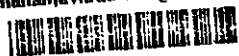


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# THE EVOLUTION OF LABOUR

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*PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE*

BY  
W. R. HAYWARD  
AND  
G. W. JOHNSON



DUCKWORTH

3 HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

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## PREFACE

We are, of course, most interested in what happens to ourselves. No matter whether the experience be pleasant or painful, we get a pleasure out of telling about it.

Not only are we interested in what happens to ourselves, but we are also interested in the experiences and adventures of others for we always feel that what has happened to the other person *could* have happened to ourselves.

The time in which the events took place has very little to do with our interest provided we are made to feel that the action centred around real flesh and blood people. If the people are real and the occurrence one that could reasonably have happened to ourselves, we are interested even though what occurred be something quite ordinary and familiar.

Stories in all ages have been much in demand as a form of entertainment. In the olden times, before the time of the printing press, when very few were able to read or write, the story teller was the principal source of information as well as of entertainment. The stories told were often fantastic and incredible, but the listeners were credulous and listened with rapt attention, for they were lifted out of their work-a-day and sordid surroundings and carried by the words of the story teller to places of enjoyment and peace.

## PREFACE

While we still enjoy the fantastic and imaginative, we are not satisfied with narratives of this character only. We have a desire to do more than listen to tales that are built largely out of the imagination of the writer or speaker. We have a curiosity to know something about what has actually happened to the people who have lived on this earth in the ages past, as well as what is happening to ourselves at this very time.

We have all read stories of the lives of famous men and women from the time of the earliest periods of history to the present. Likewise we are somewhat familiar with the history of the different nations that have flourished at one time or another. These stories of persons or nations have been devoted largely to the recounting of valorous deeds or the performance of some notable act.

This book is a story of peoples and nations. It is not given over to the recounting of deeds of valour performed on the field of battle, nor to the destruction wrought by robber bands in their forays on the innocent and unprotected. It is, on the contrary, a story of the struggles and labours of millions of men and women throughout hundreds of centuries directed to building up and preserving instead of tearing down and destroying. The story does not always tell of a great hero or ruler, unless this hero or ruler was a builder and a preserver. What we are and what we have to-day we owe very largely to the people about whom this story is written. These people were, and are, the workers and the planners—the men with vision and imagination whose inspiration was to add something to the comfort and pleasure of themselves and their

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descendants. Naturally, therefore, we are interested in this story for it is in a large measure about ourselves. It is about ourselves because it is about our ancestors whom we very much resemble and whose experiences—no matter in what century they occurred—were exactly the same as the ones which would have occurred to us had we lived in their times.

It should not be understood, however, that the authors wish the reader to believe that our ancestors lived through the identical kinds of experiences that we are living through to-day. Far from it. Each age, each generation lives in a world that differs in many respects from the world as it was previous to any given time. We struggle and strive, often quite blindly to make and hold a place for ourselves. Ignorance is our greatest handicap. The story of the way things have been, and the gradual growth and change that have taken place in the past, will do much to make clear the meaning of the forces that control us. These forces, because they do so vitally affect our daily lives, must be understood or we shall be waging a fruitless and losing fight against them.

✓ Failure to understand the workings of a force or system often causes us to destroy what, if understood, could be turned to service under our direction. The present economic system, as an example, is an object of hatred and distrust on the part of many. We all see its injustices and inequalities. The question that arises in the minds of intelligent men is : shall we destroy the system that has come down to us and largely controls our daily life, or shall we study it in the light of what has obtained

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in the past and see if it cannot be controlled and improved ?

It is the design of this book to give to the reader a working knowledge of the economic system under which he lives. It has no just claim to be called a work on economics ; it is really an attempt to show to the reader that the subject is worth studying. With that aim in view it has not hesitated to tunnel under certain inconvenient difficulties and to bridge sundry yawning chasms in our exact knowledge. In so doing it has assumed no claim to consideration as a scientific study, but has endeavoured to follow the main outlines of the subject closely enough to leave with the reader an impression the essential truth of which will not be challenged even by scientists.

It is confessedly and deliberately an optimistic book to the extent that it holds as superstition the belief, which has gained wide currency especially among the under-privileged classes, that the capitalistic system is a contrivance of wicked men consciously designed to hold the workers of the world in eternal bondage, and not the product of an evolutionary process. And to the extent which it holds that if the mass of the people can be brought to an understanding of the rudiments of any subject, even " the dismal science," they will act upon it for themselves with more honesty and intelligence than could, or would, be brought to bear by any minority acting ostensibly in the people's behalf.

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## PART ONE

*If I could only persuade you of this, that the chief duty of the civilized world to-day is to set about making labour happy for all, to do its utmost to minimize the amount of unhappy labour—nay, if I could only persuade some two or three of you here present—I should have made a good night's work of it.—William Morris, The Art of the People.*

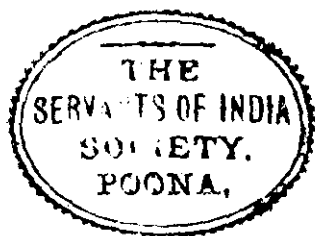
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