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Harvard University
Department of Social Ethics

APR 1 1927

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The People's Institute
1926-27

THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE

NEW YORK CITY
OFFICE: 70 FIFTH AVENUE

COOPER UNION
MANHATTAN TRADE SCHOOL

A SE

"The People's Institute may be called a mature educational enterprise for adults and a clear demonstration that adult education has its place in the social scheme—that there can be adult education, if under the proper auspices, and that it is of immeasurable benefit under the proper auspices."

-Nathaniel Peffer in "New Schools for Older Students."

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Activities of the Institute

THE People's Institute was founded in 1897 by a group of New York's public spirited citizens on the initiative of Charles Sprague Smith. Its original purpose was to provide a forum for the free discussion of public questions, and for the first twenty years of its existence its main functions were those of a lyceum and forum, with a few social service features. The Institute's Sunday evening meetings inspired the organization of the Open Forum National Council and the spread of the forum idea.

The Institute has a record of twenty-nine years' work in adult education beginning long before the present widespread interest in such education. It is now concentrating all its energies toward further developments in this same direction.

Three lines of activity are helping to carry forward this adult education program for the season 1926-27. They are:

- (1) The lectures held three evenings a week from November to May in the Great Hall of Cooper Union including Mr. Martin's continuous Friday evening course. These lectures addressed to large groups of people give broad backgrounds, arouse intellectual curiosity—and plot lines for further study.
- (2) The School of the Institute, Manhattan Trade School, which developed from the Cooper Union work, and which provides smaller classes on specialized subjects.
- (3) Adult Education Groups distributed about the city providing individual guidance in tutorial groups.

The Aim of Adult Education

I CONCEIVE it to be the aim of adult education to broaden the interests and sympathies of people regardless of their daily occupation—or along with it—to lift men's thought out of the monotony and drudgery which are apt to be the common lot, to free the mind from servitude and herd opinion, to train habits of judgment and of appreciation of value, to carry on the struggle for human excellence in our day and generation, to temper passion with wisdom, to dispel prejudice by better knowledge of self, to enlist all men, in the measure that they have capacity for it, in the achievement of civilization.

In other words, the aim is the same as that which has all along inspired the best efforts at general education. In one sense the tradition of adult education is very old, coming to us from the ancient Greeks, but there has been in recent years a notable increase of interest in education in all its branches. In the sense that large numbers of persons of mature age are discovering the fact that it is possible for them to add to their store of knowledge and improve their understanding, the movement for adult education is a recent development in American life. Heretofore, the idea has prevailed that education belongs properly to the years of childhood and adolescence; that beyond a certain very elementary knowledge education is the

privilege of a very small portion of the population. When instruction has been offered to adults it has been chiefly belated elementary instruction which the backward or unfortunate missed in childhood, or it has been instruction in English offered to immigrants, or it has been vocational training offered to those who have wished to acquire increased industrial efficiency. The value of such training is apparent but it is for the most part essentially primary education offered to grown people. It is not adult education as that term is coming to be understood, and it is not enough. It has left a chasm between the centers of enlightenment and a populace which, notwithstanding the vast sums spent upon public education, still reads the tabloid papers, frequents the cheap motion picture, and is easily swayed by prejudice and "catch" phrases.

The People's Institute is one of the agencies now at work trying to bridge this gap between formal institutions of learning and the daily life and thought of people outside such institutions. For those who wish to gain a knowledge of the higher branches of learning best calculated to give one the general outlook of an educated mind, the Institute offers continuous and serious courses of study in the natural sciences and the humanities. It has not been found expedient to offer courses in mathematics or the ancient and modern languages, but we have received a very gratifying response to such subjects as the history and methods of science, philosophy, history of civilization, contemporary literature, the classics in trans-

lation, and the general principles of biology and psychology. Each course is given by a competent instructor whose own standards of scholarship are of the best. Several of the courses given at Cooper Union and elsewhere under the auspices of the Institute have been published and are now in use as reference and text books in various colleges and universities. The response regardless of the degree of preparation of those who attend is generally keen and the interest sincere and stimulating, many individuals continuing in attendance for a number of years.

We have no illusions that we can suddenly transform the mass nor have we any new-fangled theory of what an educated person is, nor any magic or "short cut." But we are able to interest large numbers of people with an uncompromising standard of educational aims and values without resorting to any trickery, to any propaganda, or any cheapening of the content of instruction. I believe that the people we reach are "key" persons in the circles in which they live. They are for the most part eager and sincere and I am convinced that we have been able to bring some new meaning and worth into their lives. I am also convinced that these persons exist in such numbers that, given the education they desire, they may become a balance of power, in the end an influence for turning public sentiment from cant and hysteria to something more serious, more appreciative and dependable.

The People's Institute is now in its twenty-ninth year. From the beginning it has demonstrated the fact that

there is a larger demand and consequently need in New York for the sort of work it is doing. During the past ten years I have seen the demands on the Institute increase from year to year as large numbers of men and women engaged in the ordinary pursuits of life show evidence of a desire for more and better knowledge. Our present task is to meet these increasing demands.

Everett Dean Martin

What Is the Matter With Modern Ideas?

Mr. Martin's 1926-27 course at Cooper Union (Average attendance at this course last year was 983; aggregate attendance 23,600).

- Nov. 12 The Loss of Intellectual Leadership in the Modern World.
- Nov. 19 Ancient and Medieval Ideas which Pass for Modern.
- Nov. 26 THE INFLUENCE OF ROUSSEAU ON MODERN IDEAS.
- Dec. 3 KANT AND THE MORALISM OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.
- Dec. 10 THE PRINCIPLE OF THE REFORMATION.
- Dec. 17 HUMANITARIAN IDEALS.
- Jan. 7 CULTURAL STANDARDS IN THE MODERN WORLD.
- Jan. 14 THE INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUALISM ON MODERN IDEAS.
- Ian. 21 THE NEW IMPERIALISM.
- Jan. 28 THE INFLUENCE OF EVOLUTIONISM ON MODERN IDEAS.
- Feb. 4 THE MODERN MAN'S FAITH IN PROGRESS.
- Feb. 11 NATURALISM.
- Feb. 18 WHAT IS HAPPENING TO SCIENCE.
- Feb. 25 MODERNISM IN RELIGION.
- Mar. 4 THE INFLUENCE OF THE DISCOVERY AND SETTLEMENT OF AMERICA ON MODERN IDEAS.
- Mar. 11 Why is There Not More Internationalism in the Modern World?
- Mar. 18 THE BIOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW IN MODERN THOUGHT.
- Mar. 25 THE PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW IN MODERN THOUGHT.
- Apr. 1 MECHANISM IN MODERN THOUGHT.
- Apr. 8 THE IDEA OF THE EMANCIPATION OF THE MASSES.
- Apr. 22 Individualism and Collectivism as Contrasting Modern Ideals.
- Apr. 29 The Type of Man Who Thrives in the Modern World.

The School of The People's Institute

The School is an outgrowth of the Institute's work at Cooper Union. For a number of years the work of the School was carried on by volunteer efforts on the part of the students themselves and instructors who gave their services for a nominal fee, and by Mr. Martin's personal work. During the last two years the Carnegie Corporation has supported it to the extent of \$10,000 and has thus made possible a notable expansion of the work. The School has conducted its classes at the Manhattan Trade School four evenings a week.

In administering the School we are conscious of a specific group of students in New York City who have a particular educational need and make a peculiar demand of their instructors.

The student body is made up of a variety of types of persons. Some of them have no regular occupation in business or in industry, but spend most of their time reading and talking with other students at the university or public libraries. Though they are not economically well off, they form an intellectual leisure class. Others are workers who have formed the habit of discriminating study in their free hours. They choose the subjects and lecturers that have something to contribute to their individual efforts. These two together are few in number and not well-known to outsiders, but are genuine, well read, persistent minded students in both the sciences and

in the humanities. They provide the permanent interest which is the necessary basis for any educational work.

Mixed with these are those who are, or have been, engaged in social work and humanitarian movements of reform or "uplift." These activities have usually had some religious or utopian ideas as their inspiration. Urban and industrial life has shaken their convictions and they are immersed in the welter of modern theories and faiths. Very simply, they are confused, as most of us are, and feel the need of intellectual companionship and discussion. Then there are the sophisticates who, like the Athenian citizens, are looking for some new thing. Put with these the scattering of college students who want their knowledge criticized and sifted and you have the student body, totaling about five hundred and attending in groups that average fifty-five to sixty each evening.

Instructors who can deal with their subjects and students in a way that is adequate to this situation are not numerous. It takes patience and insight into human nature as well as solid grounding and careful preparation of material. These are the qualities that are demanded and the only ones that will hold attention. Spectacular and easy-going rhetoric has long since been detected and eliminated from adult study classes. Direct and clear presentation of lectures with non-evasive answers to questions at the end are apparently necessary elements in this kind of teaching. Our staff of lecturers have these qualities, or they would not have survived.

A glance at the program will suggest the range of subject matter, from science and history to religion and philosophy. It has been our particular aim to arouse and encourage the sort of critical attitude that will find a way out of confused thinking and feeling. The greater part of current instruction tends to impress students with the results of scholarly work rather than its method. Since this tends to indoctrinate people with unrelated or contradictory information, it aggravates rather than relieves confusion. We have therefore tried to work from the point of view of method, always striving to show the meaning of results in terms of original problems and the ways of getting at solutions. This applies both to science and to literature. For instance, knowledge of laboratory technique in psychology often prevents the misunderstanding and misapplication of psychological theory in daily life by showing its partial and tentative character, where it applies and where it does not. So it is with other subjects.

The more general educational result is an increasing appreciation of the scholar and his work, something which is rare and very precious in this country. For those who are already students on their own there is suggestion and encouragement for further work. Some begin studying, or return to it, after the lapse of several years. There is a contagion in the quest for ideas which is evident at the Students' Club after the lectures where uncomfortable and alien opinion gets assimilated and reinterpretated over a glass of tea. Argument gets transformed

in the art of conversation and there appear the more happy symptoms of minds at work.

That even a few people are initiated to intellectual techniques and the joy of study is no insignificant thing in American life. The Carnegie Corporation recognizes this and is generously helping to finance the work at the School. It is hoped that our work will demonstrate to a wider group the genuine values in adult study.

Scott Buchanan

Statistical Summary of the School's Work

MANHATTAN TRADE SCHOOL SEASON 1925-1926

7
LECTURER SUBJECT
Mortimer J. AdlerThe Methods of Psychology
Scott M. BuchananVarieties of Scientific Experience
John M. ClappPublic Speaking
Horace M. KallenWhy Religion
Wolfgang KoehlerPsychology
Houston PetersonThe Dramas of Ibsen
E. G. SpauldingThe Evolution of Ideas
W. L. WestermannThe Byzantine Civilization
Number of Lectures Given 91
Total Attendance5,454
Average Attendance Per Lecture 58

New Adult Education Groups

THE People's Institute is offering a number of experimental courses for adult groups this year, for the purpose of making a laboratory study of teaching methods and subject matter best adapted to grown-up students. This practical research is being financed by the Carnegie Corporation as a part of a general investigation which the corporation is making of the entire field of adult education in America.

A striking feature of modern education in America is the growing proportion of students past the formal school age who are enrolled in University extension courses, correspondence courses, and in the large number of philanthropic education institutions. America no longer looks upon education as merely a preparatory period, entirely separate from life,—it is now recognized as a vital part of living; as an essential means of keeping in touch with the swift advance of contemporary thought.

So far the type of education offered the adult has been largely of the same character as that planned for the school boy and has been modeled on methods which have proved useful with adolescent minds. The older student is impatient with formal presentation and wishes immediately to come to grips with his problem. He is less passive. He wishes to have an active part in the class discussion and becomes positively hostile when required to listen to a didactic exposition of another's thinking, however competent that may be.

The adult student also differs strikingly from the adolescent in that he is impatient with the narrowly vocational type of course. He is apt to be a competent specialist in some field and while he will eagerly study along any line that will broaden and enrich his knowledge of that field he does not care merely to talk shop during his leisure hours. When he joins a course or attends a lecture he often wants something in the way of a cultural release, a taste of the freedom that comes to the man whose mind is so amply stocked as to make him independent of life's monotonous routine.

Taking these factors into consideration, the People's Institute has undertaken to organize its new experimental classes so as to do a serious piece of educational work in a wholly informal way. Courses are not offered primarily for "uplift" but to meet the needs of the small adult minority which has a desire to lead a frontier intellectual life of adventure, discovery and progress. None of the courses are vocational in aim. The leaders supplied by the Institute are University instructors chosen because of their ability to arouse and direct group discussion and group thinking.

Two of the courses cover the history of thought, one through the classic and medieval period, and the other the renaissance and modern. These courses are modeled on somewhat similar elective courses at Oxford and Columbia Universities. Their aim is to give the student a first-hand acquaintance with the works of the authors

in each period who by the force and originality of their thinking have shaped the course of civilization. No text books or secondary sources are used. One book is taken up for a discussion at each meeting. Two leaders, one with a literary background, and the other with a philosophic background, direct the discussion. The use of two leaders instead of one is a notable feature of these courses for it gives the student the advantage of two points of view and stimulates discussion.

Besides these reading courses, The People's Institute has organized a number of classes in special subject fields where it has found groups already interested along some particular line. The same discussion method is used though only one leader is provided.

In choosing the groups for these experimental classes, The People's Institute has been careful to take a broad cross section of the educational field. Some of the groups have received most of their education from reading and living, while others have had the advantages of college and university work. All the groups have shown evidence of a desire to do a serious piece of work and the ability to think in a vigorous and original way.

Philip N. Youtz

Adult Educational Groups

Among the places where courses are offered are:

Christodora House, 147 Avenue B. Subject: Renaissance and Modern Thought.

Community Church, 61 East 34th St. Subject: RENAIS-SANCE AND MODERN THOUGHT.

West Side Y. M. C. A., 318 West 57th St. Subject: CLASSIC AND MEDIEVAL THOUGHT.

C. S. Smith Club, 123 East 23rd St. Subject: Classic AND Medieval Thought.

Greenwich House, 29 Barrow St. Subject: Psychology.

Bronx Y. M. C. A., 470 East 161st St. Subject: Psychology.

White Plains Community Church, White Plains. Subject: Varieties of Economic Theory.

Bronx Y. M. C. A., 470 East 161st St. Subject: ETHICS.

Civitas Club, Church of Savior, Brooklyn. Subject:

New Student, 2929 Broadway. Subject: AMERICAN HISTORY.

Rockaway Forum, 222 Beach 122nd St., Rockaway. Subject: Classic and Medieval Thought.

Woman's Trade Union League, 247 Lexington Ave. Subject: ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

Whittier House, 174 Grand St., Jersey City. Subject: Civics.

Philosophy Club, New School for Social Research, 465 West 23rd St. Subject: Philosophy.

Comments of Leaders and Students on the Adult Education Group

Significant of the interest in and response to these new groups are these comments taken from the weekly reports made by the leaders:

"They are reading! They are interested in ideas! They discuss! They prefer Erasmus to Luther by a vote of 24 to 1."

"This class (Renaissance and Modern Thought) is better than anything I had at college."

"Discussion was lively, well-informed and reasonable."

"There was no dead wood present. Most of them had done the reading."

"Lively discussion. Audience well read. As good as my Columbia groups."

"The quality of their 'reading-memory' is very high. The discussion remained pertinent and crisp."

Sunday and Tuesday Evening Lectures

IN addition to Mr. Martin's Friday evening course, single lectures by different lecturers are given Sunday and Tuesday evenings at Cooper Union from November to May. The average attendance of these lectures for the 1925-26 season was 778. The total aggregate attendance for the 48 meetings held was 18,675.

SUNDAY EVENING

- Jan. 9 Mr. Nathaniel Peffer—"Unloading the White Man's Burden."
- Jan. 16 Professor Harry A. Overstreet—"THE PROBLEMS OF ADULT PERSONALITY."
- Jan. 23 Professor Harry A. Overstreet—"THE PROBLEMS OF ADULT PERSONALITY."
- Jan. 30 Mr. Norman Angell—"THE GREAT ILLUSIONS OF CURRENT POLITICAL THOUGHT."
- Feb. 6 Doctor Emanuel Sternheim—"EDUCATION IN RECENT FICTION."
- Feb. 13 Mr. John Coguper Poguys—"Joseph Conrad, Master of the Real Romance."
- Feb. 20 Mr. John Cowper Powys-"PSYCHOLOGY OF MODERN LITERATURE"
- Feb. 27 Mr. Lewis Browne-"THIS BELIEVING WORLD."

TUESDAY EVENING

- Jan. 11 Mr. John Bakeless-"Heading off the Next War."
- Jan. 18 Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes—"THE NEW HISTORY."
- Jan. 25 Doctor Joseph Jastrow-"FAKE PSYCHOLOGY."
 Feb. 1 Doctor Alfred Adler-"SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND THE
- Feb. 1 Doctor Alfred Adler—"Social Behavior and the Feeling of Insecurity."
- Feb. 8 Doctor Alfred Adler—"MENTAL HYGIENE AND INDI-VIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY."
- Feb. 15 Professor Harold E. Fish—"BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE AND THE TREND OF CIVILIZATION."
- Feb. 22 Dr. Charles R. Stockard—"THE SKIN AND INDIVIDU-

Cooper Union Courses Since 1918

The courses given by Mr. Martin since 1918 are:

- 1918-19—Democracy in the Light of Psychology.
- 1919-20—Dreams of a Social Redemption: A Psychological Study of Ideal Commonwealths.
- 1920-21—NIETZSCHE AND THE SPIRIT OF TODAY: A COURSE IN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY.
- 1921-22—Human Nature in Modern Civilization: A Course in Social Psychology.
- 1922-23—The New Liberalism: A Study in the Changing Outlook in Social Philosophy.
- 1923-24—Psychology: What it Has to Teach You About Yourself and the World You Live in.
- 1924-25—The Great Mass Movements of History: A Psychological Study.
- 1925-26—What is Worth Knowing: A Course on the Meaning of a Liberal Education.

Mr. Martin's lectures have been published in four volumes: "Psychology" and "The Meaning of a Liberal Education" (W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.), "The Behavior of Crowds" and "The Mystery of Religion" (Harper and Brothers).

Financial Statement

NOVEMBER 1, 1925 to OCTOBER 31, 1926

NOVEMBER 1, 1925 to OCTOBER	51, 1920	
RECEIPTS		
INSTITUTE		
Cash on hand Nov. 1, 1925\$	6.00	
Cash in bank Nov. 1, 1925	1.98	
Contributions	0.397.30	
		\$20,405.28
Reimbursements		
School of The People's Institute\$	350.00	
Rent		
Incidentals, Tel & Tel., Postage, etc	238.13	1,074.13
TOTAL INSTITUTE RECEIPTS		\$21,479,41
SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUTE		,,
Balance, November 1, 1925\$	32.40	
The Carnegie Corporation		
The Institute	859.22	
The Institute	1.361.25	
	-,	
TOTAL SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUTE RECEIPTS.		11,752.87
STUDY GROUP		
The Carnegie Corporation		2,000.00
DISBURSEMENTS		\$35,232.28
INSTITUTE		400,000.00
Salaries\$1	12.196.15	
Rent	1,438.00	
Telephone and Telegraph	439.72	
Printing and Stationery	980.98	
Office Expense		
	_,	\$16,360.57
Cooper Union Forum		,
Usher and Guards\$	587.30	
Speakers	2,540.00	
Rent	600.00	
Advertising	930.74	
Printing and Stationery	244.50	
Incidentals		
Contribution to School of The Institute	859.22	
Total Institute Disbursements		.\$22,209.95

SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUTE	•	250.00	
Advance repaid to Institute	ф	350.00	
Speakers\$	4 700 00		
Advertising	900.63		
Printing and Stationery	250.84		
Incidentals	85.75		
Director's Salary			
Manhattan Trade School			
Walifattan Trade School	372.00	9,329.22	
CLUB		1,347.44	
The state of the s	936.00		
Secretary—Salary\$	75.00		
Rent	62.65	1,073.65	
Incidentals	02.03	1,073.03	
TOTAL SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUT	E DISRURS	EMENTS	10.752.87
STUDY GROUPS	L DIODONO		,,
Organization Secretary—Salary.	\$	625.00	
New School for Social Research.	φ	500.00	
IVEW SCHOOL for Social Research.	_	300.00	
TOTAL STUDY GROUP DISBURSEMI	ENTS		1,125.00
Cash Balance October 31, 1926		71500000	
INSTITUTE			
On hand			6.00
Deficit Institute			
SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUTE			
Balance		1.000.00	
STUDY GROUP		2,000.00	
Balance		875.00	
Datance		0,0,00	
On Deposit at Mechanics & Metal	s National	Bank	1,138.46
October 31, 1926	The state of the state of		
			\$35,232.28

Audited by WILLIAM A. MILLIGAN & Co., Certified Public Accountants.

Support for the Institute

The People's Institute has no endowment. It has no connection with Cooper Union other than that for years, through the generous co-operation of the trustees of Cooper Union, the Institute has held its meetings in the Great Hall of Cooper Union. It has no means of earning an income since its purpose is to provide educational leadership and a center for discussion free to all people.

The Institute must therefore depend entirely on voluntary contributions for funds to maintain its work. The cost of providing the high grade of education supplied by the Institute, free of charge to large numbers of people, is amazingly low. The aggregate audience for the 120 lectures during the year approximates 80,000—some 2,000 individual students yearly avail themselves of the opportunities for continuous instruction offered by the Institute at a cost to the Institute of only \$10 per person.

The Institute needs 2,000 contributions of \$10 each.

Checks should be made payable to The People's Institute, and mailed to The People's Institute, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Why Contribute to The People's Institute?

MR. GEORGE W. ALGER, prominent New York attorney, accompanied his recent generous check for the work of the Institute with the following letter. It is reproduced here in the hope that other broad-visioned citizens, recognizing "the problem of leisure" will follow Mr. Alger's lead.

"DEAR MR. BALDWIN:

I have this past year increased very considerably my annual contribution to the People's Institute. I have done so mainly because of a belated realization of the great contribution which the Institute makes to a very pressing problem of American life, that is, the problem of leisure. We are developing more leisure, year by year, for all classes of our people. Men and women who, a generation ago, had very little spare time, now have a great deal. They have more leisure in this country today than anywhere else in the world. Unless this leisure can be properly used on matters worth while, it may prove rather a bane than a blessing. To give enlarged opportunities for intelligent use of leisure, for self-education, for enlarged intellectual experience is an extremely important problem with which we are just beginning to deal.

The People's Institute is giving a very high standard of intellectual opportunities to people who wish to use their leisure intelligently. As its opportunities increase, the facilities which it will afford will also be extended.

The whole future of America as to the quality of its population will depend in a large measure, as I see it, upon this kind of work. The People's Institute is one of the most useful organizations in America having this purpose in view.

I remain,

Yours very sincerely, (Signed) GEORGE W. ALGER."

Contributors

During the Fiscal Year-Nov. 1, 1925, to Oct. 31, 1926

Achelis, Elizabeth A.
Achelis, John
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Alger, George W.
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August, Mrs. Harmon S.
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Hague, Miss Eleanor
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Harding, J. Horace
Hayden, Charles
Heide, Henry
Henderson, Mrs. E. C.
Hendrick, Ellwood
Herrmann, Arnold
Herzog, Nina D.
Hillard, Miss Mary R.
Hirsch, Mrs. Richard
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