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G. D. H. COLE



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SOCIALISM IN EVOLUTION

BY
G. D. H. COLE

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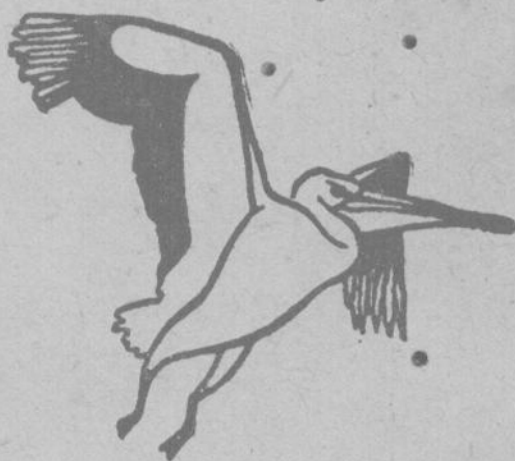
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BY •

G. D. H. COLE



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PREFACE

THE eight studies included in this volume have all been re-written—most of them extensively re-written—for republication. THE RISE OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT first appeared in a collective volume, *Great Events in History*, edited by Mr. G. R. S. Taylor. THE EVOLUTION OF LABOUR POLITICS has not been previously published in English, but incorporates material published in Germany as an introduction to Egon Wertheimer's *Portrait of the Labour Party*. THE EVOLUTION OF JOINT STOCK ENTERPRISE first appeared in *Studies in Capital and Investment*, a collective volume of studies issued by the New Fabian Research Bureau. MARXISM IN THE MODERN WORLD is based on my chapter in a volume, *Marxism*, edited by Mr. N. A. Holdaway. THE CRISIS IN EUROPEAN SOCIALISM incorporates an essay published in the United States, but not in Great Britain; but most of it is new. CAN CAPITALISM SURVIVE? is a revised version of a chapter originally published in the Fabian Society volume, *What is Ahead of Us?* THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM is based on an essay published in French, in *L'Esprit International*, but has not been previously published in English. Finally, TOWARDS SOCIALISM is adapted from an article originally contributed to *The Adelphi*.

G. D. H. C.

Oxford, 1938.

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I

THE RISE OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

THIS essay is a discussion of the rise and significance of the Labour movement both in Great Britain and as an international manifestation of the developing capitalist system. For the Labour movement, as it exists to-day in every country which has advanced any measurable distance along the road of large-scale industrialism, is essentially a product of the capitalist machine age. There were Trade Unions and strikes long before the advent of the modern system of power production; and it is easy to trace back the beginnings of working-class consciousness to a period before that of the great inventions which revolutionised both the productive processes of industry and the functions of the workers within the productive system. But the Trade Unions and other working-class organisations which existed before the beginning of the nineteenth century, or at any rate before the closing decades of the eighteenth century, even in Great Britain, can hardly be said to have formed parts of any concerted movement, or indeed to have been in any real sense representative of the working class. These earlier outbursts of industrial discontent were either sheer hunger movements, such as the bread riots which were common in many parts of eighteenth-century England, or arose out of the specific grievances of bodies of workmen, for the most part skilled artisans or craft workers in particular trades such as the woollen industry under the domestic system or the smaller urban handicrafts of the eighteenth-century towns.

The workmen who took part in these movements were for the most part barely conscious of their grievances as forming part of any general social movement extending to an entire economic class. They had particular troubles of their own, for which they sought appropriate remedies by the organisation of strikes, or by appeals, usually unsuccessful,