

Chapter XIII

POLITICAL TRADES' UNIONISM

I WANT to examine possibilities and, as far as I can see, the basic idea of the Political Labour Movement is worth serious consideration and close attention. A brief sketch of its rise and development may therefore be useful if only for guidance.

People are in these days going in for politics—almost making a habit of it. I suppose they are getting tired of picture shows. I am not certain that the vogue will last long, nor am I able to prophesy with any confidence what will be the next popular stunt, but 'now's the day and now's the hour' for politics; so let us make the most of it.

The lexicographers have defined politics as the 'science of human government', and quite a number of credulous and unimaginative people believe that is what it is. A much larger number think that it is what it ought to be, but the majority of those who know anything about the matter, know that it is nothing of the sort, and never expect it to be.

People enter political life under a variety of promptings. Some are born that way, some acquire the inclination, some simply blunder into it by sheer accident. Lawyers enter political life as offering the shortest and easiest way to judicial preferment. Traders and manufacturers do it to stimulate business—in the public interest of course. Some prefer it to golf as an exercise, some make a