what are the things it is best for us to have, and which is the best and easiest way to get them.

I hope that up to this point I have been quite clear, and practical, and truthful.

Of course you have read Robinson Crusoe. You know that he was shipwrecked upon an island, and had to provide for himself. He raised corn, tamed goats, dried raisins, built himself a house, and made vessels of clay, clothing of skins, a boat, and other useful things. If he had set to work making bead necklaces and feather fans before he secured food and lodging you would say he was a fool, and that he did not make the most of his time and his island. But what would you call him if he had starved and stunted himself in order to make bead necklaces and feather fans for some other person who was too lazy to work?

Whatever you call him, you may call yourself, for *you* are wasting your time and your chances in the effort to support idle people and vain things.

Now, to our problem. How are we to make the best of our country, and of our lives? What things do we need in order to secure a happy, healthy, and worthy human life?

We may divide the things needful into two kinds: Mental and physical. That is to say, the things needful for the body and the things needful for the mind.

Here again I differ very much from the self-styled practical people of the Manchester School.

My ideal is frugality of body and opulence of mind. I suggest that we should be as temperate and as simple as possible in our use of mere bodily necessities, so that we may have as much time as possible to enjoy pleasures of a higher, purer, and more delightful kind.

Your Manchester School treat all Social and Industrial problems from the standpoint of mere animal subsistence. They do not seem to think that you *have* any mind. With them it is a question of bread and cheese and be thankful. They are like the man in "Our Mutual Friend" who estimated the needs of the ferryman's daughter in beef and beer. It was a question, he said, "of so many pounds of beef, and so many pints of porter." That beef and that porter were "the fuel to supply that woman's engine," and, of course, she was only to have just as much fuel as would keep the engine working at high pressure. But I submit to you that such an estimate would be an insult to a horse.

Your Manchester School claim to be practical men, and always swear by facts. As I said before, I reverence facts; but I want *all* the facts; not a few of them. If I am to give a verdict, I must hear the whole of the evidence.

Suppose a gardener imagined that all a flower needed was earth and manure, and so planted his ferns on the sunny side and his peaches on the shady side of his garden. Would you call him a practical man?

You will see what I mean. Soil is a "fact," and manure is a "fact." But the habit of a plant is a "fact" also, and so are sunshine and rain "facts."

Turn, then, from plants to men, and tell me are appetites the only facts of human nature? Do men need nothing but food, and shelter, and clothes?

It is true that bread, and meat, and wages, and sleep are "facts," but they are not the only facts of life. Men have imaginations and passions as well as appetites.

I must ask you to insist upon hearing all the evidence. I must ask you to use your eyes and ears, to examine your memory, to consult your own experience and the experience of the best and wisest men who have lived, and to satisfy yourself that although wheat and cotton and looms and ploughs and bacon and blankets and hunger and thirst and

heat and cold are facts, they are not the only facts, nor even the greatest facts of life.

For love is a fact, and hope is a fact, and rest, and laughter, and music, and knowledge are facts; and facts which have to be remembered and have to be reckoned with before we can possibly solve the problem of how the British people are to make the best of their country and themselves.

A life which consists of nothing but eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and working is not a human life—it is the life of a beast. Such a life is not worth living. If we are to spend all our days and nights in a kind of penal servitude, continually toiling and suffering in order to live, we had better break at once the chains of our bitter slavery, and die.

What, then, are the things needful for the body and the mind of man?

The bodily needs are two:—

Health and Sustenance.

The mental needs are three:—

Knowledge,
Pleasure,
Intercourse.

We will consider the bodily needs first, and we will begin by finding out what things ensure good bodily health.

To ensure good health we must lead a "natural" life. The farther we get from nature,—the more artificial our lives become,—the worse is our health.

The chief ends to health are pure air, pure water, pure and sufficient food, cleanliness, exercise, rest, warmth, and ease of mind.

The chief obstacles to health are impure air, impure water, bad or insufficient food, gluttony, drunkenness, vice, dirt, heavy labour, want of rest, exposure, and anxiety of mind.

The sure marks of good health are physical strength and beauty.

Look at the statue of an Ancient Greek Athlete, and then at the form of a Modern Sweater's Slave, and you will see how true this is.

These are facts. Any doctor, or scientist, or artist, or athlete will confirm these statements.

Now, I shall show you, later, that hardly any of our people lead natural and healthy lives. I shall show you that the average Briton might be very much healthier, handsomer, and stronger than he is; and I shall show you that the average duration of life might easily be *doubled*.

Next, as to Sustenance. There are four chief things needed to sustain life in a civilised community:—

Food,
Clothing,
Shelter, and
Fuel.

All these things should be used temperately. Enough is *better* than a feast. Luxurious living is a bad and not a good thing. You know that when a man is training for any feat of strength or of endurance he takes plain and pure food, and abundant rest and exercise. A rowing man, a running man, a boxer, a cricketer, or an athlete of any kind would never think of training on turtle soup, game pies, and champagne. Again I say that any doctor, scientist, artist, or athletic trainer will endorse my statement.

Now I shall show you, later, that our people are badly clothed, and badly fed, and badly housed. That some have more, but most have less, than is good for them; and that with a quarter of the labour now expended in getting improper sustenance we might produce proper sustenance, and plenty of it, for all.

Meanwhile, let us consider the mental needs of life. These are

Knowledge, Pleasure, and Intercourse.

You may describe all these things as pleasures, or as recreations, if you choose.

Of Knowledge there are almost numberless branches, and all of them fascinating. Modern science alone is a vast storehouse of interest and delight. Astronomy, physiology, botany, chemistry, these words sound dry and forbidding to the man who knows nothing at all of the science; but to the student they are more fascinating, more thrilling, and more marvellous than any romance.

But science is only one branch of knowledge. There is literature, there is history, there are foreign countries and

peoples, there are languages, and laws, and philosophies to interest and to inform us. Solomon spoke well when he said that wisdom is better than rubies. As a mere *amusement* the acquirement of knowledge is above price. But it has another value, it enables us to help our fellow creatures, and to leave the world better than we found it.

As for Pleasures their name is legion. There are such pleasures as walking, rowing, swimming, football, cricket. There are the arts, and the drama. There are the beauties of nature. There are travel and adventure. Mere words cannot convey an idea of the intensity of these pleasures. Music alone is more delightful and more precious than all the vanities wealth can buy, or all the carnal luxuries that folly can desire. The varieties of pure and healthy pleasures are infinite.

Then as to Intercourse. I mean by that all the exaltation and all the happiness that we can get from friendship, from love, from comradeship, and from family ties. These are amongst the best and the sweetest things that life can give.

Now, Mr. Smith, you are a practical and a sensible man. I ask you to look about you and to think, and then to tell me what share of all these things falls to the share of the bulk of the British people; but especially to the share of the great working masses.

In the average lot of the average British workman how much knowledge and culture, and science and art, and music and the drama, and literature and poetry, and field sports and exercise, and travel and change of scene?

You know very well that our working people get little of these things, and you know that such as they get are of inferior quality.

Now I say to you that the people do not get enough of the things needful for body and mind, that they do not get them of the best, and that they do not get them because they have neither money to pay for them nor leisure to enjoy them.

I say, farther, that they ought to have and might have abundance of these things, and I undertake to show you how they can obtain them.

We hear a great deal, Mr. Smith, about the "Struggle for Existence."

Well, I say there is no need for any "struggle for existence." I have shown you what things are necessary to a happy and noble existence, and I say to you now that all these things can be easily and abundantly produced.

Given our country and our people, I maintain that the people, if rightly organised and directed, can get from the country *all* that is good for them, with very little labour.

The work needed to supply the bodily and mental needs above named is very slight. The best things of life—knowledge, art, recreation, friendship, and love—are all *cheap*; that is to say they can all be got with little labour.

Why then the "struggle for existence"?

So far, Mr. Smith, I have, I hope, been practical and plain. I have indulged in no fine writing, I have used no hard words, I have kept close to facts. There has been nothing "windy" or "sentimental" up to now. I shall be still more practical as we go on.

In the meantime, if you can find Ruskin's *Modern Painters* in your free library, I should advise you to read it.

There are two other books that would be valuable; these are "England's Ideal," by Edward Carpenter, and "Signs of Change," by Wm. Morris.

CHAPTER III.

TOWN V. COUNTRY.

I would not have the labourer sacrificed to the result. I would not have the labourer sacrificed to my convenience and pride, nor to that of a great class of such as me. Let there be worse cotton and better men. The weaver should not be bereaved of his superiority to his work.—*Emerson*.

The substantial wealth of man consists in the earth he cultivates, with its pleasant or serviceable animals and plants, and in the rightly produced work of his own hands. . . . The material wealth of any country is the portion of its possessions which feeds and educates good men and women in it. . . . In fact it may be discovered that the true veins of wealth are purple—and not in Rock, but in Flesh—perhaps even that the final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures.—*Ruskin*.

Before we begin this chapter I must ask you to keep in mind the fact that a man's bodily wants are few.