THE LABOUR CHURCH

AND ALLIED MOVEMENTS OF THE LATE NINETEENTH
AND EARLY TWENTIETH
CENTURIES

APPENDIX VOLUME.
BEST COPY

AVAILABLE

Variable print quality
DAMAGED
TEXT
IN
ORIGINAL
LABOUR CHURCH CONGREGATIONS

There were at least 121 congregations formed, with partial work carried on under the name of the Labour Church in an additional 16 communities. There was interest shown in another 37 places, as well as a large number of I. L. P. locals which carried on Sunday meetings on Labour Church lines.

The following chart shows the number of congregations in existence in each year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1892</th>
<th>1893</th>
<th>1894</th>
<th>1895</th>
<th>1896</th>
<th>1897</th>
<th>1898</th>
<th>1899</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(16 of these in Canada)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Present Day</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the congregations enjoyed only a short life. About 42 were relatively strong, and flourished over a number of years; the remainder enjoyed only a few months, or at most a year or two of life. The following chart shows the duration of each congregation; the maps show their geographical distribution.
### Labour Church Congregations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Manchester &amp; Vicinity</th>
<th>South Manchester</th>
<th>South-West Manchester</th>
<th>Stockport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Ardwick</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ashton-under-Lyne</td>
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<td>Denton</td>
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<td>Goreton</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hyde</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manchester &amp; Salford</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ford</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manchester</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Manchester</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oldham</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Openshaw</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pendleton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
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<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>South Manchester</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South-West Manchester</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stalybridge</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The table contains numerical data indicating membership numbers for various areas, with specific years and locations listed as follows:
- *Manchester & Salford*: Ford, Manchester
- *South Manchester*: XXXXX
- *South-West Manchester*: XXXXX
- *Stalybridge*: XXXXX
- *Stockport*: XXXXX)

**Note**: The numerical entries (XXXX) represent varying membership counts, with specific years noted for certain areas, such as c. 1912 and 1936.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Lancashire</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrington</td>
<td>XXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrington</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrow-in-Furness</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackburn</td>
<td>XXXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolton</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX c. 1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradshaw &amp; District</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brierfield</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownlow Fold</td>
<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colne Valley</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwen</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnworth</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX c. 1912</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsbottom</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>XXXx ..., XXXx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Riding, Yorkshire</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnsley</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXX ... XXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Batley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX 1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleckheaton</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewsbury</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eccleshill</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farsley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huddersfield</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keighley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Levenshulme</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longwood</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaithwaite</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wakefield</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Potteries</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Burton-on-Trent</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanley</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle-under-Lyme</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Midlands</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bordesley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erdington</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long Eaton</td>
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<td>Nottingham</td>
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<td>Selly Oak</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stourbridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyseley &amp; Sparkhill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Bromwich</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NORTH OF ENGLAND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consett</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Darlington
Middlesborough
Newcastle-on-Tyne

London & Environs
Battersea
Bermondsey
Boxmoor
Croydon
East Ham
Hemel Hempstead
London, Salmon's XXX Lane
London, Children's Church
North Paddington
Tottenham
Watford

Elsewhere in England and Wales
Cambridge
Cardiff

(dates unknown)
(dates unknown)
(dates unknown)
c. 1914
(dates unknown)
Dover
Hull
Norwich
Plymouth
Southampton
Taunton

Scotland
Aberdeen
Arbroath
Brechin
Caithness
Dundee
Glasgow, Labour Church
Glasgow, Socialist Church
Paisley

Other Countries
Melbourne, Australia
Christ Church, N.Z.
Boston, U.S.A.
Lynn, U.S.A.  
Marblehead, U.S.A.  
Providence, U.S.A.  
Brandon, Canada  1919 - 1923
Calgary, Canada  1920 - c. 1921
Edmonton, Canada  1919 - ?
Fort William, Canada  1920 - ?
Port Arthur, Canada  1920 - ?
Toronto, Socialist Church, Canada  c. 1910 - 1914
Toronto, Church of the Social Revolution  1914 - c. 1917
Toronto, Peoples' Church  1923 - 1924
Vancouver, Canada  1920 - ?
Winnipeg (9 congregations) Canada  1918 - c. 1924

Pioneer or Cinderella Only
Blackpool  
Burnley  
Chester  
Dobcross  
Dumfries  

1920 - c. 1921
1914 - 1917
1923 - 1924
Failsworth & Hollingworth
Fenton
Heywood
Horwich
Liverpool
Preston
Radcliffe
Swansea
Wigan
Wrexham
York

There was interest in the Labour Church Movement shown in the following areas; Meetings were held but no congregations were formed.

Abertillery
Altrincham
Berkshire (several localities)
Brighouse
Cape Breton, Canada
Carlisle

Castleford
Croydon (Brotherhood Church)
Dartmoor
Drumheller, Canada
Falkirk
Glasgow (New Labour Army)
Golcar  
Goole  
Grimsby  
Hackney (St. Thomas Square Chapel)  
Hereford  
Holland  
Ipswich  
Larburt  
Leeds (Brotherhood Church)  
London (Brotherhood Church)  
Neath  
Oxfordshire (several localities)  
Pendlebury  
Rotherham  
San Francisco, U.S.A.  
Skipton  
Sowerby Bridge  
Stafford  
Stockton  
Walkden  
West Malling  
Wilsden  
Winnipeg, Canada (Peoples' Forum)  
Woolwich  
Workington
Distributions of Labour Church Congregations

DISTRIBUTION OF LABOUR CHURCH PIONEER OR CINDERELLA ACTIVITY.

DISTRIBUTION OF LABOUR CHURCH ACTIVITY WITH NO RESULTING ORGANIZATION.
Distribution of Labour Church Congregations

Distribution of Labour Church Pioneer in Cinderella Activity.

Distribution of Labour Church Activity with its resulting Organization.
Labour Churches in Countries other than Great Britain:

Australia -- 1
Canada -- 18
New Zealand -- 1
U. S. A. -- 4
Distribution of Labour Church Congregations

Distribution of Labour Church Pioneer and Cinderella Activity

Distribution of Labour Church Activity with No Resisting Organization
## DIRECTORY OF LABOUR CHURCHES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABERDEEN</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Mrs. Tyvie Mayo &quot;Edward Garrett&quot; Rev. Alex Webster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Labour Prophet published an address of Mrs. Mayo to the Aberdeen Labour Church, delivered during the summer of 1894. She indicates that the congregation was under criticism because only "Socialist hymns about their own virtues and wrongs" were sung.

Several Aberdonians have vague memories of the Labour Church as being connected with the Rev. Alex Webster and the Unitarian Church, by which the Labour Church was absorbed. Several Members of the Plymouth Brethren Fellowship remember one of their number who had dropped out of the fellowship when the death of his wife broke his faith. Some years later he found "faith" again, telling his Brethren friends that he was truly serving and worshipping God in the Independent Labour Party. Apparently some time after the Aberdeen Labour Church had ceased to be the Independent Labour Party carried something of the religious fervour which characterized the Labour Churches.

The Aberdeen Clarion Scouts organised in May 1905 "to promote the knowledge of Socialism" sponsored Sunday lectures in the Aberdeen Trades Hall.

### ABERTILLERY

There was interest shown in 1894.

### ACCRINGTON

1893 -- -- S. Robinson

This Labour Church had a delegate present at the founding of the Labour Church Union. A listing of the Labour Churches in September 1894 names this congregation, with S. Robinson of the Labour Club as its secretary.

### ALTRINCHAM—near Manchester

There was interest shown in 1894.

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1. Clarion, June 2, 1905.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of Size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARBROATH</strong></td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>In 1895 this congregation was listed as operating, but not as subscribing to the financial basis of membership in the Labour Church Union.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARDWICK</strong></td>
<td>- 1895 -</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>The Labour Prophet lists this congregation as organized, but not in correspondence with the Labour Church Union.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASHTON-under-LYNE</strong></td>
<td>1901 - 1912 - 1903</td>
<td>700 - 750</td>
<td>Dr. Crawshaw M.D. (1st Chairman)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R. A. Barrett (Councillor)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T. P. Crowther</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Ethel Hague (daughter of Sam Hague of Gorton.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Sybilla Alice Holmes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. W. P. Lodge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gibbon &amp; Mrs. Mitchell</td>
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<td>Chas. P. Moody</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thos. Pennington</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>M. T. Simm (I.L.P. supporter)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Chapmans&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Davenports&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Gordons&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Hillmans&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Horocks&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Jones&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Lewis-Watsons&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Marshalls&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Tothwells&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1893 Charles Hopper was active in Cinderella work. Prior to the turn of the century there is mention only of the activity of a Labour Church Pioneer, Thos. Pennington. He began his association with the Labour Church as early as 1894 and later, in 1903, became the first superintendent of the Ashton-under-Lyne Socialist Sunday School. In 1901 Mr. and Mrs. Gibbon Mitchell, who had been active members of the Bradford Labour Church, moved to Ashton-under-Lyne.
Before long a Labour Church congregation was formed, holding its first service on "the first Sunday in the new century" (Jan. 1901). The new congregation soon assumed a role of influence and importance both in the community and in the Labour Church Union.

The congregation grew quickly, attaining an attendance of 700 to 800 by 1903. One reason for this was a strong emphasis on fellowship. Teas and socials were prominent and numerous; some of these events are worthy of notice here: An entertainment was planned to which were invited the 'old-folk' of the town; 80 enjoyed themselves as the guests of the Labour Church. Also, each Christmas, carol-singing groups went out, particularly to the homes of the sick and shut-in.

In 1903 a Socialist Sunday School was added to the Church program. The announcement clearly states that the initiative in the formation of the school was taken by the education committee of the I.L.P. The Clarion, Feb. 17, 1905 states that the Sunday School previously managed by the I.L.P. was taken over by the Labour Church. However, it is characteristic of the early days of both the I.L.P. and the Labour Church that clear and distinct lines of demarcation were not made. Those who were active in the Sunday School were active also in both the party and the church. Under the leadership of Thomas Pennington, a former Fabian and Labour Church Pioneer, and always an ardent sponsor of the religious side of socialism, the Sunday School made good progress. There were forty regular scholars but 134 attended the Christmas treat. The school was divided into five classes: kindergarten, primary, junior, intermediate, and adult. Every effort was made to make the school a close fellowship. Birthdays of all scholars were observed, concerts prepared and given, parties and outings provided, and naming ceremonies or 'Christenings' conducted. In addition close contact with other Socialist Sunday Schools was kept, with frequent exchange of speakers and occasional expeditions to visit a neighbouring school. Friendly terms were also maintained with the nearby Spiritualist Lyceum and the Unitarian Sunday Schools.

The Congregation and the Sunday School usually met in the Smaller Co-operative Hall but were obliged to hire the Larger Hall or the Oddfellows Hall for their special meetings. When they later moved to the I.L.P. "Socialist Hall" better facilities were available.

The atmosphere of the Ashton-under-Lyne Labour Church was largely Christian and quite reverent though of course with an aversion for much of the traditional conservatism of the Churches. The services were patterned on Unitarian lines. Hymns with reference to God and to Christ were sung, and the Lord's Prayer was used regularly, until Secularist influences began to change the

1. Mr. Crowther reports the regular order of service as follows:
   Hymn, Lord's Prayer, Hymn, Notices, Address, Hymn.
atmosphere. About 1907 the influence of Ingersol was reaching some of the younger members and one of them became a secularist lecturer. Questions were allowed, then discussion and debate were introduced into the proceedings; Almost immediately the Church and the Sunday School began to break up. Mrs. Mitchell reports that one of the prominent sources of this kind of difficulty was the influence of a Bradford Tea Merchant, a Mr. Gott, who would supply a lecturer free with each order of tea. Though the Labour Church did not avail themselves of this service, the I.L.P. did, and the Labour Church reaped the results. Though the exact date of the demise of the Church is not known, both Mr. Crowther and Mrs. Mitchell believe it was about 1910, although the Ashton-under-Lyne Socialist and Labour Church was still listed as active in the Labour Church Union of 1912.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1898 40</td>
<td>J. Ross Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1899 40</td>
<td>J. Quinell</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jackson - pianist (formerly of the Bradford L.C.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Barnsley Labour Church, with encouragement and support from John Trevor, began in the autumn of 1898, meeting at the Labour Club. Because this club had begun to sell beer as a means of financial support, it was not considered a suitable place of meeting, but it had to be endured because the weekly collections which seldom exceeded five shillings would not secure better premises.

The church was supported by a small and enthusiastic group of people, but rank and file socialists were indifferent. The attendances week by week were about 40. A Sunday School had been organized, but it was not growing; its membership was 23, its average attendance, 16. By the time of the first Anniversary public opinion and press comments were improving, possibly because the members were interesting themselves in questions of slum clearance, public health, and municipalization, an interest which was being implemented by a program of education and self-improvement. Better ways were being found of informing the public and effecting reforms. In 1900 the Labour Church campaigned for I.L.P. representation on the Council. The Secretary reported to the April issue of the Labour Church Record: "When we once get a representative on the chief council, the people will then see how good, noble, and self-sacrificing work can be done to cleanse away public iniquity and set truth on high before all men."

The Reformers' Year Book for 1901 makes no reference to the existence of the Barnsley Labour Church. It is possible that the congregation merged with the I.L.P., for a strong religious
In the early summer of '92 a number of Barrow socialists invited John Trevor to visit them to explain the Labour Church. As a result of this meeting plans were laid to begin a congregation in the autumn. Care was taken to avoid competition with, indeed to work with their fellow socialists of the Fabian Society, who were doing good Sunday propaganda work. It was under the sponsorship of the Fabian and with the co-operation of the Labour Church provisional committee that Keir Hardie addressed a public meeting in the Jubilee Hall on Abbey Road, on October 16th, and established the Barrow I.L.P. The church was formed two months later.

During the late summer and autumn of 1892 many hours were spent in organizing and training both a choir and a band so that all would be in readiness for the visit of Ben Tillett on the occasion of the opening service. Great was the disappointment when the Bristol Dockers Strike prevented his attendance. The expected 'complete failure' turned out to be a fair success, with a local enthusiast, Comrade Robson, giving a clear and convincing 'sermon'. Succeeding weeks brought speakers such as J. Cecil Kennedy of Carlisle, and Pete Curran, the Barrow I.L.P. candidate and an official of the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union who came to Barrow in 1892 to "nurse" the constituency in preparation for the general election of 1895. Curran was a frequent speaker in and a strong supporter for the Labour Church. By the end of January, after their sixth week, the new congregation engaged Central Hall (the second largest auditorium in the town with a seating capacity of 800) at a rent of £1 per week, as their permanent place of worship and arranged a Dedication Service with Alfred Settle of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church doing the honours.

The new church underwent considerable criticism from the general public for its atheistic and non-Christian attitudes. Nonetheless the average attendance was 600 for the winter months. With the coming of the fine weather the enthusiasm waned somewhat, and it never did regain as large a following in the succeeding years. However, it did retain a vigor and vitality till the Labour Church lost its identity in the practical affairs and activities of the I.L.P. This happened sometime prior to 1899. The I.L.P. continued the tenancy of the Central Hall till 1898.
when a move was made to 80A Cavendish St.

Labour Church co-operation with the I.L.P. was characteristic of the Barrow socialists. It amounted to something more than mutual good-will. During the unemployment crisis of the autumn of 1893 a relief program was worked out to aid the worst cases of want; while a good election campaign was conducted that Pete Curran, as a member of parliament, might help to enact legislation which would prevent such problems in the future.

The Barrow Labour Church was the meeting place, and possibly the initiator of the Women's I.L.P. which met each Monday afternoon to sew, and talk, and eat. The weekly fee of 3d. was divided three ways: 1d. was contributed to election funds, 1d. bought material which was sewn into garments which were sold to further increase election funds, and 1d. was used to provide tea and cakes. With a good membership the Women's I.L.P. was able to do some very good work.

The formation of the Barrow Socialist Society about 1906 provided a forum for 'advanced thinkers' where students at Barrow's Ruskin College Educational League, the Clarion Vocal Union, the I.L.P. and the Labour Representation Committee and other propagandist socialists could meet. Though not strictly a Labour Church, it was based on similar principles and performed a similar task.

**Bally**

Correspondence with Mildred Taylor of Huddersfield indicates the existence of this congregation during the first decade of the 20th century.

**Battersea**

R. W. Sorenson, M.P. indicated the existence of this congregation.

**Berkshire**

Interest was shown in several localities in 1894.

1. "In the ever present background was the near-starvation and poverty of the residents in Hindpool, the soup-kitchens serving thousands of free meals a day (over 12,000 per week), and the tramp of the two thousand unemployed." -- from 50 Years Anniversary of the Labour Party, published by Barrow L.P.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of Size: (Year Lieu. Att.)</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIRMINGHAM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>c. 1914</td>
<td>1893 c. 75 c. 150</td>
<td>W. E. Baker</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1894 130</td>
<td>Tom Bond</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1896 120</td>
<td>Percy Broadhurst</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1897 c. 50</td>
<td>A. King Constantine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1898 77 106</td>
<td>Miss Constantine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1899 99</td>
<td>John Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1903 86 138</td>
<td>J. A. Fallows, M.A.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1904 106 110</td>
<td>Mrs. Fiorci</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1905 119</td>
<td>Tom Groom</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1906 116 130</td>
<td>S. G. Hobson</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1907 107 112</td>
<td>Mrs. Arthur Holden</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1908 99 111</td>
<td>Kenneth Holden</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New congregations formed in the suburb during 1907</td>
<td>E. Hotchkiss</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>accounted for the decrease in membership.</td>
<td>Frank Humphries</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>F. A. Lecon</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Frank Mathews</td>
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<td>A. G. Rawlings</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. V. Stevens, councillor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. R. Wright, L.C. Librarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Archer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>L. Muir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. H. Atkinson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. Nichols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. C. Banner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Norman</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. H. Bedwell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. C. Orme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geo. F. Berry, Sunday School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. H. Pearce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E. Phillips</td>
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<td>J. Bowker</td>
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<td></td>
<td>M. J. Powell</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Brown</td>
<td></td>
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<td>W. Powell</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. W. Brown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Redman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Carlile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geo. Richards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Davis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. Sayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. J. Dieley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sewell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albert Donavan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Dyson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Everettts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ronald Spears</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. A. Fenton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Summerfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Fey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. Sydney</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. J. Geddes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. A. Tayers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greewold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geo. Thomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Hanks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. Thompson</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Hanks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Tyler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Hughes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clara Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Walters</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. King</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. Walton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Lowder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Warburton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. M. McDiarmid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. Willison</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. W. Mills</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Birmingham Labour Church began on the first day of January, 1893, with 45 charter members. It was a successful start, though the inauguration services had been postponed nearly two months to permit the presence of John Trevor; but in the three months following there was little growth. The Labour Church Idea was slow in spreading in Birmingham; to overcome this difficulty a number of social evenings were added to the program. It was a wise decision for it meant an immediate doubling of the congregation. In succeeding years, whenever there was a slackening off of attendance and interest, an added emphasis on the social side of the program seemed to be an effective counter move.

Early in its life the new congregation established a pattern which was to characterize it for many years to follow. On Sunday afternoon 30 to 40 people would gather in the Bond Street Chapel to listen to a paper and to discuss its subject matter. Then, for those attending from a distance who might want to remain for the evening service, tea was served at a nominal charge. At night, the service was 'brightened' by a choir leading in the singing of the socialist hymns and singing socialist anthems. This had a side effect of providing a wide degree of active participation, thus extending a sense of personal loyalty to the cause. The main attraction of the evening, of course, was the visiting lecturer who would expound the ethical and religious aspects of socialism to the assemblled congregation.

But even Socialist lecturers brought problems. Some were long-winded; a motion was passed restricting them to 40 minutes. Some came from a distance and travel expenses were high, and others charged exhorbitant fees: the treasury could not stand the strain. In 1895 a system was introduced by which the suitability of lecturers could be decided. After each lecturer was heard a vote of the committee placed his name on the 'approved' or the 'black' list. Reasons for 'blacklisting', according to Percy Broadhurst who was a member of the committee for many years, were: excessive cost, uninteresting delivery style, or needless length of lecture. Disagreement with the opinions of the lecturer was not one of the accepted criteria; a free platform was maintained at all times. A 'Black List' of 1907 names nine favourite lecturers whose socialist views would be unquestioned. Cost was apparently the big question. A comment after the name of Dr. Stanton Colt, "(if he cannot come in time)", suggests that punctuality was also a factor.

1. "The question raised at the last monthly meeting as to the best means of developing a closer bond of sympathy among L. C. members was discussed by the Committee, and it was resolved: That a "Social" be arranged for at 6d. each to include tea."

2. The Birmingham Labour Church leased the Bond Street Chapel (seating capacity 500) from 1893 to 1897 when they rented accommodation in the 02xells St. Board School. Sometime after the turn of the century they moved to the Bristol Street Board School.
The Labour Church Committee had many problems to face. As 'Landlord' they spent many hours in consideration of repairs, heat, renting, and employing adequate caretakers. Even the cost of lighting a fire had to be stipulated. When the new stoves were installed to provide greater comfort, a charwoman was to be paid 6d. per week per stove to light them. If extra fires were required in any week, the surcharge was to be 3d. each.

The mid-week activities of the congregation included the Member's Business Meeting (attendance approximately 50) and a 'reading' class where members learned to read aloud and then gained confidence in public speaking. The more usual 'study' classes were avoided in order that there should be no conflict with the Fabians who were doing excellent work in this field. This was a good strategy, for in May, 1895, there was an amalgamation of the Labour Church and the Fabian Society under the name of the former. By its terms the enlarged congregation assumed the responsibility of an annual series of lectures to be held in a central location; a regular study program became a part of the church life; and a lending library of books of socialist significance was established. The amalgamation meant the dropping of the Fabian name, a slight reduction in the church debt, a small increase in the membership, and a step toward the unity of the socialist cause.

In 1894 the Labour Church was one of the main socialist bodies of Birmingham. It assumed one quarter of the budget of the Joint Socialist Committee (which had been formed by the initiative of a number of Socialists most of whom were active in the congregation,) even though there was already a debt approaching £10, a piano to buy at a cost of £30, and a hymn book to publish. The Birmingham Labour Church Hymn Book began as an eight page hymn sheet containing 35 hymns and songs suitable for use at mass meetings. The first edition of 1,500 copies was sold within a few weeks, requiring a second large printing before the end of the year; an additional 1,000 copies were required the following year. This hymn book which was frequently enlarged was patterned from Trevor's Labour Church Hymn Book from which it differed by its emphasis on socialist rather than religious themes.

It is little wonder that the congregation's debt by the end of 1894 was £13, 17s. and three months later had doubled. To assist with the financial problems which were ever pressing upon the new congregation a big bazaar was planned for the fall of 1895, to be called the "Merrie England Fayre", and to be opened by "Nunquam" (Robert Blatchford) himself. The idea was repeated successfully in several later years.

Prominent among the mid-week activities was the 'Women's Committee' who were not so much the counterpart of the auxiliary or guild of an ordinary congregation as an advance guard of the feminist movement of the following decades. Their purpose was to find "ways and means of increasing the opportunities for women to take part in the movement".

For the children there were two projects: for the families of
members there was the "Children's Church", a forerunner of the Socialist Sunday School, and for the waifs of the streets and tenements there was the Cinderella program. The Children's Church was formed in 1893 and continued with varying degrees of success until the formation of the Socialist Sunday School in 1902. A Children's Labour Church Hymn Book was published, a children's band organized, and many classes and discussion groups were conducted. Birmingham's Cinderella program was a considerably large and important one. While its story will be told below, it should be noted here that support was forthcoming for the Labour Church sponsored Cinderella that would not have been given to the Labour Church itself. Cinderella certainly appealed to philanthropic motives, and gained support of many who were opposed to socialism.

The secretary gave a fair picture of the mid-week activities of the congregation in two of his monthly reports to The Labour Prophet:

"On Monday evenings the Church is desecrated by the presence of nigger minstrels, their youth being the only extenuating circumstance in their favour. On Tuesday the desecration is continued by a Clarion Glee Club, composed of adults and others old enough to know better. On Wednesdays the place is silent, a sort of lull before the Cinderella storm raised on Thursdays. On Friday there is the comparative calm of the Committee and General Meetings. On Saturday a dancing class was held during the winter.

"This roughly is the way we get through the week. Special arrangements, however, come as a break to the monotony. Members socials are indulged in. These socials are of two kinds: the dance social and the tea social. At the former we have dancing, songs, and readings, and drink tea in the intervals. At the latter we drink tea, listen to songs and readings, and have dances in the intervals. These socials are always very enjoyable."

The Birmingham Labour Church was characterized by its strong political consciousness. Official support, in terms of endorsement of candidates and provision of campaign headquarters was often given to the I. L. P., and many projects were initiated by Labour Church committees. This political consciousness is particularly evident in the instructions given to delegates to the Labour Church Union Conferences, and in the initiation of a committee to consider the possibility of a 'National Joint Socialist Party', and in the large Town Hall political gatherings held on the Sunday evening of their anniversary each year.

For the first Anniversary demonstration hundreds were turned

2. A minute of Nov. 9, 1894, grants the Labour Church rooms for electioneering purposes in the School Board Elections.
away from the Town Hall (seating capacity 3000) after all available standing room was filled. Keir Hardie, Katherine and Bruce Glasier, and Pete Curran were the main attractions. But while it was mainly a political demonstration, Keir Hardie did not overlook the fact that it was a church anniversary:

"The mission of the Labour Church is to protest against the whole social, industrial, and so-called religious life of the nation. Its object is to stir up that divine discontent which in the past has broken down every obstacle that has hindered human progress."

At succeeding Anniversary demonstrations local orators were ready to form street meetings for any who could not gain entry to the Town Hall to hear the nationally famous speakers who, year by year were engaged to preach the "sermon". Among these speakers, throughout the years, were Enid Stacy, Tom Mann, Philip Snowden, Robert Grayson, Leonard Hall, and Robert Blatchford. During the early years it was easy for the Birmingham Labour Church to engage the top rank speakers of the nation, but in 1905 one after another would decline, or if he accepted, would send a few days later his regrets that he was unable to keep his appointment. One wonders if Birmingham Labour Church were being blacklisted, but nothing definite shows till 1909 when Philip Snowden declined because 'other socialist bodies' were to be associated with the service. The differences between the socialist left and right were becoming too great for the existence of an inclusive Labour Church. This was the time when the Labour Churches changed their name to "Socialist and Labour Churches". Birmingham determined to use only the name "Socialist Church".

Apparently disintegration of the congregation was rather quick after the ascendancy of the leftish socialists. Not only did the frictions of left and right divide the membership; there was the division of the secularist and the more religiously minded. The end of the church as such was clearly foreshadowed. It is unfortunate that the minutes books for the period beyond 1909 are no longer extant. It is probable that the congregation managed to survive till the effects of the First World War brought an end to The Labour Church Movement in Great Britain. A note attached to the minute books, signed by Percy Broadhurst, states that church activities were suspended during the war, to be reconvened when peace returned. The only evidence of further activity is indicated by the existence of the Sparkhill congregation during the 1920s. (See Tyseley and Sparkhill in this directory.)

To fill in the known detail of the history of the Birmingham congregation the following year-by-year profile is presented:

1893 - Inauguration with 45 charter members; slow progress.
1894 - Gratifying growth, expansion of activities; literature sales (mostly penny pamphlets) £29, 13s. 5d. *(footnote next page.)*
1895 - Continued progress; annual budget £182. Increased membership but decreasing financial support; debt: £30. Glee club and Young
1896 - Decrease in membership; library facilities little used; low point in life of Children's Church (average attendance 17, and services suspended for a portion of the year); even Cinderella feeling the financial squeeze. A 'Visiting Committee' was formed in March. Discussion at General Meetings opened to any who wished to contribute their ideas, but voting restricted to paid up subscribing members. Attendances began to pick up a little. Debt: £23 6s. 6d. Congregation contributing to Yellow Van Fund.

1897 - Further financial difficulties; withdrew from Labour Church Union and relinquished lease on Bond Street Chapel. The membership was canvassed to assess financial possibilities with the following results:

- 24 members subscribed 1d. per week -- 2s.
- 22 members subscribed 2d. per week -- 3s. 6d. £1 8s. 8d.
- 1+4 members subscribed 3d. per week -- 11s. per week, or
- 20 members subscribed 6d. per week -- 10s. £72 16s.
- 2 members subscribed 1s. per week -- 2s. per year.

Such a restricted budget made the very existence of the congregation precarious, but the congregation rallied; the debt was reduced, and only local speakers were heard.

1898 - Membership 77; only 1/3 members subscribing; budget £86 and church just staying out of debt. John Davies, partially paralyzed and therefore unemployable at his trade, was hired as secretary at 5s. per week1, which sum amounted to about 1/5 of the weekly collections. This was characteristic of the church members. Whenever the need arose for a special collection in aid of a strike or to relieve the worst effects of unemployment, three or four pounds could always be realized. For instance in June £3 18s. 3d. was contributed to the striking South Wales miners.

1899 - Membership increased 20%; finances on a better basis, largely through the substantial contributions of J. A. Fallows, M.A., a clergyman who had severed his relations with the established

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*(Footnote from previous page)* Financial statement, 1894:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
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<td>Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collections</td>
<td>69 14 3½</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>17 5 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
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<td>Repayment of gas by sub-tenant</td>
<td>2 19 0</td>
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<td>Profit from socials</td>
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<tr>
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1. Nothing more is mentioned of this salary, but, in 1908 there is a minute which terminates, due to financial inability, a benevolent fund set up to assist John Davies. It is assumed that the assistance of 2s. 6d. per week was a continuation of the salary paid in 1898. Shortly after the termination of the fund, Davies died. The funeral oration was delivered by Leonard Hall.
(This text is not readable due to the image quality. Please provide legible text for further processing.)
prominent, and political activity becoming increasingly important. Resolutions favouring the enfranchisement of women provided a good share of the interest and activity for the year. Labour Church representation on the Right To Work Committee was strong and active. Labour Church affiliated with the W. E. A. Many prominent speakers break their engagements with the congregation. (The present writer does not know the reasons involved.) Literature sales £46 13s. 8d.

1907 - The popularity of the Labour Church brought about the formation of "new Labour Churches in the suburbs" and a subsequent decline in membership and support. The committee on a Socialist Hall or Labour Institute was still active, and still without results. The congregation was meeting in the Briston Street School.

1908 - Membership decreased a little; financial support only fair; the Cinderella club had to abandon its summer cottage, though in its place 1000 children were given a Saturday country outing. The congregation dropped its affiliation with the Union of Ethical Societies; the Church Socialist League asked Birmingham Labour Church to send delegates to its September Conference; the Birmingham Christian Social Union offered to co-operate with the Labour Church in an effort to help shop assistants. The L. C. liaison committee reported: "Although the meeting was not of much importance in itself, the discussion being of an anaemic character, it is both significant of the trend of the times and a matter of satisfaction that this organization representing the Established Church, should extend the hand of fellowship to an institution such as ours,"; about the same time the Wesleyan Central Hall Christian Brotherhood approached the Labour Church with the possibility of sharing some lecturers. These instances reflect a change of attitude on the part of the orthodox churches. The acceptance of at least some of the Labour Church ideas may help explain Labour Church decline. With the very raison d'être of the Labour Church now espoused by at least a section of the orthodox churches, the more conservative of the socialists would not be as anxious to resist the strong leftward tendencies of their erstwhile fellow labourers in a common cause. Add to this the growing distinctness and separateness of the Labour right and the Socialist left, and the handwriting concerning the Labour Church is on the wall.

The Anniversary demonstration was held in the Hippodrome, though when the management knew that Grayson and Blatchford were to be the speakers they wished to break their rental agreement. A music license could not be obtained for the occasion so all singing was unaccompanied, but no less enthusiastic. Many were turned away from the Hippodrome which was crowded to its utmost capacity; collections yielded a profit of £32 2s. 7d.

1909 - During the year the I. L. P. withdrew from the Joint Socialist Committee; charges of 'running a clique' were leveled at the Labour Church management; the I. L. P. objected to the change of name from Labour Church to Socialist Church, a change made in accord with the permissive resolution of the Labour Church Union Conference of this year. The I. L. P. had to be reminded that they were not the Labour Church, and that the church was older than the party. Secular interests were coming into friction with the more religiously minded of the members. The conflict was drawn to a head when Philip Snowden refused to be Anniversary speaker because "other socialist bodies" were to be associated with the service. It was then arranged that Leonard Hall should be asked to be the speaker,
and that discussion and debate should be allowed after the main address. Discussion was also allowed in the regular evening services which began to take on the atmosphere of ordinary political gatherings.

1910 - Just how long meetings were carried on in the name of the Socialist Church the present writer does not know. It was active enough in 1912 to be host to the Socialist and Labour Church Union Conference. It probably declined year by year till the disruptions occasioned by the first World War brought its demise.

To bring this account to a fitting conclusion, the ideas that kept the Labour Church in continuous activity for about twenty years should be emphasized. Perhaps we can do little better than quote from a handbill used by the Birmingham Labour Church in 1907:

"The Labour Church is founded on the belief that the Political and Industrial life of the nation should be the outcome of its highest Religious Ideal. Its members claim that sincere belief in the Fatherhood of God or the Brotherhood of Man must lead to a Political and Industrial Democracy. By Political Democracy they understand a government of the people, for the people, and by the people, based upon the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and aiming at the fullest physical, mental, and moral development of each member of the body politic. By Industrial Democracy they understand an organization of the industry of the people, by the people, for the people, in which the Land and Capital of the country (the instruments of production) would be held and used collectively for the commonweal, and men and women would consciously co-operate for the production of the life needs of their fellows.

"Under such a system, with the enormous power of wealth production we now possess;

a. every child could be secured the fullest possible opportunity of developing the powers within it.

b. every grown man and woman would be able to claim in addition to abundant leisure, the right to work which shall be worth doing, and worthily rewarded.

c. every old or infirm citizen could be assured of peace and plenty so long as life shall last.

"To this end the members of the Labour Church have devoted their energies, and hence must work for the overthrow of the present system of competition, wage slavery, and monotony as not only opposed to, but destructive of their highest Religious Ideal. For in it men daily seek to gain by each other's loss; the few are made rich without working, while the many, in spite of incessant toil, are poor, oppressed, and degraded; and an unending industrial war brings hatred, misery, and death throughout the length and breadth of our land.

"To those who believe in a practical religion and who despise a faith that does not lead to action, the members of the Labour Church fearlessly make their appeal, and believe that before all
others they should receive help from those to whom the name of Christ is above all other names.

"Socialism is Religion!"

**BIRMINGHAM CINDERELLA CLUB**

1893  c. 1914  Large

W. Baker  Mrs. Arthur Holden  Miss Lowder  Frank Matthews  Miss Redman

The object of the club was "to give entertainment and recreation to the poorest children of the city". It was realized that these children could not really enjoy themselves while their stomachs were empty, so each meeting began with a supper. The Board School teachers were asked to choose the most needy children in their classes, and to distribute tickets to them. When the child presented this ticket on 'Cinderella night' he or she received a large piece of cake and a cup of hot cocoa. During the supper the Labour Church workers would make an inspection of the children's clothing; the most needy cases were reported to the police-aided clothing scheme. Then would follow the evening's entertainment -- perhaps a magic lantern show, a program of minstrel songs, a conjurer, or a story teller. Interspersed with the concert-type items would be a number of games chosen by the children. These usually involved group singing, and sometimes rhythmical actions and dancing. As the happy children left for home each would be given an apple or an orange.

During the summer the club tried to arrange outings, picnics, and rambles for these children. It was indeed an experience for some of them to learn that there were parts of the world which were not like the cramped, dirty, and crowded sections of the city in which they lived.

In the autumn of 1894 Mr. Frank Matthews was elected secretary of the club. He served in this capacity, with distinction, till his retirement from these responsibilities in 1897. During these years 14,200 meals had been served to hungry children, 1,200 children had been given at least a days outing in the country, and 35 invalid children had been given a fortnight's holiday in a cottage where they received excellent care, good food, fresh air, and as much exercise as they could profitably use.

The latter project was made possible by the generosity of Mrs. Arthur Holden, who loaned her cottage to Cinderella for this purpose. After 1897, when the Holdens removed from Birmingham, the...
Labour Church rented a cottage at Four Oaks where Miss Redman, the matron at that time, could look after six children each week. The cost of the project, over £150 per year, was met by the generosity of about 200 Birmingham citizens. In addition to the week's outing each child received, through the facilities of the Police-aided Clothing Scheme, a fresh change of clothing.

The committee felt that Cinderella's connection with the Labour Church 'pulled a good many purse-strings' so it was strongly emphasized that there was no sectarian or even socialist teaching done; this was purely a service to the poor underprivileged children of the city. Of course, those doing this work believed it would hasten the socialist state; for example, the following report is from Frank Matthew's monthly report to The Labour Prophet for September, 1896.

"If only everybody could hear the 'Cry of the Children' as we who are engaged in Cinderella work hear it, then the cry of the children would soon cease, our streets would no longer bring bitter pain to sensitive hearts, and socialism would be three generations nearer, for children would grow to be men with love in their hearts and would not need to learn the lessons of cooperation but would refuse to work or live under a system based on anything but love."

Cinderella was not without financial worries; mostly she had enough to keep going, but she always spent all she had. In 1903 however, work had temporarily to be suspended till finances improved. In 1905 a generous gift of £125 made it possible for the Cottage Program to be extended to 223 children, of whom most were neither crippled or ill. This was done by having larger groups during the summer, and by keeping the cottage open the year round. During the two succeeding years the larger program was maintained, and even extended, but in 1908 the financial problem became too great. The cottage was given up in favour of a large summer outing, by which over 1000 children left the city for a day. In 1909 a Cinderella Summer Camp was organized. The regular winter program fed and entertained 2,500 to 3,000 children each year.

During the early years, when the cottage was reserved for the ill and the crippled, Cinderella arranged for Saturday afternoon outings for the healthy urchins. At Glumslade, Sutton, furniture vans would discharge their lively load of 50 to 60 children at 3:00 p.m. For an hour and a half the children of the streets and tenements would be allowed to wander round the open countryside; then they were called for tea (cakes and cocoa). If the children were not too tired this was followed by a conducted ramble through the park, or by organized games. Fun and songs continued through the ride home.

"This may seem a bare program, but one needs to be present to see and feel the happiness it is to the children, their interest in the flowers and the plants, to hear their songs and merry shoutings, and their cheering of passing vehicles, cyclists,
During the winter season the Christmas entertainment was considered to be of major importance, particularly because the poorer children would not have the same opportunity to enjoy the Christmas festivities as their more fortunate playmates, and, because during the vacation they would miss the warm school and the hot school meals which were provided in later years. The supplies required for Christmas 1896 included 1,500 mince pies, 150 plum puddings, 90 lbs. beef, 2 cwt. sweets, as well as 250 toys and 250 packages of candies (the toys and packaged candy for pre-school children only). That year dinners were served to 2,000 children, and as many more were turned away.

The regular winter work involved feeding and entertaining over 2,000 children. Every Thursday evening at the Labour Church about 100 children turned up, and every Saturday at the Gem St. Board School about 50 pre-schoolers were fed in the afternoon, and about 50 of the 7 to 11 year olds were fed at night. In 1897 another 120 were fed and entertained at the Fox Street Board School.

During Cinderella's first year over 1,000 meals were served; during the fifth, 8,500 were required. Cinderella work continued, with variations due to financial ability, to the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, and perhaps longer. Throughout its whole existence, it was a labour of love. Frank Matthew's words opening the 1897-98 report express this quite adequately:

"Our work and mission is to bring happiness into the lives of the children of the slums, and to prove to them that those who are better off than they both pity and love them."2

**HERMONDEY**

R. W. Sorenson, M.P. indicated, in conversation with the present writer, that this congregation was organized.

**BLACKBURN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>c. 1897</td>
<td></td>
<td>William Brewer</td>
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<td>H. Sidebotham</td>
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The Labour Church in Blackburn was listed by *The Labour Prophet* from Sept. 1894 till June 1895, when it was mentioned as a con-
Date of Formation: 1892
Cessation: c. 1914
Year L. C. ended: 1898
Leaders and Prominent Members:
- George Black
- Fred Brocklehurst
- John Cross, director C.V.U.
- Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Duncan
- Rev. B. J. Harker
- Geo. Harwood M.P.
- Thomas Hope

BLACKPOOL

1893 - Pioneer only.
1901 -

Mr. Binns
Rev. H. Bodell Smith

In the spring of 1893 a Labour Church Pioneer interested himself in the possibilities of the large and popular beach as a place to sell The Labour Prophet. The larger part of his sales were on Sundays and holidays, so he was often called upon to defend the right of Sunday propaganda by explaining the religious significance of the Labour Movement. He thus became, without intending it, an open air lecturer in the socialist cause. This same Pioneer was much concerned about the fifteen hour days that many of the girls in the bazaars and arcades were forced to work. Through his efforts the Pioneer, the organ of the Blackpool Co-operative Society took up the question of hours of work of shop assistants in Blackpool.

A second Labour Church Pioneer was much concerned about the underprivileged children and was anxious to establish Cinderella work among them. She canvassed the local Sunday School teachers and scholars for help, but the response was far from good. The best contribution was 2s. 6d. from a class of small girls. No continuing work was established.

Mr. Binns, an examiner for the Labour Church Correspondence Class, held classes for Labour Church and I. L. P. personnel during 1894.

The Blackpool Pioneers were present at the founding conference of the Labour Church Union, and are mentioned again a year later. Nothing further is reported of them. The next indication of Labour Church activity in Blackpool was the formation of "a church in fellowship with the Labour Churches" by the Rev. H. Bodell Smith. Apparently this venture had a good response, but the present writer has been unable to find any record of its life and work.

BOLTON

1892 1896 40 -
1898 60 400
1899 200

George Black
Fred Brocklehurst
John Cross, director C.V.U.
Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Duncan
Rev. B. J. Harker
Geo. Harwood M.P.
Thomas Hope

After the L.C. ended the socialist party carried on Sunday meetings at Wood Street.
In May, 1892, the Labour Prophet carried a report of the formation of this congregation:

"The work commenced in Manchester has spread to Bolton. For the last ten years the Rev. B. J. Harker has been pastor of Duke's Alley Congregational Church. The Chapel is the oldest in Bolton, and since the larger part of the congregation migrated to a new building, in 1862, it has been exceedingly difficult to keep a congregation together in the venerable place. During the last twelve months, however, Mr. Ben Tillett has paid several visits to Duke's Alley, and his addresses have aroused great interest in the chapel among the Labour Classes of the town, and Mr. Harker, taking advantage of this, announced that he would make the church a Labour Church so far as their constitution as a Congregational Church would allow. This has been done to the satisfaction of the Bolton branch of the Social Democratic Federation; and now the congregation has more than doubled. The form or order of service has been improved and brightened by the introduction of solo singing, and the minister preaches special sermons on Labour Questions and Social Problems, and admits well-known Labour leaders to his pulpit." 

Shortly after the announcement of the formation of the Bolton Labour Church the Rev. Mr. Harker was elected the first president.

1. The Rev. B. J. Harker was honoured and respected by the Labour Movement in Bolton. It is therefore rather strange that there is no further reference to him in the reports which appeared frequently in the issues of the Labour Prophet. It is also unusual that there is no further reference to Duke's Alley Chapel. The first indication of any change is the report that in February 1896 the congregation was meeting in the Central Hall, Acresfield. Apparently B. J. Harker had moved to London in 1893 or 1894. He maintained some interest in Labour Church work, but took no active part. Duke's Alley probably folded up for the Prophet, April 1898, Trevor mentions Bolton Labour Church being formed five years ago (e.g. 1893) in the Labour Institute on Bowers Row. In the early days there was no distinct church. Only after a majority of the Labour Groups in Bolton voted that there be no more Labour Church Services did a group rally around James Sims and organize a distinct congregation. This is probably the explanation of the Acresfield location.
of the Bolton Labour Party. His dual position as minister of the church and president of the party probably contributed greatly to a sense of the unity of the two groups. There was at first no clear distinction between them, nor was one needed for three years. It was in June, 1895 that the "Bolton Labour Party decided to work thereafter in two sections, -- the I.L.P. and the Labour Church. This decision was mainly a bid for wider support, though it was also a recognition of two functions to be served. It was in no sense a split within the Labour movement of the town.

The necessity for vigorous differentiation between the church and the political parties came two years later when it was apparent that the Labour Churches in other towns were increasingly becoming merely the Sunday propaganda meetings of the political parties. Bolton made a strong plea that, while interest in the solution of social problems should be maintained, the Labour Churches should keep themselves free from party connections. In this matter Bolton set a good example: While most of its members were also members of the I.L.P. or the S.D.F., there was a remarkable freedom from the ensnarements of political conniving. One gentleman remarked: "The Bolton Labour Church is the only religious organization in town which is not a political one." The statement is obviously an exaggeration, but it does reflect a characteristic of the Bolton congregation which differentiated it from its sister congregations in other towns. It was more "Distinctly religious" and not so intent on political action.

There were two reasons why Bolton could maintain this good example of freedom from party connections: Among the members who were protagonists for the religious and humanitarian emphases there were those who kept a careful guard. They opposed the leftist element with its doctrinaire position. The "politico-scientifico-economic" members who opposed the religious and humanitarian emphases, even to the extent of resisting the use of the Lord's Prayer, could make no headway. In 1897 they organized opposition meetings, so were no longer an internal source of trouble. In the autumn of 1898 some members of the I.L.P. were making a strong bid to use the Labour Church as 'Sunday bait' to strengthen their party; the move was stopped before it had fairly begun.

The second reason for Bolton's religious independence from party politics was the nature of their lecture program. It was always broad and free. One of the secretary's reports describes it well:

"We still adhere to the principle of a broad open platform, and consequently get a diversity of speakers, addresses, and thought. We welcome on our platform all persons, whether pronounced socialists or not, who may have anything good to tell that bears toward the interest and welfare of humanity."2

1. A strange contradiction to this statement is reported in the Labour Prophet for Sept., 1894. p.27. Bolton was one of the congregations governed by the local I.L.P. executive and meeting in the I.L.P. rooms.

2. Labour Church Record, April, 1900.
Another characteristic of the Bolton congregation was a strong Christian bias which is probably the inheritance from its congregational beginnings. This bias was reflected in their hearty singing, and in their choice of hymns. From the first they felt that the Labour Church Hymn Book could be greatly improved by the addition of a number of the 'old hymns' and the 'old familiar meters'. It was on their initiative that the 1896 revision was undertaken, and a number of their suggestions were included. When the later revisions were proposed in the early years of the twentieth century, Bolton was one of the congregations which opposed the alteration or deletion of all hymns containing "Theological" references.

In 1896 criticism was leveled at the Labour Churches because of Trevor's statement in his "Unspoken Address to the Foreign Members of the International Socialist Congress" that "the teachings of Jesus are anachronistic"; Bolton immediately made its stand clear; they would continue to read from the New Testament for "they found the sayings and stories of Jesus anything but 'anachronistic'". This attitude largely explains why the Bolton Labour Church was on friendly terms with the churches and chapels of the town. Many Labour Church members maintained connections, not always merely nominal, with other denominations.

A third characteristic of Bolton congregation was a desire for a deep understanding of the Labour Church Principles, and an impatience with those who would lightly criticize and disparage others merely for the love of dispute. One Bolton member, in commenting upon a Labour Church Union conference, expressed the general attitude of his congregation:

"A little less showing up of the supposed inconsistencies in others and in the Bible, and plenty of raising up of the Labour Church Principles, would be beneficial all round." 1

A good example of the interest in positive statements of foundational principles is the response given Fred Brocklehurst when he gave a series of eight lectures on "Christ and Socialism": the largest auditorium in the city was filled for each lecture.

The outstanding qualities and characteristics of Bolton's Labour Church are largely attributable to the leadership of James Sims. 2 To indicate something of his position in the community and

1. Prophet, July 1897, p.103.
2. Mr. Simsmith made the following statement to the present writer: The Bolton Labour Church was spontaneous, with simple organization, not too official, and centered on Sims. It was a strong recruiting agency for Socialism and the Labour Movement. It had a strong religious, though unorthodox, atmosphere that rallied advanced thinking, freedom-loving people.
in the labour movement, I quote two documents. The first, "In Memoriam" by Margaret McMillan, appeared in the Labour Leader. The second, an appraisal of the British Labour Movement by a Belgian Socialist, records an interview with Mr. Sims.

**MR. JAMES SIMS - IN MEMORIAM**

by Margaret McMillan.

Last week he passed away from us for ever - this grand old man of the Labour party, who to many of us seemed an abiding and essential part almost of the whole movement. From the first, his face, his work, his whole personality were woven into the very idea of the Independent Labour Party.

Twelve years have passed since I saw him first. It was at Bolton, of course, and the Labour Church had just been started. Mr. Sims took the chair at a crowded meeting - a remarkable figure. He was already a little bent, and walked with his head bent downwards. But when he raised it, one could not doubt that here was a man of no ordinary stamp. From under his shaggy eyebrows the dark eye flashed with all the fire, and more than the keenness, of youth. The bushy beard concealed not entirely the well-cut, firm lips; and from temple to chin the face was modelled and lined to look like what it was - the visage of a man of uncommon type and rare integrity. In a husky voice, but with spirit and fire, he went through the duties of chairman, and after the service took me home to his house for tea. The little room where we sat is something of a temple to us now, and the meals we shared have something sacramental about them. The host and hostess and their gentle daughter are no more.

Mr. Sims was the life and soul of the Labour movement in Bolton. He came into the movement at the very beginning, but even then he was, or seemed to be, in some respects, an old man - certainly a man whose youth was far behind him, whose days of mere impulse and wild enthusiasm were long past, and who brought with him the ripe judgment and experience that were lacking to a good many of us then. Not that Mr. Sims was not young. I question whether any stripling in the movement has his fire, his courage, and ardent hope, but his was the enthusiasm that has been tried and found not wanting, and so the younger men gave him precedence, and accepted him as counsellor. Well for them and us that is was so. He kept a critical eye on the lecture list and chose his speakers so well that soon the Bolton Labour Church began to permeate all

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1. The present writer has not been able to find the book, or even to identify the author. The typewritten extract here quoted came into his hands through the courtesy of the Sims family.
the religious bodies of Bolton.

It is not possible to admire one's friend very much without having a bias in his favour, but in this small appreciation there is no need to be partial. The man was more, not less, than he seemed to us to be. His modesty and detachment of mind were so genuine that it was possible to know him a long time, and yet have no notion of the scope and variety of his interests. I had known him ten years before I learned (and then not from him) that he knew anything about natural history. Then an outsider told me that few men living knew more about mosses than did Mr. Sims, and that he had given important collections to the Natural History Museums. When I mentioned this to him, he bestirred himself to show me a few volumes of pressed specimens, and began to speak to me as a connoisseur, but perceiving that I knew little, he altered his teaching and began gently to initiate me into the elementary part of the work. Sometimes he took a Labour leader out, and in the pauses of discussion would lift a curtain of dead leaves, or brush aside some dying bracken, and show "the garden", as he said, below. The Lancashire people have the love of natural history born in them - or, at least, many have, but Mr. Sims would, under other circumstances, have become famous in this field of work.

It is sad, yet sweet to recall him now, as he sat in his armchair, his spectacle fallen low, his gnarled fingers busy with the specimens, his face aglow with the light that never breaks over the features of the self-absorbed. It is even sweeter perhaps to think of him when he discussed the Labour party and its prospects, waving a large kerchief to and from his knee, or lighting the brown pipe that went out so often. Round him there were some of the books he liked to read, and I often thought that he should have written a much better one than any that he had in his well-chosen little library. But he did not write - though he was a sober and discerning judge of other men's writings - generous, too, and giving credit where he could. It was never want of human sympathy that made him withhold praise.

Not all unmarked was he - or misunderstood. Far from it. He had the allegiance of his comrades, the respect of influential men outside the Labour movement. I remember how once, seven years ago, a Belgain came to find material for a book on the Labour movement. He visited a great many people, and he called on me in Bradford and having interviewed me entirely ignored me for ever afterwards. Indeed, his book when it appeared, took account only of the prominent Fabians, and few others; but it gave a long and interesting account of the personality and work of Mr. Sims. I read this account. The man who wrote it certainly was no ordinary person, for he could see below the surface. He, too, could clear away the ferns, and knew where to look for a garden. I mentioned the appreciation to Mr. Sims, as we were going to a meeting. "Ah, yes!" he said gently, "I remember the man. I hope the poor young fellow get home safely."

The last years were sorrowful. Death entered his home and
carried away his daughter, who was the solace of his later years. His gentle wife followed her to the grave. Only seven months later his home was emptied at eventide. Dutiful sons and a married daughter strove to fill the gap as well as possible, but after his wife's death Mr. Sims failed in health and spirits. I visited him twice afterwards. On the first occasion he came to the door as if to say, "There is still a welcome here." He seemed much as of old, talked bravely, and with the old fire, of the movement and its interests; spoke, too, most chivalrously, as he always did, of the women of the movement - of the dead and of the living. A Nonconformist minister preacher gave me the opportunity of hearing Mr. Sims speak freely and fully (and for the first time in my presence) on subjects of abiding and vital interest. It was a clear, scholarly, and wonderful confession, of faith and of doubt. When the minister was gone, he mused for a while, and then told me he liked Newman's hymn "Lead, Kindly Light," and that "many agnostics liked it." From the walls looked down on him the pictures of his wife in her young days, and his daughter. "It is very like her, as she was," he said, pointing to the former, and I observed (what indeed I had remarked already), that bravely as he bore himself, and cheerfully even as he talked, there fell in every moment of silence a look of settled sorrow on his face. Like all men of very deep and very strong feeling, he was entirely free from any taint or temptation to sentimentalism. But the hair had whitened on his forehead.

And now he has gone - and the place that knew him shall know him no more. But we shall know him better as our own motives grow purer, our own hopes braver, our lives more consecrated to the cause for which he lived and which he served, even in days of waning life.

Excerpt from a book by a Belgian Socialist

(The Sims' family report that this is from page 197 and is dated February 3, 1898. It has been impossible to locate the name of the book or the author.)

There is a third class of members; the only disinterested people, who in all sincerity only wish for Socialism as a means of perfecting the individual and the nation. The latter (that is the third class of Socialists) are the least numerous, they are not much spoken of - they have to be discovered. I had the good fortune to have a good talk with one of them - Mr. Sims of the small industrial town of Bolton. I reproduce here a part of our interview-

Mr. Sims works at his own house at the trade of cabinet maker. He is not a Trades Unionist. His long career - he is now 80 years old - has given him a remarkable experience of men and things. One perceives in him a man of conviction. His white hair, the dignity of his bearing and the affability of his conversation are calculated to captivate and inspire confidence. I pass rapidly over that part of the interview which treated on the Socialism of Mr. Sims. Suffice it to say that Mr. Sims is an ardent defender of
Fabian principles. He sees in Socialism a means of realizing an ideal life for humanity and not like many of his friends a footing to ensure his own elevation. A partisan of a political party much more tolerant than that uppermost in vogue to-day in the Independent Party. He recommends voting, as circumstances allow, for the Liberals. He only wishes to Socialize England in so far as reforms are adopted by all classes. The I. L. P. and all actually existing Socialistic Societies are only in his eyes a far distant preparation. "They serve" said Mr. Sims "to propogate the knowledge of Socialism and certainly their aid from this point of view, is excellent, but up to now they have done nothing besides this. And those of them who aspire to the capture of public offices have not a single representation in Parliament. For my part I have greater confidence in the co-operative movement than in political action; let co-operative societies increase day by day in power; let their industries spread; let them educate, build workshops and employ as workmen their own members - in short let them become a State within a State - from this point to socialism will not be a long step. Take for example the practice in Lincolnshire. The co-operators buy from the agriculturalists their produce which they afterwards transform (i.e., sell, manufacture, etc.) and the co-operators pay the agriculturalists in goods which may be obtained from the co-operative shops. Here is a singular instance of Socialism and still no one thinks of complaining."

And the Trades Unions, do you think they will in the end pass into Socialism? (i.e. adopt socialistic principles) "The Trades Unions are to-day entirely anti-socialistic. They are however very excellent movements but their only end is to procure for the workers material advantages of life." But now certain Congresses of Trades Unions. ---"Above all do not place any weight upon the votes, more or less Socialistic, of Congresses, in which are assembled delegates who for the greater part do not represent the true spirit of Trades Unions" "I repeat, Trades Unionists only know what they want to know of Socialism and are on the whole very much opposed to what belongs to socialistic etiquette (life.) Would you like an example? This is what happened at the election in 1895. There were two candidates in the field, each the advocate of an advanced Liberal programme. The one Mr. F. Brocklehurst, member of the I. L. P., the other Mr. George Harwood, the latter was only a Liberal by necessity. Personally he had always shown himself in favour of the Established Church and averse to the interference of the State with Education. But when the campaign opened he advocated the dis-establishing of the church and state regulation in matters Educational. His programme was very nearly identical with that of Brocklehurst. The only difference being that Harwood took the title of Liberal whilst his opponent posed as a candidate of the Independent Party. You are not ignorant of the fact that the population of Bolton is almost entirely composed of artisans almost all of whom are Trades Unionists. Now this is how the votes were given. Harwood the improvised Liberal received 8000. Brocklehurst, who for a long time had taken up the cause of the workmen, did not receive 2,700. How do you explain that? Simply by the antagonism of Trades Unionism to Socialism. What
does the greatest harm to Socialism in England is the want of broadmindedness on the part of those who are at the head of the movement. For in order for a Socialist party to succeed here, the party must give its members absolute liberty; by this means only will it be able to avoid a re-action against Socialism and thus only can it increase the roll of its membership. This is why the Social democrats are condemned to remain stationary. Socialists of irreproachable orthodoxy they do not see that they are fighting the winds. The Federation delights to call itself "Democratic" but it is not so at all in its transactions with its members; the tyrannical control exercised by its leaders is a permanent obstacle to its numerical increase. The Socialism of the Independent Party is also too intolerant. We are however very much freer than are the members of the Federation. Our branches, united to the central committee, are bound to the procedure and regulations adopted by the Annual Meeting of the Party. But the programme like the procedure must only be observed in broad outline. Each branch remains, in practice arbitrator in matters of detail. The National Administrative Council could not even dissolve a branch for any reason whatever, but it could break with it and could thus form itself into a branch quite distinct and separate.

What are the relationships between the Labour Church and the I.L.P. I here quote the words of Mr. Sims with whom the reader has become previously acquainted (in this book) and who is actively engaged in the Labour Church at Bolton. "These two groups" he said "are entirely independent from each other and must not be confounded: many of the members of the I.L.P. are not members of the Labour Church and the opposite is also true. However there is a direct connection between these organisations and the reason of it is that each of them finds in the other its chief support. The Labour Church has need of the I.L.P. whose members are particularly disposed to accept its propaganda to second and even direct its efforts. The I.L.P. on its part has found in the Labour Church powerful support. The necessity of having a religion exists for everybody even for Socialists - what shall I say! Specially for Socialists. The aim of socialists is indeed the perfection of the individual. Now nothing is more powerful in the accomplishment of this end than the constant stirring of the people through their religious emotions; this is specially true in England, a country in which each one is more or less attached to the religious sentiment. The English people need a religion. They are not sufficiently satisfied by the prospect of material advantages only. They desire an ideal more elevated than this.

But what do you expect from Religion? From religion we hope for the fullest realization of happiness on this earth. The base, or foundation of our religion is the mutual love of all men. We do not dwarf a belief and expression of such belief in God; we recognize it even as necessary but each can interpret his religious view as best meets his own wishes. For myself I very much admire Christ in that I limit myself to taking from His doctrines what they contain about Socialism. We socialists have everything to
gain by giving to our propaganda a religious basis. The Labour Religion (the religious part of the work) which we profess is a powerful instrument for success for the socialist cause because it will lead unconsciously to socialism both children who are always attracted by what is beautiful or touching, and adults even those who actually would not wish to become members of the I.L.P. The Labour Church supplies fully the personal wants of the English people. Its characteristic is complete liberty. It is not a socialist organisation but it is open to everyone - to socialists as to non-socialists. To those who believe in Christ as to those who have faith in Buddha. Members of the I.L.P. rule it is true in 30 or 40 Labour Churches but there are also adherents who would think themselves compromised by attending a meeting of the I.L.P. They would not go to hear Tom Mann speak in a meeting of Independents but to-morrow they will go in a crowd to a service of the Labour Church to hear a socialistic sermon from the same Tom Mann."

To fill in the known detail of the history of the Bolton congregation the following year-by-year profile is presented:

1892 - Rev. B. J. Harker turned the Duke's Alley Congregational Chapel into a Labour Church so far as its constitution as a congregational church would allow. Before the end of the year a choir was organized and trained. At the end of the first year's work the secretary made three interesting observations: 1. Since the very beginning no members had left the congregation; 2. Most visitors were soon regular attenders, and many of them took up active membership; and 3. By midsummer there was a noticeable change in the composition of the congregation because the wives and daughters of the members were beginning to attend in considerable numbers.

1893 - Attendances, with the usual seasonal variations, kept up well. Seating capacity for the evening service was severely taxed, and for the afternoon service, well used. When an important speaker like Keir Hardie came, hundreds had to be turned away because even standing room could not be found. Even for a regular service in the summer time over half the seating capacity was used. This excellent response was attributed by the secretary to the form of the services which were "like the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon meetings, 'brief, bright, and brotherly'", and to the efforts to disabuse the public mind of the commonly held idea that the Labour Church was but a cover for secularists, agnostics and Unitarians masquerading as church people.

1894 - Cinderella work was begun in earnest and as a regular part of the church program. During the preceding summer the I.L.P. had taken 970 children on an outing to Lytham, and at Christmas the Labour Church had fed and entertained 200, but these were preliminary efforts. References throughout the succeeding years indicate that the Cinderella Club continued doing excellent and extended work. However, detailed records are not available.

The ladies organized an active auxilliary which conducted numerous 'Sales of Work' and a May Fair. These projects con-
tributed both financially and socially to the life of the congregation.

1895 - At some time before the end of this year arrangements were completed to move to the Central Hall, Acresfield. Attendance and interest holding firm, but finances always a problem. The church sponsored a fund to enable Fred Broeklehurst to complete his academic training at Cambridge.

1896 - Central Hall, as a rule, was filled each Sunday, but finances became even more pressing according to the report of the treasurer:

"Owing to the government needing all the spare cash of the Socialist to make a big surplus and punish the Liberals, the collections have been only so and so... We may be more advanced, as a Labour Church Movement, towards a true ethical basis, but our audiences can give the orthodox ones points and then lick them at taking a good deal for their money. A friend suggests it is because we are all anti-capitalists, and object to the financial system of the times in toto."

During the summer large numbers of the members cycled to neighbouring villages for both the fun of the outing and the opportunity of spreading the socialist gospel by open air meetings and distribution of literature. Others went regularly to Boggart Hole Clough to "look sternly at the police" and to win the right of free speech and assembly. Appreciation of lectures of less than 1 hour duration was expressed.

1897 - Bolton was host to the Labour Church Union conference. The annual meeting reported another excellent year with good attendances, increased membership, and small but sufficient financial backing. It was observed that large attendance by the general public depended more and more upon well known lecturers, and these were becoming more and more expensive. The strike of the iron workers, who made up a substantial part of the congregation, and the need for relief collections for the non-unionized workers affected by the strike, made the financial prospects look dim indeed. However increased union activity seemed to create renewed interest in the Labour Church cause.

1898 - This was an active year, though the finances were put on a sound basis only when the Clarion Vocal Union turned over £110 at the end of their season. The book stall was doing a good business with an 18s. per week turn-over. The sale was largely of penny pamphlets. During the summer of this year there was a strong emphasis on outdoor propaganda meetings and country rambles. The average attendance for all summer meetings was only 50. This the executive considered small, for, though the membership was only 60, the attendance was usually many times larger.

Under the leadership of James Sims the church published 30,000 copies of a leaflet "Appeal to the Humane" in which the harms of lead poisoning were exposed along with the possible solution of this industrial problem of the potteries. The whole question of lead-free glazes had been discussed at the Labour Church Conference; not wishing the sentiments of the Conference to die unheeded, Sims wrote the pamphlet, and arranged with the local clergy and other prominent gentlemen to endorse the statement.
and to assist in its distribution. Arrangements were made with the printer to leave the type standing that other towns might obtain copies at reasonable cost.

1899 - Both Mr. & Mrs. Jas. Sims were taken seriously ill. A sea-side vacation time of convalescence was made possible by a Labour Church subscription. Interest in and support of the Labour Church cause continued strong with increased attendances even in the summer. The approach of the Boer War and the general international unrest stimulated active support of the Peace Crusade, for which 150 signatures were obtained. In view of the general unpopularity of the campaign this was an achievement. The anti-war feeling within the Labour Church grew, and to a similar degree its appeal to the general public declined. There resulted a consolidation of the membership which left the congregation in a stronger position and flourishing. There was no Sunday School.

1900 - The congregation was free of debt, and a fund was begun to buy their own premises. At present they were only Sunday tenants which curtailed a weekly program. The cause continued to flourish.

1901 - Added emphasis was placed on money raising projects to make possible generous donations to needy causes. For example, a Labour Church Concert made possible a donation of £85 for the relief of the women and children of the Bethesda Quarrymen who were deprived of their means of sustenance by industrial dispute. Attendances often of overflow proportions. A Sunday afternoon discussion group was added to the program. Finances, as always, were a bit precarious.

1902 and following - The congregation continued actively for several years. However a detailed history of its later years is not available. In 1903 debate and discussion were introduced successfully for the afternoon. A large number of Ethical Society Lecturers were used. In 1906 the Labour Church was a member of the Union of Ethical Societies. The congregation apparently came to an end with the beginning of the First World War. A grandson of James Sims found an entry in a book which was originally to have been a minute book. It was entitled "Bolton Labour and Ethical Church, re-commenced Oct. 1st, 1916, in Boro Hall, Corporation Street." The book contained no minutes of this venture, and had since been used for other things. James Sims Jr. remembers a group of people sitting round a dell in the 'Jumbles' in the valley of the Bradshaw Brook, singing Labour Church hymns, a number of week-end rambles under Labour Church sponsorship, and Saturday evening socials to which whole families came. He recalls the church members as "stalwart solid honest people with keen views -- abstainers -- the end of the Victorian age. This kind are not to be found today." Because he was but six years old in 1915 the present writer assumes that the church carried on in some form or another for the remainder of the decade. In the twenties the Socialist Sunday School was the only indication of what had been a strong and vigorous congregation. At a Labour Rally held in 1924 the last day was Children's Day.

1. Boro Hall was the headquarters of the Bolton I. L. P.
ceremonies were semi-religious, with a children's choir singing Labour Church hymns. Mrs. Sam Brocks reports that "After the Labour Church finished, the Bolton Socialist Party carried on Sunday evening meetings on Wood Street."

BORDESLEY
- 1903 - Large

The Birmingham Labour Church minutes indicate that 300 Hymn Books were loaned to this congregation to assist in the handling of their large audiences.

BOSTON, U. S. A.
1897 -

Early in 1897 Herbert Casson began holding regular meetings in the Arcade Hall. He received wide popular support and attendances.

BOXMOOR
- 1903 - Small

A report in the Clarion of April 3rd., 1903, indicates that this "little church is still at work".

BRADFORD
1892 1911 1896 300 500 1906 - 1000

After 1911 Sunday meetings were conducted by the local I. L. P.

James Bartley W. H. Drew
A. W. Goodison, secretary Edwin Halford, secretary
Fred W. Jowett, chairman
Margaret McMillan
H. J. Wilson, J.P., treas.

Arthur Priestman, and the Priestman family, Quakers.

"Old Roberts", Chartist, 'agin everybody, regular attender, walking from Clayton-to-Bradford (4 m.) regardless of weather. He was elected to School Board after he was 70 years of age.
Roche
G. W. Smith
Harry Smith
G. Spencer
George Stark

R. Sunderland
Miss Mary Throupe
Mrs. Varley
T. Warner

The beginning of the Labour Church in Bradford is very closely associated with Fredrick William Jowett. It is perhaps well then, to give something of his personal background. The letters and papers here quoted are in the possession of Mr. A. L. Brown who, with Fenner Brockway, was literary executor of Jowett's estate. There are a number of interesting papers in this collection which were not available when Jowett's biography was written. Mr. Brown has given permission to quote from those papers which relate to the Labour Church. His kindness is much appreciated.

Jowett's introduction to Labour conflict arose out of his great sympathy for oppressed people. The following incident is typical: The shortest road from the working class residential areas to the factories of Bradford was Clairmont, one of those private roads with gates at each end along which the fashionable and wealthy families lived. Early one morning the clattering clogs (wooden shoes shod with iron and fitted with leather tops) of the mill workers disturbed one of the residents who was confined to bed. To prevent a recurrence the gates were closed and locked, thus forcing the workmen to walk considerably further on their way to work. Jowett wrote a letter to the newspaper taking up the cause of the working people and attacking the 'privileges' of the wealthy Clairmontese. Some of the latter were greatly insulted and so highly insensed that they came to Jowett to threaten him. The result was very nearly a street riot. To commemorate the event a friend and fellowmember of the Straddlebug club, S. Tetley, composed the following verse:

1. Dear Mr. Jowett
How you do go it?
With your letter writing
Its plain to me,
As you'll soon see,
There's going to be some fighting.

2. We Clairmontese
Are ill at ease
O'er such wanton exposure;
We've made a vow
Each household crew
On you to put the closure.

3. So if again
You raise your pen
Our doings to attack
We'll come some night
We tell you straight,
And pound you till you're black.

4. For how dare you,
A man so low,
Disturb our quiet peace;
We've banished clogs,
Those noisy dogs,
So you your shouting cease.

Yours, S. Tetley, Tong St., Dudley Hill

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1. The Straddlebug Club, named after the beetle with a wanderlust, was organized by the Lister Hills Congregational Church Bible Class. The members went on expeditions to climb the hills in the Lake District.
The following series of letters illustrate the development of Jowett's relationship with the church, and indicate why a Labour Church should be received so readily. F. W. Jowett and Edwin Halford were members of the Lister Hills Congregational Church; but because of the sympathetic ministry of the Rev. K. C. Anderson, were regular attenders at Horton Lane Congregational Church. But even in Horton Lane these young men did not feel completely at home; they had discussed the matter with Dr. Anderson and steps were being taken to improve the situation.

21 Easby Road
Bfd. Feb. 7th, /91

Dear Mr. Halford:

There is one question I very much wish you and Mr. Jowett would answer. It is this. Grant that the "atmosphere" of Horton Lane is such as you describe (which I do not believe) so that you cannot feel at home. How is the atmosphere to be changed? How are things to be made better? I am doing my utmost. Is the atmosphere to be made more brotherly & Christ-like by the working-men keeping aloof from the Church or by coming into it and making it better? It seems to me I have a good claim upon the sympathy and support of the working men in my efforts to produce a better state of things.

Yours very truly,
K. C. Anderson.

21 Easby Road
Bradford
Feb. 10th, /91

Dear Mr. Jowett:

Let me hasten to assure you that my feelings were not hurt by any word you or Mr. Halford said. I am not so thin skinned. I am very sensible that sudden changes are not to be expected. I believe they are not desirable were they possible. I am not so foolish as to suppose that the little I can do can restore the lapsed confidence of the people in the religion and fellowship of the Churches. Before there is any improvement there will need to be, it seems to me, a larger comprehension of the problems, a more charitable vein of those who do not exactly and in all points think as we do, less disposition to blame other people, and a greater readiness to put our own hand to the plough. If I was disappointed at all with my talk with you and Mr. Halford it was owing to the fact that I did not discover a broad enough conception of the problem. You look too much at one side — very naturally I admit — but still it limits your power to comprehend as you ought and might the conditions in the case. Your letter is full of evidence of the same fact. It is a very large problem, and a suspicion on your part & on the part of Mr. Halford that there may be aspects of it that you
do not do full justice to would I am sure help you greatly. The failure to do justice is always an element of weakness. I admit of course all you say in your letter, & would admit more in the same line but that is not all the truth. Truth is essentially polar; it always has two sides, and one main characteristic of breadth is willingness to appreciate both.

I shall be very pleased to see you; perhaps after tomorrow evening's meeting there may be time. If not we can then decide on an hour.

I am sure I need not ask pardon for expressing my mind!

Believe me
Very truly yours

K. C. Anderson

Following the discussions as arranged above, Jowett applied for his transfer of membership from Lister Hills to Horton Lane. The Rev. J. Park Noble, a minister who had been called to Lister Hills after Jowett and Halford had begun attending Horton Lane, wrote to Jowett:

29 St. Andrews Place,
Bradford, April 30th, 1891

Dear Sir,

Dr. Anderson, acting on your instructions, has requested me to forward to him your transfer of Church Membership. This means, of course, that you sever your connection with Lister Hills Church.

I have no means of knowing what has induced you to take that step; but I can scarcely think that you have seriously considered what it involves.

You are aware that you entered into an agreement; that you adhered your signature to a 'call' to me to become minister of Lister Hills Church. With the terms of that call and the measure of your responsibility you are no doubt familiar.

Now I have made a careful and searching enquiry, & I cannot discover that during the four months I have been minister of Lister Hills Church you have sought in any way or to any degree to fulfill the duties that devolve upon you. And now you wish to back out of your obligations completely.

Your conduct, let me remind you, is a breach of faith and also a breach of contract; & I request you to inform me what in the circumstances you propose to do. If you still refuse to fulfill your obligations & desire the transference of Church Membership, what do you propose to do by way of reparation for what I regard
On receiving this letter Jowett tried to consult Dr. Anderson; not finding him at home he left the letter to speak for itself. The following is Dr. Anderson's response:

21 Easby Road  
Bradford  
May 7th, 1891

Dear Mr. Jowett

I was sorry not to be able to see you when you called. I read the letter with great sorrow and surprise. It is a revelation of the writer not at all creditable to him. You may already have replied, and if not you will of course reply according to your own judgement, but I will tell you what I should say. He is evidently under a misconception. He thinks here is a man who signed my call, but he does not like my preaching but wishes to leave. I would therefore lay before him the real facts in the case. I would say frankly that probably you were at fault in retaining your membership so long without fulfilling any of the duties; that you should not have signed the call, but I would make it clear to him why you did, -- at the request of a deacon -- with the desire not to be in the way. I would distinctly point out to him that you have not heard him preach -- that your desire to come to Horton Lane has nothing whatever to do with him or his coming to Lister Hills, & was in your mind before his coming. I trust you do not regard yourself as guilty of a breach of faith or contract, and that to the transfer you leave it to the church at Lister Hills to decide whether they wish to give or not. Write as kind & Christian a letter as you can; do not follow him in his use of hard adjectives. I think that when he sees that your purpose to leave Lister Hills has nothing to do with his preaching he will take a different view of the matter. I shall be interested to hear how he takes your reply.

Believe me,  
Very truly yours,  

K. C. Anderson

Jowett then replied to the minister at Lister Hills:

2 Grantham Place, Bfd. May 12 /91

Revd. J. Park Noble

Dear Sir:

I am sorry that I have not been able to reply to yours of the
30th of April before now. This is my first opportunity.

I read your letter with great astonishment and after reading it I could not but conclude that you had written it under a serious misapprehension. Allow me to explain. First of all I may say that I have not taken a regular or even a frequent part in the worship at Lister Hills for at least 4 or 5 years. For this I have no doubt laid myself open to censure. But, even there, I think that censure should be tempered by proper knowledge of all the facts that have contributed to that state of things.

As to my transfer I hasten to say that my wish to join the Church at Horton Lane is in no sense connected with your becoming Minister at Lister Hills. So far from your being the cause of that wish I may say that everything I have heard of you has been to your credit. So much so that it pains me to think that I have received from you a letter couched in language that I am sure I could not do worse than imitate. It was in my mind long before you come to Lister Hills that I should in all probability join Horton Lane.

It is true as you point out that I signed your call; Unwisely I can now see. But you can scarcely be aware that I signed it at the request of one of the Deacons at Lister Hills; who, I am sure, did not expect when I signed it that I should by doing so make any contract with you. I deny that I did make any contract. It was distinctly pointed out to me that every member on the roll was desired to sign. That if anyone refused it would be open to the construction of direct opposition to the 'call' being made. Now I was then a member at Lister Hills, what else could I do but sign it so as not to be in the way of the Church becoming settled again? I asked no question but one; and that was "Is it the general wish of the members?"

As to the terms of the 'call' what they were I don't know. I only know I signed a sheet which so far as I recollect was without terms altogether and had no heading. I have purposely refrained from coming to Lister Hills since from the very fear that if I came some one may notice it, and when I asked for my transfer might think I had not been satisfied with you. Hence I have not even heard you preach.

I hope I have said enough to show that the strong language you have used has not been merited by me. For the rest I must leave it to the church at Lister Hills to say whether they will grant the transfer or not. But whatever happens I can assure you that I shall not carry any unkind feeling towards yourself personally.

Waiting your reply,
I remain
Yours very respectfully

Fred. Wm. Jowett

Jowett had been a member of Horton Lane for about a year when events led to the formation of the Labour Church as will be told in the words of Jowett himself. The reaction of K. C. Anderson will indicate something of the reception of the Labour Churches by
those who were sympathetic to Labour and Labour's aspirations. His reaction is revealed in the following letters.

2 Ashfield
Bradford
July 12th, '92

Dear Mr. Jowett

I have thought a good deal about our talk last night, & the more I think I am confirmed in the view I take. How you can take the position you do in relation to the contemplated Labour Church I cannot understand. I take your action and that of Mr. Halford in accepting the position of Pres. & Sec. as a direct slap in the face before the whole community of Bradford. I have made the claim, & you admit it, that I have done more for the principles that are dear to you than any one else, and as a reward you turn round & give me this slap in the face, for it is nothing less. You are both members of my church, & in the face of the Bradford Public you say I have done nothing & can do nothing for the labour cause. That is, you leave my church and for a so-called Labour Church. My faith in my fellow men was never put to so severe a strain. It does seem as if it is of no use trying to do good, -- no use to try to abate the evil effect of the class distinctions which are such a curse in English life. By your action you are doing an immense injury to me, and I believe you are doing an injury also to the working people whom you influence. A fine encouragement you are giving to the ministers to speak in behalf of the workers! A fine reward I have got for all I have attempted to do! You single out the very man whom you admit has served your cause before ever Mr. Tillett appeared, before the Manningham Mills strike happened for the first & deadliest blow! All I can say is that if you have any satisfaction in this kind of thing, I do not envy you.

Believe me
Very truly yours

K. C. Anderson

2 Ashfield
Bradford
July 15th /92

Dear Mr. Jowett

I must write you another note. I feel that my first note was

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1. The Rev. R. Roberts was another Bradford minister who was very sympathetic to the Labour Church and Labour's cause. His sympathies led to his being ousted from his Congregational Church. A strong Labour Church minority would have invited him to become their minister if they had power to do so. Roberts later became a lecturer for the Ethical Societies.
too strong. I am afraid I have done what I would not wish to do, -- give you unnecessary pain, and increase the difficulty of what must be a difficult work. I have allowed my sensitiveness to influence me too much. And I have been sensitive about the way that the working men have left me severely alone. I have done my utmost, spoken for them before anyone else was speaking, and as far as outward result is concerned it is almost nil. But perhaps that is too narrow a vein to take, and anyway I would not for the world wound your feelings. I believe that you will do your utmost to guide the Labour Church movement into right channels, & I am glad you are there to do it. I believe you will do your best to give the people whom you influence the spirit of Jesus Christ. I have the most complete confidence in your motives. I cannot but wish you success. Of course I could have wished that the workers had come to our Churches but perhaps that is impossible and I cannot but rejoice that they are thinking of a church at all. I am glad that you & the others from Horton Lane are to have the conduct of the movement. May God bless you & guide you in a very responsible position & believe me to be yours very sincerely.

K. C. Anderson

Within a few weeks Dr. Anderson left Bradford. Whether or not the formation of the Labour Church and the actions of Jowett and Halford had anything to do with his move the present writer does not know. There was one further letter from Dr. Anderson in the Jowett Papers which sheds some light on the Labour Church and J. W. Jowett and their relationship to the working classes of Bradford.

Royal Hotel
Derby Street
Bradford
Oct. 26th, 1892

Dear Mr. Jowett

May I ask a favour from you? During my stay in Bradford, I have often protested against the inequalities and iniquities of modern society, often urged the claims of the labourer to a larger share in the fruits of labour, often spoken in behalf of the suffering poor, often denounced the selfishness that is organised in capitalism. Never have I uttered a calumny against the working class. I have done my best to voice their feelings and aspirations. I have done this at a time too when my voice was the only one in the pulpits of Bradford who did so, before there was a Labour Church, -- before the Maningham strike, before there was so much talk as there is now about the subject & when it was more unpopular. No one knows this better than you do. You yourself have confessed this & said I had done more than any one else to bring about the present conditions of things. Many of those who are now working in the Labour Movement got their inspiration and impulse from me as they would be glad to confess.

The favour I ask of you is to write a letter to the Observer in
view of Mr. Geo. Cooke's letter this morning saying as much in your own way and words. I feel he does me grave injustice. I do not ask you to endorse my views in the Lecture referred to (tho I think you would do so if you had heard it). You cannot endorse it if you take Mr. Cooke's account of it. But what I would be greatly obliged for would be a letter showing that it was not my manner to talk to the stalls and forget the gallery and forget the wretchest of modern life. Such a letter would do me justice and would have great influence upon those you represent coming from you. You could disclaim any intention of entering on the controversy respecting the Lecture but simply say what you have already said to me as to what I have done for the cause we both have at heart.

Will you do it?

Believe me,
Very truly yours
K.C. Anderson.

The formation of the Labour Church was largely on the initiative of Jowett himself. It is therefore fitting that he should tell the story. Among his papers, and largely in his own handwriting (though several pages have been recopied by his niece, Miss Mary Foster) there is a copy of his address to the Tenth Anniversary Service of the Bradford Labour Church. Two quotations which were left blank in the manuscript I have been able to fill in from other sources. Otherwise the following is a copy of the manuscript used in 1902.

After ten years of the existence of the Labour Church it is certain that a survey of our past and a few reflections thereon would be profitable to all if contributed by some person who has had opportunities of watching and who also possesses the power to see and tell.

The opportunity I have had if anybody has but the power to utilise it by eloquently telling its story I do not possess. For this the true preacher is required and that I can never be. And yet there have been supreme moments even in my life which have been possessed and used by some power outside myself, and never more than ten years ago last month I stood on the platform at the Mechanics Institute and threatened the platform full of ministers of the Gospel with a Labour Church.

Our movement is young yet; it was younger then (10 years ago). It had smouldered for years in various forms. First a Socialist League was established about 1885 and numbering some dozen members. Then a Labour Electoral Association which attempted to unite Socialism and Labourism. This in its turn failed through the subservience of some of the Labourites to Liberalism. After this the disappointment of the stalwarts caused a short interval of reaction till the outbreak of the Manningham Strike. Then the smouldering spark burst into flame for the workers came face to face with Mr. Lister and his
millions and were starved into submission. During the struggle the authorities showed their bias by using the police in defence of capital and thousands of people who had previously been impervious to our appeals became luminously conscious of the need for political action.

A monster protest meeting in Peckover saw a curious combination on the various platforms. Liberal Labour men were breathing defiance of both political parties to the utter astonishment of the independents. But it was mostly sound and fury, for the same men backslided the moment the party trumpet which had called them decade after decade to fight their masters political battles sounded afresh. Had it not been for their backsliding labour in Bradford would have been well nigh irresistible and would have captured the public bodies within three years from that date. Not less than 40,000 persons attended the protest meeting in Peckover which was then a far larger space than it is now though nothing but local men spoke. (Out of the upheaval of these exciting times and the callous despotism of a millionaire there arose the Labour Union. The Labour Union was not an avowed Socialist Organisation but it stood for Independent Labour Politics and opposed itself to all the forces which opposed the interests of the workers. The new movement for the first time since the days when the old Chartists met, spoke of the wrongs of the downtrodden poor. It called upon poverty to assert itself and use the opportunities which political action offered for the redress of the injustices under which it suffered. Blatchford in the Sunday Chronicle, Tillet on the Strike platform and Keir Hardie on the Trades Union Congress floor and the public platform elsewhere all helped to fan the flame. The Labour Union men and women were caught by the wave of enthusiasm and must do something. Blatchford was invited to stand for the Eastern Division and he promised to do so if a thousand signatures were obtained. We went from door to door and obtained them. He soon afterwards withdrew in consequence of a disagreement with the proprietors of the paper on which he was employed, bringing about a change in his circumstances. Not to be baulked, the Labour Union fixed up with Ben Tillet to contest the Western Division. Ben began to make those fighting speeches which did so much to put life and vigour into the new movement. That was over twelve years ago when the Manchester School of Liberalism having done its work in widening the franchise and freeing commerce stood facing the future with nothing to say. Increasing numbers of the people looked for Labour Legislation, Factory Acts, and the like. The minimum age for the child worker in the Factory must be increased. The piece workers in factories, especially women, whose wage rates had been nibbled by secret additions to their tasks, wanted a particular clause. Politics thanks to Lister of Manningham to Blatchford, Hardie and Tillet, were taking an entirely new and practical aspect. At this stage our cause was distinctly helped by W.P. Byles and the Bradford Observer. W.P. Byles stood manfully for the Strikers and for free Speech, and the Bradford Observer was a far more courageous paper than it
is now. We could get reports of our speeches then which is more than we can get today. Tillett's opponent in West Bradford was the then sitting member, Mr. Alf Illingsworth, a staunch old nonconformist of the Manchester School of politics. During the Parliament which held office from 1886 to 1892 Mr. Illingsworth along with Mr. Briggs Priestley of the Pudsey Division had been getting increasingly uncomfortable under the legislation which had been promoted by the Conservative Government in Parliament. It was too advanced for them. To the deep disgust of Mr. Illingsworth the Conservatives had passed Housing Acts, Factory Acts and even went so far in 1891 as to carry a fair Contracts resolution.

To this day Mr. Illingsworth has a horror of the bare mention of Municipal Houses or Municipal anything except perhaps street improvements. Hating protection in Commerce, and Labour being in his theory of economics a commodity; he applies to it the same rule and declines to protect the workman in his labour by means of a fair wages clause. To crown all the Conservative Government in 1891 brought in a Factory Bill. This Bill amongst other things raised the age at which children were to be eligible for the Factory to 11 years. It also compelled employers to declare to their piece workers in plain figures the particulars which would enable the workers to check their own wages. In doing so the Government had placed its finger on a very sore spot indeed. For years previous it had been the custom to withhold from the weaver information as to the length of piece she wove and the number of threads of weft she had to weave into every inch of cloth was also unknown to her. Under this system to my certain knowledge a practice of secretly increasing the piece workers task had grown up in the Bradford Trade and lowered wage rates to an extent which will never be fully known. I myself have seen the weavers warp length grow stealthy additions from 58 yds, in some instances, to 70 yds per piece. The textile employers in Parliament fought the New measures and most of the other employers in other trades joined them out of sympathy. Mr. Briggs Priestly especially distinguished himself by moving an insidious amendment to the particulars clause with the object of making it necessary for each worker to ask for his or her information separately from the employer. The object of this amendment is not far to seek. I mention these things to show the reactionary forces at work in the Liberal party of 10 years ago. Tillett and his supporters in the Western Division pressed the lesson home at the election meetings and such was the result on the public mind that Mr. Illingsworth's nonconformist friends felt that his position was dangerous and they decided that something just had to be done.

The nonconformist ministers of the Town (though one or two held aloof) forgetting the Factory worker who should have been nearer to them than his wealthy master thought only of the champion of disestablishment and the risk he ran of losing his seat hence they called a meeting of nonconformists in his support. History was to repeat itself and the influence of the Churches
was to be brought to bear in support of the wealthy -- even though the wealthy were engaged at the time in active resistance to the forces in Society which were making for humanity and the public welfare. The announcement was no sooner made than it was replied to by a letter signed by five persons who were then connected with one of the nonconformist Churches which had at that time for its minister a learned and good man, Dr. Anderson, now of Dundee, who had been influencing numbers of young men in favour of Socialism by his merciless examinations of the present system of industry. As an illustration take the following from an address on "The Truth there is in Socialism" "The Criticism of Socialism on our present industrial system is true." "The socialistic indictment against Modern Society is a true bell . . . we cannot answer the charge." "The greatest foe to the reign of Jesus Christ is in the realm of trade . . . ."

Five members of Dr. Anderson's congregation signed a letter published in the Bradford Observer on June 13th, 1892 of protest against the action of the Churches which had been prompted by the Nabobs and worked by the ministers. It may be of interest to quote the closing sentences of the letter which were as follows: "We have no objection whatever to the committee of Bradford and district Nonconformist Association idolising Mr. Illingworth as much as it chooses; but we being Bradford Nonconformists, wish to state that we have not entire confidence in him" and we have no "gratitude for the devoted, efficient, and disinterested services" which he is alleged to have rendered to the cause of the people. We do not deny his sincerity in regard to matters which he has at heart; but there is no similarity whatever between Mr. Illingworth's views as to the way in which the conditions of the people may be improved and our views on that subject.

As to the omission of disestablishment from Mr. Tillett's programme, we do not consider it necessary to say more than that Christ did not offer such things as disestablishment to the hungry when they asked for food.

In our opinion the statements in the letters are so misleading and unfair as to be totally unworthy of the gentlemen whose names are appended to them."

The signatures to the letter were R. H. Rawson, J. Riley, F. W. Jowett, Geo. Minty and E. Halford.

The meeting of the non-conformists was to take place in the Mechanics Institute June 13, 1892 and on that evening as I was passing the Institute on my way to a Co-operative Board meeting I met Fred Pickles who informed me that I was to move an amendment on behalf of the Labour Union at the meeting and that I must obey, and I did. Inside the Hall the air was electric. All the Auld Lights of nonconformity were assembled and inter-mixed with them were the most fiery spirits of the
Labour Union. Tom Keighley who had not then been to Paris sat in the centre of the Gallery in full view of the Parsons on the platform, and quite within hearing distance. Mrs. Bruce Glasier (then Katherine St. John Conway) occupied a seat under the Gallery and how she managed to keep herself in leash and refrain from storming that platform I never could understand. The meeting was called "in aid of the return of Mesrs. A. Illingworth and W.S. Caine, but the whole burden of the meeting was Illingworth v. Tillett as champions of the two armies of Capitalist Liberalism and labour respectively. The chairman was Mr. Briggs Priestley M.P. the famous antagonist of the new Factory legislation, and he was surrounded by the leading lights of wealthy nonconformity and the ministers who preached in the name of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth to people who sit in comfortable cushioned pews which have long since ceased to contain the labouring man in any numbers.

Mr. Priestley opened the meeting by a speech in which he urged the financial assistance given by Mr. Illingworth to non-conformist objects as one reason entitling him to hold the seat. He further expressed himself as puzzled to find a reason for labour opposition to him, but the audience supplied one at once, by interjecting the words 'factory Acts.' The chairman was followed by a primitive Methodist Minister Rev. Thos. How who moved a resolution pledging nonconformists to support Messrs. Illingworth and Caine. This was seconded by Mr. C. W. Skeemp, a Baptist Minister at Mr. Illingworth's own particular Bethel. This gentlemen aroused the fighting instincts of his opponents by declaring his belief "in the rights of every man to have work that should be adequately paid for" and also the right "of every man to a full share in the Knowledge, the comfort, and enjoyment of life" and then asking the audience to agree that the Liberal party had given effect to this belief. This was too much and the labour part of the audience furiously dissented. Unfortunately for Mr. Skemp he elected to make a quotation from an issue of the "Labour Union Journal". It was from a new version of the story of David and Goliath in which Goliath was Mr. Illingworth and Mr. Tillett was David. Mr. Skemp picked his extract and read it. But the audience demanded more and they refused to be satisfied until he read every sentence to the amusement of all, and when he read the final sentence which ran "And when the liberals saw that their champion was dead, they fled" (here the labour men cheered vociferously) "And the men of Labour arose and shouted" read Mr. Skemp and the Labour men suited the action to the word.

When Mr. Skemp finished I asked leave as a non-conformist entitled to take part in the proceedings to move an amendment, but the chairman's answer was to call the next speaker. I protested then the chairman threatened my forcible removal. Again I attempted to speak but ultimately decided that I would wait till the next speaker had finished before pressing my claim. When he finished however the chairman said he must put the vote at once as there was still another resolution to go before the
meeting. This was toomuch and backed by my supporters I ascended the platform and resolutely claimed a hearing which was given to me. Such were the circumstances of the meeting when I secured my hearing that in moving my amendment I spoke with a power not of myself and took the opportunity of challenging Mr. Briggs Priestley, the chairman, to justify his parliamentary action on the Factory Bill, a thing which he promised to do some other time, but never did so far as I know.

When I had finished with the chairman I turned on the ministers present and closed my remarks by saying "that if the Revd. gentlemen would persist in opposing the Labour movement that we should establish a Labour Church.

This threat entirely unpremeditated fired the labour part of the audience, and the enthusiasm was a thing to be remembered by all. Mrs. Glasier was constrained to laugh and cry for joy with the result that the muscles were drawn for both and did neither. Tom Keighley was like an uncontrollable jack in the Box. The Parsons looked limp and grave and the chairman after Geo. Minty had seconded the amendment put the vote but refused to declare the result because it was carried. Four weeks after the Labour Church held its first meeting in the Teamsters Rooms, Barry St. under the chairmanship of Geo. Spencer, I think. I was elected the first president and I held that office attending with scarcely a miss for a considerable period until the party and the cause generally found me so much work that I could no longer spare the Sundays. But I never lost my interest in it feeling as I do that its maintenance is so important to the Labour Cause. My share in its formation will always be a source of satisfaction to me. In the first years of its existence the Speakers from its platform did much to strengthen the movement in Bradford. Whether or no it has realised all that its founders hoped is another matter. Speaking for myself, I looked for the maintenance of a distinctly spiritual impulse in the congregation which is not displaying itself in long prayers and psalm singing would at least give us that power and confidence which the knowledge that we are working for the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth is capable of granting. The defenders of the present churches say that no church should take sides in the struggle which is going on for social justice. But by accepting the present system of society as it exists without question, they are taking sides, because they are preserving the existing system against examination and subsequent interference. Consequently there is need for a church where Christians can meet and work who are frankly on the side of the poor and are prepared to voice their claims to whom justice to the poor is a part of their gospel and a part which they must express fearlessly, a thing that cannot be done when the sole prop of the Church is the rich man's gold. I sometimes think our Church has developed a little too much on the secular side only with the result that it is hardly a church in the sense I have described.
Our Church exists for the purpose of meeting this need. May it never lack enthusiastic men and women to work in it and through it and as it sends its members into wider fields and takes away their opportunity of helping in the management of its affairs, may it ever produce from its own self new recruits to take up the responsibilities.

At this our tenth anniversary let us take careful stock of our position, see where we have failed to realise our best hopes, fix our eyes anew on the ideal we seek after, and go forward with renewed energy to fight the battle of progress in the interest of the poor and needy and for the establishment of an orderly society in which all men shall be economically and politically free.

The Bradford Labour Church was preceded by the Bradford I.L.P. Edwin Halford, James Bartley, and W.H. Drew signed a postcard dated May 20th, 1891 which convened a meeting which formed the party. It was this group who backed Ben Tillett's candidature in Illingworth, which was the cause of the disruptions described by Jowett. Tillett's presence must have stimulated the idea of a Labour Church.

Following the General Election of 1892 an open meeting was held in Barry's Hall, July 10th, with Mr. Drew presiding. Between 300 and 400 people attended. (Edwin Halford in the Labour Prophet, July '96, says the room was the National Vechicular Traffic Workers Union hall then.) Here it was resolved that a Labour Church should be formed, and the following were elected to a provisional committee whose purpose was to turn this resolution into fact:

"F.W. Jowett, President; Edwin Halford, Secretary; with W.H. Drew, G. Minty, B.W. Hartley, G. Spencer, C. Aikman, G. Newboul, Miss Mary Throupe, Mrs. Varley, P. Bland, C. Holmes, R. Sunderland, F. Pickles, R. Harvey, J. McDonald, Miss Nellie Davey, Mrs. Hansfield, Miss Mary Bentley, Miss Eliz. Attwood, A.L. Jones and H.B. Knowles."

At a meeting of this committee held three days later it was agreed to rent Barry's Hall for 5s. per Sunday afternoon and to

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2. This meeting was probably held upstairs in the Central Coffee Tavern. Mr. Overton and Mrs. Senior, who were active members of the Bradford Labour Church in their younger days, have happy memories of 'Laycock's' Coffee Tavern, which was "a famous debating place, with a 'commons' downstairs and the 'House of Lords' upstairs. It was here that many socialists learned public speaking. Losing tempers was looked down on by the assembled socialists almost as much as the tavern was looked down on by the 'polite' society of the day."
ask John Trevor to deliver the opening address. On July 31st the official proceedings began with a demonstration parade led by the banner of the Manchester and Salford congregation, and accompanied by a large brass band; they ended with the provisional adoption of Trevor’s Labour Church Principles.

The early needs of the new congregation indicate its quick growth. By the end of August two dozen collection bags were ordered to facilitate the taking up of the offerings of pennies, half-pennies, and farthings. So rare was anything larger than a threepenny bit that, when H. Jowett applied to the committee for the return of a two shilling piece he had mistaken for a penny, there was no hesitation in returning it. Yet, with collections made up of small value coins the committee could soon pay cash for a piano. When membership forms were required, an initial order for 1000 was placed; and a standing order for 12 dozen Labour Prophets seldom left a surplus.

From the very first the new congregation thrived, even in spite of the multiplicity of its meeting places. During the first few months it met in the Dyers Union Club, Barry’s Hall, the Temperance Hall, and the Jolity Theatre (with its leaking canvas roof). But by September the need of a permanent headquarters was marked; the Labour Party and the Fabian Society were approached with the possibility of co-operation in the procuring of a suitable premises. Though these groups declined to enter into a joint project, the general sympathy and financial support of their members were evident, so the congregation went ahead on its own. In November the Bethesda Chapel on Peckover Street was taken for a three year lease at £100 per annum (with the owner putting in the proper repairs) providing an auditorium capable of seating 800 people, with auxiliary rooms for committees, teas, and socials. A few weeks later it was officially opened by Ben Tillet and renamed the Labour Institute. It quickly became the center of labour activities in Bradford; soon it assumed a wider significance, for within a few weeks it was let free of charge to provide the meeting place of the conference at which was formed the British Independent Labour Party.

In the early summer of 1894 the Labour Church again approached the other labour and socialist bodies of the town, suggesting that 10,000 shares be sold that a Labour Institute could be financed. The proposal came to naught, save that the I.L.P. agreed to rent office space from the Labour Church. A year later, when the congregation was facing financial difficulties, the proposal

1. The Labour Church Principles were finally and officially adopted Dec. 6, 1892.
2. Minutes of Aug. 12, 1892. As Mr. Overton and Mrs. Senior remember the event, an announcement was made asking the person who had given a two shilling piece by mistake to apply to the Committee for its return.
was made to the I.L.P. that the party take over the lease, on the Peckover property or, that it subsidize the church to the extent of £25 per year. This the party refused to do. However, when the lease came to an end, rather than leave the town without its Labour Institute, the church committee, on a basis of faith and not of finance, extended the lease another four months. The building was put up to auction but the Church was unable to buy it.

The Labour Church then called a meeting with a view to forming a company to purchase or build suitable accommodation. The Peckover property was again unexpectedly put up for sale, but the available capital was far from sufficient to acquire it, so on Nov. 24, 1896 a general meeting of Labour people was called, at which the project was put on more solid footing with the formation of a limited liability company capitalized at £5000 (£1 per share). The purpose of the company was to buy the Peckover property and to rent it to the Labour Church, the I.L.P. and other Labour Groups.

The Labour Institute Company, Limited was successful; it owned and operated property for over fifty years. At times though, the Labour Church minutes read as if the building belonged to the congregation. Rents were paid "to the Labour Church" and the Church Committee granted permission for the use of the premises by the other groups. But this was not particularly unusual, for the relationship between the various Labour and Socialist bodies was always indefinite. For instance, in 1895 the Church committee had to inform the East Ward Labour Club that it did not have the right to appoint a delegate to the Church Committee. Frequently the I.L.P. would issue instructions concerning announcements, or

1. 440 shares were promised that night; the company was registered on Jan. 8, 1897, and the prospectus issued ten days later. Early in February the property was purchased on the following terms: £100 to be paid on signing the contract, £300 plus interest at 4% on April 30, £400 plus interest on July 31st, and a three year mortgage for £1400 at 4%, making a total of £2200 plus interest. The payments were made, not without a struggle it is sure, and the property remained with the Labour Institute Company until the early years of the 20th century when a railway project skyrocketed the value of the property. It was then sold to the Pilkington Glass Co. In its place the Moreley Street Picture House was acquired as both a place of meeting and a source of revenue. After the first world war this in turn was sold, and a printing establishment, the Thornton and Pearson Co. Ltd. was bought. In 1951 the Company was reorganized, dropping its official connection with Labour, though the I.L.P. is still a major share holder. (The foregoing information is from correspondence with Mr. Austin Haigh, the successor of Edwin Halford as secretary of the Bradford Labour Church, a member of the Labour Institute Company Ltd. from its inception, and a manager of the reorganized printing company which succeeded Labour Institute Ltd.)

2. Minute of April 24th, 1895.
would arrange special collections to be taken at the Church service. When a speaker for one or other of the political parties would come on a Sunday, the 'fixture' was given to the Church. Bazaars, concerts, and other money raising projects often split their proceeds 50-50 between the I.L.P. and the Labour Church. This confusion was the result of working arrangements by which several groups co-operated in public presentation of socialism. It was also due to the large degree of overlap in membership; each person, especially the active leaders, were members of two or three of the co-operating bodies. When the colourful May Day Parades were planned, or when protest meetings were held, the whole Labour Movement acted in unison. Community Sundays, special speakers, Clarion Van visits, lantern lecture series, unemployment demonstrations, special education efforts, newspaper publicity, school meal campaigns, garden parties, summer picnics and rambles, literature distribution, the Annual Carnival, and the Miss McMillan Fund were all planned and administered by committees representative of two or more of the Bradford labour groups. The I.L.P. and the Labour Church were especially close. Mr. Overton, in an interview said, "It is hard to separate the I.L.P. and the Labour Church in Bradford. Even Labour Union members considered themselves Labour Church members. It was a muddling affair."

While this confusion, particularly of the Labour Church and the I.L.P. was present even in the thinking of the members, the church was a separate and distinct organization with its own membership card (see illustration) and a definitive constitution. For the first few years the latter consisted simply of 1. its name, and

1. cf. I.L.P. resolution of May 2, 1900 by which both of these things were done without consulting the Church committee.
2. cf. I.L.P. minute of Sept. 8, 1903 by which it was decided that when H. M. Hyndman could only come on Oct. 18th, the Labour Church "take over the fixture, it being on a Sunday."
3. Mr. Overton reports that in Bradford S.D.F. members were also members of the I.L.P. Their primary loyalty was to the S.D.F. Their function in the I.L.P. was permission.
4. For example: In June 1897 the S.D.F., the I.L.P. and the Labour Church sponsored a man meeting at which Comrades Liebknecht of Germany and Dr. Aveling of London were the speakers.
5. It is interesting to note that many of these committees forbade the use of raffling as a means of fund raising, and refused to sell raffle tickets for the prize draw sponsored by the Labour Leader. See Minutes of the Carnival Committee Mar. 11, 1901 and Feb. 27, 1902.
6. Mrs. Senior reports that Dr. Alex Dessin, a German citizen teaching at Bellevue school and a member of the S.D.F. spoke at the Labour Church. He asked no fee but requested a subscription of 10/- for the S.D.F. The Committee would not do this but paid the 10/- direct to the speaker. Such 'red tape' was required to maintain the careful balance of the Labour Church in relation to the other socialist groups.
2. Its object and principles as these appeared on the membership card. In 1895 it was enlarged by the addition of the following sections: Immediately after the Principles there was an explanatory note: "Note: The above principles were formulated by John Trevor, the founder of the Labour Church Movement." Then the object was extended:

3. To emphasise the Ethical as well as the economic side of the Labour Movement by holding of Sunday services, by the publication and the sale of Labour Church and Socialistic literature, the maintenance of fraternal relationship in the struggle for Emancipation of Labour and for the reconstruction of Society upon the Basis of Equality and Brotherhood."

The remainder of the constitution concerned matters of local organization:

"The Bradford Labour Church will be glad to welcome as Members persons of either sex and of any creed who will accept and observe the above principles and work for their advancement according to their opportunities."

"The funds for carrying on the work of the Church are raised by Collections at the Sunday Services, and the further voluntary contributions of members and Friends. No money payment is necessary as a condition of membership. We want the very poorest to feel able to join the Labour Church."

"Form of Membership": I hereby accept the principles of the Bradford Labour Church, and undertake, by personal effort, to work for their advancement, according to my opportunities; and I will endeavour to order my life in accordance with the spirit of the same.

... name... address...

... occupation... date...

"Management": The Bradford Labour Church shall be governed by a committee consisting of 30 members who shall be elected at each annual Church meeting; this committee shall appoint its own officers and divide itself into standing sub-committees to carry on the work of the church."

The constitution of 1895 concluded with an excellent list of standing orders of procedure.

The members were asked if they wished to make a regular subscription to the upkeep of the Church. If the member wished to make a pledge he was supplied with numbered envelopes to be placed in the collection bags passed at the weekly services. A treasurer kept careful account of subscriptions so received. Receipts were sent to subscribers quarterly.

The Bradford Labour Church had more than merely a good written
constituion; it led a very active life. The possession of the Labour Institute made possible a wide variety of activities, but these in turn presented problems: To provide for caretaking a 'curator' was hired for 10s. per week, with house, coals, gas, soap, brushes, etc., supplied. This basic income was supplemented by 2s.6d. for each tea or social with an attendance under 200, with double that remuneration if the attendance exceeded that figure. But even these arrangements could not prevent dissatisfaction. One night the party was very late, so 'Willie' turned off the gas. The Church committee was hard put to it to do justice to all concerned. A few months later the source of this problem was brought under control with the formation of the Bradford Independent Labour Club, a church sponsored club which was unique in its admittance of ladies as members. They were required to pay only a fee of 4d. per month for the privilege.

Socials were usually of great help in initiating and maintaining wide participation in church affairs, but that does not imply they were always troublefree. Church dances and socials for members only brought out up to half the membership. Admission of 6d. brought a profit of from £4 to £6, for the expenses were slight. At one time a set of rules had to be set up which required the 'gents' to wear slippers and to refrain from dancing with each other except at dancing classes; which demanded the ladies to forfeit their tickets if they left the hall; which forbade smoking at all times; and which empowered any representative of the Labour Church Committee to stop the music if the M.C. did not prohibit noisy or improper behaviour within the hall. At another time it was required that at least one member of the Committee be in attendance at each social event. But on the whole the socials were well conducted, and of high cultural and moral standards.

Tea was provided for about 60 or 70 who wished to remain at the Labour Church between the afternoon and evening services.

The Clarion Glee Union and the Clarion Cycling Club were organized independently of the Labour Church, but the relationship was close indeed. Proceeds of musical concerts and Cycling Club dance socials were often the means of liquidating church debts, and both Clarion groups often conducted Labour Church services. Sunday evening musicals became quite popular, and the Cycling Club Annual Service was a matter of warm anticipation. In 1896 Comrade A.C. Jones, as chairman, spoke of the aims and objects of the cycling club and the appropriateness of its participation in Labour Church Services to a congregation who had been roused to enthusiasm by the lusty singing of "England Arise." The service continued with a number of hymns and solos, and two addresses, one each by Comrades Glyde and Anderson.

The Rev. P.E.T. Middrington, who married Enid Stacy, visited Bradford about the turn of the century. He was surprised by the size and keenness of the audience. His opinion counts for much, for he visited a great number of the Labour Churches in the course of his travels as a Christian Socialist lecturer.
One strong influence which would help to account for such a favourable report was the presence of Margaret McMillan, who had come to the town in 1893. No official body had engaged her, or even invited her, but a number of ardent labourites, most of them members of the Labour Church, had made it very clear that she would be very welcome and that there was much that she could do. As one among the several Bradford groups the Labour Church did what they could to help her. She was a frequent preacher from the church platform, and favourite lecturer in the study group program; for each of these talks she was paid a modest sum to help make up a living wage. The congregation also co-operated gladly in the "Miss McMillan Fund". They also provided the fellowship along with the moral and political support without which she could not have carried out her program of reform. Certainly the story of the Bradford congregation would not be complete without reference to this "champion of the children".

To fill in the known detail of the history of the Bradford congregation the following year-by-year profile is presented:

1892 - The Bradford Labour Church was formed on July 31st and Bethesda Chapel on Peckover Street was leased in November. New seating, adequate lighting and redecoration were immediately supplied. A music and dancing license was procured. The church adopted the Labour Church Principles in December.

1893 - In January, the congregation was host to the founding conference of the British Independent Labour Party. To coincide with this conference a large demonstration rally was planned. George Bernard Shaw, R.B. Kerr of Edinburgh, Robert Blatchford, and Keir Hardie were invited to appear on the platform of the largest auditorium in Bradford (probably St. George's Hall) where five to six thousand people assembled to hear them. Also on the platform were Mr. F. W. Jowett, chairman, with John Trevor, Dr. Aveling, Shaw Maxwell, and the majority of the administrative council of the newly established I.L.P. In the evening a second service was held at the Labour Institute at which Jowett again presided and read the lesson, and at which the Rev. J. Craig Kennedy of Carlyle gave the address. Elsie Harker, daughter of the Rev. B. J. Harker of Bolton was the soloist. The day gave considerable impetus and standing to the Labour Church congregation and by means of delegates reports to the Labour Church cause.

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1. Mrs. Senior states: "G. W. Smith said, "You can do good work here" so she came. It was not an official invitation." cf. also A. Mansbridge, Margaret McMillan Prophet and Pioneer, p. 23, who refers to an invitation from Mr. Harry Smith, an invitation from the Labour Church through Edwin Halford and a formal deputation led by Jowett.

2. One particularly popular series was on "Art in the Middle Ages." A newspaper critic congratulated her highly for not scaling down her talks to the supposed lower intelligence of working class audiences.

3. In 1895 she was paid 10s. per address.
throughout the nation.

By February an afternoon as well as an evening service was required to accommodate the people. Later these services were of distinctly different character from each other. The evening was distinctly a preaching service while the afternoon allowed for questions and discussion. In April a "Self Denial Week" and retiring collections throughout the month realized a sizeable donation to the Hull Dockers Strike. (The congregation always made a generous response to such appeals.) In early summer a lending library was established. A 25-piece string band was in operation and led in the Anniversary Service at which Keir Hardie was the guest speaker.

In the autumn classes in economics, dancing, singing, and elocution were begun. One of the most popular of these was Margaret McMillan's "History and Economics." To try to meet the problems created by unemployment, the church did what it could to provide relief. In addition to food and clothing given in direct relief, it was decided that "no outside tenders be considered for any Labour Church work so long as any unemployed member was able to do the work." (Minute of Dec. 27, 1893).

1894 - F.W. Jowett, due to the pressure of political activities, resigned as chairman of the Labour Church. Affiliation with the Labour Church Union was dropped for one year. A choir master was hired at £15 per year. In the autumn it was found desirable to serve tea between the afternoon and evening services to accommodate those who came from a distance.

A paper, the Labour Echo was published; a debating society was formed. Toward the end of the year the General Committee resolved itself into a visiting committee to contact all members monthly to assure the treasurer of a steady supply of money, and to do what is generally considered the 'pastoral work' of the congregation. A Sunday School was under consideration, but not formed.

1. Comrade Conway was one of the choir masters. He was a member of the Labour Church Union Committee for the third revision of the Labour Church Hymn Book. Mrs. Senior informed the writer that the completed revision was turned over to the I.L.P. sometime after the war, when there was no longer a Labour Church Union. The I.L.P. issued it as its song book.

2. The work entailed was done by the young women members of the social committee. Twenty of them took their turns in being on duty once a month. (This often proved a valuable way of getting them interested in the work of the church. They also served at Saturday night dances which were held each week.) However there was no Women's Guild or equivalent at this time. (Correspondence from Mrs. Senior.)

3. The Labour Echo was published regularly from 1896 to 1898 when the paper with its £50 deficit was turned over to the I.L.P.

4. Minute of Nov. 28, "each person in charge of a district is expected to visit the members in that district once a month, and to report."
1895 - The effects of depression and of a very cold winter had limited the congregations and their contributions. To pay off the accumulating bills, and to provide working capital, "Ye Olde English Fayre" was held. This major project realized £250. Fred Brocklehurst's one month, eight lecture course on the Labour Church Principles was a great success both in terms of the numbers participating, and in the attentive and thoughtful reception and response given to the lectures.

1896 - A start was made on a Sunday School, with moderate success. The venture apparently petered out after a few months. Two courses of University Lectures were arranged, with six lectures in each course and at a cost of 1s. per student. The courses were: "Mediaeval England" and "Industrial and Economic Questions since 1789." The church had a forty voice choir and a Vocal Union over 100 strong. The literature Stall was turning over about £50 per year, and the circulation of the Bradford Labour Echo was 5,000. The Annual budget was about £1000 with no financial recompense to any workers except the Director of Music. The congregation was continuing with sustained support from its members and a fair number of new converts to the cause.

1898 - The influence of secular thought was becoming noticeable. There was a serious questioning as to the proper place and value of prayer in the services. A strong minority maintained that it should not be used in the Labour Church. Literature sales for the year averaged 18s. weekly even though general interest in the congregation waned a little. The afternoon service was dropped, though in the Autumn an increased demand for fellowship and discussion brought it back. Increased attendances and renewed interest brought the congregation out of debt, but the Committee were concerned that there were few new faces in the congregation.

1899 - A Socialist Sunday School was organized with about 100 scholars. The school was divided into classes by age groupings; the class teachers had only to mark attendance books and to maintain discipline. The lessons were given alternately by the two superintendants. In addition to the 'open session', there was an adult class where papers were read and discussed. The attendances were improved and the Labour Institute was completely re-decorated, painted, etc.

1900 - During the Boer War the Labour Church suffered in attendance and in finance because of the anti-imperialistic and anti-war attitudes of its staunch members. To further depress the fortunes of the congregation, the Clarion Cycling Club, which had begun as a very strong adjunct to the cause, was now beginning to divide loyalties. Sunday afternoon and evening found one time loyal Labour Church attenders astride their mechanical steeds, wending their way to nearby villages to spread the socialist message.

1902 - A year of growth and encouragement. For a period members meetings were held quarterly instead of monthly, but this decision was reversed within the year. Congregational influences exerted a strong democratic bias which would not completely entrust church affairs to a committee.

1903 - One thousand lecture syllabi were needed to fill the demand.
Date of Formation:

Date of Estimate of size:

Leaders and Prominent Members:

The Lord's Prayer was made a regular part of the order of service; the organist was requested to brighten the service with more singing, and with an organ voluntary during the reception of the offering. Chairman's remarks were limited in length. (Many chairmen tended to exceed the ten minutes that was thought adequate.)

1905 - Following a period of steady growth, the enthusiasm reached a new peak, with many new converts to the Labour Church.

1906 - Bradford was one of the congregations that opposed the Birmingham initiated secularist and leftist resolutions at the Labour Church Union Conference. But at the same time the Secularist magazine Freethought was added to the literature table. A move toward the socialist left and the secularist extreme was postponed. This was a year of prosperity. 1000 hymn books were purchased, and 20 whist tables were acquired; a large framed photo of F.W. Jowett was hung in the 'sanctuary'. This is a considerable change from the debt financing of but a few years earlier.

The motto was changed to read: "All relation to life and life of religion is to do good."

1908 - The Rev. Stitt Wilson of California was conducting a mission and proclaiming the Gospel of the Christian Socialists. Many otherwise sympathetic to the Labour Church were attending. The problem was solved by a degree of tacit co-operation. There was an unwritten agreement that the mission and the Labour Church should not run opposition to one another. A minute of Feb. 21st mentions that a certain 'fixture' could not be set because it would interfere with Stitt Wilson. So close did the co-operation become that many Labour Church members began talking about inviting the American to become resident pastor of their church. Though this did not come about it shows which way the wind was beginning to blow.

1909 - The congregation withdrew from the Labour Church Union. A minute of Mar. 2 reads: "Be it resolved that we decline to send any delegate to the conference owing to (in our Opinion) the unconstitutional action of the Labour Church Union executive and that all monies be paid owing to the Union, and that we withdraw from the Union."

1910 - Good attendances continued, but members meetings were poorly supported. Social activities continue to be well supported.

1911 - The deficit in March stood at £46. An appeal was made to the I.L.P. to take over the deficit and the work. This was accomplished in June, and the Labour Church as such ceased to be. The last Labour Institute rental payable "to the Labour Church" was dated Aug. 30.

1912 to 1920 - The I.L.P. continued to hold Labour Church services (for a time at least, in St. Georges Hall) till a few years after the First World War.
This congregation was begun in April on the basis of 'our steady faith in man'. The faith must have been sorely tried for they had to face prejudice and persecution; posters were torn down, and chalk notices were erased from walls and pavements. The congregation was governed by the I.L.P. executive and met in the I.L.P. rooms.

BRANDON, CANADA - "Peoples' Church"

1919 - large

Rev. A. E. Smith

In the events which culminated in the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, Brandon was one of the storm centers. A strike of civic employees had just been settled when they went out again in sympathy with the Winnipeg strikers. Feelings were running high. One of the prominent men marked as a 'Labour Sympathizer' was the Rev. A.E. Smith, minister of First Methodist Church, Brandon, and later founder of the Brandon Peoples' Church.

Smith came from a working-class family; his childhood had been one of poverty and difficulty; during his apprenticeship to a book-binder in Hamilton, Ontario, he had come into warm fellowship with the Methodist Church, had been trained as a local preacher, and had accepted a position as probationer; he was sent to Western Canada under the superintendency of Dr. James Woodworth. Here he completed his education and was ordained to the Methodist ministry in the year 1897. In 1902 he was stationed at MacDougal Memorial Church in Winnipeg, then a struggling congregation of 37 members. Before long its 600 seats were inadequate for its regular congregation.

In Winnipeg, Smith met the Rev. Wm. Ivens (who was later to be the founder of the Winnipeg Labour Church), the Rev. Ben Spence (who devoted his life to the causes of temperance and labour) and W. W. Puttee, parliamentary candidate and editor of Winnipeg's labour paper, The Voice. Through them he came into close contact with labour. When the Winnipeg Street Railway employees organized and struck for recognition and improvement of working conditions, Smith suggested arbitration as a possible method of solution, a suggestion which was implemented, and which, under the chairmanship of Dr. Sharling of Wesley College, brought satisfaction to both company and union. The net result, so far as Smith was concerned, was a packed church and a not-too-sympathetic District Meeting who demanded a statement concerning the strike and Smith's activities on its behalf, and his removal by the stationing committee to Portage La Prairie, Manitoba.

After pastorates in Portage La Prairie, and in Nelson, B.C., Smith came to a large and influential congregation in Brandon.
He was honoured and respected by his denomination, for he was thrice elected president of the Conference. Up to and during this time Smith had been a member of the Liberal party, and had shown a consistent sympathy with Labour's demands for just treatment. During 1917, when news of the Russian Revolution was the topic of the day, he began to read and study the Communist Manifesto to learn what Communism really was. He found a new revelation, cut his ties with the Liberal Party, and joined the Labour Party. In co-operation with a number of Methodist ministers who were moving to the left, he tried to get the church to adopt a socialist position. Reports of the Committee on Evangelism and Social Service began to use phrases like "Abolition of poverty" and "Production for use instead of for profit."

When the Winnipeg General Strike was at its height, and sympathetic strikes were occuring over the entire country, the "Citizen's Committee" of Brandon arranged with the board members of First Methodist Church that Smith should be restrained from preaching in that pulpit. The plot was exposed and the action withdrawn, but it was now quite clear that Smith could not remain indefinitely in First Church. On June 8, 1919, he intimated his intention of forming a "Peoples' Church." Though strongly advised to give up the idea, and ostracized by many erstwhile friends, Smith was convinced that this was the only way to minister to a great number of people. His request to the Stationing Committee brought the recommendation "that he be left without station, with permission to be pastor of the Peoples' Church in Brandon." The chairman put the resolution to the Conference where an amendment deleted the latter portion, and where the amended motion was defeated. The Conference was meeting in the midst of the General Strike; feelings were running high; harsh words were spoken; Smith resigned from the Methodist Church. It was the only way in which he could be true to his convictions, for, as one said later in his defence:

"It was very natural that Mr. Smith should feel that now, if ever, the ministers of the church who were trained for such interpretation should, at all costs, give themselves to interpret to organized labour the higher principles implicit in their own aspirations and at the same time interpret to the church what those aspirations are which incite so much fear among the ill-informed."

The Peoples' Church thrived in Brandon. A year after its beginning it was strong enough that Smith could go to Calgary to organize a similar project there, but before it was really underway he returned to Manitoba as candidate for the Provincial Legislative Assembly, and was elected. For the next three years, before he moved to Toronto, he devoted his time to the Brandon Peoples' Church, to editing The Confederate and to the work of the legislature. In his autobiography he has left the following commentary on the work of the People's Church:

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1. "Methodist Court of Appeal", p. 13, United Church of Canada Archives, Victoria University, N. 154-1919
"I resolutely took up the work of the Peoples' Church in Brandon. Meetings were held on June 22 and 29 (1919). A church committee of 21 men and women was named, of which the chairman was one of the art teachers of the public schools and the secretary was a reporter on the local paper. Other members were a city alderman, an accountant, a railroad conductor, a trade unionist, a motor mechanic, a musician, a trained social worker who took charge of the work among the children and women.

The idea of religion as being associated with atonement by blood for sin was wholly abandoned. Salvation was the responsibility of society. Man must save himself or he never would be saved. The basic principle of salvation was to be found in work. Productive work and the distribution of its fruit by organized scientific methods would heal the ills of humanity. Poverty, ignorance, and war, the plagues of mankind, could be abolished by human work.

My search for human Brotherhood had brought me to Christian Socialism. I embodied my conception of it in the ten ethical precepts for young members of the Peoples' Church:

1. Love your schoolfellows, who will be your fellow workmen in life.
2. Love learning, which is the food of the mind; be as grateful to your teachers as to your parents.
3. Make every day holy by good and useful deeds and kindly actions.
4. Honour good men, be courteous to all men, do not flatter or fear anyone; bow down to none.
5. Do not hate or speak evil of anyone. Do not be revengeful, but stand up for your rights and resist oppression.
6. Do not be cowardly. Be a friend to the weak and love justice.
7. Remember that all good things of earth are produced by labour. Whoever enjoys them without working for them is stealing the bread of the workers.
8. Observe and think in order to discover the truth. Do not believe what is contrary to reason and never deceive yourself or others.
9. Do not think that those who love their country must hate and despise other nations, or wish for war, which is a remnant of barbarism.
10. Look forward to the day when all men and women will be free citizens of one fatherland and live together as brothers and sisters in peace and righteousness.

"I was the leader, but not by any means the only one to encourage and guide. Members of the committee would often take part in the public services. On frequent occasions we had visiting speakers from the labour movement and sometimes from the orthodox church. I remember how gravely some of my former brethren used to question me as to our form of service: Why did we not read the Bible? Why did we not make prayers?

I remember those four years of hard work. I can see now the contrast which it all makes with the workers' movement of today. We were daring and bold, but we were lacking in knowledge and experience in the ways of the wilderness."
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRECHIN</strong></td>
<td>-1894 -</td>
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<td>The existence of this church was indicated by Evelyn March-Phillipps in the <em>Spectator</em> of April 21, 1894.</td>
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<td><strong>BRIERFIELD</strong></td>
<td>-1896 -</td>
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<td>A single report in the <em>Prophet</em> mentions &quot;but little Cinderella work this year&quot;. A small party of children were taken by train to Homes Chapel, and £1/6/8 was raised for the &quot;Home at Margate&quot;.</td>
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<td><strong>BRIGHOUSE</strong></td>
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<td>In November 1895, R. Morley of Halifax reported that the Comrades of Brighouse were almost ready to announce the opening date.</td>
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<td><strong>BROWNLOW FORD, Bolton</strong></td>
<td>1894</td>
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<td>There was some activity in 1894.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BURNLEY (pioneer only)</strong></td>
<td>-1894 -</td>
<td>John Tamlyn</td>
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<td>A Labour Church Pioneer, John Tamlyn, spoke at several of the churches. The present writer has not been able to determine whether or not a congregation was established.</td>
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<td><strong>BURTON-on-TRENT</strong></td>
<td>-1908 -</td>
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<td>There was some interest evidenced in 1894 and according to the minutes of the Birmingham Labour Church this congregation was represented at the Labour Church Union Conference of 1908.</td>
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<td><strong>CAITHNESS</strong></td>
<td>-1895 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existence was indicated in the <em>Prophet</em> of May 1895.</td>
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Date of Formed: 1893
Date of Cessation: 1898
Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:

CALGARY, CANADA

1920

In 1920 A.E. Smith went to Calgary to establish the Peoples' Church. One evening as assembled in committee in one of the rooms of the public library a telegram was handed to Smith. It was a wire from the Brandon Labour Party, advising that he had been named by them to contest the Brandon seat in the coming Provincial election. Smith accepted, expecting to be defeated. He promised to return to Calgary. But the work in Calgary was never taken up because Smith was elected to the legislature. Whether a Peoples' Church was formed in Calgary is not known.

CAMBRIDGE

- -

Mr. Overton and Mrs. Senior told this writer of an incident in Cambridge: Mr. & Mrs. Cawston met Harry Quelsh at the station, took him home to tea, and then to the Ladies Training College, Woolaston Road, for a Labour Church service, and finally back to the station. All of the way they were shadowed by the local police.

CAPE BRETON, CANADA

The late Dr. D.S. Dix told the writer that there was once a Labour Church in the mining areas of Cape Breton. No further information is available.

CARDIFF

1893 -
1898 -

G. B. Brett
Mr. Dunbar
Mr. Griffiths, Choirmaster
E. Hawkins
E. T. Robinson, Sec.
H. Rudland, Sec.
H. C. Rowe
Carey Watts
John Watts

Formed in March, 1893, the small congregation met in St. John's Hall. They were generally suspected of being "infidels under another cloak". This suspicion was at least partially dispelled when open-air demonstrations made public their object which was well stated by H.C. Rowe: "We consider that the object of the institution is to bring together all those who, whatever their creed, or no creed, yet bring to the cause of social reform that religious spirit which alone can revitalize it." A choir (which
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<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<td>Practice (in the Coffee Tavern) and a brass band were organized.</td>
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<td>A small banner was constructed, under which R. Davies, S.G. Hobson, and Rev. Paul Stacey spoke, defying the accepted custom that labour and political problems were not to be discussed on the 'Lord's Day'. In spite of, or perhaps because of, such opposition to Sabbath Observance, the congregation grew in numbers and financial strength. They were able to raise £7/10/- for the Colliers of the Featherstone district; and responded well to numerous other appeals.</td>
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<td>The position and status of women is worthy of notice. In Nov. 1893 the meeting was put in charge of the women who &quot;inexperienced as they were, did an excellent job.&quot; Women took their place as equals of their husbands and brothers in the Labour Church, and were active from the very beginning.</td>
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<td>In the reports of 1894, S.G. Hobson is referred to as &quot;our minister.&quot;</td>
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<td>The further history of this congregation is obscure; there was no congregation left at the end of 1897. In 1898 and 1899 however there was a renewal of interest. Mr. A.E. Ellery, a student for the ministry who had been denied a pulpit because of his unorthodox views, tried to organize this renewed interest into a congregation in the Grangetown district. With the support of both the S.D.F. and the I.L.P. a number of successful open air services were held. With the coming of inclement weather suitable accommodation could not be found. When the S.D.F., without officially withdrawing their support of the church, began Sunday night political meetings, the Labour Church went by default.</td>
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<td>Ellery's feelings regarding the Labour Church are indicated in the following which appeared in the Prophet, Aug. 1898: &quot;A religious socialist finds himself unable to work in orthodox churches and chapels; they are steeped to the lips in individualism, dominated by an unchristian sectarian spirit, and confined in the thraldom of dogma. To me the Labour Church is the only body that offers me the work that I want to do. There I can work the works of Him that sent me -- free from the accursed dogmatic sectarianism that so pervades the orthodox religious world today.&quot;</td>
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<td>The church continued through the year 1899 but was not listed in 1900;</td>
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<td>Carlisle</td>
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<td>A congregation was under consideration in 1894.</td>
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<td>Castleford</td>
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<td>Some interest was indicated in 1894.</td>
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<td>Date of Formation</td>
<td>Date of Cessation</td>
<td>Estimate of Size: Year</td>
<td>Leaders and Prominent Members:</td>
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<td>CHESTER (Cinderella Club only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td></td>
<td>135 to 240</td>
<td>J. D. Siddall, Annie Crewe, Robert Jackson</td>
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A Labour Church was under consideration in 1893, but only a Cinderella Club was organized. In 1895, 3300 'good substantial suppers, served in good style, even to table cloths, along with good entertainment, warm clothing, and good toys, were served to the poor children. The year's budget was £35/7/6. The policy of 'entertainment only' (no socialist propaganda sneaked in on the side) was strictly adhered to. In 1896 a summer program of outings and rambles was introduced.

CHRIST CHURCH, NEW ZEALAND (Socialist Church) -1898- Fred Knee, M. A. Atkinson, Sec.

This congregation was listed in the Labour Church Directory of 1898. In 1904 the Bradford I.L.P. referred correspondence from this congregation to the Bradford Labour Church (See minute of May 3rd). M. A. Atkinson edited a periodical The Socialist.

CLECKHEATON -1894- The Bradford Labour Church co-operated with the Spen Valley I.L.P. in organizing this congregation. It may have been located at nearby Heckmondwike. The minutes are not clear whether one or two congregations were formed. The cause may have been known as the Spen Valley Labour Church.

COLNE VALLEY

-1908- 1909 - 135 to 240

There was some interest shown in 1893. This congregation was represented at the Labour Church Union Conference of 1908 according to the minutes of the Birmingham Labour Church. They had just completed their church building.

CONSETT -1896- E. Halliday, Sec.

Existence of this congregation is indicated in the Labour Prophet, 1896.
CROYDON (Brotherhood Church)

1894 - - Rev. John C. Kenworthy
George Blogg
W. Gilruth, Sec.

In July 1893 George Blogg reported that he felt like a lone Labour Church Pioneer in the vast city of London. Nevertheless he took every opportunity of spreading the idea and the literature of the Labour Church. His best friends, most of them within the church, misunderstood his efforts -- advising him to reason less and to pray more. An audience sympathetic to the idea that religion involved one's workaday life, or that 'labour' was in any sense religious, was hard to find. His friends' religion seemed to be a matter of 'believing, and getting something you could not otherwise obtain.' By the end of the summer, however, he had assembled a small group who were ready to begin the Croydon Labour Church, but the organization was never completed, for they met too much of the attitude expressed in the following report from Blogg:

"It (the Labour Church) is hardly religious. It is so much concerned with the condition of things in the world; and the setting up of such a church would prevent men from joining existing churches and very likely thin out their congregations."

The Croydon Labour Church never came into existence; thus when the possibility of organizing a Brotherhood Church was proposed, George Blogg joined the provisional committee.

Croydon was a comfortable Conservative borough, but the efforts of the Croydon Socialist Society had at last made an impression. At 46 Tamworth Road a congregation, growing out of their efforts, established themselves as a Brotherhood Church, and called the Rev. John C. Kenworthy as their pastor. The inaugural service was held on June 3rd, 1894, with W. Belcher as guest lecturer in the afternoon, and J. C. Kenworthy as preacher at night. Among their early lecturers were most of the first London Labour Church committee. In the spring of 1895 this congregation published Croydon Brotherhood Intelligence, edited by J. C. Kenworthy.

CROYDON ("Raskin Labour Church")

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Charter</td>
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<td>1898</td>
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<td>1899</td>
<td>ev. 150</td>
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<td>1902</td>
<td>250</td>
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Reg. A. Beckett
Geo. W. Cole
J. Cole
Miss Foyster
Mrs. Annie Thurston
Miss G. Turner
Mr. Turner
Ernest Williams

1. Prophet, June 1894, p. 80.
In the autumn of 1897 sixteen men and women joined together to form the "Ruskin Labour Church." They chose this name because they felt that the memories and associations of John Ruskin would tend to diminish the popular prejudices against the terms 'Labour' and 'Church'. A small but vigorous congregation developed, centering their activities in Elmwood Mall.

The activities of Ruskin Labour Church followed the general pattern of sister congregations elsewhere. The Sunday program began in the early afternoon with a number of children's classes (an imperfectly organized Socialist Sunday School) which were followed by a lecture and discussion groups. To enable members to remain for the evening service, tea was provided at 4d. per person. This was not only a convenience for members, but a real opportunity for the development of friendship and fellowship within the congregation. Through it the Labour Church became a place where Socialists of every sort, variety and creed, who could find little in common with each other, could ignore their differences and work together for a common cause. Such causes included a campaign for municipal trams, the preservation of a wooded area called Croham Hurst, the establishment of a co-operative committee to pioneer the cause of municipal housing, and a concerted effort to publicize the harmful effect of lead-poisoning in the pottery industries and to advocate the purchase of china and pottery only if the Glaze was lead free, and the establishment of a committee to assist in the cause of local co-operative industry.

The size of the Ruskin Labour Church varied from month to month, and from year to year, fluctuating perhaps more than most Labour Churches. Attendances varied anywhere from 30 to 150 during the first few years, and after the turn of the century, closed for three months, but thereafter slowly increased till at the beginning of 1902 the lack of seating accommodation made necessary the use of the New Co-operative Hall as the regular meeting place. The Ruskin Labour Church was one of the more socialistic and doctrinaire of the Labour congregations. It was among those who advocated the change of name from 'Labour' to 'Socialist' Church. It was also a congregation sufficiently sure of its position that it was not easily deflected by the changing winds of doctrine. For instance, when 'New Thought' was making itself felt in the Croydon area during 1899, the Secretary of Ruskin Labour Church reported that it was present, but not sufficiently influential or pronounced to noticeably change the nature of the congregation. Later in the same year a conference was called to discuss Labour Church Principles with the Union of Ethical Societies. The conclusion was reached that the two bodies were agreed as to principle, but differed in opinion: The Union of Ethical Societies believed that 'Socialist' was too narrow and restricted, that it provided an effectual obstacle to breadth of thought and sympathy. The Labour Church replied that 'Socialism' was to them no narrow economic theory, but rather a broad philosophy of Justice, Love, and Brotherhood. A similar conference was called between the Labour Church and the Guild of St. Matthew, where again a broad area of agreement was found. The Guild felt that the Labour Church freedom from doctrine was a false freedom — forsaking of the essential impulses and safeguards of noble character. The Labour Church replied that their concept of character and service was similar, but that the
socialist approach was fresh, direct, and free from mawkishness. Beyond increasing the mutual understanding of these bodies there was no tangible result of these conferences. Perhaps the most important of the intangibles was the greater understanding of the purpose of the Labour Church and the significance of the Labour Church principles by the members of Ruskin Church. This deepened understanding resulted a month or two later in a statement: "The Religious and Moral Presentment of the Labour and Socialist Movement" which indicated that the 'Labour Movement' with its political action groups who determined its immediate goals and the methods used to attain these goals, was the main thing -- that the Labour Church was but an adjunct whose purpose was to interpret the moral and religious meaning of the movement within which the Church found its 'reason d'etre'. The Ruskin Labour Church did not conceive its role as the development of the philosophical leadership of the movement, and to that extent failed to live up to the purpose of the Labour Church as it was originally founded by John Trevor. This was perhaps true of the greater number of Labour Churches whose main and ultimate purpose was propaganda. For only a few leaders here and there was the larger point of view even recognized. The view of Ruskin congregation was influenced by the fact that in 1899 one of its members was a councillor for the London County Council and two more were candidates. In 1899 R.A. Beckett moved and Annie Thurston retired, leaving the others more free to express the other point of view.

DARLINGTON

1893 1898 A. W. Hildreth
J. Howden

The Church was established in October 1893 through the efforts of a number of Fabians. At the close of the first service a branch of the I.L.P. was formed, and before the end of the year Cinderella work was begun. While the relations of the party, the Fabians, and the church were very close, the latter was sufficiently distinct from the former two that staunch Tories and Liberals were among the regular adherents. A strong emphasis was placed on the need for a stronger ethical element, and for more faith 'such as Mazzini speaks of': "We need less ridicule of Evangelical fanatics and more faith in the things we know to be true." This attitude was carried into their plan of action by which reports of meetings were given to newspapers, and public men who denounced Socialism as anti-religious were challenged by letters to the editor and by public debate. Regular services and special meetings were always well advertised by handbills.

Darlington Labour Church took the initiative in organizing and encouraging a Clarion Cycling Club and a Clarion Scout's Corps. In 1896 depression meant smaller collections and increased financial difficulties, though the deficit seldom exceeded £5.
members were few. Summer brought severe difficulties out of which arose a mutual understanding with the I.L.P. by which the Church carried the socialist banner indoors during the winter, and the Party conducted the outdoor campaign during the summer. The claim was made that, for its own town at least, the problem of one socialist party had been solved. The Labour Church and the I.L.P. remained distinct organizations however.

A brief report in the Autumn of 1897 indicates that the congregation was continuing with a gratifying response from the more thoughtful of the working class. It continued through 1898 but was not listed in 1899.

DARTMOOR

Correspondence from Florence Shaw of Huddersfield would suggest some Labour Church activity here in the early 20th Century.

DARWEN

1894 1894 Small T. Ballington Chas. Porter

The Labour Prophet for Sept. 1893 reports the activity of a Labour Church Pioneer. T. Ballington published a pamphlet, "An Eight Hour Day for Cotton Operatives". On Feb. 4, 1894 a congregation was established, but progress was slow. Open air work was to have been begun during the summer. It is doubtful if the work was recommenced in the autumn.

DENTON

1895 - 1909 E. Townsend

A congregation was first under consideration in 1894 but several months passed before it could be organized. Early in 1895 the Denton I.L.P. was instrumental in establishing a congregation, but little more is known about it. The Denton congregation sent a report to the Labour Church Union Conference of 1909. Whether the church was in continual existence between these two dates is not known.

DERBY

1895

Pioneers attended the founding conference of the Labour Church Union in July 1893. Interest in a congregation was shown in 1894 and its existence was indicated in the Labour Prophet, June 1895.
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<tr>
<th>Date of</th>
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<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<td>Formation:</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEWSBURY</td>
<td>- 1906 -</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Correspondence with Miss Mildred Taylor of Huddersfield indicates the existence of this congregation sometime about the turn of the century. She remembers attending services in the Dewsbury Town Hall in 1906 or 1907.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOBCROSS, near Oldham (Pioneers only)</td>
<td>1893</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOVER</td>
<td>1893</td>
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<td>An address of S. O. Hobson to the Dover Electoral Association led to the formation of an active committee and a congregation, whose members believed had &quot;come to stay&quot;. Growth was not as rapid as expected due to opposition of a series of evangelistic services. Paul Campbell, Sec. of London Executive I.L.P. gave the inauguration address.</td>
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<td>DRUMHELLER, CANADA</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUMFRIES (Pioneer only)</td>
<td>1893 1893</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUNDEE</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>John Carnegie Joseph Carr David Lowe</td>
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<td>In the autumn of 1892 James Morton, the first president of the Glasgow Labour Army, helped to organize this congregation. It commenced on Sunday, October 23rd, with Keir Hardie as speaker. David Lowe reported that prior to the opening of the church the</td>
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Dundee Labour Party was languishing, but that the church brought new strength and unity. The new church was distinct and separate from the party however, though of course its members were largely the same people. Within the first few months regular attendances raised from 400 to 600. At the end of the year a choir was organized.

For the summer months services were discontinued; to regain enthusiasm and good attendances, Enid Stacy was invited for a fortnight of nightly meetings which were exceptionally well attended. A severe winter cut the attendances and the financial support considerably necessitating a smaller and warmer, and cheaper, meeting house than the Thistle Hall. However, the picture was brightened by a substantial increase in membership and in active participation by the members. A sense of closer fellowship grew, fostered by a series of Saturday Evening Socials.

When finances dictated that more local speakers be used, the attendance and the finances dropped further still, but the activity of the convinced Labour Church men decreased not a whit. In 1894 the church president, John Carnegie, was the first avowed socialist to have been elected to office. He was elected to the school board.

In 1895 the secretary reported a steady increase in the members and adherents even though the renting of the Good Templars Hall was a heavy financial burden, and in spite of some opposition from the local I.L.P.

EAST HAM

A congregation was organized in this community according to Mr. Sorensen, M.P.

ECCLESHELL

1895

The Bradford Labour Echo, Nov. 16, 1895, reports this congregation as recently established. Its motto was:

"The World is my country, Mankind are my brethren, To do good is my religion."

EDMONTON, CANADA

1919

Rev. G. L. Ritchie

In Edmonton, the Alberta Conference of the Methodist Church created a circuit consisting of one man that a minister might give his whole time to editing a labour paper and to conveying the comradeship and gospel of modern Methodism to the unchurched labour
<table>
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<tr>
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constituency of Edmonton. A Department of Labour pamphlet, Information Respecting the Russian Soviet System and Its Propaganda in North America, Ottawa, Aug. 1920 states:

"In September 1919, the Labour Church in Edmonton was formed with Rev. G.L. Ritchie as pastor."

**BIRMINGHAM**

- 1908 -

This congregation is mentioned in the 1908 minutes of the Birmingham Labour Church.

**FALKIRK**

There was some interest shown in 1894.

**FAILSWORTH & HOLLINWOOD: (Cinderella only)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>John Rogers</td>
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Cinderella activity was reported in 1892 and 1893.

**FARNWORTH near Bolton**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>F.A. Beet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. Hogarth</td>
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<td>Sam Rigby</td>
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This congregation formed in the late fall of 1893 or the early weeks of 1894, in a hall capable of seating 1000 people. Attendances were reported as good. After a poor summer the congregation met in the Temperance Hall which was comfortably filled week by week. Social gatherings and Cinderella work were added to the program. By the summer of 1895 a reading room and lending library were established. A Sunday School was established sometime prior

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2. In 1919 G.L. Ritchie was minister of Carman Church in Edmonton West (a church of 27 members). In 1920 he was left without station, associated with Metropolitan circuit. In 1921 he resigned and was given his credentials.
to 1898 at which time there were 60 scholars and three teachers. Two years later it was somewhat smaller but still active. Relationships between the congregation and the I.L.P. were always of the very best. In 1894 it was reported that the congregation was governed by the I.L.P. executive and was meeting in I.L.P. premises.

Interest and support of the congregation waned somewhat in the period from 1899 to 1903. In 1901 they gave up their lease on the Temperance Hall, and in co-operation with the I.L.P. rented a disused school house. Though auditorium space was limited, facilities for socials, committees and games were provided. In 1902, reflecting depression and unemployment, a temporary closing of the church became a financial necessity. Thereafter advertisements in the Clarion read Farnworth I.L.P. and Labour Church. In April 1903 they bought the premises they previously had leased. When the work was resumed is not known, but the congregation was quite active in 1907 according to advertisements in the Clarion. The Farnworth Labour Church and I.L.P. was listed as a member of the Labour Church Union in 1912.

The real beginning of each year's work was the Flower Service held each September. Large congregations turned out to see the Hall gaily decorated with thousands of blooms and to participate in the special program. The interest created that day continued through the succeeding weeks as the 'preachers', mostly prominent Labourites, expounded the religious significance of socialism.

**FARSLEY near Leeds**

- **1898** -

  J. W. Allerton, Sec. '99  
  Joe Walker, Sec. 1901

This congregation was listed in the Labour Annual of 1899 and 1901.

**FENTON, Staffs. (Pioneer only)**

- **1894** -

A small group of Pioneers managed to get some ideas over, and to sell some literature at the local Pleasant Sunday Afternoon meeting.

**FORT WILLIAM CANADA 1920**

**GLASGOW, New Labour Army**

1891 1895

Mr. M.A. Henry

James Morton, Pres.  
James Kidd, Sec.  
Angus M'Innes, Librarian

1. Angus M'Innes "... could neither read nor write, yet through a successful whimsicality which distinguishes labour organ-

2. Information Respecting the Russian Soviet System and its Propaganda in North America. p. 17 "... the best thing to call this education is the Labour Church, because if it is called a Socialist meeting there are a lot of people who would not come..."
About the same time that Trevor was establishing the first Labour Church in Manchester, Frank Smith was sponsoring the New Labour Army, patterned on the Salvation Army. He published the Workers' Cry and the "Tracks for the Times." It seems that the only branch that organized was in Glasgow under the chairmanship of James Morton. This group, a sort of forerunner of the Labour Church, established the Albion Hall Lectures, for which the nationally prominent socialist leaders were brought to the city. The regular meetings of the Army were held in the Waterloo Rooms.

The New Labour Army was a part of the 'Electoral Committee for the Taxation of Ground Values.' The original manifesto reads in part as follows:

"In accordance with the advertising fashion of the times it may be well to state what the New Labour Army will not be. It will have no creeds, no isms, no party pledges. No member will be asked to yield his convictions or abate his responsibility, in order to follow a leader. It will not oppose or endeavour to supplant any other progressive organization.

"The New Labour Army is established to afford comradeship without controversy. It will afford union without demanding uniformity; it will support and encourage attacks upon wrong doing. It will endeavour to raise low wages, to diminish excessive salaries, to equalize taxation, to stop frauds (legal or otherwise,) and to assist the wronged and suffering poor."2

The Glasgow Labour Army organized several local groups. In the East End a branch was formed to support R.B. Cunningham Graham in an election. A branch formed in Breadalbane Hall cooperated with the Scottish Labour Party in support of Bennet Burleigh in the Tradeston Division. A branch was considered for Central Hall, Govan. In all of these branches political action and campaigning was the important activity. There was a wide

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**Leaders and Prominent Members:**

- James Alston
- John Munroe
- Alexander McGregor
- Mr. M'Kerracher

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1. Robt. Smillie says he tied with Frank Smith as the most defeated (7 times) candidate for Parliament. Smith had been officer in charge of the Social Reform Wing of the Salvation Army, but resigned, because he was not allowed the freedom he desired to run it. In 1891 the word 'reform' was dropped by the Salvation Army.

2. Labour Annual 1895, p. 103. There is no mention of the New Labour Army in the Labour Annual for 1896.
variety of religious belief; the president, James Morton was an active member of one of the regular churches, and the secretary, James Kidd was a councillor of the People's Church. A spirit of tolerance was prominent; the uniting principle was "brotherhood."

The relationship of the New Labour Army to the Labour Church was fraternal.

GLASGOW, Labour Church

1896 1898 1896 50 - T. Hendrie, Sec.
Caroline E.D. Martyn
John Walker, choirmaster.

A Labour Church was under consideration as early as 1894 but no action was taken until the cessation of the New Labour Army. A meeting of interested people was called to meet in the Waterloo Rooms on April 7, 1896 to consider the formation of a Labour Church. The following invitation was sent to a large number of Glasgow citizens:

As a result of deliberations of the committee appointed to conduct a Labour Church, it has been resolved to invite a conference of residents in Glasgow interested in the ethical aspect of Socialism in conjunction with those who desire to emphasize the communistic tendency of religion, for the purpose of discussing the organization of a church which, while free from the dogmas which might narrow its usefulness, will yet found itself upon the recognition of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The committee advocate independent organization for the following reasons:

1. The subservience of many churches in adapting their theories and practice to the methods of commercialism and class privilege has rendered association with them uncongenial to many, as inconsistent with their views of justice and love.

2. An organized effort on the part of such for maintaining and promoting the ethical principles they accuse the official church of corrupting would no doubt be opportune and instructive.

3. Many still believe their chief opportunity of usefulness to lie in association with the church, but need a center from which to direct their effort to purify their ideas; and, since socialism is persecuted in most sects, such an association would provide a source of encouragement and sympathy.

4. A constitution free from dogmatic theological tenets not common to all religions is necessary as a basis of moral cooperation.

Founded on the belief that religion is a necessary factor in the highest life, social as well as personal, the Labour Church
would aim at the introduction of the law of love into politics and commerce. Believing economic competition to be detrimental to the development of that law, it would strenuously advocate the abolition of monopoly, and all the measures which would hasten the evolution of society into Communal and Collectivism.

For this purpose progressive education should be provided by means of lectures on social questions in their religious aspect, and classes for children in which social ethics and divine aspirations would obviate the development of prejudice and superstition. Also the encouragement and sustenance of committees for work among the poor, both material and moral, with a view to bring them in touch with the new social life, might become a feature of the work.

Our appeal is made to all inside or outside the churches whose love for humanity needs further means of expression, and whose belief in the dignity of humanity enables them to recognize and grieve over its degradation in the race after wealth, and the condemnation to poverty, which are the alternatives in the life of today.

The meeting, chaired and given a stirring address by "Carrie" Martyn, also heard a letter from Keir Hardie apologizing for his inability to attend, and commending the Labour Church. The assembly approved the idea, and the inauguration service was planned for 2:00 p.m. on May 10th, to meet in a Hall at 3 Miller Street, with Mr. A. Kirkland of Irvine as speaker. Discussion after the speaker's address was not to be allowed and prayer was to be used or omitted at the discretion of the chairman and the speaker. For the first while the response was most encouraging; the hall was crowded week after week. A choir under the direction of Mr. John Walker was formed to relieve the Glasgow Socialist Choir of the extra work it had assumed to assist the new congregation.

In association with the church a Socialist Sunday School was formed. This grew by 'leaps and bounds' till it absorbed the interest and enthusiasm of the Labour Church workers and the congregation simply faded away. In the early years of the 20th century Glasgow was virtually the center of all Socialist Sunday School activity. The Adult Class filled the need formerly supplied by the Labour Church. The city branch of the I.L.P. carried on Sunday lectures, often on religious subjects.

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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
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<td>100 stud.</td>
<td>J. Barclay</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tom Anderson</td>
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<td>Miss Glasier</td>
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<td>Geo. Ferguson</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>A. McArthur</td>
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GLASGOW, Socialist Sunday School (later known as the Proletarian School)
The Socialist Sunday School met at 70 Brunswick St., on Saturday evenings, and on Sundays. The usual service consisted of Labour songs, socialist readings, and address, (dancing, marching and drill on Saturday evenings,) In winter they put on concerts and in summer sponsored dancing on the green in the public parks. The older boys and girls were organized into a guild to look after the younger ones, dressing them, and conducting them to and from the meetings. In the Proletarian Song Book issued just after the First World War, an announcement is made of a "Service Committee" for the purpose of "officiating on the decease of any Comrade" who might belong to no other group who would help at a time of bereavement.

"Our service is very simple, and may be different at times according to circumstances. We have no Theology; we make fitting reference to the human side of life, the hardship which our class suffer, and we look for a brighter and fuller life here, when the workers have come into their own. At the grave we sing one of our songs, then after we have laid our Comrade in his last resting place, a few appropriate words are said, and we conclude by singing another song."

In June 1900 the Glasgow Socialist Sunday School Union was formed under the inspiration and leadership of Archie McArthur. In 1905 there were 9 schools, 600 members and schools at Kilmarnoch and at Paisley and Leith. They used the Labour Church Hymn Book. The First Conference of Scottish Socialist Sunday Schools was reported in the Clarion, January 12, 1906.

A reporter gave his impressions of visiting the Glasgow school to the readers of Justice, and reprinted in the Prophet, March 1897: "The average Social Democrat might, on visiting this school, protest against the God-idea being presented in any shape or form, as is done. He might also think that there was a shade too much sentiment running through the whole concern, but he would be compelled to admire, I think, the earnest desire on the part of those I have mentioned to bring instruction and pleasure to the little ones."

A few years later another reporter wrote in the Clarion, July 28, 1905: "A Socialist Sunday School is mainly a service of song -- not the old "would-be-like-an-angel" drivel, but real human song, expressive of human hope and joy and love and sorrow, and weaving into the very nature of the children the feeling and spirit of brotherhood."

GLASGOW, Socialist Church

The Clarion of Dec. 19, 1913, carried an advertisement: "Socialist Church for Glasgow - particulars from Tom Anderson."

A Labour Church was under consideration in 1894.
GOOLE

Reports from Hull indicate that a congregation was being formed during 1895.

GORETON

1893

This congregation was a branch of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church.

GRIMSBY

Reports from Hull indicate that this congregation was being formed during 1895.

HACKNEY

- 1896 large John H. Belcher, who later became Pres. of the Labour Church Union.

"The St. Thomas Square Chapel, Hackney, under the ministry of Mr. John H. Belcher, was popularly known as the Hackney Labour Church because of the socialist views of Belcher and thousands of young working people who attended Sunday evenings. It had to be closed, however, due to the lack of funds."1

HALIFAX

1892 1901 & 1893 1500-2000 J. M. Smith, Sec.
1894 (summer) 120 W. Greenwood, Treas.
regulars H. L. Barrett
1895 450 average M. J. Blatchford
S.S. - 300 James Gorman
1896 S.S. 300-400 T. G. Hearden
1897 1008 average J. P. Jones
1898 (spring) 600 A. Leach
1898-1999 smaller G. E. Millor
1999-00 600 H. H. Rowland
1900 500 Mrs. A. Taylor

A proposal to form a congregation was brought to the Halifax Labour Union in the autumn of 1892. The enthusiastic reception

1. Prophet, April 1896
it received resulted in the first service on Sept. 25th, with
John Trevor as guest preacher. Two months later the 'Provisional
Committee' turned over control of the new venture to a properly
constituted executive, and the congregation was on its own. With-
in a few months the many activities supplementing the Sunday evening
lecture required the renting of a room at one of the local Labour
Clubs as a members' library and reading room, and as a center for
study groups and other activities. During the summer months out-
door activities became prominent, with frequent rambles and Sunday
afternoon open-air services in Saville Park. Each autumn, as the
congregation returned to the New Public Hall and their Committee
Rooms, the need of a permanent Socialist Headquarters was felt.
When the Sunday School was formed in 1896 the need became so press-
ing that a delegation consulted with the local branch of the I.L.P.
concerning the possibility of buying or renting a hall. A fund
for the purpose was established, to which the proceeds of Bazaars,
Sales of Work, and Concerts were paid regularly. However, no hall
was procured before the Labour Church ceased to function as a
separate and distinct entity.
A Cinderella Club was added to the program in the spring of
1893. Though Whitsun tide had passed, a

1. In 1893 the New Public Hall, seating capacity 2000, was booked.
   This was the meeting place for the life of the church. It had
   its difficulties. For instance, early in 1898 the Hall was
   rented through the week by a circus. The precaution of covering
   the circus ring with sawdust did not prevent a 'perfume' from
   permeating the 'church'. Attendance for a few weeks was notice-
   ably smaller.
2. The first library was formed in 1893. In the period from 1896
   to 1898, when there came the increasing realization that the
   education and training of converted socialist, rather than the
   propagandizing of the general public, was the main emphasis of
   the congregation, more study groups were organized. The lib-
   rary was re-organized and considerably enlarged.
3. It is interesting to note that the women insisted on being mem-
   bers of these various groups; and when instruction in public
   speaking was far enough advanced that open-air propaganda meet-
   ings were undertaken, some of the most active 'missionaries'
   were women who worked with the men "evidently on equal terms"
   with them. This was as early as 1894.
4. These activities included both a choir and a string band, for
   the leadership of which a trained leader was hired. A little
   later, when Montie Blatchford (M.J. Blatchford, who wrote under
   the pen name of Mont Blong, was the brother of Robert Blatchford
   of Clarion fame) formed the Madrigal and Glee Club which was
   later known simply as the Clarion Glee Club, as an integral
   part of the Labour Church program, the committee rooms were
   not large enough for the 150 singers who turned out to parti-
   cipate.
5. The Rambling Club was formed in 1894.
6. When indoor meetings were so poorly attended that the rentals
   could not be paid the faithful refused to drop the services for
   the summer season for "What Propaganda would be done if the
   church was to give up?"
"... late-Whitsuntide treat for those underprivileged children who only know such a treat from the bitter experience of watching other children have it ..."1

was held. Several wagons took the children to 'Sally Mattock's Farm where they were given a good meal and the freedom of open fields. During the succeeding months Cinderella was very good to the Halifax waifs and urchins.

Halifax was always interested in its children. During the spring of 1895 the committee considered the formation of a Sunday School. Preliminary meetings suggested that a beginning should be made in the autumn, but this was impossible because of difficulties placed in the way of using Board School classroom space. Convincing the Board that fears as to procedure and decorum were groundless took several months, so it was December before the way was cleared. Then £12 had to be found to pay a year's rent in advance as was required by the Board. When all was done January 5th was announced as the opening date; 130 attended the first meeting of the Sunday School. A month later there were 175 children and 12 teachers, not counting an adult class of about 100; a year later there were 281 children listed as active members; and in 1898 the average attendance was 360. It was one of the largest and most successful schools of the Nineties.

The success of the school was in part attributable to the 'Entertainment Days': every fifth Sunday parents and friends were invited to attend and to observe the progress of the children. Another reason for the success was the outdoor program organized for both children and parents. An interesting side-light on the attitudes of the Labour Church is provided by two of these outings. 1897 was the year of a Royal Visit to Halifax, and of the Royal Jubilee. On both occasions, to enable parents and children to escape the tawdry show which degraded the streets of our town ..."2

trips to the Bolton Woods were planned. Halifax shared with a large section of the Labour Movement an acute distaste for everything associated with Royalty.

The Halifax congregation placed a greater emphasis on being a 'church' (without any diminution of interest in propagating socialism) than did most other congregations. As early as 1894 they were seriously discussing the form of service to be used in infant dedication ('Baptism'), in marriage, and in burial. Considerable attention was paid to the beauty of the regular services. For instance, an annual flower service was introduced. The Hall was decorated with pictures of National Labour Leaders (Robert Blatchford's picture was usually most prominent) and with thousands of blossoms. All the services were brightened by the emphasis on vocal and instrumental music as a contrast to the 'steady diet of lectures'. The Committee was also actively engaged in 'pastoral work', trying to find the best way of giving leadership and guidance in matters of personal morality and integrity, and this

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1. Prophet, June 1893.
2. Prophet, November 1897.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size: Year Lien. Att.</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>1908 &amp; 1909</td>
<td>1899 Flourishing</td>
<td>W. H. Beachener, councillor</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1905 Crowded (2 services)</td>
<td>W. H. Brown, treas.</td>
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<td>1908 75 -</td>
<td>Fred Hayward</td>
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<td>W. Lakeman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fred Scarratt</td>
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<td>T. Sneyd, sec.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>A. Tott</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Willdigg</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bertram-Wilson (later associated</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>with Ruskin Hall)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

particularly in respect of the drink problem. In 1896 a committee was set up to visit every member to encourage each to maintain his loyalty and enthusiasm. The function of this committee also had its financial side, for regular subscriptions were required to keep the cause in operation. Up till 1894 the congregation had no serious problems in finance, but the years following were seldom debt free for very long at a time. The reason was clear, if 1897 may be taken as typical. The average attendance was 1008 for 41 Sundays; the collections over the same period averaged just less than £1 per attender per week. It is only fair to observe though that the congregation was generous in its support of Labour's cause. In 1898 the church collected one guinea a week in aid of the Engineers Lockout, and in addition, organized a large concert, the proceeds of which went to the Engineers Union. They also co-operated in a bazaar which earned £400 for the Socialist Hall Fund.

The emphasis on being a 'Church may explain why, during the dissension in Labour circles in 1894, when other Labour organizations were losing members and having great difficulties in keeping going, the church came through unscathed, even gaining in membership. It may also explain why the congregation began to decrease in 1898; at that time there was reported a decrease in the religious tone of the meetings; the political emphasis were preponderant. The 'church' was losing its definitive feature. The decrease was more marked than ever when the I.L.P. began holding Sunday evening propaganda meetings in opposition to the regular services because the Labour Church wasn't practical enough, and when the local clergy opened a critical campaign attacking the Labour Church for the secularization of the Lord's Day by the propagation of political socialism and Clarion Cycle Clubs. When the Church's emphasis became political public support went to the body best fitted to be politically effective. Though active support of the Hanley Anti-Lead Poisoning Campaign during the following year tended to diminish criticism from both sides, the congregation never did regain its former size or enthusiasm. When a further decrease was marked in 1901 the Church Committee asked the I.L.P. to take over the Sunday evening meetings, and the congregation, as such, forthwith dissolved.
Hanley was represented by Pioneers at the founding Conference of the Labour Church Union in July, 1893. The congregation was inaugurated by H. C. Rowe on March 3, 1895. It attracted a large circle of people generally in sympathy with Labour, but not yet converted to Socialism, or to political action. It also attracted a large number of women who would not otherwise attend Labour functions. Perhaps there was a reason for this (though it may be hard to prove). The secretary reported:

"A lady once told me that her husband had been more helpful and considerate at home since he came to the Labour Church."

In many places it is true that, prior to the advent of the Labour Church the activities of the Labour Movement tended to take a man out of his home and away from contact with women and children. The Labour Church began a tendency in the other direction.

The activities of the congregation were numerous. Soon after the formation a choir and an adult class were established, and later classes in economics (50 members were studying Marshall's Economics of Industry in 1896), gymnastics, sewing, and singing were added. There were no other organized classes because the Fabians could be depended on to provide excellent courses. During the summer of 1896 a Clarion Field Club was organized, but after a time its activities began to detract from the summer attendances. The club later gained an independence of the congregation, and by 1899 could almost be classed as an opposition organization. Socialist it remained, but Labour Church it ceased to be.

The Hanley Labour Church first met in the Masonic Hall, but soon moved to a Temperance Hall, and later, to another Temperance Hall in a more central location. Each move brought larger attendances and an expanding sphere of public influence. This influence was well used by the committees which went to work on various problems. One committee was investigating the problem of housing for the poor. Not only were the visitors in the congested areas to assemble facts; they were also to cultivate the friendship of the residents that they might begin to understand the problems of the slum dwellers. Their reports helped greatly in the political and publicity campaigns for municipal housing. Another committee under the leadership of Bertram Wilson and Fred Scarratt, was at work on the problem of industrial lead poisoning. The colour decorations used on pottery involved the use of a lead base paint which was causing considerable suffering to a large number of employees of the potteries. The facts were gathered; the report was fully documented and explained and demonstrated and a whole publicity campaign was carried through. The public were informed that the potteries were refusing to avail themselves of the modern advances which could reduce the hazards to their employees. The committee found and verifies over 100 cases of lead poisoning in two months. Six others had died, and five were not traceable. A government inspector, Dr. White Legge investigated, and found the evidence conclusive, leading to references to the problem in the House of Commons. The Labour Church Union took up the matter, and under the leadership of James Sims of Bolton, wide publicity was given through lectures, lantern slide series, and demonstrations. The campaign quickly grew beyond a Labour Church concern. For instance the Duchess of Sutherland became concerned; she stipulated in her orders
that thereafter, china must be leadless, and supported the Hanley Labour Church Committee to put on a large display of leadless glazed ware. Other groups took up the agitation. After a published report by Drs. Oliver and Thorpe in 1899, a number of manufacturers, among them James Reeves and Co., began the regular use of the less hazardous paints. When the government stipulated that all its orders must be filled with leadless glazes, the Hanley Labour Church Committee surveyed a victory far transcending their fondest hopes and dreams.

The Labour Church in Hanley was often helped by the opposition of the Press. When Tom Mann came to the 1897 Anniversary the press gave him a misrepresentation in its report. This soon became a subject of considerable discussion. For instance one of the local rectors held a series of outdoor meetings in which he debated Mann's address as reported. The Labour Church occupied the same spot immediately after the rector was through and were able to get their message across to many new people because of the controversy.

The Hanley Cinderella club began in 1895 with the feeding of 200 children; and continued for a number of years feeding at least as many each fortnight. In June of the first year of their operations 80 children were taken by train to Endon, five miles from Hanley. Here children who had never been beyond the streets of Hanley spent the afternoon in games of cricket, football, and skipping. When tea time came each pair of adult helpers collected an even dozen children, and sat them on the lawn. One helper assured fairplay while the other served each child with a pint of milk, a lb. of currant cake, and two buns. A month later a similar outing was planned for 120 children, but rain interfered; a large hall was made available by an evangelist. Here, when tea time came round, 240 children waited in line. Somehow Cinderella was able to feed them all. Money to finance such events was raised by collecting cards, Cinderella dances, newspaper publicity, and by the sale of photographs of Carrie Martyn, one of Hanley's favourite Labour Leaders.

At Christmas time Cinderella gave a grand party to the underprivileged children. The Church members, noting how much was done for other children, held a second party for their own, and to take Cinderella to a number of the neighbouring towns. The Club continued to be a strong force for a number of years. It is unfortunate that it began to draw away from its parent body, and about the turn of the century to become a competitor of the congregation. The same forces that were drawing the support from the church to the Cinderella club led to the untimely end of the Sunday School which had been established but a few months earlier. About 1900 considerable tact and commonsense were needed to overcome the differences of temperament and shades of opinion which were making for disunity, and to keep the Sunday audience of intelligent, earnest, and sympathetic young men and women. This was not found wanting, for the congregation survived the low point, and was a strong and active congregation for a number of years after that.

In 1905 Hanley Labour Church was active in forming I.L.P. branches throughout the Potteries. It took the initiative in forming an association of Labour members of Guardians and Councils. In 1906 it became a member of the Union of Ethical Societies. It was one of the strong and active congregations at the Labour Church.
Date of Formation: 1906. In 1907 Hanley formed two branch congregations in the Potteries and was very active in all progressive organizations. How much longer it lasted the present writer does not know.

HECKMONDWIKE, Near Bradford

See Cleckheaton

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

1902

The establishment of this congregation was indicated in the Reformers Year Book of 1903.

HEREFORD

A congregation was under consideration in 1894.

HEYWOOD (Pioneer and Cinderella only.)

1893

Mrs. Fenton

In September 1893 Mrs. Fenton, a Labour Church Pioneer, began by giving her copies of the Labour Prophet to her friends. When their interest was aroused she began selling them, and soon was selling three dozen monthly. In December 1893, she organized a Cinderella club. During the following year the number of Pioneers increased; and the possibility of a congregation was discussed. There is however no report of a congregation being formed, although representation was sent to the founding Conference of the Labour Church Union in July 1893.

HOLLAND

Trevor summarises the Dutch interest in the Labour Church as follows:

"In Holland our movement is sympathised with by some of the younger ministers of advanced Churches, and our ideas are to some extent accepted. Yet nothing like a Labour Church has been formed in Holland." (1)

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Date of Formation: Date of Cessation: Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:

**HOLLYWOOD**

See Failsworth & Hollingbooth

**HORWICH (Pioneer only)**

Labour Church Pioneers from this town attended the Labour Church Conferences of July and November, 1893.

**HUDDERSFIELD**

1894 - 1896

- 1900 -

small

B. H. Shaw
Mildred Taylor

Interest shown in 1894 resulted in a small congregation which ceased to exist two years later. Correspondence with Miss Mildred Taylor would suggest that a small congregation was again active in Huddersfield around the beginning of the century.

**HULL**

1893

1898

'93-'94 Medium

Special demonstration up to 2000

W. J. Strachan, chairman
Seth Ackroyd, sec.

'95-'96 Smaller

Mr. Biggins
Councillor Joshua Butterworth
Mrs. Kennington
Mr. & Mrs. Mundel
Mrs. Palmer
Tom Wing
M. Cohen (active in Cinderella)

1897 Small

Motto: "We see no valid reason to wait for another life before happiness is enjoyed."

During, or just after the Hull Docker's Strike, this congregation was formed. Perhaps part of the inspiration came from the generous support given to the Dockers by Labour Churches throughout the country; even before an official fund had been set up in May 1893, congregations had contributed over £50, and considerably more was added in the succeeding months. By early autumn weekly services had begun. They were drawing large crowds, and membership was growing. The committee had been selected to include a wide variety of faiths, both political and religious; several had no church connections, and two were women. This was an expedient move, for the congregation began when the various labour groups were hostile to each other; the role it was to play was a harmonizing and conciliatory one. The secretary was later able to report that there was developing a freer, fuller, broader, and more tolerant spirit due almost entirely to the efforts of the Labour
The Church is fast becoming a standing committee of the Labour Movement in the town, a centre of light, leading, and inspiration. There was a feeling that, while elsewhere one may criticize another's ideas and tactics to an extreme degree, in the Labour Church all are on neutral ground where members could fraternize and be friendly regardless of differences. However, the success of this conciliation program was temporary, for the dissensions it lessened for a time were the cause of the demise of the church some years later.

The experience of the first winter suggested to the committee that a very large auditorium was a disadvantage, so Gladstone Hall on Bond Street was engaged for the second year of operations. Here row upon row of empty seats and week after week of increasing debt would not be expected; indeed, seldom were there more than a dozen unused seats until the beginning of the third year, and then December 1895 brought an encouraging return of the attendances of the previous year. However in 1896 the S.D.F. commenced opposition meetings in a nearby location. Decreased support forced the congregation to move to the Friendly Societies' Hall on Albion Street where expenses could be further curtailed. Here, to further restrict expenditures, only rarely were other than local speakers used. Even so, the financial burden was severe for the members remaining; but they were determined to keep the cause alive. A wonderful sense of comradeship and fellowship developed which helped to maintain a sense of the purpose and ideals of the Labour Church. But increasingly small attendances and heavier financial burdens proved too much; in June 1898 came the decision to disband. The following were considered to be the reasons for the lack of support:

1. The large number of poorly paid workers, the poor employment practices which made unemployment such an item of fear, and the Dockers' strike which had lost the sympathy of the middle class people, and had caused estrangement between the moneyed people and the workers.

2. The traditional forms of Methodism were firmly entrenched, with the result that people could not recognize that a church could or would maintain the justice of the worker rather than the giving of a charitable 'dole'. It was a matter of common observation that many of the most religious employers were also the most harsh in their treatment of the employees. The Labour Church seemed to inherit, even if unjustly so, the workers distrust of all religion.

3. The Labour Church was not class conscious enough for some of the Socialists, and too socialistic for some I.L.P. members, so support was lukewarm.

4. Many of the leading socialists thought of the economic view as the only valid one, and therefore opposed the ethical interpretation as a diversion.

5. Competitive meetings organized by other socialists.

1. Prophet,
6. Large number of strikes, of which at least some have been Trade Union jealousies, have impoverished the workers.

7. Labour Church Leaders moving to other towns.

In the autumn of 1899, a new start of the congregation was considered, but found to be impractical. Instead, a Socialist Sunday School was begun. Another attempt at organization was made in 1901. This time the congregation remained together for the better part of the year.

While it lasted the Hull Labour Church did not seem to have the same extent of activity as did many other Labour congregations. There were of course the usual Sunday lectures, the numerous teas and socials, the open-air propaganda program at Drypool Green and at Southbend along the banks of the Humber, a number of collections in support of Labour Strikes (for instance, two demonstrations in 1894 cleared £9 in aid of the striking Kingstown Cotton Mills), and an electioneering campaign in which Joshua Butterworth, a Labour Church member, was elected to the Council. But there is no mention of study groups, choirs, bands, adult classes, rambling clubs, or any other of the activities, except a Cinderella Club, which was organized during the early '90s and was separate from the Labour Church congregation. In 1894 it was reported that they had no active women workers. Perhaps here is an explanation of the decline of the congregation from its formation in 1893 to its demise in 1898.

The Hull Cinderella club differed from most others of its kind by giving instruction as well as entertainment, food and clothing. Indeed it was known as a Cinderella Sunday School. The instruction given included stories such as Aesops Fables and Robinson Crusoe, (which were expected to instill a socialist view of economics) and practical classes in first aid, singing, household economy, sewing, etc. In 1894, it was reported that an average of 122 children arrived (in mid-winter barefoot, frostbitten and bleeding, with younger children on their backs) in time for a hearty breakfast which cost the congregation two thirds of a penny per meal per child. A total of 2,684 meals were served. The need was desperate, and the response of the general public was good; the newspapers editorialized the Cinderella Sunday School as a good way of giving food and clothing to needy children.

The project was not without its critics. In the spring of 1895 a small religious group complained that they were disturbed by the noise of the children, and threatened to give up their tenancy if the Sunday School were not evicted from the remainder of the premises. Twelve hours notice was given to the superintendent who could do nothing save suggest to the teachers that they keep their classes together in their own homes till new arrangements could be made. It was thus that the school survived its first major crisis.

An important part of the program of the "Barefoot Sunday School" was the annual summer outing. The first year 200 children were taken by wagonette to the village of Cottingham where the vicar, the Rev. H. P. Ramsden, did all possible to make the children welcome. His own kitchen was put at the service of the lunch committee while he supervised the collection of sufficient used clothing to give each slum child a new outfit. The secretary's report of the 1897 outing is worthy of quotation. Concerning the trip from Hull to Stone Ferry he wrote:
"If you can think of a theatre gallery escaping confinement and taking to wheels, you have a clear idea of the Stone Ferry 'Bus. There it was, tier above tier, all facing the horses. I have seen nothing like it. It was a brilliant idea; a tremendous fact facing you which nobody could deny."

Even the eating of lunch was an occasion. After games "... 150 made a large circle, and there was something in the centre which was not allowed to escape. Baskets full of bread and butter and 27 pounds of ham were captured."

Seth Ackroyd has captured something of what these outings must have meant to the children for whom an excursion to the country was the event of the year:

"From the slums of Hull the children came, and nature, purifying nature, had for once a chance. They breathed the inspiration of heaven. Poor starved outcasts of society; not only food starved but air starved. Then they came back. Such singing, such shouting, and when they were neither singing or shouting, they were roaring. Roaring! that is the word. Not the roaring of many waters. It was the roar of the football field; when the game was exciting. People came out in hundreds to see who it was. It was the Jubilee of the slums. We taught them to be happy here on earth, and now. They were happy -- they felt so -- and everyone who saw them knew it also."

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<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Present day</td>
<td>89 Charter members</td>
<td>Tom Lowe, 1st Chairman</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&amp; over 100 by end of first month.</td>
<td>Miss Hopkinson, 1st Sec.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'96 250 average</td>
<td>W. B., Secretary</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'04-'09 Socialist Sunday School average was 250</td>
<td>Tom Cooper, Secretary</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'09 150 -</td>
<td>Ted Berry, trustee</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Bradley, trustee</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Snow, choir director</td>
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<td>Ed. Thornton, choir director</td>
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<td>Joseph Bradley</td>
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<td>Ted Bradley</td>
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<td>Tom Nield, Caretaker</td>
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<td>W. H. Peck</td>
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<td>Edwin Ridgway</td>
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On March 18, 1894, at Hyde Temperance Hall, Miss Margaret McMillan addressed two large and attentive meetings on the subjects: "The Gospel of the Poor" and "The Need of a Labour Church." The response was very good, as was evidenced by the sale of literature and the fact that eighty-nine Charter members began the Hyde Labour Church. By the second month the number of members exceeded 100, and membership continued to grow for a number of years.

During the first few days of the new congregations' life arrangements were made to lease the George Street Hall, a premises with two main rooms. Plans were immediately underway to make this a suitable meeting place: a piano was purchased, and adequate seating accommodation was built by volunteer labour. Then on the installation plan an organ was procured, with the congregation assuming an obligation of 5s. per week. The Labour Church was apparently a good tenant, for when they wished to redecorate the owner agreed to pay half the cost if the congregation would undertake a five year lease. After this time (1897) the reports mention 'our building'. However it was not till 1923 that the church became its own landlord. At that time, when the owner of the George St. property refused to sell, the congregation bought a more commodious hall on Mottram Road. This is still their center of activities.

The redecoration of the George Street property during the latter years of the 19th Century featured two painted scrolls, with the following mottoes:

"Socialism -- The Hope of the World" and
"The Truth shall make us Free"

A year or two later, approximately 1902, they spent £100 constructing a new staircase to the Upper Hall. Previously the entrance to this hall was by means of a rear staircase with 11 inch stone steps. The new staircase was a major improvement, giving more convenient access to their main meeting place. In 1904 the Lower Hall was furnished with 'incandescent bulbs.'

During the early years the Sunday service began with the reciting of the Lord's Prayer, and the singing of a hymn from the Labour Church Hymn Book. There followed the Chairman's remarks and, or a reading, the choir anthem, and the lecture. The meeting closed with the singing of another hymn, a short prayer, and the benediction. These practices were not dropped till the beginning of the twentieth century when secularist influences became quite strong.² Prayers were discontinued and a new hymn

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1. For several months following Miss McMillan's visit the sales exceeded £2 per month, made up from the sale of ten dozen Labour Prophets and double that number of penny pamphlets on socialist themes.

2. In 1906, inferring from the Hyde resolutions to the Labour Church Union Conference, the secularist influence was very strong. It pressed for the deletion of all theological references from the proceedings. During this year Hyde affiliated with the Union of Ethical Societies.
book adopted which omitted all references to God or Jesus Christ. 1
A few years later the singing of hymns was dropped entirely and the
general order of procedure was simplified. Today the chairman
simply introduces the speaker who then gives his address. A period
for questions and discussion follows, the meeting is dismissed.
Though the membership today is not numerous, it is still vigorous
and facing up to the challenge of modern times.

The real function of the Hyde Labour Church was of course the
preaching and the spreading of the gospel of Socialism. To this
end a number of speakers were engaged to discourse on a variety of
subjects and problems allied to the main interest. Hyde's list
of lecturers throughout the years includes most of the national
figures, and perhaps a larger variety of subjects than was repre-
sented in the syllabi of sister congregations. Perhaps this di-
versity of interest contributed to the persistent vitality of this
congregation.

These lecturers were not confined to the regular Sunday evening
service. Frequent series of outdoor propaganda meetings were con-
ducted in the Market Place, and several autumn 'evangelistic cam-
paigns' were held. For instance in the autumn of 1894 Miss Carolyn
Martin was the 'missioner' who attracted overflow crowds every
night of the week. This increased the general interest of Hyde's
citizens and brought about an increased attendance at the regular
Sunday services. Though new members were not frequent the exe-
cutive rejoiced in the propaganda opportunities presented by this
growing body of adherents. One secretary observed that the con-
stantly growing, and constantly changing, audience gave unexcelled
propaganda opportunities.

As the Church progressed it became the headquarters of many
other activities which provided interest for the members. An
active orchestra and dramatic society were soon functioning 2, as
were swimming, cycling, and rambling clubs. A class in economics
was organized. All of these auxiliary groups were self supporting
and did not become a drain on Church funds.

One of the very important auxiliary functions was the Cinderella
Club, organized early in 1895. The first event was a tea served
to 400 urchins, followed shortly by a second served to 600. The
following months brought a further increase in the number of child-
ren served, necessitating a rotational system whereby 200 were
served at one time. The provisions for one sitting included 100
loaves of bread and 30 gallons of coffee. Though the Tory press
objected to this activity as 'contrary to the heaven sent laws of
political purity' the reaction of the general public was far from
callous. Indeed, the generosity of many townspeople made possible
gifts of soup and provisions to be sent home with the poorest of
the children.

1. Hyde reported to the 1908 Labour Church Union Conference that
   it was using the Socialist Hymn Book in place of the Labour
   Church Hymn Book because of the theological references of the
   latter.

2. In 1905 the operetta "Princess Juju" was produced with the
   cast of 40 being all Labour Church members except 2.
From time to time there was raised the question of starting a Sunday School. In January 1900 the Secretary reported that while no Sunday School was underway there was an active and successful gymnasium class for boys. A year later this program was extended to include girls and young women. Still later a study program was introduced, and in 1904 a proper Sunday School was fully organized. It soon became a fairly large school with some 250 scholars.

Lessons to the older pupils included expositions of life in the early stone age, the bronze age, the iron age, the history of the common people, Darwinism, and other such 'modern' studies. It is interesting to note that the teachers held a weekly study class and a school library was established, in order that a high standard of teaching might be maintained. Physical drill was also a feature of the school, as was the monthly 'open Sunday' when any member of the school would come forward to sing, dance, recite or otherwise entertain the remainder of the school. In this way, quite a number of the children lost their self-consciousness. The school was managed by a committee of teachers and two representatives elected by the children. This committee organized and ran a football club which was one of the active members of the Hooley Hill and District League. During the Whitsuntide holidays field days and sportsdays were organized, and at many times during the year interschool visits and sports meets were held. One of the big events each year was the Christmas tea to which 500 sat down to eat, and afterwards to enjoy a pantomime or play entirely produced and acted by the Sunday School teachers and scholars. These productions were complete with scenery, orchestra, and costumes all provided by the school. Indeed, in later years the excellent dramatic accomplishments of Hyde Labour Church won for them national recognition. In 1924 the Church players won a banner in the Shakesperian Tercentenary competition with their treatment of "The Tempest". The listing of the plays of Shakespeare and Shaw, and the classical operettas and pantomimes produced by this drama group reads like the boasted accomplishments of a professional troupe.

The fortunes of the Hyde Labour Church increased steadily for the first six years of its life. Then at the end of the century, when most congregations were facing severe declines, Hyde met its first minor setback by improving an already good choir, introducing new hymn tunes, limiting speakers to 45 minutes, and by improving the social life of the congregation. When the Boer War came, Hyde took its place alongside the other Labour Church congregations in the antiwar propaganda, distributing Hardie's **Spread the Light and Stop the War**, and adopting a pacifist stand, but somehow it escaped the doldrums into which many others drifted. In fact Hyde's public relations improved during this war period, and its financial situation gained strength.\(^1\) Hyde was an active

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1. **Hyde Labour Church, Statement of Accounts, May 1, 1899 to April 30, 1899.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bal. on hand £ 4 - 16 - 5()</td>
<td>Speakers £ 29 - 0 - 6()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections 63 - 5 - 2()</td>
<td>Printing &amp; ad. 22 - 11 - 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
member of the Labour Church Union until the latter ceased to function during the First World War.

The growth and strength of the Hyde Labour Church was due in no small measure to the social life of the congregation -- there was a sense of belonging to an important cause and a close fellowship among the members. This was nurtured by frequent parties and fortnightly dances which were extremely well run, and by a policy of political independence which kept the congregation free from the political squabbles of contending sections. While the I.L.P. was influential among the church members, there was no identification of party and church affairs which could easily lead to dissensions. Perhaps at least part of the strength of this congregation is explained because it was not absorbed by political activity, but retained its identity in its cultural interests. It exists today as a lecture and debating society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-letting hall</td>
<td><strong>£ 28 - 1 - 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td><strong>£ 29 - 7 - 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds of dances</td>
<td><strong>£ 14 - 14 - 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumbo Sales (2)</td>
<td><strong>£ 8 - 9 - 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Teas</td>
<td><strong>£ 3 - 10 - 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
<td><strong>£ 6 - 14 - 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. aft. Concert</td>
<td><strong>£ 7 - 13 - 0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll. for Clock &amp; tea urn</td>
<td><strong>£ 3 - 7 - 0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the collections paid admissions to large theatre demonstrations accounted for **£25**. From the proceeds of dances a sum exceeding **£15** was spent to procure a piano and other equipment and only the remainder is shown in the above financial statement.
The Rev. W. E. Atack, a Unitarian minister at the Unitarian Church on Friars Street was a strong advocate of Labour Church. Though he formed no separate congregation, he preached Labour Church Principles and organized classes for local socialists. He was one of the Examiners for the Labour Church correspondence class.

**Keighley**

- 1895 -

300 to 400

Mrs. Roe

Philip Snowden, speaker with Christian emphasis.

Mr. Teale

Mr. Wilkinson, Clarion Vocal Union Conductor.

Very little has come to hand concerning this congregation. The following report is from the November 1895 Labour Prophet:

"Keighley is one of those precipitous, grey Yorkshire towns which force the stranger to wonder whether he prefers a monotony of stone to a monotony of brick. Of the two, the stone looks more substantial and somewhat cleaner, though not much. It harmonises better than brick would with the rugged melancholy of that hard land.

Seen from Blackhill, on a misty morning in October, the valley was full of fog, out of which long rows of houses came creeping up the "Brow". On the other side a similar whale backed ridge shouldered up out of the white cloud, and stood hard and bare against the sky. Behind it was another and another towns, villages, factories, roads, railways, canals, workhouses, and civilization generally hidden away between them. Also a cheerful, hospitable, good natured, and sturdy race of men and women, amongst whom the Socialist gospeller gets well treated. In the Co-operative hall between three and four hundred people found comfortable seating room on the Sunday evening; strong, sober, plain people, with scarcely a middle class person amongst them, so far as I could see. That, of course, is the middle class person's own particular and very serious loss.

Mr. Teale, a Socialist Candidate for the Town Council, was chairman, and made his maiden speech. It was direct, sincere, and pointed with genuine north country humour, which went straight home to the audience. The evident friendliness of the large gathering ought to greatly encourage the candidate. Yorkshire people do not believe in putting a man up and then finding out all his bad qualities.

One of the most notable things about this meeting was the
activity of a lady with a collecting-box. I am told it was only accidental, the duty properly belonging to the lady's husband, but -- let it be an instruction.

Co-operators are strong in Keighley, and Socialism is fairly well represented on the committees. Mrs. Roe (who entertains whatever angels come in the form of speakers) is an influential member of the Women's Guild, and the Educational Committee, and our movement could have no more shrewd and energetic representative on these bodies."

LANCASTER

1892

This congregation began Nov. 20, 1892 and no further information has come to hand.

LARBERT

Some interest was shown in 1894.

LEEDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>T. B. Duncan, 1st. Pres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Thos. Pennington, 1st Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>George Corkwell, Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Arthur Leak, Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>J. W. Mitchell, 1st Choir Leader &amp; Orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Miss M. Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Archer Brotherton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>D. Cummings, elected to School Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Miss Myra Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>R. B. Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Miss Myra Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>D. B. Foster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Alf. Mattison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>George H. Noble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>John Noble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>A. R. Orage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>A. Pease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Walter Morse, Sunday School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Miss Tumbler, Sunday School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Miss Bailey, Cinderella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Miss Gould, Cinderella</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the summer of 1893 a self-appointed committee of forty men met in a small room lighted by a candle stuck in a bottle neck -- the proprietor had forbidden them the use of gas. These
labouring men, whose earnings were scant indeed, levied themselves 6d. per week that they might rent premises for a Labour Church. They then worked hard during their leisure hours cleaning and preparing their place of worship that it might be ready for the opening service on Sept. 17th, when John Trevor was to be the guest speaker. Though the press hailed the new Labour Church as the "happy hunting ground for the scum of Leeds" some 400 'respectable' people, about half of them women, attended the first service. Within a few weeks over 150 of these had applied for membership, and many more were regular adherents of the new cause, which was popularly regarded as the religious home of those seeking the 'religion of humanity'.

From the very beginning the Leeds congregation had a strong sense of the need of warm fellowship within the church. In the first Annual report the secretary was able to make reference to the "comfort we have conveyed to those who were weary and could find no rest." This fellowship was fostered by a strong Women's Auxilliary which sponsored a free fortnightly social consisting of a variety program of recitation, music, and song, a simple but adequate tea, and occasional dancing. Later the financial basis was changed so that the socials increased rather than decreased the treasury, but they still provided a healthy social life for the congregation.

Leeds' sense of fellowship did not stop short; it went beyond the idea of having a good time. It had an 'outgoing' side which sought out the underprivileged and the unfortunate. For instance, Cinderella work was established almost immediately, serving some 400 children weekly; and a Children's Church service was conducted regularly. In the autumn of 1894 this led to the founding of a Socialist Sunday School which continued through a number of years with seldom less than fifty scholars.

The Sunday School service began with a well known labour hymn such as 'Life is Onward', after which was told a simple story with a heavenly meaning. The leader then addressed the children at some length, and another hymn was sung. Then the seats were piled away to make room for a musical drill to a march tune. Frequently it would be the hymn:

"O come, come away!
Beneath our Labour banner
There's room for all, both great and small,
O come, come away!"

The children responded well to this active program which was somewhat of a departure from the customs of other schools of the area. The policy of the Labour Church school was "as much freedom as is consistent with good order".

During the summer, Sunday School picnics and rambles were organized. At the first of these 43 church members and 40 children from the Sunday School went by horse-drawn bus to Roundhay Park. After a gay day of sports, and a picnic lunch, the adults were suffering from the noise of candy whistles till someone had the inspiration to offer prizes to the children who could eat theirs the fastest. At one of the outings which was planned mainly for the Cinderella children, a number who lacked tickets walked over
three and one half miles that they might join in, with the result that the adult helpers had to walk home on empty stomachs while well fed party-crashers rode comfortably. It was done without grumbling.

In April of 1895 President Duncan 'baptized' the first baby introduced to the Leeds Labour Church. The secretary reported as follows:

"Our president officiated, who in a little impressive speech, gave the child its name (Alice), hoping that when it grew so as to be able to take its place in the Battle of Life, she would be found in the ranks of the 'despised' if they be fighting for Love, Truth, and Justice." 1

At the beginning of 1897, the North-West Ward I.L.P. club began a Cinderella Sunday morning breakfast and Sunday School on Woodhouse Street. The Labour Church Sunday School leaders gave valuable advice and assistance to the Labour Club committee.

Apparently the Sunday School faded out of existence prior to 1899 or assumed an independence of the Labour Church.

Leeds' sense of care for the unfortunate led them to take up many unpopular causes. During the winter of 1894, while the church was barely established itself, it put its premises at the service of the unemployed that there might be a center from which agitation could be carried on. The following autumn the church members became interested in the plight of the women employed as tailoresses in the clothing trade. Again the church premises were offered as a center from which an organizing campaign could be conducted.

The employers prevented the first meetings, at which organization might have taken place, by scheduling overtime work at the appropriate time. The Labour Church organizers countered by meeting the women at the factory gates, and by talking to them as they walked to their homes. During the autumn of 1897 an engineers strike put a large number of skilled and unskilled men out of work. The union did not have sufficient funds to include all of these in strike pay, even though a number of non-union men had associated themselves with their striking fellow-workers, and had voluntarily refused to continue their jobs. Others were out of work because there were no jobs available during the strike. So serious did the financial plight of these men become that the Labour movement generally established a fund for their relief. The Labour Church was instrumental in initiating this fund, and was called upon to administer it. The Church premises were put at the disposal of the Union and the unemployed. Weekly strike pay of 9s. to married men, 7s to unmarried men and 5s. to youths was distributed, out of which an average contribution in excess of 2d per man was made to the fund for the general labourers. Supplemented by contributions from the Labour Church and from the public, an allowance seldom less than 4s. weekly was paid throughout the duration of the strike. Such, again and again, was the story of the Leeds Labour Church.

The activities of the Leeds congregation included much variety. One of the first groups organized was a Social Improvement Class,

which used as its first text Blatchford's "Merrie England". This class was particularly aware that improvement of society would depend not only on the changing of the institutions of national and community life, but also upon the purification and strengthening of their own individual lives; in this respect they looked to their church for help. In addition to this study group the members took part in classes in elocution, economics, history, and in a number of discussion groups. In preparation for the first anniversary services, and continuing thereafter, a choir was organized, and a year later a string band was added. The same year an active drama group was started which soon learned the way to success in both play production and money raising. Adequate stage and scenery were soon standard equipment at the Leeds Labour Church. In 1896 an Anniversary Banquet was begun as an annual event which gained local fame for its excellent food and its unmatchable fellowship. Open air propaganda meetings at Cross Flats were regular summer activities to take up the slack when winter projects began to slow down their pace. In 1896 it was reported that Leeds had the greatest number of institutions in connection with the church, and named the Sunday School, library, Clarion Vocal Union, elocution class and orchestral band.

The Labour Church Committee early learned that numerical success of the Sunday services depended upon the use of well known and favourite lecturers like Carolyn Martin, Margaret McMillan, Philip Snowden, and D.B. Foster. Local speakers were just unable to draw large audiences, so special efforts were made to include a large number of nationally known speakers each year. One of these popular speakers deserves special mention in connection with the Leeds Labour Church, for he later became a member of it, and its most influential president. It was in September 1895 that D. B. Foster first spoke to the Leeds congregation; he was then the municipal candidate for Holbeck Ward. He was repeatedly invited to return, particularly because of his emphasis which is characterized by the sermon title 'Sin and Socialism'; it was rather unusual for a socialist lecturer to speak on sin. During 1897 Foster conducted a mission to the churches which almost depleted the Labour Church because its members were so sympathetic to his message. A year or two later, instead of running opposition meetings we find Foster a leading member of the Leeds congregation, and the president of the Labour Church Union in 1902-1903.

The doctrinal position of the Leeds Labour Church emphasized freedom from any creed, but there was a strong bias toward a Christian position, which probably explains in part the popularity of D. B. Foster and the repeated invitations to Philip Snowden to lecture to them. But at the same time the other churches of town did not recognize them. For instance, when a public meeting was called to protest the Armenian atrocities, the Labour Church were not invited to send their delegates to sit with the civic and church dignitaries on the platform, nor was their point of view permitted. When Comrade Brotherton attempted to speak on behalf of the Labour Congregation he was thrown out of the hall, and later a Labour Church meeting was stopped. It seemed to the members that Armenia was not the only scene of atrocities.
against human dignity and freedom.

In 1897 there was a move to merge the Labour Church and the I.L.P., a move successfully opposed by a group led by George F. Corkwell, Walter Morse and Miss Florence Tate. The years 1898 and 1899 were difficult ones. The church was coasting into the doldrums (as most Labour Church congregations were) when the owner of the property they were renting doubled the rent. The Ladies Auxiliary spearheaded a revival of interest and activity which met the immediate problem, but during the summer and autumn something went wrong. Attendances dropped, and the executive were very much upset. In January came a decision to disband the congregation entirely. But the Women's Auxiliary had other ideas. By their own efforts they reduced the financial debt, and talked the landlord into reducing the rent. The Sunday School began to flourish, the Committee was reorganized, and the congregation returned. The String Band also reorganized. The Labour Church then initiated repeated attempts to revitalize the Labour Movement generally, for all Socialist bodies in Leeds were experiencing the doldrums. Suggestions for a union of all socialist efforts had a small measure of success particularly in the organizing of agitation for council housing to overcome the worst problems of the slums.

In the early 1900's, when most socialist groups in the city were losing ground or going under, the Labour Church was making headway. Attendances and support grew making possible a number of improvements. During the following year the increase was sufficiently large that the services were overcrowded, necessitating an enlarged meeting place which was acquired for the season beginning in October 1901.

The last location listed in the Leeds City Directory was for the year 1906. Whether the South Leeds Labour Church which advertised in the Clarion of 1909 is the same congregation is not known.

**LEEDS (Brotherhood Church)**

This church, in fellowship with J. B. Wallace's Brotherhood Church in London was formed towards the end of the century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Year of Liem.</th>
<th>Att.</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>1920's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Clulow, 1st Pres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arthur Barnett, 1st Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lerner Sugden, 1st Treas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mountford, 1st choir leader</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. Doxey, 2nd choir leader</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wallace Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. H. Baud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Clodd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P. Clowes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. Craig</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annie Godwin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEEK**

| Year    | Beginnings - small | 1897 - rapid increase | 1898 - attendance at socials averaged 120 | 1900 - over 100 member families | 1905 - attendance | I. Clulow, 1st Pres. | Arthur Barnett, 1st Sec. | Lerner Sugden, 1st Treas. | Mountford, 1st choir leader | J. Doxey, 2nd choir leader | Wallace Ball | W. H. Baud | Mary Clodd | P. Clowes | W. Craig | Annie Godwin |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|----------|---------|-----------------|
An excellent report of the founding of the Leek Labour Church is given in the Prophet of October, 1897:

"About three and a half years ago a Reading Union was formed, which fluctuated between a "Liberal" and a "Socialist" society until there were but a few left, and these, I think, were socialists. We had a small room, much too large however for our numbers, who during the last winter (1895-96) used to sit in a square circle (Did you ever see one?) round the stove; and when the warm weather came we were almost snuffed out, only just a handful being left, when Caroline Martyn (dear soul) paid us a visit. She spoke in the open air to seven or eight hundred people, and Leek people have not been the same to Socialism and Socialists since that night in June 1896. Afterwards we tried J. C. Kenworthy who was not so successful; still the cause prospered, and was aided by the Clarion Van. Our members had decided not to pay rent during the summer months, and when we wanted to renew the tenancy we found obstacles in the way. A real "Friend" suggested the old Friends Meeting House as a likely place where we might carry on our work, so we tried the opinion of the Friends, with but little encouragement at first, until we came into contact with Mr. Joseph Simpson of Mayfield. In him we found our request was investigated. He and one or two others induced the Society to give us a trial, and we were pleased to hear, after eight months, that they were pleased with their tenants. When it became known that we had taken the Meeting House, interest was aroused, and we grew a few members. We held our meetings in the Bishop's Vestry" (Shoemakers shop) during the time the building was being soled and heeled -- I mean being put in repair; and on the 13th December last Mrs. Bruce Glasier gave the first address in the church proper to a packed audience. Our members understood but little of the

1. The shoemaker whose support meant so much to the Labour Church cause in Leek was J. Prime. See letter from J. Lilley.
2. The repair and redecoration of the Friend's Meeting House was done under the direction of a local architect, Larner Sæden.
3. The newly decorated meeting place was dedicated as the William Morris Labour Church in Leek. This was appropriate, if the evidence of one observer is to be trusted, for he noted in the Leek congregation the mildly anarchist tendencies so characteristic of Morris. When the first Anniversary service was held, the speaker, Fabian Fredrick Whelen, presented a portrait of William Morris. This was a treasured possession for many years; the present writer has been informed that the picture still hangs in the building, long after the demise of the Labour Church cause.
Labour Church; very few had ever attended a Labour Church service, and when the Church began there were objections raised to the manner of service. One thing was too orthodox for some, another was not sufficiently orthodox; but speaking personally as one who attended most of the services, I am of the opinion that Truth has been advanced in a clearer and more honest manner than it has been my pleasure hitherto to experience. We must have learnt that it is not so much what we believe, as what we are doing that will prove our love to Humanity and Humanity's God."

The enthusiasm generated at the opening of the new congregation continued through the winter and spring months of 1897. The treasurer reported that the operating budget was on the black side of the ledger, with an expenditure of some £260, and that the initial debt of the congregation had been reduced to £80. In addition to maintaining their church, the members and friends were generous in their support of needy causes. For instance over £10 was collected to assist the engineers of the 1897 lockout. Cinderella too was well supported. 100 children benefited from the regular winter program, and during the summer, in addition to a number of outings and rambles for all the children, a few little girls were sent to Mrs. Johnstone's Fresh Air Camp for Little Girls from the Slums.

The Leek congregation was an active one. They had numerous study groups out of which came the resolve to initiate programs of action. There developed a strong interest in municipal politics, particularly concerning the question of workmen's housing. The secretary was proud to report to the Labour Church Record of April 1899 that their campaign to interest the town council in the construction of workmen's dwellings had been successful, and that they had been instrumental in the establishment of the Leek Workingmen's Electoral Association.

There were also the usual auxiliary groups like the choir, the women's sewing class, and the summer picnics, hikes, and rambles. Though there was no Sunday School established, there were numerous activities sponsored for the children, perhaps chief among them being the annual Flower Service. During the summer of 1899, in co-operation with the W. T. U. the Labour Church initiated the Labour Church Summer Camp.

During the early years of the twentieth century, when the issues of the Boer War had such drastic effects on a number of Labour Churches, Leek only suffered a temporary reduction of their average attendance. The organization of Clarion Cycle tours and rambles had a more serious effect, but interest and support during the winter months continued at a high level. This is indicated by the fact that the congregation distributed 100 copies of J. Bruce Wallace's Brotherhood to the homes of their member families.

When Larner Sugden died, his will provided a Memorial Lecture Fund to bring an eminent lecturer each month, with a very special one for each anniversary. This did much to maintain the cause of the Labour Church in Leek for many years. (For further insight into the Leek congregation see J. Lilley's letter)(Appendix pp. 71sq.)
LEICESTER

Date of Formation: 1895
Date of Cessation: 1907
This congregation was under consideration in 1894 and was probably begun the following year.
A statement in the Prophlet of January 1896 indicates that some Christians have excluded themselves from the Labour Church fellowship by attempting to deny the freedom of belief of other Labour Church members.
In 1907 William Temple spoke to this congregation. He mentioned in a letter to his mother that, though not Christain in metaphysics, he found a true sense of worship in this congregation. 1

LEVISHULME

- 1907 -

This congregation advertised its services in the Clarion of January 4, 1907.

LIVERPOOL (Sunday School and Cinderella work only)

1893

Joseph Edwards
Mr. Farrell
Miss Keeling
Mrs. E. G. Lowcock
Douglas Lowcock

R. R. Clarke
Mrs. Deane & daughter
Clarke E. Pugh, pianist
Mrs. Rosbottom
Miss Wade
Mr. R. Weare
Mr. Young

Liverpool was represented at the founding Conference of the Labour Church Union, July 1893. On May 7, 1893, a demonstration Labour Church service was held under the sponsorship of the local Fabian Society. It was largely pioneered by Joseph Edwards, editor of the Labour Annual. Fred Brocklehurst, at the time organizing secretary of the Labour Church Union, was the lecturer. On several succeeding occasions Brocklehurst returned, but a congregation was never formed. Also under Fabian sponsorship, a second Labour Church pioneer, Miss Keeling, began a Cinderella Club, which operated very successfully for several years. She too tried to organize a Labour Church, but she too failed.
A year of two later R. R. Clarke tried again. He succeeded in establishing a small Sunday School, which was fairly permanent, but the church just wouldn’t go. An explanation of this was

given in the *Prophet* of November 1895:

"Liverpool is one of the most important districts in the country for Socialist work. Its industries are very varied and disorganized. Its working population is largely migratory. Its ground landlords, Lords Salisbury, Derby, and others, are, however, permanent. This may be an instance of the law of compensation.

The slums of Liverpool are worse than the slums of any other city in England. The degradation of the slum dwellers is awful to see. There are women in Liverpool whose faces follow one like a nightmare. Miss Rachel McMillan, who has been working amongst them for some months, tells me that the condition of women workers in Liverpool is worse than in London or any town in England. There was no need for the Lord Mayor to consign the unemployed to the devil, because the unemployed of Liverpool have arrived.

Then there are the Irish. They listen to what you say, and they agree with it. The quick Celtic brain and the warm Celtic sympathy need little persuading to see the force of the Socialist argument. They promise to vote for the Socialist candidate, and then their priest comes round the corner and bids them vote for someone else, and they do it.

Nevertheless, the Socialist Sunday School in West Derby Ward is doing good work. The way they render the Labour Church hymns shows how carefully they have been trained, and how they enter into the spirit of the work. It is a splendid work which our friends have engaged in, and I regret that it is not expedient to publish their names. If anybody thinks that the spirit of persecution is dead in England, he ought to turn Socialist for a while.

In the evening I had the pleasure of addressing a crowded meeting on the subject of man's ethical and spiritual development. It was one of the liveliest and quickest-witted audiences anyone could wish for."

In September 1895 the average attendance at the Sunday School was about 50. A picnic at Halewood was attended by only 40 children and 28 adults. But by the end of the year the enrolment of the school was over 70. The Sunday School worked rather closely with the Cinderella program. Early in 1896, for instance, under their own initiative and largely under their own management, the School put on a successful Cinderella supper at which they entertained a hundred hungry children.

In connection with the Sunday School, there was organized early in 1896 a girls club in which the girls learned to sew, making garments which were bought by the parents or were given to slum children. For the boys the 'Clarion Juniors' provided opportunities to play team games. For both boys and girls a children's choir was begun. These activities doubled the School attendance by the end of March. But in the diversity of activity introduced, there was no lack of attention to the main purpose of the Socialist Sunday School. Through story, lesson, and discussion the children were introduced to socialism as a philosophy and as a political theory. Ways were found for the children to assist in the propagation of the new gospel. The older boys particularly were en-
London Labour Church, Salmon's Lane, Limehouse:

1892 1892 small

J. Burgess, editor of Workman's Times
W. H. Paul Campbell, formerly editor of Christian Socialist
J. Keir Hardie
H. B. Holding
J. Bruce Wallace, editor of Brotherhood
Tom Mann
P. H. Wicksteed
Ben Tillett
J. F. Wilder

In February, 1892, John Trevor addressed a small meeting convened at University Hall, the home of the settlement originated by Mrs. Humphry Ward, of which the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed was the warden. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Labour Church Principles, and perhaps to inspire a few Labour Church Pioneers. When Trevor returned to London a month later he found among those who had been present at the earlier meeting a determination to begin, not with a few pioneers, but with a full congregation. The most interested person was W. H. Paul Campbell, a former editor of the Christian Socialist, who had moved to East London to give leadership to the Labour Movement there. J. Bruce Wallace, editor of Brotherhood, and J. Burgess, editor of the Workman's Times were enthusiastic supporters. Tom Mann, Ben Tillett and Keir Hardie, though too busy with their other responsibilities to assume active membership, volunteered to assist by giving lectures and by expressing their hearty endorsement of the new church. Thus, on April 10th the new congregation was underway.

The first service was held at the Dockers' Union Platform at the East India Dock gates. Here over 1,000 people joined in the service, and listened to Campbell, Wallace, Burgess, and Holding. Campbell spent the rest of that week mixing with the working men of the district; everywhere he met an evident readiness to hear the message which the new church brought to them.

Succeeding services were held at the corner of Salmon's Lane, Limehouse, and in Victoria Park. The audiences were not large, nor nearly so responsive, but this was not too discouraging, for there were numerous other activities which gave considerable promise. There was the opportunity of distributing literature at the large Labour Demonstrations that were held periodically, and to address open air gatherings in connection with them. For instance, at the May Day celebration in Hyde Park, Margaret McMillan was able to attract specially large crowds to hear about the Labour Church.
In July Campbell reported that the Salmon's Lane services were beginning to be more successful -- but the lack of financial support was making the work rather difficult. He reported the establishment of a small congregation in August. In June 1893, Trevor wrote in the Prophet (p. 49) "An attempt was made more than a year ago to form a Labour Church in London. The effort was sustained almost entirely by one man; and when he, for private reasons, felt compelled to abandon it, the matter ended."

**1895**

When John Trevor moved to London in the spring of 1895 he had visions of establishing a Labour Church Center in London. A report of his activity and findings cannot be given more adequately than by quoting his own words:

"Of late I have been spending a deal of time in London, and have found such an opening for our work that I feel compelled to go and live there. In quarters where I least expected it, I have met with the strongest sympathy with our principles, and a desire to give practical help in their realisation. This has been especially the case with some of the workers in connection with the West London Mission, who have quite outgrown the religious and social conceptions on which that large and influential organisation has been founded. From conversations I have had with Mr. A. J. Shewell, of Cleveland Hall, and friends who are working with him, I am sure that they will be able and willing to give us most valuable assistance. Some of the members of the New Fellowship, and scattered individuals in connection with other organisations are also ready to give us their help. . . .

In order to judge more clearly of the possibilities of future development, and the best methods of procedure, a meeting of friends was called by postcard at Dr. Williams' Library, Gordon Square, on Friday evening, July 12th. There were, to my surprise, some forty persons present, though many were prevented from attending on account of the General Election. Mr. Shewell took the chair and I gave an address on "The Labour Church in London."

Seeing that some of those present were connected with orthodox churches, I thought it necessary at the outset to explain our free religious position. Hitherto I had been afraid to show any approach towards the historic churches because of their religious fetters. It would be fatal to our movement if these were introduced into it in any form whatever. I tried to show that Religion must gain all the freedom from the past that Science has won for itself, and that the Labour Church stood for that entire freedom.
Then came the practical consideration of the position in
London, and how to make the most of it.

What I have long felt our movement to need is a centre of
propaganda among the educated. We must prove that ours is not
a class movement by converting all classes to it. Moreover,
for the work we have in hand, the distinctive qualities of all
classes are needed. I am sure that no one wishes the Labour
Church to be merely a working man's church, but a church where-
in the common obligation to share in the world's work shall be the
fundamental principle. With this principle inspiring us, we
shall appeal more readily to the workers than to others, but we
shall gladly welcome to our service all who can accept our
principles.

We need in London also a centre of teaching to which we can
invite those who desire to know what the Labour Church really
is. I frequently get letters from foreigners, for instance,
asking me where they can find a Labour Church as they wish to
know what this new thing is. If such inquirers could be di-
rected to a centre in London where our religious and social
gospel was being preached Sunday by Sunday, it would be a great
advantage to our movement. We need, too, a centre for the development of well trained
speakers. I have said again and again that we have before us
an almost infinite opportunity, but not the speakers to make
adequate use of it. We want men and women, full of the social
fervour of the times, but to whom God also is a reality, as the
source and sustainer of their being. By far the greatest need
of this age is a race of Prophets, who can make God a reality
in the lives of the people, and insist in God's name, upon just-
ice and righteousness in all our social and industrial relations.
They will come some day, Meanwhile we must seek to prepare, the
way for them.

To meet this side of our work, I propose the holding of a
Sunday morning service at Dr. Williams' Library as a very con-
venient centre, the idea of holding it in the morning being
that we should then be left free for outside work in the after-
noon and evening. This proposal was generally welcomed in the
discussion that followed as one of great hopefulness. A feeling
was expressed, especially by Mr. J. F. Oakeshott, the secretary
of the New Fellowship and also by the chairman, that it would
provide an admirable and much needed centre for all those
Socialists who had no hope in Socialism apart from religious
development.

From such a centre as this would give us, we could send out
in time the missionaries of our new gospel of glad tidings.
But I urge that we should not attempt the formation of new
churches, but rather leave the people to form these spontaneous-
ly for themselves as they are now doing. I hope this democratic
element in our movement will never be superceded, for whatever
difficulties may go with it, I am sure it is an element to be
preserved with the utmost tenacity.

From this point of view, I said that our friends in North
Paddington and elsewhere should be left to form their own church,
those of us who could do so rendering them all the assistance
in our power. It is this democratic element, this spontaneity
of growth, which is one of the marked features of our movement,
and which distinguishes it from every other. Some years ago,
Date of Date of Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:
Formation: Cessation: Year Liem. Att.

Ben Tillett prophesied that the people would themselves provide their own churches, and invite the wealthy to come to them. The Labour Churches are fulfilling that prophecy to the letter. 1

The model services to be held in Dr. Williams' Library were arranged, with the expressed understanding that the trustees of the Library would undertake no responsibility for the ideas or doctrines of the Labour Church. At the last minute there was some disagreement, and the Library was refused to the Labour Church, causing considerable embarrassment to Trevor and his colleagues. The dream of an "Intellectual Center" of the Labour Church movement thus came to an untimely end.

**LONDON** Children's Church, Southgate Road North.

1898 - '98 enrollment 60 George Bates Miss Whale

This Sunday School - or Junior Labour Church Congregation - (it is not clear which it was) was formed early in 1898, with George Bates and Miss Whale as leaders. With an enrollment of about 60 scholars, it carried out a curriculum of socialist, educational, and cultural content. During the summer several excursions into the country, when Nature Study was the emphasis, were held.

**LONDON** Brotherhood Churches

1st Brotherhood Church was a Congregational cause on Southgate Road, London N. to which J. Bruce Wallace was called in 1892, with Charles Blake, as secretary. Wallace attracted to the congregation those of socialist views and changed the name to suggest this emphasis. Timely topical services, discussion sessions and open air propaganda were characteristic. It was at the 1st Brotherhood Church that the socialist phase of the co-operative movement began which has taken shape in the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust, Ltd.

West End Brotherhood Church, in Harrow Road, with W. Charter Piggott as minister was formed in 1897. It meets in a building formerly used as a Conservative Club.

There were four Brotherhood Church congregations in 1895 and in 1896.

It was in a Brotherhood Church in London that the group of Russians who formed the Bolshevik Party met to draw up their plans.

**LONG EATON**

1904

A newspaper clipping preserved in the Birmingham Labour Church

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The Birmingham minutes suggest that inauguration was 1908, so far as the Labour Church Union is concerned anyway. It was begun by a few members of the local S.D.F. Meetings were held in an anteroom of the Town Hall, with the hall itself engaged only for special occasions, when large audiences might be expected. A Labour Church sponsored Socialist Sunday School catered to the socialist education of 100 children. In later years the congregation became extremely left wing, too Marxist for average S.D.F. people like Mr. Blake. The emphasis changed from ethical to economic, audiences dwindled and the end came. In 1908 they were active in initiating School Board provision of meals to school children and in 1909 they were publishing a weekly paper, according to a report at the Labour Church Union Conference.

Apologies for not sending a delegate were received by the founding conference of the Labour Church Union. The secretary, G. H. Shaw, sent in a lone report to the Prophet which indicated a thriving congregation in the autumn of 1893.

Herbert Casson, a young Canadian Methodist clergyman who had just moved to the United States of America, formed a Labour Church. The initiating idea seems to have come from Wm. Bailie, the man whose suggestions to John Trevor resulted in the name 'Labour Church'. The Lynn congregation, inaugurated on Dec. 31, 1893, thrived under the leadership of young Casson, who became a well known lecturer for the Socialist cause. The Lynn congregation was governed by a monthly members' meeting. Sunday services were held in the Lasters' Union Hall with an outdoor service Sunday evening at High Rock. In the autumn of 1894, two services had to be held to accommodate the crowds, so arrangements were made for

1. See Appendix 1244
the use of the Lynn Theatre for public meetings; and to further show the ambitions of the new congregation, a printing press was bought that numerous pamphlets might be published. This was set up in a building which was also used as their headquarters and small hall. It was rented by the year. By 1895 the Lynn Labour Church owned a permanent hall in a central location, to which they moved their busy printing press, and which became the center for a busy congregational life.

The activities of the Lynn congregation included a co-operative grocery store, employing two Labour Church members, a 'Women's Union' for visiting the sick, a Sunday School for the children, an economics class studying Gronland's Our Destiny, a lending library, a literature table for the sale of magazines and pamphlets, an active choir and glee club, and monthly picnics or socials for the members. The only opposition to the new church came from the older established congregations from which many converts to socialism had come. The congregation claimed to have all but a small handful of Lynn's socialists. Lynn Labour Church gave strong support for the Striking during 1895 and was quite active in all political and industrial struggles. In the summer of 1896 they built a house for one of the poorer members. From time to time they collected money for relief of poverty. They netted $150 at a benefit concert given for the Lady Stitchers' Union. The congregation was still going in 1898 but was not listed in 1899. Casson reported that at the end of the century the war fever destroyed the congregation.

The following report from the Boston Congregationalist of June 18th, 1896 is indicative of the attitude of the Lynn Labour Church: "Mr. Casson went on to declare that the plain fact is that the present relation between the Church and the working man is one of mutual indifference. They are going in different directions, independent of each other, doubtless with misunderstandings on both sides. Working men are out of touch with the Church, not only because Sunday is their only day for recreation and domestic enjoyment, but because the Church, as they look at it, is incompatible for the struggle for industrial democracy that is going on -- the struggle for brotherhood and equalisation of life's opportunities. Working men are repelled by the non-committal attitude which clergymen take toward the Labour Movement. Moreover, those who have studied political economy become impatient at the stale definitions and old theories which they hear advanced in church."

The following hand bill used at Lynn in 1894 was reproduced in the Prophet, Feb. 1894.

To the Working Men of Lynn
We invite you to attend the meetings of our Lynn Labour Church
Held every Sunday at 12 o'clock, in Laster's Hall
Our Church is composed of working men and women, and we preach the Gospel of Justice and Brotherhood.
We believe that the emancipation of Labour is the greatest cause on earth, and that the real living religion of to-day is to be found in the Labour movement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>'91 Charter membership - 60</td>
<td>John Trevor, founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'92 April membership - 160</td>
<td>Atkinson, Gen. Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'93 - 1500</td>
<td>Fred Brocklehurst, Organizing Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANCHESTER AND SALFORD</td>
<td></td>
<td>'95 Autumn membership - c. 300</td>
<td>H. V. Herford, Pres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. Walker, Financial Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Robt. Jackson, Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S. Farrow, Secretary</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sam H. Lowdnes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. S. MacKenzie, M.A., leader of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Economy class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Pole</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Roberts</td>
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<td>H. C. D. Scott</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>A. J. Sheldon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. G. Thomas, 1st Sec. of Fin. Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G. Wriggson</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Washington</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Sarah Welsh, later Mrs. Dickinson</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Whitey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. G. Wood, treas. Helping Hand Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Yardley, later conductor of the Clarion Choir</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Barrett, Cinderella</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Powell, Cinderella</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sam Robinson, Cinderella</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Labour Church services began in Manchester on October 4th, 1891, in the Chorlton Town Hall which would seat 400 people. For the second service, at which Robert Blatchford was the featured speaker, so many could not find accommodation that the committee working with the founder, John Trevor, engaged the Peoples Concert Hall, which provided seating for 2000 for the succeeding meetings. The afternoon services proved to be so popular that this large audi-
torium was nearly filled week after week.

During the latter part of November membership forms were distributed. Soon enough signed ones were returned to constitute the church; Trevor called a general meeting for December 9th. 60 gathered at the Royal Oak Cafe, 230 Deansgate, and decided to organize a congregation which would be governed in as democratic a manner as possible, through the use of monthly Members' Meetings. It was decided to hold several other monthly gatherings, some of which would be open to non-members. There was to be a Members' Conference at which discussion and debate would work out the policy and principles which would guide the new effort, a social at which the members and adherents would get to know each other and at which a sense of fellowship could be nurtured; and a general meeting to consider the means of helping, especially in terms of Labour Union activity, the Labour Movement of which they considered themselves a part. This latter meeting of members and adherents brought forth, during the early months of 1892, sympathy and organization of support for the Broomsgrove Nailers, and the successful organization of the Manchester Mat Makers Union.

The Manchester Mat-Makers Union, representing 30 men and 20 women working in three factories, had been formed in 1888, but due to a weak financial structure, had broken up. A second union was formed in December of 1890; by September, 1891, it too was in financial difficulties. There was no adequate leader and dues were in arrears. The workers in the largest factory (19 men and 12 women) broke away and formed their own union. The remainder divided their share of the funds equally, and dispersed. A number of the remaining members were in arrears. 6d. per week out of 15s. (out of 9s. for the women) was too great a sum to make up. To force the issue the paid-up members refused to assist the non-paying members at a stage of production where five men were needed to put the mats on the looms. In retaliation the non-paying members refused to assist the paid-up ones. Affairs had come to an impasse; Christmas was approaching; so it was decided to disperse all remaining funds as equitably as possible.

Early in the new year the employer gave out an order for kneeling mats at 11½d. a dozen (the price he had paid the prison which could no longer supply due to restrictions of prison contracts in competition with civilian factories.) One employee worked for four hours and calculated that he had earned 7½. He talked it over with the others, and then with the employer. He then joined the unemployed. So also did seven others when they were offered the work at the same terms.

Several of these mat-makers were members of the Labour Church. Trevor called a meeting of workers from this factory; all the men and half the women turned out; a strike vote was taken; Trevor interviewed the employer, pointing out that London wages for the same work were double those paid in Manchester; the employer remained adamant; help was promised the mat-makers in Suffolk and in London and by the Labour Church in Manchester; the Manchester Mat-Makers Union was reorganized; with Alan Parks as president and John Trevor as treasurer; a strike was called.

The strike began on April the 2nd. By the end of May the two
smaller factories had agreed to pay the London rate of wages, but the largest factory held out. The small union could not remain on strike indefinitely, so Trevor, through the Labour Prophet, appealed for a fund of at least £100 to set up the idea of men in a co-operative shop on the same principle as the co-operative nailers factory set up in defiance of 'foggers' (employers refusing to accept the terms of settlement) in Broomsgrove after the strike of 1887. The "Co-operative Producers Society," employing 10 mat-makers, became a reality in August 1892. Later the Union joined the gas-workers and General Labourers Union for greater security and protection.

Their work done Trevor and the Labour Church dropped out of the picture. The final audited account of the Strike fund follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscription</td>
<td>150 13 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat Makers Union</td>
<td>5 4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bal. due Treas.</td>
<td>2 9 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>158 7 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paid to men & women on strike 18 weeks
Solicitor & Police
Court Expenses
Printing, Advertising and Stationery
Brass Band on May Day
Postage & Telegrams
Expenses of Mat Makers in search of work
Hire of rooms for meetings

In addition more than £200 was subscribed to the new Co-operative Mat Makers factory.

In March 1892, a Political Economy Class was organized under the leadership of a lecturer in Ethics and Economics at Owens College, J. S. MacKenzie, M.A. During the same month a band was organized at Piccadilly Coffee Tavern, under the direction of W. S. Allan. In April a committee under the convenorship of Mrs. Cox was organized to visit the absent and the sick members. In the May Day demonstrations the Labour Church, marching under their newly acquired banner with its motto "God Is Our King", had a prominent place in the parade and a prominent platform in the Park with Cunningham.

1. Mr. Williamson of Salford, a Conservative alderman who had known Trevor and the Labour Church speaks of these processions as composed of anemic young women and impressionable children. He admits, however, that the congregation was predominantly adult males. He described the banner as dark blue letters on a light blue or white background.
Graham, Tom McCarthy, and Rev. Harold Rylett as speakers. Two weeks later the Church paraded at Oldham, with Ben Tillett as special speaker, in support of the organization of a Labour Church there. In June a Labour Church parade was held in Manchester in support of the National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers. On this occasion 1000 people gathered for the service in Stevenson's Park. With the coming of summer, weekend rambles were organized for members and friends. July saw the organization of a Missionary Class led by Trevor and a Singing Class and Choir to assist with the regular services. The new congregation certainly was a busy and active one.

The financial 'fortunes' of the Labour Church make an interesting story of faith and courage. The initial fund had been subscribed by friends of Trevor, but this was overspent shortly after the first Members' Meeting. The members, though generous to the risk of domestic financial ruin could not keep the cause out of debt, (the deficit at Christmas 1891 stood at £5) and the weekly collections though large in comparison with a workman's weekly pay, were insufficient, for theatre rents and printing costs were high. The Labour Prophet, published at a time when a number of Labour Periodicals were failing for want of readers, though it reached a circulation of 4,500 with its second issue, did not attain self-support. The difference between income and expenditure had to be met by outside-contributors, though these too were not always sufficient. The Prophet remained Trevor's personal responsibility till 1894 after the establishment of the Central Fund, when it consumed a large percentage of donations to Labour Church work.

It was discovered that when the collection was taken at the door, a number passed the plate without contributing even a farthing, so it was decided to pass the plates from seat to seat in an effort to eliminate this loss. It was also found that a considerable portion of the audience left after the speaker finished. For instance when Tom Mann addressed 4000 at the Labour Church Service in the Free Trades Hall a potential offering over four pounds was missed because at least 1000 left before the service was completed. For a time finance seemed a problem that could never be completely solved, for with all the means taken to improve the financial structure the financial secretary reported, as of April 1st, 1892, a deficit of £20.

Though a contribution of a day's wage from each of the 160 members would barely have paid off the deficit, they were undaunted. It was determined to provide through-the-week headquarters by renting a house in a central location. This they did at £32 per year at St. John's Parade, Byrom St., renaming the house, the "Labour Church Institute". Here they had a small auditorium capable of seating 100, a few office rooms, and living accommodation for their caretaker. This certainly increased the financial burden, for in addition to the rent, considerable expense was involved in fixing it suitable for their purpose. They wanted it to be as attractive as possible. New seats were built, and good artistic reproductions were hung. For instance one person presented a copy of Millett's "Angela". To provide music a piano was borrowed from
Sam Lowndes.¹

At the same time that these increased burdens were assumed, a change in the constitution was accepted. The former basis had made a subscription a necessary condition of membership; the revision eliminated this requirement. It was explained that:

"We want the very poorest to feel able to join the Labour Church. Although on the old form it stated that it would be understood that the Membership Fee would, in most cases, be merely a nominal amount, we yet found that it barred some from joining us.²"

In spite of severe financial burdens the congregation carried on in the faith that their natural growth and the sympathetic support of others would eventually eliminate their debts. In the autumn of 1892 the ladies of the congregation who up till this time had not been too numerous, put on a Sale of Work which eased the problem and enabled the expansion of the activities of the congregation. It is interesting to note that they refused to use raffling as a means of raising funds.

The main activity of the Labour Church was the Sunday Service, (which in the early months was characterized by the absence of women). A contemporary description of a service is given by P. H. Wicksteed, then of London. He wrote to the Manchester Guardian:

The Labour Church is frankly, even passionately, democratic. It contemplates the organisation of society in the highest interests of labour as the work of the age. Anyone who should look with favour on Mr. Trevor's movement as a means of clipping the lion's claws, would be woefully out of his reckoning. But in its very being it is devout and not mutinous. My own doubts on this point, if I had any, were removed last Sunday, when I had the rare privilege of conducting a service for the Labour Church. I was struck at once with the purposeful air with which the six or seven hundred members of my congregation gathered. They were of all classes but the great bulk I took to be workmen. We had, I think, the most genuine and spontaneous religious service in which I ever engaged. As a matter of fact, the hymns, prayers, solo songs, pieces of music, lesson, and address had all been arranged beforehand, but one felt at the time as if each one of them came just where and when it did in response to the present want of the eager souls that were drinking in every word and sound. There were none of the traditions, customs, or habits of worship in the dingy, drafty, and not over-reputable hall in the box galleries, and pit of which my congregation was gathered; but the reality of worship was there. The hymns were sung with the utmost heartiness, the solo singers and musicians were felt as a part of the congregation, not as performers. At the close of the prayer a chorus of disimprisoned coughs testified to the earnest participation of the congregation in the devotions of the place, and the lesson and address were greeted with frank and spontaneous applause that did the heart good. My lesson was the first canto of Dante's "Divine Comedy," recited, or rather paraphrased, with interpretative

1. Tom Lowndes, son of Sam, tells me the piano was never returned.
2. Prophet, April 1892, p. 32
comments interspersed so as to make my rendering of it clear. I showed them Dante struggling to gain the sunlit hill of good government and well regulated life on earth, thwarted by lust, pride, and greed, and urged by his guide and master, while never relinquishing his hopes of reform, also to seek another way to peace. In the address I led them, with Dante, to seek the permanent conditions of all fruitful reform in a knowledge of the roots of moral good and evil, and when we brought our pilgrim from the very presence of God, where the life of "knowing" and "loving" is focussed, back into the miseries of exile and poverty and the never-ceasing struggle against wrong, and saw that "as a wheel without strain or jar moves equally in all its parts, so was his will henceforth moved by that love which guides the sun and all the other stars," the strained attention of my hearers released itself in prolonged and repeated applause that showed how every word had gone home. The impression was produced by the congregation, not by the preacher, and I shall not soon forget it. It will be strange indeed if Manchester is blind to the significance of such a movement. Hitherto it has been shaped by a single man, and he a man with little physical strength, with no pretence to eloquence, with no means, and with no influence, save such as spring from absolute devotion and singleness of purpose and passion inspired by a great idea."

The progress of the movement was given power and influence by the speakers of national fame who willingly came as Labour Church Preachers. P. H. Wicksteed, Rev. B. J. Barker of Bolton, Fred. J. Jowett of Bradford, Keir Hardie, Pete Curran, Kate Conway, and Margaret McMillan were among these early Labour Church preachers. The large afternoon services were held at the People's Concert Hall, the "not-overly reputable hall" of which Wicksteed writes, but these were not the only services. Regularly, evening services were held in various parts of the city in order to spread the idea as widely as possible. Around these evening services, branches of the central congregation grew up. Pendleton branch was formed in the autumn of 1892; early in 1893 branches were begun in South Manchester, Goreton, South-west Manchester, and a few weeks later, in North Manchester. Branches were also begun in Grey Mare Lane, Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, and Lower Broughton. These branches were not organized as separate congregations. Membership remained in the central congregation. As a result the branches did not have a long life.

Early in January, Trevor began open-air services at Trafford Bridge of which he wrote: "There is no pulpit in the land more sacred than Trafford Bridge, where for years past a growing band of Salford Socialists have proclaimed their message, in season and out of season; and have thus done a great deal towards making the organisation of a Labour Church possible. Comrades they call each other, and brave comrades they are -- God's pioneers, doing the rough work of clearing the tangled forest of social wrong, and earning the scorn of a foolish world."

1. *Prophet*, Jan. 1892, p. 8

* *Prophet*, Feb. 1892, pp. 10f.
The open-air work was continued at the Ordsal Fair Grounds, popularly called Flecky (flee-ridden) Sam's Fair, on the corner of Almond Street and Stretford Road, (now the School of Art, near Pauldins.) Here the lecturers would speak to large numbers of interested spectators while the members engaged those on the outskirts, who could not hear, in conversation, convincing them of the need of a religious emphasis in the midst of the Labour Movement. Meanwhile the boys moved through the crowds, selling copies of the Labour Prophet to all who would spare a penny.

At any or all of the Labour Church services, whenever there was need, a collection would be taken to aid striking or unemployed workers. There were many such appeals which were adopted as special Labour Church concerns, such as the Bristol Confectionary Girls, and the Card and Blowing Room Hands. Those causes which caught the imagination and the support of the Labour Church were those where the degree of injustice and suffering was the greatest.

As the life of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church approached the anniversary of the inception of the idea it was making great progress. The formation of a number of Labour Churches in other towns was extremely encouraging, and the fact that their debt had been reduced to £12 made them more optimistic than ever. The Church Committee felt that the opportune time for greater extension had come, so a Labour Church Extension Fund was established. This was intimately part of the Manchester and Salford congregation for some months, until the preliminary organization of the Labour Church Union could assume responsibility. Indeed, much of the Manchester work anticipated the work of the Labour Church Union; for instance, it was they who engaged the first General Secretary.

In the spring of '93 the Manchester and Salford Labour Church began to take particular notice of its children. A Children's Service was organized in which were included a number of slum children who had been helped by the recently organized Cinderella Club. Though this was not, strictly speaking, a Sunday School, it did duty for one for many months.

In the autumn of '93 the original Labour Church Cinderella Club (established in the autumn of 1892) was reinforced by the organization of the North Manchester I.L.P. Cinderella. The two clubs worked closely together. In the first eight weekly meetings in North Manchester a total of 1,417 hungry children were fed, and the most needy of them were clothed. The meal consisted of coffee, plain bread, currant bread, and an orange for each child. In the following year this menu was extended by the addition of meat sandwiches. During the season, 1894-95 the club fed and entertained 3,190 children, and 500 more were given a special Christmas treat with a visit from Father Christmas and a toy for each child. In addition about 800 were given summer outings. The cost for the project was just over £30.

During the summer of '93 a number of ardent church members were seeking open-air opportunities for propaganda, and some not-so-ardent members were experiencing other open-air pleasures, with the result that attendance and financial support decreased markedly. But there was no decrease in the work undertaken. A Helping-Hand Fund, under the direction of J. C. Wood, was established to aid those members who were either sick or unemployed. While direct relief was given to those in desperate circumstances, the primary
activity of the fund was to further opportunities of self-help for the unemployed. Sympathetic employers were encouraged to offer help wherever possible and all members and friends were urged to buy their wood from the fund. The fund, in turn, hired the unemployed members to chop wood; the project was patterned on the famous Salvation Army Plan.

The serious extent of unemployment in 1893 led the Manchester and Salford Labour Church to seek less expensive premises; a move was made from St. John's Parade to St. James Hall, with auxiliary meetings at the Ordsall Temperance Hall in Salford. It was when this move was being made that the Secretary reported a desire on the part of the congregation to learn the deeper significance of the Labour movement. To answer this need Trevor began a Sunday evening series on the 'Religious Principles of the Labour Movement', and Fred Brocklehurst began a Wednesday evening series on similar topics. A few months later this serious study of principles came to fruition in a new constitution for the Manchester and Salford Labour Church, and in a general quickening of interest and enthusiasm. When Keir Hardie came as a special speaker something of the original enthusiasm was evident, with a congregation exceeding 3000. Part of this enthusiasm found expression in the establishment of a Women's Class, under Miss Kate Dodd of Owen College, a Merrie England Class, a Dramatic Society, and by spring, a Singing Class. The increased vitality had its expression too in the financial support; the Members' Meeting authorized a subscription of 4d. per week from each member who was well and working, to be collected by accredited visitors. The plan worked well; subscriptions long in arrears were collected, and financial support continued over the summer months when collections were smaller. Evelyn March-Phillipps says in the Spectator, April 21, 1894, that the budget for 1893 was £470.

The increase in enthusiasm and vitality lasted on into the following year, when members began to think of the duties they accepted if they maintained that they were a church. Questions concerning baptism, marriage, and pastoral responsibility were thoroughly discussed. Many were willing to testify as to the help of the Labour Church in their own lives, especially in the solution of the tension between the traditional attitude of the churches and chapels and their awakened consciousness of social ills. They all realized the need of doing something more than merely proclaiming the socialist gospel. But while baptismal services, marriage ceremonies and help with personal problems were seriously and completely discussed, the practical results were rather indecisive.

To give expression to a desire for social service it had been proposed that a Labour Kitchen whose objects would be to bring nourishing food within reach of all, to provide special cooking for the Sick, and to form a Free School of Cookery for Young Women. There was no public support. But one person made a substantial donation to set up this aspect of the work, providing stoves and several months salary for Amy Dibb, with the thought that the kitchen would become self-supporting. Insofar as nothing more is heard of the venture, it is assumed it was not successful, or if it were successful, it developed on lines quite separate from the Labour Church which gave it its first home.
Perhaps in an effort to understand their function as a church, it was arranged that the Women's Class should visit Archdeacon Wilson at Rockdale. Here a time of serious talk about the affairs of the Labour Church and its mission was supplemented by a wonderful tour of the town and the church conducted by a well-informed guide in the person of their host. The leaders of the Women's Class, along with a number of others, began to think their problem was largely one of the absence of a pastor. As a result, greater emphasis was placed on the person and office of chairman. This partial solution did bear fruit, particularly when it was coupled with the development of a deeper fellowship among the members.

At the beginning of 1894 Trevor began his "Recreation Services" (especially Pleasant P.S.A. meetings), followed by tea for the whole family. These were quite successful.

A series of socials and week-end outings such as the visits to Hebden Bridge and to Macclesfield during the summer of 1895 did much to strengthen the feeling of solidarity within the congregation even when the increase in membership made the maintenance of fellowship rather difficult.

For the opening of the 1895–96 season it became necessary to find new premises, but nothing suitable could be found. It was proposed that if the church became two congregations, suitable premises could be found for smaller groups. When this division was accomplished it was with utmost friendliness. The two new congregations which met for the first time on October 1, 1895 were in every sense continuations of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church, and not a break or split from it. It was perhaps a good thing, for at the members meeting prior to the decision to break, at least 130 members were not attending or voting. Most of these became active in the two new congregations.

1. Archdeacon Wilson was a churchman who had prominently exhibited his sympathy for the aims and ideals of the Labour Church, and who had on occasion conducted services for them.
The Manchester and Salford Labour Churches came into being on the fourth anniversary of the Manchester and Salford congregation which thereby became defunct, or better, continued in the two new ventures. The new Manchester congregation leased premises on Booth Street East, Chorlton-on-Mercy, and immediately gave deep consideration to their reasons for being a Labour Church. They realized that it was inevitable that in the early stages they should become involved in the practical affairs of the Labour Movement, but they also realized that the time had now come when...

"...the Labour Church is free to revert to that side of the work on which its founder has all along laid greatest stress. This we take to be the upbuilding of personal character; the consideration of the vast possibilities of a fuller life, intellectual and spiritual, even under present conditions; and the facing of the deeper problems of human life which remain after all possible improvement of social conditions has been accomplished."

The reorganization and the re-thinking of the basic concept provided a stimulus to attendance. Inactive members returned and new people came asking for membership. By the beginning of 1896 seating capacity was inadequate requiring a series of work parties to make a few alterations and to construct more seats. But improved attendance also meant a greater diversity of interests within the congregation. This was answered by arranging for speakers who could cover a larger, more general area of topics, and by putting greater emphasis on regular socials as a means of promoting brotherhood and comradeship.

In the spring of '96 the secretary reported a slight slackening of socialist propaganda work, but a growing enthusiasm for more diversified activities. In conjunction with the Salford congregation a singing class of 150 members was thriving. There was also noted a growing sense of the contrast of socialism and the brand of Christianity popularly proclaimed in the churches.

The Labour Church Cinderella Club, which in co-operation with the North Manchester I.L.P. Cinderella, had continued its work through the years, now began a partnership with the Clarion Cycle Club. New enthusiastic and active workers were thus added. In 1896 the average weekly number of children fed and entertained was 400. The food had been improved; the menu replaced plain and currant bread by soup, meat, and potatoes. The entertainment too

had changed in character; the role of the child was now participant rather than spectator.

During '97 and '98 financial considerations dictated a reduction of the program when the need was greater. Rather than spread the help too thinly to be of any real benefit, attention was concentrated on 50 of the most needy urchins, but to these greater attention was given. Regular periods of instruction were added to the program of food and entertainment. During the summer the regular country outings were continued and in addition 20 girls were sent to Johnston's Camp. During the summer of '98, when the general vitality of the church was picking up, 43 girls went to camp as guests of the Labour Church Cinderella.

With the autumn of '98 the Cinderella committee were pleased to increase their responsibility to 200 per week at the Tuer Street Board School. This was probably made possible through the cooperation of Upper Brook St. Unitarian Church from which the Labour Church, under Trevor's leadership, took its rise in 1891.

With the beginning of a new season in the fall of '96 there was again an increase in attendance and enthusiasm, due in part to good promotion and advertising. One problem however was making itself evident. The Members' Meeting, the governing body of the congregation, was poorly attended. Alteration of time of meeting to Sunday evening helped only a very little. The problem of effective democratic government remained. The Committee, by default of the membership, had to assume greater responsibilities. But other than this, the congregation seemed to be in good health. Attendance, membership, and finance were all good. A Children's Choir under the direction of Comrade Dresser added interest to the services. Effective work was done throughout the year, though the congregation ceased to grow during the early months of 1897. Church activities were taking on ever-increasing importance while its role as a propaganda agency for the general labour movement was declining. The congregation was becoming a club for the mutual fellowship of its members. This is reflected in the decision to cancel the summer services in favour of Labour Church outings to various country spots near Manchester. But at the same time there was a continued interest in the wider aspects of the Labour Movement as was witnessed by the numerous and generous collections in aid of fellow workers, and regular funds, in addition to local budget, were being given to Fred Brocklehurst and the Clarion Vans.

On July 17, 1895 a Labour Church Socialist Sunday School was begun with seven children. Next meeting there were 12, and by the fifth meeting there were 19. During '99 the average attendance was 30. By the turn of the century this had raised to 50. When the Church ended its existence in 1901 the Sunday School was quite strong and healthy, and continued so till the I.L.P. opened another school at Pankhurst Hall, at which time the Labour Church

1. For example: £33/8/4 was collected for the Engineers Lockout in 1898, and several of the regular Christian Churches were persuaded by the Labour Church to initiate special collections for this worthy cause.
**Date of Formation:** 1897  
**Date of Cessation:** 1899

**Estimate of size:**

**Leaders and Prominent Members:**

Sunday School merged with the new venture.

For the congregation itself the year 1898 brought a noticeable change. The I.L.P. began a series of Sunday Propaganda meetings in St. James Hall which provided stiff competition for the Labour Church. The Manchester congregation, unlike the Salford one, looked upon this as an advantage, for it left it free for 'personal development'. They stopped using outside speakers, and developed their own, making the Sunday Services a sort of 'mutual improvement society'. The Church continued strongly on this basis for two and a half years. In 1899, while they were vigorously participating in the Labour Church Anti-Lead Poisoning Campaign there was an increase in attendance and support which enabled them to lease a large hall belonging to the Moss Side Liberal Club, and to bring John Trevor back for extensive Eighth Anniversary Celebrations.

With the early months of 1901, however, there was a drastic reduction in attendance leading to the decision to disband in March of that year. While the Labour Church, as such, ceased to be, the I.L.P. continued to hold Sunday meetings on Labour Church lines for another 20 years. Mr. Thursby reports that in 1907 or '08 a series of big Sunday meetings were organized on the advice of Keir Hardie. Mr. Thursby played in the orchestra. At the beginning of the second season the police prohibited the orchestra from taking part because the hall did not have a Sunday music license. The meetings carried on without music or hymns and thus with less of the Labour Church flavour.

**MARBLEHEAD, Mass., U.S.A.**

1897

Charles Casson, printing press and engaged in beginning living in Lynn and supervising the Labour Church the co-operative store there was actively en- a Labour Church congregation at Marblehead.

**MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA**

1892

In October 1892 the Labour Prophet noted that the Melbourne Commonweal and the Australian Herald were publishing news items regarding the formation of a Labour Church for Melbourne. The subject was again noted in the spring of 1896. No definite in-

1. The order of Service followed by the Manchester Labour Church Socialist Sunday School was as follows: Hymn, Reading, Hymn Lesson, Hymn, Prayer, and dismissal. In 1899 physical drill was added. The program was based on the broad principle of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.
formation regarding this congregation is presently available. Trevor mentioned in his Unspoken Address to the Socialist Congress "In Australia I hear that a Labour Church is being talked of among the Socialists, and I have also seen a proposal in a religious organ in Melbourne, emanating from some ministers, that they should form a Labour Church for the people, so as to make the formation of one by the people themselves unnecessary. But it is of the very genius of our movement that the people should form their own Churches."

MIDDLESBOROUGH

1893 1893

Mr. M. Hanson, Secretary.

The Labour Prophet of July, 1893 gives a full account of a Labour Church Service. At the end of the year the secretary reported the activity of the newly formed Cinderella Club. Perhaps a congregation was not formed for one was under consideration the following year.

MORLEY

- 1894 - small

Mr. George Benbrook

A report in the Labour Prophet of November 1894 indicates the existence of a small congregation working in close co-operation with the I.L.P. (indeed sponsored, governed, and housed by the party) John Trevor visited Morley in April of 1896. He reported that there was no Labour Church at Morley so far as the name goes, but Sunday evening services were held in the Labour Club which constituted a Labour Church in reality. The meetings opened and closed with prayer, and Labour Church hymns were sung. Trevor also attended a meeting which was concerned with the Guardian election. The general attitude to the Workhouse reminded him of George Evans preference for death by drowning than life in the workhouse. The problem was made more serious than usual in Morley by the unemployment of socialist engineers as a result of a strike and lockout in the town. This congregation had no women workers.

NEATH

This congregation was under consideration in 1894.

Newcastle-on-Tyne

1893 Charter membership 70

Alexander Allan Mr. Fletcher

1. Labour Prophet, August 1896, p. 125
In May 1893, the General Secretary of the Labour Church Union, Fred Brocklehurst, made a trip through the Cleveland and Tyneside areas to talk of the possibility of Labour Churches with various leaders who had indicated their interest. He found that in Newcastle itself work would have been undertaken earlier except that the Labour men did not wish to hinder in any way the churches of Rev. Walter Walsh and Rev. Fred Hibbert, both of which were sympathetic to Labour's cause. But time had not revealed the working-men rallying to these leaders, so a meeting was called to be held in Yeilder's Cafe, New Bridge Street, on Sunday, May 7, 1893. 60 or 70 people attended. Mr. Alexander Allan moved:

"Owing to the failure of our churches to adequately grapple with social evils and assist in the emancipation of Labour, this meeting declares it imperatively necessary that an organization of a religious basis should be inaugurated to aim at attaining these objects and that such an organization be commenced in this district."

In carrying this resolution it was made clear that it was no criticism of the Christianity of Christ, but rather an indictment of the inadequate beliefs of the average church-goer. The inauguration service of a Labour Church was held on Sunday, May 14th.

By the beginning of the autumn term the new congregation had weathered considerable opposition, but was in a healthy condition. Attendance in the Assembly Rooms in the Royal Arcade averaged 500. This average began to increase when John Trevor and Rev. Walter Walsh began to exchange opinions in the columns of the Daily Leader of Newcastle, which resulted in an exchange of pulpits and a Monday Conference in Newcastle. The subject of the Conference was "The Best Church of the People". At the conclusion Mr. Walsh made a public statement that he had not known that the position of the Labour Church was so far removed from his own. His criticism that the Labour Church was not Christian brought considerable notoriety to the new congregation. It also gave greater confidence to Trevor and other Labour church leaders that the spirit-

1. In the light of Walter Walsh's later espousal of a church without doctrine or creed, this is an interesting statement. Could it be that this conference was a factor in his later decision?
ual aspect of the Labour movement could not be understood by 'outsiders' however sympathetic they might be; the spiritual dimension could only be developed from within.

The first anniversary found the new church in a healthy position—but not as flourishing as its sponsors had dreamed. It had grown sufficiently, however, that a larger premises was required. The Church Committee took a lease on the Good Templers Hall on Clayton Street.

No further information concerning the Newcastle-on-Tyne Labour Church has come to light. It may be assumed that it continued for a few years before it faded out of existence.

The Cinderella program in Newcastle was distinctly separate from the Labour Church.

NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME

1895

- Thomas H. Stubbs (confectioner)
- Secretary & chief organizer
- J. Boots (retained Unitarian membership as well)
- Mr. Hulme, later became Unitarian
- Mr. Hall, married Minnie Sneyd
- Mr. & Mrs. Pattison, builders
- of the Higherland Newcastle
- Sneyd's family, owned Brickworks
- at Cliffe Dale
- Stapleton family, Unitarians
- Harry Whittaker, Grocer of Basford
- Robert Beresford, became mayor of town
- Mr. Jeffries, Trustee of O.M.H.
- Milton family, Cecil, Ada
- & Liela, Photographers

Early in 1895 a Labour Church was under consideration, resulting in the inauguration of a congregation on May 5th in the "Old Meeting Place" behind St. Giles Church. Progress was slow but steady. Early in 1896 the secretary reported steadier progress than any socialist body in the town during the previous year. The Fabians who were a small but active group worked closely with the Labour Church, co-operating in the bringing of some lecturers and using the Labour Church premises as their meeting place.

In the autumn of 1895 a Sunday School was started, and a Cinderella program was undertaken. Food and fun were provided for an average of 58 of the poorer children. The regular menu was sandwiches, plum cake, fruit, and sweets.

The congregation continued through '98 but was not listed in 1899.

NORTH MANCHESTER

1893

- This congregation was a branch of the Manchester and Salford...
NORTH PADDINGTON

1895 1897

J. D. Jackman
John Potberry

During 1894 and 1895 a number of Labour Church Pioneers were active in North Paddington. In order to be of assistance to them, and to investigate the possibilities of the Metropolis, John Trevor moved to London in the spring of 1895. Under his leadership a congregation was organized where hitherto there had been only unsuccessful efforts. Harrow Road Church was considered to be a suitable meeting place but was too expensive. The first services were held on Oct. 13, 1895, and shortly thereafter a Sunday School and a class in Social Science were begun, and building plans were underway. Early in 1896 a Psychology class under the leadership of J. D. Jackman and a general Reading class were added. A summer program was planned which would assist the members to appreciate the great treasures of art and culture available to the public in the art galleries, museums and parks of London.

NORWICH

mid '90s

Ernest Burrows, chairman
Fred Easton & his brother
Fred Henderson

Dr. Hall, a Unitarian minister and free-lance liberal was asked to come to the Norwich Labour Church as often as possible because the economic and political elements were being stressed by speakers and members alike. There was a desire that the moral and spiritual elements should also be stressed. Dr. Hall was in the habit of leaving his own Sunday School early in order to arrive in time to give an address to the Labour congregation. Fred Henderson preached a series to the Norwich congregation which was later published as the famous Case for Socialism. The Norwich congregation was active in the Labour Church Union Conference of 1908.

1. Rev. T. C. Douglas, present premier of Saskatchewan wrote Fred Henderson telling him that The Case for Socialism had brought him into the movement and that it had helped to shape the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.), Canada's major socialist party (right wing socialist).
Interest in forming a congregation was first shown in 1894 and the Labour Church in Nottingham was organized sometime prior to April, 1896. At that time a congregation was meeting in the Albert Academy, adjacent to the Grand Theatre, in Ryson Green. Here the seating accommodation of a large auditorium was often insufficient, and several auxiliary rooms provided accommodation for committee meetings and a literature stall where the pamphlets that meant so much to early British socialism were offered for sale. One characteristic of this congregation was the enthusiastic singing of the Labour Church hymns, accompanied by a volunteer orchestra made up of all the members who owned and played any instrument. The musical balance may have been crude, but the net result helped give expression to the enthusiasm of the members.

The first president, Wm. Robinson, reported that the Nottingham Labour Church did what "no religious movement in town has ever done"; it allowed criticism and discussion based on the remarks of the preacher. Because of this opportunity to expose mere rhetoric, those lecturers were most appreciated who could "educate and refine their hearers and not simply exhort them".

"The beauty of our movement is, we get such different speakers and such variety of topics, this all tending to educate and refine the hearers. We have plenty of enthusiasm, and are in touch and close sympathy with all Socialist propaganda throughout the country. Every practical worker in our movement feels imbued with a religious sentiment which strengthens the will and determination in the fight for social emancipation. We feel the worthiness of our cause. We realize the beauty and grandeur of the object we have in view. We possess the transparent honesty of being what we really are, and we take no steps to disguise our principles to the world, for we are unanimously one in our conviction and desire to further those natural and humanitarian principles which when consumated make the whole world kin. We feel that our religion must first of all be a social religion; that the true foundation of any abstract creed must necessarily consist in healthy bodies, healthy
surroundings, and healthy minds. That we as Labour Churchmen and Churchwomen in Nottingham are convinced of this is proved by the work we have already accomplished, and hope to achieve in the future.¹

During the summer of 1896 a wider hearing for the Labour Church message was found through open-air services held in the "Forest" - a disused race-course belonging to the Corporation. Increased interest and membership was the result, leading to big plans for the opening of the autumn work. Acting on the advice of Carrie Martyn (whose decease was sadly mourned) the congregation renovated and redecorated the Large Mechanic's Hall, thus providing seating capacity for 2000 people. Financial responsibilities seemed no deterrent, for even the large pipe organ was repaired. To cope with money problems a Guarantee Fund was set up. It received generous support, and in later years saved many a potentially embarrassing situation.

The large auditorium, which a few had considered much too ambitious, was often filled to capacity. Even standing room was at a premium for the anniversary services when Stewart Headlam was the guest lecturer. A report of this service is illuminating:

"... he told us he was not sure -- that our principles were not definite on the point -- whether we worshiped Christ or not. We had to tell him we did not worship Christ, any more than we worshiped Nunquam; that we accepted all good reformers as helpers in the cause of humanity, and that we, as an institution, did not interfere with the liberty of the individual; so long as such liberty did not interfere with the liberty of others.²"

The financial position of the church was maintained not only by securing the best possible speakers to draw large crowds, but also by various projects. The members co-operated in a 'Merrie England Show' which was a success socially as well as financially. A bazaar realized over £25, while teas, sales of work, and socials added more to the treasury each month. During the year's operation for 1896-97 £87/13/9 was spent; receipts came to within one pound of this amount. Liabilities at this time totaled £41/8/5.

In October 1897 the meeting of the Church Congress in Nottingham gave the Labour Church a wonderful opportunity for advertising itself and its principles. To avail themselves of this opportunity the Labour Church committee planned the first anniversary as a great demonstration in the Grand Theatre. Many delegates to the Church Congress were in attendance. A special correspondent of the London Daily News reported the afternoon meeting:

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1. Prophet, May 1896. The quotation is from an editorial by Wm. Robinson, Pres. of the Labour Church and editor of the Nottingham Labour Echo, a Labour Church journal with a guaranteed circulation of 5000, which was financed by advertising and published by the Nottingham Labour Church for free distribution.

2. Prophet, Nov. 1896.
"This afternoon I looked in at an Anniversary Celebration of the Labour Church, totally unconnected with the Church Congress as I need scarcely explain. 'High Priest' Tom Mann was down for the occasion, and he is preaching or lecturing tonight on the agitators of the New and Old Testaments. It was a clergyman of the Church of England, however, who was holding forth when I pressed into the Grand Theatre, where the meeting was held. He calls himself, or is called, "the Dossers' Parson" and his denunciation of the Established Church as the foe of the working man was only equalled by the fervour of his advocacy of the Socialism propagated by the Independent Labour Party. But there was a good deal more than that, for the just claims of the worker for better chances of a happy life than he often enjoys, as things now are in this weary world, were earnestly set forth.

The meeting concluded with the singing of a labour hymn, and 'The Grace of Our Lord' pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Collings, the "Dossers' Parson" aforesaid. The audience or congregation were attentive, grave, and judiciously demonstrative, but I should say it was largely composed of middle class people, who went to the theatre merely to learn for themselves what the Labour Church really is."

The events of the following year indicate that the Nottingham congregation had over-reached itself during the '97-'98 season. In the Large Mechanics Hall, when the curious stopped coming, the good attendances seemed small. Then also, compared to the attendances, the active nucleus of members was very small indeed. The adherents on whom the committee had counted proved to be quite apathetic. Thus, for the '98-'99 season they gave up the lease of the large auditorium. There resulted a reduction of the debt, and an increase in enthusiasm. The congregation became a closer knit group. Soon a dissatisfaction with the itinerant lecturers became evident, for these provided "a bill of fare more varied than nutritious" which could lead socialists to say the Labour Church was too orthodoxy Christian and which could lead the churchmen to say the Labour Church was too materialistic and too interested in economics. Then, too, the congregation was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain merely a concern of 'the welfare of humanity' as the basis of their existence. The solidarity of the congregation came to depend more and more on its organizations and activities.

Among the organizations which did much to hold the congregation together was the choir, which was now a self-supporting group, providing excellent music both for the weekly services and for occasional concerts. The Sunday afternoon tea and the monthly socials were two other projects which provided the fellowship and financial support so necessary to the congregation. The strong campaign in support of Raymond Unwin's Peace Crusade (supporting the Czar's Peace proposals) did much to make the members conscious of the

1. Prophet, November 1897, a quotation from London Daily News. The Prophet notes that most daily newspapers who reported the meeting did not mention that it was a Labour Church Service.
possible unity and identity of the Labour Church cause throughout the nation. Nottingham congregation wanted the other Labour Churches to make a strong united stand in petitioning the Government, and spearheaded a move to obtain such petitions.

In October of '99 the work was in good health. There was an increasing interest in the work of the Ethical Societies, and some questioning as to whether the Labour Churches should not belong to this society, but so far as the present writer is able to determine, nothing came of it.

In January 1900, the clearing out of the Guarantee Fund eliminated the debt of the congregation. Immediately a new fund was started to underwrite the renting of a better hall, for the draughty and cold premises then in use was leading to a reduction in attendance. Within a few weeks the congregation was meeting in the Mechanics Lecture Hall which continued to be their home for a number of years. Here attendances averaged 250, and finances were sound. During the summer months the congregation moved out of doors to the 'Forest' where propaganda possibilities counterbalanced the small number of members in attendance.

With the turn of the century came an increasing emphasis on practical matters, with the establishment of study groups and special committees on such matters as municipal housing, temperance reform, etc. In 1903 the meetings were well attended and the debt almost retired. In 1904 the Labour Church was operating an Ethical Sunday School. In 1905 they initiated a protest against the misuse of money collected for school children. They felt it could be used for more essential services than a cricket ground for the high school. Church membership increased and the Sunday School doubled in size. The Church was going strong in 1907 and in co-operation with the I.L.P. applied to the education committee for the use of a school room. This was refused on the basis of the hymns used (with a vote of 18-2). However in the autumn of 1907 they were meeting in the Shelton St. Council School.

Rev. Thomas Williams, a congregational minister in Oldham, planned to organize a Civic Church, in which plan he was assisted by two Labour Church Pioneers. As part of the campaign the Labour Church of Manchester was asked to parade and to bring a speaker. On May 15, 1892 the parade was held, and Ben Tillett spoke most eloquently. Whatever was the fate of the Civic Church the present writer does not know, but the inaugural service of the Oldham Labour Church was held at the Gaiety Theatre in October of 1892.
with Fred Brocklehurst of Queen's College, Cambridge, as special speaker.

Secretary Levi Dixon reported that the congregations were large and enthusiastic, and that the lecturers, all prominent leaders of socialism, were very well received. He added that, when some of these famous people failed to keep their engagements, and when open-air work demanded a greater number of speakers than were available, they were surprised at the latent speaking ability of some of their own local members. Cinderella work was begun in the autumn of 1892.

By the spring of '93 the Oldham Labour Church had passed the first stage of its existence, (the stage of enthusiastic response or ardent criticism) and were entering into the second stage of consolidation and organization. This they approached with confidence and accomplished with outstanding success. With the coming of their First Anniversary the Oldham comrades decided to extend their work by holding two services each Sunday, one at each end of town. To help bear the added expense the ladies worked hard at bazaars and teas that the treasury might be kept solvent.

With the Beginning of 1894 the congregation was thriving, but no further reports have been found by the present writer.

**OPENSHPAW**

Several references to a Manchester Labour Church, meeting in Openshaw, would suggest that this was an active branch. Mrs. Dickinson (a member of the Manchester Labour Church from 1891) made definite references to this congregation. Mr. Leonard Hart, when he was about ages 5 to 7, attended a Socialist Sunday School on the Old Road in Openshaw, where he received as an attendance prize, Ruskin's King of the Golden River and Morris's Children's Socialist Reader. The choir, conducted by one-eyed Joe Moyle, won several competitions. Whitworth Hall was the scene of the larger gatherings of the group. Mr. Thursby made reference to a Socialist Society meeting on Margaret Street in Openshaw, which was run like a Labour Church. Just what the relations of the Openshaw activities were, to the Booth Street congregation (the original Labour Church), Chorlton-on-Mercy, the present writer does not know.

**OXFORDSHIRE**

George Ginger of Twickenham indicated to the Labour Prophet that he intended to devote his whole time, in the spring of 1893, to organizing Labour Churches in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire.¹

Date of Date of Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:
Formation: Cessation: Year Lie. Att.

PAISLEY
- 1895 -

In June 1895 the Labour Prophet reported this congregation as organized by not a member of the Labour Church Union.

PENDLEBURY

There was interest shown during the fall and winter of 1895-96.

PENDLETON

1892 -

This congregation was a branch of the Manchester and Salford Labour Church.

PLYMOUTH

1892 Small W. H. Ellis, Sec.

On the first Sunday in October 1892 a number of workingmen formed the Labour Church. It met in the Trade Union Hall, Notte St. W. H. Ellis, secretary reported that the attendances were small, and the finances difficult, but that they considered the work very worth while. During its first year it made consistent progress, adding to its membership and popularity week by week.

The inspiration for the Church seemed to have stemmed from the persecution of Rev. Alfred Cook, who had been driven from Butler Street Chapel because he took the side of the workers. Early in 1894 the new congregation was proud to have brought him back to Plymouth (from Manchester) if only for a week-end, and even though it greatly reduced their financial resources.

For the most part the Plymouth Labour Church depended on local speakers, and the active discussion led by the evening lecturer, and the singing of the Labour Church hymns. The lack of women workers was commented upon in the autumn of 1894, possibly explaining why other activities were not taken up.

The second Anniversary was a distinct success, drawing the largest audiences they had ever had. The morning open-air service was very large, and in the evening the Trade Union Hall was not large enough to accommodate all who came. However, as the season rolled on the attendances again became small and the financial burden heavy. How long they were able to bear it the present writer does not know for nothing further is heard of this congregation.

In 1894 it was reported that the Plymouth congregation was an offshoot of, and had the same management as the Gasworkers Union.
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<th>Date of Formation:</th>
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In later years, when the General Strike crippled the Industries of Britain the Plymouth Strikers gathered in large numbers each morning for prayer at the Parish Church.

PORT ARTHUR, CANADA

A congregation was probably formed here in 1920.

PRESTON (Cinderella only)

1892 active Alfred H. Turner
        W. H. Harrison

There was some interest shown in a congregation in 1893 and 1894.

PROVIDENCE, R.I., U.S.A.

As an offshoot of the Lynn Labour Church, and under the leadership of Herbert Casson's brother, Charles, a congregation was established in Providence. In August 1894 it had only 23 members, but it was attracting large congregations. A later report indicated that it had grown considerably, and was progressing most favourably during the year 1895.

RADCLIFFE (Pioneer activity only)

1893 Sam Brooks (an active Labour Church Pioneer for over ten years)
        Rev. J. B. Burman

Radcliffe was represented at the Labour Church Union Conference of July 1893.

1. an undated news-clipping from The Globe

2. Mrs. Brooks is still living in Radcliffe, with her daughter. Though the daughter is quite definite that her father was never a communist, she feels that the only way she can be true to his principles today is to belong to the communist party. She is the only person the writer met in his researches into the history of the Labour Church who has become Communist. A few were definitely Capitalist in outlook, but most were middle class with a nostalgic feeling for Socialism as it was in the early days. The most frequent remark was "If only the Labour Party today had something of the Ideals of the Labour Church..."
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<th>Estimate of size: Year Lm. Att.</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
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<tr>
<td>RAMSBOTTOM</td>
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<tr>
<td>A congregation was under consideration in 1895. Apparently they were quite successfully organized for in July they were running their local edition of the Labour Prophet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>70 to 150</td>
<td>M. Ashworth, Sec.</td>
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<td>J. Scott</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>G. Sims</td>
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<td>The Labour Church General Secretary visited Rochdale in the spring of 1895 to find that there was an interest in Labour Church Principles, but no move in the direction of establishing a congregation. It was two years before one was attempted. On Nov. 20th, 1897 a meeting, chaired by G. Sims, and addressed by James Sims and George Humphries of the Bolton Labour Church, brought serious discussion of the possibilities of a Rochdale congregation. Though the meeting reached no formal decision, there was an understanding that such action would be desirable. A report of January, '98, indicates that a congregation was formed, and that attendances varied from 70 to 150. The lack of a suitable hall and the difficulty of getting good lecturers made progress very difficult, so success of the new venture was uncertain. A report of March '98 indicates that the organization of a congregation was again under consideration, indicating that the first venture had not fully succeeded. This congregation was not listed in 1900 but was listed in 1901.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROTHERHAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>A congregation was under consideration in 1894. In 1900 the Rotherham Labour Institute were conducting Sunday meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>150 - 200</td>
<td>W. R. Dickinson, Sec.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Comrade Park, Supt. of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Holding</td>
<td>Cinderella Sunday School</td>
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<td></td>
<td>its own</td>
<td>Comrade Pole, Cinderella</td>
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<td>Marked decline</td>
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<td>The Salford Labour Church, like its twin in Manchester, was formed on Oct. 6, 1895, but the decision of the Manchester and Salford unit to divide into two congregations. The Salford branch decided to meet on Sundays at the Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms on Butcher and Liverpool Streets, and to hold through-the-week</td>
</tr>
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</table>
activities at the South Salford I.L.P. rooms on West Craven Street. Before the end of the year more suitable and less expensive accommodation was found at 5 West Union Street where seating for 200 was available. This was considered adequate for most occasions.

One of the first tasks undertaken by the new congregation was the organization of a choir for the Sunday services. This choir went by the name "Manchester Socialist Choir" when it gave public concerts, the first of which was given within six months of its organization. The excellent standards of the choir were possible because its members were all hand picked from the graduates of a Singing Class which was organized expressly for the purpose. The Singing Class, which was sponsored jointly with the Manchester congregation, had 150 members.

With the new year, 1896, the congregation grew and financial burdens became manageable. Probably this was in part due to a change in the policy of the lecture secretary. The choice of speakers was broadened to include educational and cultural topics as well as narrowly socialistic ones. During the following year this tendency became further pronounced. Lectures became increasingly varied, with studies in Geology, Travel, Literature, and "Many other things beside dry as dust economics".

The same tendency was evident in the manner in which the seasonal summer slumps were met. On Alternate Sundays the group would meet to hear and to discuss a paper, which was not necessarily on economics or socialism, prepared by one of the members. On the other Sunday they would join with their Manchester brethren in open-air propaganda meetings where they could try their wings as public speakers. In theory and in practice the thinking and speaking capacities of the members were developed and increased. So important did this become that in the early months of 1897 a 'Recreative and Debating Society', whose main purpose was to continue the discovery and training of local talent, was formed. It was also, if one may use the colloquial term, a group of 'culture vultures' who were trying to avail themselves of that which they felt had previously been denied to them. We might add that they seem to have been successful in attaining a good understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage.

The cultural and educational emphasis developed by the Labour Church soon gave rise to a feeling on the part of the more practically minded of the socialists that the propagation of socialism was being neglected. Thus, in October, 1897, a series of Sunday I.L.P. meetings in St. James Hall were called to meet at the same hour as the Labour Church services. The Salford Labour Churchmen resented this opposition (their Manchester counterparts had wel-

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1. Even with the Sunday competition between the I.L.P. and the Labour Church, there was still a feeling that they were all working toward one end. The party still felt the church had its function, and the church still felt the I.L.P. was the main political arm. The relations one to the other, and to other socialist groups, was of warm sympathy. They still thought alike on many issues. For example, when the Royal Jubilee was
Date of Date of Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:
Formation: Cessation: Year Lm. Att.

commed the development for it set them free for their more specifically 'church' work) but could counter in no other way than to make their own meetings more attractive. This they attempted to do in many ways, including the reintroduction of teas and socials as a means of improving the spirit of brotherhood and fellowship. But there was great difficulty in maintaining the mid-position between the orthodox churches and the political parties. The demise of the congregation is here clearly foreshadowed, though the Sunday School and the Cinderella work gave indications of increased vitality.

Early in 1896 a Cinderella club had been organized to serve about a hundred of the poorer children of the neighbourhood. The following year, under the superintendancy of Comrade Park, there was organized a Sunday School for the benefit of these Cinderella Children. The program, which included hymns, prayers, stories, talks, and musical drill, was enjoyed by about 75 children. By the end of the year the average attendance was 108. During each summer the program was extended to include country outings, and in '98, a summer camp. Under Comrade Pole ten little girls went to Mr. Johnston's camp at St. Anne's on the Sea, Southport. In '98 a sewing class for girls was organized, and shortly thereafter, a boys football club was inaugurated. The Labour Church certainly had a concern for the underprivileged children and developed a practical program to alleviate some of their sufferings and to meet some of their more pressing needs.

Though 1898 and '99 the Sunday School, the Cinderella club, the girls sewing class and the boys football club continued to thrive, though often in spite of insufficient funds. Indeed their attendances began to grow and their activities to increase. The Sunday School more than doubled its size, and Cinderella tripled her services, but the attendance and support of the church services barely held their own. In June of '99 a conference with the Manchester brethren was arranged. It was agreed that the activities of the I.L.P. were taking the energies and time of socialist-minded people, and that little if any attention was being given to the church. They agreed also that there was a severe lack of lecturers able to speak on the religious principles involved in Socialism—that the lecturers were using the church services as an opportunity to deliver political addresses on Sunday. They agreed that the lack of financial support and the resulting lack of suitable premises

to be celebrated, the members of the Salford Labour Church were pleased to accept an invitation of the Chorlton Socialist Society to spend the day in the park, and thus to avoid the celebrations which were distasteful to both groups. 116 children and adults spent a delightful day in the open, and felt that they were celebrating the Jubilee in a most appropriate manner.
was a considerable handicap, but that of even greater importance was the lack of Bible reading, prayer, and spiritual worship. There was noted the competition of orthodox churches which would indicate that socialists and people awake to the questions of social justice could find sympathy and understanding in the Christian Churches to a degree not possible just six or seven years earlier.

In the autumn of 1898 a few faithful people gathered together. They decided to meet fortnightly, but by the end of the year they had given up. However the Sunday School, the Cinderella Club, and their associated classes and activities continued with even increasing enthusiasm. The congregation was listed in succeeding years till and including 1901.

SAN FRANCISCO

A letter from H. D'Arcy Power indicates some interest in a Labour Church. Socialistic ideas and a social gospel were given more favourable hearing in the churches through the work of Prof. Herron and the visit of Lawrence Gronlund, whose mission was to develop the ethical side of Socialism. Prof. Herron was incumbent of the chair of Applied Christianity in Iowa College, U.S.A. When he lectured in San Francisco (a six weeks course) he spoke daily to large audiences, sometimes numbering as many as 3,000 people. Prof. Herron may be classed as a Christian of the Social Gospel type.

SELY OAK

-.1905 -

The Clarion of Dec. 8, 1905 reported that the North Worcestershire I.L.P. had sponsored a Labour Church at Selly Oak, and that this congregation had a good Cinderella program. Tom Groom was mentioned as a frequent lecturer and as a strong inspiration for Cinderella work.

SHEFFIELD

1892 1893 “thriving”. W. E. Smith, Chairman & Sec.

In April 1892 a committee arranged for the formation of a Labour Church congregation in Sheffield. The first meeting was held on Sunday, May 8, with Mr. W. E. Smith in the chair. Regular open-air services were held in Fitzalan Square during the following months. A thriving congregation was established, but was apparently short lived, for the formation of a congregation was 'under consideration' in 1894.

The present author came across an undated paper "Sheffield Socialists Club". It contained the manifesto and an advertisement
Date of Formation: Date of Cessation: Estimate of size: Leaders and Prominent Members:

of Sunday morning and evening meetings. The program, as outlined, resembled a Labour Church.

SHIPLEY

- 1895 - "active"

This congregation was reported by the *Prophet* of June, 1895 as organized but not a member of the Labour Church Union. The Bradford *Labour Echo* reports this congregation as "active" in March, 1896.

SKIPTON

The Clarion Cyclists Club held its annual meeting (1899) at Skipton. As part of its proceedings it held a Labour Church service in the Temperance Hall. 500 attended the meeting, chaired by Tom Groom. Interest aroused initiated the organization of a congregation which probably continued as I.L.P. Sunday meetings.

SLAITHWAITE

- 1894 -

The existence of this congregation was reported by Evelyn March-Phillips in the *Spectator* for April 21, 1894.

SOUTHAMPTON

1895 1904

There was some Labour Church Pioneer activity in 1893 and '94 which lead to a meeting in May of 1895 at which a congregation was formed. Members of the I.L.P., S.D.F., and other interested socialists were invited to participate. Though the majority of those who came were Christian believers there were a number who were frankly agnostic and this would not accept the principles as adopted by the original Manchester and Salford group. How long this congregation survived is not known but it probably ended in 1897 or '98. The *Clarion* of Feb. 26, 1904 reports the formation of a new congregation.

SOUTH MANCHESTER

1893

A branch of the Manchester and Salford congregation was formed in South Manchester in 1893.
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<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH-WEST MANCHESTER</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>H. Warhurst, Sec.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. H. Milligan, Cinderella</td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. H. Woodhead, Cinderella</td>
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<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Chas Glithero, Chairman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>James Scott, Treasurer</td>
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<td>Geo. Wild, Subscription sec.</td>
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<td>Thos. Higson, Literature sec.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ernest Scriven, S.S. secretary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Smith, Trustee Sec.</td>
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<td>Geo. Burgess, General Sec.</td>
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<td>S. A. Leech, S.S. Superintend-</td>
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<td>ent '14</td>
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<td>Geo. Whitley, Hon. S.S. Sec. '14</td>
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A branch of the Manchester and Salford congregation was formed in South-West Manchester in 1893. Mr. Thursby of Manchester, a member of the South-West Manchester I.L.P. in 1902, said that though the I.L.P. branch was then mainly a social club, it still had a number of people sympathetic to the Labour Church within it. Clarion Fellowships, cycling club, and a choir were organized.

There was some activity here in 1894.

A congregation was under consideration in 1894.

A report of January 1894 indicates that a small Labour Church was progressing favourably. It was proud of the extent to which the women were taking an active part in its life and work. It had recently formed a study and discussion group, and was co-operating with the local I.L.P. in some Cinderella good turns. A Christmas dinner and celebration had been held for the poorer children of the town. Cinderella had been active since 1892.
Mr. Geo. Burgess, who was General Secretary of the Stockport Labour Church from its inception till 1914, first learned of Socialism in 1899 as he was returning from Colonial Army service in India; he read Blatchford's *Merrie England* and a book by H. M. Hyndman on India. During the Boer war, and service in South Africa, Burgess was converted to Socialism. He returned home to his job in the Post Office at Stockport - devoting his time to a serious study of Macaulay, Carlyle, Zola, Tom Paine, Thackery, Ruskin, Tolstoy, Hardy, Dumas, Balzac, etc.; but he felt he was a solitary socialist. He longed for the fellowship of a group of kindred seekers with whom he could co-operate in a practical expression of his new found faith. During 1903 he and a number of friends became interested in the Labour Church. They visited a number of congregations and discussed the underlying ideas with leaders of the movement. They held a number of exploratory meetings during the autumn of 1903 and established a committee of ten. An inaugural meeting of the Stockport Labour Church was called to meet in the Temperance Institute, ("The Rechabites Temperance Hall") London Square on the first Sunday of 1904, where they continued to meet for 18 months till larger attendances forced them to move to the Mechanics Institute whose 1000 seats were often insufficient.

A group of women had formed themselves into an auxiliary to assist the congregation. They suggested that the congregation ought to have a building of its own and were willing to sponsor a bazaar to begin a fund. Though the bazaar was only in the planning stage and the fund was practically non-existent, the church committee took advantage of an opportunity, in 1906, to acquire the Central Hall. Through the voluntary assistance of joiners, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, gas-fitters, brick layers, and labourers (all of whom were members of the congregation) the building was re-fitted to make a pleasant headquarters. £400 was raised, largely by the seventy workers at the bazaar, from a small congregation, 90% of whom were working class people. An additional £400 was raised by a mortgage, backed by twenty members of the committee. The remodelled hall provided accommodation for 900 (frequently quite insufficient) and a permanent home for the many groups associated with the congregation. These included, at one time or another, a Sunday School, an Adult Class, (organized in 1905), Ladies Auxiliary, a Youth Club, the "Socialist Silver Band", an Orchestra, a Choir, a dramatic club, a physical culture club, a "ramblers club", a swimming club, the "Clarion Scouts", and the ever popular Saturday socials. It also provided rooms for the I.L.E.P., the S.D.F., various

1. This Mechanics Institute was demolished to make room for the Central Public Library.
2. The comradeship of these work parties is nostalgically remembered by those who took part.
3. Saturday socials, with dances, games (especially whist) and
PRINCIPLES.

The Stockport Labour Fellowship has for its object the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth.

The Fellowship seeks to bring about the emancipation of the workers, by urging the members to study the moral and economic forces of Society, and to further all measures having for their object the raising of the status of the workers, and the Socialisation of the means of Life.

To conduct a Socialist Sunday School, for the training of the young mind in Socialist and moral principles.

The Fellowship maintains an open platform, for the expression of Socialist Labour and Progressive thought.

To maintain its premises known as the General Hall, situated in Lower Hillgate, Stockport, for the purpose stated above, and to provide accommodation for sympathetic bodies.

RULES.

1. That the whole of the original members be named The Stockport Labour Fellowship.

2. That membership is open to all persons at the age of seventeen, who accept the principles of the Fellowship.

3. That the Fellowship be administered by a Management Committee, consisting of four ex-officio officials named Trustees, together with nine other members, the latter to be elected to serve for three years, three to retire annually, and the Treasurer Secretary to be elected yearly. The Management Committee and all other recognised sections shall elect one representative each, to sit on the Committee with full voting powers.

4. That in all matters of dispute the members shall be the final arbitrator at Special General Meeting convened for that purpose.

5. That no rule or rules shall be added to or altered except by a two-thirds majority of members present voting, at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose.

6. That the members shall have power to call a Special General Meeting by submitting a requisition signed by twenty members, for any purpose whatsoever, such business to be stated in the requisition.

7. The Annual Meeting of members to take place during the month of March.
Socialist committees, and the headquarters for all local strike committees. During the days of the depression it became a dormitory for the unemployed marching on their way to London. It was the centre of the Labour Church until its demise and of Labour activity in Stockport for some forty years.¹

Membership in the Stockport Labour Church was open to all who would accept the simple constitution and rules which emphasized equality and democracy. The main activity of course was the Sunday lecture: the service began with a hymn followed by the chanting of the Lord's Prayer and an instrumental or vocal selection. The chairman then made his remarks which often included a reading from socialist literature, from one or other of the great writers of English literature, or from the Bible. After the speaker was introduced he was given a free platform - though addresses exceeding 50 minutes duration were not appreciated. Following the lecture, questions (but not discussion) were invited. The service then concluded with the receiving of the collection and the singing of a hymn. During the summer a similar, but less formal, service was held out-doors in the Armoury Square.

The lecturers who came were very varied, with S. D. F., I. L. P., suffragette, Christian Socialist, secularist, musical, artistic, scientific and cultural topics as popular stand-bys. Mr. Burgess mentions that the predominant character of the congregation always reflected the type of speaker. When a scientific or cultural topic was announced a . . . better class attendance was noted; if a Marxist Socialist, we expected a class conscious Socialist to raise debatable questions.²

In 1910 Mr. Burgess was transferred by the Civil Service to a better post in Manchester. He retained his connection with the Stockport Labour Church even though . . . it was seen by a few of us that the Labour Church movement was losing its grip on the general public, or on that part that we catered for. Members lapsed and new ones weren't forthcoming in sufficient numbers to fill up the vacancies.²

Though declining somewhat, the congregation continued in a fairly healthy state. By 1912 there was a recognition that the Labour Church did not have a new religion to offer. It was generally regarded as another socialist organization, though admittedly an important one from an educational and propagandist standpoint.

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¹ refreshment (non-alcoholic) were times of good fellowship. There were no "wall flowers" because both men and women made sure that shy people took an active part.

² The exigencies of World War II compelled the party to give their building up. In 1952 the party purchased the "Adelphi" as successor to Central Hall. In the souvenir program of the opening (September 1952) we read "The movement has never lost heart or faith in its ultimate ideal, 'The brotherhood of man!'." This slogan appeared in large type at the bottom of one page: "till we have built Jerusalem -- !" The influence of Labour Church ideas is still present.

² Geo. Burgess, "Memoir", see appendix pp. 673-679
Even without the war, it was clear that the 'church' was approaching its end as a religious expression. The outbreak of war brought a heated discussion which resulted in dissension within the congregation over the pacifist issue. The church managed to weather the storm, though in a much weakened position. During the war it dropped many of its religious aspects and continued rather on the basis of a Clarion Fellowship. Indeed in 1921 it changed its name to "The Stockport Labour Fellowship" under which name it continued for more than a decade. In 1936 it merged with the Labour Party. The Fellowship continued many of the characteristics of the Labour Churches, some of which continue in the Labour Party of today, though with a different emphasis. In 1927 the constitution of the Fellowship had been amended from: "Our aim is to raise 'the value placed upon human life'" it was changed to read: "Our aim is to further 'the socialization of the means of life.'"

In the Souvenir of the Grand International Bazaar held in March 1928, the following statement is found:

The Stockport Labour Fellowship strives to maintain in integrity the spirit and purpose of its pioneers. Its doors are open to all irrespective of creed or social standing; its platform is free and representative of every shade of progressive thought. It stands always

"For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the future in the distance
And the good that it can do."

If you believe in Real Progress; in Universal Peace; in the common Brotherhood of Humanity; in the principle of "All for Each, and Each for All," your place is within the Fellowship and you are assured of a hearty welcome when you seek admission. Comrade! come inside.

STOCKTON

There was some interest shown in 1894.

STOURBRIDGE

Stourbridge was a member of the Labour Church Union in 1912.

SWANSEA, Wales (Cinderella only)

1899

During the autumn of 1899 there was some interest in a Labour Church, mainly within the Swansea Socialist Society (about 50 active members with M. Littlejohns as Sec.). On the advice of
John Trevor, Mr. Ellery of Cardiff, a graduate of Trevor's Summer School of Natural Religion, was invited to meet with interested people. After the meeting it was decided to proceed immediately with Cinderella work, and if circumstances proved favourable, to organize a congregation. It was later reported that a strong element of anti-church feeling among the socialists was keeping from the proposed congregation many who otherwise would have joined, so a congregation was not attempted. The Cinderella work, however, was a great success. The first effort entertained 500 slum children, and sparked the public imagination. The demands of the children at the second so far outweighed the facilities that at the third the precaution was taken to have a policeman at the door so that only ticket holders would be admitted, thus enabling adequate control.

**TAUNTON**

1905                  
Formation of this congregation was noted in the Clarion of June 2, 1905.

**TORONTO, CANADA (Socialist Church)**

- 1914                  

Dr. C. S. Eby, a retired Methodist missionary from Japan, started the Toronto Socialist Church sometime after 1910. It thrived for a while in the Zion Congregational Church building on College Street. It was criticized by religious people as being too socialist, and by socialists for being too religious. In a book, The World Problem and the Divine Solution, Dr. Eby has left a record of the emphasis he tried to make through his Socialist Church:

Socialism, as an attempt to make an industrial ideal a religion, is a modern paganism; modern religion without the socialism of Jesus is another substitute for the reality, -- a fanaticism.

All that has been done, all the frequently recurring revivals, have been but preparatory stages for the great practical work now long overdue and for which the world is ready if Christendom could be awakened to the necessary heroic action.

His contention was that a new revival of Christianity was needed, for human nature was under a spell of Cosmic evolution. The Student Volunteer Movement was one great hope. What was needed to change the world was a "Business Brotherhood of the Christ" --

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1. See "Notes Regarding a Socialist Church in Canada," Appendix--
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 business men and 100 clergymen of the right sort, organized into a strong force.</td>
<td>c. 1917</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Rev. W. E. S. James, R. B. St. Clair, Jimmy Connor, J. Ed. Houghton, Mr. McPherson, A. W. Moore, Harry Pettit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 1914 Mrs. Eby died, Dr. Eby moved to Saskatoon, and the congregation was wrecked on the rocks of financial difficulty.

**TORONTO, CANADA (The Church of the Social Revolution)**

1914

In June 1914, the Rev. W. E. S. James asked the Stationing Committee of the Methodist Church to leave him without station. The request was granted, with the stipulation that it did not imply approval of his proposal to start the "Church of the Social Revolution". A month later the new Church was a reality.

Sunday afternoon and evening services at Parkdale Assembly Hall were well attended by 'white collar' workers. But this was not the program James had envisioned: he dreamed of winning the great mass of workers who were estranged from the church. With this as his goal, and with the evident support the Sunday meetings were receiving, James proposed a move to the disused Zion Congregational Church where week-night meetings could also be held. The move was made just before the declaration of war.

The war affected the Church of the Social Revolution adversely; financial depression meant wide-spread unemployment, and small collections. When the rumour spread that Socialists were pro-German, and it was quite evident that they were anti-war, employers began to discriminate against Socialists. Workmen were afraid to display even the slightest evidence of Socialists sympathies for fear of losing their jobs, so many dropped active connection with the congregation. The net result was that, despite its numerical success, the church was facing serious financial problems. Those who could give it security were watching their domestic treasuries and protecting their jobs.

James went out in search of a job which would provide the means of sustenance for himself, for he would not presume to add to the burdens being borne by the church members. Jobs were scarce; before he found a place in a munitions factory he had to borrow on his insurance. Wages were small and job-security non-existent. Finally, financial pressures forced him to return to the Methodist ministry. The Church of the Social Revolution continued for some time, but eventually it too succumbed to financial problems.

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1. See "Notes Regarding a Socialist Church in Canada", Appendix pp. 90-96.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of Size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>Rev. A. E. Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 children</td>
<td>Salem Bland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40 adults</td>
<td>Milton Burt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andrew Glen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Harry Hatfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. A. E. Loeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. S. McMaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jimmy Simpson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1923 a Toronto group of Socialist invited the Rev. A. E. Smith to come to Toronto to form a People's Church and to lead the Labour Forum of the Canadian Labour Party. The group included Jimmy Simpson, an active Labour leader and one-time mayor of Toronto; Salem Bland, minister of College St. Methodist Church, Toronto, who had been sympathetic to the Winnipeg General Strike and who had thus been ousted from his professorship in Wesley College; and Andrew Glen a labour sympathizer who made his house available to the Smiths, thus reducing the overhead costs of the new venture.

The Toronto People's Church opened in the Autumn of 1923 in the Old Spadina Hall which could accommodate about 700. In the Sunday classes there were enrolled 50 children and 40 adults. By the end of the year the Labour Forum and the People's Church were merged under the executive of the church and the name of forum. By the spring of 1924, meeting then in the Labour Temple, Church St., the church-forum was attracting overflow attendances and was conducting an adult education program in economics, sociology, political geography, English and public speaking. About this time and in recognition of his work, Smith was appointed Education Director of the Canadian Labour Party. The future certainly looked bright.

The big project of 1924 was the organizing and conducting of the Summer School. It began well, but after three weeks a sharp division between the right and the left wings of labour opinion became evident. The presence of Communist leadership in the school brought the division to a bitter dispute and the school came to an abrupt end. By the end of the year the schism was very wide spread -- there was no hope of any compromise agreement. Smith himself was leaning far to the left. When his son Stewart assumed the secretarieship of the Young Communist League, adverse public opinion tipped the scales. In November A. E. Smith resigned from the Labour Forum and in January 1925 he and his wife joined the Communist Party of Canada.

TOTTENHAM SOCIALIST CHURCH, LONDON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimate of Size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Reg. A. Beckett</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Socialist agitator, E. Chas. Boggis, suggested to a number of unattached Socialists that they form a Labour Church. With the assistance of Reg. A. Beckett this was quickly and easily done; but because of the strong conviction of its members that 'Socialism is a Religion' it called itself a "Socialist Church". It began with an afternoon Sunday School, and Evening Service, a week night class in economics, numerous public debates and socials, and many 'work parties'. The latter activity transformed a 'wreck of a building' into a handsome meeting place for 400 people which was officially opened on October 15, 1896, by Tom Mann. The Hall was the home of the I.L.P. and the Socialist Church.

One of the important activities of the Tottenham Labour Church was the Cinderella program. For the Christmas treat, 1896, one hundred and forty children were given a good meal, a treat to take away, a toy, warm clothing, and an evenings entertainment. The second major treat was planned for Nunquam's birthday, March 17th, when over 100 children were cared for. For the small active group of the Socialist Church this meant hours of work and heartbreaking efforts at public appeals for donations of money and time.

Another important emphasis was the Sunday School, established in December 1896, which, though small (about 80 members) was active and vital. In 1898 it was the only one in the City of London which was sponsored by a Labour Church.

In mid '97 the Tottenham congregation ran into trouble; their hall was no longer available. The reason is not plain. The statement is just made that the church was hampered by the lack of a meeting place and by the competitive meetings held by the I.L.P. in the hall which the Labour Church had formerly used. It is certainly unusual to find the I.L.P. and the Labour Church in this kind of controversy. In spite of this difficulty the congregation, Sunday School, and Cinderella Club continued to thrive.

TYSELEY & SPARKHILL
- 1924 -

A song book which belonged to this congregation has come into my possession. Its date of publication was 1924.

J. S. Woodsworth
J. Clarke

VANCOUVER, CANADA

1920
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of Size (Yearly Mem. Att.)</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thos. Ezart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. D. Herbert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the spring of 1920 J. S. Woodworth went to Vancouver as secretary and organizer of the "People's Sunday Evening", a sort of Labour Church, College, and Club whose purpose was inspiration, education and fellowship. He returned to Winnipeg in 1921 as general secretary and organizer of the Labour Church there.

**WAKEFIELD**

1903

Formation of this congregation was indicated in the Reformers Year Book for the year 1903.

**WALKDEN**

Some interest was shown here in 1894.

**WARRINGTON**

- 1895 -

Existence of this congregation was reported in the *Prophet* for February, 1895. The same issue also mentions that Warrington was running a local edition of the *Labour Prophet*, selling 500 copies monthly.

**WATFORD**

- 1901 -

H. Gorle, Sec. (Solicitor)
Mr. Syme (Architect)
Mrs. Bridger, one-time Mayor of Watford.

The Watford Labour Church was a strong congregation about which the present researches have been able to unearth little. The first evidence is a report of April 1901 which gives credit to Mr. Syme for the growing attendance and membership. In 1901 a building was erected, decorated with drawings by Walter Crane, and a Sunday School was started. The social cohesion of the congregation was excellent. They conducted out-door missions at Hemel Hempstead Moor. This congregation was influential in the affairs of the Labour Church Union in the early years of the 20th century, maintaining its active membership till the Union ceased to function during the 1st World War. The *Clarion*, March 1, 1912 makes reference to a connection between some Labour Churches and the British Socialist Party of London (Watford).

1. See illustration p. 370
Personal correspondence with Frank Spires indicates the existence of a congregation of the Labour Church in Wednesbury.

**WEST BROMWICH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation:</th>
<th>Date of Cessation:</th>
<th>Estimate of Size:</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>H. Brockhouse, Chairman and trustee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>H. Thompson, Financial sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S. Turton, Literature sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Hughes, Correspondence sec. and trustee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E. Mynett, trustee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Jackson, Cinderella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Wilson, Cinderella</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This church was opened in January 1899 by the Socialists who recognized the need for services which would apply altruistic teachings to the present day social and economic problems.

"... While most of us are very heterodox and weak in questions of ordinary religious dogma, we appreciate the good that can be got from all great teachers and leaders, among whom Christ is prominent."  

During the first few years West Bromwich congregation shared the Sunday lecturer who had been invited to Birmingham, which meant that they could have only afternoon meetings. This encouraged many of the members to continue their active membership in the regular churches, and to use this contact as an opportunity to spread Socialist ideas among Christian people not otherwise aware of the Socialist answer to community and political problems.

The West Bromwich congregation remained small, with a year-round average attendance of 40. But their smallness did not limit their activity overly much. They formed an "Improved Dwelling League", a Co-operative society, and an active Cinderella club, besides continuing unabated their activity in the I.L.P., other Socialist societies, Labour Church propaganda work, and fund raising activities to make possible the erection of a building. Walter Crane designed a corrugated iron building, a simple and economic structure which gave a much more beautiful effect than most people dreamed possible. When Keir Hardie officially opened it on Nov. 10, 1901, it was given the name "The People's Hall". It was a marked improvement over the old room, tripling the accommodation.

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1. Record  
2. See illustration, p. 910.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Estimation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>191b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Winnipeg, Canada</td>
<td>People's Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1917</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wigan, Lancashire</td>
<td>Labour Church Union, July, 1893</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A congregation was under consideration in 1895. Ethelbert Bins was a prominent member of the congregation. The members of the congregation had been boycotted, so a group of socialists engaged the Mechanics Institute for him. He stated that he would preach on the streets if not permitted to preach in the churches. He was supported by another socialist preacher who had been boycotted.

By obtaining their own services, the congregation was able to increase their operating budget by terming their agreement with Birkenhead. By obtaining their own members, they could hold evening services. The attendance and membership was increasing and there was an active Sunday School. The congregation was formed in 1895.

In 1905 West Bromwich Labour Church was a member of the Unitarian Ethical Societies. A year after the end of their financial difficulties, there was a substantial debt. The congregation was in debt, but the confidence and enthusiasm of the congregation meant that this did not bother them.

When Comrade Ethelbert Bins, who had been boycotted, went to preach in a Wesleyan Chapel in Wigan, the sermon was not permitted to be heard. He stated that he would preach on the streets if not permitted to preach in the churches. He was supported by another socialist preacher who had been boycotted.

The resulting deficit was made up by the congregation through contributions of one guinea a fund to assist the formation of a second congregation or assistance to the existing one. In 1995 West Bromwich Labour Church was a member of the union of Ethical Societies.

Whether an enduring "Labour Church" was formed is not known. He was a member of the Unitarian Ethical Societies. A year after the end of their financial difficulties, there was a substantial debt. However, there was an active Sunday School. The congregation was formed in 1895.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Lien.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vice-Pres. - F.J. Dixon M.P.P.  
Treas. - D. S. Hamilton  
Sec. & Publicity - A.V. Thomas  
Music Director - Miss Bella Hall  
Convenor of Ushers - Peter Thornton  
Directors: J. W. Arsenych  
A. W. Puttee  
Louis Konar  
J. A. Stevenson  
Mrs. Lillian B. Thomas  
Dr. Mary E. Crawford  
Alderman R. A. Rigg  

Rev. J. S. Woodsworth, Superintendent of the Methodist "All People's Mission" was ministering to the needs of the immigrants to the Canadian West. Many of these new citizens came from Central Europe; with a difference of language and custom, serious problems of adjustment became apparent. But there were also emigrants from Great Britain; these too had their problems. In an effort to meet these, Woodsworth began a series of popular Sunday Meetings in the Grand Opera House. His purpose was to exert a broad religious influence which otherwise might never be given. He hoped it would be looked upon as a sort of "People's Church".

At the first meeting in October 1910, Alderman Willoughby was chairman, and Rev. J. L. (King) Gordon was the speaker. In succeeding months speakers included J. Allen Baker M.P., Rev. Mr. Sinclair, and Rev. Dr. Salem Bland. Soon a definite "labour consciousness" became apparent, both in the Forum program and in Woodworth's thinking. It is probable that emigrants from the industrial areas of Great Britain were largely responsible for this development. In form and content the "People's Mass Meetings" (the name which Woodworth first used for his project) showed the influence of the British Labour Churches and the P.S.A. movement. The idea was not to "work any church", but to be a place "to hear all sides" of important social issues. In the autumn of 1913 the "People's Forum", (as the project was then known) was set up independently of the All People's Mission. It continued active operations through the early years of the first world war.

The Forum became a Labour Center, and assumed a socialist point of view. For instance the 1915-16 program displayed this quotation from Edward Carpenter:

Nothing but the general abandonment of the system of living on the labour of others will avail! There is no other way.  
This, whether as between individuals or as between nations, is
**WINNIPEG, CANADA (Labour Church)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Date of Cessation</th>
<th>Estimate of Size: Year</th>
<th>Leaders and Prominent Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>c. 1924</td>
<td>1918 c. 1918 500</td>
<td>Rev. Wm. Ivens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>During Strike: 6 congregations with 100-700 each</td>
<td>J. S. Woodsworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1919 (9 congregations) c. 1000 c. 2500</td>
<td>J. H. L. Wilcocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. D. Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Salem Bland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Dixon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. K. Johnston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. McQuestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. E. Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Robinson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Canon Scott</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W. S. Shipman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H. G. Veitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T. J. Watts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T. J. Welwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T. Wooler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Winnipeg Labour Church began on July 8, 1918, in Room 10 of the Labour Temple. William Ivens, the founder of the Labour Church, was a gardener by trade, who had come to the Canadian West to share in the development of a new country. He came under the influence of Rev. A. E. Smith, minister of MacDougall Church, became a member of that church in 1904 and immediately embarked upon an ambitious course of improving his education. In June 1909 he finished his Bachelor of Divinity course and was ordained to the Methodist Ministry. Seven years later he was stationed at MacDougall Church, a high honour indeed for a promising young preacher. Here he exercised a fruitful ministry, attracting a large following, mainly of working people.

During the World War Ivens' pacifist stand gathered opposition resulting, in 1918, in his expulsion from his pulpit. A large portion of the congregation did not approve of this action; they invited him to form a new congregation. They rented the Assembly Hall in the Winnipeg Labour Temple and began the Winnipeg Labour Church, patterned on earlier British lines.

It was in the spring of 1918 that the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council decided to publish their own paper. They bought The Voice from Arthur Puttee, and issued The Western Labour News; Ivens became the editor. Thus provided with a small income to look after living costs, Ivens gave his whole time to proclaiming the Social Gospel through Press and Pulpit. He asked the 1918 Conference of the Methodist Church, to leave him without station. This the Conference refused to do. When Ivens refused to be stationed by the Conference, he was 'located' and in effect dismissed from the
ministry. A year later the Manitoba Conference deprived him of his ordination rights; an action which S. G. Bland claimed was "neither fair nor constitutional". Conference's action was referred to the Methodist Court of Appeal where John Alfred Haw claimed that Ivens was answering a call to a specialized ministry for which he realized the church was not prepared to assume responsibility. This ministry in no way contravenes our standards, but [is one] which, for special reasons, is so fragmentary, partial, or even one-sided, that the Conference could not take the responsibility of saying to some specific congregation 'You must accept this man's pastorate as the voice of the Methodist Church to you.' "Ivens recognized in Iven's actions the "... presence of some religious compulsion, - some spiritual constraint..." that could not be denied. Ivens' actions in following this 'spiritual constraint' to a specialized ministry could not be properly interpreted as a refusal to continue the work of the ministry. The action of the Manitoba Conference was upheld; Ivens was no longer part of the Methodist Church.

The Winnipeg Labour Church, was to be a creedless church, based on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Its aim was the "establishment of justice and righteousness on earth, among all men and nations." Meetings were largely Methodist in form, with these exceptions: the pulpit was open to anyone with a message, whether he be Christian or not; and, even within the service, considerable discussion was encouraged.

Audiences were composed of labouring people; Growth was consistent but not spectacular; Soon it came to be recognized as a rallying place for the more idealistic type of radical thought.

In an effort to further similar organizations in other parts of Canada, J. S. Woodsworth was asked by the Winnipeg Labour Church to undertake a Canadian tour. The invitation was accepted. When Woodsworth returned to Winnipeg, the General Strike had been called. 2 The tour was forgotten and Woodsworth put his time and abilities at the service of the strike committee and the Labour congregation. Labour Church services had become the big rally of the week where, largely due to the opposition of the regular churches to the strike, hundreds and thousands of people had deserted and had come to the Labour Church. Of this J. S. Woodsworth writes:

"This movement became solidified by the opposition of the ministers and the Churches to the strikers. Staid old Presbyterian elders refused to darken the doors of the kirk. Wesleyan local preachers could no longer be restrained. Anglican Sunday School teachers resigned their classes. Class lines became clearly drawn and the 'regular' churches stood out as middle

2. Demobilization had brought unemployment as had the closing of armament factories, etc. Labour unrest had found a center in Winnipeg, where "old-country type labour leaders" were to be found and where workers were apt to be more volatile.
Woodsworth claimed that the Labour Church of 1920 was the product of the strike. Other factors support this opinion. For instance, the growth of the congregation was steady but slow till the strike brought a sudden multiplication of its numbers. This growth is reflected in the financial income. During the first six months the total income was only $164. Two months later, when the troubles which gave rise to the strike were being publicized this was raised to $400. In yet another month, the month in which the strike was called (May 15, 1919) the total had reached $1600. By the end of June, when the strike was over, the total income was in the neighborhood of $4000 and this less than one year after the formation of the Labour Church.

The relation of the growth of the Labour Church and the fact of the General strike is also illustrated by the degree of public notice of its services. In its beginning, Room 10 of the Labour Temple was quite adequate, easily seating the four to five hundred people attending. But by the spring of 1919 the largest auditoriums of Winnipeg were filled and meetings had to be held out-of-doors. In the third week of the strike a congregation estimated at 10,000 filled Victoria Park to hear Dixon, Canon Scott, Robinson and Ivens. When the municipal authorities prohibited open-air meetings within the city, the services were held just beyond the limits. On many occasions six or more meetings were held simultaneously, each attracting anywhere from one to seven hundred people. Opposition certainly made of Ivens church a movement which J.S. Woodsworth described to Vernon Thomas as a "Religious Revival."

1. J. S. Woodsworth, The First Story of the Labour Church and Some Things For Which It Stands, See Appendix pp. 363-376
2. W. D. Bailey, in an interview with the present writer, suggests that the leaders of Labour in Winnipeg were against calling a general strike. The strike came as an emotional urge - some thought as a prelude to revolution. If such be true it would account in large measure for the sudden growth of the Labour Church when it became the rallying feature of the strike.
3. Rev. Hugh Crozier, a Presbyterian minister in Winnipeg at that time makes this comment: "The Labour Church was the outcome of the injustice being meted out to the people and a protest against the abused of Capital."
4. The usual places of meeting were as follows:
   - Columbia Theatre Chairman - T. J. Watts
   - West Kildonan Centennial School W. S. Shipman
   - Elmwood, at corner of Brazier & Montrose T. J. Welwood
   - St. James, at corner of Barry & Portage T. Wooler
   - Brooklands School J.H.L. Wilcox
   - Fort Rouge at Elm Park Bridge H.G. Veitch
5. Woodsworth Papers Scrap Book IV, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, cf. also a letter to Mrs. Woodsworth, June 30, 1919, J. S. Woodsworth wrote: "The first (one of several evening meetings) was in Elmwood - in the open air one black outside the city limits. . . . Our Church service opened with singing.
The first Anniversary Services were held on July 25, 1919. Twenty-four district meetings were held in the afternoon. In the evening thousands were turned away from the Mass Meeting in the Industrial Bureau after 5000 were seated and standing room was filled. There were at that time nine congregations with a total membership exceeding 1000, with a weekly attendance between 2000 and 2500. With this degree of success, J. H. L. Wilcocks was hired as General Secretary and J. S. Woodsworth as Organizer.

When the excitement of the Strike had passed, certain lines of cleavage became evident. Many who had come because their own churches had opposed the strike, but who had not questioned the theological positions of the churches they had left, wanted the Labour Church to adopt Christian Orthodoxy in doctrinal matters. Others, who were ultra-materialistic 'Scientific-Marxian' socialists, who had joined the Labour Church because it was the rallying point of the strike, wanted nothing of religion at all. The majority of the members were betwixt and between - they wanted the teachings of Jesus with a new application to industrial conditions.

In such a situation, where compromise was needed, there was a danger that the Labour Church would stand for nothing at all. Definite leadership was required; Ivens was still in prison. Excellent leadership was given by Wilcocks and Woodsworth as well as many unpaid and unrecognized workers. Central Church had to seek larger headquarters, and eight other branches were active in Greater Winnipeg. Besides the Sunday services there was a program of Adult education, with classes in Economics, Religious Education, History, Public Speaking and Music. J. S. Woodsworth conducted

One Scotchman said these open air meetings reminded him of the Covenanters: 'Faith of our fathers, living still in spite of dungeon, fire and sword.' An elder in the Presbyterian Church opened with prayer. He prayed for the cause of justice - that God would bring repentance to the profiteers. The chairman was a small manufacturer who spoke of this new labour church. I made a plea for the boys who remained in jail. Said people have been praying for a great revival of religion. The revival was here - a passion for justice - a sense of brotherhood - a yearning for a better order - a willingness to serve and sacrifice - a reliance upon the 'God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own.'

1. Strike leaders were arrested, tried and imprisoned under the "... infamous 'Section 98' of the Criminal Code by which a man could be found guilty of most serious offences on the weakest of evidence." (Arthur Lower, From Colony to Nation, p. 499.) This section defined "unlawful association" in wide and loose terms, and provided extreme penalties for officers and members of such associations. It was enacted in 1919 to deal with the Strike situation.

W. D. Bailey told the present writer that the foreman of the Jury who tried the seven wished to bring in a verdict: "Technically guilty -- but not to be punished." He had no opportunity to say anything other than "Guilty, but . . ."
six classes in Economics and History. J. K. Johnston conducted the orchestra and W. McQuestion lead the choir. At this time T. J. Watts was the chairman. There was also the Labour Church Sunday School which did admirable work among the children.\(^1\)

The nine congregations continued in operation for some years, but gradually became extinct, perhaps because the leaders were devoting more and more of their time to the political arena.\(^2\) Wn. Ivens suggests the termination date as 1924, though this may be a year or two early.

It is a tribute to the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike, and the leaders of the Labour Church that, although suspected of and some arrested and tried for, seditious conspiracy, libelled by the Dominion Government as Communists\(^3\), and criticized by the Churches

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1. This is a series of lesson outlines as used by the Winnipeg Labour Church Sunday School. This outline is found in the Woodsworth Scrap Book, Public Archives, Ottawa:

   1. Who set the Dinner Table
      (a) The many who keep us
      (b) Our part in the world's work
      (c) Grace before Meat

   2. Making Clothes & Wearing Them
      (a) Producers not always consumers
      (b) Masters and Slaves today
      (c) The Dreams of Isaiah, Is 65: 21-22

   3. The Age of Homespun
      (a) Manufacturers in home workshop
      (b) Production for use - Independence
      (c) "God bless me and my wife and son John"

   4. Harnessing Water and Steam
      (a) The Industrial Revolution
      (b) When one man can do work of ten
      (c) Man co-operating with God.

   5. The Fight with the Machine
      (a) Tools of production in hands of the few
      (b) The new Slavery - Men, Women, Children
      (c) The Work of Jesus - Luke 4:18

   6. Organizing the Workers into an Army
      (a) Joint Stock companies and combines.

2. In the latter years there may have been some truth to the newspaper criticism that there was nothing religious about the Labour Church. They claimed that its Sunday service was nothing but another political meeting.

3. See Pamphlet Information respecting the Russian Soviet System and Its Propaganda in North America, Dept. of Labour, Ottawa, Aug. 1920. The Dept. of Labour related the Labour Church to the one Big Union movement, the Knights of Labour, and the International Workers of the World, largely because of an overlap in personell involved in each. For instance, Ivens, the founder of the Winnipeg Labour Church was the correspondent of the New York Call, a 'Communist controlled' paper. The religious orientation of the O.B.U. was also a factor. The O.B.U. membership card bears the words "Money is the root of all evil" saith the
as Materialists and Promoters of Class divisions, they were by popular ballot elected to the legislature. Wm. Ivens, John Queen and George Armstrong could not take their seats for some time because they were still in prison. A. E. Smith, Fred Dixon, W. D. Bailey, A. E. Moore were among those elected. J. S. Woodsworth later took up a political career. A. E. Smith makes this remark: "It is significant that not one of them was at that time a Marxist".

Woodsworth became a founder and active leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, Canada's socialist-labour political party.

WOLVERHAMPTON

1894                  12                  120

Wm. J. Carthy
Tom Frost
Joseph Whittaker

Joseph Whittaker, author of Hymn 57 in the Labour Church Hymn Book, was active in the Wolverhampton Labour Church Pioneers. In a reported dated July 1893, he wrote:

"We are going on quietly. We are scarcely more than a dozen, and heavily hampered by hours of work, and bread-and-butter considerations. We have held a kind of Labour Church Service in the open air (east end) the last four or five Sunday nights. We have two or three hymns from the Labour Church Hymn Book, a reading - usually from The Prophet, and about two addresses. No Prayers. This is not exactly a praying region. The first Sunday we sang two hymns, but no adults came near us. About forty children clustered around, but of course we cultured Fabians could not stoop to speak to mere children. The next Sunday was the same - plenty of children, but no adults. We were disgusted, but one of us, Tom Frost by name, was not so superior as his comrades, and, to the children's delight, commenced reading to them the children's story from the May number of the Labour Prophet. By and by a few adult people came round, and we had an adult meeting after all, though only about a dozen. The next Sunday was a shade better, and last Sunday we had about forty; so we are going on slowly. As I said, we have many drawbacks, but why give up the children? If you must have the adults, let Tom Frost go off somewhere else and draw the children."

Lord. 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' saith the Lord.". Another factor would be the statements of men like J. S. Woodsworth who gave his endorsement to 'One Big Union and One Big Church whose only test of membership would be Brotherhood and the Fore-Look.'

The author of the pamphlet may have been Senator Robertson.

1. A. E. Smith, All My Life, 

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In the autumn of '93 the Labour Pioneer group were attempting to hold Labour Church meetings and socials in an effort to get a Labour Church congregation established. A choir and string band were organized and trained, in order to lead in the singing at the meetings. Early in 1894 these efforts resulted in the organization of a small congregation which sponsored one large public meeting per month, at which the average attendance was 120.

In 1914 The Wolverhampton I.L.P. had a Labour Church secretary. The Wolverhampton Labour Church members were also active in the Wolverhampton Trade Union Co-operative Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Society, Ltd., which had been formed in January 1893, and in which Councillor Stevenson had been a prime mover. While the project was under discussion the employers heard about it and fired the workmen interested - thus forcing a premature beginning. The Co-operative workshop formed succeeded for at least the first year.

WOOLWICH

- 1913 -

At the Fourth "Labour Week" in Browning Hall in 1913 the Woolwich Labour Pioneer Choir crowded the platform. The present writer is of the opinion that this choir may have been a Labour Church venture. R. W. Sorensen, M.P. indicated in conversation that there was a Woolwich Labour Church.

WORKINGTON

There was some interest shown in 1894.

WREXHAM (Cinderella only)

1894 Medium Miss Williams Mr. Frater

Wrexham Cinderella (not strictly a Labour Church Cinderella, but Labour Church inspired) was begun in the autumn of 1894. During the first two years 4,800 free meals were given to slum children. At the beginning of the 1896-97 season the committee was planning another bigger and better year.

 YORK (Cinderella only)

1893

A Cinderella Club was in operation indicate that in 1895 a Labour Church discussion.
SIGNIFICANT EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES
OF THE LABOUR CHURCH UNION

The Founding Conference, Saturday and Sunday, July 22 & 23, 1893, at Manchester:

Seventeen delegates representing 10 congregations (four were un-represented) and Pioneers from 9 areas met in the Labour Church Institute, 3 St. John's Parade, Byrom Street.

A resolution having been passed safeguarding the delegates' position and responsibility at the conference, the Chairman then submitted the resolution: "That the time has come when it is desirable that a Labour Church Union should be formed." In doing so, he gave a more detailed and personal statement of the origin and growth of the movement, and said that if any justification were needed for the resolution he submitted, it was to be found in the report of the General Secretary. He spoke next of the financial difficulties connected with the work, in spite of which he had stood resolutely for both religious and political independence. He felt that he could honestly say that in asking them to form a union of Labour Churches, he was inviting them to take over a movement absolutely independent of either denominational or political control. -- The resolution was seconded by E. Halford (Bradford) and carried unanimously.

The Principles of the Labour Church were next put forward as the basis of membership of the Union, and although several amendments were proposed, these were not carried, and the Principles were finally accepted as originally drafted and presented.

The next subject for consideration was the Object of the Union. E. Halford (Bradford) moved, and S. G. Hobson (Cardiff) seconded the acceptance of the Bradford "Object" . . . After some discussion . . . it was agreed that the following should stand as the "Objects of the Union": "I. The development of the religion of the Labour Movement." "II. The realization of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth by the establishment of a state of society founded upon Love and Justice."

A statement of the methods of work of the Union was next put forward and accepted, and then the Conference discussed its own constitution, the constitution of the Council, and the arrangements to be made for the holding of future Conferences. An important alteration was made here in the original draft constitution. It was decided nem. con. not to have a President, but to appoint a Chairman of the Union, and to this office John Trevor was eventually elected. Hugh V. Herford was appointed Treasurer, Miss K. M. M. Scott was chosen Pioneer Secretary, and Fred Brocklehurst, B.A., General Secretary, and the four delegates who were elected members of the council were Edwin Halford (Bradford), S. G. Hobson (Cardiff), S. Hodgkinson (Bolton), and J. C. Kennedy (Carlisle).
The Council of the Labour Church Union, July 24th, 1893.

... the question of raising funds was considered. It was decided to issue an appeal for immediate help to the Labour Churches and Pioneers, and to individual friends of the movement. The Secretary's salary was next discussed, and after this matter had been disposed of, it was decided to allow him the help of an assistant secretary.

With respect to the resolution standing in the name of the Halifax Labour Church, it was decided that in the opinion of the Council the arrangement of a Speaker's Plan for the Churches was impracticable, and that the question of Sunday Schools be left over until the next Conference. The Council recommended all Labour Churches in the meantime to extend Cinderella work, wherever such work is practicable. A discussion upon the question of Labour Church literature concluded the business.

The Second Conference, November 18, 1893, in Manchester.

Ten churches were represented by delegates; ten others were unrepresented; several pioneers were present representing four areas.

... we began our new financial year with a slight balance on the wrong side. There is every reason, however, to believe that the effort which the churches, Pioneers, and other friends are making will speedily make this right and make us solvent for the future.

The following resolution was then moved by S. G. Hobson, of Cardiff: "That this conference of the Labour Church Union hereby expresses its intense satisfaction that the Coal Lock-out has at last been settled. We congratulate the miners and their wives upon their magnificently Spartan fight, and express the hope that the lessons gained will lead to the earliest possible nationalization of the mines." This found a ready seconder in Clement Atkinson of Bradford, and was carried unanimously.

Mr. Robson then read particulars of a rearrangement scheme, by which the services of the chairman and general secretary will be better utilized in the services of the Union, and it was agreed that the recommendations of the Council in this matter should be accepted; and under this scheme Mr. H. C. Rowe has since been appointed corresponding secretary.

1. By this arrangement John Trevor was free to pursue the development of the movement according to his own ideas, with the assistance of H. C. Rowe. Mr. Rowe's duties were "to do the correspondence of the Union, to take the minutes of the Conference and Council, and to help John Trevor in the work of literature." Much of the routine of Labour Prophet distribution was to be turned over to the publishers. Fred Brocklehurst was to work as a 'field secretary' under the direction of the Council. Both Brocklehurst and Trevor were to be free "for Missionary effort and the work of uniting and developing the churches". -- Information based on an editorial in the Labour Prophet, Dec. 1893 p. 12.
The General Secretary's report next followed. . . . Four new
congregations had been opened and Labour Churches had been begun, or
were about to begin, in eight other centers of population. . . . He concluded his statement . . . by referring to the financial dif-
ficulties which threaten their life as a Union in its inception, but
which, he said, were now being overcome by the generous efforts of
the churches.

The question of Sunday Schools was next discussed. Some delegates
spoke in favour of Children's Sunday Schools; others on behalf of
adult Sunday Schools; and it was finally decided that the Council
should collect information regarding the Adult School Movement, and
issue a circular to the Church thereon.

The resolution empowering the General Secretary to charge, in the
interest of the Extension Fund, Ten shillings above travelling ex-
penses to the churches he visited, was lost. It was justly pointed
out that a resolution such as this would press very heavily upon
churches so far distant as Plymouth, Dover and Dundee, who were now
heavily burdened in having to pay bare railway fares.

A most important resolution was next passed, . . . "That this Con-
ference recommends that in so far as possible, the churches grant
periodical collections to the Extension Fund, and generally assist
that fund in other ways; and instruct the Council to bring this
matter before the churches.

The Constitution as approved at the Second Conference:

I. BASIS

The Labour Church Union is a union of Labour Churches and Labour
Church Pioneers accepting the following Principles as their Basis of Work: --

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 relation 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.
II. OBJECTS

1. The development of the Religion of the Labour Movement.

2. The realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth by the establishment of a state of Society founded upon Justice and Love.

III. METHODS OF WORK

1. The consolidation and development of the Labour Church Movement by Missionary enterprise.

2. The strengthening of individual Labour Churches, and the maintenance of fraternal relations and collective work among them.

3. The sale and free distribution of Labour Church literature.

4. The maintenance of a Labour Church Union Fund, and such other funds as may from time to time be required.

5. Hearty co-operation with other organisations in the struggle for the Emancipation of Labour and for the reconstruction of Society upon the basis of Equality and Brotherhood.

IV. ORGANISATION

1. That the Labour Church Union shall leave each Church free to manage its own affairs.

2. That the organisation of the Union shall consist of a Conference and a Conference Committee.

V. ANNUAL CONFERENCES

1. The Churches shall meet annually, to transact business and to discuss matters relative to their common work, each Church being eligible to send two delegates. Pioneers present at Conferences to have equal powers with delegates, save that they shall not vote on the revision of the Constitution.

VI. SPECIAL CONFERENCES

1. The Conference Committee, or any six Churches, shall have the power of summoning a Special Conference.

VII. OFFICERS

1. Honourary Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary. They shall be elected at the Annual Conference.

VIII. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

1. The Annual Conference shall appoint a Conference Committee composed of the three officers and four Church delegates. The delegates so elected to be chosen from Churches other than those to which the officers belong.
2. The duties of the Conference Committee are as follows:
   (a) To transact special business which may arise between the Conferences.
   (b) To call the next Conference and to prepare the agenda therefore.

3. The Conference Committee are empowered to propose such by-laws as may be necessary for the performance of its duties, these by-laws to be subject to revision by the Conference.

IX. FINANCIAL

1. Each Church shall pay an affiliation fee of 5s. per quarter to the funds of the Union as a condition of membership thereof, such fee to be due on the 1st of January, April, July, and October.

2. In addition to the affiliation fee each Church shall grant at least one Sunday's collections in each year to the funds of the Union.

3. The expenses of officers and of delegates from Labour Churches attending a Conference shall be pooled and shared equally by the Churches represented, these expenses to include actual loss through absence from work.

The Third Conference, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 17 & 18, 1894, at Bradford.

Delegates from twelve churches and Pioneers from six areas made up the conference. The press was excluded from proceedings.

The report of the Treasurer of the Extension Fund was read, and showed a deficit of £51/9/4, mostly salary due to the General Secretary. The General Secretary followed with a report of the year's work, and after explaining his reasons for so doing, placed his resignation before the Conference.

A resolution standing in the name of Fred Brocklehurst read as follows: "The Labour Church movement is a union of all those who, by organised or individual effort, are emphasising or developing the moral and ethical aspect of the Labour Movement. The Annual Conference is the outward expression of this union of spirit, purpose and work." It was proposed by the General Secretary to substitute this general formula for the Basis and Principles at present accepted by the Constitution of the Union. After a long discussion, the resolution was rejected 11 votes to 9. It was decided later on that whilst the organisation of the Union should be left free for revision by an actual majority at the Conference, the Basis should only be revised by a resolution supported by two-thirds of the Delegates present.

The draft scheme drawn up by Mr. Brocklehurst, and endorsed by the Council, was accepted with some slight alterations, excepting the financial clauses, which were referred to the new Conference Com-
mittee. This committee now has in hand the task of preparing a
scheme whereby, if possible, the General Secretary's services may
be retained, either wholly or in part.

The Conference Committee is composed as follows: John Trevor,
Chairman; S. Hodgkinson, Treasurer; F. Brocklehurst, Secretary;
Delegates: E. Halford, Bradford; S. G. Hobson, Cardiff; R. Morley,
Halifax, and H. C. Rowe, Cardiff.

**Correspondence**, Labour Church Union to all Labour Church Congregations,
dated, January, 1895.

Dear Comrades, -- ... We have now fourteen Churches which
have accepted the new financial basis, ... There are twenty
other towns and districts carrying on Sunday work on our lines, and
in many cases adopting our principles and title, but without con-
forming to the new financial conditions of membership. ... There are twenty-five other districts which have evinced a desire to
begin Labour Church work in connection with the Union.

Mr. John Trevor having resigned the position of chairman of the
Union, Mr. Hugh V. Herford, the late treasurer of the Extension
Fund, has been asked, and has consented to succeed him.

In conclusion we would suggest the advisability of a careful selec-
tion being made of the speakers upon our platforms. ... Our
movement should be preserved against the danger of its becoming a
mere political or economical propagandist medium.

**The Fourth Conference**, Nov. 16 & 17, 1895, at Halifax. (All groups
calling themselves Labour Churches, whether or not they had af-
filiated themselves with the Union, were invited.) There were 19
Churches represented by 24 delegates.

The financial report showed that the Union had not fulfilled the
obligations to Mr. Brocklehurst as agreed to by last Conference,
and was also in debt to the treasurer and to the bank. A discussion
on financial re-arrangement then took place, and it was finally
resolved to lighten the burden on the churches by reducing the
affiliation fee to 2/6 per quarter. It was also decided that all
churches in the Union should devote the collections taken on the
first Sunday in March to the expenses of the Union, and that this
Sunday should be known as Conference Sunday.

Edwin Halford, of Bradford, was then appointed to the chair; R.
Morley, Halifax, treasurer; and G. F. Corkwell, Leeds, honourary
secretary. The Committee consists of S. Hodgkinson, H. C. Rowe,
Seth Ackroyd, and G. J. Wardle.

It was decided to meet again sometime in May, when weather could be
expected to be much better.

**The Fifth Conference**, Saturday, June 6, 1896, in Leeds. (Invita-
tions were sent to various Clarion clubs to join in the Conference.)
A number of congregations bought tents to hold the Conference in
the open air.
An important resolution was brought forward by R. Morley to the effect that Conference expenses in future should be pooled and divided on the basis of each delegate present instead of each Church; the Churches being entitled at present to send two delegates. After considerable discussion an alternative resolution was passed; "That in future a fee of 5s. per delegate attending Conference be charged, and all expenses incurred above that sum be pooled per Church represented."

The Conference Committee was elected: Edwin Halford, Chairman; Walter Morse, of Leeds, Secretary; R. Morley, Treasurer; Seth Ackroyd, Hull; G. J. Wardle, Keighley; S. Hodgkinson, Bolton; and H. G. Rowe, Manchester. The Committee was instructed to get out a list of speakers suitable for the Labour Church platform, with particulars as to charges, etc. It was also instructed to prepare a short supplement which could be added to the Labour Church Hymn Book, and to publish a leaflet similar to one prepared by H. V. Herford for free distribution at Labour Church open air meetings.

The Sixth Conference, Sat. and Sun., May 22 & 23, 1897, at Bolton.

Out of 27 Churches, only 7 were represented at the Conference. The financial statement showed a small balance in hand, and the debt to Fred Brocklehurst reduced to £2.

The Churches had already too much expense to bear, and found that they could not well support the Union. Comrade Morley moved, "That the present Constitution of the Labour Church expire with this Conference." Comrade Morse (Leeds) seconded. Comrade Sims supported, pointing out that there had been too much constitution-making. On being put to the vote it carried. Comrade Hodgkinson moved, "That the Labour Church Union consist of all Labour Churches, Brotherhood Churches, and societies whose object is to present the ethical view of the Socialist and Labour movement, and that all such be invited to an annual Conference, attendance at which and payment of conference dues shall constitute membership. A chairman to be elected at this conference who, along with the church at which the conference is to be held, shall form an executive committee, and make arrangements for the next conference, no affiliation fees or other charges to be imposed." This was carried.

Comrade Morley moved, "That Comrade Sims be chairman of next Conference." Comrade Halford stating that he wished to retire from the position; Comrade Bland seconded; carried.

Comrade Sims moved, "That this Conference of delegates of the Labour Churches believes it to be highly expedient in order to perpetuate and consolidate the Labour Church movement, as well as the unity and cohesion of the Churches themselves, that active steps be taken by each Church to add Sunday-School work to what they have already in hand.

The Seventh Conference, Sat. and Sun., June 4 & 5, 1898, at Leeds.

Twelve congregations were represented at the Conference.
President gave a short address on the question of the Labour Church Union. He thought we could have a Union without any financial burden, at least for the present, and without any Executive Council, the bond of union being the work we were engaged in. The following resolution was then moved by Leeds: "That there be a Labour Church Union, which shall include Ethical Societies and other bodies who are agreed as to the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven in this life." An amendment was moved by Halifax to delete "Ethical Societies", and the amended motion was carried.

It was further resolved that "Labour Churches be recommended to form themselves into groups for the purpose of arranging a plan of local and other speakers, and thus work harmoniously together at less expense and that Labour Churches be formed wherever none exist."

Bertram Wilson of the Hanley Labour Church Reform Committee gave a report on their Anti-Lead Poisoning Crusade. The following resolution was then passed: "That this Labour Church Conference give its united voice in condemnation of the system of lead glazes in the manufacture of pottery, seeing that a non-injurious glaze can be successfully used, and call upon the Home Secretary to insist upon this glaze being used for the better protection of the workers' lives."

The following resolution was passed: "That we recommend the formation of Vigilance Committees in all churches to take cognisance of all abuses in the industrial world, particularly of those affecting women and children." The scope of such committees was defined as follows: the watching of all dangerous trades in order to endeavour to eliminate all risks to human life, trying to shorten the hours, and better the conditions of unskilled and unorganised labour, particularly of women and children, watching the progress of education, sanitation, demolition of slums, watching elected persons, assisting workers in dispute, and tabulating all such help in our monthly report to the Labour Prophet, so that proof of our practical sympathy could be given.

Walter Morse, (Leeds), moved, and Bradford seconded, "That the Conference take into consideration the best means of infusing Socialism into the Christian Churches." It was gathered that the best way to achieve this was by means of the literary and other societies connected with the churches, and that we should cultivate every opportunity for intercourse with such bodies.

The Eighth Conference, Sat. and Sun., June 17 & 18, 1899, at Hanley.

Nine Labour Churches were represented at the Conference. In the absence of Mr. Sims due to illness, the chair was taken by Mr. W. H. Beechener, the secretary of the Hanley Labour Church.

The first resolution on the agenda was sent from the Bolton Labour Church: "That there be one motto for all the Churches in the Union." Mr. Pearce proposed: "Laborare est orare." Mr. Williams said he had voted against adopting a motto, but if one were to be used, he thought that at least it should be in English. He therefore proposed Carlyle's translation of the Latin, "Work is Worship". Mr.
Duncan said that he could heartily adopt the motto if it were rightly interpreted. To most working men their daily labour was anything but worship. It was hard grinding toil, with nothing that was elevating in it. Labour in that sense was not worship; but work for humanity was. The resolution was carried nem. con.

"With the view of relieving the difficulty experienced by the Churches in finding suitable speakers, it is suggested (a) that a central organisation be constituted for mutual aid, with a lecture secretary at its service; (b) that by entering into closer relation with local progressive societies a helpful interchange of suitable speakers might be effected." It was pointed out that at the Leeds Conference their Church had proposed the grouping of Labour Churches into districts for arrangement of speakers, with a view to harmonious working and the reduction of expenses. The Churches of Bradford, Halifax, and Leeds had appointed representatives to see what could be done for their district. One or two meetings had been held, but nothing came of them. This resolution dealt with another phase of the problem. It was felt, when they had an exceptionally good speaker who had aroused and inspired them, that the same inspiration should be carried round to all the Churches. Through a Lecture Secretary information might be given respecting such speakers, and arrangements made whereby all the Churches might benefit. The resolution was put by the Chairman, and carried unanimously. It was then moved that "Mr. Waldegrave be appointed Honourary Secretary to the Labour Church Union, with the work of Lecture Secretary included.

Mr. Atkinson moved the following resolution on behalf of the Manchester Labour Church: "That the Labour Churches take into consideration the advisability of changing our name to Brotherhood Church, Socialist Church, or some similar name, with a view to the question being brought up at the next Conference." Some of the Manchester members felt that their name was a hindrance to them, and was liable to cause misconception. Mr. Halford said that whatever name they had, some objection might be raised against it. He moved: "That we proceed with the next business." The amendment carried, with only the Manchester delegates opposing it.

On behalf of the Hanley Labour Church, Mr. Sneyd moved: "That a constitution be drafted for the working of future Conferences." With the explanation that they were an executive body, meeting but once a year, and that it was far better they should be free in the transaction of their business, it was moved: "That the next business be proceeded with."

Mr. Sneyd, also on behalf of the Hanley congregation, moved: "That Labour Churches take political action where there is no political organisation." In opposing the motion Mr. Duncan spoke of the splendid work done by the Hanley Labour Church in regard to lead-poisoning. The eye of the whole world was on them. Direct political action would have injured their cause rather than helped it. What they had done was real educational work. They had stirred up sympathy, and compelled people to study the terrible evil with which they were confronted. If, on the other hand, they had put political candidates forward to demand a reform in lead-working, what a poor
show they would have made! Those who were engaged in that dangerous industry would be able to say, "See what a small following they have!" Now it could truly be said, "See what a large influence they have!" More had been done in two or three years by their methods than could have been done by 20 years of direct political action. He was sure that for Labour Churches to enter the arena as political organisations would not increase their influence. At the same time it must be left for each Labour Church to decide upon its own action. There might be exceptional cases. They had a free platform in ethics and religion, and must have the same freedom in politics.

Another speaker claimed that the greatest help which the Labour Church could give to the Labour movement was to bring speakers down to stimulate them to do greater things for the cause.

The following motion was passed as the alternative to Hanley's proposal: "That this Conference deprecates the taking of political action by Labour Churches as such, although heartily approving of such action by individual members." This was carried with only two dissentients.

Mr. Atkinson moved and Mr. Pearce seconded, "That Mr. Sims be the President of the Labour Church Union for the ensuing year." The resolution was carried unanimously.

In the course of a discussion on "The Raising and Development of Speakers for the Labour Churches" Mr. Trevor spoke of the necessity, if their movement was to become permanent and effective, of providing a body of trained men for speakers and workers, and especially for the pastoral work of the Labour Churches. He believed it would be found impossible to carry on such a movement as theirs without setting apart those who were most suitable for such work, and providing them with the means of living. Of course, the time for this was not yet, and he intended to do nothing whatever towards the solution of this part of the problem. He believed it must be solved simply by the actual experience and necessities of their churches.

A succession of speakers opposing any idea of a 'paid ministry' clearly showed the attitude of the Conference: The influence of the parson was no good. The paid minister would always want to boos the show, and so make trouble. If we had a free pulpit in all the Churches we should hear things; but now, 'He who pays calls the tune!'

The Labour Churches supported Raymond Unwin in the Peace campaign. A united Labour Church section of the International Memorial was signed by 500 people representing 8 congregations. Many congregations passed resolutions similar to the following:

"Resolved that the ....... Labour Church desires to express hearty approval of the step taken by the Tsar in calling a conference to consider the maintenance of peace and the restriction of the growing burdens which modern armaments entail on the peoples of Europe, and calls upon the British Government to go into the conference with a determination to help in giving practical effect to the desire of all the people for the maintenance of peace and the reduction of armaments."
The Ninth Conference, Sat. & Sun., May 19 & 20, 1900, at Bradford.

Delegates were present from ten congregations. The reports from the delegates on the position and the methods of their respective Churches showed that in spite of the prevalent indifference to Socialism, the Labour Churches were holding their own, and in one or two cases, making distinct headway.

On the question of the war in South Africa, it was felt that, while it was rather late to do anything in the matter, the Conference must add its voice to the protest against the proceedings which had led up to the war, and it was decided that a manifesto submitted by the Croydon Labour Church should, with a few slight amendments, be issued forthwith.

On Sunday morning an address was delivered by Dr. Stanton Coit (of the Ethical Societies) on "The Relation of Ethics to the Labour Movement".

The Tenth Conference, Sat. & Sun., June 8 & 9, 1901, at Nottingham.

Eleven congregations were represented. After a discussion on suggestions to alter the name of the Labour Church, or add some subtitle bearing the word "Ethical", it was decided to ask the Churches to consider the matter by next Conference.

There were proposals from Bradford and Leek that the hymn book be revised and enlarged. It was suggested that Churches send in lists of the hymns they would like retained together with suggestions for new ones, and that the result be brought before the next Conference.

Mr. Woods, on behalf of Bradford, moved that some form of service for the use of the Churches be drawn up. It was felt that something wanted to give unity and order to Labour Church meetings. This matter was also referred to the Churches for their consideration.

The Conference decided that the Churches be asked to send the names and particulars of 'newly discovered' Labour Church lecturers to the Secretary.

The proposition that a visiting committee be appointed, and that every Church receive two official visits each year, was defeated because the Union was in no position, financially, to put the resolution into operation.

Mr. Blogg on behalf of Croyden, moved that "This Conference of Labour Church recommends that Labour Churches everywhere should unite for the purpose of taking common action, wherever possible, in endeavouring to bring about the ownership, by the community, of houses for the working classes." The resolution was unanimously carried.

On Sunday morning the first business proceeded with was the election of officers. Dr. Crawshaw, of Ashton-under-Lyne, was elected president, and Mr. A. J. Waldegrave was re-elected secretary.
The question of electing a Treasurer again brought up the financial arrangements of the Union. Mr. Beechener of Hanley moved that the question of a general fund be brought before the churches with a view to the formulation of a scheme for their making contributions according to their means; and that meanwhile, the Secretary act as Treasurer. This was agreed to.

Mrs. Sims having briefly explained that at present the Labour Church Record was on the rather unsatisfactory basis of depending on the contributions of outside sympathizers for its existence, the Editor, Mr. Allen Clarke, asked for expressions of opinion from the delegates as to whether they thought it worthwhile continuing the publication. Expressions as to the value placed upon the paper were rapidly forthcoming. Eventually it was decided that the paper should be continued as a quarterly publication, and issued to the churches at 5p. per 100.

Dr. Stanton Coit lectured on "The Parables of Christ and the Coming Socialist Struggle". Dr. Coit's presentation of the parallel between the revolutionary character of Christ's teaching and that of Socialism was enthusiastically received, and evidently made a great impression on his hearers.

The Eleventh Conference, June, 1902, at Leek. (From an article in the Clarion, August 29, signed W. H. Syme.)

The Labour Church Union held in June at Leek in the Wm. Morris Labour Church, was, in the main, a dire disappointment to those who have been looking for the Labour Church Union to become the inspiriting and directing head of a great social and religious movement. So far-reaching are the potentialities of its development as an organizing and executive power that the contrast between what it yet is and what it might be is a depressing and humiliating consideration. Hitherto its guiding and combining influence on the separate Churches has been little felt. Indeed, there appears to be somewhere within the Union something radically wrong. Its life and energy are lilliputian in comparison with those of the weakest of the scattered churches contributing to it.

Feeling their need for a truly executive tribunal, five of the Labour Churches have sought it in the Union of Ethical Societies. There they now sent their delegates, hoping, as they assert, permanently to continue the support of both unions.

At the Leek Conference, a restless sense of schism was manifest. At all points it intervened to stay action, and nothing of any practical importance was accomplished. The tide was at ebb, and a very low ebb, too. Was a desire expressed that a program be drawn up to aid in the church celebration of births or marriages, or for the solemnisation of a burial? The subject was already under the consideration of another union, and might well wait. Was a fund suggested to widen and strengthen the work of the Union? There was no necessity for it, as there was little, if anything, to be done. Was the organisation of systematic mission work for increasing the number of churches mooted? This was a
matter that could very well be left to the individual Churches. Was the attempt made to enthuse the conference upon any particular branch of its labours? It was held to be simply a pious resolution.

These were low water marks. Now it is felt the tide has turned, the flow has begun. Mr. D. B. Foster, of Leeds, is the chairman, appointed for next year's conference. He knows of the incoming tide, and is stirred by its hopeful vigor. In this he is not alone. His purpose during the coming months is to visit all the Labour Churches, and to get into touch with each.

Mr. John Trevor, too, improved in health, is prepared to renew his energies on behalf of his offspring, the Labour Churches, if only ways and means can be devised. Like a veritable father, it is hoped he may be enabled to sojourn for a season among all his children, aiding them with his counsel, and strengthening them for renewed effort, and propagation of the humane gospel -- the gospel of the good samaritan -- of the human family.

The President's Message, in the Clarion, Dec. 19, 1902:

In an article entitled "A Creed For The Labour Church" D. B. Foster wrote:

"The spirit of rebellion has largely predominated the Labour Church Movement so far. The time is now coming to move to the positive side." He suggested the following tentative creed:

"The life and teaching of Jesus were very good.

"The sense of good in me by which I appreciate the goodness of Jesus is my authority.

"The beauty of Jesus lies in his having the tendency toward evil, like the rest of us, but overcoming that tendency.

"The sense of good in me urges me to live my own life faithfully, and not to be an imitator of others.

"That I am capable of perfection, and that I am called upon by my sense of good to follow it ever.

"That the Kingdom of Heaven is a condition of right relations amongst men."

The Twelfth Conference, February, at Hyde; 1903:

This Conference established a Central Fund, issued a List of Lecturers suitable for Labour Churches, and proposed a thorough revision of the Hymn Book. It elected a new executive: J. H. Belcher, President; J. Herbert Shaw (Birmingham), Secretary; T. A. Pierce (Nottingham); J. Mitchel (Bradford); H. Thompson (West Bromwich). This executive was instructed to make the Labour Church Union more effective.
The Thirteenth Conference, June 11 & 12, 1904, at West Bromwich:

All the Churches sent delegates and most of them were able to report a good year's work, with increased membership and satisfactory finances. In not a few instances the Churches could tell of successful co-operation with other societies and Labour organisations in local elections and in other ways. The previous Conference made a new departure in electing an executive committee, who were able to report the establishment of a most successful Church at Stockport, and of another at Long Eaton. Efforts had also been made to found Churches in other centers. The accounts showed a balance of £6.

The executive drew up a constitution and set of rules which were discussed, amended, and passed, subject to ratification next year.

It was resolved to revise and enlarge the Labour Church Hymn Book.

The following executive was elected: John H. Belcher (London), President; John Mitchel (Bradford), honorary secretary; T. A. Pierce (Nottingham); J. H. Shaw (Birmingham); H. Thompson (West Bromwich).

It was agreed to observe a Union Sunday, Labour Day, Citizen Sunday, and Peace Sunday, in all Labour Churches. Resolutions were passed favouring free, secular, industrial education, compulsory with State maintenance, and a Labour and Socialist political party. It was resolved that Socialist Sunday Schools be formed in connection with every Labour Church.

The Fourteenth Conference, 1905, at Watford:

Thirteen delegates were present from nine congregations. The year began with £6/-6½; the sum of £8/-3 was received from the Churches; the cost of meetings and printing accounted for £11/2/6½ leaving a balance of £2/18/3. It was reported that no congregation was in a flourishing position and that all were in financial difficulties though all were hopeful for a better future.

Birmingham brought in several motions to revise the Principles; the First was revised to read "That the Labour Church exists to give expression to the Religion of the Labour Movement." The other proposals were lost, or resulted only in minor changing of wording.

Resolutions were passed supporting the Labour Representation Committee, the feeding and care of infants and children, and the necessity of bringing pressure to bear on all National and Local governing bodies.

The Birmingham Delegate charged that J. H. Belcher was an unfair chairman, speaking to amendments, and thus defeating agnostic and socialistic resolutions.

The Fifteenth Conference, February, 1906,

Good reports were received from the Churches. Large and enthusiastic
meetings are recorded, as a result of the aid of good speakers. Finances are assuming a better complexion, as may naturally be expected. Such reports have been the rule this session previously to the elections. Since the first results arrived, however, packed "houses" have been the order of the day. The elections generally have manifested a keen interest in our work, and have created a tremendous revival in all branches of the movement. The last three Sundays at Bradford have been reminiscent of the early days. Hundreds have been turned away. For the next two Sundays, therefore, St. George's Hall is to be engaged for evening services.

The following executive was elected: H. Brockhouse (West Bromwich), President; John Mitchel (Bradford), Secretary; T. A. Pierce (Nottingham), Treasurer; Messers Spencer, Watson, and Gorle, Committee; and Tom Groom and P. M. Sturge, Auditors.

The Principles were again amended. The executive was instructed to provide a "Model Form of Service", to compile an up-to-date list of Labour Church Lecturers, and to make recommendations that a ceremonial form might be adopted for births, marriages, and burials or cremations.

It was resolved "That this Conference adopt some system of keeping all affiliated Churches well informed of the work done by the Union, with a view to increase the interest of the Churches in the Union."

A further resolution supported the Women's Enfranchisement Bill;

The Sixteenth Conference, March 9 & 10, 1907, at Stockport:

Reports indicated that all congregations were in a flourishing state. The treasurer reported a balance of £13/1/6. A revision of the Hymn Book was approved; a wide selection of hymns was to be retained. The information received regarding services of birth marriage and burial was referred to H. Brockhouse and J. H. Belcher that complete drafts might be prepared and submitted to the Churches.

R. Gorle (Watford) was elected President; the remainder of the executive were re-elected.

The Seventeenth Conference, March 7 & 8, 1908, at Bradford.

Reports from thirteen congregations showed flourishing conditions. Most had flourishing Sunday Schools. A letter from J. H. Belcher reported no progress on the preparation of ceremonials.

The first edition of the revised Hymn Book (10,000 copies) was sold. A second printing of 20,000 copies had been ordered, and it was nearly sold out. The profit to date was £13/4/4. A new edition was again required. Some desired further revision, but no action was taken. A motion by P. Barnes, seconded by Tom Groom, that the

1. For a discussion of the revision of the Principles, see pp. ????
hymn "When Wilt Thou Save Thy People, Lord?" contrasted sharply with the Labour Church idea of self reliance was lost 7 to 13.

Several Churches had changed their name to Socialist Church. A resolution that the Union change its name accordingly was lost 8 to 12.

Resolutions were passed favouring state action to provide work for the unemployed, pensions for the aged, and free universal education for every child to the age of sixteen.

The treasurer reported the New Hymn Book account -- £28/2/8, the General Account -- £54/18/5 with a balance in hand of £26/18/4.

Lewis Watson (Ashton-under-Lyne) was elected President; there was no other change in the executive. Secularist influences were quite strong throughout the Conference.

The Eighteenth Conference, March 13 & 14, 1909, at Ashton-u-Lyne:

The executive reported that efforts had been made to get affiliations from many branches of the Socialist Movement who were holding Labour Church meetings, but with little success. A few new Labour Churches had been formed. Nine congregations reported by delegates; four congregations reported by letter; Bradford declined to send a delegate to Conference owing to "... (in our opinion) the unconstitutio- nal action of the Labour Church Union Executive."1

The Conference changed its name to "The Socialist and Labour Church Union." It resolved to circularize its member congregations half-yearly, support the "Right To Work Conference", and publish its "Form of Ceremonial for Burial"

The treasurer reported a balance in hand of £12/3/10. The following executive was elected: H. Beechener (Hanley), President; J. Mitchel (Bradford), Secretary; T. A. Pierce (Nottingham), Treasurer; Lewis Watson (Ashton-u-Lyne), T. Hardy (Hyde), and Dolly Parker (Birmingham), Committee Members.

Further Conferences:

The 1910 Conference made the change of name to 'Socialist and Labour Church' obligatory. Conferences were held each year till the outbreak of the First World War. The final Conference was held on March the eighth, 1914, at Stockport. Detailed information of any of these Conferences has been unobtainable.

1. Bradford Labour Church Minute Book, Minute of March 2, 1909. The Birmingham Minute Book suggests that the trouble was mainly the changing of the name.
STOCKPORT LABOUR CHURCH

Official Handbook

"Merrie England" Bazaar.
January, 1891

My Dear Friends:

At our congregational meeting recently, I welcomed the opportunity of thanking you for the generous reception which you had given to Mrs. Trevor and myself, and of indicating what I felt to be one of the most important duties of our church. As we are about to enter upon a New Year together, I am anxious to say something further of what I deeply feel about our work.

In the first place, I want to thank you for the freedom of the pulpit to which you have invited me. In these days it is no small privilege, and also no small responsibility, which you have conferred upon me. You leave me more liable to make mistakes, to say things which a wider experience, a deeper knowledge, a tenderer affection would have left unsaid; but, on the other hand, you grant me one of the most necessary conditions of development and strength, which, consecrated to your service, will, I trust, be your reward.

To lessen the mistakes attendant upon the exercise of freedom, I have endeavoured to extend our opportunities for interchange of thought upon those religious and social problems which are of such vital importance to us. It is not the minister alone who must contribute his best thought to the development of the church. Life is so vast, and its problems so intricate, that only by the collective experience of many individuals can the true path of progress be followed; and it is one of the aims of our church to bring together a variety
of minds all united in the common purpose of establishing upon earth a Kingdom of Truth and Righteousness.

The position of the minister of such a Free Church has peculiar difficulties. If his mind be actively engaged in the pursuit of truth, if he be seriously studying the problems of life around him, if he be earnestly looking forward to an awakening among men of nobler thoughts and purer deeds, then he will be liable to find his views diverging more and more from those of some of his congregation, while approaching more nearly to those of others. Thus he will be in danger of seeming to be the leader of a section of the Church rather than of the whole Church, and in proportion as he enters into his work with sincerity will his danger in this direction be increased.

I beg you to help me solve the problem thus presented. I believe its solution lies chiefly in a frequent and generous interchange of thought, and the development of mutual understanding and confidence. I am sure you will not wish to escape it by seeking to limit my freedom, or by asking me to refrain from the utterance of convictions which I honestly feel. If the preacher is to endeavour to please all his hearers, he is limited to the utterance of helpless platitudes, to marking time to empty words.

And such preaching is useless in these days -- a New Conscience is awakening in the world which is sweeping away the old confutable conceptions of life, and unless the preacher can give some utterance to this New Conscience, however crudely, his function is worse than useless. This strong
spirit is drawing us to the cesspool and the gutter — not by any means for the first time, but with a stern determination and a more inspiring hope. We have learned that many of the diseases of the body are preventable; and everywhere men are busy in their prevention, and successfully busy. We are now learning that diseases of the soul are largely preventable — that Poverty and Drunkenness and Crime are ills which we have to master as well as small-pox and typhoid fever. Thank God, with the New Conscience a New Faith too arises, and we are growing more confident that our fight with these awful social diseases will be increasingly victorious.

In our church we have the New Conscience largely developed. What we do need more and more is the New Faith to accompany it. Otherwise we shall only be perplexed and dismayed by the problems presented to us by our awakened moral sentiment. It is in the direction of a higher Faith that I want to work during the coming year. I fear that to some of you I have appeared too much like one who perpetually pokes the fire without also adding fuel. Myself appalled at the sin and misery in which so many are lost, and believing that there is ample energy in our great nation to obliterate a vast amount of it, if only that energy can be turned from the satisfaction of selfish desires to the service of man as man, I not unnaturally grew impatient with the comparative Indifference or Hopelessness which still characterises the average mind in spite of all our progress.

However, impatience is not strength; neither can it impart
strength. We must have more faith as well as earnestness.

And so I will try during this New Year to work out thoughts
ever which my mind has long breded, and which convince me
with growing power that we may hope in the future both of the
Individual and of the Race. Our thoughts of God change, but
He changes not. We are permitted to watch the evolution of
His laws, and to co-operate with Him in their working. We are
beginning to share God’s kingdom and rule with Him, and to be
increasingly our own intelligent and free Providence. We live
at the dawning of a new Spiritual Age, as real in its advent
and as marked in its development as any Age of Bronze or of
Iron. No greater privilege, no richer fortune, can fall to a
man than to be filled with the consciousness of this new
dawning. May its radiant warmth and golden glory bring new
light and love to our Church, and consecrate it afresh to the
Divine service of Humanity.

I have urged upon you from time to time the necessity of
our doing work as a Church outside our Church. A commencement
has been made in a humble and faithful way. A few earnest
young men, attracted by the freedom and wide sympathy of our
Church, have come asking for work, and have begun with an
enquiry into the conditions and needs of a small and poor
district. This has been an unspeakable encouragement to me,
as well as an added responsibility. May it encourage you also.
We need more faith in our message, and according to our faith
will it be unto us.

Will you accept at once a motto and a message for the New
Year? I find none more noble and true than the old words of
Jesus, which, in our new age, are being filled with a deeper meaning: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." The consecrated life includes everything. As individuals, as men of business, in our homes, in our church, in the world, we may use this saying as a test of our real worth to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and before God. And as a message, we may preach it fearlessly, so far as we act up to it honestly; and we may be assured that its wide acceptance would bring a new life to our old world.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year, I am,

Yours very sincerely,

John Trevor.

July, 1891

My Dear Friends:

You are aware that from my first coming among you I have felt the need of carrying our message beyond the walls of our own Church. It has seemed to me that, unless we were able to do this, we could not justify our pretensions to religious life; that, on the other hand, we should continue to justify those who declare that Free Religion can awaken no enthusiasm and inspire no self-sacrifice. Unwilling to admit the truth of such a declaration, I have worked on as patiently as I could, believing that the day would soon come when we could see our way to enter upon some serious missionary enterprise. Until recently, however, I have not myself seen what partie-
ular form such an enterprise should take, though I have had a very definite idea of the results I wished to accomplish.

The material and political progress of the present century has brought us to the verge of a great social crisis. Labour is assuming a new position and a higher dignity in the affairs of the State. It is being organised on an ever increasing scale. It is multiplying its agencies, developing its resources, adopting independent principles, and providing itself with its own means of expression and representation. Indeed, Labour is becoming so strong that it is being assiduously courted, not only by politicians but by the Churches. What Labour needs, however, is not to be courted, but to be inspired with a strong religious life of its own, which shall save it from finding the hour of its success the hour of its ruin. The need of our time which I feel most deeply is to give Religion its rightful place in the Labour Programme — Religion, free from creeds and formulas, but full of vigorous life, and capable of sustaining self-sacrifice and enthusiasm.

If it be said that many of the Labour Leaders of to-day have rejected Religion, I must reply that what they have rejected is a Religion which has in the past been employed as an instrument of repression, a Religion which has been limited in its view to personal sin and personal salvation, and therefore to mere personal relations; a Religion which has taught men a good deal about their individual responsibility to God and man, but which has utterly failed to enter into the more intricate question of social responsibility. The Labour
The attempt made to form a Labour Church in Manchester has already met with unqualified success. Based upon the simple conception that The Labour Movement is a Religious Movement, that through it the Power of God is working in the hearts of the people towards a nobler existence on earth, it has laid hold upon a large body of men, most of whom had become utterly indifferent, and many of them thoroughly opposed to all existing religious organisations. It is impossible to convey on paper any adequate idea of the New Enthusiasm and Hope that have been awakened. Every day I have some fresh proof of the readiness of men to consecrate all their energies to the new movement. The following quotation may be taken as a sample of the communications I receive.

"I scarcely dare write all I wish, yet I cannot keep silent. So pardon me, for I must say a little of what I feel. I know the uphill fight that's before you. I think I know the task you have set yourself. It is noble, sir; it is good. I cannot help but admire; ah! and help you, if you command. You have gone to a rough school. But there are some true hearts there, and some willing hands. Many of us have been on the look-out for years for a church such as you told us about a few Sundays ago. And now, sir, it is within our reach. Do not be surprised if a few out of a great number try to express their gladness and their thankfulness, if only in a humble way. . . . My companion of these last few Sundays is an old man 71 years of age. We have walked down twice. I tell you this so that you may know that your teachings are not only heard in Manchester, but carried miles and retold, and that men will walk five miles to hear the Religion they have longed for, waited for, and never understood till now."

Still more touching, perhaps, are the letters I have received from men not so well able to express themselves as this man from Pendlebury has done. Many who have regarded themselves as outcasts from Religion, because they could find no home in any of the Churches, are beginning to realise that in struggling resolutely to improve the condition of their fellow men they have been doing God service though they knew it not. The new inspiration of this thought has given joy and gladness to many a weary and way-worn life. A New Gospel of Glad Tidings has been preached, and thereby a new confidence in the coming of God's Kingdom on Earth has been awakened.

The work involved in starting this movement has been very heavy, and far more lies ahead as we develop our organisation. Any amount of voluntary effort is forthcoming, but it needs organising and directing. This is no mere question of popular
The principle to be adopted was so clearly and emphatically stated by Mr. Wicksteed at our recent National Triennial Conference, that I cannot avoid giving it in his own admirable words, for which I heartily thank him:

"If I say that all questions of industrial organisation are to be regarded simply and without qualification from the point of view of the worker; that the employer, the professional man, the artist, the statesman, the man of science, the poet -- all who do not in the strictest sense 'make' their living -- must stand or fall by the simple test of whether they make life more truly worth living to the hewers of wood and the drawers of water; if I say that culture, and beauty, and knowledge are pagan and inhuman so long as they are the privilege of a caste and are built upon the toil of a subject race excluded from their enjoyment, I may be denounced as a revolutionist, but I am simply stating the very root principle of Christianity."

This principle I am prepared frankly to accept; not merely for industrial organisation, but for religious work; not merely for others as a class, but for myself as an individual. If our religion is to be a power in the community, it must be a power in the hearts of the workers, and to them must our appeal be directly made. But religion will never be a power with any people save so far as it arouses their sense of need, and satisfies the need they feel. Now, what the worker most needs today is not only personal salvation, that is, freedom from his own selfishness and sin. It is the Emancipation of Labour he is crying for in the name of the Brotherhood of Man. He has
grown out of the pure individualism of the old religious spirit. He wants not only himself but his whole class and the whole social order saved. He believes in a Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and he is most anxious not to enter the Kingdom alone. We have long talked of Brotherhood, but we have never yet realised the deep meaning of it. Man has been the slave and tool of man, and we have not understood how unbrotherly such bondage was. The worker is beginning to understand it, and if any appeal in the name of Religion is to awaken a deep response in his heart, he must find it in a new inspiration in demanding the Emancipation of Labour, and a new confidence that his demand will be realised.

Further, if any genuine work is to be done in this direction, it must be by means of a new organisation, going beyond anything the Churches have yet attempted. Pleasant Sunday Afternoons and Popular Services and various philanthropic organisations have commenced an attack on the problem, but the time has come for another step in advance. Just as Liberal and Conservative candidates no longer satisfy the workers, but they must have Labour Candidates with a Labour Party and a Labour Press to support them; so they must now have a Labour Church, if Religion is to be included in the Labour Programme. Such a Labour Church I want to organise in Manchester. This is the work outside our own church which I am most anxious to accomplish. On the first Sunday morning in the month I will explain my proposals more fully, and on the following Thursday evening I shall be glad to meet those of you who are interested in the matter, so that we may freely discuss it together.

Yours very sincerely, John Trevor.
November, 1891

Dear Sirs-

I write to you as Secretary of the Upper Brook Street Free Church, to tender my formal resignation of my position as your minister. I do this with most sincere regret, and am only led to take this step because I am convinced that the interests of the Church demand it.

The Labour Church movement has, quite unexpectedly to me, assumed such large dimensions that it can no longer be regarded as a work in which Upper Brook Street can find a sphere of missionary labour. Moreover, the nature of the movement is such that my continued connection with it and with Upper Brook Street would cause serious financial embarrassment to the latter.

Under our agreement I believe that six months' notice on either side is necessary; on my part I am quite ready to waive this, and to leave you at the end of the year if you wish me to do so; and I can assure you in all sincerity that you will be most truly consulting my own wishes if you consider solely what is the real interest of the Church in this matter. My own feeling is that the Labour Church movement will develop in such a manner that it will be decidedly for the interest of Upper Brook Street that I should leave as soon as possible.

I had arranged for the December services, etc., before deciding to take this step, but the arrangements can be altered if the committee wish it. I felt that I should need a short break in my work and so am preparing to be away in Norwich with my family on the last Sunday in the year. This was the
only time at which we could be away together.

I am most anxious that it shall be understood that I leave you without any sense of ill-will or want of kindly treatment. It is scarcely necessary for me to say that I only leave you from necessity, and shall always feel that you have acted toward me in the most considerate manner possible.

I have only to ask you, in conclusion, to accept my resignation as final. Don't have any voting, or any division upon it. I am certain that no other course is open to me.

Very sincerely yours,

John Trevor.

**QUOTATION FROM A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW ERA**

January, 1892

"... The religion I want to teach is the religion of the nineteenth century, helped by the first century, but not in any sense bound by it. The inspiration of it must come from what God is doing now all around us and within us. As of old, I find I must get outside existing churches to preach the new gospel. They may do a great deal in softening the hearts of the middle classes toward the labour movement, but they cannot develop the religious heart of the labour movement, as it needs developing if we are to have a true civilisation. ..."

Signed: John Trevor.
Do you desire

THE EMANCIPATION OF LABOUR?

ARE YOU IN REAL EARNEST ABOUT IT?

THINK WHAT IT MEANS!

It means that Labour shall be self-directed, instead of being driven by Necessity, whose whip is Hunger and Cold.

It means that toil shall be borne, not from a mere selfishness and greed, but from a feeling of Brotherhood among men.

It means that the reward for toil shall not be so many shillings a week, about which there shall be endless strife, but a reasonable share in the general well-being, a humane existence, and a sense that work done has not kept another less fortunate brother out of employment, but has contributed to the wealth of the community.

It means a great Moral Revolution in Society — not a Bloody Revolution which can bring no permanent good.

It means a hearty desire to learn the laws of God, and a ready willingness to obey them.

It is time there was a church to stand for all this!

This is why

THE LABOUR CHURCH HAS COME!

ALabour Church Handbill - 1891.
The attempt made to form a Labour Church in Manchester has already met with unqualified success. Based upon the simple conception that The Labour Movement is a Religious Movement, that through it the Power of God is working in the hearts of the people towards a nobler existence on earth, it has laid hold upon a large body of men, most of whom had become utterly indifferent, and many of them thoroughly opposed to all existing religious organisations. It is impossible to convey on paper any adequate idea of the New Enthusiasm and Hope that have been awakened. Every day I have some fresh proof of the readiness of men to consecrate all their energies to the new movement. The following quotation may be taken as a sample of the communications I receive.

"I scarcely dare write all I wish, yet I cannot keep silent. So pardon me, for I must say a little of what I feel. I know the uphill fight that's before you. I think I know the task you have set yourself. It is noble, sir; it is good. I cannot help but admire; ah! and help you, if you command. You have gone to a rough school. But there are some true hearts, there, and some willing hands. Many of us have been on the look-out for years for a church such as you told us about a few Sundays ago. And now, sir, it is within our reach. Do not be surprised if a few out of a great number try to express their gladness and their thankfulness, if only in a humble way.

... My companion of these last few Sundays is an old man 71 years of age. We have walked down twice. I tell you this so that you may know that your teachings are not only heard in Manchester, but carried miles and retold, and that men will walk five miles to hear the Religion they have longed for, waited for, and never understood till now."

Still more touching, perhaps, are the letters I have received from men not so well able to express themselves as this man from Pendlebury has done. Many who have regarded themselves as outcasts from Religion, because they could find no home in any of the Churches, are beginning to realise that in struggling resolutely to improve the condition of their fellow men they have been doing God service though they knew it not. The new inspiration of this thought has given joy and gladness to many a weary and way-worn life. A New Gospel of Glad Tidings has been preached, and thereby a new confidence in the coming of God's Kingdom on Earth has been awakened.

The work involved in starting this movement has been very heavy, and far more lies ahead as we develop our organisation. Any amount of voluntary effort is forthcoming, but it needs organising and directing. This is no mere question of popular
It is a question of developing a Strong, Living Church which shall have its varied activities and agencies covering the whole of Manchester and Salford, and wielding a powerful influence in the social and religious development of the community.

With the other duties which devolve upon me I cannot possibly carry on the work without the assistance of a paid secretary. A young man has just been appointed, who is now at work in my own house; but it will be necessary to find an office for him close at hand, as we have not the room to spare which he will need for his duties. Besides this, a large room will be required in the centre of the city for our week-night meetings. All this, with the expenses connected with the Sunday afternoon services, means that a considerable income will be needed. But more than this; we are missionaries; we are propagandists; we want to go out into all parts of this great community to deliver our message, we hope to spread our literature far and wide, so that this dense mass of population may be leavened with the Gospel of the coming Kingdom. To us, therefore, the statement that a Church ought to be self-supporting does not apply, because we are taking in hand a far greater work than our own religious edification once or twice on the Sunday. The men and women who are coming to the services are ready to give according to their means, but until we are well organised we shall not know how much support they can afford. They are ready to give themselves; the money will follow. We shall hope in time to be able to support ourselves entirely, and to devote whatever money comes to us from outside to missionary and philanthropic enterprise.

The accompanying financial statement will satisfy you that we wish to be very business-like in the management of money, and, indeed, in all our work, although we are touched with enthusiasm. Whatever money is given will be duly acknowledged and accounted for. Cheques may be made payable to the Financial Secretary, Mr. J. O. Thomas, 324, Oldham Road, Manchester, or to myself; and under any circumstance a formal receipt will be given by Mr. Thomas. Cheques or Postal Orders may be crossed "Manchester and Salford Bank".

JOHN TREVOR

20, Acomb Street,
Greenhays,
Manchester,
November, 1891.
THE LABOUR CHURCH
Manchester and Salford.

On the following pages will be found the Accounts of the Labour Church to the 31st. of October, 1891.

The afternoon Services were commenced on the first Sunday in October in the Chorlton Town Hall, which seats 400 persons. On the second Sunday we were overwhelmed with the crowds who came to hear Mr. Robt. Blatchford. This compelled us to find a larger Hall at once, and the Peoples Concert Hall was taken, which has a seating capacity of fully 1,600. As our handbills and posters had been printed for the month, this change of Hall necessitated a large additional outlay in advertising.

On the third Sunday in October, the first in the larger Hall, I announced that in November a Penny Collection would be commenced. The audience cried enthusiastically for a collection to be taken at once; hence the two amounts given in the Balance Sheet.

The last item of expenditure, the amount invested in Books, etc., is an investment which will yield a large dividend. The full discount of 25 per cent. is allowed off the published price of books, but we get thirteen to the dozen where a dozen of one kind can be ordered, and we make a profit on pamphlets and on the sale of the Workman's Times, for the North Country Edition of which I am writing a series of articles on the Labour Church. In four Sundays a profit of 22s has been thus realised. After spending what is necessary for the extension of our stock of books, the balance will be given towards the formation of a lending Library for the use of members.

So far I have had the financial arrangements entirely in my own hands. Now a Finance Committee has been appointed, consisting of Mr. Alfred Dugdale, Mr. F. H. Breedon, and Mr. J. G. Thomas, of which Mr. Thomas is the Secretary. All cheques are to be signed by myself, and one member of the Finance Committee, and cheques may be made payable either to Mr. J. G. Thomas, 324, Oldham Road, Manchester, or to myself. All subscriptions will be acknowledged by a formal receipt from the Financial Secretary. Balance Sheets will be published periodically, audited by a well known Accountant, and everything will be done to ensure confidence in the management of our Finances.

I have to thank Mr. Frederick Willett, Accountant, of 49, Spring Gardens, Manchester, for very carefully auditing these accounts without making any charge.

JOHN TREVOR

20, Acomb Street, Greenheys, Manchester, November 12th, 1891
The Labour Church, Manchester

Balance Sheet to October 31st, 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr.</th>
<th>Cr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Subscriptions</td>
<td>47 9 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Collections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>2 9 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>2 15 7 5 5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 900 Circulars</td>
<td>1 10 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>By 23,500 Handbills</td>
<td>3 16 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 600 Posters</td>
<td>4 9 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Posting posters</td>
<td>3 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Advertising in papers</td>
<td>2 11 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Papers for distrib.</td>
<td>0 3 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 7000 Hymn papers</td>
<td>5 10 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By M.S. Music Books</td>
<td>0 17 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Copying music</td>
<td>1 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Music stands</td>
<td>1 16 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Band</td>
<td>2 18 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Piano etc.</td>
<td>1 14 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Hire of halls</td>
<td>7 14 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Gratuities</td>
<td>0 10 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Collecting boxes</td>
<td>1 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Cupboard at hall</td>
<td>1 15 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Stationery case</td>
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<td>By Postage stamps</td>
<td>2 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Telegrams</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Cheque book</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Amount invested in Books etc. for Book stall</td>
<td>4 5 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audited & found correct

F. Willett
Accountant

11th, November, 1891

By Balance in hand 4 15 10

52 14 3

The subscription list to October 31st, 1891, listed 28 donors of amounts from £5 to 5s. Among the donors were:

J. Estlin Carpenter
Alfred Dugdale
Hugh V. Herford
J. S. Mackenzie, M. A.
D'Arcy W. Reeve
A. J. Reynolds
C. Reynolds
Wm. Reynolds
John Tenney
Mrs. John Trevor
John Trevor
REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF LABOUR CHURCH LECTURERS

("*" indicates a Lecturer whose name turns up frequently in several lecture syllabi)

Ackroyd, Seth - of Hull.
Adams, Mrs. Bridges-Adams, - S.D.F., Education Committee of Gas Workers and General Labourers Union; spoke on school meals and education; '08 - '12
Aldridge, Mrs. - interested in Land Nationalization; '98 - '99
Aldridge, H. B. - '98
Alexander, - of Leeds; '98
Alpass, Bert - '99
Anderson, Tom - of York; '94, '98
Anderson, W. C. - Hyde candidate for parliament; '07-'10
Annakin, Miss Ethel (Mrs Phillip Snowden)
Armitage, John - of Buxton; '26
Atkinson, - '98
Baker, Mrs. H. Hennie - of London; Birth control; '14
Baldwin, Oliver - '26
Banham, W. - Nat. League of the Blind; '01
Banton, G. - '98
Barnard, W. F. - Ethical Society; '99 '01
Barrett, H. L. - of Halifax and Brighouse; '98 - '00
Barratt, Moses
Barry, Miss Marion - of Leek; Women's Trades' Union; '98
Bartlett, W. W. - E.L.R.L.; '96
Barton, Alf. - '12
Bassham, Wilfred W. - of Stockport; Militant Socialist spoke on Paris Commune
Bates, J. A. E. - championed free speech, and went to goal for it in '97. Free Lance journalist and lecturer. Freethought Socialist League and B.S.P. Self styled as a rebel against all institutions revered by ruling classes; '13-'14
Baylock, T., B.Sc. - '25
Beckett, R. A. - one time Editor of the Labour Prophet; '96 '98
Beckett, T. - of Hartlepool; '95
Belcher, Rev. J. H. - of the Unitarian Church in Plymouth in 1910; for some time Pres. of the Labour Church Union; '94 '01 '10
Benson, Councillor J. W. - Active Trade Unionist with Railway workers in earlier years. Left Railway to take up public service as Councillor and Guardian, and Candidate for Parliament; '08-'11
Berinder, Frederick - '98
Best, J. C. - '94
Black, Edward - '08
Bland, Hubert - '94
Bland, Paul - '94
Blatchford, Robert (Nunquam) - Editor of the Clarion, Merrie England, etc.; founder of Cinderella groups Clarion Cycle clubs, Clarion Fellowships, etc. Often in demand and always ready to assist the Labour Churches, especially during the '90s.
Bondfield, Miss Margaret - of London; very popular at Labour Church children's services; child and mother health problems; Ass. Sec. to Shop Assistants Union; '07-'10
Bonner, Mrs. - (daughter of Mrs. Bradlaugh) '99
Boughton, Rutland - lectured on Wagner as the musician of Socialism and Communism. Lecture illustrated by complete third act from Tannhauser; '10-'14 '29
Bowen, J. W. - U.P.W.; '28
Bramley, Fred - Clarion Vanner
Bree, Jessie - of Leicester; '01
Brewer - of Blackburn; '95
Brewin, J. A. - '26
Bridges, - of Nottingham; '01
Broadbent, J. E. - from Oldham (vegetarian) '92-'99
Brookehurst, Fred (Councillor) - one time secretary of the Labour Church Union; in popular demand during the '90s and early 1900s;

Brooking, J. W. - '12
Brooks - of Blackburn; '99
Brown, R. Hope - '00
Bryan - '01
Burgess, Joseph - of Clarion Van; one of the Old Brigade of socialism; '98-'12
Burgess, Stanley M.P. - '23
(One might expect to see John Burgess's name here -- but he would not speak in Labour Churches for he deplored them; nor after the first few years would the Labour Churches invite him.)
Burrows, Herbert - '94
Burt, J. - '07
Butler, W. P. - '00
Calladine, Mrs. - '98
Campbell, Paul - of London; '95-'99
Campbell, W. P. - '94
Capper, D., B.A. - '26
Carpenter, Edward - Member of Fellowship of the New Life; '92
Casson, H. N. - of Lynn, Mass., U.S.A.;
Catford, E. O. - '98
Chaplin, Councillor Jabez - of Leicester; '99-'01
Charlesworth, Rev. A. - '94
Charrington, Charles - London Fabian from its formation. Essayist, Novel writer, and dramatist; cultured and eloquent socialist lecturer, lst to produce and tour the plays of Ibsen and Shaw. '98-'02
Chatterton, - '98
Chesterton, Cecil
Child, Rev. Thomas - '00
Child, Mrs. - '99
Clarke, C. Allen (Teddy Ashton) - of Bolton; writer, one time editor of the Labour Church Record; '98
Clarke, Ernest - '07
Clarke, Rev. J. Ross - of Barnsley; '98-'01
Clayton, Joseph - '98-'01
Clynes, J. R., M.P. Oldham J.P.; half-timer in cotton mills as a child; organizer for Gas Workers and General Workers Union; Various offices in Trade Union; '01-'09
Coates, Florence - '98
Cohen, Chapman - Nat. Secular Society; '22 '24
Coit, Dr. Stanton - Ethical Society; '92-'01
Cole, Mrs. Gordon - of Liverpool; '27
Collings, Rev. T. - of London; '98-'99
Collings, Rev. - "the Dossers Parson" at Nottingham service in '97
Colthammer, F. W. - '12
Compton, Jos., M.P. - of Gorton
Connell, Jim - '98
Connolly, James - of Dublin; '01
Conway, Kathleen (Mrs. Bruce Glassier) - '93-'08
Cook, A. J. - '27
Cook Gilbert - Socialist Sunday Schools; '26
Cooper, Styan - of Dewsbury; '98
Cope, G. C. - '01
Copley, Burley - '12
Corbett, Miss - '98
Corbett, Chris. - of Manchester; '97 '98
Cowlin, W. H. - '22 '28
Cox, Mrs. - '98-'00
Craik, Will. W. - '12
Crees, L. - of Birmingham; '95
Cross, T. - of Rishton; '98
Cunningham, - of Dunfermline; '98
Curran, Pete - '92-'01
Dale, - '98
Davies, John - of Birmingham; '98-'01
Davies, R. J., M.P. - '24 '29
Dawson, Harry - of Liverpool; '08
Dearmer, Percy
Deasy - of Manchester; '98-'99
Dell, Robt.
Dendy, Miss M. - making appeal for the building of a home for defective children.
Desmond, Shaw - '12
Despard, Mrs. G. - (sister of General French) Women's Freedom League; S.D.P. then I.L.P. and Socialist Church; joined W.S.P.U. in '06; founded W.F.L.; '00-'14
Dhondi - of India; '99
Dobson, J. E. - of London; '98
Douglas, Miss Margaret - '14
Driver, C. - of Walkden; '98
Duffy, T. Gavan - widely travelled lecturer with 'limelight' illustrations; '08-'25
Dugdale, A. - Associate of Trevor at Upper Brook St. Church at Manchester; '99
Duncan, Chas., M.P. - of London; '07
Duncan, Mrs. Herbert - '00
Duncan, T. B. - '98 '01
Dunn, Miss May - Lecturer on Burns; '26 '28
Dunne, Rev. Herbert, M.P. - '24
Duxbury, Fredrick - elocutionist; '09
Edwards, Frank H. - of Birkenhead; S.D.P.; delegate to International Congress at Amsterdam '04; '10 'is now well known as a paid agitator"
Edwards, John - of Liverpool; one of the leading lights of Socialism in Liverpool; Pres. of Fabian Society; well known citizen and shipping merchant; '09

Elliot, Dr. Arnold - of New York, U.S.A.; '07

EIlcum, Jennie - '98

Ellery, Mr. - A candidate for the ministry who was not given a pulpit because of his unorthodox views. Active in L.C.; '98-'99

Ellis, Edith Lees - '92

Ellis, Havelock - Fellowship of the New Life and Fabian

Ellis, Mrs. Havelock - '05

Elvey, Maurice - an actor writer with an interest in socialism; '10-'11

Ensor, R. C. K. - of London; barrister; I.L.P. representative on N.A.C. Executive of Fabians, and author of book on modern socialism; '09-'10

Evans, Miss Dorothy - W.S.P.U.; '12

Fallows, J. A. - first a Curate of Established Church, then Unitarian minister, then sec. of Birmingham Socialist Society, member of Birmingham City Council; '99 '10

Farrington, Wm. - of Bolton; '98-'99

Fathers, J. F. - '12

Ferrey, J. R. - of Manchester; '97 '99-'01

Findler - of West Salford; '98

Finley, Wm. - of Manchester; '98-'01

Flannery, Sir F., M.P. - of Shipley; '01

Fletcher, A. E. - editor of New Age; '98-'00

Flood, F. - '24-'26

Flux, Prof. A. U. - Manchester University; '99

Ford, Mrs. I. O. - '98-'01

Foster, D. B. - '98 '01

Foster, Fred - '12

Fothergill - '98

Fox, Councillor Tom - Member of I.L.P. from inception; General Sec. of British Labour Amalgamation and member of Executive Council of National Labour Party; '01 '11 '12

Frank, Alick - '99

Furlong, Mrs. Lillian - Socialist Sunday School; '26

Fyfe, Hamilton - '25

Gallacher, Rev. C. - of Bradford; '99

Garbutt, T. - '01

Garland, Miss Alison - '98 '99

Gee, W. - B.S.P., Marxist; '12

Glasier, Bruce - very popular L.C. Lecturer throughout the years. ***

Glasier, Mrs. Bruce - (see Miss Kathleen Conway) '12

Glyde, C. A. - of Bradford '12

Gordon, Maud - '12

Gordon, Thomas - of Salford; '98

Gore, H. H. - of Bristol; '04

Gore-Booth, Miss Eva - of Charter St. Ragged Schools, Manchester; '01

Gorle, Fred H. - Pres. Labour Church Union; '08

Gorst, Sir John - '07

Gould, F. J. - of Ethical Society; Socialist Sunday Schools; Councillor (London); '00-'07
Grady, Joe - of Walkden & Leicester; '96 '98-'01
Graham, Duncan, M.P. - of Hamilton; '22 '25
Graham, J. W., M.A. - of Dalton Hall; '99 '08
Graham, T. B. Cunningham, M.P. - '92 '94 "
Graham, Rev. W. B. - won to Socialist thought by Belamy's Looking Backward and confirmed in it by Blatchford's Merrie England; lost curacy by political activity in Colne Valley by-election; '10
Grayson, Victor, M.P. - B.S.P.; "But for our esteemed comrade, Victor Grayson, many of the churches would be penniless" (Birmingham delegates report of 1909 L.C.U. conf.; '07-'14; "
Green, F. R. - of Inner Temple, London; '98
Green, Harry - of Openshaw; '98-'99
Green, J. T. - '99 '01
Gregory, - of Manchester; '98
Grieg, Miss Billington - '12
Griffiths, Miss - '98
Groom, Tom - '98 '01 '05 '12; "
Guest, Dr. L. Haden - of London; '12 "
Gunning, J. - of Manchester; '98
Guttridge, E. - '01
Gwynne, C. G. - '98-'99
Hacking - from Ruskin Hall; '00
Hales, Samuel - '95
Halford, Edwin - of Bradford; '93-'98 "
Hall, Edward Potter - of Eccles; '94
Hall, Leonard - Militant Socialist; member of N.A.C., B.S.P.; refused consistently to stand as candidate for parliament; '98-'12; ""
Hall, Thos. - F.R.H.S.; '25 '27
Hall, W. K. - '92
Halls, Eldred - of Birmingham; excellent and eloquent advocate of ethical principles inherent in Socialism; '10 '12; "
Halling, Miss Daisy - an ex-actress who gave up the stage to use her talents in the spread of the Socialist Gospel; '09-'12; ""
Halstead, Robt. - of Hebden Bridge; active in Co-operative movement; '98
Hamilton - London Fabian Society; '98
Hampson, Walter - ('Casey' of the Labour Leader) '08
Hanson, H. - of Halifax; '98
Harben, H. D. - J.P.; '14
Hardie, J. Keir - National leader of I.L.P.; very sympathetic to and enthusiastic for the Labour Church; '91 onwards; ""
Hardy, Rev. Thos. J. - '95
Hare, F. S. - '96
Hare, W. L. - of Derby; '01
Hart, E. J. - '98
Hartley, E. R. (Fred) - was the B.S.P. candidate in by-election at Leicester in '13; Secretary and organizer of Clarion Vans in '10; Bradford alderman; '98-'14; ""'
Harwood, G. Jr., M.P. - for Bolton; '98-'01; "
Haslam, James - of Bolton; '98
Hayward, Fred - of Burslem; '98
Haywood, W. Price - Sec. of Land Nationalization Society; '01
Hazel, Miss Gladys - '12
Headlam, Stewart - '96
Healey, Father S. Anglican - member of the Community of the Resurrection '87-'10; then devoted full time to propagation of Socialism as means of Salvation for Church; Sec. London branch of Church Socialist League.
Heavyside, - '96
Heller, W. - (neuristic education) '00
Hemingway, Leonard N. - Brought to Socialism through Fabians in '06; In '09 studying for the ministry to devote whole life to cause of the workers.
Hempshall, J. - '94
Henderson, Fred - of Norwich; Member of Norwich City Council, and author of Case for Socialism and other pamphlets; '12;
Hendry, T. - of Glasgow; '96
Henshall, - of Manchester; One of the early founders of I.L.P. and a critic of 'sidetracking' from pure socialism; '98 '10
Hepworth, Molesworth - '98
Herford, H. V. - one time president of Labour Church; one of the original founders of Manchester Labour Church; '92-'00; ***
Hildreth, A. W. - '93 195 196;
Hird, Dennis - teacher and lecturer on Evolution and Socialism; "When they get too good for the Established Church they come to the Labour Church and in Mr. Hird, I think I see the drop indicating a coming shower. But there is one qualification which we must make, that they come as brothers & socialists and not as superior persons." (Keir Hardie in introducing Dennis Hird to a large Labour Church Anniversary at Halifax; Prophet, Nov. '97) '98-'11;
Hobson, S. G. - Quaker; '94 '98-'01; "
Hogdson, H. - '99
Holmesgore, Hugh - of Bristol; '98
Hopps, Miss - of Stockport; '99
Hookway, E. J. - of Manchester; '22
Horne, Rev. T. - '97 '98
Horniman, Miss A. E. F. - '14
Horrobin, J. Frank- '27
Horrobin, Winnifred - '28
Hoyle, Dr. - of Manchester; University Museum; '99 '07
Hubbard - '99
Hudson, J. B. - of Manchester; '98 '01
Hudson, J. H., M.P. - '12 27
Hughes, Fred - of Birmingham; '01 '12 "
Hughes, H. - '95
Humphries, G. - of Bolton; Compelled to leave Bolton because of Socialism; went to Coventry; '98
Humphries, Hubert - '12
Hunter, Ernest E. - of Clarion Van. A young speaker and writer of the movement; '10
Hutton, W. Harrison - '96 '98
Hyndman, H. M. - founder and leader of S.D.F.; in constant demand but only an occasional lecturer at Labour Churches.
Ingle, H. - Labour College; '22
Irving, Dan - member of Burnley Town Council and Board of Guardians; '98-'14; ***
Isherwood, R. W. - Socialist Sunday Schools; '14
Jackson, - of Manchester; '98 '99
James, John - Trades and Labour Council of Barnsley; '99
Johnson, H. H. - '99
Johnson, Howarth - Land Problem; '14
Johnston, James - of Macclesfield; '98 '01; 
Johnstone, Dr. - '98 '00
Jones, F. O. - S.D.P.; eloquent and sarcastic, orator of socialism; '12;
Jones, Rev. J. E. - '98 '01
Jones, J. T. - '12
Jowett, Fred W. - founder of Bradford Labour Church; Bradford M.P. and writer for the Clarion; 
Kay, Mr. J. Taylor - of Manchester; '98
Keeling, Miss Eleanor - '98
Kenworthy, J. C. - of Brotherhood Church, London; 
Killip, A.E. (Bert) - of Birkenhead; organizer for B.S.P.; was imprisoned for free speech agitation; '07
King, P. J. - '98
Kirkland, A. - of Irvine; '96
Knapp, A. W. - '12
Kneeshaw, J. W. - '12;
Knight, Rev. Theodore - Guild of St. Matthew; '00
Lane, Wm. - '98
Lang, Rev. Gordon - '28
Lansbury, Edgar - of London; '26
Lansbury, Councillor George - member of Commission on Poor Laws and one of the signers of famous minority report. M.P. for Bow and Bromley; imprisoned for his socialist principles and actions; '07 '14 '26; 
Large, J. Dawson - of Liverpool, leader of Scottish Clarion Van '08 and the Lincolnshire Van and Lancashire Van; '08 '11 '12;
Laurie, H. H. - '14
Law, Albert - '26
Laycock, Arthur - '98
Layland, A. - of Heanor; '01
Lazenby, Albert - '96
Lees, Albert, - of Tyldesley; B.S.P.; '12 '14;
Lees, Miss Edith - '91
Lennard, Harry, - '12
Leonard, T. A. - Ex-minister of Free Church; '08;
Lester, John - '98
Lilly, J. - '01
Linfoot, George - Prominent I.L.P.; '11
Lishman, R. - of Bradford; '98
Llewellyn, H. - '98
London, T. C. - '94
Long, James - '98
Longden, Fred - '26
Lowerison, Harry - Headmaster of Ruskin School House at Heacham-on-Sea; thorough going socialist; educationalist; '95 '98 '11
McArthur, Miss Mary (Mrs. W. C. Anderson) - of London; '07
McCabe, Joseph - was Father Anthony of O.S.F.; Rationalist Press Association; Translator and author; '08 '22; 

516
McCarthy, Tom - organizing Sec. Dockers Union; '92
McCulloch, John - '92
MacDonald, Gordon - '28
McDonald, J. R. - Ethical Societies; Member Fellowship of the New Life; '94 '95 '00 '01
McGhee, Richard - '92
MacKail, John William - '00-'04
McKay, Miss Ivor - '11
McLachlan, Councillor J. M. - of Manchester; candidate for parliament; I.L.P.; 'stirling worker for 'bottom dog''; '10 '12
MacLaren, Andrew, M.P. - '27
McMillan, Margaret - of London, Bradford, etc.; '92 on
McNeill, John - '98
MacPherson, J. T.? M.P. - '08
Malone, Col. C. L'Estrange, M.P. - '28
Mann, Tom - active, particularly in the early years; opened many Labour Churches; '92-'28
Marklew, Ernest - S.D.P.; conducted week long Socialist 'missions'; '09 '11
Marland, Miss - '95
Marr, T. R., M.A. - Manchester councillor, Warden of Ancoats settlement; '05 '10
Marshall, Mildred D. - a good friend though not a member of the Labour Church; '96
Martin, Dr. A. W. - of Gorton; '97 '98-'01
Martyn, Miss Carolyne - '95
Mason, Richard - of Liverpool; amateur actor and lecturer on Socialist dramatists; '10
Mathison, Arthur - '12
Maude, Aylmer - lecturer on Art and on Modern views of Sex Question; '00 '01
Mellow, W. - of Ardsley; '99 '00
Mercer, T. W. - '23
Merry, Frank - of Ruskin Hall; '00
Midgley, James - of Peace Society; '98 '99
Miller, David - '96
Minty, G. - of Bradford; Councillor; '98
Mitchell, Mrs. - of Ashton-under-Lyne; Guardian and advocate of woman suffrage; '07 '08
Mitchell, John - of Bradford; elocutionist; '01 '10 '12
Mitchell, J. - of Nottingham; '01
Moore, C. H. - '00
Morel, E. D., M.P. - Dundee; '25
Morgan, Fred - '98 '01
Morley, Councillor Roht. - '96 '98 '01
Morrisey, Councillor J. W. - of Liverpool; Catholic Socialist Society; '08 '09
Mossman, J. - '96
Muirhead, Prof. J. A. - of Mason's Science College; '99
Muggeridge, E. T. - '01
Myers, Tom, J.P. - '25
Nair, Sir. C. Sakkarin - C.I.E.
Neal, Miss Mary - '01
Neale, Clara - '00
Neighbour, Rev. Geo. - 19 years Baptist Minister compelled to resign because of staunch advocacy of Socialism. He began a Non-sectarian Brotherhood; '09 '10
Neild, Alda - '96
Nelson, Dr. Joseph - of Hull Public Dispensary, but dismissed for appearing on Socialist platforms, and set up in practice as 'poor man's doctor'; '09
Nevill, A. - of Leek; '98 '01
Newett, Miss - of Owens College; '98
Nield, Miss Ada (Mrs. Chew) - of Rochdale; '99 '01
Mobbs, Horace - sec. of Hyde Socialist Sunday School; '10 '11
Noel, Rev. Conrad - Organizing Sec. of Church Socialist League; conducted week 'missions' for Labour Church; '07 '10 '12
Northcote, Prof. Henry F. - Andrew's Scholar in Science, University College, London; 'Marxism and Evolution'; S.D.P.; '10 '12
Nowell, Rev. Roden - '95 '96
Oakeshott, John Francis - Member of Fellowship of the New Life and Fabian; '97 '98
Oakesmith, J. - '12
Oliver, Miss - '98
Palmer, Geo. - '00
Pankhurst, Dr. & Mrs. & daughters - Woman sufferage; '98 '01 '12 '23
Parikh, J.M. - speaking on Indian Famine; '01
Parker, Councillor J. - of Halifax; '98 '01
Parkes, Kineton - '98
Parris, H. - '00
Paul, Wm. - '25
Peach, Chas. - '98
Peacock, John - '01
Pearce, Madam Georgia - '23
Penney, Mrs. Edna - prominent I.L.P. lecturer; '13 '14
Pennington, H. - of Marple; schoolmaster; '13 '14
Penny, John - '99 '01
Phillips, Henry - '01
Phillips, Dr. Marion - '12
Phillips, Tom - '99
Phythian, Ernest J.; M.A. - '25
Pickles, J. E. - '98
Pickles, Wm. - candidate in Holmfirth; '98 '11 '12
Pierce, T. A. - of Nottingham; treasurer of Socialist Church Union, on editorial board for new hymn book; '01 '14
Pimblott - '99 '00
Pincott, Mrs. E. F. - '12
Poel, Wm. - '12
Pomeroy - visiting American; '01
Postlethwaite, W. J. - '92
Potter, F. W. - of Oldham; '98 '01
Price, J. - of Leek; '01
Priestman, Councillor - of Bradford; '99 '01
Prime, J. - '01
Pritchard, Councillor W. B. - '99
Purcell, A. A. - of Manchester; '12 '14
Purcell, W. G. - '98
Purse, Ben - President of League for the Blind; '08 '12
Purves - '98
Quaile, Miss Mary - '27
Quelch, Harry - S.D.F.; '96 '98 '99
Quine, Dr. - of Pendleton; '98
Quinell, James - of Barnsley; '99
Ralphs, Mr. E. - '98
Raynes, W. R., M.P. - Derby; '14
Redfern, Percy - '98 '00 '25 '27;
Reed, Mrs. J. H. - antivivisectionist; '01
Reid, Andrew - '94
Renshaw, A. - Charter St. Ragged Schools, Manchester; '01
Reynolds, Rev. Walter - '95
Richardson, Arthur - of Nottingham; '98 '01
Richardson, John - of Lincoln; '99;
Ridley, Ernest - of Liverpool; '98;
Rigby, Sam - '99
Riley - of the Red Van; '94
Roberts, G. H., M.P. - Pres., Sec. and organizer of Norwich Typographical Society; '09
Roberts, Rev. R. - congregationalist; '98 '01;
Robinson, Ellen - of Peace Society; "not a socialist but indispensable to Labour Church"; '98 '01;
Robinson, Mrs. - of Manchester; Women's Social and Political Union; 'Votes for Women'; '98
Robinson, Dr. J., M.Sc. - Councillor; '25 '27;
Robinson, S. - '98
Rogers, F. - '01
Rose, Frank H. - parliament Candidate for A.S.E., proponent of parliament vs. strike action; '07 '09
Rowley, Chas - of Ancoates Brotherhood; '98
Rowntree, Mr. - temperance question; '99
Russell, Dora (Mrs. Bertrand R.) - Birth control; '26
Rutherford, Geo. - '12
Rylett, Rev. Harold - '91;
Sadler, Prof., M.A. - authority on Education; '09
Saklatvala, S. K., M.P. - Battersea; '23 '28
Salton, Rev. E. J. - of Birmingham; opposed the 'sky-pilotism' of other-worldly religions; '94 '98 '99;
Salt, Henry B. - Member Fellowship of the New Life;
Samuels, G. A. H. - 'Marxian' of the Labour Leader; '98
Samuels, Maurice - '12
Sanderson, Wm. - of London; Alderman London County Council; '99 '01
Sandring, J. H. - '12
Scarlett, Fred - '98 '00;
Schofield, J. H. - of Oldham; '98
Scott, Mrs. C. P. - '01
Searle, W. C. - '12
Sewards, Ben - of Liverpool; '98
Sexton, Jas. - '94 '98
Sheppard, S. D. - '98 '00;
Sharples, H. - of Blackburn; '92
Sharples, J. Arnold - '07
Shaw, Charles N. L. - journalist and author; Sec. London Clarion Scouts; I.L.P., S.D.P. and Fabians; '06 '11
Shaw, Mrs. Clarice McNab - Socialist Sunday School; '28
Shaw, Councillor Tom - of Sheffield; '98 '01
Shaw, Tom, M.P. - '28
Shelley, J. - '12
Shufflebotham, J. - of Bolton; '98 '99
Silk, W. H. - '98 '01
Simm, M. T. - '93
Simm, T. - 'Land Nat. Soc.'; '00 '01
Simpson, W. - Sec. Tolsteyan Soc.
Sims, James - of Bolton, Pres. of Labour Church Union; "
Slater, Dr. Gilbert - '12
Smart, Russell - lecturer and pamphleteer; staunch defender of pure Socialism; '99-'14; ""
Smith, C. E. - '94 '99
Smith, C. Stuart - '12; "
Smith, Frank - founder of the Labour Army;
Smith, Miss Margaret B. A. - teacher, full time lecturer for Socialism; '00-'08;
Smith, W. R., M.P. - '14
Snell, Harry - Ethical Church; '12; "
Snook, J., D.C.M. - '28
Snowden, Philip - of Keighley; '96 '98 '01; ""
Sorge, Madam - '12
Sorkin, Harry - '14
Sparling, Halliday - '94
Sparrow, A. G. - '07
Spires, Frank - '01
Spencer, C. H. - '01
Stacy, Enid (Mrs. P. E. T. Widderington) - led Confectionery Girls Strike 1892; died 1903; '92 '98 '02; ""
Stacy, Paul - '94
Standing, Geo. - '99
Starr, Mark - '25; "
Stepniak, Sergius - '94
Stirling, Madame Antoinette - '98
Stopes, Dr. Marie, D.Sc., Ph.D. - Birth Control; '23
Stott, Mr. - '98
Stuart, G. H. - Parliamentary Secretary of Postmen's Federation; Candidate for Parliament; '10
Studd, Miss Eda - '14
Sturt, P. M. - of Birmingham; '98 '12
Sugden - of the Antivivisection Society; '97
Swan, Rev. F. R. - retired from Congregational Church at Marsden and Hidersfield because of socialist view offensive to the deacons; '07 '09
Swift, Miss Ruth - '12; "
Swinger - of Bordesley I.L.P.; '95
Syms, W. H. - '01
Tamlyn, John - '95 '00
Tattersall, Ald. - '94
Taylor, Mrs. Dora Walford - Socialist Sunday School; '22; "
Taylor, Tom - of Barnsley; '98 '01
Thomas, J. C., B.Sc. - London (Keridon) Rationalist Press Assoc.; '92 '06
Thomasson, J. P. - of Bolton; '00 '01
Thomman, M. - of Barnsley; '99 '00
Thompson, Councillor - of Richmond; '01
Thompson, Rev. S. - '98
Thordyke, Miss Sybill (Mrs. Lewis Casson)
Thorne, G. K. - of Wolverhampton; parliamentary candidate; '00
Thornley, Dr. - of Bolton; '98
Thornton, - of Nottingham; '01
Thurston, Mrs. Annie - '98
Tillett, Ben - organized Dockers Union and Dock Strike of '69; Internationalist and Marxist; supporter of parliamentary action; '91 '11 '24
Tinley, W. - '01
Tiplady, Miss - '95 '98
Tiptaft, Norman - '12
Toms, A. Maurice - Anti-vivisectionist
Tonge, James - F.G.S.; one time Pres. Bolton and District Free Church Council; '98
Toole, Jos., M.P. - S. Salford; '14
Toole, Lawrence - '12
Tooth, G. - '94
Townend, A. E. - '02 '25 '29
Trevor, John - founder of Labour Church; '91 '31
Tuckwell, Miss - Women's Trade Union League; '01
Turner, T. T. - '98
Turner, Ben, M.P. - '25
Twist, Harry - '12
Unwin, Raymond - of Buxton; active in Peace Crusade (Peace Society) '98 '99
Utley, Willie H. - a London Fabian; '92
Vogele, A. L. - '98
Wade, - of Manchester; '99
Wake, Councillor Egerton P. - Barrow-in-Furness; '14
Waldegrave, A. J. - Sec. of Labour Church Union; frequently mentioned as the best speaker of the month; '96 '98 '00
Walford, Miss Dora - Socialist Sunday Schools; '10
Walker, John - '98
Walker, Joseph - '97
Walker, Thos. F. - '91 '95
Wallace, Rev. J. Bruce - '92 '95 '96
Wallhead, R. C. - Organizer of I.L.P. Scouts; manager of Labour Leader; '06 '10 '12
Walsh, Rev. Walter - Newcastle-on-Tyne; Baptist.
Ward, Albert - Wigan; '13
Ward, P. - '01
Wardle, Geo. J. - M.P. for Stockport; Editor of the Railway Review; '06 '12 '14
Warren, Walter; L.L.B.; '98
Watkins, J. T. - '12
Webster, Rev. Alexander - of Aberdeen; '92 '96
Webster, Edward - '96
Warwick, Countess of - '05 '10
Weiss, Prof. F. E. - Manchester University; '08
Wellock, Wilfred, M.P. - '28
Welsh, Councillor Mary - '14 '26
Wheeler, Alex - National Anit Vaccination Society; '96;
Wheeler, Dr. Olive - '23
Whelen, Fredrick - Fabian; '97
White, C. F. - of Newcastle; '95
Whitehead, D. - Financial Reform Association
Whitehead, Geo. - Scientific and Educational side of Socialism;
Socialist Sunday Schools, pamphleteer; '10 '12 '25; "
Whitmore, Chas. - Southport; '07 '08;
Whittingham - '98 '00
Wicksteed, Rev. P. H. - Unitarian minister, scholar, and lecturer,
author; Warden University Hall, London; '92-'98; "
Wilkinson, T. - '95 '98
Williams, A. - of Barnsley; '99
Williams, Ernest - of Croydon
Williams, F. A. - of Bristol; antivivisectionist; '98
Williams, H. B. - '12
Williams, Jos. B. - Amalgamated Musicians Union; speaker and
musician; '06-'09;
Williams, T. Russell - Parlt. Cand. for Huddersfield and Spen Valley;
'04
Williamson, Miss Lillian - Women's Social and Political Union;
Fabian; '10
Williamson, Wm. - elocutionist; '12 '13
Wilkinson, Ellen C., M.A., M.P. - '25 '26 '28; "
Wilson, Archdeacon; - '99
Wilson, Bertram - of Hanley; '98
Wilson, Rev. Stitt - of America; conducted social crusade to
orthodox churches on "Christ and the Labour Problem"; '00
Wilson, W. C. - '12
Winder, Thomas H. - of Bolton; '98
Wing, Tom- of Hull; '92
Winks, - '98
Winstanley, Miss, B.A. - '00
Witworth, A. - '98
Wood, Albert E. - K.C.; '25 '22
Wood, Mrs. Esther - '97 '98
Woodhead, Dr. - of Manchester; '98
Woodman, Dorothy, B.A. - '27
Young, Wm. - of Newcastle; '95
LABOUR CHURCH LECTURE TITLES AND TOPICS

(The following are a sampling of 'sermon' titles used in various Labour Churches from the formation of the movement in 1891 to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.)

THE CRY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

The sermon titles which emphasize the demand for social justice are found in every lecture syllabus, but in both frequency and intensity, these characterize the early 1890's more than any other period.

We Want Only Justice
Commercial Slavery
Emancipation of Labour
The Redemption of Labour
An Indictment of Capitalism
Vested Interests and British Capitalism
The Waste That Is; The Wealth That Might Be.
Socialism or Slavery
The Problem of Poverty
The Workhouse
The Abolition of the Pauper
Poverty and the Class War
Wage Earning Mothers
The Cry of the Children
Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

THE LABOUR CHURCH

Sermons dealing with the nature, purpose, and organization of the Labour Churches were not as frequent as one might suppose them to be. They became most prominent in three periods. During the first two years of the Church's existence, during the resurgence of '97 and '98, and again in the resurgence of 1905 and '06.

The Programme of the Labour Church
God In the Labour Movement
The Possibilities of the Labour Church
Why I am a Socialist
The Future of the Labour Church
The Labour Church Principles

MORAL AND ETHICAL PROBLEMS

In the Lecture Syllabi there was usually a liberal sprinkling of talks dealing with the moral and ethical problems of the day. While most of the problems were characteristic of the whole period, certain generalizations are evident. During the last decade of the 19th Century, there was a great emphasis on the Drink question, the evils of vivisection, the advantages of vegetarian diets, and the evils of theological non-concern with social problems. During the first decade of the 20th century the emphasis shifted to
questions of Birth Control, Free Love, poor housing and occupational hazards. It is impossible to separate sermons dealing with the moral and ethical problems from those dealing with the practical program of Socialistic action. The reader is here asked to compare both lists. The basic concern with problems of injustice to workers, paupers, criminals, etc. continued through the whole period.

The Drink Traffic
Labour and Liquor
Our Treatment of Criminals
The Story of the Juvenile Court
The Evils of Vivisection
Socialism and Health
Socialism and the Children
The Blind and the State
Marriage, Motherhood, and Murder
Is Birth Control Right?
Labour's Attitude to Birth Control

THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS AND POLITICAL PROGRAM OF SOCIALISM

During the early '90's the lecture topics were general. There, of course was a fair representation of talks on Land reform, Home Rule for Ireland, The Advantages of BiMetalism, etc., but the main emphasis was the spreading of Socialist thought, and the development of independent working class representation in Parliament. During the later '90's the emphasis changed to municipalization and a strong move toward electioneering. At the turn of the century problems of international significance came to the fore, and a little later the question of feminism became a major emphasis, though it had been introduced in the early '90's. Questions of economic reform and the need of wider education were always part of the lecture syllabus.

(a) Political Action and General Political Themes

Ethics of Government
Individualistic Socialism
A Labour Programme
Citizenship and its Relation to Socialism
Labour Candidates
Socialism in and out of Parliament
Parasitism, Organic and Social
Practical Socialism
The Black M.P.'s
Capitalism, the Enemy
The Power of the People
Is Socialism Practical?
The Present Need

(b) Miscellaneous Topics

Oxford University and Working Class Education
The Manufacture of Public Opinion By The Press
(c) Unionism
The Future of Trade Unionism
Socialism and the Worker's Hope
Syndicalism
Industrial Order
The World Power of the Workers

(d) Land Reform
The Rural Problem
Who Owns The Land?

(e) Economic Diagnosis and Reform
The Fraud of Tariff Reforms
Trust and the Revolution
Finance and the Nation
The Manchester School

(f) Municipalization
Municipal Workshops
Municipal Work
Prison Workshops
Municipal Transportation
School Meals
Through Slums to Palaces
Municipal Housing
Housing and Citizenship

(g) International Concern
New and Old Japan
Socialism and International Peace
The Old Imperialism and the New Socialism
The Paris Commune and the Coming Communism
Labour and the Language Barrier
Home Rule for India
The Boer Question
German Bureaucracy and the Servile State
Will American Finance Dominate Europe
German Imperialism
Education in Soviet Russia
A Socialist Lesson from Denmark
Imperialism
The Challenge of Communism
Russia and Europe's Trade

(h) Feminism
Woman's Place in the Labour Movement
Women in Industry
Democracy in the Kitchen
Democracy and Women Suffrage
Women and the War
ETHICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM

Most Labour Church lecture topics fall under this heading. Prior to 1910 over half of the lectures would be in this category. After 1910 the congregations seemed to become politically orientated, or to have put the stress on educational and cultural subjects, with a liberal emphasis on musical recitals, travelogues, and illustrated lectures in the arts and sciences. Even then, over 25% of Labour Church lectures would be about the ethical and religious implications of Socialist thought.

Socialism: What It Is and Is Not
The Future of Society
The Brotherhood of Man
Socialism and Religion: The Church
Socialism: Its Message of Goodwill to Men
Socialism and Everyday Life
Are Socialism and Christianity Identical?
The Ideals of Socialism
What is Democracy?
Socialism, Morality, and Religion
Socialist Ethics
The Religion of the Socialist Movement
A New Theory of Human Nature
Socialism and Human Nature
A New Religion
Dives and Lazarus
The Coming Social Revolution
Commercialism Incompatible with Christianity
Socialism and the Prospect of John Burn's Soul
Socialism versus Insanity
From Cain to Christ
The Rights of Leisure
The Power of Conviction on Social Betterment
The Infection of Faith
The Origin and Nature of the Christ Myth
Is Life Worth Living?
Marxian Economics
The Collapse of Capitalism
Not a Revolutionist! Why Not?
Can Socialism Replace Capitalism in Easy Stages?
Can We Have Morality Without Religion?
Will Rationalization Bring Salvation?
Democracy and War
The Causes of War

RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL TOPICS

These were popular at all stages of the Labour Church.

(a) Scientific and Educational
Wonderful Chapters in the Story of the Earth
Evolution of the Mind
Evolution of Man
The Evolution of Religion
From Nebula to Co-operative Commonwealth
Heredity: Theories of Darwin, Mendel, and Weissmann
The Psychology of the Crowd
Lectures in Natural History, Geology, etc.
Frequent Rambles in the Countryside

(b) Art and Culture
Architectural Wonders
Socialist Prose and Verse
Books and Ideals
Lectures in Art Appreciation
Lectures in Music Appreciation
Limelight views of Art Treasures
Music Recitals
Travelogues of England and Foreign Parts (often illustrated by limelight views)

(c) Biographical and Historical Studies
The French Prophet Lamennais
The Italian Prophet Mazzini
The Humanism of Shakespeare
Ruskin's Influence in Education
Shelley, Poet and Rebel
Burns, the Rebel Poet
Thomas Huxley
The Philosophy of George Bernard Shaw
The Religion of George Bernard Shaw
Karl Marx
The Historical Basis of Socialism
Some Interpretations of History
Labour's Struggle for Power
Socialism and Liberalism
Wagner, Musician of the People
A Night with Mozart
A Night with Chopin
A Night with Gilbert and Sullivan
A Night with Schubert
INTERIOR - WILLIAM MORRIS LABOUR CHURCH, LEEK.
LABOUR CHURCH LECTURES AND SERMONS

Typical examples from Manuscripts, Pamphlets, and Newspaper Reports.

POSSIBILITIES OF THE LABOUR CHURCH 1

by S. G. Hobson

(An address to the Cardiff Labour Church, St. John's Hall, Cardiff, on February the 19th, 1893.)

The very title Labour Church implies that we its adherents, have grafted upon our religious belief, articles of faith in relation to labour. And so it is. For years and years back there has been going on in our midst social changes, social upheavals, caused by the evolutionary working of vast economic forces. And out of these changes, as the old order has been yielding to the new, there has been evolving a new sense of justice, combined with a deeply seated desire for a more practical application of those religious teachings which have animated all that has been good in our national character for centuries back. The vitality of religious faith can only be gauged by its power of development. The faith which is only applicable to the needs of a generation is dead almost as soon as it is born. The faith which develops even as the race develops, which carries with it the solution of each social problem as it arises, which can stimulate to noble deeds and unselfish action, which, like the flowers, as time passes lives to show unexpected beauties, must be a real and valuable faith, and a reliable guide to private or combined action. Through the vicissitudes of centuries we of Great Britain have drunk in the teachings of Jesus Christ. And as generation has succeeded generation we see how grandly the teachings of Christ have been a guide to them who walked in darkness—a light set upon a hill, calling us to go forward. Upon every institution in this country, upon our laws, upon our national sentiment, upon our aspirations, upon our sense of justice and right is writ large the words, Ecce Homo, Behold the man.

And so it comes about that this new departure is essentially Christian, look at it how we may. It is simply an index showing the latest development of social change, and an honest endeavour to apply to the social question Christ's teachings and ethics. That being the case you will naturally enquire why we thus create a separate Christian organization instead of going into the churches and leavening them. We mean to do both; but I venture

1. A pamphlet published in Cardiff by Chapple and Kemp, Printers, etc. Neville Street, 1893
to think, that amongst the many possibilities of the Labour Church will be that of being a buttress and a support to the true enunciation of Christian ethics in other churches. But we are partly forced into the formation of a new church because unfortunately the old established churches are altogether too far committed to an endorsement of the worst aspect of latter-day industrialism. We indignantly revolt against the prostitution of Christ's teachings which we hear from too many pulpits to-day. We protest against the sacerdotalism, the sensuous enjoyment of pseudo-worship which is all too prevalent. We protest against the separation of Christian morality and daily avocation. We join issue with the teaching that Christianity is a religion of comforting hope in the future. We say that unless it is of practical utility to us as we hew the coal and hammer the metal, as we sell, as we buy, as we think and act, it is no religion for us. We say that Christ was essentially a practical teacher, and therefore we treat with contempt the narrow theological hairsplitting which is making the churches of to-day the laughing stock of every thinking man. Or to reduce the matter to the smallest compass, the essence of true religion is labour done and duty accomplished. Christ was himself, in his thought and action, a labour man. The son of a carpenter, labour to him was the great necessity of being, and it is easy to quote instance upon instance of his detestation of mere theology and Pharisaism. And his apostle Paul, promptly seeing the real side of Christ's teaching, was not slow to take up the parable, both by deed and word. And coming to some of the greatest writers of this century we find they too only follow in Christ's footsteps.

Says Thomas Carlyle, in that wonderful book, "Past and Present": "There is a perennial nobleness and even sacredness in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope for a man that actually and earnestly works; in idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so monommonish, mean, is in communication with Nature; the real desire to get work done will itself lead one more and more to Truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are Truth."

And again: "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness."

And again: "Religion, I said; for properly speaking, all true work is Religion, and whatsoever Religion is not work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antimonians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbour. Admirable was that of the old monks, 'Laborare est orare. Work is worship.'"

And again: "For we are to bethink us that the epic verily is not 'Arms and the Man,' but 'Tools and the Man,' an infinitely wider kind of epic. And we are to bethink us that men cannot now be bound to men by brass collars, not at all; this brass collar method in all figures of it has vanished out of Europe for evermore. Hug Democracy, walking the streets everywhere
in his sack-coat has asserted so much; irrevocably brooking no reply."

I am tempted to quote many more of these prophetic passages, but will be content with one more in the last chapter:

"Some 'Chivalry of Labour,' some noble humanity and practical divineness of labour will yet be realized on this earth. Or why will; why do we pray to heaven without setting our own shoulder to the wheel? The Present if it will have the Future accomplish shall itself commence. Thou, who prophesiest, who believest, begin thou to fulfil."

Those works were written sixty years ago. They are the very embodiment of Christian teaching, and how fresh they come to us to-day and encourage to go forward in our task. Ah! I cannot help thinking, that Thomas Carlyle, dyspeptic, uncertain, whimsical though he may have been, would have been delighted to come here and speak of the Possibilities of the Labour Church.

And the best of our modern literature teaches us the great fact that work must be essentially religious, and that work which is irreligious is not good. And to encourage us still further come the inspiring words of Mazzini:

"That which Christ has done, humanity may do. Action is the Word of God; thought alone is but his shadow. They who disjoin thought and action seek to divide Deity, and deny the Eternal Unity."

And more encouraging still, he triumphantly exclaims:

"The alliance is founded. Answer your persecutors with the formula, God and the People."

The responsibility devolves upon us therefore to put our shoulders to the wheel, to proclaim the glad tidings that we have taken a step beyond mere religious formulism, and that the time has come when, like the Jews in the time of Nehemiah, we must work with the tools in one hand and our weapons in the other, and thus create a "Chivalry of Labour" which will bring us yet nearer to the finding of the Holy Grail (which is still, thank God, amongst us), and show us yet more clearly the golden possibility of "Peace on earth and goodwill toward men."

My title is "The Possibilities of the Labour Church." Before, however, I can develop that line of thought it is necessary to rapidly glance at labour as it is to-day. I cannot state our mission until I know what our mission has to do.

The condition of labour to-day is altogether unchristlike and utterly debasing. The accepted laws which govern our industrial system have now come to be bad in principle, and worse, ten times worse, in practical application. If Christ ever had a message,
that message undoubtedly was conveyed in the words, "All ye are brethren." But to-day our whole social fabric is built upon the barbaric law of the survival of the fittest, which is interpreted by the competitive system which sets man against man, community against community, and nation against nation. We have separated our morality and our economy. Morally we preach love and brotherhood, economically we enforce through a competitive system hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Our Christianity has not yet recognised the great fact that nothing can be economically sound unless built upon justice and truth. The operation of the law of competition bears cruelly and despotically upon the workers of our country. It robs them of the first rewards of their labour, it reduces them to the level of beasts of burden, it takes from them many of the higher attributes of our manhood, and both in its working and effect is debasing and utterly unchristlike.

Life to-day is not peace, an intense and continual joy, as it should be, it is one long struggle from the cradle to the grave. Civilization is disgraced by the conditions surrounding the victims of this struggle. Had Carlyle foreseen the operation of this industrial system he would have modified his views when he said that the brass collar method in all its figures has disappeared from Europe. Ah! there is not such a great difference between negro-slavery and wage-serfdom. There is less hope in the heart of the unemployed docker than in the heart of the whipped negro. We give him the liberty of the franchise, and we carefully preserve for him the liberty to starve. Look at London, the wealthiest city in the world. Those who are in the habit of reading the Daily Chronicle will bear me out when I say that a week never goes by without two or three cases of starvation being reported. There is no use praying to Almighty God to give us this day our daily bread if we help to perpetuate a system which inevitably takes from thousands their daily bread.

Frederick Harrison, after hearing some terrible facts stated at the Industrial Remuneration Conference, rose and said: "To me at least it would be enough to condemn modern society as hardly an advance on slavery or serfdom if the permanent condition of industry were to be that which we behold. That 90 per cent of the actual producers of wealth have no home which they can call their own beyond the end of the week; have no bit of soil or so much as a room that belongs to them; have nothing of value of any kind except as much as will go in a cart; have the precarious chance of weekly wages which barely suffice to keep them in health; are housed for the most part in houses that no man thinks fit for his horse; are separated by so narrow a margin from destitution that a month of bad trade, sickness, or unexpected loss brings them face to face with hunger and pauperism."

Dr. Drysdale at the same conference said that the average age at death amongst the nobility, gentry, and professional classes in England and Wales is 55 years, but amongst the artisan classes of Lambeth it only reaches 29 years.

And after stating other facts he goes on to say: "The only
real cause of this enormous difference in the position of the rich and the poor with respect to their chance of existence lies in the fact that at the bottom of society wages are so low that food and other requisites of health are obtained with too great difficulty."

And some of those who call themselves Christians and teachers are drawing thousands a year. Strange followers of Christ, the Labour Man, who had not where to lay his head.

But there is no necessity to quote many more facts. I would draw your attention to the difference in the death-rate between fashionable St. George's, Hanover Square, and artisan Holborn. With about the same population, there died in 1854, in Holborn, 1,614 children under five; whilst in St. George's, 1,007, a difference of 50 per cent.

And the Labour Church enquires if this wholesale murder of children is to continue.

Robbed of every opportunity to live, except at the will and pleasure of a few who hold possession of the means of production, robbed of our undoubted right in Mother Earth, forced to live in the midst of insanitary surroundings, there lie great possibilities before us who desire to see the kingdom of heaven a reality on earth.

"Through game-preserving," says John Ruskin, "you get some curious laying-out of grounds: that beautiful arrangement of dwelling-house for man and beast, by which we have grouse and black-cock--so many brace to the acre; and men and women, so many brace to the garret."

Selfishness, in its most degrading aspects, is to-day triumphant. We bow the knee to the golden calf. The capitalist and labour exploiter sits in our Parliament and makes laws, he holds the strings of the purse in church and chapel, and is made churchwarden and deacon. Woe betide the luckless minister who denounces this system and rebukes its votaries.

But worse than all this, hope has been crushed out of the heart of the worker.

Well might Matthew Arnold write:

"We, too, say that she now,
Scarce comprehending the voice
Of her greatest, golden mouthed sons
Of a former age any more,
Stupidly travels her round
Of mechanic business, and lets
Slow die out of her life
Glory, and genius, and joy."
When Charles Bradlaugh went to the workers of London and told them that their faith was a useless factor in the situation, he was readily responded to by these hopeless, workless men. Their faith could not stand the strain. Their wives and children were starving. They themselves were starving. Christ first fed the multitudes, and then instilled faith into their hearts.

"How can you expect children conceived, born and bred in hell ever to reach heaven?" indignantly enquires a well-known writer.

"The hell of the poor exists by reason of the paradise of the rich," said Victor Hugo.

No wonder that faith has almost disappeared.

Joseph Mazzini writes: "Faith disappeared; but what have we done, what do we even now to revive it? Shame and grief! Ever since that holy light of the people faded away, we have either wandered in the darkness without bond, plan or unity of design; or folded our arms like men in despair. Some of us after uttering a long cry of grief, have renounced all earthly progress to murmur a hymn of resignation, a prayer like the prayer of the dying; others have rebelled against hope, and, smiling in bitterness, have proclaimed the reign of darkness by accepting scepticism, irony and incredulity as things inevitable, and their blasphemy has been responded to by the corruption of those already degraded, and by the suicide of despair of the pure in heart."

And this brings me to the point I am aiming at. Knowing a little of the position, we can now estimate some of the possibilities of the Labour Church.

Our path lies straight before us. We have a great gospel to preach, a great crusade to wage against the mammon worship of to-day. In Carlyle's words we have to work to "dethrone the brute god mammon, and place a Spirit God in his stead." We have to instil faith and hope into the hearts of the workers, and, by laying down sound principles, show them into the Promised Land. We will preach the necessity and duty of applying Christian brotherhood, not only socially and morally, but also economically. We proclaim brotherhood, We say, without brotherhood of man there can be no Fatherhood of God. Is there one in my audience who for one instant doubts it? Let me quote to him the case which so impressed Carlyle:

"A poor Irish widow, her husband having died in one of the lanes of Edinburgh, went forth with her three children, bare of all resources, to solicit help from the charitable establishments of the city. At this charitable establishment, and then at that, she was refused; referred from one to the other, helped by none, till she had exhausted them all; till her strength and heart failed her; she sank down in typhus fever; died and infected her lane with fever, so that seventeen other persons died of fever
there in consequence. The humane physician asks thereupon, as with a heart too full for speaking, 'Would it not have been economy to help this poor widow?' She took typhus fever and killed seventeen of you! Very curious. The forlorn Irish widow applies to her fellow-creatures, as if saying, 'Behold I am sinking, bare of help; ye must help me! I am your sister, bone of your bone; one God made us; ye must help me!' They answer, 'No, impossible, thou art no sister of ours.' But she proves her sisterhood; her typhus fever kills them; they actually were her brothers, though denying it! Had human creature ever to go lower for a proof?"

Ay, brotherhood in every relation of life must be our motto. We will preach its necessity in every event of human life. We must think as brothers, we must act and work as brothers. "Fraternity," says Mazzini, "is undoubtedly the basis of all society, the first condition of social progress."

This principle he calls the principle of association, and so we can understand him writing: "The highest possible degree of human progress will correspond to the discovery and application of the vastest formula of association."

And again: "As we believe in humanity as the sole interpreter of the laws of God, so do we believe in the people of every state as the sole master, sole sovereign, and sole interpreter of the law of humanity, which governs every national mission."

And again: "Whereso God is, there are the people. The instinctive philosophy of the people is, Faith in Him."

What grander mission, what grander possibility can there be for any church than to make its people a living religion?

Can we accomplish this work? Yes, I believe we can if we have faith in our principles. Faith is the greatest necessity of any church, or any movement.

Coming to local matters, my earnest desire is to see this church a great moral influence on the workers, and particularly the organized workers of Cardiff. I want it to influence us to greater charity of thought and action. I want it to be a stimulus to many to do their part in the higher calling of the people. I want Cardiff to be the first town in the kingdom in the matter of the health, morality and general condition of its people. I profoundly believe that this can only be accomplished by bringing to bear our truest religious sense. The materialist has no faith to help him. He lives a life of negation. He can subscribe however to the gospel that true work is true worship. The atheist may entirely disbelieve in the common understanding of the Godhead. We have a faith and a work to which he can subscribe. The Christian, sick of mere formulism, ardently desiring deeper and greater reality, will come to us and be our greatest support.
Unification of creed is another possibility. We want men and women thoroughly permeated with this creed in all its beauty, and "practical-devotion." We want soldiers, whole-hearted, who will fight this battle in the spirit of Emerson's hero in his fourth "Voluntary":

"Stainless soldier on the walls
Knowing this, and knows no more,--
Whoever fights, whoever falls,
Justice conquers evermore,
Justice after, as before.
And he who battles on her side,
God, though he were ten times slain,
Crowns him victor glorified,
Victor over death and pain;
For ever: but his erring foe
Self-assured that he prevails,
Looks from his victim lying low,
And sees aloft the red right arm
Redress the eternal scales."

Possibilities of the Labour Church! Its possibilities are boundless. To be the greatest motive force in removing starvation, want, misery, this hereditas damnosa, from a century's free scope of individualism in our industrial system. It is a mission worthy of our highest and noblest effort, and nothing short of religious enthusiasm can accomplish the work. Therefore we have started a Labour Church, and meet together on the common platform of sacred labour. We mean to go forward in this work, to face the obstacles of prejudice and mistrust, which every new movement inevitably meets. Secure in our hearts' deepest convictions, we believe this work to be of God, and destined to glorify God. We want earnest men and women, for the work will drive away those other than the earnest.

And I conclude with the words of Thomas Carlyle: "But it is to you, ye workers, who do already work, and are as grown men, noble and honourable in a sort, that the whole earth calls for new work and nobleness. Subdue mutiny, discord, widespread despair, by manfulness, justice, mercy, and wisdom. Chaos is dark, deepest hell; let light be, and there is instead a green flowery world. Oh, it is great, and there is no other greatness. To make some work of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuler, happier, more blessed, less accursed. It is work for a God. Sooty Hell of mutiny and savagery and despair, can, by man's energy be made a Kingdom of Heaven; cleared of its soot, of its mutiny, of its need to mutiny; the everlasting arch of heaven's azure overspanning IT, too, and its cunning mechanisms and tall chimney steeples, as a birth of heaven; God and all men looking on it well pleased. Unstained by wasteful deformities, by wasted tears or heart's blood of men, or any defacement of the Pit; noble, fruitful labour, growing ever nobler, will come forth, the grand sole miracle of man; whereby man has
risen from the low places of this earth, very literally into Divine Heavens. Ploughers, spinners, builders, prophets, poets, kings, Brindleys and Goethes, Odiius and Arkwrights, all martyrs and noble men, and gods, are of one grand host, immeasurable, marching ever forward since the beginning of the world. The enormous, all-conquering, flame-crowned host, noble every soldier in it; sacred, and alone noble. Let him who is not of it hide himself; let him tremble for himself. O heavens, will he not bethink himself; he, too, is needed in the host. It were so blessed, thrice blessed, for himself and for us all.

The future hides in it
Gladness and sorrow;
We press still thorow,
Nought that abides in it
Daunting us. Onward!

RELIGION OF SOCIALISM

by A. J. Waldegrave

(A Labour Church sermon by the secretary of the Labour Church Union)

In speaking of the Religion of Socialism it will be necessary to state, first, in what sense I am using the word "Socialism." There are still some people to whom the word Socialism spells robbery and riot, who think that Socialism is a wicked scheme for violently taking the hard-earned property of the industrious, and sharing it out in equal portions to everybody alike, idle, and thriftless, and drunken included. These people think that they finally dispose of the claims of Socialism as a cure for poverty by the acute observation that in a year's time we should be exactly where we are now. The wealth of the idle and thriftless, they say, would have again passed into the hands of the industrious and thrifty. No doubt! We can trust those hands to resume possession, at the earliest opportunity. But, Socialism is not a scheme for a general share-out of this kind.

There are other people to whom the word "Socialism" calls up a vision of a perfectly mechanical Society where everything shall proceed by state-prescribed rule -- what we shall eat, what we shall wear, what work we shall do and how long we shall be engaged at it, what our recreation shall be, whom we shall marry, how many children we shall have and what numbers they

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1. A manuscript of an address delivered to many Labour Church congregations circa 1900.
shall be called by (for of course we shall, each be "citizen number so-and-so"), --all these things to be regulated and governed like the working of a soulless machine.

I might point out that the present condition of things is about as mechanical and oppressive for most of us as anything we can well imagine. In spite of our boasted freedom, these matters of where we shall live, what hours we shall work, what we shall wear, etc., etc., are prescribed for us most vigorously. And the future Commonwealth of which we Socialists dream, and for which we work, will be characterised by the absence of the tyrannical and oppressive conditions which prevent the development of the individual to-day. We look for less of restraint and compulsion than we have now, not more.

But in dealing with the Religion of Socialism I do not wish to conjure up visions of a future state at all. Interesting as the effort would be, I do not intend to attempt any forecast of the forms which religion would take in a society where there was no want or wretchedness, a society where Socialism was realised. Perhaps then, when class distinctions had disappeared, we might have that Holy Catholic Church in which we could express our common love of one another and our common faith and joy in God. For we cannot have a Catholic Church while class distinctions remain. Religious fellowship must be the fellowship of equals.\(^1\)

It is not, however, with Socialism as an accomplished fact that I wish to deal, but with Socialism as a Movement -- a movement in the midst of our present capitalistic and competitive state of Society. Here, again, it will necessary to distinguish.

Socialism is, broadly speaking, of two sorts. The two, as we shall see, overlap, but they are sufficiently distinct for all practical purposes, and it is highly necessary that we should guard against confusing one with the other. There is an unconscious, mechanical, sort of Socialist movement going on in our modern Society, and there is also a conscious, humanitarian, socialist movement. To the first sort belongs the growth of the Post Office, of municipal tramways, waterworks, gas works, etc. These enterprises have not, for the most part, been planned and executed by conscious Socialists. The recognition of the simple fact of the economy that there is to the community as a body of consumers in having works of this kind carried out without the intervention of the capitalist does not make a man a Socialist. Sir William Harcourt may blandly declare that "we are all Socialists now," but the Socialism that has a religion is something more than a recognition of the economy that there is in collective

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1. The instinctive recognition of this brought Labour Church into existence. A.J.W.
enterprises of this sort, and of the tendency among public bodies to undertake them. That this gas and water socialism is most useful and desirable, I need hardly contend. It serves two purposes. It not only confers the direct benefit at which it aims, but it also serves to show that large industrial undertakings can be quite well managed by the community, for itself, without the aid of the private capitalist, and so must, in the long run, open men's eyes to the folly of allowing the supply of their bread, their beer, their meat, their clothes, their coal, etc. to be controlled by groups of capitalists whose aim is not the public good, but their own profit. So far then the Post Office and kindred institution are a part of the socialist movement. But the growth of limited-liability companies, of rings, and trusts, is in this sense a part of the Socialist movement. These monopolies, which so alarm us, are helping to get things into order for taking over by the community. Yet one would scarcely rank company-promoting as a religious movement, even though it is helping Socialism forward, -- even though it has its martyrs, like Hooley.

The Socialism, of the religion of which I wish to speak, is that conscious, determined, Socialism which has been brought into existence by a realisation of the appalling misery and degradation that exist about us as the result of poverty, which has traced that poverty to its prime source in the private ownership of capital, and which seeks to re-organise society by recognising therein no rights but those of Labour.

Before going further with a consideration of what Socialism is and involves, let us now consider what we mean by Religion. At first sight it would seem as though there are so many different kinds of religion that it must be impossible to sum them up and say what it is that they have in common. But does it not work out to this, that Religion is the answer of the human soul to the double question -- What is, and what ought to be? At all times in all places, from the very infancy of the human race, men have looked forth upon the scene in which they live, and have asked what is behind that which appears and that which happens. The answers have varied. Primitive men saw in every running stream and swaying tree a separate living being; and in every misfortune that overtook them, such as flood, or famine, or pestilence, they felt the malignancy of evil spirits who must be propitiated by offerings and circumvented by charms. This kind of religion still survives among some of the native races of Africa. Very grotesque are some their beliefs and very horrible some of their practices. But their religion, such as it is, is their answer to the two questions -- what must I believe? and what as a result of that belief, ought I to do? Between crude Fetishism and cultured Buddhism or Christianity there are many grades and shades of religious conception, but all grow out of this double enquiry of what is and what ought to be.

Now, although Religion and religions have grown out of this natural and spontaneous inquiry, and have their roots in the very
nature of man, it has always happened that, after a time, the belief he has evolved out of his own faculties and experience has become invested with the fictitious authority of a Divine Revelation which must not be questioned, on peril of endless ruin and damnation. It becomes reckoned a crime even to suggest the natural origin of Religion, great as is the honour which that suggestion, does to human nature.

This assumption to itself of a super-natural origin and an unquestionable authority is partly due to the influence of the priests, and partly to our natural desire to be quite sure that we are "all right." Doubt is distressing. We hunger for infallibility in religion until we turn on the very impulses that have led us to such heights as we have reached and strangle them for fear they should lead us further. We want to feel fixed.

The process that I have been describing is as true of Christianity as of any other form of Religion. Christianity in its reply to the questions of what is, and what ought to be, has led us to a higher conception of God and a nobler devotion to duty than any religion that has ever captured men's minds and hearts. But the time has come when to answer life's questions by referring to the formularies of the Christian Church, or to the Bible, is to obstruct and degrade life, not to lift and guide it. I do not say that the Christian forms and documents are not capable of a new interpretation which shall make them still serviceable to the religious life of men. Indeed that re-interpretation is fast being given to them, but it is only by going outside of them, only by first denying their authority and sufficiency.

A great deal of the new reading which is being given to the teaching of Christ in the churches and which is doing so much to renew the hold of Christianity on men's hearts is due to light which has come from non-Christian or anti-Christian sources. It is almost impossible to find an intelligent Christian to-day who does not profess himself to be some sort of Socialist. We even hear the grotesque assertion that Jesus was a Socialist. Yet Socialism has for the most part been the work of men who have avowed themselves Atheists. How is this? Has Christianity to go outside itself for such light and inspiration as shall enable it to live? Will it perish if it sticks to the "good old Gospel?" I say, most unhesitatingly, that it will. As soon as it comes to regard the book of revelation as closed, its own career will be closed. In theory, of course, the Christian Church does regard that book as closed, and utters anathema against him who shall dare "to add unto the words that written therein." But, in practice, it assimilates, however tardily and clumsily, those fresher, clearer, views of Truth which are gained by the few earnest, untrammelled souls who dare to look facts in the face, and so we have to-day free admission within the Church of such heresies as Evolution and Socialism; nay, welcome of them as bringing deliverance and power. But would it not be better to throw over this idea of an authoritative Revelation
and be ever frankly seeking a newer, higher, knowledge of Truth? Socialism, at any rate, would not have been in existence to-day had there not been men who united with firm loyalty to truth the conviction that the revelation thereof is progressive, and that only he that seeketh findeth. We may take it, therefore, that one of the religious principles of Socialism is perfect freedom of thought and enquiry. It knows no set creed, no dogma saying "So far shalt thou go but no further."

"But," it may be rightly urged, "granting that there should be no boundaries to what we may be allowed to find out, what has Socialism found out? Has it any answer to this haunting question of what is? Or does it simply take up a negative position and leave the universe still an unguessable riddle? There are of course Socialists who do take up this position of agnosticism, as there are also Socialists who are Christians. But the point is not what individuals think, but what the natural, the logical, answer of Socialism itself to these questions is. I hope to show that, while not professing to "know all about it," Socialism does occupy an affirmative position, that it has a belief infinitely superior at any rate to that crude conception of God as a benevolent but very irascible being which was presented to us in our Sunday School days with so much admirable and lovable, but utterly mistaken, zeal.

Let us return to the outline I gave of what Socialism is, and see what are the religious implications involved therein -- what philosophy of life it supposes and what scheme of conduct it proposes. Socialism, I said, has been brought into existence by a realisation of the appalling misery and degradation that lie around us as the result of poverty. It refuses to be drugged to sleep by any assurance of a Divine Providence which awards to each just that which is best for him. It finds nothing but mockery in that conventional treatment of the question which consists in quoting comforting texts such as "I have been young and am now old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." "The Lord will provide," "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" It cannot go to the workers in our factories or to the dwellers in our slums and sing to them bidding them

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense
But trust him for his grace -
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Socialism declares that things are not "all right," but all wrong. Its religion is not a comfortable religion. It voices the cry of revolt against that law of the "struggle for existence" which

1. The rich man in his castle.
in Nature, and hitherto in human society, too, has bid the weakest go to the wall. "If this is God's law," it protests, "as the ages seem to say it is, then we defy him, we curse his cruel law." Does this seem to you to be blasphemous? I say that only as you have been stirred by this passionate spirit of Revolt, only as you have known the "Tears of things," only as you have felt the "whole creation groaning in travail until now" will you be able to appreciate Socialism's cry of deliverance. For it is a cry of deliverance as well as a cry of revolt.

"But," you may say, "we know there is a great deal of poverty and misery, but is it not chiefly people's own fault? If they were more industrious and frugal, and if they did not drink, would they not then be well enough off?" To most good people who have been trained in the conventional religious ideas, who imagine that virtue is bound to prosper, that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come," the blunt reply of Socialism, "No!" comes as a shock. Yet surely it should be obvious to the most superficial observer that, speaking broadly, those who work hardest and fare most simply are the poorest. What then is the cause of poverty," you may say, "if idleness and wastefulness are not?" Well, idleness and wastefulness are the cause, but it is the idleness and wastefulness of the rich, not of the poor.

It is not the purpose of this paper to trace the whole process by which, under our capitalist competitive system, industry, which should be a joy and a blessing, becomes a curse both to the poor who labour and to the rich who take the fruit of their labour. Suffice it here to say that Socialism has traced our poverty to its roots in the very nature of Capitalism as a monopoly - a tyranny - an injustice. And in proclaiming this discovery, and cursing Capitalism as the cause of so much misery, it appeals to the two sentiments which are the very life-breath of religion, the sentiments of sympathy and justice, and takes that aspect of religion which concerns itself with what ought to be. If it is vague and undogmatic in its reply to the question of what is, it is very positive in its insistence on what ought to be.

Let us however take just one more glance at the philosophy of things involved in the Socialist position. Does it not imply the bottom soundness of things and the worth of life? With all its keen consciousness of the tragedy and horror of the world, it is essentially optimistic, for we do not attempt to reform things which we believe are not worth reforming. And, besides bringing home to us the fact of the worth of things, does it not also proclaim their unity? For, if it divides men into classes, does it not also show how they are linked together, one causing another's misery or happiness? If it insists on the importance of the material side of life, declaring that the higher problems cannot be settled until the bread - and - butter question is
settled, does it not thereby link matter and spirit together, and bring to us that consciousness of the oneness of life, which, in moments of ecstasy becomes God-consciousness; and remains thereafter, an abiding inspiration?

I know there are Socialists who have the bitterest contempt for any such association of their creed with things spiritual, who would meet the suggestion that they are doing the will of God in their work with derision. Socialism is to them a religion in the same sense as Christianity is a religion to the man who seizes the first opportunity of taking you by the button-hole and asking a sepulchral voice, "My friend, are you saved?" It is a narrow blinding formula, shutting up their sympathies instead of opening them out. It is not in this sense that Socialism should be a religion. It is, of course, desirable to have a healthy mistrust of any kind of theory calling itself Socialism which gets away at all from the plain, hard, cruel, economic facts. We do not want philosophising and theorising if they do not lead straight to shorter hours and better conditions of labour, to better food, better clothes and better houses. But surely it is a mistake to throw away the strength and inspiration that come from a consciousness that our work is rooted in the spiritual nature of things; that it is bound to tell; that we are working with the Power behind Evolution; in a word, that the Socialist Movement is a Religious Movement;

Let us turn again to what Socialism has to say about what "ought to be." It may be summed up in one word -- Justice. This is the ethical creed of Socialism -- Justice! Of all things this is the most difficult to define, but it is of all things the most necessary to love and to try to do. Do you think this is a poor thing for religious creed? Listen to these words of Walt Whitman - "Great is emotional love . . . But there is something greater . . . Then - noiseless, with flowing steps - the Lord, the sun, the last ideal, comes. By the names right, justice, truth, we suggest but do not describe it. To the world of men it remains a dream - an idea, as they call it. But no dream is it to the wise -- but the proudest, almost only solid lasting thing of all." No doubt it will be objected that the love of justice is not peculiar to Socialism, that it is to be found in more or less perfect form running through all codes of law and systems of religion, that it finds most eloquent expression in the Hebrew prophets, and that Christianity is a religion of justice tempered by mercy. But it is not my object to endeavour to prove that Socialism has discovered Justice -- only to show that it embodies it in a purer and more intense form than it has ever taken. Indeed, I believe that there is in men and women to-day, as the result of long ages of training in habits of lawfulness and religion, so firm a love of justice that it is, in the main, their notion that Socialism is an unjust thing that keeps them from becoming Socialists. They need clearer insight into the unjust working of the present system rather than more
love of justice. Yet, I say, Socialism embodies a purer and intenser justice than most men and women have learned to appreciate. Let us apply a test. To how many does the giving of "charity" cause pain? -- not the receiving, mark, but the giving? The average Christian feels no pain in giving. "Is not almsgiving reckoned as a Christian duty? And should we not feel glad that we are able to help the poor and the suffering? Are not our hospitals and such-like institutions monuments of the triumph of Christianity?" That is the ordinary attitude. The Socialist attitude is one of truer justice and deeper sympathy. "Why it asks should there be the needy in the midst of such wealth?" Justice -- not pity -- it demands. Charity, it declares, "curses both him that gives and him that takes," fostering a spirit of patronage in the one, and of servility in the other, which effectually forbids the existence of the only kind of society which is tolerable to the man or woman with the Socialist spirit -- a society of equals and comrades. Indeed, it is the injustice of our present way of life, more, even, than the physical pain it causes, which is unbearable to the Socialist, and no amount of alleviation of it by charitable means can reconcile him to the wrong it does to men in crushing their spirit of freedom and numbing their sense of justice. Do you urge that love is a higher virtue than justice? Yes, but it must be the love of freemen, of equals. Many a woman dotes upon a dog and ill-treats her maid. Would not justice to her maid be a finer virtue than her love for dog? Socialism looks for a society where love shall reign, but it knows that justice must come first. Only then can we have that generous relationship between man and man, which deserves the name of love.

And Socialism proposes to bring about this state of society by reorganising all our institutions in the interests of Labour -- of man as a worker. At present they are organised in the interests of Property -- as man as a possessor. Is there not a fine moral instinct in this Socialist principle of regarding first the interests of Labour? In his work man is a giver, giving his strength, his skill, himself; and is it not truly "more blessed to give than to receive?" Is it not nobler to produce than to consume? [Is not this the old ideal of the Political Economist?]

Our present system blesses him who has, orders all things for him. Socialism would honour man as a worker; would place him in conditions which should develop his ability and nobility as a worker; would release him from being a mere machine for serving the lusts of the idle rich; -- to repeat, would reorganise Society for the sake of man as giving himself, rather than of man as having and enjoying.

Is there not Religion in all this? To me there seems to lie

1. It is not clear whether or not this question was deleted from the text.
behind Socialism, and to express itself through Socialism, a
religion grander than men have ever known, a religion of reverence
and freedom, of tenderness and courage, much like the religion
which throbbed in the heart, and which lives in the words of Jesus,
but blending with the Christian ideal a confidence and joy in
this Earth-life of ours which shall at last issue in mastery over
its discordant elements and the transformation of its meanness
and ugliness into nobleness and beauty and its selfishness into
love.

The Socialist Movement is something more than a mere scramble
for a bigger share of material goods for the worker. After what
I have so far said you will not suspect me of the cant which says
we don't need to trouble about giving a man better wages, that
what he wants is a new heart, as our Evangelical friends phrase
it. It does matter what wages a man has. Up to a certain point
it matters enormously. But Socialism I repeat is not a struggle
for more material wealth as the be-all and end-all of life. It
is just the contrary of that; it is a struggle for a new manhood.
It recognises that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance
of the things which he possesseth, and it refuses to honour a man
who has heaped up riches just because he has done that. It detests
servility; it honours service.

So far I have been speaking of the religion of Socialism, but
in a sense there can be no religion of an "ism" -- a mere abstrac-
tion. Religion is something that beats in the hearts of men and
women, that sets them doing this and that. It is a thing of the
will. Our problem is not to settle speculative questions of the
intellect, but to set men on fire with hatred of injustice and
love of their fellows. I have just said that socialism detests
servility and honours service. That means that men and women
with the socialist spirit are those who scorn equally to be
tyants or slaves, to oppress or be oppressed. If our Socialism
is only an economic dogma, however sound, or a set of collectivist
opinions, however exact, it will be worthless in this world of
live men and women. It must be the embodiment of earnest personal
belief in the dignity of human nature and in the reality of our
high destiny. Difficult at times it is, in the presence of the
pettiness of meanness of life, to preserve our faith in any high
calling for man. Indeed sometimes we view with a sigh rather of
satisfaction than regret the working of those cosmic processes
which eventually quite wipe out this "brief and discreditable
episode in the history of one of the meanest of the planets" as
one has cynically described the record of mankind to be.

But, comrades, let us throw off such nightmares. The end is not
yet. Let us rather rejoice that to us there has come the ideal
of human justice and the call to work for its realization. Let
us devote ourselves afresh to social service.
A New Sermon From An Old Text

By John Tamlyn, of Burnley

(If I could attribute the following sermon to some stalwart preacher of the Middle Ages, I can fancy some of the readers of the Labour Prophet saying — "Ah! there were fine men in these days. Would we had them now!" Whereas, coming from John Tamlyn, now in the flesh, and living and agitating in Burnley, I can fancy the same readers saying — "Ah! what a pity that so crude and exaggerated a statement should be printed!"

The sermon is crude and exaggerated, perhaps; but it is a vigorous and vivid expression of what lies in the hearts of the people. And I do not see why these who would be glad to hear John Ball preach should be afraid of hearing what John Tamlyn has to say. — Editor.)

Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted, and their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days. Behold the hire of the labourers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out; and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived delicately upon the earth, and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you.

James V., 1-6.

A very bold man is this James; a blunt, sturdy, straight, truth-speaking man; one of those rare "call-a-spade-a-spade" men, as we say it; a man that cannot suffle, or mince, or trim, or equivocate for the life of kin.

But, leaving the man, let us come to his words before us. Verily they are stalwart words — they are furious words; words are they of tremendous scorn and anger.

Listen to him. He is calling upon rich men to weep and howl because of miseries that come upon them. Rich men are those who held the wealth and glory and might of the earth. For what cause, then, need they to weep and howl? And yet this James sees cause. And he speaks with exceeding great confidence of evils to come upon them.

Can this James be right? Let us see. This James here speaks of labourers, labourers who have reaped fields, labourers who have been hired to reap fields by those others — the rich men. And they have not been paid for their reaping. It has been kept back by fraud — so he says.

And of these rich men, how have they fared meanwhile? He says they have lived delicately; they have taken pleasure; they have
nourished their hearts in a day of slaughter. And this excess has been supported on the hire of the labourers, kept back by fraud. So says this James.

But are these things true? I must now ask you to apply them to yourselves. Now, what are the things onee more? They are these: that labourers have reaped fields; that rich men have kept back their hire by fraud; that the said rich men have lived delicately on the kept-back hire. These are the things.

Now then, do you reap your own fields? If you do not, then it will be clear to you that some one is doing your reaping for you. Now then, how are you paying them — those that are reaping for you, and those that are doing all the other things for you? For I think we see clearly that what James says of reaping he means of other things as well. Now then, how are we paying our labourers? 'Tis a homely question, a trite, simple question — oh, so simple!

Those who are bringing forth from the earth your corn and wine — how are you paying for them? Those who are making the clothes that clothe you — how are you paying them? Those who are taking up the coal from the bowels of the earth to comfort and warm you — how are you paying them? Those who are building your houses to shield you from heat and cold and rain — how are you paying them? Those who are weaving for you soft and rich carpets for those houses, that the sounds of your falling feet may not jar upon your fine and delicate nerves — how are you paying them? Are you doing none of these things yourself? Then you see that somebody must be doing them for you, and how are you paying them?

What is that? Do I hear you answer this by saying that your great grandfather was a useful citizen, and did these things three or four generations ago, and your stock has lived upon the energy that God gave him ever since? I'm afraid this won't satisfy James. I'm afraid it can't satisfy me. I'm afraid it won't satisfy the Lord of Sabaoth that James here speaks of.

What is that? Do I hear you say that your great forefather led the people in council and in war, and for his great deeds you have called the land of the country yours, and have fined the labourers for the use of the land, and have yourselves lived upon these rents, because your fathers were mighty in counsel and valour these many generations ago. I am afraid this will not satisfy James. I am afraid it cannot satisfy me. I am afraid it will not satisfy the Lord of Sabaoth that James speaks of. I am afraid this is what James calls keeping back hire by fraud. I am afraid I must call it this. I am afraid James's Lord of Sabaoth will so esteem it. I would pray you look to it!

And now, have I some one here who would say: "Sir, I was a labourer many years. I did my own sowing and my own reaping — that is, I produced in some sort that which was a blessing to
the commonwealth. And I was frugal and sparing in my habits, and I saved portions of my wage each week; and I saved and saved until I had some few hundred pounds." Yes, friend, that is thine; the result of thy moderation and frugality; thine to give, or to spend, or to live on for the rest of thy days. I think James will admit this. I shall admit it. I feel sure the Lord of Sabaoth will admit it.

But maybe I interrupt this man. Perhaps he has more to tell. I fancy I hear him say, "Sir, I pray you hear me out. I did not keep the money. I took it to the bank, and there my money, with the money of others, kept the banker, and the bankers clerks, and myself. So that I had to labour no more, the banker giving me more money that I took him in return."

But I now further answer to this man: How did thy money keep the banker and the banker's clerks and thyself, while he yet put to thy credit more money than was at first thy money? I am afraid, friend, that thyself and the banker and the bankers clerks have been living upon the labour of somebody else; and that you have used your money to rob some labourer of his hire. I am afraid James would call this keeping back by fraud. I am afraid I must call it this. I am afraid the Lord of Sabaoth will have to call it this.

I pray thee, look into this matter! How have thy hundreds made more hundreds while thou hast stood by idle? The hundreds which thou didst receive in the days of thy labour were hundreds which thou didst receive for labour done; the hundreds which thou hast since received are hundreds which thou hast received for labour done by somebody else, which they have earned, but which you and your banker and his clerks have received and have not earned!

And now, is there some one here who would say: "Sir, I had money left me by my relatives and friends, and other money I also earned. But I did not put my money in the banks -- at least no great sum of it. I built me factories and foundries; I fitted them up with machinery and the tools of labour. Then I called upon the labourers to come and work for me."

I do reply to such a man that this was good.

And then, what then? You shared together the fruits of your labour, you yourself taking one simple share, and receiving from all the others a portion towards the cost of your machinery until the whole was cleared off. And then, I suppose you clubbed together and got fresh machinery, which I suppose is new the machinery of you all. Yes, that was a good deed! I feel sure that James would agree with that. I am sure I do; and I think I can venture to say, in the name of the Lord of Sabaoth, that He will approve of it as right.

But maybe my zeal has again interrupted, and now once more you say: "Sir, I did not do that way. I hired my labourers and paid them their wages."
Yes, my brother, you hired your labourers and paid them their wages. I was sure all along it would come to this, and that other way I forstalled you with was only a heavenly con-
ception of your poor preacher's own brain.

Brethren, in dealing with this part of James's subject I must ask you to give me your sincere and undivided attention; because in this matter of hiring and paying wages, it behooves you to see that you are the rich men, and they the poor labour-
ers. You hold in one hand money, in the other factories and workshops and lands -- while they hold what? Their naked lab-
ear. And the land they must have for their labour! and work-
shops and tools they must have for their labour! and these you hold in your hands! I pray you look at your position. It is a fearful position this that you hold, which is the holding of
the lands and tools of the labourers. I do declare here before
my God that I would not have your position for a thousand
worlds. It is a frightful position for weak man! and yet many
of you seem to dance under it most lightly. James says, "You
have lived delicately upon the earth and taken your pleasure,
and have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter." And
while the lives of the labourers were in your hands! This
while they cried out so that their cries entered into the ears
of the Lord of Sabaeth. So saith this James.

But what! Shall I hear you saying: "It is a free contract;
the labourers can choose!" Tut, tut! what do you mean? We-
think you have been reading some foul books of some foul
brains where hearts were dry as dust. How can a contract be
free where the contracting parties are unequal? Answer me this,
I pray you; not in the language of these books, but in the
straight, plain human language which your nature dictates. You
are the rich men. You hold the land and tools. They, the lab-
ourers, have but their raw labour. Are you on the same plat-
form? He must have land and tools to live; therefore by holding
these you hold -- what? Why, his life! Yes, you held his life;
-- you can allow it, or you can take it! It is in your hands
so long as you hold these things, without which he cannot sub-
sist. Oh, my brethren, this is a fearful responsibility! I
trouble to so open it up to you, and to gase into its depths.
Yet it is my painful duty, as I am a follower of this James
and his Master, and as I shall have to give an account of this
opportunity to speak to you before the Lord of Sabaeth.

You say that the labourer is free to contract with you. Let
us see. Pass you over to the side of the labourer. Sit you
there in his place while we clear up this matter. You are the
labourer now. You are without work, and you have your wife and
six little children to feed. Work comes -- are you free to
accept it or refuse it? Are you not compelled to take the work
to provide feed and shelter for your wife and little ones, with-
out which they cannot live? And he who, knowing your condition,
takes advantage of it to give you, not what is your right, but
what will just suffice to let you and your wife and little ones
live — what shall we say of him?

Now pass you ever to your own side again. You are the master once more. Do you do that kind of thing? Have you ever done it? You, my rich brethren, you hold the labourer’s land and tools. Without these — the land and tools — he cannot live. Therefore you hold his life! Are you taking it or giving it?

It is a marvellous life, this life of man! I sometimes think it is only a tiny bud as yet, scarcely at all unfolded. It has marvellous potentialities wrapped up in it — who can tell how marvellous? It was not born to flicker in alleys and cellars, in sepiolness and darkness and want. It was born to breathe the pure air; to beam in the sunshine; to laugh, to run, to skip, to play, and unfold these marvellous powers amidst the natural elements — earth, ocean, air — that the Lord of Sabael hath placed around it. Are you helping them to unfold all these human lives that touch yours? Are you sending them back again to the Lord of Sabael with their mission unfulfilled? Are you helping them one and all upon their upward way? You remember these lines of the old Buddhist priest. It does well for us to remember them, because we are Christians, and he was only a poor, dark, Buddhist priest. Hear what he says:

Kill not, for pity sake!
And, lest ye stay the meanest thing
Upon its upward way,
Give and receive toward all;
But take from none, by greed;
Or force, or fraud, what is his own.

Well, brethren, we have now the gist of this great matter before us. We see what it was that vexed the righteous soul of James. It was the same matter that is our great matter today — that the few have got into their hands the “means of life” of the many; and in getting into their hands the “means of life” of the many, have really got into their hands the life of many. The way in which, through the centuries, they have got the land and tools of the labourer into their hands is not a pleasant story to read. First, by naked force; then by fraud; then by law; and ever for themselves, and never for the poor they governed. This, I am afraid, must be the verdict of the unbiased historian. First, kings plotting for themselves; then nobles plotting against kings and against peoples; then commercial merchants plotting against kings, and against nobles, and against people. And now the people are beginning to learn, and to plot. If they should learn from us, brethren, what will come? Let us fall on our knees before the God of Sabael! Let us confess to him that we have been robbers all; and let us go and confess to the people that, seeing our sorrow and humility, peradventure they may be prompted to do better with us than we have done with them.
Brethren, we can assure them that might is met right, and that force is no remedy. But how shall they believe us, when all along we believed it by our actions? Besides, we have crucified afresh the Just One — that is, we have done these naughty deeds under His name. Better had we been blunt, bold, reckless Atheists! much better. We have been proud, haughty, grasping: we have praised that Man whose birth-place was a stable, while we ourselves have courted palaces. We have praised his poverty, simplicity, and honesty, while we ourselves have courted riches. He said life was within, a divine gift supplied direct from God; we have sought it in things without. He measured wealth by soul-power; we have measured it by gold and silver coins, and the garments that can become moth-eaten. And the man that has had most of these we have called the rich man.

Brethren, I have almost done. Perhaps you will require an apology from me for preaching this haughty sermon. Perhaps even now you are saying within yourselves, "We are honest citizens; we try to pay twenty shillings on the pound; we are as honest as other people. If we are in a cut-throat system of things, how can we help it? We cannot mend the bad system. We do not come to church on Sunday to be bullied and brow-beaten. We come out of a week's fight, and we want to get a little soothing opiate from you, parson, in order that we may go back to the fight with fresh vigour to-morrow."

Yes, brethren, something like this I know many of you are saying, and hear my answer to these thoughts. Brethren, I think you will agree with me in this: that all social politics have been made by men; and have been rent by men; and if they have to be mended, men must mend them. As men, we are all social forces in our present society. We are mending forces, or rending forces; and if we are not mending, then depend upon it we are rending. That is, we are isolating men by accentuating their individual antagonisms, or we are welding them together in a common unity. Isolation is death; solidarity is life. The material atoms must have chemical affinity, and come together and form a body, or they do not achieve their destiny. So, as the atoms of our body hold together and build up our body, we must hold together and build up the social body; in which body, says Paul, there can be "neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free" — and I think if he had lived in our day he would have added, "nor capitalist nor labourer". The principles of life, brethren, which I learn from Christ, and which Paul and this James seem to have learned from Him, are these: a common Father and a common humanity, a common education and a common destiny.

Brethren, I have done.
POLITICS IN THE PULPIT

by Fred Henderson

(An address delivered at the Norwich Labour Church in 1900.)

"I hate, I despise your feast days and your solemn assemblies. . . . But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

The glorious thing about the moment through which we are now passing is that religion is alive in the world again, and the exhilaration of a great spiritual adventure is in the air. There is, as a modern writer has said, only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it. Diverse as they may be in form, they have all the same thing to say; and the world is beginning to repeat it with something of that choral gladness which marks every period of religious revival. Religion is to-day coming back upon men. In all its manifold forms, whether it disguises itself under a theology or a political programme or a revolutionary movement, religion means the craving of men to see God's Justice embodied in the life of the world, the sense of a direct relationship with the Highest rendering it imperative, at all cost and through all hazards, to bring life into conformity with that relationship. If men will it, they can do it; and a period of religious revival is when men are willing it on the large scale, when the New Jerusalem becomes so clear to them as to be a mandate. And never, surely, was the sense of fertility, of great things almost at fruition, of a coming glory, more diffused about the world than now. The movements, the unrest, the strivings which are disconcerting so many people, are all at bottom the same religious movement of revival. It is being borne in upon men's consciences that there are deep injustices in the way they live together, that methods of life and work which they have been taking for granted as part of the inevitable order of things are not inevitable at all; are in opposition to God's law of equity and that the supreme business for us is to bring life into conformity with that law. Our politics, our local administration, all the agencies through which men express and attain their will concerning their order of life, are being transfigured in the inspiration of this purpose. The talk of men, in the streets, in all places of resort, in newspapers, in the throng of our common ways, is more and more. "How can we live justly together? How can we ensure the right quality in human life?" You overhear two men in the street, and it is an even chance that they are talking about infant mortality, or the housing

1. A pamphlet published by The Norwich Printers, Maddermarket 1900.
question, or the problem of the unemployed. It is all a stirring
and an effort towards a new order of life which shall satisfy the
conscience of the race in the dealings which its members have with
one another and the way they live together. Every political dis-
cussion passes on the common tongue into an ethical dis-
cussion, a
problem of conscience, the hope of the coming of the Kingdom. We
are saying, "Thy Kingdom come on earth," not on our knees only,
but saying it at the ballot-box, in municipal elections, in polit-
cical outlooks, and in our ideas concerning the organisation of
industry.

A good deal of the unrest now existing in the Churches is at
bottom only one more manifestation of this same movement of re-
ligious revival. Earnest men are feeling more and more intensely
the need for bringing the inspiration of their religious beliefs
to bear upon the actual life of the world. They feel that in a
very large measure many of the Churches have attempted to with-
draw the sanctification of religion from the actual work-a-day
life of the race, and to petrify religion into a mere speculative
theology; and against that process man's religious instincts re-
volt. The function of religion is not to set up certain sacred
things in opposition to secular things, but to bring life in its
entirety and in all its common work and its common human relations-
ships into conformity with the law of love and of justice. The
unrest in the Churches to-day has its origin in the felt failure
of the Churches to get at close quarters with actual life; the
failure of organised religious work to fulfil itself and to come
to fruition in the activities of our general humanity. "By their
fruits ye shall know them." If the faith once delivered to the
saints is a valid and a sufficient faith, and if it is being faith-
fully presented to the world by the Churches, how is it that the
vast range of human life shows no sign of response to it? How
is it that nations go to war? How is it that children suffer
cold and hunger? How is it that under a superficial veneer of
culture our modern civilizations are still a mere wild-beast
scramble for selfish ends? It is from this feeling of contrast
between the professions of the Churches and the things condoned
by the Church in human life, from this perception of the futility
of the Christianity of to-day to influence in any adequate degree,
or even to attempt to influence, the actual life of the world,
that your Labour Churches and your New Theologies have sprung.
All these movements of unrest point to what I have just said to
you, that religion is coming back upon men, and the evidence of
its coming is the rising demand, shown in a thousand different
ways, for actuality, for fulfilment in the life of the race.

Now this is no new thing in the world, although it is a new
thing to this age of the world. Christianity, organised and
respectable Christianity, has got into pretty much the same con-
dition in the modern world as the orthodox and respectable reli-
gion of Judaism had got when Jesus came into conflict with it.
And what the teaching of Jesus did as against Judaism, that same
teaching must now do as against modern Christianity, if religion is to live again in the affairs of men. What we have to do is to assert the law of love as a rule of life, against the barren formalism of a religion which has separated itself from the affairs of life. I cannot find that Jesus cared very much about doctrinal theology or about the metaphysics of religion; while as for the formal observances of respectable religion, he positively hated them, and never lost an opportunity of expressing his utter contempt for them, and of warning his hearers that unless their righteousness exceeded that sort of thing it was the vainest of follies. What he was concerned about was to persuade men that brotherhood is the primary law of human relationships and human conduct, and to redeem men into that new life out of the old animalisms and fightings and revenges. I find nothing else in the teaching of Jesus that is more than dust in the balance compared with that. He came into acute conflict with the respectable and established religion of his day precisely as every true man is bound to come into acute conflict with the respectable and established Christianity of to-day; and on precisely the same grounds. He found it condoning the conduct which his Gospel condemned; a respectable and established religion absorbed in formal observances which did not touch the lives of men. Could he have foreseen that a day would come when similar formalisms would be observed by similar great ecclesiastical hierarchies, professing to act in his name and to be the exponents of his teaching, he would certainly have prayed for a new re-incarnation in these latter days, in order that he might denounce it as he denounced its Jewish prototype.

It is a familiar phenomenon in religious history, this of the persecution to which all great religious teachers are subjected by the respectabilities of their own time, contrasted with the honour and worship paid to their memories by generations long after. It is generally assumed that this growth of a religion into recognition and honour means the acceptance by the respectable world of the teaching of the prophet whom their forefathers stoned. Unfortunately for that notion, respectability is pretty much the same thing in all generations; and if it honours in one generation the name of a prophet whom it stoned in an earlier generation, it is in most cases not because it has accepted his teaching, but because it has discovered some ingenious way of reducing that teaching to naught while professing to render lip service to it.

The process by which this transformation of a great religious inspiration into mere formalism takes place is a perfectly simple one. You can find it illustrated over and over again in history. All great ethical teaching is necessarily idealistic. It expresses human duty in terms of no compromise. The complexities of life do not exist for it; it dissolves all such difficulties in the simplicity of first principles which throw a clear and imperative light upon conduct. Such an attitude towards life is always a challenge to the respectability of its day; respectability which
is bound up with self-seeking and the maintenance of privileges. Human society generally compromises with such teaching, after having failed in the attempt to beat the life out of it by persecution, by making a theology of it, and so severing it from application to the ordinary conduct of daily life.

That is the unfortunate fate which has befallen the teaching of Jesus. To accept that teaching as a guide to conduct would be to make many of the practices of modern social, industrial, and political life impossible. Accordingly, modern nations make a theology of it instead of a rule of conduct; relegate the recital of its principles to a set day in the week, upon which they agree to shut their shops and offices, by way of showing that there is absolutely no connection between their religion and the business of their life; and so, establishing a wholly blasphemous distinction between conduct and creed by calling conduct secular and creed religious, preserve to themselves liberty to kill, thieve, lie, make war, grow rich by sweating or by landowning, and all the rest of it in matters within the "secular" sphere, while still describing themselves as Christian on the strength of the odd day upon which these business and political activities are suspended. A metaphysical subtlety of doctrine takes the place of the law of righteous conduct; a respectable hierarchy of high social status grows up, becomes involved in the defence of huge property interests and social prerogatives for itself; the whole thing hardens and petrifies into ecclesiasticism; and the age again stands ready to stone the next prophet who attempts to turn its dead formulae back again into a living inspiration for the conduct of the world's affairs. Every prophet is thus a reprobate to his own age, and the provider of a new religion for some future generation grown adroit enough to pack his message into a respectable formula not so wholly incompatible with the continued exercise of savagery and knavery as it appeared to be at first. How skilled the vested interests which have hitherto controlled the affairs of the human race, how skilled they are in this process of bluffing the prophets and getting round religious teaching so as to make it possible for men to profess religion without giving up the practices which that religion condemns, is manifest enough from the continued existence of war--not to mention commercial enterprise--amongst nations actually calling themselves Christian.

Official Christianity to-day is in the main nothing but a cynical bluff to the teaching of Jesus; and the extent to which it has become eligible for addition to the world's museum of religions whose life has been petrified out of them by respectability may be clearly seen by the derision and protest with which any suggestion that Christianity is a matter of conduct is now received; and by none more loudly than by many of the professional holy men whose function, as they interpret it, is so largely to provide us with excellent pulpit reasons for ordering our lives in complete disregard of the precepts of their creed. Their favourite phrase in this connection is that you must not bring politics into the
pulpit which is only another way of saying that you must not claim for the teaching of Jesus any authority over or any application to national conduct; for what is politics but the ordering of our national conduct?

The official hierarchy of a religion thus grown respectable have always been the chief stone throwers at contemporary prophets. Read your Bible. Who are the people against whom all the prophets prophesy? Against whom Jesus thunders? The poor and outcast? The publicans and sinners, the disreputable? Never. For these the religious teacher has deep pity and a message of sympathy. It is the scribe and the Pharisee, the chief priest and the elder, the Bishop and the Dean, the men who say and do not, who love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the congregation, and greetings in the market place, and to be called "Rabbi."

Don't you know them? Do you want to go as far away as Jerusalem nineteen hundred years ago to find them? You will find them all through history, dominating every established church system with their unctuous respectability. These, I repeat have always been the chief stone throwers at contemporary prophets. They deem it their business to keep religion out of life, and to confine it to metaphysics and forms and ceremonies which can be respectably practised without threatening their social and industrial privileges, to pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and to omit the weightier matters of the law: judgment and mercy and faith, the actualities of conduct of business, of politics. And they always hate the prophet because the prophet has an exasperating habit of telling them that their forms and ceremonies are nothing, and less than nothing, without the practical application of righteousness to daily life; which is the very thing they most earnestly desire to prevent. They object to bringing politics into the pulpit. Their real fear is that the pulpit should come into politics, into business, into industrialism. Where would they and their class perquisites be if it did? The whole attitude of the prophets towards a religion which attempts to separate sacred from secular things, reducing the former to metaphysics and leaving the latter unconsecrate, is summed up by Amos, "I hate, I despise your feast days and your solemn assemblies; but let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." That has always been the attitude of every great religious teacher towards the religiosity of his day. That is why he invariably gets himself stoned and crucified. He insists upon realities, upon life; he will not be content with forms and ceremonials. The burden of his message has always been that religion is a rule of conduct; and the occasion of his appearance has always been when a once living religion has become hardened into formalism, and detached from the daily life and activities of men; when the pulpit has avoided politics. He comes to re-establish religion as a principle of conduct, to claim the whole range of human activity as being subject to its teaching.

When your respectable religious man says that he does not approve of politics in the pulpit, what he means is, "Look here,
you leave my shop alone. I don't go to Church on Sunday to be asked about my factory, or my rent-roll, or whether the girls I employ are on the streets at night because their wages are not enough to live on. Business is business, and I don't want politics in the pulpit. The teaching of Jesus has nothing to do with these things."

Friends, I am here to declare that religion has everything to do with these things; that it is a worthless thing unless it does concern itself with these things. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your appointed meetings my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. When ye make many prayers, I will not hear. But put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." There you have it, the old prophetic message. Your Sabbaths and Church-going, your oblations and missionary collections, your praying and your religious observances, are nothing, are an iniquity and a curse, if they go with injustice and oppression in your life and work. That is the message which rings out, clear and strong, from the lips of every inspired religious teacher. Listen to it again as another of these old Hebrew prophets proclaims it. "Wherewith," says Micah, "wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand rivers of oil? He hath showed thee, oh man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy?" Always the same note, you see. Always insistence upon the fact conduct is the only true worship; that religion is not a set of ceremonies; or a creed, or giving to missionary collections, or praying, or Church-going, or being pious on Sundays; but a life to be lived, a law to govern all your relationships with your fellow-men. Or take it again as Jesus himself expressed it. There was one phrase which was often upon his lips. It is repeated over and over again in his rebukes to the orthodox and respectable religious folk of his day. These people, as you know, were constantly trying to get him into difficulties because he did not observe the established proprieties of religion. When he sat down with publicans and sinners, they said it was shocking. When he walked out on the Sabbath and plucked the corn, they rebuked him and his followers for Sabbath breaking. "Go," he said to them, "go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Sacrifice was the central ceremony in Jewish ritual. "What I want is religion in your lives, brotherhood and love in the relationships of men. I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

This is the message, this the truth that I put to you religious men and women. What are your Churches doing to help to fulfill
the prayer so constantly on their lips, "Thy Kingdom come on earth?" They have substituted a mere selfish other-worldliness: for the magnificent inspiration of the redemption of the world into a new life of brotherhood, the inspiration that should lead every Church to say:

I will not cease from mental fight
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Here you are, living and moving in a society with slums to the right and left of you, with a new generation of stunted and ignorant and underfed children constantly growing up round you, with men committing suicide, women driven to prostitution, workhouses and prisons full of the wrecks of a social order which fails to prove itself anything but a social disorder, with a population as big as a nation in itself slinking through life by thieving and pilfering, a welter and confusion of lives in a world of abundant resources; and, on the sunny side of the wall which throws these myriad lives into shadow, the strutting respectabilities, the idle lives, the classes who are only able to live as they do because the others are condemned to live as they do. What is your organised and respectable religion doing for this broadcast life of the nation? Shirking its duty, for the most part, on the plea that you mustn't introduce politics into the pulpit. Don't make any more hypocritical pretence about it. What you mean when you say that you mustn't have politics in the pulpit is that you will not give up your class privileges, and that you are going to prevent religion from questioning the justice of your privileges in the sight of God. I tell you that a religion which does not question you on these matters is no religion at all, but a devilish negation of religion altogether. Let us look the thing in the face. God has given us a most plenteous earth; and such things as want and ignorance and crime can only appear on it by some miracle of chronic old blindness in the human ordering of affairs. Is want, is suffering, is injustice, an inevitable fact in organised human society? The things that we take for granted, the things that our ordinary politics do not question and our organised Churches refuse to challenge—the existence of large classes of ignorant poor people, a social system that treats the dogs of one class better than the children of another class—are we bound to these things by any law of our nature? Ought not the whole civilized world to be thinking, thinking, thinking, with all the desperation of men upon whose consciences every moment is thrusting the burden and agony of wasted and bewildered lives, until the defect in our social organisation which makes life a tragedy for millions is discovered and set right? And you mustn't have politics in the pulpit! If the establishment of God's justice on earth is not the business of religion, what in heaven's name is its business? You think that these are political questions? I assure you that they are the vital test questions of the reality of your religion.
The conflict and struggle of Christ to-day is with Christianity, Christianity whose official organisation has been captured by the enemy, and turned into a citadel of defence for human selfishness against the teaching of Jesus. They keep religion from coming into politics because they know that if it did come in, if the teaching of Jesus were to be practically applied, their way of living would promptly be made impossible. They are up to the eyes in the iniquities of a social order which, in all its institutions, in its business, in its commercial enterprise, in its class distinctions, denies at every turn the foundation principle of the teaching of Jesus—the possibility of brotherhood and love, instead of competition and strife, as a synthesis of human society. "No politics in the pulpit" means the deliberate gagging of religion on the very issues upon which the world has most need of the guidance of religion. No wonder these people don't like politics in the pulpit, and use their dominance in the Churches to keep politics out. They are like slum-owners who have got themselves elected as a sanitary committee; and when they say that politics must be kept out of the pulpit they are simply announcing that the sanitary inspector will be exceeding his functions if he says anything about their backyard. They have given us a Christian era of great Churches and perishing people. They have emptied Christianity of Christ's teaching, silencing it from giving any practical utterance to his gospel of the establishment of the kingdom of love upon earth. They have refused point-blank to deliver his message to the world. He said peace; they defend and justify the wars which their paymasters wage for new markets and the increase of dividends. He taught the brotherhood of man in the Fatherhood of God; they are the most strenuous champions of an economic order which makes brotherhood impossible and sets up class division instead. Even their talk about not bringing politics into the pulpit is false. They do bring politics into the pulpit. They are always ready to bear their negative testimony against making Christ's teaching operative. The politics that tell against Jesus, the politics that uphold class privilege, the politics that would make the poor content with poverty, the politics that take for granted the continued existence of their paymasters' privileges, to such politics the pulpit is pretty freely open. It is only when politics begin to insist upon a positive testimony from religion as to the justice in God's sight of social and industrial methods, it is only then that the Churches say, "This is no business of ours; it is politics, and we don't like politics in our pulpits." They have, I repeat, emptied Christianity of Christ's teaching; and looking at these great empty tombs of the Churches, a world in earnest about living its religion, a world looking with a growing and a passionate desire for the fulfilment of God's purpose in human life, can only say of them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

Of course, in all this I am speaking generally. When you speak of the Churches you speak of the general and dominant tendencies of the Churches. I admit joyfully that there are voices
raised even in the pulpit for making the teaching of Jesus something more than a pious opinion, for claiming our right to test by that teaching the whole range of human activity. But they are comparatively few as yet; and they rarely condescend to particulars. I confess that I do not find any great edification in vague talk about the duty of the Churches to interest themselves in social reform and social justice. When you say, as it is becoming customary for many orthodox people to say, that the Churches must stand for social reform and for the establishment of justice, I venture to ask you what social reform, and what embodiment of justice? Unless you give a definite point to it, unless you apply this general talk to the actual definite problems of life, you might as well talk about standing up for time and space as about standing up for social reform. When you speak about the necessity for securing justice in the relationships of men, you have either said too much or too little. You cannot stop in that hazy region of indefinite sentiment. You must go on to apply your general sentiments to concrete cases, and dare to translate your preaching from the general to the particular. An aspiration after social justice in general is very apt to turn out to be an aspiration after no social justice in particular. The classes which profit by our present industrial anarchy and social injustice will listen with the utmost complacence to any amount of vague generalities about social reform. They do not mind generalities in the least; so long as you keep them in the abstract. It is when you begin to apply your general maxims to special facts, when you get to the point of "Thou art the man," that they don't like it. I have no doubt that the slave owners of the days of chattel slavery listened with complete satisfaction to general pulpit maxims about justice between man and man. It was only when the particular practice of slave owning was denounced as a violation of justice that they got annoyed, and threatened to resign their position as deacons if politics were introduced into the pulpit in that rude and outrageous way. And the landowner, the man who lives upon dividends, the industrial parasite of any sort, who lives by taking out of other men's labour all the surplus over and above a bare standard of existence, will come to your Churches and sit in the broadcloth which he gets by imposing his maintenance upon the labour of his generation, and will listen with much comfort and edification to your generalities. He will perhaps feel that it is the privilege of the clergy to be just a little impractical, but that is really doesn't matter so long as it is all kept in the abstract. "The sermon this morning was full of the most beautiful sentiments, my dear!" he will say to his wife when he gets home again. I am inclined to think that the elders and the scribes and the pharisees, the decorous and respectably pious people, when Jesus said to them "You hypocrites, you who devour widow's houses and for a pretence make long prayers, you will receive the greater damnation;" I am inclined to think that they did not go home and say how delighted they were with the beautiful sentiments of the sermon. So long as it is possible for a sweater, a slum owner, a profiter by other men's labour, to sit
in a Church without being made to feel that he is the man who is crucifying Christ afresh, the blasphemer against God's purpose in man's life, that Church is failing in its duty. It is engaged in saying soft things to please its paymasters instead of delivering fearlessly the message of Jesus. Vague phrases about social reform mean nothing. If those who utter them really mean anything by their talk, let them have the courage to say what they mean. If such phrases are spoken sincerely, they must have some definite idea behind them. Is private land-ownership just or unjust? Is the organisation of industry for private profit, hell on earth or not? When you talk about the need for justice between man and man, you tell us nothing unless you go on to define what you mean by that in its effect upon the actual institutions under which we live. The Churches in this matter appear to be going on the good old Biglow principle,

"I'm willing a man should go tolerable strong
Agin' wrong in the abstract; for that kind o' wrong
Is ollers unpopular, and never gits pitied
Because it's a wrong no one ever committed;
But you musn't be hard on particular sins
'Cause then you get kickin' some people's own shins."

It is quite possible to make talk about social reform in general serve the purpose of enabling you to avoid the very issues which you seem to be talking about.

No; it won't do; it won't do. The duty lying upon the conscience of every religions man is to face the definite facts of life, and to ask himself, without shirking and without reserve, "Is this institution, is that way of doing business, a just thing, an honest thing, a thing that helps or that hinders the relationship of brotherhood amongst men?" The landowner must be made to ask that question about the rents which come to him by no effort of his own, the shareholder about his dividends, the employer about the wages of his labourers, the politician about his wars and his armaments. It is the business of religion to put these questions with incisive directness to us; they say to us, "You must justify these things in the light of Christ's teaching, or abandon them." If religion means anything at all it means the redemption of men, our deliverance from evil, the bearing away of the sins of the world, the attainment of a life of brotherhood and love.

The theologians have fastened upon these great phrases; and, in pursuance of their set purpose of turning the edge of Christ's challenge to actual life and conduct, of keeping politics out of the pulpit, have turned the whole thing into a supernatural mysticism, to the great relief and comfort of those vested interests whose occupation would be gone if the world were actually and in fact delivered from evil. I take it that when Jesus spoke of human redemption, of deliverance from evil, of saving men from their sins, he meant just precisely what he said in the plain and ordinary sense of deliverance; a sense which the sweater and the
slum owner would find particularly unpleasant, and quite incompat-
ible with the position of Church deacon, if the theologians
had not invented the device of wriggling away from the meaning
of the Gospel by putting mystical interpretations upon a plain
and direct issue of conduct. It is the old story, "Then assembled
together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, unto
the palace of the high priest; and consulted how they might take
Jesus by subtlety, and kill him." There you have a perfect picture
of the ecclesiastical councils assembled to destroy the influence
of Jesus on the life of the world, to kill him by the subtlety
of putting what they are pleased to call a spiritual interpreta-
tion upon his teaching and denying its applicability to the actual
human relationships of the living world; enabling them to say to
the unjust man, "We bring you this soothing gift of a Christianity
out of which we have carefully extracted all that would be un-
pleasant for you. Isn't it clever of us?"

To say that you will keep politics out of the pulpit is to re-
veal the shameful impotence of a Christendom bound and gagged by
the monied interests of the world; a Christendom sharing in those
interests and so reduced to silence in the face of the great
human needs and duties which are calling the Churches of our day
to a new career and a more comprehensive mission. My reply to
those who ask, "Has religion anything to do with politics?" is
the old reply, "Do men light a candle in order to put it under a
bushel?" You are willing enough to concern yourselves about
individual sins. You are eager enough to bring home to the pros-
titute and the criminal a sense of their wrong doing. What about
the industrial system which makes the prostitute and the criminal?
Individual sin is, for the most part, only a knot in the vast
network and entanglement of social and industrial conditions. It
all resolves itself back into politics; and my claim upon you is
that politics must resolve back into religion, in the true sense
of religion, which is a life to be lived. How is religion to be
the light of the world, if it does not light the world to life?
How is it to be the salt of the earth, if the activities of the
collective life, which are governed by politics, are to be ex-
cluded from contact with it? Christendom which denies, or (what
is the same thing) does not work for the establishment of human
society on the foundation of brotherhood and love, Christendom
which is faltering in its condemnation of whatever stands in the
way of attaining that kind of life, is a Christendom which rejects
the Christian ideal of the possibilities of life. It is not a
Christendom at all, but heathenism which has wrongfully obtained
possession of the citadel of our faith, usurping its Churches,
lighting strange fires upon its altars, and turning the hope of
the world to derision in the very name of him who gave to men
the most inspiring utterance of that hope. The ultimate blasphemy,
the final denial of God in human affairs, is now, as nineteen
hundred years ago, the blasphemy of the elders and the chief
priests who smother under theological metaphysics and ceremonial
observations the ideal of such a life, and even deny the possibility
of attaining such a Utopian purpose. Without that clear purpose, religion becomes a mere mystical dreaming, and human life a chaos.

Dreams, say you? Nay, but rather such clear vision As in the bud can see the flower full-blown, And read a promise of the world's fruition In each prophetic hope our hearts can own.

Dreamers of dreams! We take the taunt with gladness Knowing that Time, beyond the years you see, Has wrought the dreams that seem to you but madness Into the substance of the life to be.

Is it a dream that human life can become a life organised on foundation of co-operation and brotherhood?

Is it a dream? Nay, but the lack of it the dream! And, failing it, life's love and wealth a dream, And all the world a dream!

THE FIRST STORY OF THE LABOR CHURCH and Some Things for which it Stands1
by J. S. Woodsworth
(An address in the Strand Theatre, Winnipeg, April 5th, 1920.)

Hymn

Is true freedom but to break Fetters for our own dear sake, And, with leathern hearts, forget That we owe mankind a debt? No! true freedom is to share All the chains our brothers wear, And, with heart and hand, to be Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak For the fallen and the weak; They are slaves who will not choose Hatred, scoffing, and abuse, Rather than in silence shrink

1. A pamphlet published by the Labor Church Offices, 530 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.
—J. R. Lowell.

Prayer

We meet together as brothers and sisters of the one big family.

We confess that we have not yet learned to live together in love and unity. We have thought too much of our own interests and too little of the common welfare. We have enjoyed and even sought special privileges. Our own gain has often involved another's loss. We are heartily sorry for these, our misdeeds; the memory of them is grievous unto us.

We acknowledge that we are still divided into alien groups separated from one another by barriers of language, race and nationality; by barriers of class and creed and custom. May we overcome prejudice. May we seek to find common ground. May we recognize the beauty in other types than our own. As we claim that our own convictions should be respected, so may we respect the convictions of others. May we grow in moral stature till we can join hands over the separating walls. May we enter into the joy of a common fellowship.

We have learned how imperfect is our knowledge; how narrow our vision. May we be willing to welcome truth from whatever source it comes. May we endeavor to follow the truth at whatever cost.

We would remember that the things that are seen are temporal; that the things that are not seen are eternal. May we judge things by their spiritual values. May we estimate success by high standards and in our own lives, reject the temptation of a low aim and easy attainment.

We would be wide in our sympathies and generous in our living. If we have more than others, may we accept our heavier responsibilities. We would extend to others that indulgence which we ourselves crave.

We are grateful for the lives of all the wise and good who have made this world a better place in which to live. May we enter into their spirit and carry forward their work.

We pledge ourselves to united effort in establishing on the earth an era of justice and truth and love.

May our faces be toward the future. May we be children of the brighter and better day which even now is beginning to dawn. May we not impede, but rather co-operate with, the great spiritual forces which, we believe, are impelling the world onward and
upward.

Readings

The accusers in Pilates Court:—"We found this man (Jesus) perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is an anointed king." --Luke 23, 2.

Jesus:—"Remember the word that I said unto you: A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also." --John 15, 20.

The mob at Thessalonica to the rulers of the city:—"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." -- Acts 17, 6-7

Demetrius, a Silversmith, at Ephesus:—"Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth. Not only is there danger that this, our trade, come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account." -- Acts 19, 25, 27

The "Orator" Tertullus at the Court of Felix:—"We have found this man (Paul) a pestilent fellow, a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; who moreover essayed to profane the temple." -- Acts 24, 5-6

A. J. Andrews, K.C., in Judge Metcalfe's Court:—"I maintain that this so-called Labor Church is merely a camouflage for the preaching of sedition and for fanning the flames of unrest. Their doctrines were intended to make you forget all you ever were taught at your mother's knee. Their aim is to remove the word duty from the dictionary and substitute pleasure and vice. The whole vile doctrine preaches duty to class first, self before country." -- Tribune, March 15th, 1920.

At the birth of each new era, with a recognizing start Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with mute lips apart, And glad truth's yet mightier man-child leaps beneath the future's Heart.

Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne, Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown, Standeth God within the shadow keeping watch above his own.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,--they were souls that stood alone, While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone, Stood serene, and down the future, saw the golden beam incline To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine.
Worshipers of light ancestral make the present light a crime.

We are traitors to our sires

... Shall we make their creed our jailer?

New occasions teach new duties—time makes ancient good uncouth,
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.
Lo, before us gleam her camp fires! We ourselves must pilgrims be,
Launch our May flower, and steer boldly through the desperate

Winter sea,

Nor attempt the future's portal with the past's blood-rusted key.

—Lowell (The Present Crisis).

Address

Today many of us have participated in the funeral ceremonies
of the young son of Wm. Ivens, the founder of this church. The
whole situation is unique and full of significance; heart breaking,
yet inspiring fresh courage.

Here is a dangerous criminal "guilty" of conspiring with others
to wreck society permitted, under merely nominal guard, to spend
several days at home in free intercourse with his family and friends.
We wish to express our appreciation of the humane consideration
of the authorities. Men's hearts are kind, but the existing
system permits freedom of action within very narrow limits.

Could anything be more anomalous than that thousands upon thousands of the citizens of Winnipeg should eagerly seize this
opportunity to show their sympathy and respect for a man with
close-cropped hair, accompanied by a jail guard? From the Sunday
Schools came bands of girls carrying wreaths to honor the man in-
tent upon under-mining home life. Heading the procession, marched
the returned men—honoring this man guilty of sedition—and
throughout the war a consistent Pacifist. Then at the cemetery
children from another Sunday School awaited to sing the old familiar hymns in honor of the man who was bent upon destroying
all religion. The officiating "clergyman" was a former city
pastor, now a "fellow-conspirator."

I cannot get away from that scene at the graveside. While
the women wept, many a strong man gritted his teeth and swore
strong oaths. With a more passionate people, the occasion would
have provoked a riot. By the open graveside we pledged ourselves
to be true to our comrades, and in our hearts there came a deeper
determination to continue the fight until every man and woman
and child had a chance in life and this cruel competitive system
had been replaced by an era of co-operation and brotherhood.

YOU CANNOT IMPRISON IDEAS

Mr. Ivens is now serving a year's sentence for "seditious con-
spiracy" and being a "common nuisance." His voice is silenced for the time. He cannot answer the charges that continually are hurled against him even by those who once called themselves brother ministers of the Gospel.

But, notwithstanding his absence, the Central Labor Church today moves into larger quarters, and at this hour camouflage for the preaching of sedition and for forming eight branch churches in the city are holding their meetings and the movement is extending Eastward and Westward. "You cannot kill ideas!"

THE THEORY OF IRRESPONSIBLE LEADERS

At the time of the great strike, the pulpsins of this city denounced the "Strike Leaders" for leading astray the poor, silly multitude who were as sheep without a shepherd. Yet, at the ensuing municipal elections, notwithstanding property qualification restrictions, the bringing in of absentee voters, and the active opposition of the Press, the Church and the business and political organization, Labor polled for Mayor 12,000 votes, as opposed to 15,000 for the so-called "Citizens" candidate.

It is now proposed to nominate the arrested Labor men as candidates in the forthcoming Provincial elections. The methods of suppressing the strike and of conducting the trials has aroused a Dominion-wide protest that will not cease until the real "conspirators" are removed by the people from their positions of trust.

Our existing laws and institutions have proven inadequate. A new ideal is attempting to find expression. With pain and travail a great new "cause" is coming to its birth.

ANSWERING CHARGES

In the recent trials A. J. Andrews, K.C., Chief Crown Counsel, in his address to the jury, coupled the names of William Ivens and William Hohenzollern, asserting: "They were both masquerading under the guise of religion. They both are enemies of society." Not content with this, he denounced the whole Labor Church. This challenge we do not propose to meet by counter denunciations. We do not propose even to defend ourselves against the absurdly false charges. We do propose, however, both for the benefit of open-minded outsiders and of our own group to attempt to give some account of the spirit and aims of the Labor Church Movement.

We remember the apostolic advice: "Be ye all like-minded, sympathetic, loving as brethren, tender-hearted, humble-minded; not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing. . . But and if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye. . . being always ready to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you." -- I Peter 3: 9, 14-15.
We trust that soon our judges will be as wise as Gamaliel, an ancient Doctor of the Law whose advise was "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God. -- Acts 5, 8-29

"GLORIOUS COMPANY OF MARTYRS!"

 Outsiders may consider me as disqualified to speak on behalf of a Church because I too have been in jail and I too am named by the Crown as conspiring with others whose "doctrines and principles are directed to wipe out all sentiments of faith in God, respect for fellow men, sanctity of marriage and the family, love of country, regard for life and property, in a word, all principles of religion and nationality and to overturn and subvert the present system of constitutional government of the Dominion of Canada, by force, in order to bring about a condition of chaos such as exists in Russia and to give control of the Dominion of Canada or a part thereof to the ambitious conspirators under the guise of a so-called government by the workers or the dictatorship of the proletariat."

 But I feel somewhat re-assured when Dr. S. G. Bland reminds us that probably the only one of the apostles who had not been arrested was Judas Iscariot, you will remember that, as F. J. Dixon recalled the careers of the world's great leaders who in their day had been arrested and accused of the most serious crimes, he began to consider that he had "been thrust into rather illustrious company." I have ceased to be a Minister of the Church, but I never felt so strongly the call to preach the good news of the Better Day.

HISTORY OF LABOR CHURCH

A brief review of the history of the Labor Church may not only give us the needed background, but furnish a clue to the understanding of the spirit of the movement.

When the radical and pacifist views of the Rev. Wm. Ivens, M.A., B.D., forced him out of the pulpit of McDougall Methodist Church, he accepted the editorship of the "Western Labor News." Feeling still his "call to preach" he started the Labor Church, in room 10, Labor Temple, July 8th, 1918. Although announced as a creedless church, it was said to be founded on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. Its aim was declared to be "the establishment of justice and righteousness on earth, among all men and nations." The motto was: "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." The meetings opened with devotional exercises, more or less after the Methodist form, but the platform was open to anyone with a message and there was considerable freedom of discussion. The audiences were composed chiefly of Labor people and the church came to be a rallying place for the more idealistic type of radical
thought.

Then came the strike. The Labor Church of today is essentially one of the products of the strike. The Labor Church Sunday meeting, under the leadership of the militant pacifist editor of the "Strike Bulletin," became the big rally of the week. The enthusiasm generated in the Sunday meeting did much to maintain the morale of the strikers during the ensuing week.

THE SPIRIT OF A RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

I remember my first Labor Church meeting. It was the third week of the strike. The vast congregation, estimated at 10,000, filled Victoria Park. For nearly two hours I talked—could not but talk! Dixon talked, Canon Scott talked, Robinson talked, Ivens talked. The people "stood" it—in a double sense of the word, and then gave a collection of $1,500.00 for the relief of the girls on strike. The police detectives reported us as Bolshevik Spellbinders and dangerous crowds of illiterate foreigners. Some of us thought we felt the spirit of a great religious revival.

Then came the arrests and the "breaking" of the strike. But, as I described it at the time, Ivens' Church had become a "movement"—a spontaneous movement of the people—an insistence upon a social code of ethics—a revolt against denominationalism and formality and commercialism in the churches—a hunger after righteousness and spiritual truth—a sense of fellowship in suffering and inspiration.

This movement became solidified by the opposition of the ministers and the Churches to the strikers. Staid old Presbyterian elders refused to darken the doors of the kirk. Wesleyan local preachers could no longer be restrained. Anglican Sunday School teachers resigned their classes. Class lines became clearly drawn and the "regular" churches stood out as middle class institutions. A disruption became inevitable. The new wine could no longer be retained in the old bottles.

THE DISPERSION

The prohibition of public meetings in the open air within the city limits completed the chain of events which led to the conscious organization of the movement. The Sunday after the order had gone into effect, North, South, East, and West, just outside the city limits, groups from one hundred to seven hundred strong met in the open to worship God after the dictates of their own consciences. "It almost reminds one," remarked one sturdy Scot, "of the Covenanting days when they drove our fathers out on the moors!"

I shall always remember the first of these meetings, which I attended after my release from jail. The women and children said...
on the dry grass. The men, many of them wearing returned soldier's buttons, stood in a large outer circle. The chairman was one of the few business men who had shown sympathy with the strikers.

"Faith of our fathers living still
In spite of dungeon fire and sword."

The old hymn rang out with a new meaning to those who during the preceding fortnight had been behind the bars or shot at by the soldiery or otherwise deprived of the rights of free citizens.

"Faith of our fathers! holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death!"

The new movement had become self-conscious.

"And seeing the multitude, Jesus went up into a mountain." So read the lesson. How natural in God's out-of-doors! "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake." Surely the old book had become very modern!

Then a Scotch workingman led in prayer. Not a conventional prayer by any means though full of conventional phrases! He prayed for the profiteers, that God's grace might be vouchsafed to them so that they might see of the error of their ways. He prayed that we might have courage to stand by our brothers.

The preacher, just out of jail, was greeted with applause. He plead for fair dealing for the strangers within our gates—his foreign fellow-prisoners who had not been allowed out on bail. He urged: "Seek ye first God's Kingdom—a Kingdom of justice and love—other things—jobs and wages—will be added."

Then in the closing hymn came Lowell's words of cheer:

"Though the cause of evil prosper
Yet 'tis truth alone is strong."

Even the Crown Prosecutor's fiery assaults do little harm to a movement like this!

Differences of Opinion

Unfortunately but naturally the unanimity which had prevailed during the enthusiasm of the strike was gradually superceded by differences of opinion among the rank and file. There came the factional fight between the O. B. U. and the A. F. of L. So in the Labor Church a certain cleavage was discernable between the more "Orthodox" Christians and the more "Orthodox" Socialists.

Many adherents up to the time of the strike had not thought of questioning the doctrinal teachings of the various denominations to which they had belonged. It was the Church's attitude to the
strike that had driven them into the Labor Church. On the other hand, many who attended the meetings had imbibed the ultra materialistic doctrines of the self-styled "Scientific Marxian School" of Socialism. They rejected all religion as superstition. The majority were "betwixt and between".

The situation was very clearly illustrated at the time of the formation of the first Sunday School. The parents who had taken their children from the "regular" Sunday Schools decided that they must have one of their own. A hall was engaged and a "superintendent" appointed. A hundred children crowded in next Sunday. The Superintendent declared he didn't know anything about such things. He had left school after he had been confirmed and, later, had attended church only to please his wife. He sent to me a "hurry up call" to come to his assistance. We got the teachers together. They didn't know what to teach. One group said: "We don't like to give up the Bible and the old teachings altogether. There is some good in the old, but we want a new application." The other group said: "We're tired of that old dope. We want to teach the children Marxian economics." Then one man made a happy suggestion: "Don't you think you could mix them up a bit?"

That, put in a crude way, is the position of the majority. They want the teachings of Jesus applied to the complex condition of our modern industrial life. They are reaching after a viewpoint different from that of either Orthodox Christianity or Orthodox Marxianism.

NATURAL DEVELOPMENT

On several occasions committees have been appointed to draw up a constitution, but the pressure of arrests, trials, elections, and educational propaganda have crowded out less important matters. One article dealing with the object of the Church was apparently lost in the shifting of the labor papers--just as some of our Sunday School lesson helps were lost in the R. N. W. M. P. raids! Probably all this was for the best as the Church has grown naturally--problems being dealt with as the special needs arose.

Already, in addition to the regular Sunday meetings, there have been organized Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies, Women's Guilds, Teachers' Training Class, Economic Classes, Sick Visiting Committees, Choirs, and Orchestras.

GETTING AWAY FROM MERE FORMS

We are trying to be sincere and to work out a religion that will be real and vital. A little incident will illustrate the transitional period through which we are passing. One evening I was a guest at the home of a Labor Church family. As we sat down to the table my host said, half defiantly, we thought, as he gazed at his wife: "We no longer say a 'blessing' in this house. I believe that the existing system of production and distribution is all wrong. We should not have these things while others go without
and I don't intend to blame 'God' for it!" Was that shocking? Surely this man exhibited a better spirit than if he had mumbled through a conventional blessing. But for those who wish to maintain the old form of "Grace before Meat" would something like this not be more in keeping with our modern ideas? "We are thankful for these and all the good things of life. We recognize that they are a part of our common heritage and come to us through the efforts of our brothers and sisters the world over. What we desire for ourselves we wish for all. To this end may we take our share in the world's work and the world's struggles."

So the Church is considering the advisability of some sort of dedicatory service to take the place of the conventional "Christening".

We still use some of the old forms, even though we recognize that they do not adequately or even correctly express our ideas. This is not camouflage. They are the forms of expression with which we are familiar and we have not yet developed new ones. So, at banquets, toasts are still drunk, even though only water is used. We have not yet evolved a "prohibition" method of expressing good fellowship! Many of our hymns reflect the life of a hundred years ago. We await the poet of the new era!

SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF NEW MOVEMENT

Our object has not been—and, I think, should not be—primarily to build up an institution or lay down a creed or adopt certain forms, but rather to attempt to interpret the spirit of a new movement.

While the Labor Church refuses to be bound by dogmas, we believe it is essentially in line with the teachings and spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. Most of us gladly, if humbly, acknowledge his leadership and inspiration.

A "PROTEST-ANT" MOVEMENT

The movement is a protest against the present social order. As such it challenges existing ideals and standards and institutions—industrial, commercial, financial, social, legal, political, moral and religious. Its task is to test all things, to hold fast only that which is valuable, to create ideals and standards and institutions that will more adequately express the growing needs and aspirations of humanity.

The movement is born of a social age. Its viewpoint is social, not merely individualistic, its aims are social, not merely individualistic, that means that it stands for replacing the present selfish scramble for existence by a co-operative commonwealth in which each will have a chance.

THE FUTILITY OF PHYSICAL FORCE

The Labor Church was born during the war, as a protest against
war. We believe that physical force settles nothing. Mental power is superior to physical power and "moral" or "spiritual" power is superior to mental power. What is won by physical force must be maintained by physical force. Physical force is a deceptive shortcut. "Moral" ends can be attained only by "moral" means. The co-operative commonwealth must be founded on justice and good will. It presupposes the "consent of the governed". Democracy that is maintained by coercion is not worthy the name. Education, then, not the sword is to be the instrument of our emancipation.

THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

Religion, in so far as it is vital, changes and grows. That is true of the individual. When I was a child I thought as a child, spoke as a child, understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. Some people never grow up spiritually— and pride themselves on their childishness! Rather, ours should be the experience of the Chambersal Nautilus: "Build ye more stately mansions, oh my soul, as the swift seasons roll." The man who thinks today as he did before the war must surely have an ossified brain and hardened heart!

As with the individual so with the race. The religion of any period usually expresses itself in a certain creed or institution or set of ceremonies. Then the expanding forces of a new period burst the narrow confines of the old creed or institution and express themselves in new forms.

Religion in this broad sense is simply the utmost reach of man—his highest thinking about the deepest things in life; his response to the wireless messages that come to him out of the infinite; his planting the flag of justice and brotherhood on a new and higher level of human attainment and purpose.

THROUGH THE SPECTACLES OF EXPERIENCE

Men look upon life through the spectacles of experience. The world in which we live is limited and colored by what we are. In the brilliant sunset the farmers may see only a fair day for haying; the artist sees a poem. Religion then, like all ideas and institutions, is closely related to the every-day experience of mankind.

The human race has passed through several more or less clearly defined stages of development: (1) the Hunting Age, when our Savage forefathers lived by the chase, as until recently did the North American Indians; (2) the Pastoral Age, when wild animals were domesticated and then more easily caught and killed— the Patriarchal age of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; (3) the Agricultural Age, when man learned to grow and use more extensively the fruits and grains; (4) the Handwork Age, when man learned to make by hand the simple tools and things to satisfy his ever-increasing needs; (5) The Machine Age, when man invented machinery and called water, wind, steam and electricity to help him in his work.
THE OLD ORDER CHANGES

Each of these ages has produced its own ideas and institutions, its own laws and customs and codes of morality and religion. As one age runs into another, so old ideas and institutions are not suddenly and absolutely changed, but are modified and transformed, and then, parts of them incorporated into the new.

CHANGING IDEAS OF GOD

Take the idea of God. The hunter thought of a great spirit—a shadowy life that always escaped him—a mightier hunter than himself. The shepherd caring for his flock exclaimed, concerning his tribal God: "Jehovah is my shepherd." The farmer thought of a great Husbandman who sent the rain and fruitful seasons. The hand worker conceived of a great architect of the universe who had admirably planned this world for the needs of man. What of the machine worker? Is not the world to him more or less of a vast machine, with each wheel cogging into the other? He takes it as it is and yet -- ? Yes, there is something more. He is becoming conscious of a determination to understand and control the machine and to determine his destiny. This great new life Force that is pulsating in his own veins and through society—is this not his idea of God?

As with the idea of God, so with the idea of worship. If God is conceived as an oriental despot, He may be placated by sacrifices, human, animal or symbolical. If He is a Righteous Judge, then He is pleased not with burnt offerings, but with a life of righteousness. If He is an Ecclesiastical Potentate, then He will expect an elaborate ceremonial. If He is a "Our Father in Heaven", then He will be satisfied with nothing less than the love and service of His children. If it is in Him that we live and move and have our being, then worship of an external Deity will be replaced by Spiritual Communion and co-operation.

IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD

Through the history of Christian doctrine we might trace the changes that have been occasioned by the changes in Asiatic and European civilization. Now we have entered upon a new era. We are passing through the difficult transition period. It is full of uncertainties. It is easy to follow a beaten path; it is not easy to blaze a trail through an untracked forest. It is easy to reiterate old phrases. It is not easy to formulate ideas that are slowly emerging and only half understood.

Some would shrink back and cling desperately to the old. Rather let us have faith to say:
"Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail!
Steer for the deep waters only.
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all
0, daring joy, but safe! Are they not all the seas of God?
0 farther, farther, farther sail!"
THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

The Labor Church, born of the class struggle, at present limited in its activities, "Protestant" in its attitude rather than "Catholic" in its spirit, nevertheless reaches out to the religion of the future. What that will be who can tell? But while we cannot yet see the light we can already tell in what direction the light is breaking.

The religion of the future will be (1) PROGRESSIVE -- dynamic not static. It will lay no claim to finality but rather be "going on towards perfection". (2) It will be SCIENTIFIC in its spirit and methods. The universe will be perceived as one and indivisible, each part in relation to the whole. We shall not be afraid of truth, rather welcoming it remembering that the truth only can make us free. (3) It will be PRACTICAL. Our immediate concern is with this present world rather than with some future life. Right relationships with our fellow men are more important than speculative Orthodoxy or ceremonial conventionality. (4) It will be essentially SOCIAL in character. No man liveth unto himself. The highest individual development can be realized only in a social organization. The emphasis is on social salvation. This involves fraternity and democracy. (5) It will be UNIVERSAL. When we evolve a religion that is big enough and broad enough and loving, it will make a universal appeal.

At this time let us have faith and courage, and the future is ours!

THE LABOR CHURCH BELIEVES IN:

1. A spiritual interpretation of life.
2. A continually developing humanity and religion.
3. The establishment on earth of an era of justice, truth and love.

THE LABOR CHURCH STANDS FOR:

1. FELLOWSHIP. We welcome all men and women irrespective of creed, class or race.
2. EDUCATION. We seek to know and spread the truth. We believe that knowledge only can make men free.
3. INSPIRATION. By association we stimulate one another to truer thoughts, higher aspirations and nobler living.

THE LABOR CHURCH IS DEMOCRATIC IN ITS ORGANIZATION

1. Each local branch is free to adopt its own institutions, choose its own officials and manage its own finances. The general executive is composed of delegates from and responsible to the various locals.
2. The Labor Church co-operates with other institutions of like aims and spirit. It realizes that it is a part of a larger world-wide movement.

WORKS WITHOUT FAITH

by Hugh V. Herford

(The following is a much abridged summary of an address delivered last year to the Manchester Labour Church, and more recently to other Labour Churches. I have asked Mr. Herford to let it appear here, because it so faithfully represents the situation in some of our Churches, and also the direction in which we have to advance.

-- Editor, in The Labour Church Record, April '99.)

I have been led to this subject by a discussion on Labour Church work at a recent joint service at Salford. The burden of this was that somehow our numbers had fallen off, that we were making no impression, adding no new members. Some put this down to the bald nature of our services -- to the almost entire absence of what is ordinarily understood by "religious observances".

It seems to me that we express either too much or too little, in the use of our hymns and our principles, of the idea of God and of communion with him. Too much, if we are content to meet Sunday by Sunday practically confessing that we have no notion what is meant by it all -- that the idea of God is nothing to us -- that the idea of prayer only suggests asking a power in which we don't think we believe for good things to eat or wear, whether for other people or for ourselves. Because we go on implying more than they think we mean, manly and honest souls have left us and sought in real outside work that harmony between their views of life and their views of conduct which continued experience among us had paralysed. They had to get into the fresh air, out of what seemed to them an exhausted atmosphere. We implied, in our hymns and principles, beliefs which they felt were not vital to us. To them we expressed too much.

Too little do we express our principles and ideas, if they have any reality for us and are part of our daily life and thought. For we slur them over, as if they were, indeed, the proper thing for us as a Church -- all right, of course, but not exactly appropriate for talking about in our semi-public gatherings. Those to whom God and their own souls are true facts and not mere nebulous speculations have been starved by our services; and them, too, we see no more. So that in both directions we have lost friends who were attracted at the outset by what seemed to be just what they had been looking for. In either case they found after a time that we were not true to ourselves.
I believe that we have tried, with the best intentions, to sit securely on a fence. Anxious to satisfy both the religious and the non-religious hearer, we have somehow largely dissatisfied both. We have failed to grasp the real idea of the Labour Church. This I take to be the sense of being co-operators with God in developing, in our own hearts and in those of all around us, that fullness of life which will urge us each and all to work for the uplifting, physically and morally, of ourselves and of the low-lying mass of society around us. The very essence of the conception is that this regenerating power flows from within outwards.

Now, the words Religious and Secular are neither of them quite satisfactory without much qualification; but the issue is practically this: Is the Labour Church frankly and squarely a religious institution, or is it frankly and squarely a secular institution? I think there can be but one answer -- that it is to be a religious institution. And if this answer be given, it rests with those who give it to put life into our religion, and to show that what we mean by it is not any narrow, other-worldly, dogmatic religion, but that it is yet so vitalising that it animates and inspires our whole outlook upon the so-called secular side of things.

Having thus made our choice between the two alternatives -- the only possible choice if the whole conception of the Labour Church is not to be abandoned, -- it becomes possible to see that we may now do honestly and sincerely what, if done for the mere sake of outsiders, I said before would be hypocritical. That is to say, we may try so to arrange our services that they may really express the ideal we are trying to build up within our individual souls. I think we might make our hymns and readings, and music so full of suggestion and expression that we could go from our services satisfied even though we had no address at all. I go further, and urge that we should look with less narrowness (and what seems to me a kind of inverted bigotry) at this subject of prayer. With an apt and plausible quotation we have put the question aside: "Laborare est orare. "To work is to pray" It may be, and often is -- but not necessarily. It is, if our work is inspired with a strong and glowing inner conviction which compels us to see for ourselves all the wrong that is in ourselves and the world around us, and leaves us no peace until we are doing some work which will help towards bettering the wrong. But it is nothing but a phrase if we are without any such strong compulsion within. It is true, again, of the enthusiastic worker who may be absolutely without any idea of God, but who yet is on fire to do something to mend the world's wrongs. But of the greater number of us it is not true, and without the inspiration of a strong inner life our efforts are feeble and fluctuating.

There is a beautiful thought expressed in one of our hymns, "The City of the Light":

We are builders of that City,
All our joys and all our groans
Help to rear its shining ramparts,
All our lives are building stones;
But the work that we have builded,
Oft with bleeding hands and tears,
And in error and in anguish,
Will not perish with our years.

It will be at last made perfect
In the universal plan,
It will help to crown the labours
Of the toiling hosts of man;

It will last and shine transfigured
In the final rein of night,
It will merge into the splendours
Of the City of the Light.

"We are builders of that City!" We are not, then, mere accidents -- gnats in the summer air -- but related to the great scheme of life, "the universal plan". Each of us has a part to play. Each has his piece of building to do. And if this is so, do we not want to know something of the Architect who so sets us to work? Or are we content to build blindly, or even to shirk the task, putting in mere jerry work, because we have not realised that there is any Architect at all? Will not our share of wall be better built, our stones more truly squared, if we feel that we may even come to have a glimpse of the plan, that this Architect will in some way answer faithful and honest work with some comprehension of what he is about, and that as the building rises we may, by understanding him better, be enabled to do better and truer work?

My belief is that, in order to do the good work we all want to do, we must take thought, not only in the secret of our own hearts; but among our fellowship here, as to what is the nature of the faith that should inspire us in our work to patient continuance in well doing. Faith of some kind is needful for this. Passing emotion will oftentimes rouse us for a moment, but Faith alone will make us stick to our post, so that
The task in hours of insight willed
May be in hours of gloom fulfilled.

This faith we shall find if we set our hearts and minds to seek it. If so many of us have been without it, this is because we have not sought it, and our work has been spasmodic and fitful in consequence. I believe this faith to be more than a mere speculative opinion. It will rather be something going down to the very roots of our being -- some truer understanding of what is divine in all men, but so crushed out of most of us -- certainly no mere assent of the intellect to any creed or belief, however correct.

We are a small body here, but that matters little if we know why we are here and what we want to do. It was said, "Faith can remove mountains". Remember Cromwell's boast of his small band of troopers -- "They are men of religion!" Those became the famous Ironsides, who were like yeast in the parliamentary army, so
leavening it that, from being a mass of raw levies, it became a powerful weapon to overthrow tyranny in the land. If, like these men, we can become convinced that we, too, are called by a power not ourselves to a work of overthrowing tyranny in the land — the tyranny of evil within which chokes our better purposes, the tyranny, without, of cruel social ills — I can conceive in each Labour Church the gathering of a band of Ironsides, small, perhaps, but fearless, which would command an influence just in proportion to its earnestness. Numbers would matter little, but to such a body even numbers, in time, would come.

FREEDOM
by Keir Hardie

(From a report in the Manchester City News, Sept. 3, 1892.)

In the course of his address Hardie referred to Lancashire Cotton operatives: There is no language to convey my feelings when I heard that the hard headed, thinking cotton operatives had come round to our way of thinking. No longer can people point at Lancashire and say those people don't want an eight hour day. Many believe, as I did ten years ago, that the Liberal Party is adequate to bring about amelioration, but I cannot now agree. Idle land should be expropriated and colonized by people who could produce food, etc. for themselves. Also private ownership of the means of production should be abolished — not to interfere with anyone’s personal freedom, but to prevent the freedom of the capitalist from curtailing the freedom of the subject. Workers must unite to accomplish these objects.

SOCIALISM AND THE WAR
by Keir Hardie

(From a report in the Bradford Labour Echo, Jan. 25th, 1896.)

The past year has been a year of trouble. The Battles of History make great reading, but actual fighting is different. Modern war is quite different from the hand to hand fighting of the past. There is nothing heroic about modern methods, there is nothing but carnage. Everyone is glad that the war scare is passing. War has its roots in selfishness and pride of Kings and of the Commercial Classes; its roots are not in Christianity or in Civilization, etc. "The missionary sent out on the money sweated out of their workers by wealthy plutocrats, and carrying Bibles presented by sweated non-union labour, was followed by the trader, who compelled the savage to take his adulterated drink and shoddy clothing, and when the native refused to have their land taken from them, we sent out
soldiers, in the interests of commerce and civilization, to shoot them down."

Socialists have a responsibility in the establishment of peaceful attitudes in places of power. It is not hunger of body but hunger of soul that fights on the socialist side. Commercialism and war at home must give way to international Socialism and to the abolition of baser attitudes.

**SOCIALISM AND CHARACTER**

*by Keir Hardie*

(From the *Labour Leader* as reprinted in *The Labour Prophet*, Nov. 1896, p. 176)

Keir Hardie, speaking at the Holborn Town Hall on Sept. 27th, 1896, stated that "the ideal of Socialism was not the materialistic cast-iron system it was sometimes represented to be by some of its exponents." The keynote of the discourse he stated in a single sentence: "Every reform, every system of philosophy, every endeavour to make life sweeter and pleasanter, is only valuable in so far as it tends to the development of individuality and strength of character." He looked forward to Socialism, not merely to provide the comforts of life for those who produced them, but to give birth to that higher, nobler, truer, fellowship and comradship between all nations and individuals, which would realise for the first time in history the poet's dream -- the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God.

**SOCIALISM AND THE HOME**

*by Enid Stacy*

(From *The Labour Prophet*, March 1893, p. 20.)

Socialism is being criticised as destroying homes. We make reply that the same conditions which make society so evil tend to make men rough in their family relationships. Socialism works for homes in which there is equality and love side by side -- for regeneration of the individual and family life as well as of social life. These are our ultimate ends.

But in practical life at present advocates of socialism often do display ruined homes. If wife does not sympathise with husband's cause, he stays away from home even longer than necessary because of the lack of understanding and the constant nagging. The man's complaint is legitimate; so also is the wife's that she no longer has time with her husband. His concern for other folks children apparently doesn't extend to his own.
There is need for forbearance and sympathy and love. Husbands: Do you attempt to broaden your wife's views by giving information in attractive ways and enlisting her sympathies? Help them to widen their sympathies beyond the family circle. Also, organise your time and spend a lot at home -- show your love, give attention to the children, help them to find recreation outside the home. Bachelors and Suitors: Look for companions as well as wives. Married women: Be interested in your husband's interests. Be a friend and confidant and comforter. Remember Socialism aims at protecting home as well as our country generally. Take your own share of the struggle beside your menfolk, not necessarily by campaigning, but by understanding and accepting the present inconveniences for the ultimate ideal.

SOCIALISM AND ART

by Margaret McMillan

(Condensed from reports in the Bradford Labour Echo, April 4, 1896.)

"The Early Church and Art"

Great artists and religious pictures show that true religion expresses itself in art. Contrasts of Pagan and Christian Art, using examples, were given.

"Renaissance Art"

Rebirth is a wonderful experience -- awakening to new life and beauty; this new Life came to the Western World. During the Middle Ages the craftsmen were educated by making something beautiful -- there was no liberty in the modern sense -- there was obedience to natural laws and to guild laws -- but the craftsman did create beauty. For instance consider the Pulpit of Nicolo Pisano which rests on wild beasts -- human passions -- from which straight columns rose -- discipline and inspiration, the evolution from brute -- and at the top, the story of the cross. Commercialism has ruined art in our Churches, and has spoiled our deeper worship.

In the Middle Ages it was understood that the most important thing was not to make Churches, but to allow the Churches to make the character of the people. Miss McMillan assured her hearers that their work might pass away but that the result would remain in the final work -- the noble man and woman. If our life be but a vapour, let it be a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, lighting the way for others.

"Art in the 14th Century"

Before art there is always religion; this is clearly illustrated in the 14th century. For example, the Inspiration of Dante is interpreted by Giotto, a shepherd lad of artistic ability who was
discovered and taught. But in our day there are no Giottos, for Board Schools prevent development. After Giotto there was a decline in Art till Raphael, who caused a schism in Art with his pictures. One part was dedicated to the Muses, the other to Theology on the walls of the Vatican. Art is now wandering in a wilderness -- there will be no revival of art until there is, in people's hearts, a revival of religion which is inspired from above.

"Art in the 16th Century"

At this time poverty was respectable. Diogenes of ancient Greece had loved in a tub. Thomas Aquinas and Francis d'Assissi begged bread. This is not so today. Only financial success is honoured; poverty is a shame. We are now restless, both morally and intellectually. We need stability of society before Art can progress. Therefore we need commercial equality of opportunity. Poverty of necessity and not of choice is degrading. Therefore let us abolish it.

SOCIALISM AND NEW LIFE

by Margaret McMillan

(From a report in the Bradford Labour Echo, April 18th, 1896.)

Reformers often forget that there is no destructive work that does not endanger constructive work. The human mind expresses itself in Art, Literature, Science. At the time of the Reformation Art was mature, but Science was in its infancy. The Reformation of Luther brought, not new life, but the grave of life. Miss McMillan then described pictures of Holbein's Dance of Death -- the Queen, the wearied labourer, and the child attended by the skeleton Death. Holbein gave the people a wholesome shock and braced them by reminding them that our future might be greater and higher -- but that we could never gain it by soothing ourselves with pretty fables.

In the 12th century Rennaissance of Venice, Peter the Hermit wakened the spirit by calling people to a Holy War. Responding as best they could in a savage manner, the people were given New Life. In the Middle Ages there was a Christian Nation -- in modern world there is none. The work of our hands is not with religious things as it was for the Venetians. For example, consider Botticelli's figures of Patience, Charity, and Faith which express a divine worship of what is the fountain of all rebirth. Venice thus began to show mercy, love, justice, and to do righteousness. When wealth began to be prominent, Venice began to totter and so came decadence of Christianity, which gave up its opposition to 'usury'. If we do the work to which we are called, i.e., Socialism, there will come to us new power, -- a rennaissance.
AN ANNIVERSARY SERMON
by Margaret McMillan

(From the Bradford Labour Echo, Jan. 18, 1896.)

In olden times men thought of everything as fixed and complete. In Science we have got beyond these ideas, but not in politics and economics. For example, we still believe in a fixed wage fund, the law of supply and demand, and the struggle for life with its suffering and pain. But nature is overflowing and bountiful. So also is human life if we let it grow and flower and mature. Every person, no matter how fallen, has seeds of perfection in him. We don't know it, for we never allow growth. The new message of Science is this: As every grain of sand is raw material for a jewel, so every human is raw material for a hero or a saint. But the higher life is not possible for those too exclusively compelled to occupy themselves with the lower. Our first duty is to give bread and butter to all, that they need not fight for it.

PRACTICAL RELIGION
by R. Morley of Halifax

(From the Bradford Labour Echo, March 7, 1896.)

The controversy of Hugh Price Hughs and a Church of England clergyman brings a matter of importance before us. The latter said that the "Sermon On The Mount" was impractical. The Bishop of Bradford has criticised Jesus as impractical and emotional, led by love and pity to indiscriminate charity. Present day commercialism has thus debased Religion. Jesus served men in need without counting the cost; The modern world only serves a need after payment of cost and a fee.

The Church has a day of memorial for the children slain by Herod -- but none for those slaughtered daily in England by the unfairness of mothers having to work, etc. Commercialism equals selfishness. Christ equals service. Are we to uphold present society, or to join hands with those trying to realise the ideals of Jesus Christ.

EMANCIPATION
by Philip Snowden

(From the Bradford Labour Echo, Jan. 25, 1896.)

The ideals of today are essentially those of the past, but on a higher plane of human evolution. Today, we are not making the best of either our country or our people, and so are failing in Socialism
as it is defined in Merrie England. One in twenty are millionaires. Nineteen in twenty are paupers -- the leisured gluttons and the starved workers. "We had palatial colleges . . . and we had the cheerless schools where ragged children with empty bellies mumbled the Apostles creed"(Several striking illustrations of this contrast were given.)

Socialists are committed to discovering a scheme of giving the worker the full value of his work.

Earlier all worked in common -- then the stronger enslaved the weaker and so developed a civilization based on robbery. The desire for Socialism is a desire to loose the chains that have bound men's souls to the earth, and to set them free for higher things. Free from the struggle for existence, and freedom to develop the higher life. Socialists are to work until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

JUSTICE
by Paul Bland
(From the Bradford Labour Echo, Jan. 4, 1896.)

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these . . ." The speaker reviewed the state of society when Jesus spoke these words: the masses were in poverty and the few in luxury. The early Christians instituted communism. Present day Christianity is a disgrace to its founders. We appeal to the state rather than to a few benevolent people to take charge of necessary charities, eg. care of orphaned and ill-treated children, lifeboat institutions, Hospitals, etc. Society has not yet learned the lesson of our text: We want Justice, -- not philanthropy or charity.

MORAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM
by Paul Campbell
(From the Bradford Labour Echo, Dec. 21, 1895.)

The claim is often made that a change in character is needed if reforms are to come. Socialists say: change the environment and character will improve. The Labour Church exists to accentuate the moral movement in Socialism, i.e. the evolution (relativity) of morals. Christianity has the seeds of both individualism and socialism -- self regard and service of others -- Both are natural instincts. Altruism unwisely expressed in philanthropy and individualistic morality. The new morality is in its birth throes today, and of it Socialism is to be born.
IDEALISM IN POLITICS
by Paul Campbell

(From the Bradford Labour Echo, Dec. 21, 1895)

Many idealists stand aloof from politics. Politics are thought unclean and so have become degraded. Politics must be redeemed from the degradation of the practical politician; and so the Labour Church is to awaken the unconscious socialists living round and about us. Therefore we need to agree on a comprehensive policy, and present it appealingly, to fight elections, and to preserve political independence, to keep our higher ideals and our common sense.

NATURAL RELIGION AND THE LABOUR CHURCH
by W. Harrison Hutton

(An address delivered to the Leeds Labour Church as reported in The Labour Prophet, Sept., 1896, p. 145)

A belief in the Supernatural is not necessary to a true religion, and it is a source of great danger to any belief because it cannot be proved by facts or reason, and has been the cause of much disbelief, disappointment, and despair. . . .

The natural in Nature is sufficient to generate the warmest, truest, safest, and most lasting religious (n nobly good and elevating) sentiments, strong enough and high enough to regenerate a world. For instances read any nation's past history. And it is the duty of the Labour Church to draw the people nearer to Nature by helping them to better understand the wonders and the beauties thereof; thereby creating a love for and a sympathy with Nature, which will invariably grow to a love and sympathy with Humanity, and an earnest desire and striving for the greatest good -- not for self, but for all.

... Natural religion is to love and help one another, and no true rest or happiness can ever come so long as there is work to be done left undone, life's best purposes left unfulfilled. True religion is Love; true worship, to toil for others' good; to work, to strive for good is the best prayer. . . . Comrades, our Temple must be the world; our Religion Love and Brotherhood; Our Prayer, Work; and the Devil that has to be conquered is self.
THE RELIGION OF SOCIALISTS

by R. A. Beckett

(From a report in *The Labour Prophet*, Nov. 1896, p. 182.)

Beckett commenced by saying that he had felt keenly since joining the Socialist movement, some twelve years ago, its lack of definite religious consciousness and aim. It was a religious movement, but it was shy of recognising and declaring the fact. This reluctance came from a dislike and fear of all religion, which had been engendered by the formalism, dogmatism, and hypocrisy of much that passed under that name. But, he urged, no scheme of a perfect life could ignore the factor of Religion. The religious instinct was as natural as the reasoning faculty, the artistic instinct, or even as hunger and thirst, and it must be recognised and provided for.

He then sketched the origin and history of the Labour Church movement, and, taking its principles in detail, proceeded to explain them to an interested and sympathetic audience.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES

by A. J. Waldegrave

(From a report in *The Labour Prophet*, Nov. 1896, p. 182.)

He declared that Socialism was no mere struggle for material things. It aimed at producing the bigger and better man. Those who denied to it the character of Religion, who failed to see in it the working of the eternal spirit of justice and love, however they might worship the name Religion, were really the people "of little faith". While as a political party Socialists must be largely concerned with their own rights and the duties of others, as a Church they would be chiefly concerned with their own duties and the rights of others.

POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION

by Mrs. Pankhurst

(From a report in *The Labour Prophet*, Jan. 1898, p. 151.)

Her opinion was that the many defects in the system were the result of bad administration, and not of the Poor Laws, which she thought were framed in a humane spirit. Several important improvements had been made in recent years, especially with the comfort of the inmates of the workhouses, in which class the orders of the Local Government Board allowed the Guardians more discretion
than in the administration of outdoor relief, which was generally controlled by hard and fast rules. The uniform, which was so conspicuous in former years, was now almost entirely dispensed with; the diet had also been improved. But more improvements were desired in this direction, especially in the food supplied to the sick. In the treatment of the old people, she recommended the abolition of the large dormitories, and so prevent the herding together of so many old people. The greatest improvement in the Poor Law administration of late years was the alteration in the treatment of children, who, she considered, were now far better cared for than the children of a large number of working-classes outside. She recommended the cottage system. The accommodation and nursing of the sick had been considerably improved; but little had been done in that direction for the insane and epileptic class. She thought the public was far too apathetic in the elections for Guardians, a position which she contended was of far more importance to them than the elections of members of Parliament.

THE TRAGEDY OF CHRISTIANITY
by Bruce Glasier

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, Feb. 1898, p. 159.)

Christ assailed the wrongs of his time, and so far as his language can be translated into that of our own day, he was a true Socialist, a sweet and beautiful democrat. He had no rich followers; although a few invited him to their houses, none of them took up the cross and followed him. The disciples, apostles, and early fathers preached the doctrine of love and communism, but a change came over this purer form of religion when kings and priests took it up; they made it an excuse for a long record of torture, persecution and war. The injustice of present-day commercialism, the suffering in our mines and factories continue the tragedy.

FROM BRUTE TO BROTHER
by Dennis Hird, M. A.

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, Mar. 1898, p. 168.)

He spoke at length on Evolution and the influence of Environment. It was a hard thing to alter mankind, but the Socialists had a plan for alleviating the misery that existed; any one who could stand by and demonstrate, in view of the mass of suffering in the world, that, "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world" must have a big income. How was it, he asked, that all through the history of Civilisation, wherever they had that glutinous animal they called government, eating up the poor like grass, there had been that terrible tie of poverty and misery. The time had come for a higher and truer civilisation.
THE GREAT WHATSOEVER

BY Edward Webster

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, February, 1896.)

"The Great Whatsoever" was based on the passage in the Sermon on the Mount -- "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do to you even so do ye also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12) The speaker read the first twelve verses of the chapter, and contended that in them -- but especially in the verse used as the text -- was to be found the true, the Divine Socialism, and the only Socialism likely to break down the force of self-interest and indifference which now barred the path of that Kingdom of which Jesus spoke; whose rule was righteousness, and whose end was peace.

A RETROSPECT OF THE LABOUR CHURCH MOVEMENT IN DARLINGTON

by A. W. Hildreth

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, April, 1896.)

Our comrade closed his useful and interesting address with an appeal to the members to be true to the cause they had adopted; to keep in view the religious aspect of the movement; and to work with untiring energy and perseverance for the realisation of their ideal.

THE LABOUR CHURCH

BY M. T. Simm

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, July, 1893.)

The speaker referred to the increased interest taken in social problems in recent Church Congresses, and then went on to say that after eighteen centuries of Christianity they had a waster of wretchedness through greed and the race for wealth. Wealth and privation alike were morally and spiritually stunting. God's Kingdom must be worked for as well as prayed for. All honour to men like John Trevor, Bruce Wallace, Walter Walsh, and Dr. Clifford. Primitive Christianity had been departed from. The "boss" was often the deacon; the works manager went around with the plate. Hence they had pulpit trimming. Last November statistics showed a million and a quarter unemployed. Still, the Churches appealed for tens of thousands of pounds for the heathen -- who were nearer nature, and therefore nearer God, than most Englishmen. We wanted justice, not charity. The many slaved and starved that the few might run riot in vice, idleness, and luxury. Christ rebuked the religious classes of his time, and championed the downtrodden and disreputable. Charles Booth declared that, while half the social
misery was the result of drink, the drinking itself was the result of bad conditions; while there was the other half of poverty the direct result of bad economics.

GROWTH OF POVERTY

by Tom Anderson

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, December, 1894.)

The speaker traced the growth of poverty from the 13th century through the period of the monks and monastries down to our boasted 19th century civilized Christian poverty as we in the Labour movement know it today.

A PLEA FOR HUMANITY

by Tom Anderson

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, December, 1894.)

The speaker made an appeal to the better nature of those present to give up bickering amongst ourselves, for while we are quibbling with one another there are thousands of our brothers and sisters perishing. "Let us to the fight; do not let us weary; do not return the sword to its scabbard until we have captured the world for love, justice, and God." So spake Tom Anderson; 'twas a veritable Labour Church sermon.

ANTI-VIVISECTION

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, December, 1897.)

The speaker told of all the attendant cruelties of vivisection and the inhumanities of our colleges in the name of science. He wondered if we could possibly be living in the enlightened age of the 19th century.

HOW INFECTIOUS DISEASES WILL BECOME EXTINCT UNDER SOCIALISM

by Dr. A. W. Martin

(From a report in The Labour Prophet, December, 1897.)

Dr. A. W. Martin pointed out how easy it is to lead a clean and pure life, if only we have the conditions, and unfolded a glorious vista of the healthful lives we might live under Socialism.
METHODS OF PROGRESS
by Mrs. Esther Wood
(From a report in The Labour Prophet, November, 1897.)

Mrs. Esther Wood, authorist and journalist of London, pointed out some of the mistakes made by well-meaning socialists in their efforts to convert others. Their methods had been too narrow, and they had not taken account of the many sources from which Socialism was fed. She showed how the science, the art, and the literature of the century, especially in the newer treatment of history, had been unconsciously preparing the way for 'the Social Gospel'. The revelation of the law of evolution and the influence of pre-Raphaelitism, and the Broad Church movement, ought to be thankfully welcomed as contributions to our highest ideals of life; while a sympathetic study of human character should help us to win all sorts of persons to those ideals.

TYPES OF PERSONAL RELIGION
by Mrs. Esther Wood
(From a report in The Labour Prophet, November, 1897.)

Allowance should be made for differences of temperament in the expression of men's personal convictions and habits of worship. It is necessary that every variety of aesthetic and ascetic feeling, of symbolistic or literalistic theory, should have its place in the great Church of Humanity, from which neither the man of intellect nor the simple and unlearned should be shut out.

ELECTIONEERING
by P. H. Wicksteed

(A précis of a sermon delivered before the formation of the Labour Church but typical of the sermons preached by Wicksteed to Labour Church congregations.)

Our Unitarian Ten Services of Public Prayer, 1881, recognises and expresses an exalted patriotism -- would we could realise it. Political measures should be tested by eternal laws of God rather than expediency. The 'interests of the Empire' must be subservient to our duties to the world. If the Empire can fling itself into

the crucible of our prayers it will emerge transfigured, but not thereby unfitted for the world of practical politics; rather, changed from blustering self-assertion that can only confound and destroy, and can never build; changed into a deep transforming power for good to which nothing were impossible.

Prayers are not exorcisms or adjurations which we perform. They are registers of aspiration and solemn vows. They seek not outward intervention by God, but His spirit to consecrate the heart of the worshipper. It is blasphemy to pray for the nation and not to do what we can, or worse, to 'play' the political game.

When we once have learned to place our ideals, not only unrealised, but no longer even striven after, side by side with our practice, when we have come to an understanding with them like that of Frederick the Great with his people: "You say what you like, I do what I like.", when we have learned to pass easily from the one to the other without sense of shock or incongruity, then our ideals have lost all power over us.

THE LABOR CHURCH

by Herbert N. Casson

(Précis of a pamphlet published by the Lynn, U. S. A., Labor Church. It is typical of an out-door discourse.)

The Labor Church is an organization chiefly of wage-earners who believe that the social question is the moral question of our time. It maintains Socialism to be the present ideal of industry, and perfect freedom of thought to be the ideal of religion. It aims to be a free and friendly meeting-place for all social reformers whose goal is collectivism and brotherhood. It pays no regular salaries, and has no money qualifications for membership. The more unfortunate a man is, the warmer will be his welcome. If you need a friend, or want to enjoy the luxury of being one, come to our Sunday meetings.

SOCIALISM OF NATURE

by Herbert N. Casson

(A Précis of a published sermon delivered to the Lynn Labor Church.)

The scientific point of view seems to be 'dog eat dog'. The Labor Church point of view is co-operation: Nature is orderly and law abiding. Even life itself involves a chemical co-operation. Evolution reveals a division of labour which is a form of organic co-operation. So also society is based upon a division of labor, a system of co-operation which is best expressed in socialism.
Socialism is freedom to co-operate in the industrial system which is the basis of society. If modern parsons were compelled to make a living with picks and shovels they would dig up a different theology. Nature seems to impose conditions of life, which would mean 'work or die'. This means that millionaires and monopolists will die. None but the earners are honest.

Co-operation is the mother of language; every structure of language is socialism. The more social animals become, the higher they stand in the evolutionary scale. Strife is the weakest form of life, for in warfare life is destroyed. Thus society must become increasingly social if it is to survive. The Labor Church exists to promote this increasing socialization.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Labor Church Pamphlet No. 3, by Herbert N. Casson

(A Précis of an address delivered in Lynn, Mass. U. S. A.)

The Labor Church comes not to destroy Christianity, but to fulfill it. It proclaims that the Kingdom of God is at hand; and demands obedience to the economic laws of the creator. It recognizes that the great inequity of our country is inequity. By salvation we mean the deliverance of nations and individuals from selfishness and pride, and tyranny, and evil. By regeneration we mean the reign of love in the heart and in society. We believe that every man should be left free in his personal relations to his creator; and that our relations to Him are chiefly determined by our conduct toward each other. By the Church, in its best sense, we mean that body of men and women who are willingly working with God in the uplifting of the human race.

The Labor Church is not Christian Socialism. The latter is a Divinely Sanctioned institution. The Labor Church is the centre of the Labor Movement. Its claim is that God is here in the Labor Movement. Christian Socialism tries to capture the power of Labor for the Church, tries to become the Christian Board of Conciliation.

The theology of Democracy and Brotherhood has not yet been written. The present theology is that of Feudalism and Individualism. The Labor Church believes that both the Church and Capitalism have the same root, and that both must go. God does not cling to useless institutions.

The Atheism of the Church is in denying the divinity of man, and forgetting that we are now the sons of God. Therefore the Labor Church opposes the doctrines of total depravity, original sin, etc. The Labor Church intends not to destroy Christianity, but to fulfill it. Jesus was the most famous and most influential of all workingmen.

The Labor Movement itself is religious, but this religion needs developing. Our agitation is not the crying of swine for more swill, nor selfishness, but sympathy, justice, and brotherhood. The Labor Church exists to develop this religion. It is a church
for workingmen to worship God. It realizes that there is no brotherhood apart from Fatherhood. Thus comes its emblem -- one hand uplifted to God, the other outstretched to man. This is not true in many of the regular churches, which are nothing but "spiritual opium joints" where one does not find Jesus, for His soul is marching on in the Labor Movement. In fact, the churches keep many good workingmen bound, and by lack of freedom keep them away from Jesus, by teaching that the Labor Movement is atheistic.

The ordinary churches are content with 'plucking brands from the burning' but don't feel it their duty 'to put out the fire'. The Labor Church takes the opposite view, that it is not enough to be concerned with the 'saving of souls' but that the 'saving of society' is the important thing. Thus, while we do not deny a personal God, a future life, the general teachings of the New Testament, or the Mastership of Christ, the Labor Church is not based on these, but upon our present duty to each other. It is time that we became aware of our presumption, and let theology alone.

If the Creator is an aristocrat, or if the demands of workingmen are impertinent and unjust, then the Labor Church is wrong; but if we accept the new definition of "church", which evolution has suggested, as a movement instead of an institution, it will be impossible for us to be dislodged from our position. The resistless march of religious democracy has made the Labour Church a Fact. The emancipation of Labor is the greatest cause on earth, and it can be accomplished only by a great moral revolution in society.

The command of God to America is the brotherly division of wealth and labor; the real living religion of our time is to be found in the labor movement. The unemployed and half-paid working-men are as unjustly oppressed as any negro slaves. The Pharisee may be shocked and the capitalist enraged at what we say; but it is the Truth, and we are determined to maintain it. Our appeal is not to the colleges, not to the rich, not to the church or state, but to the honest and earnest working men and women of America.

THE RELATION OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT TO FREE RELIGION

by John Trevor

(An address to the New Fellowship, November 29th, 1895, summarized from a report in Seed-Time, January, 1896, p. 7f.)

A definition, though not a scientific one, of Religion is: Man's relation to God and the expression of his concept of it in every department of life. It is the greatest fact of human existence and will not be diminished by progress or by science, though these may reveal former errors. Free religion means man's own natural and free development. It is not based on teachings, books, or Churches,
but on individual conclusions drawn from all phases of human experience. In this respect religion must be as free and unfettered as Science is.

In the history of the last century repeated attempts to establish Free Religion have failed in the English speaking world. The religious concepts of Carlyle, Emerson, and Whitman have not been effective though their moral, political, social, and critical work has been. The deep spiritual conviction underlying their lives has not been an inspiration to those they otherwise help. They have increased skepticism but have not freed the orthodox Churches. Science and Religion are still unrelated by one unifying concept; ethics has not found its true place in Religion. In only a few scattered individuals has Free Religion issued in simple and immediate relation to God.

If Religion is three centuries behind Science it is because it is greater. After eighteen centuries we scarcely comprehend the Christian idea, much less combine with it the Pagan concept of life -- which Free Religion will do. But how are we to forward this?

1. Have the right attitude: Know that Free Religion exists. Here Evolutionary theory is a help; there was no fall; the golden age is in the future, not in the past.

2. Possess Freedom in some measure now: Let us awaken and develop our own relations to God by first developing our own personal life. This is an individual matter, and is essentially a foundation to anything we would do to help others. The Kingdom of God is in our hearts before it is in the world. But merely subjective religion is not enough; it is too weak, too separated from the world. The Divine light must also enter into our corporate life. It must be objective for this too is essential. The Divine must be both personal and universal.

In the present century the religion of obedience is not enough. We must now enter into life and possess the world as a trust received to be developed creatively. Now, how best can we co-operate to-day? In all development, life comes first and theory follows after. The advancing point in life is always a new fact; it is never a new theory. To co-operate with God we look for a movement, not for a leader. God reveals his power to us, not his thought. It is we who must think, and our thinking will always halt after the ever advancing tide of God's energy operating in the children of men.

Therefore, look for a movement which inspires self-sacrifice for some great end. -- Such is the Labour Movement! Its demand for brotherhood of all men comes as a new moral force to regenerate a world which worships wealth and conquest -- even in its Christian Temples.

In the Labour Movement we find a sphere of service to God through service to man. Let us compare our world with the days of the Old Testament Prophets: The present demands of the Labour Movement are
the cries of the Hebrew Prophets, but with a new power of insight gained by political and material progress.

The Labour Movement offers many avenues of service; any ability may be consecrated. The Labour Movement needs the service of clear thought. Speaking to a group who have the advantages of education I would emphasize this aspect of service, but all service must be inspired by a religious reverence and a love for the served and their cause. Otherwise from the pride of learning and the ignorance of life there can come no help.

In the Labour Movement there is more than a mere sphere of religious service; here and now men are in the act of serving God, though, perchance, they may know it not. It is only a question of opening their eyes to what they are doing for them to be set upon the road towards the highest possible development of Religion.

The Labour Movement is the field for free and natural religious development. We have been compelled to leave the Churches and their traditions; we are largely compelled to find encouragement and strength in modern authors rather than in the Bible; but yet we do find a new faith and an awakening soul, and a new field of service. Thus the Labour Church is doing work similar to the Prophets of old, with this difference: they addressed themselves to those who thought they did God's service and did it not; we address ourselves to those who do God's service and know it not.

The Labour Movement is also a witness to God's spirit moving in human society -- to the great unfolding power underlying Evolution. In developing the consciousness of this mode of God's action let us not demand too much. In this direction we may look for the gradual upbuilding of a free and natural religious life in the hearts of the people, especially if at the outset we do not demand too much. With the teaching of Traditional Religion still fresh in our minds we are apt to magnify the importance of intellectual conclusions at the expense of the energies of a newly-awakened life. Even those whom we seek to help are liable to be hindered thus. Our lack of ability to explain may suggest that Religion itself is not for them. True Religion is of Life, and not of Intellect. The first steps in Religion are not in the acceptance of a theory, but in the awakening of the heart.

In the past century Free Religion has not failed, only the theory of it has. It is a vital force in the world though at present it is a subconscious one. It only remains for us to become conscious of it. To this end the Labour Church has been organized.
THE LABOUR CHURCH IN ENGLAND

An Unspoken Address to the Foreign Members of the
INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS
London, July, 1896

by John Trevor

... We believe that the cause that brings you to our country is the greatest in the world's history, destined to carry Humanity another stage forward towards its unknown but glorious destiny. ... This mission is the emancipation of Labour from the economic oppression and social injustice that now hold it in bondage. ... In the vast mission which we have undertaken, each individual has a part to play, and each nation a place to fill in accordance with its genius and its history. ...

... one of the chief requisites in establishing a working harmony among the different Socialist Peoples is to understand the nature and the origin of their different lines of development. ... What you of other countries do not, as a rule, understand about us English, is our religious development. With all its faults and hypocrisies, England has a religious conscience and a religious consciousness which give her a distinct place and mission among the nations. ... If Karl Marx could say that England was the only country in which the social revolution could be realised without violence, it was largely because of our religious life and history that he could say it.

Our economic revolution is understood among Socialists the world over. The religious revolution which has been slowly developing along with it has been misunderstood or ignored altogether. From the beginning of the century Religion has with us been slowly laying the foundations of its emancipation from Tradition, and becoming more and more a vital energy among us. ... The Anglo-Saxon, in England and America, has shown himself capable, more than any other race, to throw off the husks of Religion without losing the kernel. Our very Agnosticism is deeply religious. ... This deep religious instinct, which Doubt cannot destroy, is no mere survival, doomed to perish in the advance of human thought; it is the seed of the new life ... The germs of this life are to be found in the early days of the Reformation. In the Puritan Revolution it showed itself more strongly. In our great and simple poet, Wordsworth, it gained, perhaps, its first clear expression, though still associated with a traditional religion clearly separable from it. In Shelley, the "Atheist," it stands for the first time free and unfettered, while it manifests, too, those elements of wild energy and revolt which are apt to accompany a newly-acquired freedom. In Carlyle it assumes a grim Scandinavian form, reviving a spirit which has done so much for the regeneration of Europe. In America, first Emerson, then Whitman, have been its most conspicuous prophets. In
England, since Carlyle, it has gained no really robust and virile expression. Matthew Arnold, our English Renan, has been, perhaps, its most typical exponent; but with him it sinks to a sigh of infinite longing.

... In the midst of English Socialism alone do I see any sign of Religion being able to stand securely alone, without Priest, without Parson, without Creed, without Tradition, without Bible; firmly based, as Science itself is, in the heart of the living facts of to-day, capable of revising its conclusions without losing its life, committed irrevocably, therefore, to continual growth and progress. The transition of Religion from a final truth to a growing life—the same transition which Engels has described in Philosophy as one from metaphysics to dialectics—this is the work which is going forward in England in the most intimate association with the Socialist movement. The Labour Church is its expression and embodiment.

The fundamental conception of the Labour Church and the First Principle in its Constitution, is, THAT THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IS A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT. Thus at the outset we wipe out all distinctions between Secular and Sacred; we place Religion in the broad current of human progress; we take from it its ghostly character, its voice from the tomb, its cold dead hand laid on the mouths and hearts of living men.

Thus, too, the Labour Church is not a Christian Socialist Church, though it has Christian Socialists among its members... 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. The bond of unity with us is the religious spirit, which moves men and women to the service of Humanity... Religious life is an individual matter. Religious work is collective.

The epoch is passing away when great principles can live only through association with great names... No Scientist is great enough to give his name to the Scientific movement—not even Darwin. No Socialist is great enough to give his name to the Socialist movement—not even Marx. No religious teacher is great enough to give his name to the Religious movement—not even Christ...

The continuous effort of the old life to swallow up the new is one of the greatest menaces to human progress... That is why it is necessary to make it clear to you that the Labour Church is not a Christian Socialist Church... The attempt to bring the thought of Jesus into the life of to-day as a guide and a standard is an anachronism, fatal to any complete development. It is an endeavour to associate a reactionary principle with a revolutionary one... In a few instances ministers of churches have sought to bring the Labour Church within the fold, but in each case the fold has gone to pieces.
What characterises the Labour Church, and makes it unique in the religious life of our country, is its spontaneous development among the people, without priests or pastors or even leaders. . . . The people have made the movement their own; . . . From the first our mission was understood and accepted by the most pronounced Socialists. . . . In all cases where there is a Labour Church to-day, it has been formed by Socialists to express the highest life and work of those engaged in the struggle for the emancipation of Labour. . . . This democratic spontaneity indicates the genius of the Labour Church in England. It also illustrates the religious genius of the English people. With us the fight for freedom has long lain along religious as well as political and industrial lines, and the measure of freedom we have won has been largely the fruit of our religious instincts. To-day our most distinct contribution as a nation to the International Socialism represented this month in London is this Democratic and Socialist religious life, organised spontaneously by the Socialist workers. And this has been done without developing a separate interest to cause dissension among Socialists. As an organisation the Labour Church claims no right to political action. Its influence in politics is personal rather than collective. Its members act politically through their political organisations. Not only has the Labour Church caused no dissension in the ranks, it has on the other hand had a strong uniting influence. . . .

So far the Labour Church has not spread in any country as it has in England. In America . . . Herbert and Charles Casson, have formed Labour Churches, . . . but it has not spread as in England--spontaneously among the Socialist workers. In Holland our movement is sympathised with . . . and our ideas are to some extent accepted. Yet nothing like a Labour Church has been formed in Holland. In Australia I hear that a Labour Church is being talked of among the Socialists, . . . At present, therefore, the Labour Church is a peculiarly English institution. We believe, however, that, in principle, if not in its present English form, it is destined to become International. . . . We believe that the organisation, throughout the world, of the religious life of the Socialist movement would be an enormous gain in the struggle you have undertaken, . . .

Brother Socialists of Europe, to you especially I appeal in the name of Religion. I beg you to throw aside your prejudices and your misapprehensions, born largely of priestcraft and state-craft, . . . The Religion of our fathers I, too, have abandoned. . . . On the other hand, the quarrel with Religion itself is injurious to all who take part in it, and to any cause which identifies itself with it. The religious instinct in man is the highest that has yet been awakened in him; no higher is conceivable. . . . In the evolution of Humanity Religion cannot die. . . . The inner life and the outer life of man are inseparable. Each acts and reacts upon the other. It is the bigger Man we are working for as well as the bigger opportunity, . . .
But Religion . . . has to do with those great questions of human life and destiny which Socialism can never answer and never silence. . . . the present moment can only have full significance so far as it becomes related to Eternity; . . . Even the goodness of his heart cannot give him real satisfaction, unless he can regard it as but the imperfect hint of the Eternal Goodness at the heart of all things. If, in thought and feeling, he cannot pass from the show of life to the reality beneath it, and find a home for his soul on earth as well as for his body, the charm and power of life must fade away, or else man must condemn himself to the extinction of his highest faculties. But this is inconceivable, impossible. Man, in the unfolding of his nature, has awakened to these thoughts, has been moved in his inmost soul by these inspirations. You can no more hinder his religious than you can his economic evolution. The Power behind all progress marches onward; the Principle beneath all forms of unfolding goes on working itself out. That Power and that Principle are incarnated in you and in me. We have the mysterious and yet undisputed privilege of a limited freedom, which we can use in a limited way for co-operation or for resistance.

. . . In human evolution the highest is the latest. This is why Religion is still in the bondage of Tradition, while Science has broken her fetters for three centuries. This is why the name of Christ is still a fetish in Religion, as the name of Aristotle used to be in Science. Yet freedom from authority is even more essential to the growth of Religion than it is to the growth of Science. Religion is a life first of all, the highest form of the inner life of man. It is an intensely personal and private matter. So far as it solves any problem, it can only do so for the individual, and the solution can only come through a life lived soundly and wholly. . . . It is a mistake to suppose that Religion can be based upon Philosophy or Science. Religion is one of the subject matters for Philosophy and Science to exercise themselves upon. . . . And what is this fact of the religious life, about which Science or Philosophy may concern themselves, but which they can neither create nor destroy? It is that man, in his inmost and highest life, grows increasingly conscious of his fellowship with the Eternal Source of his being. His material evolution is the stage upon which his spiritual evolution is being worked out. In proportion as man grows, so does isolation become intolerable to him. He yearns more and more for closer relations with his kind. Marriage becomes more sacred, Comradeship dearer, Competition and War more revolting. He claims Brotherhood from his fellows; he seeks to make real his ideal of a world-wide Humanity. The Socialist movement is the expression of this growing yearning of man towards man. It is a claim, not for economic justice and freedom alone, but for justice and freedom and brotherhood in all human relations—LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY—with a sounder economics for the material basis of Society. . . .

. . . The Priests of the Past are with us everywhere. Keep the old law is always their cry; and when they find that the old
law is too narrow for the new life, they try to stretch it a little bigger by means of a new interpretation, ... the dying past sucks the blood of the living present. ... Our business in Religion, as in Socialism, is to make life from within, to keep on making it, to be men of action. The Deed precedes the Thought in man's evolution, whether in human or divine relations. I think you will understand now why I associate Socialism so closely with Religion, or, rather, the Socialist movement with the Religious movement. It is because in the life of the Socialist movement I recognise the vital energy out of which a higher and freer Religion must be unfolded. ... By ignorance and prejudice we may for a time hinder the growth of this new life, and so hinder the realisation of our dream of Socialism also. ... Link Socialism with Christianity, and you cripple it. Link Socialism with Atheism, and you cripple it. Link it with a perfectly free and natural Religion, and then man's inner life and outer life will unfold together. Brother Socialist of all nations, I appeal to you to organise yourselves for the emancipation of development of your religious life, as you have organised yourselves for the emancipation and development of your social and industrial life. .. Your life, your love, your service, your worship—whatever they are, organise them as your religion, and leave them free to grow. ... Do not think you can hand over Religion to the Priests, and have done with it. What men and women have more right than you to form religious fraternities, when it is you, more than any, who are going straight to the roots of the misery of the people in the glorious work you are undertaking? What men and women could meet together in the august name of Religion with more right and less hypocrisy than you who are engaged all your lives in a self-sacrificing religious service? ... The great World-Will is with you.

I have spoken to you of Priests. Happily there is another class to which I can call your attention—men whom the Priests of the Past have always misunderstood and hated and persecuted, and sometimes the people also—the Prophets of the Present, ... The Socialist movement in which we are taking part has been inspired and led forward by the clear and sweeping thought of men gifted with insight beyond their fellows into the great economic evolution of our century. With keen prophetic eye the emancipating work of the next century became clear to them. The economic life of man has its Seers and Prophets; so has the religious life also. ... It is the function of the Prophet to give eyes to blind energy and direction to aimless discontent; and this, not so much by religious or political leadership, as by the stimulus of his message, which he leaves the people free to accept or reject at pleasure.
CHRISTIANITY AND THE LABOUR CHURCH

(John C. Kenworthy - one of the original Labour Church Union Council members took issue with Trevor's Unspoken Address. The following excerpts are from a feature article in The Labour Prophet, Sept. '96, pp. 137 f.)

As readers may know, I am wholly in sympathy with the Labour Church movement. . . . What is to be the attitude of the Labour Churches toward Christianity? . . . It is perfectly true, as the article says, that "the name of Jesus is still a fetish in Religion." But is it also true, as Trevor further says, that "The attempt to bring the thought of Jesus into the life of today as a guide and a standard is an anachronism, fatal to any complete development?" The last saying seems to me to be unsound, for two reasons, namely:

1. The truth we are trying to spread through the Labour Churches is the thought of Jesus (not his alone, but still his); . . .

2. Hundreds of millions of people acknowledge, less or more intelligently, the authority, the worth, of Jesus as a teacher. Then, why not make it our effort to hold people to the guide, the standard, they acknowledge? To begin by telling them they must give up Jesus as a teacher, is to throw out of our hands the most powerful weapon which the wisdom of the past and social tradition has put into them.

. . . Jesus is actually far ahead of any other teacher who claims our attention to-day. . . . To realise our principles, not as vague aspirations, but as positive and definite motives of action . . . to surrender every worldly, material consideration that stands in the way of the simple, child-like integrity of our own souls; --these steps mean progress, and they are "the way, the truth, the life" which Jesus taught. . . . to accept the real teaching of Jesus on external authority of any kind, from any reason other than our inward conviction and vital experience, is impossible. He himself taught this; . . .

(Editorial Comment on the above, by John Trevor)

(John Trevor, in promising a reply to Kenworthy wrote in The Labour Prophet, Sept. '96, p. 136)

. . . My ideal of the Labour Church is that it should be the home of perfect religious freedom, and that therefore different conceptions and different developments of religious life should be welcomed within it. That we should be conscious of God in our lives and in our work and in the world about us is of infinitely greater importance than the particular form which the
consciousness may assume.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE LABOUR CHURCH

(Before Trevor's reply was forthcoming, his illness had removed him from the field of Controversy. R. A. Beckett replied on his behalf, criticising the argument from principle and from expediency. The tone of Beckett's defence of Trevor's position is well summarized in the following from The Labour Prophet, Oct. '96, p. 156)

... To some among us, Christ is much; most of us have passed through the phase of Christianity, and known what "personal friendship with Jesus" means. But now we feel that the faith of Jesus is nobler thing than faith in Jesus. ... with the disappearance of the mystic halo around his head the simple human lineaments of Christ have grown more lovable; and in proportion as his sayings have ceased to be regarded as oracles, they have seemed to me more helpful and intelligible.

(R. Morley of Halifax in reply to Kenworthy, wrote in The Labour Prophet, Oct. '96, p. 162)

... Christianity must go, and a humane, lovable, and progressive religion must take its place. A religion void of dogmatic subscription, whose only test of vitality shall be the doing righteously to one's neighbour, and the working towards perfect development.

(Annie Thurston wrote in The Labour Prophet, Nov. '96, p. 178)

... "It [The Labour Church] waits for the speaker with a message." And this message is just the message of the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Not "according to the Churches"; not according to Tolstoy; but according to the living, palpitating, love in our own hearts - the voice of God within the soul. ... .

The Christ, the God-soul lives in every man in whose soul is born the yearning after higher things - but chiefly in the soul of him who desires (in ever so little) to become a Saviour, though it be but to one another.

LABOUR CHURCHISM AND SOCIALISM

(The International Social Democratic Club took strong objection
to Trevor's "Unspoken Address" to the International Congress of 1896. On the instructions of the club, Francis Sator, secretary, wrote to Justice, Sept. 26, '96. The letter was reprinted in The Labour Prophet, Nov. '96, Vol. 5, p. 175)

Dear Comrade:

As the Labour Church . . . professes the necessity to become an international movement for the emancipation of labour from spiritual and economical oppressions, the International Social-Democratic Club . . . has directed me, after a discussion . . . to give its opinion in Justice by the following resolution: "Considering that every physical and spiritual development of man has been brought to a higher level by constantly revolting against bondages which the Labour Church says 'we shall never do away with', considering that the movement of the working classes is first of all a struggle of existence, which the animal nature of man has imposed upon him, which no divinity can destroy or blot out.

God, the nominal chief of a hypocritical conspiracy, and the sentimental preachings in every possible shape and form, have always been the means for the enslaving and starvation of the masses, and we have to recognise this fact and to carry on a firm and ceaseless fight as a class, and of an open and clearly pronounced revolutionary character, to which the Labour Church is in direct opposition.

The action of the sentimentalists at the recent Congress should warn Socialists of the danger of coquetting with men who shriek for toleration, for those who never would agree as a body with their aims and methods, but only because they were against the warfare by which the modern Socialist movement could reach, distinct from all bourgeois and political parties, its importance and extension.

The claim for toleration in connection with trade unions and Anarchists is a logical curiosity, as the "Labour Church" is antagonistic to the class-movement of trade unionism and strenuously opposed to the tactics of the revolutionary Anarchists at the same time, so it spells rather toleration for capitalists for Trevor says, in his "What does the Labour Church stand for":

"As soon as his militant programme is ungrudgingly accepted, and it is understood that his actions as well as his ideals will be based upon, it, that it will wing his prayers and ring through his praises, then he in his turn will be ready enough to ignore class distinction and receive the capitalist, the landlord, or the rich professional man, of the purity of whose intentions he is convinced in the frankest spirit of brotherly love."
This shows for what the Labour Church is yearning, where the "claim for toleration" really comes in, and the necessity of our position to exclusiveness, which we will especially endeavour to explain to our continental brethren. An artificial surface of such a platform is liable to lead us away on side tracks at any moment.

We have to fight our own battle. Science will not only be the grave-digger of churches, taking the money and consoling their victims to a better future elsewhere, but also of every institution in the trade of the souls of man, in which the working people are merely the merchandise to be kept out of the way to its real emancipation.

Economical freedom secures the means to the highest faculties of human aspirations which the Labour Church has never dreamed of.

Our war cry is expropriation, and the use of every practical means in the onward march of the international proletariat to its complete emancipation.

... 

Yours fraternally,

THE RELIGION FOR A WORLD THAT LABOURS

by Henry Scott Holland

(This is excerpts from The Commonwealth, Nov. 1896, Vol. 1, no. 11, p. 371 ff.)

... "The Religious instinct in man is the highest that has yet been awakened in him; no higher is conceivable. ..."

In the evolution of Humanity Religion cannot die.

The inner and the outer life of man are inseparable. Each acts and reacts upon the other. ..."

These are words which ring home to the heart of every one of us. ... Yet in saying them, in an unspoken lecture in the Labour Prophet, Mr. Trevor warns us off from any share in them. "Link Socialism with Christianity, and you cripple it."

"The attempt to bring the thought of Jesus into the life of to-day, as a guide and a standard, is an anachronism, fatal to any complete development. ..."

Now what is the secret of this arrest of sympathy, of this
collision, just where we thought we were going to shake hands?

Let us look into this religion of Mr. Trevor's imagination.

First we are surprised to hear that "the religious life is an individual matter". The repudiation of all formulas and dogmas is the natural recoil of the individual spirit fighting for its personal freedom. But then, we are looking, not for an individual faith, but for a social religion. We want a religion fit for those whose whole being is in protest against individualism.

... a formula, a creed, an organisation, officers, a tradition. These are, in some form or another, essential to corporate communion.

... A religion may be indeterminate, without fixed speech, without positive form, so long as it is "an individual matter." Quite true. But then, a religion that is individual can never be the religion of Socialism.

Mr. Trevor says, indeed, that while "religious life is individual, religious work is collective." Surely, the most impossible of all combinations! How can the work be separate, in type and principle, from that which is its inspiration, its motive, its sanction?

... The religious life of man is larger and deeper than your own little self, therefore it lays necessities upon you, masterful and authoritative. Yet since your own little self is one with this larger life, it finds itself liberated and made alive through the very responsibilities to which it surrenders itself.

... Mr. Trevor calls Christians reactionary for going back to the Name of Jesus Christ. But what is he, then? He goes back in his religion four thousand years further. This private individual churchless, lonely religion of his is "the faith of Abraham," indeed, it goes back behind Abraham: it is the Abraham's faith, as it was in Ur of the Chaldees, before it arrived at its utterance. It is faith in the germ. Elemental faith; the dim inarticulate, formless instinct that God is, feeling after Him if so be that it might find Him.

... God must be found and followed in the thick of the real, human society, at work upon earth. So says Mr. Trevor; and we thank him from our souls for saying it. But what then are we going to say, in face of what we see? What is God doing? What does He mean? What is His Will? Why this confusion, this suffering... this disease, this death?

No religion can survive for a moment in face of the awful
pressure of these inquiries, which has not some answer to give; and that answer is its dogma: that interpretation is its creed.

Religion, as Mr. Trevor says, is a thing of life, of action, of will; not of science or philosophy. It must give proof of life in positive acts done. God and man in their religious cooperation must have dealt with the situation together; . . . and the answer must be positive . . . and any such statement of fact, and such certification of deed done, is dogmatic, it is a creed.

For us Christians Jesus Christ is our Fact - our Creed. . . . This is a message which meets the case; which is what a creedless religion can never do. This is real, vital, human, immediate, appealing, vivid, strong. If it be true, what can antiquate it? How can it become needless? Only when man ceases to suffer, to strive, to wrestle for a joy of which sin has bereaved him, to rise through Pity into Peace -- only then will Jesus Christ cease to have meaning for him. That day has not yet dawned, and until it dawns, no religion can hope to maintain man's spirit, that has any message short of this to give.

FAITH --INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE

by A. J. Waldegrave

(Because Trevor in another of his periods of depression and severe headache, had retired in the country, A. J. Waldegrave defended Trevor's position against Scott Holland's criticism. The following excerpts are from The Labour Prophet, Dec. '96, p. 189)

. . . Here, says the Canon, is the weakness of Trevor's position. "This private, individual, churchless, lonely religion of his in 'the faith of Abraham'. We have long ago been forced to go further." . . . In earnest and eloquent language he proceeds to urge that the Christian Creed must be our rallying point. . . .

Now we must face the fact that, for the mass of men the Catholic Religion has broken down . . . Centuries of experience have convinced them that there is no hope of the priesthood solving the social problem . . . The Church . . . as a political force . . . is always opposed to freedom and progress.

But it is not only as a political force that the Church has lost their sympathy. Its dogmas no longer hold men's minds; its ceremonies no longer express their aspirations.

. . . To these men we come with the Message that Canon Scott Holland himself so powerfully expressed in "Lux Mundi", that faith is an "elemental act of the personal self -- the conscious recog-
nition and realisation of our inherent adhesion to God."

In his article Canon Scott Holland asks, "Has this awful age-long story of man evolved itself and has God never spoken or acted? ... What has He done ...?" To this we reply that the evolution itself is the manifestation ... We do not point to the "here and there" of the past. In the compassion and justice and comradeship of the living movement which is called Socialism we find the revelation of God's Pity and Righteousness and Love more than in any deeds or writings of the past. By sympathy with Nature and with Life we get into touch with the heart and soul and will of the universe.

Now, this knowledge, this communion, must at first be, and must, in a sense, remain "personal and private". Nevertheless, we acknowledge the pertinence of the contention that a religion which is purely an individual matter "can never be the religion which Society needs to give voice and expression to its essential brotherhood."

But the time for the new Collective Faith is not yet. We yearn for it. We catch glimpses of its form. ... Much of the old is there. The Cross is there.

For the present, in spite of our critics' objection that such a combination is impossible, we must go on with our collective religious work, yet living our individual religious life.

A PLEA FOR TOLERANCE

(Sam Brooks expresses what was perhaps the characteristic attitude of the greater number of Labour Church members. His letter appeared in the January, 1898, issue of The Labour Prophet, p. 3)

As one who has been more or less intimately connected with the Labour Church movement from the beginning, I should be glad if you would allow me to say a few words which I think ought to be said.

One thing I have noticed in my contact with Socialist and Labour Church brethren is, what appears to me to be, the totally unnecessary amount of language which is directed against all creeds, dogmas, and doctrines, be they human or divine.

Our Socialist Iconoclast goes out into the great world, and (with a most unsocialistic spirit) feels himself at liberty to call down fire from heaven, or violence from earth, upon all that has been, for many centuries, most reverenced by the vast majority of his fellow men and women. ... If the Labour Church is to progress "with the process of the suns", it can only do so by obtaining more and more points of
contact and sympathy with those who, today (through ignorance or otherwise), are not of our fold, and do not agree with our principles and teachings.

But this most unnecessary, most unsocialistic and cruel conduct of the Iconoclast, only tends to make such contact less and less possible with the great world outside, inasmuch as it presents an unlovely and unattractive aspect to the impartial observer, and tends to convert the sympathetic listener into a determined and headstrong opponent. "I speak of that which I do know, and testify of that which I have seen." . . .

I should like to plead for more tolerance and more charity in our movement, for more sympathy for those who do not happen to believe exactly as we ourselves believe.

I should like to plead for less of that angry vituperation against more fortunate people than ourselves, knowing that these people are just as much the creatures of their environment as we ourselves are.

I should like to plead for more willingness to discern and give just praise to goodness and self-sacrifice, purity and honesty of life, in whomsoever it may be found enshrined, no matter to what class or sect they may belong.

Let these things be, and then our cause shall appeal to many who, today, have stopped their ears against us; for our lives and actions shall speak louder for us than the voices upon a thousand platforms.
LABOUR CHURCH READINGS PROPOSED FOR PUBLICATION

As printed in The Labour Prophet

The Poor

By Mme. E. de Pressense, translated from the French (Trevor).

They pass by us, following their dark road,
   Without raising their eyes.
For us -- all the sunshine; for them -- all the shadow;
   We are the happy ones.

They pass by us. Of course we give them
   A look of pity;
Then we turn round and take our own road --
   We have forgotten them.

Our hearts are moved for them, and it may even be
   That tears fill our eyes;
But if we would comfort them, we must learn to know them;
   And what do we know of them?

We are strangers both to the griefs and to the joys
   Of their poor homes.
Yet, see how their dark path winds along
   Side by side with our easy road.

Upon our knees we often call them brothers
   Before the God of heaven;
But this word, which flies away to him in our prayers,
   Is lying and cruel on our lips.

When God hears it, I fear that he grows weary
   With our vain worship;
And that from our hearts every trace of the image
   Of his divine love is wiped out.

Ah! it is not for our lips to speak
   Of a gospel of compassionate love,
When all we have for them is the cheap charity
   Which we throw them while we pass on our way.

It was not thus, Jesus, thou who comfortest,
   That thou didst pass them by
When thou didst let fall the divine words
   Of the kingdom of heaven.

Thou didst not behold their misery afar off;
   Thou didst walk in the way they trod;
In seeing them suffer they felt that thou wert their brother,
   And wept at thy feet.
Poor, disinherited, ignorant, guilty,
    They came fearlessly to thee.
Ah! who will give to us that unspeakable pity
    Which they found in thy presence?

Who will give to us the love which can draw them,
    Which will know how to raise them up?
Who will teach us, Jesus, to speak once more
    The word which can save?

Who will put into our hearts the tender, holy flame
    That burns night and day;
The love which nothing wearies, nothing repels --
    A love the image of thy own?

When shall we know that love, strong and tender,
    Which alone can heal?
When shall we love enough to understand everything,
    And to suffer for their woef?

Poor, disinherited, ignorant, rebellious --
    When shall we love you enough
To enfold you in the eternal compassion
    Of the Father of us all?

To A Working Man

By Mdam. E. de Pressense, translated from the French (Trevor)

I heard him speaking; and, as in a dream,
I seemed to see him walking at night along a shore
    At the edge of an ocean!
Then I saw him rising upon a dark tide,
Each wave of which was the secret suffering
    Of some living being.

And my heart fainted; for that weary tale
Of eternal martyrdom -- a martyrdom with no glory --
    I knew too well;
But, in my deadened soul, how many times already
Had I let the flame die down, unfed,
    Like a fire we let out!

To feel is such a small matter. It is so very easy,
At the right moment, to let a useless tear
    Fall from our eyes;
But if we would dare to descend to the depth of their abyss,
We must have the strong love and the heroic will
    To suffer with them --

Yes, to suffer with these the martyrs, with these, the victims
Of man's selfishness, who, proud of his crimes,
    Calls them -- Laws!
With these who are broken on the godless wheel
Of work without hope, which eats up their lives,
And sometimes their very souls --

With these whom, at a distance, we call our brothers --
Brothers unknown, last in their wretchedness,
Whose shadow fills us with fear;
Brothers whose chains are made heavier by our hands,
While, throwing them a few useless words,
We drink from their sweat.

You who were speaking to us about them, you whose burning soul
Embraces them, who bear in your brave hands
Both the tool and the flag;
You who cherish in your heart that sacred vision
Of a day when justice shall have changed our earth
Into a new world;

You who suffer as they suffer, you who can tell them
That your heroism is born of the same martyrdom,
Oh! you are happy!
Yes, you are happy! -- Ah! would I were like you!
For, to give our hearts to them, our thoughts, our lives,
We must be one of them.

From "Words Of A Believer"

By Lamennais, translated from the French (Trevor)

"The people are incapable of understanding their own interests. For their own good we must always be their guardians. Is it not for the enlightened to lead the ignorant?"

Thus speak a host of hypocrites, who wish to control the affairs of the people, in order that they may grow fat on their substance.

"You are not able," they say, "to understand what is good for you."

Thereupon they will not allow you to dispose even of what is your own for an object you think useful; and they will dispose of it against your will for another object which is displeasing and hateful to you.

"You are incapable of managing a little common property, incapable of knowing what is good or bad for you, unable to understand your needs and how to provide for them."

Thereupon they will send you men, well paid at your expense, who will manage what is yours according to their own fancy, will hinder you from doing what you will with your own, and will compel you to do what you do not wish.
"You are incapable of discerning what education is suitable for your children, or of judging whether you and your family can live on the wages they offer for your work." **

If what these hypocritical and greedy folk say were true, you would be quite beneath the beasts; for the beasts know all that they say you do not know, and they only need their instinct to know it.

God has not made you to be a flock of sheep, driven by others. He has made you to live in a free community of brothers. Now a brother has no right to command his brother. Brothers are bound together by common customs, and these customs are the law, and the law has to be respected, and all must unite together to hinder any from breaking it, because it is for the protection of all, and represents the common will and the common good.

Be men! No man is strong enough to put a yoke on you against your own will; but you can put the collar on your own neck if you wish.

There are animals so stupid that men shut them up in stalls, and feed them that they may work; and then, when they grow old, they fatten them to be eaten.

There are other animals who live in freedom on the prairies, that men cannot bend to servitude, who will not let themselves be seduced by deceitful caresses, nor conquered by threats or ill-treatment.

Brave men are like the latter; cowards are like the former.

II

Understand clearly how you may make yourselves free.

To be free, you must, before all things, love God; for if you love God you will do His will, and the will of God is Justice and Love, without which there can be no Freedom.

When, by force or fraud, a man takes what is another's; when he attacks his person; when, in what is perfectly lawful, he hinders him from acting as he wishes, or forces him to act against his wish; when he violates his rights in any way whatever -- what is it? It is an injustice. It is Injustice, then, which destroys Freedom.

If each of us loved only himself, and thought only of himself, without seeking to help others, the poor would often be compelled to steal what is another's in order that they and their family might live; the weak would be oppressed by a stronger, and he by one stronger still; and Injustice would reign everywhere. It is Love, then, which maintains Freedom.
Love God more than all things else, and your neighbour as yourself, and servitude will disappear from the earth.

And yet those who profit by the servitude of their brothers will use every device to maintain it. For this purpose they will use both falsehood and force.

They will declare that the arbitrary rule of some and the submission of all the rest is the order established by God. To maintain their tyranny they will not fear to blaspheme Providence.

Answer them that their God is Satan, the enemy of the human race; and that yours is he who has conquered Satan.

After that they will let loose their satellites upon you; they will have prisons built without number to shut you up therein; they will pursue you with fire and sword; they will torment you, and will pour forth your blood like a stream of water.

If, then, you are not resolved to fight without ceasing, to bear everything without flinching, never to grow weary, never to give in, keep your fetters and give up the freedom of which you are not worthy.

Freedom is like the Kingdom of God. It suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

But the violence which will put you in possession of Freedom is not the fierce violence of robbers and brigands; it is not injustice, revenge, cruelty; but a strong, unbending will; a courage calm and generous.

The most sacred cause is changed into an impious and execrable one when crime is used to maintain it. The man of crime may rise from slavery to tyranny, but never to Freedom.

III

Why do animals find their food, each after its kind? It is because they do not steal from each other; because each is content with what is sufficient for his needs.

If a bee in a hive should say: All this honey is mine; and should thereupon begin to do what it pleased with the fruit of the common labour, what would become of the other bees?

The earth is a great hive, and men are the bees.

Each bee has a right to the honey needful for life; and if, among men, there are any who are in need, it is because justice
and brotherhood have disappeared from among them.

Justice is life, and comradeship is also life; and a sweeter and more abundant life.

There have been false prophets who have persuaded a few men that others were born for their use; and these others have believed it, too, on the word of the false prophets.

Men, equal among themselves, are born only for God; and whoever speaks to the contrary speaks blasphemy.

Let him who would become great among you be your servant; and he who would be first among you be your slave.

The law of God is a law of love; and love does not raise itself up above others, but sacrifices itself to them.

He who says in his heart: I am not as other men are, but others have been given me that I may command them, and dispose of them and theirs according to my pleasure:—he is the son of Satan.

And Satan is the king of this world; for he is the king of all those who think and act thus; and all those who think and act thus have, by his counsels, made themselves masters of the world.

But their rule is only for a time, and we are approaching the end of this time.

For there will be a great battle; and the angel of Justice and the angel of Love will fight on the side of those who are armed to establish the reign of Justice and of Love.

And many will die in that fight; but their name will remain on earth as a ray of the glory of God.

IV

Young soldier, whither goest thou?
I go to fight for justice, for the holy cause of the people, for the sacred rights of mankind.
I go to fight, that my brothers may be delivered from oppression, and their chains be broken, and the chains of all the world.
I go to fight against wicked men for those whom they overthrow and trample under foot, against masters for their slaves, against tyrants for liberty.
May thine arms be blessed young soldier!
Young soldier, whither goest thou?
I go to fight, that the many may no more be the prey of the few; that the bowed heads may be lifted, and the trembling knees made firm.
I go to fight, that fathers may no more curse the day when they are told: A son is born; nor mothers the day when they first press their child to their bosom.
I go to fight that the brother may no more grow sad at seeing his sister fade away like grass which the earth cannot nourish; that the sister may no more gae, weeping, upon the brother who sets off never to return.
May thine arms be blessed, young soldier!

Young soldier, whither goest thou?
I go to fight, that fathers may no more curse the day when they are told: A son is born; nor mothers the day when they first press their child to their bosom.
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Brothers, Arise!

Verses from a poem by an Englishman, George Phillips, addressed to the Irish Nationalists during the Munster Meetings of 1843. From the "Sunburst of Ireland Reciter." Glasgow: Cameron and Ferguson.

Brothers, arise! the hour has come
To strike the blow for truth and God!
Why sit ye folded up and dumb?
Why, bending, kiss the tyrant's rod?
Is there no hope upon the earth,
No charter in the starry sky?
Has freedom no ennobling worth,
And man no immortality?
Ah, brothers! think ye what ye are!
What glorious work ye have to do!
And how they wait ye, near and far,
To do the same the wide world through!
The wide world, sunk in dreams and death,
With guilt and wrong upon its breast,
Like nightmares choking up its breath,
And murdering all its holy rest!

Bethink ye how, with heart and brain,
This God-like work were ablest done;
For man must ne'er go back again,
And lose the triumphs he has won.
Ye who have spurned the tyrant's power,
And fought your own great spirits free,
Forget not, in this trying hour,
The claims of struggling slavery!

The wise and good! Oh, where are they
To guide us onward to the Right,
Untruth and specious lies to slay,
And red oppression in its might?
For life itself is only great,
When man devotes himself to be,
By virtue, thought, and deed the mate
Of God's own children and the free.

Proudly We Stand In The People's Ranks
From Poems by "Finola." (Dublin: McGlashan & Gill.)

Proudly we stand in the people's ranks, to war with the people's wrong
Though not always the race be to the swift, the battle to the strong!
We dare to preach forth the banded creed of equal rights to all --
On the evil and just will the fruitful rain and the cheering sunbeams fall.

Our weapons -- true thought and fearless speech -- with these we will overthrow
Each low device and base pretence, each aim of the crafty foe;
We laugh at their hollow sophistry, their station, rank, and caste;
Their senseless barricade of words our arms will soon lay waste.

'Tis idle to prate of rank and class -- nay, urge not the shallow plea --
Remember who sat in the fisherman's boat on Galilee's purple sea!
Rend the tyrant chains that custom forged, and recant the impious creed
That a separate law for rich and poor by God's wisdom was decreed.

Remember who sat at the publican's feast -- was there peer or noble there?
What jewelled garter, or diamond star, did those guests, so honoured, wear?
Ah, men! arise from delusion's sleep, fling off the coils that bind
The free-born soul's exalted strength, the heaven-endowed mind!
And proudly stand in the people's ranks, to war with fraud and wrong!
Oh, pass not by! -- ye have stood apart, ye have held aloof too long;
Fear not to utter the glorious faith of equal rights to all;
On the evil and just will the fruitful rain and the cheering sunbeams fall.

The Voice Of The Poor

From Poems by "Speranza" (Lady Wilde)
(Glasgow: Cameron & Ferguson.)

Was sorrow ever like to our sorrow?
Oh, God above!
Will our night never change into a morrow
Of joy and love?
A deadly gloom is on us -- waking, sleeping,
Like the darkness at noon-tide
That fell upon the pallid Mother, weeping
By the crucified.

Before us die our brothers of starvation;
Around are cries of famine and despair;
Where is hope for us, or comfort, or salvation? --
Where -- oh, where?
If the angels ever hearken, downward bending,
They are weeping, we are sure,
At the litanies of human groans ascending
From the crushed hearts of the poor.

When the human rests in love upon the human,
All grief is light;
But who lends one kind glance to illumine
Our life-long night?
The air around is ringing with their laughter --
God has only made the rich to smile;
But we -- in our rags, and want, and woe -- we follow
Weeping the while.

And the laughter seems but uttered to divide us --
When? -- oh, when
Will fall the frozen barriers that divide us
From other men?
Will ignorance for ever thus enslave us?
Will misery for ever lay us low?
All are eager with their insults -- but, to save us,
None; none we know.

We never knew a childhood's mirth and gladness,
Nor the proud heart of youth, free and brave;
Oh! a death-like gloom of wretchedness and sadness
Is life's journey to the grave.
Day by day we lower sink and lower,
Till the godlike soul within,
Falls, crushed beneath the fearful demon power
Of poverty and sin.

So we toil on, on with fever burning --
In heart and brain;
So we toil on, on through bitter scornning,
Want, woe, and pain;
We dare not raise our eyes to the blue heaven,
Or the toil must cease --
We dare not breathe the fresh air God has given
One hour in peace.

We must toil, though the light of life is burning
Oh, how dim!
We must toil on our sick bed, feebly turning
Our eyes to Him
Who alone can hear the pale lips faintly saying,
With scarce moved breath,
While the paler hands, uplifted, aid the praying --
"Lord, grant us Death!"

Where The Greatest City Stands
From Walt Whitman

The greatest city is that which has the greatest man or woman.
If it be a few rugged huts, it is still the greatest city in
the whole world.

The place where the greatest city stands is not the place of
stretched warves, docks, manufactures, deposits of produce,
Nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new comers, or the anchor-
lifters of the departing,
Nor the place of the tallest and costliest building, or shops
selling goods from the rest of the earth,
Nor the place of the best libraries and schools -- nor the place
where money is plenteist,
Nor the place of the most numerous population.
Where the city stands with the brawniest breed of orators and bards,
Where the city stands that is beloved by these, and loves them in return, and understands them,
Where these may be seen every day in the streets, with their arms familiar to the shoulders of their friends,
Where no monuments exist to heroes, but in the common words and deeds,
Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place,
Where behaviour is the finest of the fine arts,
Where the men and women think lightly of the laws,
Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases,
Where the populace rise at once against the never-ending audacity of elected persons,
Where fierce men and women pour forth, as the sea to the whistle of death pours its sweeping and unript waves,
Where outside authority enters always after the precedence of inside authority,
Where the citizen is always the head and ideal -- and President, Mayor, Governor, and what not, are agents for pay,
Where children are taught from the jump that they are to be laws to themselves, and to depend on themselves,
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs,
Where speculations on 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, and are appealed to by the orators, the same as the men,
Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,
There the greatest city stands.

The following poems are by Joseph Whittaker, one of our most active Labour Church Pioneers. The first appeared recently in the *Workman's Times*; the second was written for the *Labour Prophet*.

Close Up!

Close up! close up! for the ranks are small,
And every unit of strength is needed;
Quarrelling hosts never yet succeeded,
Houses divided aye must fall.
With a cause to love and a world to win,
Do we need, my brothers, this jangling din?

Squabbles and bickerings fill the air,
Each cock for a dunghill grows so jealous,
Each little chief of the rest so jealous,
We in the trenches half despair;
While, mocking the snarling which never tires,
The foe laughs over his dying fires.
If all are leaders, who shall be led?
First in rank should be first in battle.
Sharpen your swords, then, and end your prattle,
And let the last fool's boast be said.
No scattered army we have to meet,
But a scornful host that defies defeat.

What does it matter who ranks first
If the city perishes undefended?
Honours come when the war is ended,
And hearts that battled the best have burst.
When the heights are stormed is the time to count
The stalwart souls that were first to mount.

Close up! we have many a fight to fight;
Cast out all faltering, half seceders.
Fellow the cause, and we need no leaders;
None, save Liberty, Truth, and Right;
And, wrathfully heralding misery's fall,
Humanity's battle cry — "All for All!"

The Workers' Prayer

We pray aloud, O Lord, for light,
And "Light, more light!" our souls repeat;
We never feel the genial heat
Of summer: all our day is night.
The very brutes know more than we
The wonder of the world we see;
We do not live, but seem to be,
And evermore we pray for light.

A cruel burden, Lord, we bear:
Dead systems choke our path, and dead
Dark labyrinths of lies we thread;
The garments of dead men we wear;
Dead custom and dead shibboleth
Oppress us, and the putrid breath
Of souls that live in living death
Adds horror to the ghastly night.

In heavy chains of vice, and sin,
And torment, Lord, our limbs are bound;
Yet must we drudge our dreary round,
And gain for vampire-sluggards win.
But misery the worker drinks,
Till, dying in his chains, he sinks: —
Oh, help us, God, to snap the links,
And in our darkness give us light.

We call on God, but cannot tell
If on a living God we cry;
We have not hope, except to die; 
We have no faith, except in hell.
On Thee for aid we cry so long, 
The same dark doubt grows on each tongue: --
If Thou art living, why this wrong?
Oh, God, if living, give us light.

Yes, give us light, that we may see 
The enemies with whom we fight,
The foes that stab us in the night;
And smite them till they cease to be. 
World-wide the bane; but if Thou wilt, 
All oppression, wrong, and guilt; 
All dungeons we ourselves have built,
Shall yet be hurled to endless night.

And thus, no longer slaves, but men, 
The ancient dream of brotherhood, 
Of common toil for common good, 
Shall fill humanity again 
With stronger faith, unstained by creeds, 
And truer thoughts, and nobler deeds, 
Till love sways all, and proudly leads 
The nations home to God, the Light.


By James Russell Lowell

(For an account of the circumstances which inspired this poem, see "John Brown" Chapter V, in this number of The Labour Prophet, i.e. November, 1893. This poem was read at the first Labour Church Service in Manchester, Sunday, October 4th, 1891.)

Look on who will in apathy, and stifle they who can 
The sympathies, the hopes, the words, that make man truly man! 
Let those whose hearts are dungeoned up, with interest or with ease, 
Consent to hear with quiet pulse of loathsome deeds like these.

I first drew in New England air, and from her hardy breast 
Suck'd in the tyrant-hating milk that will not let me rest; 
And if my words seem treason to the dullest and the tame, 
'Tis but my Bay-State dialect -- our fathers spake the same.

Shame on the costly mockery of piling stone on stone 
To those who won our liberty, the heroes dead and gone, 
While we look coldly on and see law-shielded ruffians slay 
The men who fain would win their own, the heroes of to-day!

Are we pledged to craven silence? 0, fling it to the wind, 
The parchment wall that binds us from the least of human kind -- 
That makes us cower and temporise, and dumbly stand at rest, 
While Pity's burning flood of words is red-hot in the breast!
Though we break our fathers' promise, we have nobler duties first;  
The traitor to Humanity is the traitor must accursed;  
Man is more than Constitutions; better rot beneath the sod  
Than be true to Church and State while we are doubly false to God!

We owe allegiance to the State; but deeper, truer, more  
To the sympathies that God has set within our spirit's core: --  
Our country claims our fealty; we grant it so, but then  
Before Man made us citizens, great Nature made us men.

He's true to God who's true to man; whatever wrong is done,  
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding sun,  
That wrong is also done to us; and they are slaves most base  
Whose love of right is for themselves and not for all their race.

God works for all. Ye cannot hem the hope of being free  
With parallels of latitude, with mountain-range or sea.  
Put golden padlocks on Truth's lips, be callous as ye will,  
From soul to soul through all the world leaps one electric thrill.

Chain down your slaves with ignorance, ye cannot keep apart,  
With all your craft of tyranny, the human heart from heart:  
When first the Pilgrims landed on the Bay-State's iron shore,  
The word went forth that slavery should one day be no more.

Out from the land of bondage 'tis decreed our slaves shall go,  
And signs to us are offered, as erst to Pharaoh;  
If we are blind, their exodus, like Israel's of yore,  
Through a Red Sea is doomed to be, whose surges are of gore.

'Tis ours to save our brethren, with peace and love to win  
Their darkened hearts from error, ere they harden it to sin;  
But if, before his duty, man with listless spirit stands,  
Ere long the Great Avenger takes the work from out his hands.

* * * * *

From Prof. Felix Adler, in Creed and Deed.

Be it ours to hold high the moral ideal, whether we clothe it with personality or not. Be it ours to act divine things, no matter how we regard divine mysteries. Be it ours to help in lifting up the fallen, to lend free utterance to the complaints of the oppressed, to brand the social iniquities of our times, to give our hearts' warmth and the labour of our hands to the cause of their redress, and to push on, with whatever power we may, the progress of our race towards those high and holy goals of which the dreamers dream, the prophets prophesy.
Harvest Home

From an Old-English Song

Our oats they are hoed, and our barley's reaped,
Our hay it is mowed, and our hovels heaped;
Come, Boys, come; come, boys, come;
And merrily roar out, Harvest Home!

We've cheated the parson, we'll cheat him again;
Why should the vicar have one in ten?
One in ten; one in ten;
Why should the vicar have one in ten?

For staying while dinner is cold and hot,
And pudding and dumpling are burnt to pot?
Burnt to pot; burnt to pot;
And pudding and dumpling are burnt to pot?

From Ethical Religion, by W. M. Salter

It is wonderful how every great religious movement in the past has been marked by a new sense of personal righteousness. It was thus when real religion rose among the ancient Hebrews, and a cry went forth from the prophetic lips, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me!" It was so when Jesus called for a deeper righteousness than even the most religious of his own day practiced. It was so when Luther threw off the bondage of dead works, and wrote and spoke to the conscience, and said that an act in itself good becomes sinful if its motive is sinful. If I ever have a doubt of the possibility of a religion arising out of Liberalism to-day, it is because Liberalism speaks more of the rights of men than of their duties; because it talks more of the reform of society than of the reform of ourselves; because its ideal is philanthropy rather than justice; because it forgets that "society gains nothing," as Emerson says, "while a man not himself renovated attempts to renovate things about him," or, as John C. Learned says, "that those who are in the wrong cannot cure evils." Let us purify ourselves; let us leave the world's standards behind us, and ask what manner of men we ourselves are; and if we find ourselves unholy, unchaste, passionate, envious, ready to take advantage, petty in spirit and narrow in sympathy; oh, let us leave doctoring the ills of the world, and first cure ourselves!
"O God! that bread should be so dear,  
And flesh and blood so cheap!"

He sat on a crag in the hollow near S---- Bridge. A man somewhat past middle age, muscular, deep-chested, with white hair falling over a straight, wrinkled forehead. Between the thumb and forefinger of his toil-hardened hand the miner's "kegg" was still visible. His face had a greyish tint -- the effect of two months' residence above ground. His threadbare jacket was patched and repatched along the seams and below the arms, and in one of his yawning pockets lay an old, thumbed copy of "The Wealth of Nations"!

"Eh! A'um tired o'ntalkin', that I am," he said, gruffly, looking straight before him into the flame-coloured woods. "There's fowk as think as 'talkin' 'll mak two and two come to four and a hawf. What I sees plain enough is this: Th'd just as well take a broomstick to sweep back t' waves o' t' Atlantic as take Acts o' Parliament and sech like to control Economic Forces. No. We've got to moil and to wrastle and to starve all our days. Very good. I'm willin'. But what licks me is this" -- he drew in his breath, and compressed his thin lips -- "to he a bletherin' fool at my lug sayin' as how another fool i' Parliament 'ud make it oom aht reight."

The young man, lying on the grass, kicked his heels together idly, and made no answer. Perhaps he had a suspicion that he was the bletherin' fool darkly alluded to.

"Capital is strong," proceeded the miner. "I ha' felt it. I knows its pow'r better'n you. But I knows, too, that there an't no use callin' aht agin' t' wind -- no, nor agin' t' man that has t' wind in his favour, nawther. Force is a brutal thing, fer sewer. T' winds, an' t' waves, an' t' power o' capital lick up t' lives o' men, an' women, an' children. Ay, but they works aht summat as ta' couldn't get wi' ta' fool i' Parliament."

The old miner's shoulders drooped wearily, and he leaned his arms on his knees. While he was speaking the flame-like light of the sunset had faded, and the valley was now in shadow. A chill wind rustled the dead leaves.

"Ay. It's like t' sea," pursued the old man, absently. "It's cruel; and it's creepin' up arahnd every shore o' t' habitable earth -- t' power o' capital."

"Pooh!" said the Idler on the grass, letting his heels fall suddenly. "Pooh! What nonsense!"

The miner turned suddenly, as though he had been struck.
"Oh! excuse me. I didn't mean any harm," said the Idler, picking damp leaves off his coat. "But when I see a man making himself miserable over a fallacy, I have to sit up. To say the power of capital is a natural force! But nature is against it."

The miner muttered something about "havers", and gazed away into the woods again.

"Utterly against it," said the Idler. "In the countries where nature is strongest, the capitalistic system has to fight for its life. The temperate zone is the birthplace and nursery of capitalism. No wonder; for capitalism is based on men's power over nature."

"Nay, that's havers," said the miner, taking out his pipe, and sorrowfully replacing it, as he remembered that he had no "baccy". "Man's noan ahtside nature. And even when he feights wi' her, it's that shoo may give 'im new powers."

"Just so. In the tussle with the man's fighting power, that fighting power is increased. Nature is, under all circumstances, the great enricher. You were just hinting, rather darkly, that she is the great robber."

The miner wrinkled his brow, scratched his head, threw his cap off. Then he did what bewildered people generally do — he fell back on "authority".

"You ha' no call to talk to me," he said, doggedly; "I hev 'Adam Smith' i' my pocket."

"Ah!" The Idler slipped to the ground, and began to kick his feet again.

"He says -- mind you, he's a man o' sense. Has t' ever heard o' 'im? He says labour's t' mother and t' source o' t' wealth o' nations."

"That's a great truth. The expansion of capital, then, as well as capital, means expenditure of labour-power."

"Well, yes, o' course."

"Labour power belongs, in the first instance, to the labourer."

The miner looked down at his gnarled fingers, smiling grimly.

"Ay. It belongs to 'm. On'y he's got to sell it every day o's working life to 's maister."

"Sell it! How sell it? It's capital, you say -- the mother of capital. A birth-right if there be one!"

"Ay; We sells it howsever," said the miner, listening to the shaking of the yellow beech leaves. "We'se forced to 't. We'se all Esaus, we be. It's a'most a goak, man, to think on
"'t," he added, looking at his hairy arms.

"What an idea," said the Idler, letting his legs fall suddenly, "to sell capital."

"For a mess o' potage," said the old miner, pleased with the parallel between the Eastern hunter's case and his own. "Ay, it's the Jacob class as gies us our wages, you see, and it has its mother -- Nature -- to help it."

"Come! Go back to your Adam Smith," said the Idler, turning out his pocket, and emptying a few bits of tobacco into his hand. You'll feel more comfortable, and you'll speak more intelligibly. You'll see, for example, that an economist does not speak of selling capital, but of advancing it."

"Ay, for sewer," said the miner, taking out a brown stump, and packing the pieces of baccy into it. "He advances on 't. Thank ye, kindly. It's a good while sin' I had t' last puff o' smoke anear my noose."

"You advance capital, brother," said the Idler, seriously. "And I shouldn't wonder -- such is the frightful improvidence of the working classes -- if you advance it without security."

"Ah! Security. That's a word of capitalist, that is. We're nobbut workers, and we ha' nowt to do wi' 't. I had a son," pursued the old man, in a lower tone, "on'y one -- a fine, strappin' lad. I thought a heap on 'm, and so did t' missis. Wall, he advanced summat -- he did. Ay, an' he lost it. He was on'y a mangled heap, so as his mother 'n I couldn't tell as we'd e'er set eyes on 'm, when they brought 'm up."

The miner's voice failed.

"Credit, now," said the Idler, after a little pause. "Do you get any credit for your mother of capital?"

The miner wrinkled his brow.

"Nay, thee's mixin' up terms, and a usin' of 'um all awry," he said testily. "Tha knows nowt about it, lad! Labour-power an't capitalist!"

"What is labour-power, anyhow? said the Idler, sharply.

"The miner frowned, took off his cap, scratched his head, and finally took his pipe out of his mouth.

"I've told you a'ready," he said, after a long pause.

"No you haven't," said the Idler, kicking his feet together, "you've told me that it's the mother of capital, and that it belongs in the first instance to the labourer. You say the labourer advances it without security, that he gets no credit for it, no interest on it, that -- -- "
"Thee's mixin' terms up, and usin' o' 'm all awry. Labour-power ISN'T capital."

"Very good. It isn't capital. What can it be? It's bought and sold at the market -- the rate of wages is the price of it. Is it a commodity?"

"'Tisn't, so to speak, a commodity nawther," said the miner, fairly in a fog. "A commodity, you see, by itself produces nothing. You might lay a spade on t' ground, or a pick i' t' mine, and nothing 'd come o't."

"Very good indeed," said the Idler. "Now, perhaps you will tell me what this labour-power is. It is not capital -- only the mother of capital. It is not a commodity -- only the creator of value and surplus value in all commodities. What does political economy say about it? What do coal-owners say about it -- "

"Political economy don't say nothink about it," said the miner, briefly. "And the coal-owners say -- what's true -- that Labour-power's cheap."

"Cheap! But why cheap? The day of slavery is past. You have now free contracts -- "

"That's a lie!" burst out the miner, suddenly, as a new light broke in on him. He rose, took out his "Wealth of Nations", made as though he would fling it from him, and finally put it back in his pocket (for, after all, he had no quarrel with Adam Smith). "It's a lie. Free contracts are for men who sit at peace, who have time to think, to weigh their forces, and to learn t' natur' of 'em. Working-men has been hurried into makin' bad bargains, driven by hunger and the fear o't, from t' cradle to t' grave, so as they don't know yet as they are capitalists -- the true capitalists -- capitalists who advance everything, and risk everything. Ah! Gospel o' thrift indeed" -- he shook his fist at the wood. "I'll begin from this day to preach it. The working-men o' England, and o' every civilised country, is usin' up as much labour-power in ten years as ought to last thirty -- "

"There you're wrong," said the Idler, carelessly. "The great majority of workers make no use whatever of their finest quality of labour-power. That is why the energy in them corrupts and turns into vice. Why, ragged schools and reformatories, and prisons and asylums, and temperance institutions and homes for lost men -- and lost women -- and lost children -- lost Human Capital -- "

"Who'd 'a thot it?" said the miner, throwing his cap back. "A capitalist -- "

"Miserable, degraded, without self-respect -- "

"Ay, of course. They'd no call to respec' themselves, not
knowing as how they were capitalists. And who'd 'a thowt -- "

"But a great many people are thinking," broke in the Idler, impetuously. "See! I will read you a quotation from a letter which appeared in the TIMES two weeks ago." (He produced a copy of the portly paper.) "It is proposed that of the capital of £50,000, £23,000 shall represent security for labour-power advanced by the men, and the sum of £3,000 regarded as interest on labour-power." "Ah!" The Idler rose to his feet, and crushed the TIMES back into his pocket. "We shall arrive -- "

"For sewer," said the miner, rising, too. "Why shouldn't we? Capitalists!"

The Poor Old Son Of Labour

by John Macleay Peacock

When dreary winter's blasts blow cold,
   One dark December day,
A poor old son of Labour's own
   Sat trembling by the way;
Big drops of rain, from his thin locks,
   Came o'er his cheek like tears;
His eyes were dim, for he was then
   A man of eighty years.

He looked like some old patriarch,
   A sad, forsaken man,
And on the passing crowd he gazed
   And sighing, thus began:
"Oh! now I feel the fearful truth,
   Oft told me in my time,
Age is an outcast coldly scorned
   And poverty a crime.

"My Mary looks as if her heart
   Would pine away with woe;
The law has said that we must starve
   Or to the workhouse go.
Thus would they part life's dearest links
   And break our holy vow,
As if our hearts were dead to love
   And loathed each other now.

"I've toiled -- and oft until the task
   Had nearly turned my brain --
From boyhood's sunny days, till now
   Life lingers in the wane;
And this is all the recompense
   For lab'ring long and hard --
A beggar's bread -- a felon's bed --
   A pauper's prison ward."
"All in my time I've tilled the soil,
And hewn the hardy rock;
Have sunk the mine and dug the well,
And felled the giant oak.
My wife and I have tugged through life
Industry all our aim;
Now we are wandering beggars both, --
Oh, shame, old England, shame!

"Was it for this we toiled and milled,
While we had strength to spare?
Has youth no hope for hoary age
But weary want and care?
More great than God, in Mammon's eyes,
Appears one princely drone; --
More care to wealth than human woes
Are baubles of a throne."

From "God Wills It!"
by Herbert W. Casson

No. 1

The great struggle that is at hand, both in Europe and America, is between the working men and the aristocrats. The despised labourers of the world, who have been wronged and robbed for six thousand years, are being endued with power from God. There is coming an end to their bondage. Already there are millions of working men who are organised and ready for action. Labour is a mighty giant waking up from a long slumber. Wage-slavery shall soon be as utterly destroyed as chattel-slavery and feudalism. What corporation of millionaires can conquer Providence? Can they bribe God with their gold and silver? He is behind the Labour movement, and those who oppose it are His enemies.

All history reveals to us a Power that makes for righteousness, that overthrows tyrants and uplifts the oppressed. That Power is God; and to-day He is teaching, guiding and inspiring the rough masses of the working men. The true prophets of the Kingdom of Heaven are to be found among the Trade-unionists and Socialists. They are preaching the gospel of Brotherhood, as Christ did, to the poor.

The great cause of Labour is God's new Messiah; it is the test-question of our generation. Our fathers had their religion tested by the struggle to emancipate the negroes; that struggle is over, but John Brown's God is on the side of the slaves still, whether they are white or black. Trade Unions are becoming the real churches of this country and of Europe. Wherever good is, God is; and wherever a number of working men bind themselves together for mutual protection and support, He is in the midst.
God dwells not in temples made with hands, but in the minds and hearts of those who hate falsity and cant, and love only that which is true, and helpful, and just. Wherever the weak are feebly struggling for their liberties, wherever the blind and ignorant are conscious of the darkness, wherever there is pain, or patience, or hardship, wherever a single human soul is despised because of poverty or labour, God is there to bless, and strengthen, and comfort, and help. To love one another is to serve Him; and there is no higher worship than self-sacrifice for the good of others. His sympathy is not with the fat bishop who rolls in a cushioned carriage to his cathedral or his palace car, but with the untaught and ragged children of the slums.

The parish priest of Austerlitz
Climbed up in a high church steeple,
To be near God, that he might hand
God's word down to the people.

In sermons grave he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven,
And he dropped this down on the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.

In His rage God said, "What meanest thou?"
And the priest cried from the steeple,
"Where art thou, Lord?" and the Lord replied,
"Down here among my people."

No. II

The Emancipation of Labour can never be accomplished by cursing capitalism. Criticism, sarcasm, and invective may be useful in overthrowing the old, but they can never establish the new. There is nothing constructive in cynicism, nor any life in negations. At present Socialists, and most Labour Reformers, are masters of sarcasm; they cut right and left through the falsities of our industrial system with the sharp swords of their wit and ridicule; but as Socialist Congresses and Labour Conventions prove, they are too apt to turn these weapons upon each other. There is little unity in their councils, because the spirit of criticism is stronger than the spirit of brotherhood. They are too often appealing to selfishness to overthrow selfishness, and using all the methods of individualism.

Instead of overcoming evil with good, they are fighting the devil with fire. They have not remembered this — that the worth of a revolution is its motive. A Labour movement that does no more than clamour with covetous hands outstretched for rights and privileges can end only in desension, or, at the very farthest, in a jealous and suspicious Socialism. It might repeat the French Revolution upon a vaster scale; but it alone can never bring the Co-operative Commonwealth. Legislation by itself might create a second Sparta, but not a humane and fraternal democracy.
There can be no doubt that before many years some kind of Socialism must come; the only question for earnest Socialists and true men everywhere is this—by what means can we soonest establish the most desirable form of national co-operation? And it is the mission of the Labour Church to declare that Labour can secure its rights only through a movement founded upon brotherly helpfulness and moral enthusiasm, and to appeal to all noble-minded and brave-hearted young men to fling themselves into such a movement.

The churches have so betrashed the name of God and the teachings of the "Sermon on the Mount", that working men have turned away in disgust from their sophistry and cant; and naturally drifting from one extreme to another, have brought upon the Labour movement too often the stigma and paralysis of atheism. But the time has come for working men to claim their God.

One of the noblest and most powerful Labour emancipators of Europe once said: "Without God you may compel, but not persuade; you may become tyrants in your turn, but you cannot become Educators or Apostles." Nothing but the inspiring, unifying, irresistible war-cry of the Crusaders, "God Wills It, God Wills It" can rouse the working men from selfish caution, and lead them to a speedy victory over all oppressors. The moment that a few thousand respond to it, and sink all personal ambitions in the desire to serve their comrades, the final struggle will commence; and capitalism, with its debasing wage-slavery, shall be forever abolished.

No. III

We are now in the midst of the second Civil War. It is not being fought with bullets, but with ballots; and not between the North and the South, but between the few who are rich and powerful and the many who are poor and weak. There has never been a war in history so great and widespread as this. Compared with it, the struggle for National Independence and the first Civil War were trivial and insignificant.

If, therefore, many young men became the most unselfish patriots and heroes in the former wars, and exulted in the opportunity, how much greater is that opportunity now! The highest glory is in defending Truth and Justice against Power and Pride.

There is more courage and endurance required in this war than in any other. It is harder to face poverty than powder; and contempt is more painful than a sword-thrust. There will be tremendous obstacles and bitter persecutions; but the end will be world-reaching and glorious.

The great need of our country, therefore, is for a number of young men, not necessarily large, who dare speak the truth in
love, and proclaim the impartial will of God with boldness and moral enthusiasm. To-day the truth is almost everywhere betrayed. It is bought and sold in the press, in the hall, in the pulpit, in the street. In political conventions and ministerial synods nothing is spoken except whatsoever things are popular and profitable. On the most important problems of our time there is a conspiracy of silence. The minister is blind, the editor is gagged, the politician is corrupted. They love darkness better than light. The very foundations of the church and of society are too unstable to stand investigation. The truths that ought to be spoken are the very truths that are not spoken.

The reason for all this is plain: there is hardly anyone in a position to speak the truth. Under the present business system every man is dependent upon the goodwill of others for his means of support, and consequently shapes his words and his conduct so as not to lose their approval. Many brave men and women have already dared to be independent in the Labour movement; but there is great need for more. In such a time as this, when writers and speakers are becoming the pensioners of the rich, God and the oppressed working classes have need of spokesmen who dare live even in poverty till death sooner than suppress or sell the truth that is within them. The influence of a few such incorruptible tribunes of the people would be incalculable.

Three single-hearted men, who would suffer themselves to be thrust into a den of lions or a fiery furnace rather than bow down before the golden image, could set the wage-slaves of this nation free. Truth is mightier than dynamite. No bomb would make a more startling explosion in most political, religious, or social assemblies than would the simple utterance of the plainest truths. Reality is an open secret; and there are thousands who shudder at the faintest echo of truth even in the solitude of their own hearts.

The Labour Church, therefore, calls for volunteers who shall come forward and defend whatsoever things are true, and whatsoever things are just. It is not necessary that there should be organisation, or any union except that of spirit. There is no stronger or holier bond than co-operation in a righteous cause.

From "The World's Parliament of Religions"

Speaking of the common note of charity, humanity, and brotherhood that had been heard in all the denominational congresses, Prince Serge Wolhonsky, of the Russo-Greek Church, dwelt on the fitness of bringing together all these harmonious voices into a single chorus, and recognised in the Parliament of Religions the realisation of this thought. He continued: --
I will take the liberty of relating to you a popular legend of
my country. The story may appear rather too humorous for the oc-
casion, but one of our national writers says, "Humour is an in-
visible tear through a visible smile", and we think that human
 tears, human sorrow and pain, are sacred enough to be brought even
before a religious congress.

There was an old woman who for many centuries suffered tortures
in the flames of hell, for she had been a great sinner during her
earthly life. One day she saw far away in the distance an angel
taking his flight through the blue skies; and with the whole
strength of her voice she called to him. The call must have been
desperate, for the angel stopped in his flight, and coming down
to her, asked her what she wanted.

"When you reach the throne of God," she said, "tell Him that a
miserable sinner has suffered more than she can bear, and that
she asks the Lord to be delivered from these tortures."

The angel promised to do so and fled away. When he had trans-
mitted the message God said: "Ask her whether she has done any
good to anyone during her life."

The old woman strained her memory in search of a good action
during her sinful past, and all at once "I've got one!" she joy-
fully exclaimed. "One day I gave a carrot to a hungry beggar."
The angel reported the answer. "Take a carrot," said God to the
angel, "and stretch it out to her. Let her grasp it, and if the
plant is strong enough to draw her out from hell she shall be
saved."

This the angel did. The poor old woman clung to the carrot.
The angel began to pull, and lo! she began to rise! But when her
body was half out of the flames she felt a weight at her feet.
Another sinner was clinging to her. She kicked, but it did not
help. The sinner would not let go his hold, and the angel, con-
tinuing to pull, was lifting them both. But lo! another sinner
clung to them, and then a third, and more, and always more --
a chain of miserable creatures hung at the woman's feet. The
angel never ceased pulling. It did not seem to be any heavier
than the small carrot would support, and they were all lifted in
the air. But the old woman suddenly took fright. Too many
people were availing themselves of her last chance of salvation,
and kicking and pushing those who were clinging to her she ex-
claimed: "Leave me alone; hands off; the carrot is mine!"

No sooner had she pronounced the word "mine" than the tiny
stem broke, and they all fell back to hell, and forever.

From the Clarion, April 30, 1892: Labour Day, by "Nunquam"

Whence came it, this Labour Day? From the heavens, surely.
Out of the cloud-wrack of adversity, out of the darkness and the storm! radiant, white, magnificent; a light to the feet of the people, a pillar of fire for the van, an oriflamme of battle, a covenant and a sign.

But a year or two ago we knew it not. A great day of rendez-vous! A great day of hope, of promise, of the rallying of hosts of the despised and neglected peoples seemed a thing unreachaible, a thing to dream about, to long for, but not a thing to live to see.

And now, you have the fact that Labour has claimed its day. You have the fact that all those men have met. You will never again wring that day from Labour's hands nor unhook the grapples of the spirits of the people. As quicksilver rushes together, so will that multitude coalesce. Once they have seen each other, it is enough; once they have heard the sound of their own united voices.

Do you think the lesson will be lost upon them? They will thrill with one emotion for the first time. They will hear the mighty roar of the voice of the people. They will realise what fraternity means, they will realise what union means, and how a hundred thousand men willing one thing are like a hundred thousand men shouting with one voice.

Know it or not, it is true. It is the first stroke of the hour. It is the first note of the war song. It is the first step of the march of the army of Labour; an army vast and solid, and confident and irresistible. It is

**LABOUR DAY**

The people will meet -- that is the main thing. We shall see each other face to face, feel each other shoulder to shoulder, hear each other voice to voice, trust each other soul to soul, and we shall go away open-eyed and conscious of a change. We shall have felt our strength, imagined our numbers, seen as a vision of the world to come the golden dawn-streak of the day of our deliverance, and our triumph.

But a little while ago we were as men fighting without hope, crying aloud in the storm; casting our bread upon the waters; but now we have got

**A LABOUR DAY.**

Ah! the dawn is in the sky, the bud is on the tree, the field is green with the harvest that shall ripen. We have got our Labour Day, and we are a century nearer than we dreamed of. For years we have sown our dragon's teeth in the sterile earth and
cheerless darkness, toiling where one sower could not hear an-
other's voice; and now, with a sudden burst of God's White Light,
the sun shines on the field of our labours, and lo! it is brist-
ling with a harvest of armed men.

We shall march on from this Labour Day, growing ever wise,
nobler, braver, and juster, until there is honour for those who
make, more than for those who mar, reward for those who labour
better than for those who loaf; until snobbery and prejudice, and
theft and butchery, are banished into the Hell they came from;
until Labour shall hold that which it wins, and England shall be
the freehold and the home and the inheritance of The English.

This, now, is my Labour Day prophecy. Mark it well. And on
the day of its fulfilment we will set the bells a-reeling till we
split the steeple, and the cannon shall roar forth salutes to
something holier than murder, and the crown shall no more be
placed upon the brows of them that make a trade of slaughter, nor
shall the robber be repaid with heaped-up masses of gold for his
iniquity. Meanwhile, as a foretaste, as an earnest, as a pre-
monition, you shall hear us about aloud on Sunday, for it is

OUR LABOUR DAY.

The following story is taken from a sermon by Robert Collyer,
entitled "Tender, Trusty, and True".

Away off, I believe, in Edinburgh, two gentlemen were standing
at the door of a hotel one very cold day, when a little boy, with
a poor, thin, blue face, his feet bare, and red with cold, and
with nothing to cover him but a bundle of rags, came and said,
"Please, sir, buy some matches? " "No: don't want any." the gentle-
man said. "But they are only a penny a box," the little fellow
pleaded. "Yes; but we do not want a box," the gentleman
said again. "Then I will gie ye twa boxes for a penny," the boy
said at last.

"And so, to get rid of him," the gentleman, who tells the story
in an English paper, says, "I bought a box. But then I found I
had no change: so I said, 'I will buy a box to-morrow.' 'O, do
buy them the nicht, if you please,' the boy pleaded again. 'I
will rin and get ye the change; for I am verra hungry.' So I gave
him the shilling, and he started away, and I waited for him.

"But no boy came. Then I thought I had lost my shilling; but
still there was that in the boy's face I trusted, and I did not
like to think tad of him.

"Well, late in the evening, a servant came, and said a little
boy wanted to see me. When he was brought in, I found it was a
smaller brother of the boy that got my shilling, but, if possible,
still more ragged and poor and thin. He stood a moment diving into his rags, as if he was seeking something; and then he said, 'Are you the gentleman that bought the matches frae Sandie?' 'Yes.' 'Weel, then, here's fourpence out o' yer shillin'. Sandie canna come; he's no weel. A cart run ower him, and knocked him down, and he lost his bonnet, and his matches, and your seven-pence; and both his legs are broken; and he's no weel at a', and the doctor says he'll dee. And that's a' he can gie ye the noo,' putting fourpence down on the table; and then the poor child broke down into great sobs.

"So I fed the little man," the gentleman goes on to say, "and then I want with him to see Sandie.

"I found that the two little things lived with a wretched, drunken stepmother; their own father and mother were both dead. I found poor Sandie lying on a bundle of shavings: he knew me as soon as I came in, and said, 'I got the change, sir, and was coming back; and then the horse knocked me doon, and both my legs are broken. And, O Reuby, little Reuby! I am sure I am deein'! and who will take care o' ye, Reuby, when I am gane? What will ye do, Reuby?"

"Then I took the poor little sufferer's hand, and told him I would always take care of Reuby. He understood me, and had just strength to look at me as if he would thank me; then the light went out of his blue eyes; and in a moment,

"He lay within the light of God,
Like a babe upon the breast;
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest."

By Disraeli

(During the agitation against the infamous Truck system, Mr. Disraeli, than head of the "Young England" party, published the following sketch of a scene in a "tommy-shop". The death of the child is an incident from real life, and the brief story gives us the whole essence of many debates and bluebooks. It was drawn from personal observation.)

The door of Mr. Diggs's tommy-shop opened. The rush was like the advance into the pit of a theatre; pushing, squeezing, fighting, tearing, shrieking. On a high seat, guarded by rails from all contact, sat Mr. Diggs, senior, with a bland smile on his sanctified countenance, and a pen behind his ear, and recommending his constrained customers to be patient and orderly. Behind the substantial counter, which was an impregnable fortification, was his popular son, Master Joseph, a short, ill-favoured cur, with a spirit of vulgar oppression and malicious mischief stamped on his
visage. His black, greasy, lank hair, his pug-nose, and projecting tusks, contrasted with the mild and lengthened countenance of his father, who looked very much like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

For the first five minutes Master Joseph Diggs did nothing but blaspheme and swear at his customers, occasionally leaning over the counter and cuffing the women in the van, or lugging some girl by the hair.

"I was first, Master Joseph," said a woman, eagerly.

"No, I was," said another.

"I was here," said the first, "as the clock struck four, and seated myself on the steps, because I must be home early; my husband is hurt in the knee."

"If you were first you shall be helped last," said Master Joseph, "to reward you for your pains."

"O! Lord have mercy on me!" said the disappointed woman. "And I got up in the middle of the night for this!"

"More fool you! And what you came for I'm sure I don't know," said Master Joseph, "for you have a pretty long figure against you, I can tell you that."

"I declare most solemnly --" said the woman.

"Don't make a brawling here," said Master Joseph, "or I'll jump over this here counter and knock you down, like nothing. What did you say, woman? Are you deaf? What did you say? How much tea do you want?"

"I don't want any, sir."

"You never want tea; you must take three ounces of the best tea, or you sha'n't have nothing. If you say another word I'll put you down four. You tall gal -- what's your name? -- you keep back there, or I'll fetch you such a cut as I'll keep you at home till next reckoning. Cuss you, you old fool, do you think I am to be kept all day while you are mumbling here? Who's pushing on there? I see you Mrs. Page. Won't there be a black mark against you? Oh, it's Mrs. Prance, is it? Father, put down Mrs. Prance for a peck of flour; I'll have order here. You think the last bacon a little too fat; Oh! you do, ma'am, do you? I'll take care you sha'n't complain in future. I like to please my customers. There's a very nice flitch hanging up in the engine-room; the men wanted some rust for the machinery; you shall have a slice of that, and we'll say tenpence a pound, high-dried, and very lean -- will that satisfy you?"

"Order there, order; you cursed women, order, or I'll be among you. And if I just do jump over this here counter, won't I let
fly right and left? Speak out, you idiot! do you think I can hear your muttering in this babel? Cuss them, I'll keep them quiet." And so he took up a yard measure, and leaning over the counter, hit right and left.

"Oh! you little monster," exclaimed a woman; "you have put out my babbie's eye."

There was a murmur, almost a groan.

"Who's babbie's hurt?" asked Master Joseph, in a softened tone.

"Mine, sir," said an indignant voice; "Mary Church."

"Oh! Mary Church, is it?" said the malicious imp. "Then I'll put Mary Church down for half a pound of best arrowroot; that's the finest thing in the world for babbies, and will cure you of bringing your cussed monkeys here, if you all thought our shop was a hinfant school."

"Where's your book, Susan Travers? Left it at home? Then you may go and fetch it. No book, no tommy. You are Jones's wife, are you? Tickets for three-and-sixpence out of eighteen shillings wages. Is this the only ticket you have brought? There's your money; and you may tell your husband he need not take off his coat to go down our shaft again. He must think us cussed fools. Tell him I hope he has got plenty of money to travel into Wales, for he won't have no more work in England again, or my name's not Diggs. Who's pushing there? I'll be among you. I'll close the shop. If I do get hold of any of you cussed women you sha'n't forget it. If anybody will tell me who is pushing there they shall have their bacon for sevenpence. Leagued together, eh? Then everybody shall have their bacon for tenpence. Two can play at that. Push again, and I'll be among you," said the infuriated little tyrant. But the waving of the multitude, impatient, and annoyed by the weather, was not to be stilled; the movement could not be regulated; the shop was in commotion; and Master Joseph Diggs, losing all patience, jumped on the counter, and, amid the shrieks of the women, sprang into the crowd. Two women fainted, others cried for their bonnets, others bemoaned their aprons; nothing, however, deterred Diggs, who kicked, and cursed, and cuffed in every quarter, and gave none. At last there was a general scream of horror; and a cry of "A boy killed!" It was the little boy who, sent to get a loaf for his mother, had complained before the shop was opened of his fainting energies. He had fallen in the fray, and was smothered.

By Henry George

(The following reading is taken from an address by Henry George, on "Thy Kingdom Come!" published by R. McOhee, Tanaghmore, Lurgan. Price one penny. It will, doubtless, be familiar to many, but is well worth repeating.)
Mr. Abner Thomas, of New York, a strict orthodox Presbyterian -- and the son of that Dr. Thomas, famous in America is not here, the pastor of a Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, and the author of a commentary on the Bible that is still a standard work -- wrote a little while ago an allegory, called "A Dream". Dozing off in his chair, he imagined that he was ferried over the River of Death, and, taking the straight and narrow way, came at last within sight of the Golden City. A fine looking old gentleman angel opened the wicket, inquired his name, and let him in; warning him, at the same time, that it would be better if he chose his company in heaven, and did not associate with disreputable angels.

"What!" said the new-comer, in astonishment, "is not this heaven?"

"Yes, " said the warden, "but there are a lot of tramp angels here now."

"How can that be? " said Mr. Thomas, in his dream. "I thought everybody had plenty in heaven."

"It used to be that way some time ago," said the warden; "and if you wanted to get your harp polished or your wings combed you had to do it yourself. But matters have changed since we adopted the same kind of property regulations in heaven as you have in civilized countries on earth, and we find it a great improvement, at least for the better class."

Then the warden told the new-comer that he had better decide where he was going to board.

"I don't want to board anywhere," said Thomas; "I would much rather go over to that beautiful green knoll and lie down."

"I would not advise you to do so," said the warden: "the angel who owns that knoll does not like to encourage trespassing. Some centuries ago, as I told you, we introduced the system of private property in the soil of heaven. So we divided the land up. It is all private property now."

"I hope I was considered in that division?" said Thomas.

"No," said the warden, "you were not; but if you go to work, and are saving, you can easily earn enough in a couple of centuries to buy yourself a nice piece. You get a pair of wings free as you come in, and you will have no difficulty in hypothecating them for a few days' board until you find work. But I would advise you to be quick about it, as our population is constantly increasing, and there is a great surplus of labour. Tramp angels are, in fact, becoming quite a nuisance."

"What shall I go to work at?" said Thomas.
"Our principal industries," responded the warden, "are the making of harps and crowns and the growing of flowers; but there are many opportunities for employment in personal service."

"I love flowers," said Thomas, "and I will go to work growing them. There is a beautiful piece of land over there that nobody seems to be using. I will go to work on that."

"You can't do that," said the warden. "That property belongs to one of our most far-sighted angels, who has got very rich by the advance of land values, and who is holding that piece for a rise. You will have to buy it or sell it before you can work on it, and you can't do that yet."

And so the story goes on to describe how the roads of heaven, the streets of the New Jerusalem, were filled with disconsolate tramp angels, who had pawned their wings, and were outcasts in heaven itself.

You laugh, and it is ridiculous. But there is a moral in it that is worth serious thought. Is not the ridiculousness in our imagining the application to God's heaven of the same rules of division that we apply to God's earth, even while we pray that His will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven?

On The Verge Of Change
by William Tirebuck, from the "New Party", edited by Andrew Reid.

"We are on the verge of a great change," say the members of the New Party.

"Change!" answers the learned Liberal; "we are always on the verge of a change."

"Change!" cries the more learned Radical; "life consists of links of changes."

"But there are changes and changes," say the members of the New Party. "The change of a moment, and the change of an epoch. It is the change of the epoch upon the verge of which we stand."

"But what great change?"

"First, moral; and because truly moral, then material; and because truly material, then moral. Or, to repeat it -- first, spiritual, and because truly spiritual, then physical; and because truly physical, then spiritual -- the one acting upon the other as inevitable laws."

That is the coming change -- a change that carries with it the
largest political programme that has yet been presented by the fulness of life itself to those who live.

Life seen in its healthy conditions, whether in the wild animals or the civilised man, has two prime forces -- it is difficult to say which comes first and which second, and which is the outcome of the other -- namely, Love and Labour. Each after its own kind loves by labour; each after its own kind labours in love.

Hours of weariness may come, but in due course the spiritual impetus of love comes -- the love of the young, the love of kith and kin, the love of life; the love of justice and right, and back we go to labour at material things with mind and muscle, in partnership with God.

This is high talk for a political programme; but it is not too high for the good time coming and the signs of the times when the pretences of the politician and the professions of the priest shall alike be cast off, and the true union of the moral and material, the spiritual and the physical, and of Love and Labour, shall come in their stead.

The People's Advent
by Gerald Massey

'Tis coming up the steep of Time,
And this old world is growing brighter!
We may not see its dawn sublime,
Yet high hopes make the heart throb lighter!
Our dust may slumber under ground
When it awakes the world in wonder;
But we have felt it gathering round!
We have heard its voice of distant thunder!
'Tis coming, yes, 'tis coming!

'Tis coming now, that glorious time
Foretold by Seers and sung in story,
For which (when thinking was a crime)
Souls leaped to heaven from scaffolds gory!
They passed. But lo! the work they have wrought!
Now the crowned hopes of centuries blossom!
The lightning of their living thought
Is flashing through us, brain and bosom:
'Tis coming, yes, 'tis coming!

Creeds, empires, systems, rot with age,
But the great People's ever youthful!
And it shall write the Future's page
To our humanity more truthful;
The gnarliest heart hath tender chords
To waken at the name of "Brother!"
'Tis coming when these scorpion-words
We shall not speak to sting each other.
'Tis coming, yes, 'tis coming!

There's a Divinity within
That makes men great if they but will it;
God works with all who dare to win,
And the time cometh to reveal it.
The world will not for ever bow
To things that mock God's own endeavour.
'Tis nearer than they wot of now,
When flowers shall wreath their sword for ever!
'Tis coming, yes, 'tis coming!

Fraternity! Love's other name!
Dear heaven connecting link of being;
Then shall we grasp thy golden dream,
As souls, full-statured, grow far-seeing;
Thou shalt unfold our better part,
And in our life-cup yield more honey;
Light up with joy the poor man's heart,
And Love's own world with smiles more sunny,
'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming!

Aye, it must come! the Tyrant's throne
Is crumbling, with our hot tears rusted;
The sword earth's mighty have leant on
Is cankered, with our best blood crusted.
Room for the men of mind! Make way
You robber Rulers! -- pause no longer!
You cannot stay the opening day!
The world rolls on, the light grows stronger --
The People's Advent's coming!

Seed-Time
by Joseph Whittaker

Driving furrows, straight and deep,
In a hard and stony soil;
Sowing, that the world may reap
Fruitful harvest of our toil;
Firm and fearless, still we sow
Under stormy, lowering skies;
Every grain of truth will grow,
In each seed fruition lies.

Pioneers of life are we;
Clearing for a coming race
Highways that by them shall be
Made a broad and free as space.
And their cities shall be reared,
And their harvest homes be held,
Where the forest growths we cleared,
Where the rotten trees we felled.

Though the fields are wild and wide,
Shall we falter, being few?
Foes may scorn, and fools deride,
Faith shall triumph, being true.
Seeds of comradeship and love
Sown in faith, superbly strong:
Mighty must the harvest prove,
Though the waiting time be long.

Sow the seed, then, though it chance,
When the grain is gathered in,
Younger, stronger hearts advance,
Harvest of our work to win.
Though the grain be theirs that we
Sowed, defying storm and sword;
In their splendid life shall be
Our rich harvest and reward.

Bereavement
by Herbert N. Casson

There are hearts that are no gladder for the springtime
And eyes that are not brighter for the sun;
There are faces not uplifted to the blue sky;
And homes where dreary winter is begun.

There is no light on earth but carries shadows,
Nor precious loan that may not change to loss;
No Sinai without its flames and thunder,
Nor Calvary without its heavy cross.

The glare of joy is always dimmed with sadness,
The swift, strong rush of life is calmed with death;
What can we do, but lightly hold our gladness,
And bow before the mystery of breath?

It only seemeth best to trust our Father,
To work with steady patience in our place,
To bring our own bereavement to the altar,
And sink it in the sorrow of the race.
A Parable
By James Russell Lowell

Said Christ our Lord, "I will go and see
How the men, my brethren, believe in me."
He passed not again through the gate of birth,
But made himself known to the children of earth.

Then said the chief priests, and rulers, and kings,
"Behold, now, the Giver of all good things;
Go to, let us welcome with pomp and state
Him who alone is mighty and great."

With carpets of gold the ground they spread
Wherever the Son of Man should tread,
And in palace-chambers lofty and rare
They lodged him, and served him with kingly fare.

Great organs surged through through arches dim
Their jubilant floods in praise of him,
And in church and palace, and judgment-hall
He saw his image high over all.

But still, wherever his steps they led,
The Lord in sorrow bent down his head,
And from under the heavy foundation-stones,
The son of Mary heard bitter groans.

And in church and palace, and judgment-hall,
He marked great fissures that rent the wall,
And opened wider and yet more wide
As the living foundation heaved and sighed.

"Have ye founded your thrones and altars, then,
On the bodies and souls of living men?
And think ye that building shall endure,
Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor?

"With gates of silver and bars of gold,
Ye have fenced my sheep from their Father's fold.
I have heard the dropping of their tears
In heaven, these eighteen hundred years."

"O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,
We built but as our fathers built;
Behold thine images, how they stand,
Sovereign and sole, through all our land.

"Our task is hard, -- with sword and flame
To hold thy earth for ever the same,
And with sharp crooks of steel to keep
Still, as thou leftest them, thy sheep."
Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
And a motherless girl, whose finger thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set he in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garment-hem,
For fear of defilement, "Lo, here," said he,
"The images ye have made of me!"

The Higher Law

(From "Ethical Religion", a volume of Lectures by W. M. Salter, of Chicago. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston.)

The higher law is not a beautiful speculation to indulge in; it calls for a higher life. If we win a thought in advance of the common practice of the day, it is a summons to us to live our life to a new level, and contribute so much to the onward movement of the world. If we are but vaguely ill at ease, as we think of the present condition of society, it may be that thereby the spirit of progress marks us out, and gives us the first presentations of the work it has for us to do. Discontent because our personal wants and wishes are not gratifies may be far from noble; but discontent with ourselves and our lives in view of the suggestions of an idea that calls us up higher — there is something almost sacred about that. Every stirring of this discontent signifies that we are not really at home in the world as it is; that in some sense we have a better country, and belong to another order of things.

With a thought of some higher good, I, in real truth, believe that we cannot lose or fail. The world is meant to go that way — it is in its make and nature to do so; and every effort, every thought, is simply a new beginning, a new impulse to that onward movement. The only thing that fails in this world is wrong — fails, though it takes men and nations with it, and involves them in ruin. The good is that which preserves and keeps alive.

I almost fancy that if a perfectly just society should ever come to be, it would never cease; that the elements would wax kind for it; that the earth would put off its day of final destruction to do it honour — or, if that dire event should ever come, that the divine society would be transported to some happy isles, "ever fertile, clear in atmosphere, and unvexed with storms", and be dowered with immortality.

But, whether or no, we belong to such a society. The higher law which sounds within us is a sign that we belong to another
state than that in which we live, to a divine commonwealth; and a man is to remember this higher citizenship as he walks the streets of his earthly city -- it is to keep him erect while he walks there, and from aught that is unbecoming or mean or common. Lying is not the law of that ideal commonwealth, and it is not for him to lie; honour is before gain there, and his first thought should be to keep himself spotless here; selfishness is not neatly matched with selfishness there, and it is for him to live in an element of disinterested love now. The only thing he may have now that he will find no room for there is indignation at and resistance to wrong; and even these cannot become settled habits with him, for they exist only to the end of removing all wrong; and when that time shall come, should he ever see it, delight and joy and thanksgiving will take the place of all other emotions.

To act now, not according to our poor human statutes and conventions, but according to that higher perfect law that we know only within our own breast; to live here as the citizen of an ideal kingdom -- that, it seems to me, were the proudest distinction a man could crave. That kingdom is not yet; only the thought and the law of it are in us, and the kingdom is to be. We are to make that kingdom, and we know of its possibilities nowhere else than here. A great creative responsibility rests upon mankind and upon us for our measure of the task.

To be as good as our fathers, said Phillips, we must be better. The duties of their day were new to them; let it not surprise us if there are duties for us and for the future that have never dawned upon mankind before. Duty is like the truth; we are ever discovering it. The principles, the great laws, may be old; their applications, their practical meaning in our lives, are ever new.

New occasions teach new duties,
Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward, still, and onward,
Who would keep abreast of truth.

At Eventide

by R. L. Gorton, Kirkby Rectory, Sleaford, Lincolnshire.

Within a dingy, narrow room,
Amidst the city's whirl,
Where scarce a sunbeam breaks the gloom,
There sits a pale-faced girl,
Working from early morn, till twilight eve
Brings but a momentary sweet reprieve.

How patiently her fingers ply
The needle all the day,
With ne'er a glimpse of God's blue sky,
Or note of song-birds gay;
Hard work to earn a wretched crust of bread,
Till she may lay her with the happy dead.
When evening comes, just down the street
She goes with footsteps slow,
One draught of heaven's health to meet,
One taste of joy to know;
She rests upon a bit of broken wall,
To gaze her fill upon a flower stall.

And, as she sees the blossoms bright,
She sits as in a dream:
She sees the hillside bathed with light,
She hears the moorland stream
Flow down the vale; and through a mist of tears
She sees the cottage home of childhood's years.

Back to her lonely, dingy room --
Back to her toil again;
But the scent of the golden broom
Has comforted her pain,
With a transient glimpse of her mother's face,
And a hope of a fairer resting-place.

Ah! ye who hold the land in fee,
Who roam the earth at will,
Who Nature's loveliest may see --
Of pleasure take your fill.
For you, life's very sweetness seems to cloy --
Then think with shame of that one hour of joy.

Coal, Iron, and Men
from the New Earth

Under our present system of private ownership of the earth,
where the earth offers the greatest riches, look there for the
worst human conditions.

I am writing from the heart of the greatest coal, oil, and
iron region of the United States. In this spot only, of all
places in the United States, so far as I know them, do you find
slums out on the hillsides; and in the midst of the hills is a
city that is like a great horror to the sight.

Crowded between cliff and river, overhanging the turbid yellow
waters, piled up helter-skelter, are toppling, beetling, yawning
piles of brickwork and rotten wood, blackened and askew. Through
cracks and open ends you see streams of liquid fire squirming and
darting. Out of escape-pipes with half-raised lids are flares of
light. Above these belches from thousands of chimneys a never-
ending choking vomit of black smoke and white steam which darkens
all the city at mid-day with a ghastly yellow atmosphere, through
which the unsightly piles of building grin at you like ghosts of
a hideous impossible.

Crashing sounds, blackened, huddled, gigantic shapelessness; fire, smoke, iron -- these you see, and you involuntarily look for blood. I cannot explain why, but I have so felt that these things feed on human lives, that from the first moment that I caught sight of the city on my first visit, I stood up in excitement and whispered, "It is like a quarter in hell!" I have looked stupidly to see if there were not an oozing of blood in the gutters.

The city goeth on to her cleansing. Will that call for blood?

-- Alice Thacher Post.

**Little Words For Little Girls**

Little Dame Lie-a-bed wanted a snooze,  
Made such a fuss as she put on her shoes;  
Set up a whimper, and shook with the cold,  
What will become of her when she is old?

See how Miss Late-to-school loiters and stares!  
Mother had sent her in time for the prayers;  
Now she has dallied this while on the way  
She will have lessons instead of her play.

Hush, Lady Talkative, can you be still?  
You are as noisy as wheels of a mill.  
Tie up that tongue of yours. Tongues that are loose,  
Never are ready when wanted for use.

Blot the book! blot the book! O what a plight;  
Pray, Mrs. Slovenly, can you not write?  
Inking your fingers, and spoiling your clothes!  
Which are the upstrokes? Why, nobody knows.

Dear Madam Pout-the-lip, what is amiss?  
That's not the pretty face teacher can kiss.  
Girls that are pretty should smile and be kind.  
What is it vexes you? Well, never mind.

Dainty Miss Proud-as-spice, all you possess,  
Necklace of coral, and velveteen dress,  
Hat with a feather, and cloak with a hood,  
Make you no lady; real ladies are good.

Sweet little Do-her-work, she is the lass  
Teacher can welcome to school and to class,  
She is the one I would choose for a wife,  
She is the maiden to love for a life.
A Cry Of The Unemployed

BY Gerald Massey

'Tis hard to be a wanderer through this bright world of ours,
Beneath a sky of smiling blue, on fragrant paths of flowers,
With music in the woods, as there were naught but pleasure known,
Or Angels walked Earth's solitudes, and yet with want to groan;
To see no beauty in the stars, nor in Earth's welcome smile,
To wander cursed with misery! willing, but cannot toil,
With burning sickness at my heart, I sink down famished:
God of the Wretched, hear my prayer: I would that I were dead!

Heaven droppeth down with manna still in many a golden shower,
And feed s the leaves with fragrant breath, with silver dew the flower.
Honey and fruit for Bee and Bird, with bloom laughs out the tree,
And food for all God's happy things; but none gives food to me.
Earth, wearing plenty for a crown, smiles on my aching eye,
The purse-proud -- swathed in luxury -- disdainful pass me by;
I've willing hands, an eager heart -- but may not work for bread!
God of the Wretched, hear my prayer: I would that I were dead!

Gold, art thou not a blessed thing, a charm above all other,
To shut up hearts to Nature's cry, when brother pleads with brother?
Has thou a music sweeter than the voice of living-kindness?
No! curse thee, thou'rt a mist 'twixt God and men in outer blindness.
"Father, come back!" my Children cry; their voices, once so sweet,
Now pierce and quiver in my heart! I cannot dare to meet
The looks that make the brain go mad, for dear ones asking bread --
God of the Wretched, hear my prayer: I would that I were dead!

Lord! what right have the poor to wed? Love's for the gilded great:
Are they not formed of nobler clay, who dine off golden plate?
'Tis the worst curse of Poverty to have a feeling heart:
Why can I not, with iron grasp, choke out the tender part?
I cannot slave in yon Bastille! I think 'twere bitterer pain
To wear the Pauper's iron within, than drag the Convict's chain.
I'd work, but cannot; starve I may; but will not beg for bread:
God of the Wretched, hear my prayer: I would that I were dead!

Bibliolaters

by James Russell Lowell

Bowing thyself in dust before a book,
And thinking the great God is thine alone,
O rash iconoclast, thou wilt not brook
What gods the heathen carves in wood or stone;
As if the Shepherd who, from outer cold,
Leads all his shivering lambs to one sure fold,
Were careful for the fashion of his crook.
And what art thou, own brother of the clod,
That from his hand the crook wouldst snatch away,
And shake instead thy dry and sapless rod,
To scare the sheep out of the wholesome day?
Yea, what art thou, blind, unconverted Jew,
Who with thy idol-volume's covers two
Wouldst make a gaol to coop the living God?

Thou hear'st not well the mountain organ-tones,
By prophets' ears from Hor and Sinai caught,
Thinking the cisterns of those Hebrew brains
Drew dry the springs of the All-knowing's thought;
How shall thy lips be touched with living fire,
Who blow'st old altar-coals, with sole desire
To weld anew the spirit's broken chains.

God is not dumb, that he should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
There towers the mountain of the Voice no less,
Which he who seeks shall find; but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone;
Each age, each kindred adds a verse to it,
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
While sways the sea, while mists the mountain shroud,
While thunder-surges burst on cliff or cloud,
Still at the prophet's feet the nations sit.

The New Politics

An extract from a Sermon by the late George Dawson, of Birmingham.

(George Dawson was born in London in 1821. His father was a schoolmaster, and an uncompromising Baptist. George, being a boy of exceptional ability, was sent to Glasgow to be trained for the Baptist ministry. He took his degree of M.A., and became minister of a small chapel at Rickmansworth. In 1844 he was invited to Birmingham to take charge of a decaying church. When asked what salary he would expect, he replied, "Dread and cheese for the first year, and what I am worth afterwards." In a few weeks crowds came to hear the young preacher, but the deacons were frightened. Although all the sittings were soon taken, and the debt on the church was rapidly disappearing, the liberal views and outspoken utterances of the new minister alarmed them. In a year the complaints which were continually made caused him, in a perfectly friendly manner, to resign his pulpit. In course of time his friends built him a new church, which was opened in 1847 as the "Church of the Saviour". Here there were to be "no doctrinal tests, fixed creeds, or professions of faith". For nearly 30 years he preached in this church,
and also lectured all over the country. On November 30th, 1876, he was suddenly smitten down by death, and "the whole town wailed as though each man had lost a brother". Several volumes of his sermons and prayers have been published, and from one of these the following extract is taken. It will be seen that the sermon was preached before the passing of the Ballot Act. -- Editor.)

The old political programme for which our fathers struggled has been gained. There is nothing which the old Radicals asked for, with the exception of that little bit of carpentry, the ballot-box. And when the "working man" walks away with that little bit of furniture under his arm he will have gotten all his Radical fathers fought for.

And now that the old programme is fulfilled and the old wants are satisfied, a new programme is being presented.

In this world there is never to be peace until He comes whose right it is to reign.

It is the same individualism rising up, hot, impatient, eager to justify itself and its claims, and to make itself and its just desires acknowledged. It is precisely the same principle, but now it takes other questions in hand. Is it the eternal and necessary constitution of things in this world, it asks, that there should be two classes -- one unwholesomely rich and the other miserably poor? Is it necessary that these conditions should exist forever: that there should always be Dives and always Lazarus? Some men think it not necessary, and the next thirty or forty years of European history will be mainly occupied with the strife on that question. It has entered into the heads of working men, who are beginning to think, that perhaps three days a week might suffice for men who are all their lives long doomed to work in a coal mine -- that three days a week is enough of that insupportable labour! It is a question of the length of work, and the relation of work to wages; and the question as to whether one side will always come in for the lion's share of capital. You can't help these questions coming. They belong to the epoch. And when you say, "Why, these people are at it again; they're never contented; the other day they wanted something or other, and now they want nine hours, and in a year or two they'll be wanting eight," you might understand that beforehand. Of course they will be wanting eight.

My good friend, if you had had the good fortune to have been born into this world of England some centuries earlier, you would have been "born a thrall" -- a serf. You would have been cowhided, my respectable middle-class citizen! And your broad back and your not very exuberant brain would have made a most admirable churl of you. Your forefathers fought that out for you.

No, you cannot prevent these questions from rising. They are
inevitable. They will have way. The battle is perpetual, being fought on one question or another. Now we take women away from painful labour, and give them the first possibility of chastity and beauty. Here one day we plead for the factory lad, and one day for the education of the children of the streets and alloys; now for the negro, now for the man over-taxed, now for the man underpaid.

Let me warn you, that to the end of the chapter, to the end of the story of humanity, that awful Christ shall stand and plead. Wherever there is an iniquity there shall be a shaking of the heavens and the earth. There will be no peace in my day. As long as there is any leaven left and any meal unleavened the turmoil must still go on.

A New Church

(The following is an abridged extract from "The New Conscience; or the Religion of Labour", by Henry D. Lloyd. Published for the New Fellowship by William Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, London, E.C. Price One Penny.)

Churches come and go, but there has ever been but one religion. The only religion has been that which clears off one by one from the face of man: the earth-stains that hide the God imprisoned in the flesh, which breaks down one by one every barrier which incarnation has put in the way of the growth of the God within in the likeness of the God without. In the sight of the new conscience, wherever man walks, there is the Holy Land, and it raises the cross of the new crusade which shall deliver it from the infidels who deny the divine right of the people that the will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. It insists that every question between men is a religious question, a question of moral economy before it becomes one of political economy, and will make all political, industrial, and social activities functions of a new church -- a church where science, the revelation of what has been, will never be at war with religion, the revelation of what ought to be -- a church which will make its worshippers share this world as well as the next world -- a church which will recognise no vested right of property in man except the right to love and be loved -- a church which will declare that the difference in the death-rate between the classes and the masses is evidence of murder done for money -- a church which will teach that the life eternal is the life we are living now -- a church which will not let the poor give up all of this world on the unsecured promise of the rich to divide the next world -- a church that will "dine with the poor and preach to the rich", until there are no more poor -- a church which says that those who are to be brothers hereafter must be brothers here -- a church that will know what its members believe only by what they do -- a church which recognises nothing as love which does not bear justice as the fruit -- a church which will
tell the merchant-prince that between him and his ruined competitors, and between him and his employees there is a moral question greater than the question of markets -- a church which will abolish the merchant-prince and the factory corporation sooner than let them abolish the childhood of children -- a church in which God will be natural and men supernatural -- a church which will abolish charity and philanthropy, for these cannot be between brothers, and need not be where justice is -- a church in which no man will have a right to do with his own what he will, but only a right to do what is right -- a church which will take the weak and despised out of the earthly inferno of dirt, and want, and ignorance, to which they have been condemned by the oppressor -- a church which will tell the sinner that repentance fit for heaven only begins by restitution and reparation on earth -- a church which will teach that brothers must share both the mess of pottage and the birthright -- a church which will worship God through all his sons made in his image, through a mediator, Mankind, which, having suffered all and sinned all, can sympathise with all, and will carry all the weak and weary ones safe in its bosom -- a church which will realise the vision of Carlyle of a Human Catholic Church.

An Incident In A Railway Car

Verses from a Poem by James Russell Lowell

He spoke of Burns: men, rude and rough,
Press'd round to hear the praise of one
Whose heart was made of manly, simple stuff, --
As homespun as their own:

And when he read, they forward leaned,
Drinking, with thirsty hearts and ears,
His brook-like songs whom glory never weaned
From humble smiles and tears.

Slowly there grew a tender awe,
Sun-like, o'er faces brown and hard,
As if in him who read they felt and saw
Some presence of the bard.

It was a sight for sin and wrong
And slavish tyranny to see --
A sight to make our faith pure and strong
In high humanity.

I thought, these men will carry hence
Promptings their former life above,
And something of a finer reverence
For beauty, truth, and love.

God scatters love on every side,
Freely, among his children all,
And always hearts are lying open wide
   Wherein some grains may fall.

There is no wind but soweth seeds
   Of a more true and open life,
Which burst, unlocked for, into high-souled deeds,
   With wayside beauty rife.

Within the hearts of all men lie
   These promises of wider bliss,
Which blossom into hopes that cannot die
   In sunny hours like this.

All that hath been majestical
   In life or death since time began,
Is native in the simple heart of all,
   The angel heart of man.

And thus, among the untaught poor
   Great deeds and feelings find a home,
That cast in shadow all the golden lore
   Of classic Greece and Rome.

All thoughts that mould the age begin
   Deep down within the primitive soul,
And from the many slowly upward win
   To one who grasps the whole:

In his wide brain the feeling deep
   That struggled on the many's tongue
Swells to a tide of thought, whose surges leap
   O'er the weak thrones of wrong.

Nor is he far astray who deems
   That every hope, which rises and grows broad
In the world's heart, by ordered impulse streams
   From the great heart of God.

God wills, man hopes: in common souls
   Hope is but vague and undefined,
Till from the poet's tongue the message rolls,
   A blessing to his kind.

Never did Poesy appear
   So full of heaven to me, as when
I saw how it could pierce through pride and fear
   To lives of coarsest men.

It may be glorious to write
   Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
   Once in a century; --

But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And friendless sons of men;

To write some earnest verse or line
Which, seeking not the praise of art,
Shall make a clearer manhood shine
In the untutored heart.

The Eternal Goodness
by John Greenleaf Whittier (abridged).

O friends! with whom my feet have trod
The quiet aisles of prayer,
Glad witness to your zeal of God
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;
Your logic linked and strong
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds;
Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To our fixed stake my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see;
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me.
The wrong that pains my soul below
   I dare not thrive above:
I know not of His hate, -- I know
   His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
   Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
   His judgments, too, are right.

I long for household voices gone,
   For vanished smiles I long;
But God hath led my dear ones on,
   And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
   Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
   His mercy underlies.

And so beside the Silent Sea
   I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
   On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
   Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
   Beyond His love and care.

The Labour Church
   - by L. Hird

The Labour Church! What need have we
   Of other Churches in the land?
Already spires unnumbered rise
   From holy fanes on every hand.
Churches of varied forms and faiths,
   Where we, one day in every seven,
May hear the different priests proclaim
   A hundred different roads to heaven.

"Ours is the only perfect way,"
   One teacher cries, in strident voice;
"Outside our pale may none be saved,"
   Says one, yet bids his flock rejoice.
Strange doctrines, dogmas dark and grim,
   Block up each way to those who mean
To every Church in turn for bread,
   And get from every Church a stone.

Ah! blind these leaders of the blind
   Deem se who to no fold belong;
Not all their varied paths are right,
   Then may not, haply, all be wrong?
They preach a God of love and power,
   Yet limit both to suit some creed,
Till we, who sin and suffer, find
   His grace less boundless than our need.

The Labour Church! What hope is here?
   This is no temple built of stone,
Where stately Bishops preach and pray,
   And snowystashioned choirs intone;
Where worshippers, on bended knee,
   To God, "our Father," humbly pray,
Yet hold Him Father but of those
   Who walk along their chosen way.

Ah, no! Of earnest, striving souls
   The Labour Church is building fair;
Nor walls of stone, nor iron creeds
   Shut out men seeking entrance there.
One article of faith have they,
   Which not the weakest need appal:
"God is our Father -- that being so
   Then surely we are brethren all!"

Ah! blessed liberty indeed!
   In this faith who may not unite,
And in such unity find strength
   To battle bravely for the right?
Brethren in heart as well as name,
   With Labour's sacred flag unfurled,
Oh! may not such a Church do much
   To raise and purify the world.

What I Mean By Socialism

by Robert Blatchford
(From an article on "The New Religion" in the Clarion of April 25th, 1896.)

Let the last be first, and the first last; let the strong
support the weak, and the great serve the small. That, it seems
to me, is what we sigh for, strive for, and are ready to die for;
that is what we mean when we speak, or sing, or dream of Socialism.
We are to give, not to take; to serve, not to be served. Call our God by what name we will, call our religion by what name we will, we mean that we are to work and think, and, if needs be, suffer and die for the general good of our fellow-creatures, and for the general advancement of the race along the mysterious upward path which leads from degradation to we know not what sublimities. Speak of our faith as we list, we believe that our talents and our strength are no more ours -- in the sense that our houses or our clothes are ours -- than is the land the landlord's who draws rent for it. Is it not so? When we call ourselves Socialists, do we not imply a belief that God, or Nature, gave to each of us his special power or special aptitude, as he gave to all of us the earth and the sea to be used in the service and for the benefit of all men?

Well, at any rate, that is what I mean when I speak of Socialism. But I suppose few Socialists will quarrel with me when I say that this faith of ours has no economic justification; that it does not stand, and can never stand, upon any basis but that of a religion -- a religion of passionate love for humanity, a religion of service and sacrifice -- a religion of Altruism.

These are my reasons for declaring that Altruism stands first, and Socialism second; these are my reasons for declaring that the loving human idealism satirically called "sentiment" is a greater thing and a grander thing than economics.

Your economics can never do more than bid you do a thing because it will "pay" to do it, or because it is "just" to do it. But your despised "sentiment" demands more than mere cold justice; it demands love and mercy, and a broad and wide and noble conception of the nature and destinies of the human race.

The race will not get far upon its awful, fascinating, glorious march -- for bloody and shameful, wreck-strewn as is the road behind us, we can, in rare moments of exaltation, see the glint of the skyward path through the cloud-wrack above -- the race will not get far upon this pilgrimage from the Slough of Despond to the Heavenly City so long as it carries strapped upon its back the burden of economic science. The burden must be cast off and the wings of love must take its place if the ideal of the thorough Socialist -- the Communist -- the man-lover and man-server -- is to be attained.

**Socialism Must Be A Religion**

by Robert Blatchford

(From an article on "The New Religion" in the Clarion of April 25th, 1896.)

If I desired to rouse a people, the figures I should deal in
mostly would be figures of speech. Economics are for the few; God's love is for the many. We are not all good at the rule of three; but the Golden Rule is understood of every human soul.

Could you so much as get a parish pump municipalised by means of a cry of "Pure economics for the people"? You know you could not.

Yet it is equally true that without economics the invaluable structure of scientific Socialism had never been.

As I take it, economics are to the Altruistic Sentiment as the bullet to the powder. You'll win no battles with blank cartridge, nor will it avail you anything to double-shot your guns if they will not go off.

Or, to use another figure, I may say that cold economic shot will never fire the ships of the enemy; but the shot must be made red-hot in the fire of fervid human love.

Be economically sound, be sternly practical, be irreproachable in your logic; but hold your ideal high.

Do you remember what Oliver Cromwell said after Prince Rupert's Cavalry had broken the ranks of the Parliamentary forces at Edge Hill? Said Oliver: "The army must be remade. To defeat the gentlemen of England, London apprentices will not suffice; we must have men of religion."

Oliver remodelled the army. He got his men of religion -- men who, as Macaulay put it, moved to the attack with the precision of machinery, whilst burning with the fiercest religious fanaticism. And these drilled fanatics became invincible, and not only never failed to defeat the enemy, no matter to what nation that enemy belonged, but never failed to rout and shatter to pieces every foe by whom they were opposed.

From these facts perhaps our ultra-practiced friends may glean a hint. What was it smashed and destroyed the dare-devil chivalry of Rupert's Horse? What was it made the issue certain victory to Cromwell's men, no matter what the odds or valour arrayed against them? What was it enabled the English Puritan Brigade on the Continent, outnumbered by enemies and deserted by friends, to "drive before them in headlong rout the finest infantry of Spain"?

My practical friends, it was "sentiment". It was religious zeal and faith. It was enthusiasm for the cause they believed in.

Let us learn from Cromwell. If we are to fight the gentlemen of England we must have, not crop-eared 'prentices filled with selfish greed, but men of religion!

If Socialism is to live and conquer, it must be a religion. If Socialists are to prove themselves equal to the task assigned them, they must have faith; a real faith, a live faith, a new faith; the
faith in a glorious destiny of the human race; the faith that
demands of its notaries love and sacrifice even to death in the
cause of mankind.

Physics and Metaphysics; Or, The Stomach and the Soul

BY Solon Lauer

(The following reading is from a book sent to me for review —
Life and Light from Above, by Solon Lauer. London: Elliot Stock,
62, Paternoster Row, E.C. Price 5s. I have not had time to read
it, but find it is by an American writer of the Transcendental
School, which has had its history and its epitaph written, but
which lives none the less. — Editor.)

One day a poor, forlorn-looking kitten came to my kitchen. I
opened the door, and she sneaked in, trembling. She looked fit
for any crime, save that her evil intention lacked courage for
execution. She had the air of a Cain fleeing from his brother's
murder.

I set a dish of milk upon the floor. At once she manifested
an interest in life. She lapped it greedily, and when I filled
the dish again, again she emptied it.

Now a wonder was manifested in my little teacher, sent of God.
The world began to brighten to her. She became an optimist, and
began to praise God by frisking and jumping. She coquetted with
her tail, chasing it with more zeal and joy than men chase the
objects of their desire, and with as much success.

I dropped a ball of yarn on the floor, and this was her imme-
diate heaven. She tossed it into the air, and bit it in play, and
struck it from her, and chased it again. She assumed indifference
to see if the ball would manifest anxiety; but as it lay still,
she pounced on it again. For an hour she prolonged this instruc-
tive spectacle, with all the joy of innocent nature.

But what had wrought this mighty change? What potent agency
was it that had brought the world out of darkness and the pit,
and filled it with sunshine and joy for her? No metaphysics,
but only a poor dish of milk; so closely is the stomach related
to the soul.

Is this the refutation of all idealism? No; but it shows us
that matter is not to be trifled with. God did not make the world
in vain. These mountains and rocks, rivers and seas, have a mean-
ing for us. There is a difference between white and black, be-
tween hot and cold, between meat and poison. To teach us these
facts is the office of matter. Let us, then, be materialists when
dealing with matter, and idealists when dealing with ideas.

There should be no discord between the two.
Freedom
by Walt Whitman

It is not only true that most people entirely misunderstand Freedom, but I sometimes think I have not yet met one person who rightly understands it. The whole universe is absolute law. Freedom only opens entire activity and license under the law. To the degraded or undeveloped -- and even to too many others -- the thought of freedom is a thought of escaping from law, which, of course, is impossible. More precious than all worldly riches is Freedom; freedom from the painful constipation and poor narrowness of ecclesiasticism; freedom in manners, habiliments, furniture, from the silliness and tyranny of local fashions; entire freedom from party rings and mere conventions in politics; and, better than all, a general freedom of one's self from the tyrannic domination of vices, habits, appetites, under which nearly every man of us (often the greatest brawler for freedom) is enslaved. Can we attain such enfranchisement -- the true Democracy, and the height of it? While we are from birth to death the subjects of irresistible law, enclosing every movement and minute, we yet escape, by a paradox, into true free-will. Strange as it may seem, we only attain to freedom by a knowledge of and implicit obedience to law. Great -- unspeakably great -- is the will! the free soul of man! At its greatest, understanding and obeying the laws, it can then, and then only, maintain true liberty. For there is to the highest that law as absolute as any -- more absolute than any -- the law of liberty. The shallow, as intimated, consider liberty a release from all law, free every constraint. The wise see in it, on the contrary, the potent law of laws -- namely, the fusion and combination of the conscious will, or partial individual law, with those universal, eternal, unconscious ones, which run through all time, pervade history, prove immortality, give moral purpose to the entire objective world, and the last dignity to human life.

-- From Democratic Vistas

A Leader's Failure

by Jessie Annie Anderson

A soul awoke from early dreams,
And looked upon the stars;
And, reading glory in their beams,
Went forth to worldly wars.

With crowding banners, smoke, and glare,
The heavens were darkened o'er;
The soul was first in leading there,
But read the stars no more.
Two Sonnets: A Contrast

by Katharine St. John Conway

I

Far from the crowded town and eager stir
Of men enlisted in the tearing strife,
Where loss is got of gain, and death of life,
Where Fortune smiles on those who cheapen her,
A maiden dwelt whose heart made no demur
When called to give for peace her liberty;
Intent on nobler visions, passion free,
She spent her days in holy calm: the whir
Of Angels' wings made music in her ears,
And in the hush of eventide a glow
Of rapture filled her veins. Kneeling below
The dim lit altar, cherished hopes and fears
Were lost in one overwhelming hope to know
The joys of heaven beyond the Vale of Tears.

II

Down swept the rain at dusk, made darker yet
By heavy clouds of smoke that lowering hung
Above the quarters whence the wealth is wrung,
For idlers' spending, from the toil and sweat
Of workers. Through the stress of cold and wet
With earnest face and weary, willing feet,
Came one to whom no thought of life was sweet
Apart from service. Never a regret
She knew for cultured ease, or careless mirth,
Rayment of silk, and all that to her birth
Of old world right belonged. Tearless, she set
The aim of perfect knowledge, perfect love,
Before her. "Heaven on earth, if not above."
She whispered, "when the ideal and real have met."

The Prayer of Labour

By John C. Kenworthy, Mansfield House, Canningtown E.

God of the Helpless! on this soil
Beft from my circus by fraud
Where I in want and darkness toil
To glut an idle lord:

Here kneeling, I stretch out my hands
In bitter prayer to Thee!
Restore, restore my father's lands,
And set the bondman free.
Ly foes are more than Samson's foes,
They rob my soul of sight,
With chains of law they bind me close,
And mock my fettered right.

Yet woo to them! My hands shall find
The pillars! Presently
Their house shall quake, shall fall, shall grind
Ly foes who feast, and eat!

Restore my freedom and my sight,
And turn my wrath away;
Save me, O God, ere my mad night
Breaks forth to wreck and clay!

Mystery

By Annie Thurston

In the heart of the mountains
Lies many a cave,
And the ocean's deep fountains
Strange mysteries have.
And the Key to the mystery
Lies out of our sight;
For the source of all beauty
Is Infinite Light.

In the heart of thy brother
Deep secrets may lie,
And the thoughts of another
Thy counsels defy.
For the Key to the mystery
Lies out of our sight;
And the source of all beauty
Is Infinite Light.

Even the night that is darkest
Must end in bright day;
And the road that is roughest
Is oft the right way.
For the Key to the mystery
Lies out of our sight;
And the source of all beauty
Is Infinite Light.

For a Conference

From Post Mortem and Other Poems by R. A. Beckett. Several poems from this booklet were recommended for Labour Church Readings, particularly the latter part of "Post Mortem", "To the Workers of the World" and "Times and a Time".
Though Pentecost but faintly now recall
The rushing mighty wind and tongues of flame,
Wherewith the spirit of devotion came
Upon the faithful at the festival,
When all the crowd of strangers in the hall
Heard them, in divers tongues, one faith proclaim,
And, in the concord of a common aim,
They gave their goods, each, for the good of all:

Yet if, like them, we seek the highest good
In earnest union, and cast out to-day
The evil spirit of mistrust and strife,
Our tidings shall be told and understood
Through every country, and our hands shall lay
The new foundation of the house of life.

"Christmas"

By A. J. Waldegrave

Again returns the Pagan-Christian feast
And the old story of the great God’s birth
As human babe, to save his sinful Earth,
Falls from the lips of the obedient priest;
But men pass on, not heeding in the least,
Or, heeding, find no solace for the dearth
Of deeper joy which mocks the Season’s birth,
In the sublime tradition of the East.

Yet think not with that great dream of the Past
Fades hope for man. E’en now by waking eyes
Is seen amongst the poor the birth of God;
The Eternal Will takes lowly form at last,
And leads us on to mighty destinies
Through those who tend the loom and turn the sod.

Union Is Strength

by F. A. Beet

Come and stand beneath the banner,
Floating o’er the land so free,
Emblem of a nation’s honour,
’Tis the flag of Liberty.

We will welcome all as brothers,
Comrades in a noble cause,
Make our sufferings one another’s
In our fight for righteous laws —
Laws that give the willing worker
Food to eat and much to spare,
Laws which say that every shirker
Shall in future earn his share.

All we ask for is that Justice
May be spread throughout the land,
That each man may be of service
Whether by his head or hand;

That the aged shall be shielded
When the sun of life has set
On the strength that they have yielded
For a nation's benefit.

Every soul to God is precious,
Be the body rich or poor;
Then let man to man be gracious,
Help each burden to endure.

Let us stand by one another,
Whether it be weal or wo;
Recognize each man a brother,
As through life we onward go.

Brood not o'er a life sorrow;
There are better days in store;
Soon a bright and shining morrow
Will repay the storm before.

LABOUR CHURCH HYMNS

(These hymns were published in The Labour Church Record during 1901, but were not included in the revised Labour Church Hymn Book published but a few years later.)

Vision

by Allen Clarke. Tune: "Ewing" ("Jerusalem the Golden")

0 vision green and golden,
Seen by the seers alway,
Sung by the prophets olden,
By wise men seen to-day;

0 vision of the beauty
This struggling world shall see,
When men dare do their duty,
And Brotherhood shall be.

0 glory of our dreaming!
The thought that gives us life,
The light about us gleaming,
Our comfort in the strife;
A hope in storm and sorrow,
A starlight in the dark,
A message from the morrow,
A sky-song of the lark.

And not alone the vision
That's conjured out of clay,
But faith in some Elysian
Sweet soul-land far away,
Where all the broken-hearted
Shall reap the joy of pain,
And those in mourning parted
In gladness meet again.

The Wheel goes round but slowly,
Life's short, and progress long;
The world rejects the holy,
And folly seemeth strong;
But though the path be weary,
And long the toilsome way;
We sing, convinced and cheery,
The coming of The Day.

In darkness and derision
We hold hope's banner high;
For if there were no vision
The world would droop and die;
And so we do our duty,
And the Great Vision see, --
The vision of the beauty
When Brotherhood shall be.

27th March, 1901.

When I Survey

by Allen Clarke. Tune: "Hamberg" (No. 424 in "Sacred Songs and Solos")

When I survey the wretchedness
Which all our progress makes no less
I deem it well to use my life
Uprooting ill and ending strife.

When I survey the selfishness
That makes a curse of what should bless,
I feel this gospel I must preach, --
"Each work for all and all for each."

When I survey the foolishness
That fills our life with needless stress,
I feel that it is more than good
To teach goodwill and brotherhood.

When I survey the unrighteousness,
Cause of all things that hurt, oppress,
I feel, though I be sacrificed,
That one must follow Buddha, Christ.

**A Carol Prayer**

by Allen Clarke. Tune: "Rule Britannia"

When Christmas first shone on the earth, --
What centuries have been since then! --
The angels hailed Messiah's birth,
And sang "Peace and Goodwill to men!"

_Chorus_ -- Mer-ry Christmast 09 may its power increase
Till all the world is full of peace.

0 may the angels' chant abide,
Holding all hearts in holy sound,
Until the spirit of Christmastide
Shall bless the world the whole year round.

December, 1901.

**If Any Man Shall Smite Thy Cheek**

by Joaquin Miller, published in _Songs and Hymns_

If any man shall smite thy cheek,
Turn thou that he may smite again,
The truly brave are truly meek,
And bravely bear both shame and pain.
They slay, if truly brave men ever slay,
Their foes with sweet forgiveness day by day.

And if a man would take thy coat
Give him thy cloak and count it meet;
Bread cast on waters can but float
In sweet forgiveness to thy feet;
So thou, by silent act like this, shalt preach
Such sermons as not flame nor sword can teach.
LABOUR CHURCH -- FORM OF PRAYER
Confession and Supplication

Prayer composed and recommended for the above, by a loyal citizen of Great Britain and Ireland in great distress. Printed and published by J. & E. W. Jackson, 62, Corporation Street, Manchester. 1891. Price One Halfpenny Each. 3/6 per 100. Copyright.

Our Father, which art in heaven, We worship Thee afar off in our own sinful consciousness of disobedience to Thy law of Love and Truth and Purity, but trusting and knowing that Thou art not far from any one of us, for in Thee we live and move and have our being. O, bring us back to our lost faith in Thee our Creator, Preserver, and Bountiful Benefactor, and help us to forsake our false gods which are no gods in which we have trusted, and the spirit of worldliness, individualism, covetousness and competition on which we have relied and by which we are sore smitten.

We acknowledge that Thou hast made this world fruitful and abundantly responsive to wisdom and labour in means to preserve both man and beast, in blessings sufficient in their abundance and variety to make human life enjoyable, and Earth a paradise for all. We are not straitened in Thee, but we are straitened in ourselves. We have explained Thy universe to ourselves without Thee, and have forgotten and repudiated our fealty to Thee and our family relationship to each other, saying what profit shall it be to us if we serve God only, and not both God and Mammon, and also, -- with our brothers blood upon our hands -- AM I MY BROTHERS KEEPER? Therefore is it that while we look to heaven for miracles to undo the effects of our own ignorance and folly, Thou makest us to know that we generally have as good as we deserve, because if there had been no idolatrous worship of false doctrines there would not be the spiritual and material confusion we deplore, if there were no willing slaves — there would be no tyrants, if we had not been so unbrotherly to each other we would not have been a prey to our common task masters, and if we had not been so culpably selfish and unsocial there never would have been possible the successful knavery which troubles us.

Our hands are not clean. We have, in the same community and possible commonwealth set Town against Country, and Peasant against Artizan. What Thou in Nature hadst joined together as one National reciprocal interest we have parted asunder as separate and hostile interests, and believed them to be so, and made it our wisdom to set the one against the other. We have framed and accepted systems of human Government and Society in which we have separated rights from duties and privileges from responsibilities. We have given to individuals for their property, and made merchandise and commodities of those things which Thou didst give for the good and advantage of all, acquiescing in and
Deut., ch. 28, and sharing in the social robberies arising from the creation of such properties in place of trusteeship of that which was Thine; and thus those whose toil produces honey do not enjoy the sweets of it, those who produce food are hungry, those who make cloth are ragged, the wives and children of those who make shoes go barefoot and the farrier's mare goes without shoes. Those who engage in the hardest and most dangerous labour get the least honour and the poorest hire, while those we honour most and confer the greatest substance on, do the least, are the idiest and the most selfish and cowardly amongst us. Honest, virtuous, principled poverty goes bare and poor to a broken heart, and a suicide and a pauper's grave, while those who sell their bodies and souls to minister to vanity and lust can command dainties and luxuries and splendours -- at least for a time.

See the Book of Ecclesiastes.

O, Lord, wherefore is it that all our wonderful inventions and labour-saving appliances, increasing our productive and distributive power three hundred fold, have not lessened the rigours of our toil or our necessity to Labour sorrowfully from our youth to our old age?

O, Lord, wherefore is it that all the alms and endowments intended as restitutions and ameliorations of our lot do but inexorably add to our burdens by lowering our wages and raising our rents, and in the end are confiscated by the lords of the Philistines to whom we have bowed our necks, and who have cruelly put out our eyes?

O, Lord, wherefore is it that all our reforms and revolutions, after all the blood that is spilled and the tears that are shed, do but substitute one tyrant and one form of slavery for another. As was the despotic king, so became the haughty noble. As was the Oligarchical and feudal oppressor, so, and even worse, is the commercial capitalist ruling us with the iron rod of competition and the merciless creed of dividends and percentages. Our "liberal" is mainly liberal with the property of others than himself, and "NEW PRESBYTER IS BUT OLD PRIEST WRIT LARGE." We have set up these gods which trouble us and cannot save us. We have adopted as a means of relief the same abominable principles of personal covetousness and commercial policy, and our iniquities have now become a burden greater than we can bear, and a flood that has clean gone over our heads, so tremendous is the accumulation and aggravation of our folly, and so terrible the retribution accompanying our crimes.

O, Lord, we slew our brother and held his soul cheap. For cheapness rather than justice -- just exchanges, just weights, measures, and qualities -- have we sought. We have taken tribute from the children, our own brethren, and made the strangers free, encouraging and using the stranger as a means of cheapening the labour and oppressing the soul of our very own brothers of the same national family. We have taken the children's bread and cast it to those without our city's walls, when they might have been served with the crumbs which fell from the children's table. But we did it by reason of our covetousness to get big
loaves without giving in return to our own loaf makers, to get ves-
tures and materials and luxuries, as Achan, without considering our
own just and local exchanges and responsibilities,

We have beggared and banished our brethren, and we have not bene-
fited ourselves, for we have given away and robbed ourselves of our
markets, and raised up the oppressor, the MIDDLE-
MAN, and the USURER. Whatever we produce by our
Confession of sin toward Ireland, the
Scottish Highlands, and the English Ag-
icultural Counties.

Commodities produced many thousands of miles away, at less cost, in
many cases, than the products of our own labour are charged for being
conveyed from one British town to another. Therefore have we inverted
the conditions of Nature, and made that which is geographically near
us (and for which we are responsible) economically distant from our
markets, and those places which are geographically distant (and for
which we are not responsible) economically near to the same, and have
robbed and wronged our brethren thereby.

O, LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US MISERABLE SINNERS!

O, LORD, TURN US FROM THE ERROR OF OUR WAYS TO THE WISDOM OF THE
JUST.

Make us to walk in the right way of duty and justice to our own
National family and brotherhood; to dethrone our idols and false
gods of materialism and covetousness. MAKE US TO KNOW JOY AND GLAD-
NESS THAT THE BONES WHICH THOU -- O, JUST GOD -- HAST BROKEN, MAY
REJOICE.

Here let all the people say, AMEN!

Let the Priest also then say, AMEN!
The Socialist Sunday School: belated impressions.

by Bernard I. Palmer.
(written Aug. 1953)

My earliest memories of the Socialist Sunday School are confused and dim. I suppose I must have begun attending the Acton school in about 1919. I do know that it involved a long walk of 1½ - 2 miles through suburbs of varying character, and ending in a yard in Acton Lane. Here there was what I now realise must have been a stable with a room above approached by an outside staircase with a handrail to prevent high-spirited young socialists from falling to their death in the cobbled yard below.

Here we sang "hymns" from the flimsy red cloth covered SSS hymn book, listened to the lessons, repeated the precepts, and ended with a collective recital of something like a credo, which ran:

"Look forward to the day when all men and women will be free citizens of one fatherland, and live together as brothers and sisters in peace and righteousness."

I remember practically nothing of that school except that it made an abortive attempt to start a group of "Young Crusaders", presumably as a counter-attraction to the boy scouts of the religious organizations. It was pathetic really with its bowdlerised drill which pretended not to be drill, in the first flush of post-war anti-militarism. "Comrades, get ready for marching!" instead of the "Get fell in!" of my later (R.A.F.) days. It was pathetic, too, because of the lack of understanding by the very people who conducted the school of what they were about, and where they were going. Tommy Laddon (an "old" man, friend of father's, quite 40 years old) who later allied himself with the Communist Party; Mr. Scott and "Mrs." Scott (I always knew there was something funny about this, though mother and father did nothing to suggest it); Mr. Hellulish(?) who had gold tooth and a taste for beer (which I never knew my father drank till I was about 20); and a host of others all pulled different ways. They were, I now think, defeated people protesting against a society which clipped their wings: the first because he had superior abilities, which should have found an outlet in conducting big affairs, the second because of marriage laws and the difficulties of divorce, the third because... I really cannot think. He later became a local councillor, I believe. He certainly had the instincts of a carpet-bagger.

And through it all, I remember Dad. He was a strange mixture of rancour against the upper classes (his Socialism is of the 1906 brand) his quite honest religious feeling (he is not a church-goer, however), and his love for music. He has all the instincts of a cultured man, heavily damped down and overlaid with the definitive iconoclasm of the factory worker. Such a pity, that such a good man should be so warped by the forces of society. He is a man of strong emotions, gusty love and gusty anger, great generosity and odd economies; but never mean, except in his attitude to the "upper" classes, by which he means men who speak the Queen's English, take thought for the narrow, and maintain a front of independence. Of these, for his sins and out of his sacrifices, I, his own son, have become one. But he does not recognise this. Like his socialism and his provision for retirement
they are kept in separate compartments.

I have spent so much time on my Father because I believe his sort to be the key to the S.S.S movement. Certainly, when he became disgusted with the private lives and public behaviour of the other adults who ran the Acton S.S.S, and he transferred his allegiance and our attendance to the Hammersmith school, the Acton school soon closed down.

It is of the Hammersmith School (about two miles walk) that I remember most. By now I was about eleven, and soon proudly wearing the cap of the grammar school to which I had won a scholarship. I stayed at this Sunday school on and off till age 17, and did not finally cease my connection till I reached 18. In the last years, however, the link was temuous, and I chiefly attended to give talks.

The order of proceedings was the same as in any non-conformist Christian Sunday school. Indeed, the best visiting lecturers were of the same moral calibre as non-conformist parsons; but probably brighter intellectually. It was rather like the Hampstead Ethical Church, which I visited in later life, good religious stuff with God left out. We were enjoined to live together in peace and righteousness, to honour the good, be courteous (but never to bow the knee), to remember that everything is the fruit of labour (labour with the hands, and most of the most assiduous socialist Sunday scholars later became, like me, respectable bourgeois), to respect truth and "never to deceive yourself or others." There was more self-deception per square inch there than in any similar organisation. We all believed that we could retain the essence of Christian teaching after removing the mainspring; we all believed that we could, like Tolstoi's Ivan, oppose hate with love; we all believed we could have youth movements (Young Crusaders, or the Co-op's Woodcraft Folk) without militarism. We busily prepared the way for Munich, as did every other Quasi-religious body. But we were right to make the attempt, despite the fearful risk which the civilised world ultimately ran.

There was endless goodness in many of the adult workers in the S.S.S., but there was the scary side, too. Dad tells me now of the times he almost came to blows with the adults who, having taken the Sunday school on its annual "treat" to the country, left the kids to their own devices while the village pub remained open. I can now recollect those queer periods of calm on our outings after the sandwiches were eaten, when hardly an adult was around, and we couldn't begin the races.

It is the constructive side that matters, however; the earnestness of Dr. & Mrs. Turner (having some vague connection with William Morris), of the Stubbingtons (I believe he had a club foot), of Mr. Warden (?) a cripple, of Dr. & Mrs. Tipping who were philosophic anarchists and protested against society by having themselves and children sleep in sleeping bags instead of the conventionally caked God. (Who says that the lives of ordinary working folk are uninteresting?) These good people, and many others whose names escape me, provided the basis for the moral and political instruction that went on year after year at Hammersmith S.S.S. The interesting thing is, however, that it was mostly moral instruction. Although this all took place against a background of political struggle, of strikes, lockouts and unemployment, actual politics seemed to play a very small part.
A typical meeting went thus: the Superintendent would say: "Good afternoon, Comrades," and the children reply "Good afternoon, Comrade." Then came the singing announced always thus: "To will begin this afternoon with hymn no: 11, "Would you gain the golden city?". This done the Superintendent would ask the minute secretary to read the minutes. This would be one of the children. The minutes would prove to be a more or less adequate memorandum of the previous meeting. The minutes being read, the school then heard a list of those who were sick and sent "fraternal greetings" to them; there were also good wishes for birthdays, and greetings on some occasions from other socialist Sunday schools who had sent visitors. Next would come another hymn, and then the Superintendent would introduce the speaker for the day. A. J. Gould was my favourite; a gentle old soul who had mastered the technique of story-telling. I remember his talk on J. H. Fabre called "Things are not always what they seem". I remember hearing Satclatvala (Communist M.P. for Battersea, I believe) and a man who went by the name of Betteredge "because he would lose his job if he were known to be in the Movement." There must have been scores of others, but their names elude me now.

After the talk would come more singing, and then we would be called upon individually to recite the "precepts". There would be announcements of future speakers and of ancillary activities. The whole meeting terminated with the Red Flag, and the collective repetition of "We desire to be just and loving..."

(If you want an outsider's rather cruel caricature of a meeting, try the one in A.P. Herbert's "Water Gypsies").

What did I learn from the S.S.S.? Nothing, I think which those who ran it set out to teach me! If I learned pacifism, I learned also the critical mode of thought which now leads me to reject it. If I learned to bow before collectivism, I learned, too, that committees achieve nothing of themselves; that only when there is an active mind to light the way does a committee go forward; a committee of nonentities functions at the lowest common level. If I learned that virtue is only to be found in the horny-handed sons of toil, I observed, too, that those of my fellow-scholars who seemed most virtuous to me have become insurance-brokers, Harly St. specialists, or sales-managers. As was said by a former S.S.S. colleague when I not in 1919 after a lapse of nearly twenty years; "The old S.S.S. taught me a lot of good common sense". Myself I should put it in another phrase "Critical awareness".

Memoir by Geo. Burgess
(Stockport Labour Church)

1901 to 1914

I was now home once more and giving anxious thoughts as to my future. My job in the P.O. was open, and amongst the staff was a member who in intelligence was superior than any not in by ten years of army life. I had linked up with the trade union, and was elected to the local branch committee. Threfore getting accustometd to the workings of the British Trade
union movement.

There was something also in me that was calling for action. By new
colleagues were responsible for a yearning to read good books, and during
the autumn and winter of 1901, I read Macaulay, Carlyle, Zola, Tom Paine,
Thackeray, Ruskin, Tolstoy, Hardy, Dumas, Balzac. It appeared to me at
that period, that we were the only people, borrowing these books from the
Public Library. I had always in my mind the downtrodden Indians, and read
about this time a few works on India. These however appeared to me to
approach the angle I expected, and it was only after a few years that I came
across a book on India, by an author, who was to have tea with me later in
life, i.e. H. M. Hyndman, the son of an aristocrat, who preached Socialism
from the S.D.P. point of view. I also had in mind a small pamphlet that
was read by many of my soldier comrades on a returning Troopship written by
one, Robert Blatchford, who was also to come in my later life, as a speaker.

I had an urge that something must be done, and set about looking for a
medium to supplement my reading.

In June 1902 I married a young woman, Lizzie Clayton, who was to be my
faithful friend and comrade for 39 years, and bear me two children, son and
daughter.

It should be mentioned here that our departure for honeymoon coincided
with the coronation of Edward VII but which was cancelled because of one of
the first operations for appendicitis. This will always be remembered. As
is usual the towns were decorated especially Liverpool through which we
passed on our way to Onchar, I. of Man.

Life as usual with newly married folk, until 1903, when I and a few
kindred spirits realised that a movement was in being that needed our atten-
tion, and after a few enquiries a circular letter was sent to persons whom
it was thought would be interested in forming a Labour Church in our town.
As a result a meeting was called on a Sunday evening at a meeting room to
discuss the advisability of starting such an organisation. As a result of
this get-together, a committee of ten, and a hon. treasurer, hon. secretary,
(myself) & chairman. This new organisation was destined to make a name for
itself from its first meeting in January 1904 until 1914.

We made a smashing hit, to be known throughout the country, and where
leaders in politics, trade unionism, church, secularism, science, music,
drama were always glad to visit the Stockport Labour Church.

It is a long and interesting story which I hope to give a brief but
portant record, as I was the Hon. Sec from its first meeting until Dec
1914---fourteen years of hard, tiring but happy work.

During those years my wife was a willing helper, and it is to her un-
flinching loyalty that my success as a leader in this work was so well done.
As will be realised my committee was constantly changing, but the Treasurer,
Jim Scott, & myself, kept to the grindstone.

It will be not amiss to mention that our constitution & rules were simple,
and anyone accepted who kept them. All our meetings were open to all and
questions were a prime necessity. We prided ourselves on our democracy and equality. Our membership varied from eighty to at one time two hundred. Our speakers represented all classes, races, religions or none. As will be during those hectic years I met hundreds of people from the aristocracy, like the Countess of Warwick, to common or garden folk, the John Smiths.

Meeting the celebrities of science, art, culture, and the ordinary man and woman, broadens one outlook on life. Our first meeting place was at the Temperance Institute, London Square, and as our meetings got more popular we eventually engaged the large room at the Mechanics Institute, later demolished and the present Central Public Library erected. During this period a fairly large women's group had been formed and these fine comrades suggested a Bazaar to create a fund as a basis to purchase a new building. The Committee accepted with joy and formed a Bazaar Committee, who went to work at once. In the meantime I was instructed to attend a conference at Huddersfield of the Socialist Sunday Schools, and give a report as to the advisability of organizing one in Stockport. This was duly done and favourable report given. Out went our suggestion to all Socialists that a Sunday School was being formed and suggested help in finances, children as scholars, and friends who had had experience as teachers. We had a good response, and off we sailed to success.

Many other activities were started. An orchestra, brass band, Choir, Adult Class, etc etc.

In the meantime the Bazaar Committee was busy making, begging all those materials that go to making such a money making function a success and this it did.

In Oct 1906 we engaged the Mechanics Institute for four days, arranged with a firm in Pendleton, Salford to set the scenery and stalls, for what was called "Jerry England Bazaar". And my Bazaar Book tells all and sundry what a fine production it was, more so as the society was only two years eight months old.

Everybody of note in the movement helped, we had over seventy helpers, and for three evenings the place was packed with visitors. The end justified our faith in the members and loyalty to our principles.

This venture realised over 400; quite a feat in those days when Socialism was ignored as the best way to another those now fangled ideas.

We were then free to look about for suitable premises and eventually a building committee to look over and inspect premises in the market.

The Central Hall, Hillgate, Stockport was firmly recommended to us for purchase, and after the preliminaries were completed we took over. This building had at one time been a Methodist Chapel which meant that, internal alteration had to be done on an extensive scale. Pulpit, pews, out of date heating & lighting. But we had the men in our membership. Builders, plumbers, joiners, electricians, gasmen, engineers, and above all labourers to fetch and carry. I well remember anew floor being laid, a stage with scenery being erected. Painting and decorating and all voluntary labour. What happy times we had. That was real comradeship. During this turmoil our Sunday evenings had to be kept going. We eventually organized Saturday
evening concerts and plays, i.e. one acts & short sketches, were produced.

Our Sunday evening meetings were the talk of the town, and although the hall seated 900, many occasions saw crowds outside unable to enter. Our speakers during this period, 1906-10, was a succession of progress. Our speakers delivered their message and answered the questions. Our orchestra and choir gave of their best. Our collections increased, their was no ticket or entrance fee on Sundays. Our speakers included A Chesterton, Joseph McCabe, (science) Indians Americans, Germans, French & Trade Union leaders like Tom Mann & Ben Tillet.

H. W. Hyndman was a character as mentioned previously. He was the son of the landed aristocracy and looked the part with his tall hat and frock coat and beard. He always travelled first class, and when he was chaffed of this, he replied, “When the workers demand steaks and wines instead of poor stews meat, clothe themselves in fine raincoat, live in decent houses instead of slums, I shall believe they deserve to be saved.”

I met during these years many queer characters. There are always a few people in the world who have a pet theory. I well remember a queer looking chap, tall, thin, whiskers, no hat, who along with two companions, one from the Andea region, another from Bulgaria, who really believed they had the cure for freedom, peace, and equality in so far that they had a mission to the world’s workers in a new religion. They had a tent and all their worldly goods & no money. They had tramped America and Europe mostly in bare feet & old clothes. The leader was eloquent in six languages. They were anxious to give our members their cure for the world’s ills. We sent them on their way and heard after that some police in a Lancashire town had put them in a cell, as they had camped on an open space.

We had an American parson giving his stuff from our Sunday evening platform. His delivery was the most peculiar I had ever seen. He walked like a caged lion or tiger, from end to end on the platform. He had the reputation in the States of being a spell-binder.

We engaged, one season, aukan Sorgue, who was a fire eater, and wore a brilliant red silk dress, and what a flow of language. Robert Blatchford, an ex Sergeant of the Dublin Fusiliers and now editor of “The Clarion” a weekly Socialist paper, also author of a number of books on army life, and socialism, and religion, one of the latter, “God and My Neighbour” caused such a sensation that practically all the religious journals, from the “Church Times” to the Catholic Herald attacked this dangerous propaganda. Bishops, Clergy, Ministers, Priests gave vent to their feelings on this new atheism by a Socialist. Blatchford had the help of an ordinary school black-board to illustrate how the common people are exploited by the clever ones who own the means of production, distribution and exchanges. He made a success of this method.

Victor Grayson, a young man attending the Manchester University studying in theology for the church, had an attractive style and as the saying goes a “Silver Tongue”. I became very friendly and visited him in his little flat in the Corporation Dwellings Oldham Rd, Manchester. He was well liked and came to the Labour Church, and to our open air meetings during the summer
months. By the way this outdoor propaganda was most successful and brought thousands to the Armoury Square. Grayson became popular in the north and was persuaded to abandon his study for the Church and give his whole time to the Socialist cause, and eventually he was elected M.P. for Colne Valley-Huddersfield but I am afraid he wasn't a success in Parliament. He fell for flattery, after a few speeches, which for a time held the members spellbound. The Tories flattered him and alas he took to drink, which was his downfall. He lost his seat and the goodwill of the rank & file. It is sad that so many working class leaders had fall by the wayside.

The modern system is too offer our leaders capitalist & royalist honours and get praise from the capitalist press, pats on the back, we all know the method.

Grayson by the way went to New Zealand about 1913 and when the first war broke out, he joined that country's cavalry was wounded got a "Blightly" and arrived at a home in Harley Street London. And the last heard of him was speaking at an open air meeting at W. Hartlepool, After which he disappeared entirely.

During all these activities my wife was my guide & help in many ways for which I was thankful. A grand wife, comrade and tip top mother. One half of the propagandists of the Labour movement could never carry on if their wives weren't sympathetic.

My army training had helped me to give of my best to my work in the Labour Church movement, and my frequent visits to conferences, discussion groups helped me to improve my technique. Self discipline also helped me to avoid rash enterprises and guard against a type of individual who appeared to be clever and bossy.

About 1905-6-7 I put before the committee a type of syllabus in booklet form, which while accepting advertisements on one side of a page, at the same time set out our programs for eight months work, from Sept 1st to April 30th giving a thumbnail sketch with a small photo, if obtainable of the speakers engaged. In addition our other activities were mentioned such as Sunday School, Adult Class, Choir, Orchestra, Women's section, along with a number of notes of the Labour Church Socialism, "Why the people are poor." How few of our rich landowners "own so much land" etc. etc. As the ads paid for the issue we could afford to give 4,000 copies away to a selected number and naturally was an immediate success.

I must mention of other speakers that made a great impression on me and many more. Tom Mann was a giant amongst dwarfs in the trade union world.

The ruling class was afraid of him, and he told my wife and I when having tea with us, that certain politicians had offered him a bribe to "get out" and retire. But true to his principles he carried on to his death a great leader of the working class.

Another was Ben Tillett, who I had the pleasure of inviting to tea, before the lecture. A real good and hard fighter for the dockers and labouring class.
Altogether I engaged for my Committee approx 360 speakers, during the period 1903-14 eleven years of relentless graft, and hard at that, and never received one penny in remuneration.

Our speakers included all professions, Scientists, Doctors, Architects, Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Trade Union leaders, politicians, composers, authors, writers, M.N.S.

Prominent women of those days like Countess of Warwick, Mrs. Despard, (sister of General French) Mrs. Fankurhurst (suffragette), Margaret Bondfield, Edna Sorge, Miss Horniman, also Lewis Casson, Basil Dean, Harry Quelch, Clarion Vanier, Elocutionists, many others were present on our syllabus including members of Church Socialist League. Musicians Union. Have not heard of any other organisation that made such a contribution to progress.

I know now that the diversity of subjects succeeding each other on Sunday evening may have contributed to a confusion of thought in the minds of the regular attenders at the meetings.

For instance we would have one Sunday a Clergyman preaching the Gospel of Christian Socialism, the next a Secularist condemning such heresy. Socialism as an S.D.F. speaker expounded and Socialism as an I.L.P. speaker held forth.

Now to me it appears so puzzling. But we did one thing during those years. Our Society had developed into an organisation for the promotion & diffusion of knowledge by Lectures.

Many of the Stockports older generation will have pleasant memories of the happy times spent during those years in the Central hall, and many of our propaganda activities during that period were useful and no doubt have been a factor in forming Socialist ideas, and helping to create a large labour vote in the borough. We were told our ideals depicted an impossible utopia, human nature being what it is.

By association with so many of my members, and speakers, musicians, etc, had made many friends who until recently kept constant contact with me. Alas time flies and there are very few now alive, their friendship is now a pleasant memory. I have a vivid recollections of a friendship with Dr. Rutland Boughton, a well known musical composer, who came to us and lectured on music and the Workers, and very instructive it was. This visit brought to our meeting place a special type of audience made of music lovers, artists & others artistically minded. Along with the speaker we had musical illustrations by professional players. An evening worth while.

It is of interest to note at this stage that much help was offered and accepted by Miss Horniman's Gaiety Company and many artists of that period that helped us at our Sunday evening meetings. In later years became national actors and actresses.

The Musicians Union helped us with Musical Evenings by their members. J. B. Williams, the General Secretary was our guide in selecting the most suitable players. Also at many of our meetings, choirs from other towns, were glad to help us in our good work, of raising the cultural standard of our membership and visitors.
Naturally our audiences changed with the quality and type of speaker. If a scientist, like a professor, a better class attendance was noted. If a Marxist Socialist we expected a class conscious Socialist to raise debatable questions.

One of our many visitors from abroad was an Indian, fairly well educated, but with, I thought, a perpetual sneer at the white man living and governing his country. I have not many Indians since then and found them at least pleasant to talk to. In later years I was to be in close association with the Indian League, where I met a few times a very fine leader of the Indian people, Dr. Chirma Menon, the first Indian Ambassador to the court of St. James, and now permanent delegate for his country to the United Nations.

In a description of memories of people and places, the lesser lights are usually forgotten. It is leaders who claim attention, and so it is with these notes. The ordinary folk of the world, the toilers and sowers are passed by, except in so far that without the ordinary people no organisation could prosper. I mention a few, such as the speaker failed to turn up a meeting, and the chairman was persuaded officiate, and when he had started, the original speaker came in and sat at the back of the hall, and admitted after that the "make-shift" had done a better job than he could have done. And the printer who in a syllabus he had published inserted 1900 instead of 1910. This mistake was not found out until over 1,500 copies had been distributed. As it was a printers error, he printed & published a new edition.

Perhaps the quaintest error we heard of was a couple from country who called at four churches to attend our meeting where a one-time non-conformist minister was speaking on "Why I was driven from the Church".

These two strangers eventually found us and heard the last ten minutes of his address, which shows the necessity of reading the advertisements correctly.

In 1910 as a result of passing a civil Service Exan, I was transferred to Manchester. And although this meant more time spent travelling I was determined to keep to my task, although it was soon by a few of us that the Labour Church movement was losing its grip on the general public, or on that part that we catered for. Members lapsed and new ones wasn't forthcoming in sufficient numbers to fill up the vacancies. We tried new ideas such as lantern lectures, and formed an energetic youth club.

In 1910 the government declared war on Germany and a great patriotic wave of enthusiasm swept the country. The Labour movement including our section was divided. Many comrades declared for pacifism. Our Syllabus was cut and one of the speakers engaged was an old friend, previously mentioned, was to speak, I refer to Victor Grayson, other George Lansbury, Mrs. Bespard, Walter Hampson (Violin Recital), Ernest Haridew, Miss Horniman, Cecil Chesterton, & others. V.G.S. subject was "My Views on War" and Grayson & myself was to join up in the "Fight for Liberty."
Labour Churches: Notes for Mr. Summers.

A. J. Waldegrave.

My acquaintance with the Labour Church Movement began with my reading an article on it in Great Thoughts to which my attention was called by an old friend & colleague, Ernest Williams, who was prominent in social activities in Croydon. This was in 1894 or perhaps in 1895. I was ripe for taking an interest in the movement. In the autumn of 1891, just before my nineteenth birthday I had come to London to take up a Civil Service post. Full of zeal for the movement in Methodism, the church in which I had been brought up, for the establishment of missions in London slum areas, I joined the South London Wesleyan Mission which had its headquarters in Long Lane on the south side of London Bridge. It was a dismal district, with patches of as bad slums as were to be found anywhere in London. The mission brought some brightness into the neighbourhood other than that of the public-houses & did a little here & there to relieve the worst cases of poverty. Its main activity, however, was to preach the evangelical gospel of individual salvation, in an atmosphere of brotherliness which should make the poorest slum-dweller feel he or she was someone who mattered. Practically nothing was done to show there was any feeling by the mission that the slums themselves mattered & ought in some way to be wiped out of existence.

The brotherliness was genuine -- not a mere patronizing pity -- & it brought a certain amount of warmth & colour into the lives of those who were attracted to the mission but the number of these was relatively small; expressed as a percentage it would have been insignificant. And all the time there was the tacit assumption by the leaders of the mission & most of their assistants, good devoted people as they were, that the way to change slum conditions was to love the slum-dwellers & convert their souls in the old-fashioned Methodist manner.

That the stream of human sympathy flowing outwards from the mission was one of "the fruits of the Spirit" as described by St. Paul. I did not doubt, & still do not; but, while I was taking my share in the activities, two processes were going on in my own development which, towards the end of the three years of my association with work, had convinced me of its comparative futility. I had been losing my belief in the central Christian doctrines & I had been enlarging my knowledge of the economic aspect of society. In 1892 I had joined the Fabian Society, with the notion that Socialism was something that one ought to study after accepting the general principle & was not to be taken as a hard, definite creed with a complete set of political proposals. This was after reading Henry George's "Progress & Poverty" & seeing that his argument about land applied equally to large-scale Capital of other kinds. Of course I had also read the Fabian Essays.

As regards Christian doctrine, discussion of Belief, Doubt & Unbelief was in the air; it could not be escaped. I seemed to be always concerning myself about my own opinions & convictions in this field & submitting Christian doctrine to critical examination in the light of modern science, general observation of the world, & personal experience. Particularly I felt that orthodox Christian belief did not square with the realities of life as I saw it in my London slums. Perhaps if my original knowledge of theology had come from a better source than Methodist textbooks, as expounded by
Methodist ministers, things might have different. But, after all, I did read "Lux Mundi" at this time & took the trouble to copy the full summary of contents included in it. I have that copy still.

Some time in 1894 I quietly dropped out of the South London Wesleyan Mission. While participating in its work I had fallen in love with one of my co-workers & we had become engaged; & in 1897 she became my dear wife. Her upbringing had been very different from mine — half Iogan & half Church of England as I used to tell her; adding, that it was difficult to distinguish one half from the other. She had been attracted to the mission by the personality of one of the Sisters attached to it (herself no typical representative of orthodox Methodism, although she used its phraseology) & her own compassionate sympathy & sheer simple goodness never got fitted into the Methodist straitjacket. Towards the end of 1894, her people moved to Stoke Newington in north London, & as soon as my railway season-ticket expired I followed suit.

By this time I had definitely become incapable of taking up straightforward, unequivocal membership of a Christian church. When I attended a Methodist church service, as I did once or twice at Stoke Newington, it all seemed to me desperately unreal. Yet I know that at the heart of the religion which had led my fellow-members & myself to say "The love of Christ constraineth us" was a deep Reality & I wanted to have it continue such, both in my own life & in that of others. To drift away from it, I felt, would be -- well, just to drift.

This then was the position when in 1894-5 I made the acquaintance, first of the Labour Church as presented in the article I have mentioned & soon after of John Trevor himself. At Stoke Newington I found that an attempt was being made by a few people in Tottenham, a short tram-journey away, to establish a Labour Church there, & I got in touch with them. This was probably in 1896. There were only some half-a-dozen of them. Like myself, & like most of those, I believe, who took the initiative in forming other Labour Churches, they were discontented nonconformists. They had obtained a room over a warehouse, a room which was sometimes used as a meeting-place & in particular was the meeting-place of a small branch of the Social Democratic Federation; always known as the S.D.F. A series of Sunday evening meetings had been arranged & advertised, with some of the ablest people in Social Reform movements as the speakers. Among those I attended I recall those addressed by Tom Mann & by Bruce Glasier, both outstanding speakers, -- but ready to address small audiences as well as large.

The attendance was never more than about twenty, perhaps thirty on occasion. A nucleus was provided by the members of the S.D.F. group & it was the presence of these which introduced me to a knowledge of the great gap that existed, & still exists I have no doubt, between the rigidly Marxist element in the British Socialist Movement & the less doctrinaire, more humanist, element. It would be making the same mistake as the Marxists themselves, to say that a rigid line can be drawn between the two. (If so, Tom Mann, for example, would have been found to have a foot on each side of the line, judging by the address I heard him give.) But there can be no doubt that the difference of tone & temper between the two elements is a real one.

The Marxist element at Tottenham always remained critical & non-cooperative
& the non-Marxist element never became strong enough to establish the broader-based organization which a Labour Church needed to be. The effort faded out. For a time one of the members continued to run a Youth Club in the room at the back of his shop, & the three or four women associated continued for two years or more the Cinderella Club at which they made garments for the poorest children of the neighbourhood & distributed at a Christmas tea-party they arranged. The S.D.F. branch carried on; whether it eventually became merged in the Communist Party, I do not know. Probably.

I should remark that the Tottenham group had no direct contact with any of the Labour Churches in the North & the Midlands. Their knowledge of the churches already established was drawn from the reports of their meetings in The Clarion, and in the Labour Prophet which John Trevor was issuing monthly. The Labour Church idea they had got from the several tracts Trevor had published & the one written by Philip Wicksteed.

At this time Trevor had moved to London. He kept in touch with the churches in the North & the Midlands by correspondence, but he took no part in the actual running of them. He had conceived the plan which he mentions in "My Quest for God" of forming a Labour Brotherhood which would devote itself to fostering the Labour Church idea, that of a new religious movement, both in the labour Churches already existing & in those which he hoped would be established. He had also taken some steps in his correspondence towards the formation of a Labour Church Union.

He was living by the help of a small Sustenance fund contributed mainly by old Unitarian friends, & the Treasurer of this was John Tenney. Tenney arranged a meeting of ten or a dozen people, all men I think, who had shown interest in the Labour Church movement & I attended this meeting. Trevor explained his conception of a Labour Brotherhood & we all agreed to become members of it, but nothing was done to give it formal shape. It amounted simply to giving him an assurance of our contributing such support & assistance as we could in the efforts he would be making. As regards a Labour Church Union, I agreed to act as secretary if & when it got going but he was to take further steps himself towards getting the churches to take action.

I cannot say how long after it was—the files of the Labour Prophet if they are available will show—Trevor's health broke down & he announced that he could not continue to issue the paper unless somebody else undertook the editorship. Reginald Beckett, one of those who had been present at the inauguration of the Labour Brotherhood, agreed to carry on the paper. While he was doing so I was in close touch with him & we had lunch together in the City at least once every week.

When Trevor had sufficiently recovered he took a poultry-farm (with his second wife) at Horsted Keynes in Sussex, in the hope that he would become able to dispense with the Sustenance Fund & would still be able to help the Labour Churches with his thought through his pen. It was here that in 1897 he wrote "My Quest for God."

He must have taken some action to promote the formation of a Labour Church Union, because soon after the South African War broke out—that would be in 1898—I went as Secretary of the Union to a Conference of the
churches at Bolton. The chairman of the Conference was a dear old man
named Sims, a Bolton man, whose appointment to the Presidency of the Union
seemed to have been as informal as my own appointment to the Secretaryship.
I recall that I was very disappointed with the Conference, for it devoted
its whole time to the discussion of a Pro-Boer resolution calling on the
Government to end the war. I forgot whether the resolution was carried or
not -- there was much difference of opinion -- but I came away feeling
that there was no cohesion among the churches represented & no vision
of a great wide movement transcending current political controversies.
Moreover, there was no central leadership & I did not feel qualified, igno-
rant outsider as I was, to provide it.

In the course of the next year or two I visited several of the churches --
I remember going to Bradford, Ashton-under-Lyne, Hanley, Leek, Leeds, Not-
ttingham & West Bromwich. At each of them I found a small core of earnest,
devoted people linked by their mutual belief in Socialism. Socialism was
to transform the world & bring the "Kingdom of Heaven" on earth. It would
abolish the destitution & degradation seen on all hands in our cities & in
the countryside. There would be no place for greed & exploitation; in their
stead there would be universal comradeship & brotherhood. Socialism in-
volved fundamental economic change but it was not only an affair of econom-
ic & material conditions; it was also a way of life. "Under Socialism"
mankind would be in a new world; meanwhile it was a gospel to be preached.
And there were some remarkably fine preachers for whom the inner circle of
earnest believers arranged Sunday meetings. Among them were Keir Hardie,
Philip Snowden & Bruce Glasier; Margaret MacMillan, Mary MacArthur & Mrs.
Despard. These & a number of others combined the appeal to the heart &
to the head in a way which created an atmosphere that might rightly be
called religious.

There were not many activities carried on by the churches other than
the Sunday meetings. A few had choirs to lead the singing of the hymns
in the Labour Church Hymn Book which Trevor had compiled: this Hymn Book
very clearly indicates his conception of the spirit that should pervade
the church he had established. Some of the churches had Cinderella Clubs
like the one at Tottenham which I have mentioned & there must have been
some Sunday Schools, for I contributed to the "Labour Prophet" a few notes
for Teachers' Lessons. These notes led later to my association with the
Watford Labour Church, as I will presently explain.

On my visits to the six or seven Labour Churches, I found nothing to
indicate the sort of interest in the "Peculiar ourselves" which was so
prominent a feature in Trevor's own experience as described in "My Quest
for God." If it existed, it was of too deep or too shadowy a character to
find expression -- except perhaps in the singing of some of the Labour
Church Hymns. On the other hand I did not meet any aggressive anti-Theism.
It seemed to be taken for granted that the high purpose of Socialism, aim-
ing at a change in men's behaviour to one another as well as a change in
the economic system was sufficient justification of the use of the term
"church."

I did not get to Manchester, but at the places I did visit there was
little personal knowledge of Trevor. He was honoured as the founder of
the Labour Churches & it was assumed that he must be a man of outstanding
character & personality; & it was left at that. There was no suggestion of his having any authority in the direction of the Movement he had called into being. Trevor himself would have been glad this was so, but it did mean that there was an absence of leadership.

I continued to indulge the hope of there arising a great new Church which would be completely freed from bondage to the past, with its outworn creeds & fossilized traditions; would be a home for men's highest aspirations & finest spiritual instincts; would be a power-house supplying energy for strenuous moral endeavour; & would devote itself to a peaceful revolution in social conditions on a basis of Socialist principle. But I realized that I had none of the gifts required for taking a prominent part in the creation of such a church, & that anything I could do must be of a quietly educational character.

Meanwhile I had got married & had become pretty much absorbed in responsible work in my Civil Service post. In May 1899, with our first child soon to arrive, my wife & I moved from our cramped quarters in Stoke Newington to a cottage at Shenfield in Essex. Shenfield was only 20 miles from London but at that time it was really in the country & it had a train service which enabled me to make my daily journey to town comfortably. We were there until the autumn of 1901. By that time we were feeling that, much as we enjoyed the quiet & the beauty of the countryside, we were too much cut off from social activities. I had kept in touch by occasional correspondence with Trevor, & my wife & I had paid one visit to him at Horsted Keynes, where he was finding that he could not make the poultry-farm pay. Several of my friends in London were active members of one or other of the several Ethical Societies that had sprung up, & I had become interested in their efforts to introduce into schools Moral & Civic Education which would take the place of the Scripture Lessons -- often given by teachers who did not believe in what they were teaching or believed in it & taught it in a narrow, superstitious way.

I should mention that I had been a pupil-teacher in a Board School for five years before entering the Civil Service, & on the basis of that experience I ventured to give a few demonstrations at a Moral Instruction Circle organised by the Ethical Societies of how I thought "non-theological moral instruction" could be given.

It was at this time that the Watford Labour Church was formed. Soon after its formation there came into the mind of Dr. Stanton Coit, one of the leading men in the Ethical Movement, the idea that the Labour Churches were practically Ethical Societies & that they might be persuaded to join, & so strengthen, the Union of Ethical Societies. Finding that the Watford Labour Church had started a Sunday School he suggested to some Watford members with whom he was in touch that I should be invited to move to Watford & help with this part of the church's work & told me that he had done so, urging me to accept the invitation if it came. It did come, & my wife & I decided that we would make the removal. Thus it happened that I became, for the first time, associated with the actual organization & life of a Labour Church. I was appointed Superintendent of the Sunday School, which numbered a dozen, perhaps fifteen or sixteen children of various ages.

Alas, my formal membership of the Watford Church did not continue long.
Unknown to me there was much heat among the members of the committee on the question of joining the Ethical Union. When the matter came up for decision it was decided not to join. The next day one of the committee told me this; & the day after, having occasion to write to Dr. Colt on another subject, I casually mentioned the regret I know he would feel at the decision. To my surprise & disgust I received a letter a few days later from the Secretary of the church conveying a vote of censure by the committee on my "disloyalty" in having communicated the decision to Dr. Colt in advance of its being communicated to him officially: he had evidently written to the Secretary immediately on receiving my letter. I forgot the exact terms of the letter of censure, but they were such as to make me feel that I did not want to be a member of so intolerant a body & I resigned my membership. Perhaps I was hasty; yet I still think it was a sound instinct that led me to feel there was something radically wrong in an organization which could so pre-emptively denounce what is called deviation. Have we not had monstrous examples of this attitude in recent years?

I continued to assist the church where I could, carrying on with the Sunday School & attending the Sunday-evening meetings. Occasionally my wife & I would entertain a speaker from a distance. One such was John Trevor himself. I will say more about this when I come to give (by word of mouth) my impressions of his personality -- a strange one indeed.

The Sunday-evening meetings went well for a good time. They were held in a hall which had been built for the church in its first year through contributions by members & sympathizers; with a substantial debt outstanding however, I suspect that the contributions came mainly from two or three comparatively well-off members of the group that initiated the establishing of the church. Two of these in particular held the two chief offices of the church & continued unstinting in their contributions both of money & service. Splendid men, both of them, if a little narrow in their idealism, seeing nothing good outside Socialism.

It was exceptional for a Labour Church to have a building of its own; the only other case I know of is that of Ickn, with its William Morris Labour Church. In the case of Watford it had one drawback: the building naturally became the home of the local Labour Party & in the mind of the general public, no distinction was made between the church & the party. So it came about that the church drifted more & more into becoming a political organization, & in the end was nothing else. How far the same development took place in the churches which had no building of their own I do not know.

My knowledge of the eventual decline & disintegration of the church is scanty, for I was not in the inner councils. I continued in charge of the Sunday School but this only lasted a year or two. With one exception the parents who, in the flush of enthusiasm at the opening of the church, had sent their children to the school were indifferent about its success & they found it more convenient to take the easy course & let them go to the ordinary Sunday Schools; & the children themselves (natural conventionalists) disliked the singularity of being "Labour" or "Socialist". My own personality was not, I am sorry to say, a sufficient counter-attraction. The one exception was that of two parents who thought I was not teaching their daughter dogmatic Socialism of the
out-and-out Marxist type — as I certainly wasn't.

I fancy the church continued on much its original lines, but with the local political emphasis growing stronger with the putting up of candidates at the Council elections, until there came the shock of the outbreak of war in 1914. The war brought immediate friction between the Pacifist members & those who supported the war. And indirectly it introduced another rift. The trade-unions grew stronger & had more friends, & some of their members urged the formation of a Labour Club at which alcoholic beverages, billiards etc. would be available. The Labour Church, classed as a Place of Worship & on that account escaping payment of rates, could not have been converted into such a club even if the desire for it among the members had been unanimous, which it was not. Some of the members strongly wished to preserve the religious atmosphere involved in the war & "church". So there was a cleavage & Club premises were acquired by the section that wanted them. The Sunday-evening audiences dwindled partly of course as a direct consequence of the war & after the war there was no substantial recovery. Trouble then was caused by the growth of a Communist section & eventually the church ceased to exist as an organised body & the building itself was sold for commercial purposes.

All this is very hazy in my own mind, for I only got news of it in the way of friendly gossip. Perhaps more definite information could be obtained from survivors in Watford. Here I will leave my rem iniscences & wait for questions from Mr. Summers.

Notes on the Labour Church Movement

A. J. Waldegrave

... The movement had been started by John Trevor, the minister of a Unitarian church in Manchester, who found his church too "stuffy". Socialism as a gospel of human brotherhood and a programme of peaceful but revolutionary political change had found a footing in the industrial North, and a considerable number of its adherents were attracted to the idea of Religion & Socialism being fused into a movement which should bring into existence a new social order & a nobler way of life. "England arise! the long, long night is over", the opening line of Edward Carpenter's hymn, was its keynote. The Sunday meetings in Lancashire & Yorkshire, once the Labour Church was formed, were large & enthusiastic.

The idea had been taken up by several groups in the neighbourhood of London & one of them was at Tottenham, within a short tram-ride from Stoke Newington. We got into touch with this group, & so began my connection with the movement, a connection which was to last a long time -- some ten years of more or less close association -- but which now seems to no a brief, educative episode in my life. It was an education; first, because I was so ignorant & secondly, because it presented the social problems of the time in a way which compelled attention to one's basic attitudes & beliefs. The Labour Churches attracted to themselves people of different types, who had however one thing in common -- discontent with the social order (or, rather, disorder) which existed & a belief in the possibility of building a new world; beyond this they differed widely in their outlook on life. The members were united in their emotional acceptance of Socialism as a movement which, like a great wave, was to sweep through the land, cleansing it of poverty, injustice & oppressive privilege; & they were agreed that this was a religious movement, but what they understood by its religiousness was by no means an understanding shared by all alike. It was of course related to their notions of what the existing churches stood for, but these notions were usually vague & confused & were frequently ignorant & prejudiced. Perhaps the common denominator was that a church was an institution or building in which there was earnestness & seriousness & where a gospel was preached.

In the Labour Churches with which I became acquainted there were at least five types of members: (1) There were those who had been active members of a church, usually a nonconformist one, & had found their efforts to interpret the teaching of Jesus in the Socialistic way (which seemed to them the natural & obvious way) obstructed by the brethren who found nothing in that teaching inconsistent with individualistic commercialism. Apart from this they were as much Christian as they had always been -- Christians of a simple & un-critical sort, having no quarrel, so far as they knew, with orthodox theology. Indeed, they broke away because, in accordance with that theology, they regarded the teaching of Jesus as authoritative and unassailable.

(2) There were former members of the Christian Church who had become both Socialists & Rationalistic Humanists. If they tolerated the religious orthodoxy of the people I have described under "(1)" it was somewhat condescendingly. They wanted humanistic ethics preached & taught, uncontaminated by "superstition". This approach to Socialism was liable to be more intellectual than emotional & to be more marked by criticism of present evils
than by visions of the future good. Nevertheless, their belief in human brotherhood & their love of justice, even if one sometimes felt these were rather in the nature of abstractions, were genuine & their love of justice could be passionate.

(3) The largest section of the membership consisted of working men (& often their wives) who were class-conscious members of trade unions & as such, were concerned in improving the conditions of the workers under the existing industrial system; but who had embraced the idea that class-conflict could be ended & those conditions permanently & immeasurably improved by the abolition of Capitalism & the adoption of Socialism. They had little interest in religion so far as it was concerned with things spiritual & transcendental -- with "other-worldliness" — but it would have been unjust & untrue to describe them as simply materialists, bent on getting for themselves & their children a larger share of the wealth produced in the country. They had an idealism tinged by the religious conception of a Kingdom of Heaven on earth. But they knew at first hand the evils of the existing social system -- insecurity of employment; abject poverty for a large proportion of the workers, with indifference to it on the part of most employers; & much else that was hateful -- & there stirred in them emotions of indignation & pity (not merely self-pity) and a desire & determination to help create the new & better world which would come "under Socialism." The conviction of practically all of them was that the means to be employed must be political; the only way was through a Socialist Government, & to obtain such a Government it was necessary to create a Labour Party with a majority in the House of Commons. Meanwhile, something could be done by having Labour majorities on local government bodies.

Although the Labour Church meetings were devoted to rousing & strengthening the idealistic humanism from which Socialism sprang, and the churches as organizations had no share in Labour Party activities, it was natural that they should incur the criticism of being "just the I.L.P. (Independent Labour Party) meeting on Sunday." And I fear it must be said that, on definite issues in public affairs, any conception of a general good of the community got pushed into the background by considerations of class interest.

(4) The tendency of the Labour Churches under the influence of the members of type "(3)" to become narrowly class-conscious, & to be purely political in outlook and aim, was checked to a considerable extent by their attracting members whose Socialism was derived from Ruskin & the circle of reformers of whom William Morris was the outstanding figure. They wanted "Labour" to be redeemed from the degradation to which it had been reduced by machines and profit-seeking commercialism, & to regain the dignity it had enjoyed when every worker was an artis-craftsman living close to nature. Historically, of course, this golden age had never existed except in small patches; but if it was an imaginary state of things as regards the past, it was also a healthy & stimulating imaginative one as a conception for the present & the future. It brought dreams of a beauty that might be, & gave new hopes & aspirations to some at any rate for whom "Labour" had simply meant monotonous toil in ugly surroundings -- or perhaps was a word used to designate a factor which entered into a study of economics.

(5) There would be a small group of hard-shelled Marxists who, strongly &
perversely, had associated themselves with a "church" although they declared that they were materialists & that "religion was the dope of the people". They were usually members of the Social Democratic Federation (known as the S.D.F.) & were precursors of the Communists of to-day.

Into this movement, embracing such a mixture of elements, I came, sharing, rather naively I fear, the hopes & expectations with which John Trevor had started it. His conception had been that it would embody Christianity's faith in God & love of man, while discarding the backward-looking belief in a finished & final Revelation (its creeds now outworn), & accepting with confidence belief in a contemporary & continuous exercise of God's creative energy, revealing itself in the shaping of a finer sense of brotherhood & a higher type of society than the world had yet known.

My point of entrance into the movement, as I have said, was where an attempt was being made to form a Labour Church in Tottenham (in the winter of 1895-96). My dear wife-to-be was willing to co-operate, but more from love of myself than from attraction to the people we found engaged in the Tottenham effort. Indeed, she found the S.D.F. element positively repellant; & I confess that I also found it difficult to fit the group's hard materialism & narrow dogmatism into the picture of universal brotherhood which their Socialism was to bring. However, there were congenial representatives of the other elements & there was the compensation that among those belonging to the section I have numbered "(1)" there were two people, husband & wife (with three nice children, two boys & a girl) in whose home we found warm hospitality & kindness & with whom we formed a friendship which was to last to the end of our lives together.

The incongruous elements at Tottenham did not fuse & by 1899 the effort had faded out. Longing for an experience of life in the country, we then moved to a cottage at Shenfield & there Dulcia was born. During the Tottenham period it had been discovered that I had some gift for teaching children & I had contributed to the Labour Prophet, the organ of the Labour Church movement, notes of lessons for Socialist Sunday Schools. Those I recognize, more definitely than I did at the time, were an attempt to teach the distinctive Christian ethic -- that there is such, who can doubt? -- disconnected from the superstitions, the irrationalities, & what I considered the falsehoods, of the Christian creeds. Intellectually, if I may use that term as applying to my own mental processes, I suppose I had become an agnostic, but it was rather with the connotations of "don't know" that with that of "can't know". I still indulged the hope that one might get glimpses of the whole of which we are a part. Indeed, such glimpses had come, I was sure, from the Bible & from one's attempt to follow the way of life taught by Christ. But I could not find in the Christian religion an adequate, authoritative & final Revelation -- key to the mystery of the universe & of man's place in it. There might be no end to discovery, but there had not been & would not be a supernatural Revelation; one had to live in accordance with this conviction.

Accompanying this agnostic attitude there was, however, the conviction that, clinically, one could & should remain a Christian, responding to the unique & masterful demands of the Christian ethic as expressed in the Gospel account of the teaching & example of Jesus himself & afterwards by those who, through the ages & in our own time, have understood its distinctive character & have faithfully exemplified it in their lives & often
also by words of interpretative insight. Outstanding among such inter-
preters, of course are St. Paul & the authors of the Gospel & Epistles of
St. John. But there have been many others who have understood . . .
A.J.J. 1954

(I will not trouble you with any more of these reminiscences & reflec-
tions unless you should ask for more. In November 1901 we moved to Wat-
ford & joined the Labour Church there. I think I told you something about
that organization when you came to see me. I did not remain formally a
member for very long. Incurred a vote of censure for alleged "intriguing"
with the Ethical Societies, there being no basis at all for the ridiculous
charge of "disloyalty" brought against me. (I smile as I think of the little
"storm in a teacup"). And I got into trouble for not following the party
line in a local dispute about acquiring a public park. I thought it best
to discontinue formal membership but I remained in close association up to
the outbreak of war in 1914. The war brought disintegration of the church
& it faded out a year or two after the war came to an end.)

NOTES REGARDING A SOCIALIST CHURCH IN CANADA

BY W.E.S. JAMES

Josiah Strong showed in his prophetic book, The Next Great AWAKENING—
that during the nineteenth century the proportion of church members to the
population in the United States gradually increased in that country while
strikes, walkouts and labor disputes also gradually increased. He saw in
these a demonstration that the preaching of the gospel had a direct relation
to the awakening social unrest.

The depression of the nineties crept over the American Continent, weaving
a trail of unemployment, poverty, broken homes, and industrial bitterness.
It became evident that Capitalism was no answer to the economic problem
and that it was a definite hindrance to the creation of a Christ like world.
As a result many books appeared dealing with Socialism as an answer, and
especially with the ideal of the Kingdom of God as the answer of Jesus.

Many ministers of the gospel came out openly for socialism, many of them
demanding a Christian Socialism. These men were not with such ignorant and
brutal denunciation that they renounced Christianity or at least Churchianity,
in disgust, and either established labor or people's Churches or renounced
religion as a solution to the world's problems. Carl D. Thompson became the
secy of the Socialist Party. Later Rev. Norman Thomas gave his full time
as leader of the party.

Since Canada was at the time less developed industrially, she was not so
drastically affected as her southern neighbor. The opening West helped her
to weather the depression of 1907 and she did not even know that she was
entering another when World War 1 broke out.

There were four Socialist articles clamoring for recognition at that time.
The S.L.P. (Socialist Labor Party) and the S.P. of N.A. (Socialist Party of North America) were small groups, rigidly Marxian, deterministic, never so happy as when they were killing off God, convinced that organized Christianity had to be destroyed before any real good could come to the world and that nothing mattered but the advent of the Socialist economy. They were sure that the change could be made over night, that it was all right whatever ill came to the decipants of the present order, and that all ills would be righted, all injustices solved or resolved with the social revolution. Their followers were often keen students, clever in argument, and ready to do almost anything for the all-desired goal.

The Socialist Party of Canada was strongest in British Columbia and the West. It was rigidly Marxian, but rather neutral in regard to religion, very class conscious, disciplined by opposition, and a real fighting force.

By far the larger Party was the Social Democratic Party of Canada, headed up in Toronto. It was inspired by Marxists and largely lead by them. But it was more liberal than any of the other three, more given to accepting the idea of working piecemeal or gradually towards the social ownership and control of the means of production and distribution. Its strongest member was Jim Simpson who later became the Mayor of Toronto.

Incidentally it might be well to mention here that Jimy first became prominent as the head of the Epworth League Union of the Methodist Church then entered politics through the Board of Education and Board of Control. His friends of the Epworth Leagues never forsake him, they supported him to the last and he was of such absolute integrity that he was always worthy of that support. He was killed in an auto accident. The writer polled his first vote for Simpson in 1904 or 1905.

The writer neglected to note that in the early days of the century Rev. Stitt Wilson and his brother of California, Rev. W.A. Prosser, a Methodist minister of Pittsburgh and the Rev. Edward Ellis Carr, were among the ministers who came out for Socialism and did not lose their faith or support of Christianity.

In Jan. of 1905, in his final year at the University of Toronto the writer found in his mail box one day a letter saying that if he would apply for it, the Labor Leader of New York City, would send him free a three months issue of the paper. He applied. At the end of the three months he wrote them that while he could agree with most of what the paper stood for, he could not see any permanent or much permanent good coming to the world unless the moral forces of religion could be harnessed for the task. He soon received some literature and copies of the Christian Socialist, Edited by the Rev. E. D. Carr, of Chicago. In them he found what almost completely satisfied him, a genuine Socialism, along with a genuine application of the social teachings of Jesus, built around the ideal of the Kingdom of God.

In the spring of 1914 the writer became aware that Rev. C. S. Eby D.D. who had been a Methodist missionary in Japan and had built the Central Tabernacle, in Tokyo, had started a movement in the old and then unoccupied Congregational Church opposite the General Hospital on College St. Toronto. Dr. Eby ran into the problem found in all Socialist Churches, it was too
religious for the Socialists and too socialistic for the religious people. Besides, the supporters had never been accustomed to supporting a cause with any real sacrifice, and the movement could not be financed.

There was a Bible Class in Westmoreland Ave Methodist Church and among its members, if my memory serves me rightly, were Jimmy Connor, R.B. St. Clair, Mr. McPherson, A.J. Moore, and others. I am not so sure here. Anyway, they along with Harry Pettit, and J. Ed Houghton of Arkdale and a few others, whose names I have forgotten, invited Rev. E. E. Carr of Chicago, Gen Secty of the Christian Socialist Fellowship, to come to Toronto and deliver a series of lectures in the various Methodist Churches. I was then living in Holstein but I attended all the lectures. They were magnificent. Carr was a very strong speaker and he knew his ground and spoke in no uncertain tones.

Rev. Carr appointed no General Secty for Ontario of the Christian Socialist Fellowship and R.B. St Clair Secty of the Toronto local.

At the end of June 1914 I left my Church in Holstein and moved to Toronto. Assisted mostly by Harry Pettit and J. Ed. Houghton, we started the Church of the Social Revolution. I had asked to be left without a station at my own request by the Methodist Conference and they had granted it but stipulated that it was not with their approval that I start the Church of the Social Revolution in Toronto.

I had gotten nicely settled in Toronto and started the Church when on the last Sat in July word came that World War I had started. The following Sun I was preaching in the Davenport Rd Methodist Church in the morning. I remember telling them that if it were really true that war had started in Europe, it would be a short war because war was so costly and destructive it could last only a few weeks and that it would be the last war. How wrong I was.

Life went on as usual in Toronto on Monday. Everyone went to work, but the British Banks had withdrawn their deposits or credits from the Canadian Banks and they in turn withdrew their credits from Business men and so 40,000 workers were laid off in Toronto that morning. All construction ceased and houses partly built remained just as they then were till after the end of the war. Thinking this situation would be only temporary, workers were happy. But then it became clear that there was no work for them, that they were faced with falling prices and wages and permanent unemployment, dire poverty shocked them into desperation.

The Socialists promptly condemned war, giving rise to the idea that they were secretly in sympathy with Germany. Of course, that was not the case. I did not know one of them who was. But every Socialist who could be fired seemed to have been fired and all workers lived in terrible fear of losing their jobs.

I tried to find a job. It had been my intention to find work and so support my wife and family. Slowly it dawned on me that for no work was impossible. I was finally reduced to doing the most humiliating thing I know, go to the Methodist Book Room and ask for a job. I was turned down.
The Book Room had had to let go many of their old employees and were greatly concerned about their welfare. I had to fall back on borrowing on my Life Insurance.

Wages were then very low and $2 per day was considered good. I had not the heart to ask for support financially from the men who were most in sympathy with me. They were struggling for their own families.

Harry Pettit was a printer and he printed the program for one month and we circulated it broadcast. Our meetings were well attended. It soon became evident that the city was full of people who were reaching out for some solution such as we were trying to give. One evening a Mr. . . . . . . . . . . a noted United States Liberal or Radical, Editor of The Philistine, attended our meeting and declared that it was one of the most significant movements of the day. He was drowned on the Titanic. I am sorry I cannot for the moment recall his name.

Rev. J. S. Woodworth once addressed us. I remember the profound impression his address made.

But the meetings did not satisfy me. Our crowd was too select, - the white collar class. I knew that Christianity made its first big gains in the Roman Empire by winning the slave class. The great mass of workers were estranged from the Church. The passion of my life was to bridge the gulf between these workers and the Church. I felt that here was the great untapped field of Christianity. Here among this class, and here alone, would be found the people who would and could re-vitalize Christianity. I entered heartily into the Social Democratic Party. Here I found suspicion, - was I sincere or just a paid agent of the capitalist class? Would I stand true or would I sell them out. Was I honest?

To these questions many Socialists answered "No."

I met the same attitude from my brother ministers, - I had done the unpardonable, - given up the ministry for what they thought seemed a petty personal advantage. Pretending to be advocates of the unselfish life, they could not conceive that I could be actually living it. I must be condemned.

Secretly, however, I was given to understand by some of the leaders of Methodism that they understood and were in great sympathy. Rev. Dr. J.D. Chown told me how he had tried for three years to have Jimmy Simpson engaged as a Field Society of the Dept. of Social Service and Evangelism in order that he might interpret the Church to Labor and Labor to the Church and so bridge the gulf. Then when he thought he had it on the way to success one man blocked it. Rev. W.H. Cowes, of Kitchener, told me he wished me every success. I soon learned that there were many people who were feeling their way along these lines and who felt strongly enough about it to tell me, yet who dare not let it be known they had any sympathy. However, Socialists so strongly condemned the war that they soon became looked upon as secretly in league with Germany and no indignity or persecution was thought to be big enough to fit the enormity of their crime.

In the midst of success at the Parkdale Assembly Hall, I requested that we move to the old Congregational Church, - Zion Church, - in order that we
might have a more varied program and that we might have weeknight meetings. We now had a regular afternoon and evening meeting. The afternoon was in the nature of the practical problem and open for discussion and the evening more definitely religious.

All sorts of people came to us. We counselled with them and loaned them literature. One evening a young man said to me at the door, "Well Mr. James, you have some truth, but not all the truth. If you had all the truth you could fill this Church." I did not see his point of view but asked him if he thought he could fill it and he said "Yes!" So I said, "Alright, go ahead and try it."

We set aside the following Wed night. He advertised it fully. About half a dozen people came out. I sat through about half the talk and could not make out what he was trying to get at. It was too painful to stay longer so I left the hall. After it was over he told me he thought he would move to some State in the southland where they had open minds.

In those days street cars in Toronto had seats running clear across the car and to collect the fare, the conductor had to travel along the side of the car as it sped along. Many men were killed when they failed to grasp the iron on the side for their support. One week, following the death of one such man, I announced that I would preach on the moral responsibility for the death of the streetcar conductor. But one of the conductors came to see me secretly and said, "Rev. James, please do not do it. We believe in you and what you are trying to do, but you must realize that if it becomes known that any of us attend here, we would be immediately fired. You know that there are detectives hired to spy on us and they work beside us and report every word we say. None of us know if we can trust any of our fellow workers. I do not know if the motorman who drives my car is a friend or a spy. I dare not lose my job for the sake of my family. So please do not do it."

Gradually fear of unemployment grew so great that support dropped. I had borrowed my limit from my Life Insurance Co and was forced to seek work. By this time it was realized that the war was going to be much longer than expected. Thousands of men had been starved into enlisting in the Army. Factories began to make war supplies and many men got work making 18 pounder shells for the French seventy-fives. I got work and the Canadianis Chambers Co, making shells.

The making of shells was done mostly by piece work, so many cents for each operation. I was on $2 per day pay, completely unskilled. I remember one day we figured up how much it cost the Co to make a shell. We added up what it paid the men for each step in the process. It came to just $1.29. It did not increase our estimation of the patriotism of Canadian and American manufacturers when we knew that they were charging the British Govt $6.50 apiece for each of those shells. No wonder they were so down on—death on—the Socialists who opposed the war.

Finally I was at the end financially. I just had to find food for my family, so I returned to the Church. The Church could not refuse to receive me back but it was agreed that I had to be punished. I was given the poorest possible appointment.
Looking back at the venture now I have the following conclusions,—

1. I should have tackled the problem of finance at the start. Of course the war coming on unexpectedly changed everything. But I should have made it clear that if we wished the movement to succeed, we must be prepared to sacrifice to finance it.

2. In an effort to make it clear to my atheistic comrades that I was entirely sincere, I gave too much of my energy to party affairs. I was on the Provincial Executive. I addressed many street corner meetings. I helped everything I could. I was candidate for the Board of Education and for the Provincial Govt. I never did get across with any thoroughness the essential message of Jesus,—the message of the Kingdom of God.

In Cowansville, Quebec, a lawyer owned and edited the weekly news paper. He was so rabid in his attacks on Socialism that he attracted the attention of the Editor of the Appeal to Reason of Kansas. I forgot his name. This Editor journeyed to Cowansville and spent a week with Mr. Cotton, at the end of which, he had completely convinced him of the truth of Socialism. Cotton's Weekly gradually became so Socialist that the local subscriptions dropped off and he was left with the support of only the Socialists. It went all over Canada for 25 cents a week.

When the time came for Mr. Cotton to give up work, he turned the paper and plant over to the Social Democratic Party and it was moved to Toronto. A. W. Manse was appointed Editor and Manager and it was set up in an unused Church east of the Don. Manse was a very able Editor but the persistent pressure of capitalism gradually bankrupted it. Isaac Bainbridge became Editor. The paper and much Socialist literature were put under the ban and Bainbridge sent to jail. Despite the fact that he was suffering from tuberculosis all appeals for his release failed and he died in jail, a true martyr to the cause of Socialism. His daughter married Mr. W. Dennison who later became Alderman and Provincial member for Toronto.

After I returned to the Church, the Church of the Social Revolution kept going for some time. The tide was turning. Men were returning from the front with minds definitely turned toward Socialism. They condemned the war and the way the capitalists had used it to enrich themselves at the expense of the Canadian people. Men were discharged from the Army so disgusted with war that they refused to wear the uniform even when paid to for parades. The stark selfishness of the military and the manufacturing clique opened their eyes and a Farmer-Labor Govt was elected in Toronto.

I think that if I had had the finances to hold on a bit longer till the tide turned, the Church of the Social Revolution might have gone on to success. Ministerial friends came to me and said,—"James, I now know you were right, but, gosh, I felt so sore at you I could have done anything." Rev. W. D. Creighton, Editor of the Christian Guardian, who had refused to print my articles of protest came out with a statement on the front page of the Guardian, saying that, remembering all the way propaganda hadfooled him, and the way it might do so in the future, he was resolved that never again would he be found supporting war of any kind. Little did he foresee the events that resulted in the second world war.

I forgot to mention that Rev. Dr. Shearer, of the Presbyterian Dept of Evangelism and Social Service once addressed the meeting of the Christian
Socialist Fellowship in the Western Y. M. C. A. in Toronto. It was apparent that, working from purely Christian teachings and compelled by the actual effort to solve social problems, he had actually come in his own mind to the Socialist position— the same position to which so many of the comrades had come who had worked through the Marxian theory.

Many ministers of the gospel have done the same thing. In the actual work of the ministry, they have come to the conclusion that under the dog-eat-dog competitive system of economics it is impossible to evangelize the world.

At the end of an Ashram I wrote Rev. E. Stanley Jones, noted writer and evangelist, saying that I believed it impossible to win the world for God until we squarely faced the problem of teaching Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom, as he taught it in his books and demanded that it be put into practice in our social and economic life. He replied, agreeing with me but saying that it was very difficult, if not impossible for him to get across Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom in the face of the psychology of the modern world.

I still believe that Josiah Strong was right back in the early days of this century when he wrote The Next Great Awakening and outlined the Gospel of the Kingdom. The awakening awaits the unadulterated preaching of that gospel.

The Winnipeg Labor Church Movement

1910 - 1924

by William Ivens

The Winnipeg Labor Church Movement while centering in the person of The Rev. William Ivens, B.D., M.A., was largely a product of the social upheaval that followed the ending of World War I, and its duration for the most part coincided with those days of unrest and social turmoil. It came to an end when social and economic conditions, as well as the sociological and psychological thinking came back to normal.

For some dozen years the Rev. William Ivens had been a pastor of rural congregations of the Methodist Church of Canada. In 1916 he was stationed at McDougall Methodist Church, in north Winnipeg. Throughout the war he had taken a pacifist position. This in an era when patriotism ran high, and when Canada and its churches had gone all out in support of war, made the task of a pacifist minister difficult. By the end of the 1918 church year the congregation of McDougall Church was divided as to whether or not their minister should be removed. Conference, June 1918, decided that the interest of the Church would be better served if for the time being Mr. Ivens were left without a station. This left him for one year without a pastorate. The Conference, June 1919, insisted that Mr. Ivens again accept a pastorate, and when he urged that in the midst of The Winnipeg General Strike, 1919, and since he had started The Labor Church Movement, he was not then free so to do, he was "Located", left without a station, and virtually dismissed from the ministry.
In June 1918 Mr. Ivens felt that he was called upon to preach the gospel, which, as he saw it, had deep sociological roots and wide ramifications. If the Methodist Church could not provide this opportunity then it seemed evident that he should seek out a place where he would be free to continue to do so. He thereupon rented the assembly hall in the Winnipeg Labor Temple, and thereafter preached there as from the pulpit of McDougall Methodist Church.

During the strike in 1918 of the Winnipeg Civic employees Mr. Ivens had been asked by the strikers to present their case to the Winnipeg City Council. This he did, and closely associated himself with the men and their demands. When the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council decided, 1918, to start their own weekly paper, they asked Mr. Ivens to become editor. They took over the old established, but very small "Voice", published by the Winnipeg Printing Co., with Mr. Arthur Puttee, as shareholder and editor of the Voice, and changed the name of the "Voice" to "The Western Labor News".

The Western Labor News met the need of the times and quickly built up a circulation of 20,000 per week, throughout Canada. Several Labor Unions in the City of Winnipeg subscribed for their total membership. When the 1919 strike of the Metal Workers in Winnipeg developed into the Winnipeg General Strike of all organized workers, and quickly involved many labor unions in western and eastern Canada, the Western Labor News was well established as their official organ.

The Winnipeg Labor Church immediately received wide support, and when the 1919 General Strike took place, eight branches of the Labor Church came into being in Winnipeg and environs. Its speakers came from those who felt impelled to forward this new socio-religious outlet. It started a number of Sunday Schools. Quickly requests came from other centers for assistance in starting similar Labor Church Movements.

The Rev. A. E. Smith, for many years a minister of the Methodist Church was stationed in Brandon, Manitoba. He was left in 1920 or thereabouts without a church. Brandon workers thereupon urged him to start there a Labor Church. This he did, but after a couple of years it was found impossible to raise for him necessary financial support. Thereupon he went to Toronto, and there started another Labor Church. Its fate was similar to that of Brandon.

The Labor Church for a time gathered impetus from the conviction that the Churches as a whole were not sympathetic with the aims of the Labor Movement. One Winnipeg Church, Westminster Presbyterian, reportedly allowed its premises to be used by anti-Labor groups; the so-called "Citizen's Committee of 1000". This group actively opposed the Winnipeg General Strike.

For several years the Winnipeg Labor Church carried on. Mr. Ivens made his living at first as editor of The Western Labor News until he was arrested, with others, and charged with "Seditious Conspiracy to overthrow The State". The this charge was utter nonsense, all but one of those charged were convicted, and sentenced with from one to two years in jail and penitentiary.
While in jail Mr. Ivens was elected to the Legislature of Manitoba, and went directly from prison cell to parliament, as also did George Armstrong and John Queen. The latter were not associated with the Labor Church Movement. The parliamentary honorarium for the next fourteen years gave financial support to the founder of the Labor Church Movement.

After the initial impulse and enthusiasm spent, themselves support for the new church venture waned, and it became increasingly difficult to pay rentals for meeting places, and necessary printing and advertising costs. Consequently one branch after another had to be closed until eventually the central group also had to end its activity.

Meantime the crowd, still seeking something new upon which to use its desire for betterment, followed other movements that offered more opportunity for free thinking. The pledge card for the Labor Church read as follows: "I am willing to support an independent and creedless Church based upon the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man."

The this was simple, and brief, it still had sufficiently of religious basis to stir opposition from free thinkers. The roots of the Labor Church had not struck deep enough to hold the loyalty of such persons. Slowly, but surely, after a few dragging struggling years, its day was done, and its usefulness had ended.

While it existed it supplied a very real need for the outlet of passions pent up by the war years.

Signed, William Ivens.
CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING LABOUR CHURCHES

August 2nd, 1953.

Dear Sir:

I saw your letter some weeks ago, in the "Manchester Guardian" asking for any information about the Labour Church movement which was in existence during the early years of this century. I don’t know if I can help you at all in your researches, but in 1894 I before my marriage I attended Labour Church meetings in Bolton Lane, which were held on Sunday evenings, and were immediately popular. After my marriage we spent some years at Newhall near Burton-on-Trent, where we tried, without much success, to run similar meetings. In May 1900 we went to live in Ashton-under-Lyne, and at once joined the Independent Labour Party there, who ran Sunday meetings occasionally, as speakers were available, but these were mostly political propaganda. During the following autumn, my husband and I got together a small committee to consider the opening of a L. C. on the same lines as the one we had attended in Bolton. We found there was already a similar organisation running in the neighbouring town of Hyde, whose members, including a small choir, were willing to come along and help us. So in the new year we formed the Ashton-under-Lyne Labour Church, which for many years was very successful. Later we helped start one in Stockport which was also very popular for some half a dozen years or so.

At first my husband was lecture secretary for Ashton; later this office devolved on me, and I attended one or two national conferences, one at West Bromwich, one at Watford. During the summer months, the Hyde, Ashton, and Stockport contingents held a joint meeting in Marple, a country village which was a favourite place for picnics etc. These three churches did a vast amount of propaganda work in the north, besides meeting the spiritual needs of those who were not attracted to the Labour movement by the stark Marxist theories of the S. D. F. school of thought.

We started our meeting with a hymn; then repeated the Lord’s Prayer; then a reading which might be from the New Testament or might be from one of the classics, Poets, Novelists, Essayists, etc.; then a solo or a recitation, as we were able to get a fair amount of talent from among our members, or from the Clarion Choirs in the north, who were pretty strong at that time; another hymn; then the address which might be taken from a text of Scripture, or might be a lecture on art or literature, or might be Philip Snowden on Ruskin, Bruce Glasier or Katherine on some aspect of the growing Labour movement. In Ashton we also had quite a good Socialist Sunday School, where we also stressed the ethical side of the Labour movement. Unfortunately about that time the movement had a strong influx of secularists, whose influence played a great part in the decay of the Labour Churches, and an
irreparable loss to the Labour movement, in my opinion.

If you have read the book on Robert Blatchford, by Laurence Thompson, there is some information there about the rise and decay of the L.C. movement, which might help you. I think perhaps if the author has any further information, which is not included in the section on Labour Churches, he might be willing to help you. The book is published by Gollanz, through whom you might contact the author. If there is any question you wish to ask me, or any information I have omitted or which I can obtain for you I should be glad to oblige. I am getting old myself and I feel there is much information regarding the early Labour Movement which is not known to the younger members. Consequently they do not value the freedom they enjoy today, which was won for them, at bitter cost, by their forefathers. I have spoken to one or two old members, who may perhaps write to you as well. Wishing you every success in your task. Kindest Regards.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. H. W. Mitchell

Blackburn, Sept. 26

Dear Mrs. Mitchell:

I was very pleased to get your letter and to know that you can still take active interest in Social Matters. Regarding the Labour Church. There was a good branch of the Labour Church very active in Birmingham round about the beginning of 20th Century. A friend of mine had a cousin an active member, and through his invitation my friend and I went along to one or two meetings. The meetings were held on Sundays at a room in the Bristol Street Board School, B'nham. I believe that gentleman is still living, though he must be about your age. The address is Mr. Albert Stanton (I think it is Albert) 36 Hampton Road, Birchfield, Birmingham 6.

I have always remembered that Labour Church, though I never became a member. But I remember going to a lecture by Mr. Stanton Coits. He was a great one in the Ethical Movement. His lecture was on "The Lord's Prayer" and it has had a great influence on my life.

At the time I was growing sceptical of the dogmas of Christianity. I had read books on astronomy and learned of the vast expanse of the Universe, the wonders of the stars and the infinite distances, so great as to be measured by light-years. I had also been studying Embryology and the infinitely small in creation. And I could not place a Personal God round all these creative facts. But Stanton Coit gave me the clue I needed. "God" he said, "is synonymous with Good." They belong to the same root, there is only an extra o in the one. God and Good are the same. God is Good, and
all good is of God. This was a great idea to me. I could realise a
great infinite Spirit of Goodness pervading and creating this
vast universe from the infinitely small to the infinitely great.
If then God is Goodness, and all religions teach he is Love, and
if he is "Our Father", then in every man, however crude or vile,
goodness lived. And I could dedicate myself to that Great Father
to help in his work of winning all souls to worship Infinite Pure
Love. That has been the keynote of my public work ever since.
You see how I remember the Labour Church.

Mr. Stanton may know other members who still live. I believe also
there was a Labour Church at Hyde to which the S. Sunday School
was attached. A Mr. Whitehead connected with it wrote a book on
Womanhood. I forget the exact title.

The Socialist Sunday Schools were connected with various Socialist
Parties: I. L. P., S. D. P., B. S. P., etc., some with a Labour
Church. The last I heard of was at Hollinwood. But many of the
S. S. Schools are now closed. I edited the Children's Pages of
the Young Socialist for about 11 years. The last I heard of it a
few years back it was still going. I am enclosing a copy of one
of the last numbers I have by me. It is dated 1921. There are
some addresses on end pages that may bring some fruit.

I have often thought of the Labour Church and I think if it could
have lived and grown it would have raised the Socialist Movement
to a higher level. "Man does not live by bread alone" but unfortu-
nately most labour and socialist members still believe that
bread is the most, the only worthwhile thing to fight for. Of
course all parties think much that way, but generally there has
been an acknowledgement that spiritual ideals were honourable and
the Capitalist class does not belittle the teachings of Christian-
ity though they may ignore them. All these things perhaps account
for the present day indifference to religion.

I know when I was working for the S. S. Schools I often came upon
objectors to the sentiment of Love: On the other hand the S. S. S.
had a lot to say in the teaching of Love to their scholars. Their
opening and closing invocations and their Naming Service all stres-
sed the power of love. For only through that could one get real
comradeship.

I send Mr. Summers my best wishes for a successful accomplishment
of his idea. All is well here. Hope to see you at L. A. A. in
N/C. If there is anything more I can do to help let me know. Is
Northern Voice still going? Would they like a short article about
my brief touch with the Labour Church? I don't suppose the Man-
chester Guardian would accept such an article. What do you think?

Love and Best Wishes
Yours Sincerely,

Edith Pearce.
Birmingham, 22, 4, 54.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your enquiry received April 17th. re. Socialist Sunday School & Labour Church Movements between 1890 & 1920 I am sorry that I cannot be of much assistance to you as I was never a member of either organisation although I attended the B'ham Labour Church a number of times & was intimately acquainted with many of its members from about 1900.

I think it would be more correct to say that both movements had an ethical basis as the emphasis was on the Brotherhood of Man & I have no clear recollection of having heard any reference to the Fatherhood of God, the Supernatural, or the Hereafter. That the majority of its members, as well as the membership of the Independent Labour Party which expressed with emphasis the political and economic side of the movement, had been brought up in Christian Churches, Sunday Schools and homes is certainly true, but it is also as true to say that they had come out from these religious organisations because reference to social problems & our public responsibilities was discouraged & personal conduct in its narrower sense was all important.

When I came out from the Church & joined the Independent Labour Party I was surprised and gratified to find that the great majority of its members were ex Sunday School Scholars & Teachers & Church members who had completely failed to find the satisfaction they were seeking in the organisations they had left.

This Party with its leader Keir Hardie & others helped to form the Labour Representation Committee which formed the Labour Party.

The Labour Church meetings were arranged to include the singing of Labour songs and poems compiled in a Labour hymn book, the reading of poems and prose by the great poets & writers having a bearing on & giving support to the subject of an address by prominent men or women who were members or sympathisers with the movement, the meetings closing with singing & announcements.

The pamphlets & books on sale at the literature stall of these organisations dealt with humanitarian movements and subjects, also the ethics of the great religions of the world as well as books published by the Rationalist Press Association on scientific subjects. These organisations were composed of the serious and thoughtful minds of the working class, who felt the need of a deeper understanding of social problems & many of them took advantage of the Workers Educational Association, the governing body of which is drawn from the Trade Unions & the Universities who supply the tutors. That the influence of this body has been widespread is shown by the formidable list of M.P.s, County, City, Town, Parish & Rural District councillors & leading Co-operators who have passed through its classes which were in the early years almost
entirely on Economics & Economic History & kindred subjects.

I regret that I cannot be more helpful with books, pamphlets etc. & can only speak of what I have personally contacted in these organisations which are still full of vigor & giving rise to further movements & certainly making history.

Wishing you every success with your thesis & trust that your requests for information in other quarters will result in greater success that I have been able to render,

Yours sincerely,

Albert E. Stanton.

Manchester, 5 Dec. 1953.

Dear Mr. Summers:

Since you wrote me a month ago I have been unable to find any documents relating to the Labour Church, which never became a significant force and had a relatively short history. It was supported mainly by members of the I. L. P. and readers of the "Clarion", and endeavoured to present Socialism as a religion. For a few years it was fairly widespread, but the local congregations were small. Of course there were few socialists fifty years ago. I belonged to Birmingham L. C., which met on Sundays in the Bristol St. council school. Tom Groom, who followed Blatchford as editor of the "Clarion", was an active supporter, as also were most of the people mentioned in the enclosed L. R. C. Report.

There were L.C.s at West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Wolverhampton and most Black Country (S. Staffs.) towns; also at places in the Potteries. Some L.C.s ran children's socialist Sunday Schools.

I do not remember that the L.C. was ever organized as a national body.

Yours truly

Frank Spires

Brownlow, Anderton near Chorley
20 July '53.

Dear Sir:

I saw your letter in the Manchester Guardian of the 16th asking for information about the Labour Church.

I was associated with the Bolton Labour Church in the 90s which
held meetings each Sunday evening but as I lived 8 miles outside the town I attended only occasionally. James Sims, a dominating personality, usually presided. Most of the pioneers of the Socialist movement gave addresses there, in the Central Hall & were well attended at one period. I remember best two addresses by my friend Edward Carpenter who had quite a few admirers in the district. One was on "Shelley" & the other on "Beauty in Civic Life" & he gave others I think but can't remember. The Labour Church published a good little journal, monthly I think, called "The Labour Prophet".

Fred Brocklehurst I knew well, he contested Bolton unsuccessfully for Parliament. I met Trevor & Herford. Trevor published a brochure of his poems "The One Life". I may have a copy but I am too old and ill (63½) to go through a lot of stuff I have and my memory is failing badly.

Among those who came to Bolton were Keir Hardie, the Glaciers, Aylmer Maude, Stanton Coit. I ought to remember more but can't just now. All the old friends who attended seem to have passed away.

I can't write more now but if I think of anything interesting, I will write again.

With all good wishes

Charles F. Sixsmith

James Sims had a small business as a french polisher in the town. He was said to have the largest collection in the district of ferns & collected botanical specimens.

There were a number of Whitman admirers who attended the church. Many of the Sunday evening speakers were local people.

Bolton. 29/7/53

Dear Mr. Summers:

... My grandfather died in 1905, before I was born, but my early childhood was greatly influenced by the traditions and beliefs which were passed on by him, and by the great esteem in which he was held by those of his contemporaries who survived him. Of these, few now remain. ... My personal knowledge of my grandfather is that which I obtained from my father and uncles. He was, from all accounts, a man of upright mind and forthright beliefs -- a man not easily turned from any opinion which he believed to be right. He brought up his children in the same ideals and it is a fact that all of his sons were greatly respected in their various walks of life. His interests were varied, ranging from his trade -- he founded a local firm of
french polishers which has only just passed out of the family -- to homeopathic medicine. He was a naturalist of some distinction and presented collections of microscopic mosses to the museums. I still have in fact, some of his personal collection and his microscope. Both he and his wife were keen lovers of music -- his wife once sang by royal command. He was also, as befits a naturalist, a great lover of the countryside, and I recollect as a boy reading a small book of poems which had belonged to him, one verse of which seemed to exemplify what I have heard of his views:

If you would be wise and well,
Ramble off in vale and dell,
Learning more than tongue can tell
From the outdoor bible.

He was a very keen exponent of the cause of Labour and was regularly visited by those who came later to be the national leaders of the Labour Party -- Ramsay Macdonald, Philip Snowden, Margaret McMillan, etc., to whom he was known, if my memory serves me right as "the grand old man".

I will write you again as soon as I can verify further information.

I am, yours sincerely

James Sims.

Radcliffe, Manchester, 19.7.53

Dear Sir:

My daughter saw your letter in the Man. Guardian and thought I might be able to help you. My father, brother and myself began to attend the Bolton Labour Church over 50 years ago.

I think Mr. Sims had been mainly responsible for starting it, and when we started attending it was always very well attended, very often it was full. I'm afraid I can't remember exactly the order of the service but it was something like this: Opening Hymn (from Labour Church Hymn Book), Lord's Prayer, Vocal Solo or occasionally violin or piano solo, President (Mr. Sims) introduced the Speaker, Speech and I think collection, Final Hymn.

Near the door was a well filled bookstall which, I should think, was fairly well patronized. Books on sale were by the "Clarion" staff, Robert Blatchford, Montague Blatchford, A. M. Thompson (Dangle), R. B. Suthers (The Whatnot), Fay (The Bounder) had just died when we entered the movement. Also H. G. Wells, Tolstoy, etc. etc. (Fred Brocklehurst). The speakers included Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald, Bruce Glasier, his wife Catherine St. John Conway, Margaret McMillan, Alison Garland, Percy Redfern, etc., and at Christmas time an elocutionist from Manchester who did Dicken's "Christmas Carol".
What a glorious treat that was. I remember our very first visit to the Labour Church and thinking "This is it! We've found it!"

Very soon after this, my father, (who had taught singing both public classes and privately) started the "Bolton Clarion Vocal Union". The "Clarion Vocal Union" (C. V. U.) was started by Montague Blatchford (Robert's brother) which spread over Yorkshire and Lancashire. One year the "meet" was in Yorkshire, the next year in Lancashire. A short time before the actual "meet" Monty used to visit each choir taking part for a final rehearsal. And what a 'drubbing' we got. Sopranos "slithering down the scale", tenors "lagging behind" etc. etc. But when the 'Day' arrived and a final run through of all the pieces to be sung and we were all in our places on the platform in the biggest hall in the town. Sopranos and contraltos on one side in white blouses, tenors and basses on the other side in white ties, hundreds of us. And the applause, stamping, shouting, deafening. It was all so delightful. Then came the test pieces to see which choir held the Clarion baton for a year. Oh! Monty was an artist to his finger tips.

And then -- there were no more funny drawings and articles by Monty in the Clarion and nobody could understand it. And at Easter time my boy and I went to stay with his brother and his wife. He was a minister in Halifax where Monty lived. On Sunday we visited the Socialist Sunday School, and met there Phyllis Blatchford, Monty's daughter. Sam asked her to come to tea with us at his brother's home. She said she must get permission first, so we went with her to her home. How often I had seen that address in the Clarion in connexion with the C. V. U. It was Easter 1908.

Phyllis went through to speak to her mother, whilst we were shown into the front room where Monty was sitting before the fire. Of course I opened up right away about his absence from the columns of the 'Clarion'. For a while he was very reticent, I couldn't get anything out of him. But I persevered, and eventually it came out. His brother Robert had informed him that his articles were too light, that Clarion readers wanted more serious matter, so it seemed to me that Monty had got the "sack". He looked such a pathetic figure sitting there in the room, the walls of which he had embellished with his own hands. To us, it seemed a tragedy, and not a very long time after that we read in the 'Clarion' that our beloved Monty was dead. I've never forgiven R. B. for that.

I recall quite clearly a book which was on sale at the Labour Church Bookstall. The title was "The Art of Happiness" by Montague Blatchford. He described John Smith after a hard day's work, "seated in a sort of clammy bower festooned by wet clothes".

Then there was the 'Clarion Cycling Club'. The jolly runs, meeting other C. C. C.'s, the teas, and oh! joy, the impromptu social evening afterwards. How we did enjoy those happy happy days. And the Bolton Clarion Vocal Union produced Sydney Granville, later to become one of the stars of 'D'Oyley Carte Opera Company'.
I'm afraid I can't tell you much about the Clarion Cinderella Clubs. The nearest I ever came to the Cinderella Club was at Christmas time. After the C. V. U. had been out Carol singing, and the spoils had been equally divided, I used to send my share 5/- to the Cinderella Club. After some years, I don't remember just when, but I should imagine it was about 1905, the Labour Church must gradually have died out, and the Bolton Socialist Party began to flourish. Then the Sunday evening meetings were addressed by Ben Tillett, Victor Grayson, Tom Mann, Dr. Stanton Coit, H. M. Hyndman, Mrs. Bridges Adams, etc.

And shortly afterwards we started a Socialist Sunday School. I had a class of girls aged between 8 and 10 years. We opened with a Socialist hymn or song. I was the pianist (not a first rate one, but I did my best). Then we went to our classes. Sam was a book collector, so I had thousands of books to choose from, and whilst I read to my scholars they sat entranced. Then the Superintendent gave a little talk, and then a last hymn and Sunday School was over.

Those too were very happy days for everyone who took part, but alas, my happiness was short lived, for after I had been teaching about a year, I was obliged to give it up, as I had a big operation pending. And after I had recovered somewhat we were married. And one of the guests I remember was H. V? Herford whom Sam knew very well, although I never knew him. Here I must go back to Labour Church days. In the winter, I suppose in order to get some funds, the Labour Church used to organise a social and dance in the Bolton Town Hall. I remember seeing a poster advertising a social and dance to be held in the Town Hall: "Come and hear the three Freds!" Fred Brocklehurst, Fred Morgan (the elocutionist from Manchester) and Fred Partington, one of Bolton's tenors. On the Labour Church bookstall I recall seeing a book entitled "I was in Prison" by Fred Brocklehurst, -- also one by John Trevor "My Quest for God". I don't remember reading either of them, but I fancy Fred B. spent some time in goal because of speaking somewhere, but where I don't know.

In 1918 we went down to live in London, Streatham S. W. 16. We'd been there seven or eight years, when one day Sam said he'd come across John Trevor and had invited him to come to Streatham on Christmas day. That will be about 27 years ago, and in the meantime Sam has died, so I don't remember very clearly much of what he said. I do remember that he seemed to be in a poor way, and that he and his daughter were living in one room. We had a relative (by marriage) who was a doctor and when she knew that Trevor had been to our flat, she was utterly disgusted. Why, we never found out and didn't inquire.

I hope what I have been able to tell you will be of some service to you. Don't hesitate to ask, if there is anything more I can tell you I will gladly do so. With kind regards,

Sincerely Yours

Mary E. and Eileen Brooks.
Radcliffe, Manchester, 15.8.53

Dear Mr. Summers:

I have received your second letter, and am glad to have been of some service to you. . . . Pa got socialism when I was about 22. I fancy Enid Stacy just about drew him into socialism, and very soon after that he was reading the 'Clarion', attending the Labour Church and starting the Bolton Clarion Vocal Union. It certainly kept him busy, but it was a labour of love. . . .

Sincerely Yours

Mary E. and Eileen Brooks.

Bolton, July 30th. 1953

Dear Sir:

The Labour Church in Bolton ended before I was old enough to be interested in it, but from old socialists I gathered that it was essentially a propaganda meeting for socialism, labourism or radicalism set in the form of a religious evening service, with music, and the singing of socialist or humanist songs. Similarly the Socialist Sunday Schools were institutions to train the children of socialists, and took the form of the orthodox Sunday Schools. I enclose a copy of the ten Socialist Commandments. The school opened with a socialist hymn or song (the movement had an excellent song book), children would repeat the commandments, the superintendent would speak, and then the school would separate into classes. The tiny tots would be given humanitarian stories, later they would learn something of tribal life, slavery, feudalism and capitalism, until they reached the adult class, which would discuss current topics. The idea was to train them as good citizens and good socialists. In addition there were prizes, sermons, field days, Xmas Parties, and all the usual activities of a Sunday School. Infants were named, and occasionally, I believe, there were marriage services (not legal of course). There were at that time (1912 - 1925) a number of county and regional federations, and a national organisation, with the Young Socialist as the movement's national organ.

The movement still exists, though I am not now in touch with it.

Yours sincerely,

James Paulden.

Cambridge, July 17th. 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:
Your letter in yesterday's Manchester Guardian woke many happy memories for me. I have written out some that may be helpful, or not. I have a copy of The Labour Church Hymn Book, words 2d (with tunes 1/6) and also my old membership card dated December 1895 and signed by Edwin Halford. These give you the principles and object of the Labour Church but no doubt you already have them. I can send them on. I haven't much memory of Edwin Halford, and of the other names you mention only Sam Hobson was known to me. Most of the active workers are dead now. My parents attended the Labour Church from its beginning. I took an active part, being subscription secretary and later platform secretary. That meant I had to book the speakers, see to the advertising, and arrange hospitality for them. We were fortunate in having members who could give speakers comfortable lodgings. Often the hostess would invite members in to meet the speaker, and there was much discussion. These meetings and also the tea time intervals at the Labour Church were very valuable in forming friendships which endured for a life time. Many of the things for which we agitated are taken as a common place now-a-days of course. Miss McMillan with her unceasing agitation for the better treatment of children, for school meals, baths, and later nursery schools, altered opinions very considerably. How we worked! and thought that if only we made the people see how much better things could be, they'd enthusiastically join in. I could talk a long time. If there is anything you would like to ask, I'll do my best to answer. Hoping that you will get helpful replies.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs. ) Miriam Senior, nee Sunderland

My birthday was August 27th 1875 so you see these memories go back a long way.

Bradford Labour Church: Services:

In the early days it was Hymn, Prayer, Reading by Chairman, Hymn, Address by visiting speaker, Collection, Questions, Soloist sometimes. The chairman -- a local man -- was free to include a prayer or not and to choose his own reading -- from the Bible, or Ruskin etc. Gradually the routine changed, with the prayer omitted, and chairman's remarks substituted. Hymns were from The Labour Church Hymn Book published in 1892 at 2d by Labour Church Institute, Byrom St., Manchester.

The speakers included Keir Hardie, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald, J. H. Thomas, J. R. Clynes, Bruce and Mrs. Glasier, Margaret Bondfield, Margaret McMillan, S. O. Hobson, as well as local men who had taken a public part. The speaker submitted three or four titles from which the secretary chose the one likely to be most useful. The Labour Church platform provided a good training ground for speakers. Later, of course, as the Labour movement grew, some of the speakers mentioned above were too busy. One summer, I remember Fred Brocklehurst giving a course of lectures.

Two services were held each Sunday, at 3 p.m. and 6:30. There was
only one Labour Church in the town which meant that many sympathisers lived at a good distance away. For their convenience a tea was provided at 4d (!) the work entailed being done by young women members of the Social Committee; 20 of them who took their turn in being on duty once a month (This often proved a valuable way of getting them interested in the work of the Church). They also served at Saturday night dances which were held each week, again by a rota -- Labour Church.

**I. L. P., Clarion Cyclists:**

Clarion Vocal Union was formed of L. C. members. They served as a choir and would give a concert during the winter session in place of the ordinary meeting.

Clarion Cycling Club attracted some of the members, but were responsible for their own affairs. Supported the Church Funds by a monthly dance at The Labour Institute.

A Sunday School was formed but as I took no part in it beyond booking some special speakers for their anniversaries, my memory is vague. A second school was formed in Great Horton ward. (I think possibly that Mr. Austin Haigh, Cross Lane, Gt. Horton, Bradford, might be able and willing to give you more particulars.) Harry Lowerson came for them once and a Mr. George Wilson (who is still living as far as I know) from Halifax came twice. I haven't his address.

Bradford Cinderella Club was I imagine one of the first in the country. It was run by a town committee. The secretary, Harry Smith and some very active members such as Wm. Leach (later one of Bradford's M. P.s) and Bernard Riley were Labour supporters. At one time there was a suggestion of a Labour Cinderella Club but it was felt unnecessary so the garments some of the women members had made were passed on to the well established club.

Bradford Labour Church was established in October 1891, meeting first in the Dyers Rooms, then in the Temperance Hall, & finally in the Labour Institute opened in 1893 (from Socialism Over Sixty Years by Fenner Brockway. Other references to Bradford can be found in Margaret McMillan by Albert Mansbridge, and The Life of Rachel McMillan by Margaret McMillan.) The Labour Institute was an old chapel. After meeting there for some time it was decided to buy the building. A company was formed with £1 shares which were taken up by Labour sympathisers. The Hall was let to the Labour Church Committee who sub-let it to collateral bodies, the I. L. P., Cycling Club, etc.

There was always a good selection of pamphlets and books by such writers as Edward Carpenter on sale at every meeting.

Cambridge, August 15th, 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:
I am pleased my letter re Labour Churches was of interest to you. 

... I suppose it was largely the growth of the Labour movement that led to the gradual fading away of the Churches. In the early days it was more necessary to go to a central point to meet people with similar beliefs; later with ward groups, members could meet more easily. Then, too, the ethical side didn’t appeal to many -- too slow they felt it, wanting to see results in better wages, etc.

... Edwin Halford was elected as a Member of the Board of Guardians, and he accepted a paid post, Relieving Officer, I believe, which put an end to his Labour work.

Yours sincerely,

Miriam Senior.

Great Horton, Bradford, 2.11.53

Dear Miriam:

... The only person I know of the names in Summers’s letter is Edwin Halford. I succeeded him as Labour Church secretary. He later faded out of our movement after becoming an officer under the Poor Law. He lived, after retiring, with his eldest daughter, Maud, in the house next door to the one the Misses Bentley occupied in Cousen Place, and became a member of the Liberal Club now in the home of the Cousen family. I lost him after Maud migrated to Canada.

After the sale of the Labour Church to Pilkingtons, the glass firm from St. Helens, the Labour Institute acquired Morley St. Picture House where meetings were regularly held on Sunday evenings for some time during and after the First World War. The known connection of the picture house with Labour, coupled with indifferent management by A. G. Sutton caused a falling away of patronage, & the place was sold to New Century people. In the meantime the printing business of Thornton & Pearson, Bartherend Rd. was bought for £5000, & myself appointed to manage. Willie Pearson carried on as Secretary after his father. It was uphill work for years, our tie up with Labour was a handicap from a business standpoint. We printed the Bradford Pioneer until its demise, some ten years ago.

Two years ago the company was re-organised & has now no official connection with Labour. The title of the firm is now Thornton & Pearson (Printers) Ltd. Now that I am retired my eldest son, Alan, is managing the business and doing it very well too. Willie Pearson’s son, Geoffrey, is secretary, and the directors are myself, Alf. Dewhirst (representing I. L. P. who have shares in the company) Mrs William Leach and her son Philip, & Maurice Wilson, with Willie Pearson as chairman. I was in charge from Jan. 1919 until I retired in 1946. The business has prospered. The equipment is of the most modern, & our turnover last year was over £25,000. "Whisper it not in Gath" but we actually paid a dividend of 20% or more. Bonuses are given to our staff which is now some
17. Such is the brief story of the end of Labour Institute Ltd. It is worth mentioning that everybody that could be traced who had shares have got their money back, or equivalent shares in the new company.

Sincerely yours,

Austin Haigh.

Hyde, Cheshire.

Dear Sir:

I do hope the enclosed notes, photographs, etc., will be a small contribution towards your work of research. It will give some idea of the grand community which we were, and the splendid activities we took part in for so many years, all in existence under the name of the Hyde Labour Church.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. H. Armitage

(The material referred to above has been incorporated in the account given elsewhere in the present work of the Hyde Labour Church.)

Febry. 13/54

Dear Mr. Summers:

In reply to your letter, I am sorry that it is very difficult to give you much information with regard to the Labour Church as most of the members have passed away. The Labour Church Movement would be founded in the early nineties, but the Wm. Morris Labour Church, Leek, was not founded until 1897 when an old meeting house belonging to the Society of Friends, which had been disused for many years, was rented from them & renovated to be used as a Labour Church.

The religion of the Labour Church emphasized the Fatherhood of God & the Brotherhood of man, believing that service to mankind was the most essential form of worship. Creeds and dogmas were largely ignored.

The services held were usually, A Hymn from the Labour Church Hymn Book, A Reading, Short introduction of the Speaker by the Chairman, Lecture, concluding with a Hymn. Among the lecturers who visited Leek were Ramsay Macdonald, Philip Snowden, George Lansbury, J. R. Clynes, Will Crooks & other M. P.s. Other lectures were given by
Dr. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pankhurst, Dr. Martin, Gilbert Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Duchess of Sutherland, Miss MacMillan (founder of open air school movement), Jabez Howard (founder of Garden City Movement), & many others who had messages calculated to benefit humanity.

I hope this information will be useful to you, & if I think or hear of anything further, I will write you again.

Yours sincerely,

W. Barnett,
Leek, Staffs.

p.s. Since writing enclosed letter I have been in touch with my old friend, Jas. Lilley, of Sunholme, Ashbourne Rd., Leek, who was one of the founders of the Leek Labour Church & he has given me the enclosed which I hope you will find of interest:

The Labour Church was fortunate in having amongst its members a few men who were interested, and good, at choral singing, and they were able to form a good choir to lead the singing of hymns. They also formed Glee Parties to interchange visits with other Labour Churches in the surrounding towns, and also to run concerts during the week.

Each Saturday during the winter there was a social meeting in the evening, in which the lady members took turns to provide refreshments, pie suppers, etc., so that the Social side kept the members interested during the winter. There was a billiard table for the men; card games, etc., to keep the interest alive.

In summer organized rambles around the countryside were well attended.

The Labour Church may fairly claim to be the pioneers of the Labour movement in Leek, and we have had a Labour M. P. for many years, almost an unbroken record; All is not well with the world, but it is certainly better for our united efforts.

Special mention must be made of a local architect, Larner Sugden, a prominent Fabian; in the beginning and development of the Labour Church. He was one of the leaders in the organising and running a bazaar to raise the money for the equipment of the church as explained by Will Barnett. Other members, of course, willingly gave their services.

A large portrait of Larner Sugden and John Prime hung in the Labour Church along with pictorial designs by William Morris, Walter Crane, etc., with Morris Velvet curtains to the windows, giving a very artistic effect to the whole.
A milestone in the history of the Labour Church was when the Clarion Cycle Club had their Annual Easter Meet in Leek. On Sunday afternoon Jimmy Sexton gave the address, clad in a black and amber ringed cycle sweater, and looking somewhat like a gigantic wasp. Clarionette Robt. Blatchford (Nunquam of "Merrie England" fame) took the chair. Other members of the Clarion, A. M. T. "Dangle" etc. attended the meeting along with several hundred cyclists, for whom the Labour Church members got billets in the town, for the week end.

When that grand soul, fiery little red-headed Nellie Wilkinson led the hunger marchers from Jarrow to London they came through Leek. The comrades of the Labour Church met them and put them up for the night. Bundles of straw were obtained, and covered the floor of the church. The lady members brought pots of jam, loaves of bread, and other articles from which sandwiches were made for supper and breakfast next morning; also parcels for them to take along with them on their way to Derby. Special mention must be made of our President, John Prime (a cobbler) who stayed up all night putting patches on their boots which were worn through.

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Longton, Staffs, March 6th, 1954.

Dear Mr. Summers:

This reply to your inquiry of March 28th has been delayed by the need to get together bits and pieces after the lapse of half a century. I was secretary of the Longton Labour Church in its early stages but fail so far to recall the date of its commencement.

Prior to the Labour Church a branch of the Social Democratic Federation (later renamed The Social Democratic Party) existed in Longton. Its weekly journal was "Justice", published in London, its editor Quelch, its teaching Marxist. There was also a Clarion Cycling Club in the district. It distributed Socialist literature at meetings held far afield on its country runs.

The S. D. F. met in a room of the workingmen's club in High St. & usually some ten or twenty members assembled. Three or four of these took the initiative in starting the Labour Church which at the outset met in an anteroom of Longton Town Hall, perhaps fifty or a hundred in the audience. Occasionally the hall itself was booked for special meetings when there might assemble some hundreds of people.

The Labour Church Hymn Book was used, Readings were from various sources. Speakers were of many persuasions; as a general rule stressing the ethical rather than the economic. A table at the door displayed for sale books & pamphlets: difficult ones like Marx "Capital", easier like "Britain for the British", and amusing like Suthers' "The Hen Run".
The Church was from the first strongly supported by S. D. F. men and women, and by the Clarion Cyclists. Looking back it appears a fortunate combination could it have been retained -- S. D. F. for economics; Labour Church for ethics; Cyclists for distribution. A Socialist Sunday School was also brought into being with some 100 children, as part of the Labour Church.

Finally the extreme left wing won election to the principal offices of the Labour Church, & I with two other members resigned from it. From this point my information is hearsay. I have been told that the type of address changed towards economics; that audiences dwindled & the finish came. Certainly it is folly to feed strong meat to babes & this may be the sort of thing that happened. Or it may be that the novelty wore off. The minute books should show, if they exist. You might try a letter to the Cartwright Honor, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, & ask the Secretary of the Workers' Educational Association for the address of Mrs. H. Barker, widow of Mr. Harry Barker; I believe he became Secretary of the Labour Church at the change over. If so, she may still have the minute books. And she may give you her recollections of the organization, which would check on, & add to mine.

You ask for books & letters -- I have none -- and for pamphlets -- I have none on the Labour Church, & only one left over from the sort we sold at the door. It is too dilapidated to enclose it. I have found a Fabian & enclose it.

The old photographs sent may interest -- especially one of a Labour Day which is dated May 27th, 1906. I seem to remember the Labour Church taking part in it, but this would require verification. On the back of the photo is a newspaper cutting of the comprehensive & optimistic resolution moved by A. Brockhouse. He was or became a city councillor. Miss F. A. Farmer sometimes came to the meetings. Later she was Alderman & first Lady Mayoress of Stoke-on-Trent. Councillor Beechener also spoke on our platform many times.

Adcock's poem indicates the white-hot-Indignation that got the "Daily Herald" started in the face of fantastic odds. Compare with the comfortable doctrine of Bibby in the "Study of Social Welfare" enclosed. Sorry I have only the one part of it. Pett Ridges, the novelist, used to say that the real heroines of this world are the women of the slums!

The other items enclosed show conditions in the potteries about 1906: children playing in the gutter; women cleaning outsides of their homes. None of the enclosures need be returned.

With compliments,
Yours faithfully,

Wm. J. B. Blake.
Dear Sir:

I noticed your letter in the "Manchester Guardian" the other day, and was agreeably surprised that someone should be delving into the history of a church that was one of my parents chief interests in their youthful days. If not among the founding members, they must at least have become attached within a few weeks of its birth. From conversations heard as a child and during young manhood, I may be able to give you some aid.

In the first place, when my mother died a short while ago I came into possession of a Labour Church Hymnbook, fourpart music, tonic solfa notation, containing, form memory, 96 hymns, which seem to consist of specially written words to well known hymn tunes. Additionally, and I have reason to think that this may be well-nigh unique, 10 years' (or perhaps 12) issues, bound in three volumes of the "Labour Prophet", the monthly magazine of the Labour Church.

These I handed, some months ago, to the custody of our county library. They are in the care of our local Librarian.

Mr. E. Read, District Librarian, Flixton Library.

Apart from documentary matter, I append a few recollections from the overheard conversations, and some details that while not possibly proved facts, are, I think, plausible statements. They may fit in with other details to enable you to piece together a coherent story.

The Labour Church was founded by John Trevor, minister of Upper Brook Street Unitarian Church, Manchester, in a building in the Trafford Road district of Salford. I have a suspicion that many of the members fell under the spell of Robert Blatchford and the "Clarion" and that they drifted from the church to the secular activities of "Clarionettes". John Trevor later returned to the Unitarian fold, in the 1920's he was at Rainow, near Macclesfield, Cheshire. At that time H. V. Herford (who was then crippled and propelling himself in a wheeled chair, and who had a (works?) managership at Hans Renolds, the chairmakers.) engaged himself in collecting alms for Trevor's support. It was a pathetic appeal suggesting penury, but later rumour suggested that the poverty was relative and Trevor was at least comfortable. Trevor probably died at Rainow. His son was at that period an official of the Sandbach Union, probably relieving officer, and had a numerous family, which was held out as the reason for his inability to assist his father.

H. V. Herford established a name for himself in the improvement of factory working conditions at a time when such were unheard of. H. Atkinson (a schoolteacher?) was sometime secretary of the Salford Labour Church, as was my father, and John Walker, at that time a solicitor's clerk, but later a solicitor, partner in the firm of Blackburn and Walker, Kennedy Street.
Fred Brocklehurst, a barrister, became a Conservative platform speaker in later life, an action which led to strong speaking on the part of his former associates. Then something occurred which blemished his name and he disappeared from public life. I cannot say anything of H. C. Rowe.

The "Cinderellas" were taken over by E. Halton's "Manchester Evening Chronicle" in this district. This newspaper was able to organize them on a bigger scale.

During my father's term of office he had to entertain (Prince) Peter Kropotkin, the Russian socialist, who had some engagement to speak at the Labour Church. He also attended "anarchist" meetings as observer on the church's behalf.

I fear that you will have difficulty in finding any adult members of the church alive in this district. My mother (who would have been 84 had she been alive) looked upon herself as the last survivor. I think that the Salford Church must have existed but 15 years.

Yours sincerely,

Wilfrid Cooke.

Bristol, 15.9.53

Dear Mr. Summers:

It is I who must now apologise for delay in answering. Owing to illness some letters were displaced.

I find it rather difficult to describe my father. He was a man of strong philanthropic leanings who spent much time and energy in lecturing for 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoons' and in being treasurer for the Hulme Day Nursery. He was a clear and fluent speaker. His politics were the radical end of liberalism. Our papers were the Manchester Guardian and the Clarion, and for business the City News. He was at Sidcot, a Quaker School, and was brought up a Quaker, but resigned from the society with the group of young men who resigned out of indignation at the exclusion from the Society of Friends of David Duncan, a man whom they all very much admired. My parents later became Theosophists.

In business he was an architect and sanitary engineer, but he was never a very successful business man. He left school at 14 and went into his father's office, so any further education was acquired by home reading. He wrote a very beautiful hand; I still have books which he gave me which are most beautifully inscribed. He was not quite 52 when he died of an acute attack of pneumonia. He was always ready to help anybody who needed help and was most generous to all, and was an affectionate father. He was born
June 24th, 1848 and died Easter 1900.

Yours sincerely,
Catharine L. Corbett.

Manchester, Aug. 25/53

Dear Sir:

Your letter in the M/C Guardian last month prompts me to reply belatedly having a slight knowledge of the facts relating to M/C. I understand that the Labour Church founded by John Trevor was first opened in the Peoples Concert Hall or Casino, "Cass" as it was called alias Billy Burton's night school; he was the manager or owner. This stood where our Midland Hotel now stands. Later the Labour Church had rooms in Booth St. E, where the Roxy Cinema now stands (Oxford Road All Saints). The South-West M/C I. L. P. used this room also & I was a member till it ceased its existence in 1905. The I. L. P. had taken over the rooms when the Labour Church gave up some time before this.

John Trevor was the preacher at the Unitarian Church, Upper Brook Street, M/C near to Booth St. The Rev. Charles Peach was minister there later on & you might get some information from L. Du Garde Peach, the writer and broadcaster of Chapel-on-le-Frith who I understand is his son. Two of the Pankhurst daughters had some connection with Booth St. while Mrs. Pankhurst was the registrar for Births in that part of M/C. I remember they did some skirt dancing on our stage at a concert either for the I. L. P. or the Labour Church. This room in Booth St. was over a stable & the owner was a pioneer in the 3 horse Char-a-bang or wagonette. It used to smell strongly of ammonia & this was bad for our introduction of new members to the I. L. P. & might have been the cause of the Labour Church failure to carry on.

Nearly all the people who could have attended at Booth St. will have died by now. There was a clock in this club room & I have always thought it must have belonged to the Labour Church. It came into my family's possession & told the time to customers in an off licence in Moss Side M/C. I like to think that this must have been one of the earliest of Socialist owned clocks.

Mr. Herford I seem to connect with Hans Renolds Chain Co. Burnage, M/C; I believe he was a director.

There was a Cinderella Club held at Armitage St. School, Ardwick, M/C and run by the Clarion Cyclist Club M/C section. I played the violin there once for the children to sing choruses. It was eventually given up because the parents became too demanding for their children's gifts. I belonged to the Clarion Cyclists & the Clarion Choir for a good number of years.
Much of this may not be of any use to you but as I am here in M/C
& retired from work I would be willing to call on anyone you may
contact to sort things out or do a bit of devilling in the M/C
Central Library where I expect copies of old papers of that period
are there for our use.

Hoping this will be of some help,

Yours sincerely,

William Thursby

W. Buxton, Nov. 15th. 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

In reply to your letter of the 10th inst. My Father and I were
attending Upper Brook St. when Mr. John Trevor came as Minister
and then started the Labour Church and we went down to the "Music
Hall" where meetings were held (it was on the site where the "Mid-
land Hotel" now stands, facing Lower Mosley St.) Mr. Hugh Herford
and Mr. Alf Dugdale Junr. also I don't call to mind any others
from Upper Brook St. Church. There was prominent Labour Speakers:
Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, Enid Stacy, and Kathleen St. John Conway
afterwards Mrs. Glasier, Ramsay Macdonald & others.

We attended Up. Bk. St. for morning service & went down to the Hall
at night. Mr. Dugdale took charge of a Bookstall for a time, but,
gradually returned to Brook St. when Mr. Peach came as Minister.
Mr. Hugh Herford was a very staunch supporter of Mr. Trevor until
he died some years ago.

After the "Music Hall" was given up there was a House rented some-
where at back of John St. Deansgate and used as an Institute for
meetings and Lectures. We moved out and lost touch after a time &
can't recollect correctly. There was published a Labour Prophet by
Mr. Trevor, I think, & my Father had copies bound together; which I
gave to the Rev. J. W. Dyer when he was living here some years ago,
and have written to him if he would loan it to you. He has a
church in N. Ireland, address enclosed.

Am afraid can't tell you any more to be correct. Have heard from
L de Bard Peach, but, he would be too young to be interested or
recollections. Am afraid this is not much but at 86 one gets
mixed up.

Yours sincerely,

A. Jackson.
Norwich, 21 August, 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

Please take great care of the enclosed pamphlet -- "Politics in the Pulpit" -- and return to me. It's the only copy I've got. But I thought it might be helpful to you in preparing your thesis. As you see, it was an address given to the Norwich Labour Church at the end of last century, intended to set forth just what was the outlook and purpose of the Labour Church movement. It had a very wide circulation as a pamphlet; and had a good deal to do with shaping the thought and mood of British working-class life in the formation of the Labour Party, then in its birth period as a definite political organisation.

One other connection with the Labour Church movement is worth noting. My "Case For Socialism" had very definitely a Labour Church origin. Some years after the publication of the "Politics in the Pulpit" pamphlet, I was asked to take the service and give the address on the first Sunday afternoon of each month for a year. I decided to make it a sequence instead of a series of unconnected talks. And, as you probably know, when the talks were published as "The Case For Socialism", the book jumped out of my control as soon as it was published, and rapidly became the official textbook of the Socialist movement in almost every country and language in the world.

My best wishes to you for the success of the thesis.

Faithfully yours,
Fred Henderson.

Stockport, Jan. 4th, 1954

Dear Sir:

... As for Casey, Walter Hampson. He was an adherent of Roman Catholicism but was excommunicated from the Church, I presume because of his writings (probably in the Clarion). He was an accomplished violinist and lectured over a wide area on musical subjects, and he and his pianist Dolly Pickard (I hope the name is correct) were well known and their services highly appreciated.

He took his children from the R. C. day school they attended, and Walter (Junior) was in my class. The first letter he wrote to his father, then on a tour, after he came under my supervision, resulted in a letter from dad to Comrade Lincoln and in repayment for the lad's improvement as a correspondent and in other ways, we had a number of visits by Casey with his violin and talks to our scholars at Wellington Rd. G. S. on composers and forms of musical composition. My headmaster, J. H. Gregory, was a capable pianist, and so
the "music appreciation" visits were very enjoyable and instructive.

I reckoned he was at heart a religious man, rather embittered by the apparent inconsistency between profession and practice of certain individuals.

Yours faithfully,

D. S. Lincoln

Kirkoswald, Cumb. 16.7.53

Dear Mr. Summers:

Referring to your letter in today's "Guardian", I was a member of the Labour Church in Stockport before the 1914-18 War (which it did not survive so far as I know -- though the Labour Party, a vastly different thing, took its place).

I was too young then to notice much (or know much) about the details of the Church's membership, services, etc., beyond the fact that it included a Young Socialist Sunday School; but I do retain very vivid impressions of a selflessness and idealism which permeated everyone connected with it. This is hardly surprising, for in those days only a sincerity of belief in Socialism (generally of a deeply religious and equalitarian type) could be the reason for becoming a member of the Church (there being no "pickings" to attract the rats). Socialism, to us, was something we never expected to see (and we have even less expectation now) but it was a vision we would have died for if dying would have made it into a reality -- a vision of happy children and smiling adults, working, and sharing all their joys and the produce of a labour which itself would have become a joy. Our Socialism might have been impossible, but it was inspiring and made the curses and brickbats bearable. And we were happy in our ignorance of the future, when Socialism would come to mean "Jobs for the Boys" and a seat on the Coal Board at £5000 per year.

Though I am now a private trader, I am still the Socialist I was in those days; but you will not be surprised to learn that I no longer even exercise my right to vote, and that I attend the Polling Station only for the purpose of cancelling my Voting Paper -- this after thirty years in the Socialist, Co-operative and Trade Union Movements as I. L. P. Literature Secy., Collector, Labour Party Secretary, and Trade Union official.

All my brothers, sisters and parents were -- and are -- socialists and were connected with the Church, but I think they would be of less help to you even that I am, but I know one of the older members who was (with his family) a very prominent member, and could tell you everything about it. He is Mr. James Clarke, of 26 Moorland Road, Woodsmoor, Stockport, Cheshire.
With all good wishes, I am

Yours faithfully, (and hastily)

John Wilde

Southport, Lancs. July '53.

Dear Sir:

Re your letter in the \vC Guardian of the 9th inst. Perhaps my experiences at Stockport would be helpful in your book. A few progressive folk met during the months of Nov. and Dec. 1903, and after inquiries from various Labour Churches, we held a final one which decided to found a Labour Church in Stockport on Sunday evening 4th January 1904.

This organisation appointed a committee and officers to organise a code of rule and conduct, and find a meeting place, and engage speakers. I enclose copy of Bazaar Hand Book which please note was organised three and half years after our founding, and please note Page 5, Article by T. A. Pierce prominent in the movement at the time; and page 15. Our first chairman gives a report of our work during the first few years. I was elected Hon. Sec. at the first meeting and was re-elected at every annual meeting for ten years. When I joined up in the 1914 war. The L. Church carried on until about 1925 when the name was changed to Labour Fellowship.

I am sure the Handbook and the syllabuses will be useful in the memoirs you are about to write showing the type of work we were engaged in. It may interest you to know that all the ads in the publication were secured by Mr. Clithero and myself, the lay out mostly by your servant assisted by a journalist friend. We were helped in our work by the L. C. Union, W. Belcher, President, J. Mitchell, Sec., & Mr. Pierce, Treasurer, and Committee. Various Labour Churches helped by providing speakers and suggestions, i.e. Hyde Socialist Church, Leek Labour Church, Birmingham Lab. C., Bradford & others.

In the booklets enclosed you will notice the type of speakers who visited us, and amongst others were persons from U. S. A., Reichstag S. D. members, French Deputies, and others too numerous to mention.

In our organisation at various times we had a brass band, orchestra, choir, Soc. Sunday School, Swimming club, Rambling Club, Physical culture class, womens section, adult class, and bought our own building. I regret to report that practically all of the original founders of our Labour Church at Stockport, have passed on. There must be only a half a dozen in Stockport now, and am afraid the names mentioned in your letter are now unknown to any survivors in my home town now.
Perhaps a perusal of enclosed will be of some benefit in your task.

I ought to say our form of service was: opening hymn (Labour Church Hymnal), Lords Prayer (a chant), Chairman's remarks, Speaker, Questions, Collection, Hymn. Our attendance averaged 450, on some occasions 800. During the summer months for many years we organised summer open-air meetings & a few weeks missions. Our speakers list over the years included Socialists, Trade Union Leaders, S. D. F., I. L. P., leading Dramatic Elocutionists, Musical Composers (Rutland Broughton), Actors etc. from Miss Horniman's Company (a few who are now famous), Vegetarians (Josiah Oldfield), Secularists, Clergy, Scientists. Our Church membership was usually averaged at 190 for five years. Soc. School attendance ave. 80.

Yours Sincerely,

George Burgess

Southport, Lancs. 21.8.53

Dear Mr. Summers:

... My part in our organisation was really the part of Organising Secretary, which, without boasting, I did a lot in bringing it up to a high state of efficiency in so far that we had a membership at one time of 180 paying members, & over a period average 150. Bought an old chapel, converted it to our requirements, by our own members composed of all trades and professions. I travelled all over Lancashire and Cheshire to find speakers. These as you will realise were of different kinds of thought, from Clergy, including spiritualists, to Secularists. All types of Socialists, men like Alma Maude friend of Kropopkin?, Cecil Chesterton, Rutland Boughton, Jos. McCabe, Mrs. Despard, Countess of Warwick, Margaret Bondfield, hundreds of others, all of whom I engaged. My wife always told friends that I was worse than a lodger.

The L. C. movement didn't fail because of the 1914 war. It may be that we had no H.Q. like other bodies usually have, no affiliation etc. Many Labour Christians didn't like us because we had no creed.

Sincerely,

George Burgess.

York, 22nd October '53.

Dear Mr. Summers:

It amuses me to learn that our doings in the I. L. P. (the Independent Labour Party), the impudent little pups as we were called,
should be made the subject of research at a great university. Fifty years ago the Party was strong and vigorous, its members being prepared to sacrifice practically everything they had for the Cause in which they believed. Unfortunately for you I was never in at the heart of things. The branches of the I. L. P. to which I belonged and with which I did all my work, were at York (first), Lancaster, Sheffield and Huddersfield, and what these branches were doing fifty years ago seems to me in retrospect, just a routine of meetings public and private, distributing literature and canvassing for votes.

In none of the towns I have named was there any sort of connection between the Party and the religious bodies, with the possible exception of York where two of the leading members were officials of the Unitarian Church there. Indeed it is true to say that the churches were amongst our bitterest opponents. I well remember when I made an attempt to interest the Sheffield Cathedral clergy in the work we were doing to bring down the Infantile Mortality rate which continued year after year unaltered in its incidence. You may imagine my dismay when I found that these reverend gentlemen were not interested in attempting to reduce the rate; all they wanted was that the children who died should go to heaven with clean hands and faces and full bellies. Which is to say that the idea of reducing the mortality rate was an unheard-of thing. God took the children to Himself; it was His will they died, and that was that.

But we did it! Yes indeed we did! The Infantile Mortality Rate in the east end of Sheffield was reduced from 240 per thousand births to something under 50, and it is less than that now. I with many others spoke at scores of meetings held mainly in the streets; I gave lantern lectures in the streets; indeed I think I have spoken at more street meetings in Sheffield than any man alive.

With Councillor Padley, the only Socialist member of the City Council I was instrumental in getting an X-Ray apparatus installed at the Town Hall, ostensibly for the treatment of ringworm, and we got it because there was not a member of the Council knew what an X-Ray apparatus was. We persuaded the School Medical Officer to indent for it. And the requisition went through greatly to our relief. That was the beginning of the magnificent clinic for which Sheffield afterwards became famous. This was in 1908 or 9.

For me this continual propaganda, Sundays and weekdays alike was a conflict with death. Death in all its various forms: infantile mortality, poverty, disease, slums, unemployment, and war. We carried our propaganda for the Strike against War to the Continent and it was well received in Germany. There, in 1914, 2000 men were shot for refusing to obey the call to join up with the forces in which they were conscripts. Keir Hardie and Bruce Glasier were at the head of this campaign and it kept its place in the Party programme until the Newcastle conference of 1915, the last I attended. After that came the deluge. I was the speaker at the first meeting
held to protest against the war of 1914, on the Sunday after war was declared, and I had the greatest difficulty in finding anyone who would take the chair for me. The hopes of men faded and died.

I have no letters or papers by me now; all these I deposited in the Rylands Library at Manchester. One thing however you should get and it is the report of the speech delivered by Keir Hardie at the children's meeting held during the conference of 1914 at Bradford, the twenty-first birthday conference at which the most of those present believed that their work was done. It was only a matter of putting out the banners. But our enemies beat us with the war of 1914. This speech of Hardie's was the greatest speech I have ever listened to and though it was not reported Fenner Brockway has been extraordinarily successful in reconstructing it and I am sure he will be glad to help you to a copy. It was essentially a religious speech.

If you should require any further information on particular points I may be able to help you. About Trevor and his Labour Church I know nothing.

Yours sincerely
Richard Hawkin

Urmston, Sept. 13th, 1953

Dear Mr. Read:

My daughter, Jenny, passed on your request for any information I may have on the Labour Church Movement and its history. I have not been a member of the Labour Church . . . In the North-East of England, where I spent my early and most active time, the Labour Church Movement was at its strongest in the 1890s. I have no documentary proof to support my impression which is that it lost its influence on the formation of the I. L. P. . . . This Movement, definitely Socialist in character, gave a practical expression to the idealism which was the inspiration of the Labour Church. The I. L. P., whilst advocating economic change, stressed that these were not an end in themselves, but necessary before life could be placed on a basis of co-operation & fellowship instead of competition & struggle. It was this striving for a practical application of ideals which resulted too in the formation of Socialist Sunday Schools, a movement I have been connected with for about 43 years.

Yours sincerely,
J. Simmons.
Newcastle-on-Tyne, July 18th 53

Dear Mr. Summers:

I am much obliged for your very kind letter dated July 16th and containing your personal news as well as a quotation, apt and helpful, from Iremonger's biography of Wm. Temple, about the Labour Churches in 1907. I remember that period very well. I was ordained Deacon in 1906 and Priest in 1907. But I did not meet Wm Temple until he became Bishop of Manchester in the 1920s, after which I saw a good deal of him, for he was a very "live wire". As you wrote in your letter to me lately: - "Wm. Temple made unnecessary the Labour Churches as separate organisations." I actually witnessed the process of labour church movts. being absorbed by historic churches or by political socialism -- as you express it in your letter to me. In other words, Wm. Temple, under God, was the means of ending the rise of unchristian Socialism, and that was why, quoting from memory, I was able to say so to you on your visit to me. . . .

P.S. I am nearly 80 years old, & so can remember Robt. Blatchford & used to read his book "Merrie England" & his paper "The Clarion". In fact I introduced both to the notice of many of my contemporaries, myself giving a Christian twist to Blatchford's rank materialism -- though I must confess Blatchford & his colleagues were a very human lot, though mostly heathens, except one Roman Catholic on his staff, who managed to season the lumps of heathenism with the salt of Christianity.

As to Wm. Temple, he was a born leader of men, and, I repeat, under God, saved the situation into which he was born. Incidentally, he burned himself out in doing this saving work. May God rest his soul. . . .

Yours very truly,

W. T. Taylor

Woodford Green, Dec. 17, 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

. . . When I was a student at Manchester College (now 65 years ago) we heard of the "Labour Church". But as an organisation it did not seem to be making any "headway". As a matter of hearsay (for the accuracy of which I cannot vouch) some of the meetings consisted of denunciations of the rich backed up by readings from the Epistle of James in the New Testament. . . .

Sincerely yours

S. H. Mellone
Woodford Green, Jan. 25, 1954

Dear Mr. Summers:

I am afraid that I can be of very little assistance to you in your study of the history of the "Labour Church" (I am not speaking of the personality and religious and social ideals of John Trevor himself, but of what the Labour Churches became.)

About the time when I left College, the impression made on many people was of a class-conscious movement which had no possibility of permanence.

Moreover (at that time) the rising political and social controversies in great matters of public policy were absorbing the attention of people who thought about such things at all. There was the constitutional struggle of the liberal government with the House of Lords, over "Home Rule" and, above all, the rejection of the Budget by the Lords. There was the campaign for "Votes for Women". Socialism (not very clearly defined) was being enthusiastically advocated by Robert Blatchford in his widely-circulated "Clarion" and other writings. Blatchford identified Socialism with Atheism. This was bitterly resented by many who perceived that political socialism had nothing to do with Atheism. The "Daily Mail" was doing all it could to exasperate these controversies. And the real possibility of war with Germany was becoming more and more evident. As far as I can remember, among all these things the "Labour Church" ceased to be heard of.

I imagine that if John Trevor were living now, he would have had a message for the labour movement as a political party today -- a message which would not have been welcome to all of them.

I am sorry that I cannot say anything more definite about the movement in which you are interested.

Sincerely yours

S. H. Melone

Dunmow, December 5th, 53

Dear Sir:

. . . My first wife, Enid Stacy, who died very tragically in 1901, knew Trevor and spoke very frequently at Labour Churches. Probably the most successful of those churches was the one at Bradford, which had the backing of the Priestmans, -- the well known Quaker family. I remember speaking there on a Sunday evening in 1900 and being much impressed by the size and the keenness of the audience. Another experience I like to recall is a weekend at Leek in Staffordshire. The Labour Church occupied a building which had
been a Quaker Meeting House. I found a highly intelligent audience presided over by a man who was both poet and craftsman. His name was Larner Sugden. 

P.E.T. Widdrington.

Newburgh, 20th Jan. 1954

Dear Mr. Summers:

. . . There may have been some connection between the stirring of the social conscience which expressed itself in the Socialist movement of the time, and the decay of religious belief which led to a temporary effort to found various new “churches”, ethical societies, brotherhoods, adult schools, and so on, but my own view is that they were merely contemporary. When Blatchford began his secularist propaganda he had a larger personal following than any other person in the Socialist movement but he failed to carry that following with him in his crusade. The great majority of the workers in the movement refused to become involved in a controversy which had nothing to do with Socialism, which was their abiding interest. The younger men with whom I was in contact in Scotland were mostly agnostics, but they were not interested in churches or in secular propaganda. We were fully aware of the opposition we had to overcome to the socialist idea, and we had no desire to add to our difficulties by antagonising any of the sectaries.

I am sorry I cannot help you in your inquiry. It would be attaching an altogether too definitive label to say that we had any “attitude” towards the coteries. We went on with our job as if they were not there, and our job had not enough workers that we could afford to wander afield.

Yours sincerely

Joseph F. Duncan

London, 17.4.54

Dear Mr. Summers:

. . . The Socialist Sunday Schools had some scores of centres at one time, but there are, I believe, very few nowadays. They were emphatically ethical & somewhere I have a copy of their “Ten Precepts”. If you cannot trace these I’ll try to find my copy some time -- only it means searching around & if that can be avoided in my very busy life I shall be glad. If however, you cannot trace them in Edinburgh please let me know. The Sunday gathering consisted of Socialist
ethical hymns (without theological reference), readings, recital of the Precepts, & an address. Occasionally there would also be a Dedication Service of an infant belonging to a Socialist couple, when all the children presented flowers & the red flag was held over the child.

The Labour Churches have also faded away, but were fairly numerous at one time. I have copies of their Song or Hymn books. They were non-theological but religious, & did not necessarily exclude a general reference to the Deity or the Christ. The Service consisted of hymns, readings (sometimes, perhaps, from the Bible), an address, with perhaps a solo, a choir or instrumental music. Frequently a short time was given to questions & the address could be broadly ethical or even specifically political. Here & there local Labour Parties still hold an Annual Harvest Service (as at Bournemouth) & last year I spoke at one. In that case there were Bible readings, Lord's Prayer & religious hymns. I gave the address of a broadly religious-ethical character.

Trade Unions often, in some parts (as with miners & agricultural workers), attend a local church service for an Industrial Sunday or a Harvest Sunday, with their banners, & occasionally display their tools and products before the pulpit or the altar.

Forty years ago "The Progressive League" (later The Liberal Christian League) united Christians and Socialists, & out of that came the Order of Pioneer Preachers founded by the then famous Congregationalist, Rev. R. J. Campbell of the City Temple (now an Anglican, aged 90, Canon Dr. Campbell), a religious residential community of young men, who pursued studies & preached. I was one of those Pioneers for 4 years.

During the time you mention (& before, back to Charles Dingsley & Frederick Dennison Maurice) there were numerous Christian Socialists such as Father Paul Bull of the Community of the Resurrection, & Father Conrad Noel, Vicar of Thaxted, Essex. There were also the Church Socialist League & the Catholic Crusade (all above were Anglican), both Socialist Christian movements later merging in the Socialist Christian League, which I helped to found. The religious, ethical, & Christian elements in the British Socialist & Labour movements have been very strong & influential.

Yours sincerely,

R. W. Sorensen.

Paisley, 18/1/54

Dear Mr. Summers:

... It was in 1893 the Independent Labour Party was formed in Bradford. One of the founders was Keir Hardie. Keir Hardie was
what may be described as a "Christian" and a "Socialist". Arthur Henderson, who became one of the outstanding members of the Labour Party was a Methodist Lay Preacher, as were quite a number of others, particularly, miners' leaders. This does not, however, apply to the Scottish miners. They were mostly composed of Catholic, indifferent, or sceptic. But the Independent Labour Party in England and Scotland had always, under the leadership of Hardie, a religious flavour. But already earlier than the I. L. P. was the Social Democratic Federation. This was Marxist, and strictly non-religious.

Then there was the Clarion (a weekly publication) edited by Robert Blatchford, with Clarion Vans and Clarion Cycle Clubs carrying Socialist propaganda all over the countryside. Blatchford, from being indifferent, became actively hostile to religion with two books: "God And My Neighbour" and "Not Guilty, A Defence of the Bottom Dog."

A Life of Blatchford was recently published. You will get it in the Library. Read also "The Life of Keir Hardie" by Wm. Stewart. . . . The Socialist Sunday School was mainly under I. L. P. auspices. It was quite widespread in the industrial centres. There are still several schools in Glasgow. . . . I hope this will be helpful.

Yours Sincerely,

Wm. Gallacher

Paisley, 30/1/54

Dear Mr. Summers:

I am not just too clear on what you want me to say, but here goes.

In the second half of the 19th century there were several small groups and individuals carrying forward the message of Socialism. By the beginning of this century it had become a crusade with even greater fervour than a "religious revival".

At street corners (there weren't the traffic problems of today), at Public Park gates on Sunday evenings, in the trade unions & in the factories the "disciples" of the new evangel carried on their manifold activities. Most of us were ordinary workers, with a fair percentage of school-teachers.

Those of us who were in the factories had in many cases to get up at 4:30 a.m. & to travel quite a distance down the Clyde to start work at 6 a.m. Meal-hour meetings in our respective factory with pamphlets & books (mostly Marxist) sold to our fellow-workers, & then trade union, co-operative or street corner meetings at night -- this was the general run of life. I belonged to the Social Democratic Federation, Marxist & therefore accepting Dialectical Materialism as
providing the only adequate explanation of the Universe and its various phenomena. Maxton was in the I. L. P., a body which had no accepted theory but based its propaganda on sentiment and on the profound thesis that "If everybody was good nobody would be bad".

The Tories (Christian) jeered at us & told us we couldn't change human nature, forgetting that their own gospel proposes to change human nature without changing the conditions or system that produces such a crop of selfishness and greed. That by the way. In 1916 I was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. When I entered the prison Reception I had to give the usual particulars, name, age, etc. When the question was put to me "What's your religion?" "Socialism." I answered. Two weeks later Maxton followed. He answered in the same way. He often told the story of the "Christian" Screw (warder) exclaiming "That's no bloody religion." Then in 1916 when Herbert Morrison was before the London Tribunal as a conscientious objector he was asked the same question, "What is your religion?" to which he answered "I am a Socialist and a member of the I. L. P."

The greatest Crusader of them all was a Glasgow School teacher, John McLean. Lectures, economic classes, propaganda meetings, for years he went on never-ceasing till his death in 1924. During the school holidays he travelled all over Scotland, getting a "bite & a sup" from comrades here & there but like the rest of us never charging a penny for his services. We were preaching our faith, our beliefs, without money and without price.

So much did this New Gospel take the place of the old that Socialist Sunday Schools were started & soon had spread far and wide. Socialist hymns & Socialist Precepts took the place of the Psalms & the Ten Commandments.

That roughly is a picture of the movement as it was before its leaders were taken prisoner by the Bourgeoisie.

Yours Sincerely,

William Gallagher

Paisley, 1/4/54

Dear Mr. Summers:

In the second half of last century there were many people who saw the evils of Capitalism & who in one form or another espoused the cause of Socialism as the application of Christianity to the problems of modern society. Such a one was Kingsley, the author of "Westward Ho" and a non-conformist clergyman. Another well known clergyman, more to our times, was Rev. Conrad Noel, an English Churchman who occupied a small church in the small village of Thaxted. He kept a red flag displayed in his church. Look up these two in the Library.
In the latter half of the last century there was such "religious" enthusiasm, particularly on the continent, around the Socialist movement, it became a menace to the Catholic Church. So much so that in 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued an Encyclical, "Rerum Novarum" in which he condemned Socialism root and branch & appealed for fair treatment of the workers by the Capitalists in order to combat it.

In 1931 Pope Pius issued a "follow-up" Encyclical "Quadragessimo Anno" (forty years after the publication of "Rerum Novarum"). In this he re-emphasised Leo's condemnation of Socialism & praised the "Co-operative" (Fascist) State then prevailing in Italy. He advises Catholics everywhere to work for such a state where strikes will be prohibited & Socialist agitators will be suppressed. But he directs attention to the fact that the main enemy of the Church is "Liberalism". That means the holding of, or expression of, opinions not sanctioned by the Church. If you read that Encyclical you'll see there the guiding lines of what McCarthy is trying to do in America.

Many of the early Socialists in this country who were at some time Christians, believed that the founder of Christianity & his immediate followers were in essence Socialist. They certainly taught and practiced a religion for the poor against the rich.

There is the story of the young man who sought salvation to whom Christ said, after the lad had claimed that he kept the Commandments, "One thing thou lackest, sell all thou hast & distribute it to the poor." and he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. This led Christ to say "It is easier for the camel to pass through the needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven." Then in the Acts we are told that Peter & the brethren assembled & that all things were held in common & no man lacked anything. Then in the Epistle of James the fifth Chapter opens with -- "Go to now ye rich men. Weep and howl for your miseries that will come upon you." This is followed by five or six verses of a most condemnatory character.

The wealthy treated this new movement as all such movements have been treated by their enemies. Thus Paul is constrained to say in the Corinthians "We are made as the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things unto this day."

That immediately raises the thought of the hoodlum gangster language of Vice-President Nixon when he talked of Communists as "rats". "We are made as the filth of the world."

I hope this will be of some help to you in the job you're doing.

Yours Sincerely

Wm. Gallacher
Ashford, Kent, 16 July, 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

Someone has sent me -- I can only guess from the postmark who -- a cutting from the Manchester Guardian containing your letter of 9 July. I shall be very pleased to send you any information I can from my memory of the Labour Church Movement. I am now living in retirement at the age of 80, prevented by a heart that has turned sulky from taking any further part in social activities.

I am sorry that I have not preserved any of the Labour Church publications, all I have is a copy of John Trevor's autobiography entitled My Quest For God. I shall be pleased to lend you this if you have not seen it.

Let me say at once that there never was a Labour Church in the sense of a centralised, homogeneous organization. There was nominally a Labour Church Union, of which for a time I acted as Secretary, but it did not amount to more than keeping the local organizations sufficiently in touch for one of them to call an annual Conference. None of these Conferences led to the establishment of a standing central organization.

John Trevor had no gifts as an organizer & administrator, & knew he hadn't. Indeed he was a thorough individualist in the deeper things of life & distrusted institutionalism. And no St. Paul arose to turn the sporadic, spontaneous outburst of "churches" into a Church.

There were never more than about twenty of these local organizations. I was myself associated with an attempt to form one at Tottenham in north London, which proved abortive, & later I was a member for a time of the Watford Labour Church, which came into existence in 1900 & lasted until the upheaval caused by the 1914-18 war.

The chief value of the Labour Churches was that they provided a platform for that able band of Socialist speakers who laid the foundations of the present Labour Party. In a way the Labour Churches were rightly described as "just the I. L. P. meeting on Sunday"; but they provided an audience which included many with sympathies and interests going beyond those that were strictly political. They attracted those who found the doctrines of the Christian Churches no longer credible, or no longer relevant, & those, partly but not altogether the same people, who wanted the Christian principle of brotherhood to take more practical shape in contemporary social life & institutions than the churches themselves were giving it or were prepared to give it. An enthusiasm for Humanity was the outstanding feature of the Labour Churches. This, most of the adherents thought, was the whole of religion.

I will not at the moment enter into the question why it proved not to be a sufficient foundation for the establishment of the Church which John Trevor, & I, for one, with him, thought he saw coming to birth as the spiritual home of modern man. I do not know how far you may
be interested in the general question of the history and future development of religion in the world. It is a question on which I was more ready with answers at twenty than I am now at eighty.

Yours sincerely,

A. J. Waldegrave

Ashford, Kent, 14 August, 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

I am glad you have had some encouraging response to your appeal for information about the Labour Church. Naturally you have set my own mind roving over my eager, aspiring 'twenties' & I shall be very pleased to place at your disposal my recollections of them, not too much distorted or obliterated, I hope, by the passage of the years. I fear I shall have little to tell you but of aspirations unmatched by achievements; in that respect being a sad counterpart of John Trevor's own. But do come & see me, if you think it worth while.

... my impressions of John Trevor as a person. I met him & corresponded with him for several years on a pretty intimate footing, & I spent an evening with him towards the end of his life when he had quite dropped out of contemporary activities. He was indeed sincere -- in some ways naively so. True, he disappointed by his lack of the strength to nurture the child he had begotten & bring it to maturity, but personally I have always been grateful to him for helping me to preserve the essentials of religion when the non-essentials, in the time when it was difficult to distinguish between the two, were crumbling away. ...

Sincerely yours,

A. J. Waldegrave

Ashford, Kent, 8 Sept., 1953

Dear Mr. Summers:

Saturday, Sept. 26th., will be quite convenient for me & I will hope to see you on that date. ...

30 Sept., 1953

One or two further points have occurred to me since your visit on Saturday -- which was a great pleasure to me & I hope, not too serious a waste of time for yourself.

Among some miscellaneous papers I have kept since my early days, I
have found the enclosed address which I must have prepared for one or more of the visits I made to Labour Churches in 1900 or 1901; or possibly earlier, the last four pages having been added when I had left Shenfield. These pages, you will see, were written on paper with a Labour Church Union heading, which had no doubt become obsolete when I thus used the sheets.

You will perhaps get a better idea of the effect the impact of Trevor had on my mind from this address than from the description I tried to give you on Saturday. At any rate it is a contemporary document.

I am horrified on reading it -- or should be if I were not amused -- at my presumption in standing up as a teacher, with so little qualification to assume the part. The weakness of my understanding, both of economics and of metaphysics, is so dreadfully apparent. Yet the ethical insight & appeal seem to me sound & true even now. The social & industrial system, both on the side of production & on that of distribution, was monstrously unjust & it was important that, in seeking to change it, we should not become narrow materialists but in our souls should live on spiritual heights.

My economics got put on firmer ground by my reading the books of J. A. Hobson. I still have the greatest admiration for him. I am still fumbling with the metaphysics of the problems of "is" & "ought", Being and Becoming, but with a somewhat surer touch, I think, than I had when I gave that address. I understand pretty clearly now that Belief begins where Knowledge ends, & that on it must be based all that is most important in life. How important then is the formation or adoption (what is the mysterious process?) of our beliefs?

You will see that on the headed notepaper is a list of the Labour Churches: this must have been given to me by Trevor. I see it includes Croydon. I recall now, & ought to have done so when you were here, that it was the representative of Croydon who brought forward the resolution about the South African War at the one Labour Church Conference I attended. He was a vigorous Socialist speaker named Muggeridge. For a time he was on the Executive of the Fabian Society & was one of the supporters of H. G. Wells when he burst into the Society & tried to reform it; & was snuffed out by Bernard Shaw. I have sometimes wondered whether the Malcolm Muggeridge who has recently become Editor of "Punch" is a son of his. I shouldn't be surprised; it is an uncommon name.

Sincerely Yours,

A. J. Waldegrave

Ashford, Kent, 18 Dec., 1953

Dear Summers:

I hope your enquiries will bring you some contact with Trevor's
family. Even if they are successful, however, I do not suppose they will throw much light on the development of his religious ideas & of the influence of these on his way of life after he dropped out of the Labour Church Movement: for all his strong social sympathies & yearning for fellowship he was a solitary soul, & when I saw him towards the end of his life he gave me the impression that his love of Individuality & Independence (using capital letters, as he would have done,) had led him to encourage his children to go their own way, so that he was living in the loneliness in which I met him.

I shall be interested to learn more of the impressions you get by your study of the articles in the "Labour Prophet". My own contributions were very few... The only article of mine I can recall is one that I wish I had forgotten with the rest. It was a disrespectful, not to say impertinent, reply to a criticism of Trevor's religious position which had been made by Canon Scott Holland, a genuine scholar, a great preacher, & a leader of the Christian Socialist group in the Church of England. I came to have a great admiration for him.

His criticism was that Trevor had gone back to the simple, intuitive, primitive Faith of Abraham, ignoring the historical development of that Faith through the Hebrew nation, the Prophets, the Incarnation, & the events recorded in the Gospels, and then through the witness of the Apostles, into the Christian Church & the Christian Creeds. I recall that I defended Trevor's fresh start in terms that afterwards I felt had been in bad taste, considering the relative standing of Scott Holland and myself. If you come upon it, I hope you will not find it so outrageous as I think it was.

I comfort myself with the reflection that even now, fifty years after, we have not settled the place of historicity in religion. That Christian doctrine is a blend of historical & literal fact on the one hand, & imagination & myth (which are nevertheless spiritual truth) on the other, is evident, but there is no agreement on the discrimination of the one element from the other. Moreover there is little recognition of the still developing character of Christianity; little of the expectant, forward-looking attitude, ready for the vital new discovery which flashes out like a revelation. In this matter the Church of Rome sets an example by proclaiming from time to time a fresh dogma. But the Protestant churches look askance at such Papal proclamations, & the Anglican Church takes little notice of its handful of Modern Churchmen.

Trevor, I see now, -- have seen for a good many years -- had too little of the historic sense & was mistaken in thinking that there could be a completely fresh start in religion, but he surely made a great contribution to the religious world -- if only that world had taken notice of it! -- in insisting that religion is in the line of Evolution & that it is of vital importance that men should place themselves & their lives, in union & freedom, at its growing-point. He thought that growing-point to be at the heart of the Labour Movement. And I shared his hope that it was there. Perhaps in the "Labour Prophet" you have come upon a Christmas Sonnet in which I
tried to express the Labour Church idea. It began, I remember,
"Again returns the Pagan-Christian feast,
And the old story of the great God's birth
As human babe to save his sinful earth
Falls from the lips of the obedient priest."
And it ended with lines about there being
... "a new Birth of God
Which leads us on to mighty destinies
Through those who tend the loom & turn the sod."
If you come upon it I hope you will smile indulgently. I thought
last week how incongruous it would seem if it were read in connection
with the threatened Christmas Railway Strike. Yet there was some-
thing fine, something spiritually dynamic at the heart of the Labour
& Socialist Movement in that ferment of the late 1890s & the early
1900s.

... in the note on page 9 of the draft chapter you ask whether I
think the question of tradition & historicity should be treated at
greater length.

Well, I think it should, to the extent of explaining how it came
about that there were so many people whose attitude and sentiment in
the matter of religion were such that Trevor's appeal could evoke
the response that it did. I state a few of the factors that occur to
me, but I think you might do something fairly elaborate on this
aspect of the subject. Points that occur to me are -- The extent to
which love of one's neighbour had come to be regarded in the churches
to be equivalent to love of God -- and more comprehensible; the
growth during the nineteenth century of unsectarian humanitarianism,
stimulated by Dickens, Hood's "Song of the Shirt", Elizabeth Barratt
Browning's "Cry of the Children", "Uncle Tom's Cabin", etc., & find-
ing expression for example in Florence Nightingale's development of
nursing service; disgust with parade & power of wealth inside the
churches; in non-conformist churches, development of democratic man-
agement, & of preaching capacity by laymen; an element of scepticism
which had not reached secularism & shrank from doing so; slum mis-
ions with emulation of the Salvation Army.
Such factors as these had, I think, helped to prepare the ground for the Labour Church Idea in so far as that meant hoping and working for a new world in which Socialism would remould Society & provide for the individual a worthy way of life. Except for a very few people (like my foolish idealistic self), I don't think Trevor's "God is in the Labour Movement" meant much beyond giving an assurance that in working for Socialism one was on the right road. By most members Socialism itself was regarded as a sufficient religion -- not as the product-to-be of a transcendent religious ideal. This would not have mattered if "Socialism" had really been a compelling personal way of life, bringing "fruits of the spirit" corresponding with, & even superior to, those which St. Paul enumerated, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, self-control; but it didn't always.

I am running into the region of the second question which you are proposing to endeavour to answer in your thesis -- why did the Labour Churches decline & become extinct? You ask for any ideas I may have. Here are a few -- (1) The seeds of disintegration were there from the beginning, because of the diversity of interest & outlook among the members -- hard-core (S. D. F.) & soft-core (I. L. P.) Socialists, spiritually-minded members & materialistic ones; traditionalists & aggressive sceptics; earnest reformers & light-hearted lovers of a good time (Clarion Clubs bred these); with all the misunderstanding arising from such differences. (2) The absence of any pastoral oversight & co-ordination. (3) The extreme individualism & emphasis on freedom in Trevor's conception of religion; this, of course, is closely related with "(2)". (4) The development of other organisations, not hostile, but nevertheless attracting the interest of members -- for example, Women's Co-operative Guilds, Men's Brotherhoods, in London, Ethical Societies, Infant Welfare Associations, & of course, Local Labour Party Organizations. (5) The general decline of interest in religion & of the habit of church-going. (I don't know whether there are statistics on this matter). (6) The mere passage of time without fresh recruitment. Socialist Sunday Schools didn't provide a stream of new members.

Yours Sincerely

A. J. Waldegrave
Directory of Groups
whose aims and objects, in one or more areas, paralleled or overlapped those of the Labour Church.

Adult School Movement

American Institute of Christian Sociology -- founded at Chautauqua, July 20, 1893; inspired and led by Prof. Geo. D. Herron of Iowa College. Its objective as the application of "... principles of Christianity to social and economic difficulties."

Brotherhood Churches -- established by J. Bruce Wallace in 1891.
Wallace had been called to a congregational cause on Southgate Road, in North London. Timely topical sermons, discussion sessions, and open air propaganda activities began to shift the tone of the congregation towards socialism. Before long they adopted a new name, "Brotherhood Church". Within this congregation began a socialistic phase of the co-operative movement, with the forming of the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust, Ltd., a company experimenting in co-operative business in both production and retail spheres, in anticipation of the formation of a complete co-operative community.

In Croydon a number of members of the Socialist Society constituted themselves as a Brotherhood Church, and called the Rev. J. C. Kenworthy to be their pastor, and acquired the premises at 46 Tamworth Road. With the assistance of the Rev. W. H. Belcher, H. Bond Holding, J. Morrison Davidson, J. Bruce Wallace, Percy Alden, Will Reason, J. Keir Hardie, and other prominent Labour leaders, the Croydon Brotherhood Church was launched on June 3rd, 1894.

The Labour Annual reported four congregations as organized and active during 1895-96. The West End Brotherhood congregation, in Harrow Road, with W. Charter Piggott as minister, was formed in 1897. A Brotherhood Church was formed in Leeds towards the end of the Decade.

It is interesting to note that it was in a Brotherhood Church in London that a group of Russian exiles met to plan and prepare the constitution which was the basis for the Bolshevik Party.

Brotherhood of Christian Unity -- established in April 1891, in U.S. A. Its motto: "Love your neighbour and respect his beliefs".

Brotherhood of the Kingdom -- established in U.S.A. 1893; it was originally Baptist, but later became interdenominational. Its members were to "... lay stress on the social aims of Christianity" and to "... infuse the religious spirit into the efforts for social amelioration". No sectarian or theological tests were required of the members.

Brotherhood of Saint Andrew -- a Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge sponsored Church Training College for Lay Workers. It was centered at Stepney; in 1900 it had 1000 members workers as part-time lay missionaries.
Catholic Truth Society -- established 1884. One of its objects was to assist the uneducated poor to a better knowledge of their religion.

Christian Commonwealth Fellowship -- sponsored by the Christian Commonwealth early in the twentieth century. It was organized by H. H. of Toxteth. A letter from Miss E. F. H. of Bolton expresses many 'Trevoresque' ideas which received the approval of the Editor. "Allow the Fellowship to develop as freely and spontaneously as possible, so as to give an opportunity for it to express fully the impulses which are, I think, giving it birth. . . . There is an irresistible urge of the spirit of God which is checked and thwarted by the confining tramels of a conventional heterodoxy, as certainly as by a conventional orthodoxy." -- copied from an undated clipping.

Christian Social Brotherhood -- associated with Dr. John Clifford.

Christian Socialist League -- Established Feb. 1894. President, Dr. John Clifford; Vice President, J. Bruce Wallace; Secretary, J. H. Belcher; Committee Members: Percy Alden, Will Reason, Rev. Prof. Shuttleworth and the Rev. Flemming Williams. Membership was open to all willing to sign the following: "This country cannot be called Christian so long as the people in their collective capacity, by their social, industrial, and commercial arrangement, practically deny the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man. Members believe that the principles of Jesus Christ are directly applicable to all social and economic questions, and that such application to the conditions of our time demands the reconstruction of society upon a basis of association and fraternity." The League was a continuation of the Christian Socialist Society.

Christian Socialist Society -- Established in the mid eighties, it adopted The Christian Socialist as its organ. The society was independent of all theological views. In 1891 there were four active branches (Bristol, Glasgow, Leicester, and London) with a total membership of 116; it began to break up in that year. Among its members were Rev. John Glasse, Rev. Alex. Webster, E. D. Bridlestone, and Margaret McMillan.

Church Army -- became a social rescue agency; in 1900 it had 65 vans, and 600 full-time evangelists and nurses.

Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labour -- established 1887, New York, U. S. A. Protestant Episcopal Church.

Church of Humanity -- a Positivist Chapel in St. Lamb's Conduit St., London E.C.; published the "Church of Humanity tracts".

Church of Our Father -- founded Jan. 1, 1892, by Rev. John Page Hopps, social reformer of Leicester. It was the "Ideal" Church with no organization and no clergy, whose basis was Fatherhood and Brotherhood.

Church Social Union -- established 1891, U.S.A.; the American version of the C. S. U.

Church Socialist League -- established June 14, 1906 at Morecambe. Its object was to unite clergy and laity in a Socialist Movement within the Church. Members: Chairman G. A. West, Sec. Rev. J. H. Hastings, Organizing Sec. Rev. Conrad Noel, George Lansbury, James Adderley.

The Civic Church -- founded by W. T. Stead. Largely an unrealized ideal which aimed at the organization and co-operation of all philanthropic workers in every community.

Clarion Fellowships and Clubs -- Objects were the fellowship of the members and the propagation of Socialism -- "The education of the people by means of meetings, lectures, debates, circulation of literature, etc. towards the attainment of a Socialist State."
Publications included Clarion Monthly Scouting Paper and The Scout, monthly organ of Clarion Scouts. For the children there was organized the Merrie England Corps of Young Citizens.

Clarion Clubs tended to break class barriers and to increase humane sympathies. Some Clarion Fellowships are still in existence. The Clarion Clubs began in the mid-nineties, and began to flourish in the early twentieth century; their variety increased greatly. At one time or another there were: Cycle Clubs (most numerous), Fellowships, Clarion Vocal Unions, Clarion Scouts, Social Clubs, Rambling Clubs, Swimming Clubs, Campers' Clubs, Handicraft Guilds, Mutual Help Societies, Club-house Societies, Clarion Cafes, Gardeners' Guilds, Photographic Guild, Clarion Choirs, Athletic Clubs, Clarion Players.

Clarion Vans -- An excellent means of consistent propaganda. A van provided accommodation for a lecturer and a store of literature, and guaranteed enough income to keep him fulltime in lecture work. In 1913 there were four vans on the road, they were the financial responsibility of the Clarion Cycling Clubs.

Community experiments in Socialism and Communism -- In 1900 there were about 8 in Britain and 9 in the U.S.A.

Community of the Resurrection -- established 1892 at Mirfield under the Rev. Paul B. Bull, M.A. In 1900 there were 10 members and 3 probationers.
Fabian Societies -- established 1884. In the early nineties several locals sponsored Labour Church services or themselves became Labour Church congregations. In 1899 there were about twenty locals of which half were associated with universities or were in other countries. Most of the secretaries associated with the remaining branches were active with Labour Church congregations. In 1900 there were fifteen locals; in 1901, seventeen locals; in 1908, forty-one locals.

Fellowship of the New Life -- A London group founded by Thomas Davidson in the early eighties. It was this group that gave birth to the Fabian Society. The Fellowship lasted till 1898. Its object was to study the conditions of the 'Good Life' and to explore the possibilities of a communal way of living. Its organ was Seed-Time. Cf. also The New Conscience or The Religion of Labour, 1899, No. 3 in the New Fellowship Series; Trevor's ideas show a similarity especially to pp. 19ff. of this pamphlet written by Henry D. Lloyd; and Jupp, Wayfarings.

Forward Movement -- inaugurated by Hugh Price Hughes, c. 1898; was at first Methodist, but was soon adopted by John Clifford, Baptist, and R. F. Horton, Congregationalist. Cf. Herford, Brooke, Practical Christianity, the Salvation of Society.

Free Church -- Cf. Sturt, Henry, The Idea of a Free Church, 1909

Free Religious Movement -- led by Walter Walsh, who had to leave his congregation in Dundee (Gilfillian Memorial) in 1916 for his Universalist views. It is possible that the Labour Churches influenced the Free Religious Movement. In 1893 in debate with Trevor at Newcastle-on-Tyne Walsh had strongly opposed the 'free' religious views of the Labour congregations. Walsh's later views have great similarities to those of Trevor. Cf. Walsh, Walter, The World Re-built, the Aims and Principles of the Free Religious Movement; 1917; The Golden Rule, 1920; The Endless Quest, 1920; The Republic of God, 1921; Religion for the Labour Movement, 1923; The Free Religious Movement Explained, 1925; and E. D. Morel, M.P., Justice Between Peoples, an address delivered at Steinway Hall, London, Feb. 3, 1924, for the Free Religious Movement.

Great New Democratic Church -- associated with Dr. Wat. Tyler.


Guild of St. George -- 1871-1884, established by Ruskin. It was an attempt to revive mediaeval spirit, to show the world "chivalry without war, devoutness without a Church, nobility without luxury or sloth, and monarchy without profligacy or pride". It was supported mostly in Yorkshire.
Humanitarian League -- associated with Henry S. Salt. The Labour Church Union sent delegates to the National Humanitarian Conference in March, 1895.

International Society for the Recognition of the Brotherhood of Man -- established in 1892 or 1893; the first public meeting was held in Aberdeen in April, 1893. Mrs. Tyvie Mayo (Edward Garrett) was a prominent leader. Trevor was invited to be an executive board member. Mr. Celestine Edwards was the editor of the society's publication, Fraternity. The Motto of the society was "Fellow Workers" "Unity our basis; Love our principle; Truth our method; Justice our aim."

Knights of Labour -- founded by Uriah S. Stephens, a Philadelphia taylor. It started with six members; in 1886 it had 500,000 members. The aim of the Order was that toilers should gain their share of the wealth of the nation. Their methods were individualistic; they tended towards radicalism.

Labour Army -- see The New Labour Army.


Labour Association -- "... for promoting Co-operative Production, based on the co-partnership of the Workers." It recognizes Capital, Management, Labour, and Organized Consumption, each of which must share in the control and profit of an industry. The Emancipation of Labour in its fullest sense is the goal of the Labour Association. It inherits the legacy and carries on the work of the early Christian Socialists, Maurice, Neale, Ludlow, etc. It was established at Derby in 1884, at a Co-operative Congress. From it came the Co-operative Federation, the International Co-operative Alliance, pioneer experiments in co-operative workshops and co-operative wholesale business, and the Co-operative Productive Federation (a federation of older 'tried' societies with younger untried ones in an effort to induce confidence and a flow of capital. Its purpose was to borrow money and then to re-lend it to its members.) It published Labour Co-partnership; it advocated voluntary co-operation; its function was propagandist and advisory. Among its members were George Jacob Holyoake, president; Henry Vivian, secretary; Aneurin Williams, editor and treasurer; the Earl of Pembroke, vice president; Tom Mann; and Thomas Blandford.

Liberal Christian League and the New Theology -- Leader: R. J. Campbell. When Campbell retired as President in 1912 the League resolved to continue "on a completely democratic basis".

London Free Church Socialist Union

Moral Instruction League -- associated with F. G. Gould. Its purpose was to give ethical instruction to children and to assist those adults who were teaching children.

National Council of Labour Colleges -- Ruskin College, Oxford, was
founded in 1899 by an American Philanthropist as a working-man's college; its staff was largely left-wing. After the 1906 election the "Plebs League" was formed to bring Ruskin College into closer relation to the Trade Union Movement. Oxford authorities wanted to bring the college into their sphere. The Lord Chancellor of Oxford offered to give help and to have some control; Dennis Hird refused the offer. Out of the mix-up Central Labour College was formed as successor to Ruskin College. In many localities groups interested in adult education joined with the Plebs League and formed local colleges; i.e., in Edinburgh the first class was formed c. 1912, and in 1916 a college was formed. The National Council of Labour Colleges was formed in 1921; most of the member colleges had grown up spontaneously.


New Church Socialist Society -- Swedenborgian Community; publication: Uses.

New Fellowship -- See the Fellowship of the New Life.

New Labour Army -- founded by Frank Smith in 1891, after he left the leadership of the Reform Wing of the Salvation Army. The only branch which thrived was at Glasgow.

Order of the Golden Age -- established in 1895 "... to uplift mankind to a higher and more spiritual plane of experience and consciousness." Its main points were 1) a vegetarian diet, and 2) Universal Brotherhood. It was founded by Sidney H. Beard and Josiah Oldfield.

P. S. A. (Pleasant Sunday Afternoon) -- established in 1875 by John Blackham of West Bromwich, but did not begin to spread till 1885. The idea was soon repeated in P. S. E. (People's Sunday Evening) and P. E. S. (People's Evening Service) meetings. Towards the end of the century many P. S. A. programs were hardly distinguishable from Labour Churches. In the early years of the twentieth century the P. S. A. movement was a competitor of the Labour Churches; cf. R. C. K. Ensor, England, 1870-1914, pp. 525ff. With respect to the mental and social aspects of the years 1901 to 1914 Ensor states: "There was not now, as there had been in 1870, any solid core of agreed religious belief, round which the daily conduct of the nation as a whole shaped itself. ... Creed sat lightly on the great majority in the middle and upper classes; the Bible lost its hold on them, and the volume of outward religious observance shrank steadily. ... Preachers of any merit still drew large and attentive audiences everywhere, and a considerable number had what might be termed national reputations. ... The Chapels kept up their congregations better than the Church of England; but the labour and socialist movements poached extensively on their preserves. Not only, as we saw earlier, did it provide careers on the platform for gifted men who would otherwise have found them in the pulpit, but the I. L. P., which made a practice of holding large indoor propaganda meetings on Sunday evenings, directly drew away the members of congregations. The ministers of the Chapels, feeling the attraction which the new politics had for their people, very often went to meet it half-way. An institution which spread widely at this time was the P. S. A. (Pleasant Sunday Afternoon); held as a rule in
the Chapel itself with the minister presiding, but, save for a short
prayer and hymns, secular in character. Usually there were songs or
other solo music, but the main feature was an address by a layman on
a secular subject, oftenest with a bias to humanitarianism of some
kind. . . . it is significant of the political trend of non-con-
formity in these years, that while few conservative politicians were
invited to speak at P. S. A. s and many liberals were not either, a
leading socialist might spend practically every Sunday afternoon in
them. The sects, however, differed somewhat in this respect, and the
contacts of socialism were commoner and closer with the Congregation-
al and Baptist Chapels than with the Wesleyan:"

Cf. Byles, A. H., The P. S. A., What It Is and How To Start It,
1891; Lees, S., "The P. S. A. Movement", an article in The Christian
World, April 7, 1892, p. 276; and The P. S. A. Magazine.

Positivist Churches

Ruskin Movement -- established in 1900 as a federation of 19 existing
societies.

 Salvation Army -- While Frank Smith was in charge of the Social Reform
Wing, 1890 to 1891, the socialist emphasis was present.

 Salvation Socialist Society -- c. 1897; later became the Brotherhood
of Essenes; activity centered in West Gorton.

 Scottish Christian Social Union -- a Scottish Version of the C. S. U.
Cf. The Scottish Christian Social Union and How It Came To Be Formed,
1901.

Settlements: Browning Hall -- established 1897 with Herbert Stead as
warden; founded the Fellowship of Followers; sponsored
the annual Religion and Labour series.
Cambridge House -- 1897
Mansfield House
Oxford House, Bentham Green -- established in the eighties.
Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel -- established 1884.
Women's University Settlement -- established 1887,

Socialist Crusaders -- a Glasgow group associated with J. Keir Hardie
and with the Socialist Sunday Schools.

Socialist Quaker Society -- The Manchester Area Yearly meeting called a
conference on the relation of the Society to modern thought and
social questions. Over 1000 people took part; a strong socialist
emphasis was evident; the year was 1895. The Society was associated
with J. T. Harris; it published several tracts among which were:
The Oneness of Religion and the Secular Life by Mary O'Brien, and
Applied Christianity.

Socialist Sunday Schools -- Nesta H. Webster (The Socialist Network)
suggests that the original idea came from A. A. Watts of the S. D. F.
but evidence seems to suggest that the idea came spontaneously in
several areas during the nineties. Credit for the first school is
usually given to Miss Mary Gray of the Battersea B. D. F. (Nov. 1892)
During the nineties many schools came into being in connection with Labour Churches, Ethical Societies, Cinderella Clubs, S. D. F. and I. L. P. locals, as well as a few independent groups.

Classes were organized for children of all ages and for adults as well; the courses of study were similar to those described in relation to the Labour Church program. For an evaluation see Bernard Palmer, "The Socialist Sunday School: Belated Impressions" supra, p. 671.

The Socialist Sunday Schools were not organized nationally until the early twentieth century; district unions had been formed in the late nineties. Among those most active in the National Council of British Socialist Sunday Schools were B. J. Gould, Archie McArthur, Tom Anderson, A. Arkell, Fred Coates, J. J. Donaldson, M.A., A. Fleming, Fred Foster, Lizzie Glasier, Alex Gossip, John Hirst, D. D. Hopkinson, James Love, G. Malton, Miss A. Mathers, Stanley Mayne, Mrs. Edith Pearce, Alfred Russell, Mrs. Scarlett, John Searson, Mrs. Clarice McNab Shaw, James Simmons, Mrs. Telford, Mrs. Wainwright, and Miss May Westoby.


Sunday Societies Federation

Theosophy and Universal Brotherhood -- "Fraternity" "No creed but Brother- hood". Believed in "One Life" in mineral, organic, and human expression, and therefore believed in 're-incarnation' and evolutionary progress. Theosophy was sympathetic to the Labour Churches: "The Labour Church, which aims at giving the spirit of human unity direct expression, has especially awakened their deepest sympathies."

Theosophy groups in Liverpool and London held "Brotherhood Suppers": "The members sally forth after midnight and collect homeless wanderers (really homeless after that hour), bring them into a warm room, give them food, and afterward have a sort of concert. No doctrine is attempted to be taught, save by implication, that which inspires the effort -- the simple human lesson of Brotherhood."

(A-- Prophèt, April 1897, p1.56)

Among the members were Annie Besant, Sidney G. P. Coryn, and Walter J. Renshaw.

Unaffiliated Socialist Societies -- such as Tolstoyan Societies, Cobden Clubs, the Glasgow Study Circle, the Ancoats Museum, and the Ancoats Brotherhood. The Labour Annual of 1889 listed 15; in 1901 19 were listed.

Union of Ethical Societies: -- In 1900 there were 22 affiliated groups; in 1901, 19; in 1902, 15. Several Labour Churches affiliated with the Union of Ethical Societies for a number of years. After the demise of the Labour Churches many members found their spiritual home in ethical societies.

Wesleyan Mission Movement -- established by Hugh Price Hughes, assisted by Samuel Keeble. The latter later showed strong Marxian influences.

Women's Industrial Council -- Eleanor Keeling (Mrs. Jos. Edwards), sec-
retary of the Liverpool society reports that the society has "... ever striven to lessen the bitterness of strife by quietly appealing to the sentiment of what is just and reasonable. ... We provide lectures and music, and inquire into grievances as they arise, plead for the humane treatment of the women, and endeavour to settle disputes amicably by personal interviews with the employers."

It was the Women's Industrial Council that asked Margaret Bondfield to make a thorough investigation of London shops. The active members included Miss Clementina Black, Mrs. J. R. MacDonald, and Mrs. Gilchrist Thompson.

**Women's Labour League** -- which in 1918 became the Women's Section of the Labour Party.

**Women's Co-operative Guild**
"I understand the Labour Church to be an attempt to call into consciousness, and to develop, the religious aspects of the Labour Movement. Now, all the highest hopes of humanity, in the immediate future, appear to me to depend upon whether the struggle for improved conditions of life, which we call the Labour Movement, does or does not become religious — that is to say, non-material in its ultimate aim, self-sacrificing and generous in its spirit and its methods, and permeated with the consciousness that it is working out the decrees of the Supreme Power, and helping men to realise the Supreme Love. It is just because I believe the Labour Church to stand for this religion of Labour that I am fain to bear testimony on its behalf."

-- P. H. Wicksteed in the Inquirer as reprinted in the Prophet, April, 1893.

A typographical error on the front page of the Labour Prophet for January, 1896, gives rise to this question:

"Has the freedom demanded by the Labour Movement a generation ago become "greedom" with us?"