

## THE INTELLECTUAL CONDITIONS OF THE LABOUR PARTY

### I

**T**HERE are various questions, religious, political and social which, though always closely connected with the general welfare of mankind, obtrude themselves at particular periods, with more than usual force on the consciousness of particular countries, or of the civilised world generally. One of these questions, which is, at the present moment, occupying an exceptional share of public thought and interest, is the question of what, more or less vaguely, are spoken of as the claims of Labour.

The "claims of labour" have acquired their present special importance, not in this country only, but in others—for example, in Russia. It is, however, with reference to the manner in which they are now being brought forward amongst ourselves, that I shall speak of them primarily, though not exclusively, here. I shall aim at setting forth in clear logical order the main ideas and principles which are animating the professed leaders of the labour movement in Great Britain—especially those who profess to represent Labour in Parliament; and I shall then point out precisely how, and to what extent, these principles and ideas accord, and fail to accord with fact. We shall find much in them which is sound, which those who are accustomed to condemn them condemn with gross