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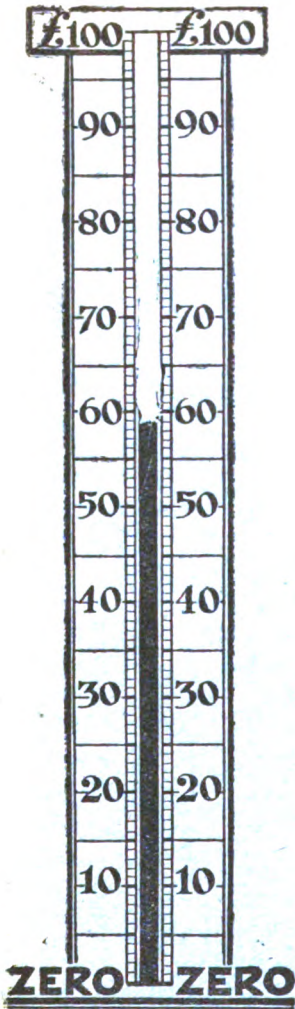
The
PLEBS
MAGAZINE



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MONTHLY

TWOPENCE



We have to
get this
down
to

Zero

We Want a
**SPECIAL
SPURT.**
This Month.

SEE
LEAFLET
ENCLOSED.

THE PLEBS MAGAZINE

"I can promise to be candid but not impartial."

Vol. VIII

March, 1916

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Education for What?

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT, Mr. Wells, and other representatives of what G. B. S. recently referred to as the "High Toby Intelligentsia" have been writing at some length lately on the need for a New Education. "This is the hour," Mr. Wells announces, "for educational reconstruction. . . . There never was before, there never may be again, so wonderful an opportunity . . . for a profitable new start in British education." And so he has been knocking into shape a scheme or two designed to ensure "a finer spiritual training, a sounder mental gymnastic, and a more comprehensive presentation of life." The practical-minded Mr. Bennett, on the other hand, has been insisting that "our very existence as an Empire depends on a renaissance of education. . . . Grave trouble, (he goes on) a tremendous ordeal, lies ahead of us, even if the war be smashingly won. Knowledge alone can deal with it satisfactorily."

Now both Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett, one has been led to believe, profess and call themselves Socialists. Both of them, that is to say, are dissatisfied with society as at present constituted;

both of them are conscious of its injustices, its stupidities—and its instability. Yet neither devotes a line to the question of Education considered from this point of view— from the point of view, that is, of the Socialist. Each, although a declared enemy of the existing order, concerns himself with educational reforms “within the existing order”; nay, more, with reforms expressly designed to buttress the existing order by making it more “efficient.” Mr. Wells’ “Socialism,” of course, is (or was when last defined) of a peculiar aristocratic brand; so that perhaps one ought not to be wholly surprised that his scheme for a new education is mainly directed towards a “cleaning-up and sweeping-out” of Oxford and Cambridge. (One might not object to that—as a beginning.) But—making all allowances for the necessity of finding the Samurai something to do—one is a trifle taken aback when, after the general observations on the need for a “more comprehensive presentation of life,” &c., Mr. Wells proceeds to devote himself exclusively to a discussion of the “chief things we need in the education of our ruling-class;” and when he states the problem confronting “us” as—“What sort of training should a University give to produce the ruling, directing, and leading men which it exists to produce?” This is “reform within the existing order” with a vengeance!

Mr. Bennett, of course, is a Democrat. One of his articles on the subject was actually inspired by the text, “the working-man’s security against servitude is education” (a quotation from the Bishop of Oxford). Yet the only security against servitude Mr. Bennett visualizes for the working-man is an increased technical efficiency; or, as Mr. Fred Henderson once admirably put it, “a sufficient improvement in the quality of that commodity (the working-man’s labour-power) to enable its purchasers to compete more efficiently with their foreign rivals.” Mr. Bennett points to certain Northern Universities as representing “the advanced movement in education to day.” “They are our hope,” says he. . . . “They have had an enormous beneficial influence on the processes of manufacture, and the organization of trade concerns.” Beneficial to *whom*, one is driven to ask—and *whose* hope are they? The correct answer, of course, is sufficiently indicated by the fact that Mr. Bennett’s objective is “the capture of German trade.” As though “we” were an undivided nation, a beautifully organized society built up on a genuine community of interests! As though such a problem as “producers’ control” had never been raised! As though, in short, (to quote Mr. Henderson again) it were not merely “windy humbug to talk about an educated democracy, since education in any real sense is incompatible with the retention of the people in a helot status.”

Will YOU send us something THIS MONTH?

But perhaps, after all, it is scarcely correct to say that Mr. Bennett does not devote a single line to the question of Education from the Socialist point of view. For in a couple of passages he does seem to come within-sight of that problem, only, apparently, to shrink back from the prospect, appalled. Knowledge alone, he has been saying, can help us in the "tremendous ordeal" lying ahead of us.

It is conceivable that such knowledge may originate in the democracy. If it does, the struggle between classes will be long and wasteful (!) and perhaps worse than wasteful (!!).

So this Democrat fearfully insists that "the required knowledge ought to originate in the existing oligarchy!" in another article he writes:—

We shall want every possible equipment for the future struggle --and I mean not only the industrial struggle against Germany, but the moral struggle against the reactionarism which inevitably accompanies and follows the active working of such an immensely stupid institution as war. After the war, militarism, thoroughly discredited and afraid, will fight everywhere, politically, for its continuance: the blind foolishness of mankind will be its abettor, and we all, especially the poor, shall have need of every possible "security against servitude."

And the knowledge which is to save the poor is to "originate in the existing oligarchy!" One pictures Mr. Lloyd George devising fresh "securities."

There *is* a need for a New Education, but it is an education of a kind which the existing oligarchy is scarcely likely to supply. Education for what? No study is of value, as Mr. Wells wisely remarks, "*that does not go through to an end.*" And the question to *what* end the education which we, as Socialists, need and want, is to be directed, has only to be asked to answer itself. Certainly *not* to produce either a ruling-class or an army of wage-slaves guaranteed "efficient" for the capturing of German trade. The education we are concerned with is based upon a recognition of the fundamental fact of modern society—"the antagonism of interests existing between Capital and Labour." Its end must be to make the working-class conscious of this antagonism, for the purpose of removing it; "Education towards Revolution," in the three words which according to William Morris, expressed what our policy should be. And the oligarchy is not going to provide us—either in Universities, public schools, or technical classes—with educational facilities of this kind. We have to take this matter in hand for ourselves.

J. F. H.

Will YOU send us something THIS MONTH?

On the Clyde: A Study in Solidarity

TO understand thoroughly the situation on the Clyde, one must go back to the time when war was declared. At that time, the engineers, who had just found themselves freed from an agreement which had kept them tied for three years, were advancing a claim for an increase in wages of 2d. an hour. This, it must be remembered, was a *pre-war* demand, based on the increase in the cost of living during the period of fixed wages. The outbreak of war of course afforded the employers a superfluity of excuses for refusing to meet the demand, and these were exploited to the utmost. The further rise in prices as a result of the war was entirely ignored. By the end of 1914 negotiations were no further forward, and the relative position of the engineer had become still more precarious; and then, in February 1915, their own officials brought about a climax by accepting 3/4d.—a sum that would have left them worse off than they were when they made the original demand for 2d.

The men withdrew their labour and the now famous February strike took place. Deserted by their own officials, they were confronted with the problem of organization, and this was tackled in able fashion. The forces were divided into districts, and delegates appointed to act on a Central Committee which met daily. As their ranks included members of the A. S. E., Toolmakers, United Machinemen, &c., the possibility of the former capitulating if *official* action was taken—thereby leaving the others, who numbered but a small minority, no choice but to accept their terms—brought home a lesson which the Clyde to day has thoroughly learned, viz., the futility of sectionalism and the advantage of united action. By pledging themselves to accept no decision other than that arrived at through the Unofficial Central Committee, and endorsed by *all* the workers in the District Meetings, a possible split in the ranks was averted.

It is not necessary to go into all the details of this struggle; it is sufficient to point out that in overcoming all the coercion and intimidation brought to bear against them, and *returning in a body*, the workers gave ample evidence both of their discipline and of their capacity for organization. A compromise of 1d. per hour being effected, they carried their grievance back to work with them, determined to gather strength for the next round. It had become clear that the employers had a valuable asset in the arbitrary powers of the Government, and that they intended to make full use of them. As a result the Trade Union leaders were coerced into signing agreements which bound the men hand and foot, and made "official" action impossible. This was still more clearly demonstrated after the introduction of the Munitions Act. The officials could do nothing to meet the grievances

of the man in the shop. It was left to the initiative of the A. S. E. shop-stewards to take matters up, and they set about forming a Vigilance Committee, composed of men from the shop, and the machinery of the Central Committee was the means adopted. This now became the Clyde Vigilance Committee. Its activity was chiefly in connection with the Munitions Act, and included the historic case of the three Fairfield shipwrights. An action of the local officials, to whom, of course, the Committee had become a dangerous body, put an end to the Clyde Vigilance Committee as such, but did not succeed in breaking it up. That action was as follows :—

When the agitation demanding the release of the three shipwrights had reached a point at which it was obvious that the workers were desirous of more drastic action, the officials conveniently resurrected an old body which had died a natural death at the beginning of the war, called the Clyde Vigilance Committee and composed of the various local officials. At the psychological moment they issued a leaflet instructing the workers not to take any action until word came through from the Union officials, and this leaflet they signed, not as formerly by their own names, but by the names of the various societies. The ruse was successful only so far as it kept the shipwrights in prison longer than necessary, and demonstrated to the workers the need for another title for the Committee, which henceforth became the Clyde Workers' Committee.

I have said little of the various grievances which necessitated the existence of an unofficial committee. These have been of a general character, and not confined to the Clyde area. By reason of the defensive machinery which they evolved for themselves, the Clyde workers have been able to put up a better fight against the efforts of the employers than the workers in some other districts. And the time was soon to come when this machinery would be necessary not only for industrial purposes, but also for battles of another character. Its utility during the Rent Strike is now well known, as is also the part it played on the occasion of the visit of the celebrated Welsh Puritan and Democrat, the Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George. No-one in the least conversant with affairs on the Clyde but will admit that in coming here after the ruthless operation of the Munitions Act against the workers, Mr. George earned the reception he got. And he has earned quite a lot more since his visit. The blatant audacity of suppressing *Forward* when it appeared with a truthful account of what transpired at the St. Andrew's Hall meeting only added to the Clyde workers' already overflowing indictment against him. His defence that the suppression was for something that was published several months previous was about as convincing as his reply to Mr. Pringle, when he said that 'it was not true that the shop-stewards in Fairfield

Yard had refused to see him,' and proceeded to rebuke Mr. Pringle for 'listening to tittle-tattle.' What he did NOT mention was that it was the shop-stewards in Weir's Cathcart, an even more influential firm, who treated him thus! And it will take something more than the word of honour of a Cabinet Minister to convince the Clyde men that Conscription was not rushed to the front as a result of Mr. George's Glasgow visit.

Apart from this, however, the Clyde workers have had filched from them within six weeks what remnants of freedom they possessed. Free Speech, Free Press, the right of combination, all are things of the past. No less than four papers have been suppressed—*Forward*, the *Vanguard*, the *Socialist*, and the *Worker*. Halls let for meetings have been cancelled by the score, and even where meetings have been held, summonses against the speakers have been issued and fines imposed. Again, cases innumerable have come up involving the right of organization, supposed to be conceded in the Munitions Act, and the defending workers punished.

In their zeal to demonstrate what a land of Freedom this is—by arresting two members of the C. W. C. and the printer of the *Worker*—the powers that be went just a little too far. Once again the patience and tolerance of the workers were exhausted, and in less than eighteen hours some ten thousand had stopped work to demand the release of their three comrades. As a result, bail was granted, despite the earlier statement that the Crown had instructed that no bail be allowed. It was only the prompt action of the C. W. C. in urging those who had not yet come out to refrain from doing so, that averted a still more dangerous situation.

Meantime, there are still the issues of the Government dilution scheme, which to say the least is obnoxious to the workers; and also the Compulsion Bill. The handling of these measures will determine the length of time peace is likely to reign on the Clyde. We are, it seems clear, slowly but surely moving towards a crisis, which when it comes will have far-reaching effects, and it is to be hoped that the workers in other districts will at least endeavour to get at the true facts before passing judgment.

A. McMANUS. (Glasgow.)

Industrial Organization on the Railways

RAILWAYMEN have had considerable experience, in actual practice, of what the development of capitalist industry means so far as their labour is concerned. During recent years certain portions of the Marxian Theory have been abundantly proved by events. They have organized—after a fashion—have negotiated, and occasionally broken out in open conflict in the endeavour to improve their economic con-

ditions. In some cases nominal wages have been increased, hours shortened, and working conditions made safer. All this, of course, has been accomplished as a result of such organization and action as they have hitherto developed. But there is another side to the picture. Whilst this has been taking place, the railway corporations have not been sleeping. They are not in existence to provide work for working men, or to increase their wages. They are in business to obtain as much as possible for as little as possible. They are out to obtain the largest possible mass of profits. What have they been doing? They have gone in for improving the mechanism of transportation, and for intensification of the labour process; e.g. the doubling of running lines, (i.e. laying two sets of metals where previously there was only one, four sets where there were only two) resulting at once in an improvement in the mechanism of transportation. The goods and mineral trains can now reach their destinations quicker, and consequently the labour of the train crews is intensified enormously. In all probability too the opportunity is seized of getting more work out of the platelayers, and in many cases out of the signalmen. Then the increase in the size of the locomotives, wagons, &c., means not only that the work of the train crews is considerably intensified, but also that heavier couplings have to be adopted, which makes the work of shunters, guards, and others who have to manipulate these couplings more arduous. The heavier locomotives, &c., also result in the adoption of heavier rails which makes the work of the platelayers riskier and more arduous. Furthermore, there is the Control System, which means that train crews are largely considered as so many pawns on a chess board, without human feelings; as a result of this, further intensification of the labour process takes place and, in addition, the home life of the train crews looks like becoming a negligible quantity. When all the factors are weighed, therefore, the improvements obtained have been more than counterbalanced by the intensification of labour which has taken place.

All this is from the nominal standpoint. From the standpoint of real wages the railway-worker has suffered along with his fellow-workers in other industries from the increased prices of the necessities of life. Relatively, he is economically worse off than he was some years ago, because the total mass of profits has increased by 33%, whilst the total mass of wages has only increased by 19%; and this latter increase has been largely due to the increased number of employees following upon the extension of the railway system. Looked at from the standpoint of the intensification of the labour process, from the relatively enormous increase in the mass of profits, the railway workers have been losing rather than gaining ground; at any rate, in the process of development, they have not made headway sufficiently fast to maintain wages at the same ratio with profits.

What is the remedy? The railway workers must adopt ways and means which will give them the greatest possible power when dealing with their employers. And this they could obtain by so organizing themselves as to be able to paralyze the whole of the railway industry. This implies organization in a Union which shall be as broad and as wide, as high and as deep, as the whole of the railway industry; a Union catering for all grades of railway workers, and therefore capable (when its membership in all departments is sufficient, when sectional societies have merged into it) of paralyzing every department of the Industry.

Such a Union, so far as basis is concerned, we have now in the N. U. R.; but there are other unions existing separately which cater for a section of railwaymen, and others which ramify into many industries, and cater craft by craft for craftsmen employed in the railway industry. Whilst the N. U. R. is strong, whilst its basis is on the lines of industry, it certainly would be a great deal stronger if those unions catering for sections of railwaymen merged into it, and if all the craftsmen eligible for membership in other unions, but employed in the railway industry, came into it.

That the need for this greater unity is more or less realized is shown by the fact of the expressed willingness to federate, and the attempts made in this direction. But federation is a mere tinkering with the position, a compromise with the necessities of the situation. Federations are weaker bodies than Amalgamations. The bonds holding a federation together are more easily broken than the bonds which hold together an amalgamated body. Federation has been tried and has failed, and always must fail because of the possibilities open to any section to break away for some reason or other. The Miners Federation of Great Britain, the strongest and probably the highest type of Federation in this country showed in the National Strike that it would have been better to have been an amalgamation. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; and in the case of the Miners, those with the smallest fighting funds proved to be the weakest link, the link which measured the strength of the whole Federation. If the Miners had been an amalgamated body, this difficulty would never have arisen. And seeing that the railway workers want the greatest power, why dally with federation when there is a method to hand which gives greater power than federation can give?

Let the railway workers realize what each of them has in common. They all sell their labour power to the same buyer. They all have to haggle with the same common exploiter for improvements in their position. They cannot give each other better conditions; these have to be fought for. But they can organize together and in that way assist each other up the ladder towards their

emancipation from exploitation. Let them organize in ONE BIG UNION. And let them make up their minds not to be sectionalized by any form of negotiative machinery, and thus have the fighting strength divided. When they get into one organization, and once realize their power, they will make short work of tedious methods of negotiation, conciliation boards and the like. They will gain more and more of the results of their labour. They will gain more and more control. Until eventually they will take their stand along with the other industrial workers in ridding themselves of their exploiters, and will manage and control the railways on behalf of the community by means of their organization.

GEO. W. BROWN.

The Only Way

RECENT events in the Labour world afford conclusive evidence—if such were needed—that the future of the working-class movement depends *entirely* upon its members having a thorough and intelligent knowledge of the forces operating in society. We require something more than occasional meetings addressed by lecturers and glib-tongued orators. Again, Trade Union branches are not, for obvious reasons, able to devote as much time to the subject of education as its importance merits. It is therefore necessary to devise a separate educational scheme to meet the needs of Trade Union members.

The first essential is a College, and it is to be hoped that by the time these lines appear the difficulties, real and imaginary, in connection with the taking over of the Central Labour College by the S. W. M. F. and N. U. R. will have been surmounted. The principal work of the College must be to train teachers, and those Unions who send students should do so with this object in view.

The next question is the course of study. A cat may have kittens in an oven, but that does not make them biscuits; and it does not follow that the mere fact of two Trade Unions owning a College will of itself result in an education which recognizes the inevitable antagonism between Wage-Labour and Capital. The curriculum being the key to the whole situation, we say emphatically that it must be the same as hitherto taught at the C. I. C. Too much stress cannot be placed on this, and it is imperative that this matter should be carefully watched and that we should prepare for eventualities.

The method of getting in touch with the rank and file will vary with local conditions, but in the towns a scheme could be adopted similar to that recently inaugurated by the London Council of the N. U. R. in conjunction with the C. I. C. Affiliated

to the Council are 84 branches, representing 35,000 members. Besides the Central Council, branches are grouped together into four district sub-councils for dealing with local organizing work. At the outset an Educational Committee was formed, and it was decided to issue the following leaflets at fortnightly intervals: 1. — Education and Labour; 2—Economics of Labour; 3—The History of Labour; and 4—The Modern Working-Class Movement. The leaflets were well circulated, their fame travelling as far as America, one being reprinted in the *International Socialist Review*. Attached to each leaflet was a form, and members were invited, if in favour of the scheme, to fill it in. The returns proved so satisfactory that it was found possible to commence classes at three different points in the western district of London. The control of these was vested in the Western Sub-Council, who were asked to appoint a local committee and secretary to administer their working. The classes commenced in January, and will continue at least until the end of May. They are open to any member of a Trade Union, Socialist Organization, or Co-operative Society. Should any of these affiliate *en bloc*, they are entitled to representation on the committee. The student's fee is 2d. per week. There are at present about 150 students attending, the number increasing weekly. Owing to the difficulties of railway work it has been found necessary to run morning as well as evening classes; in fact, everything is being done to meet the needs and wishes of the students.

Provision has been made for two subjects to be taught; (a) The Modern Working-Class Movement, comprising the following lectures:—1, Historical origin of the working class; how it is distinguished from the chattel slave, serf, guild-handicraft, and early factory worker; 2, The Industrial Revolution and its immediate consequences; 3, Trade Unionism in the 18th and early 19th centuries; 4, Trade Unionism, 1825-35; 5, The Chartist Movement and the Anti-Corn Law League; 6, Trade Unionism from 1848 to 1900; 7, The Industrial Unrest of the 20th century; 8, As to politics: the rise of the Labour Party; 9, The rise and progress of Industrial Unionism; 10, Some Craft Union Objections; 11, Industrial Unionism and its relation to Syndicalism and Guild Socialism.

(b) Some Broad Surveys of Social Evolution and Revolution; comprising the following lectures:—1, The Historical Method; 2, Savagery and Barbarism; 3, The Ancient Civilizations; 4, The Downfall of Rome and the Rise of Christianity; 5, The Middle Ages and the Reformation; 6, The Rise of Modern Capitalist Society in England; 7, The American Revolution; 8, Some European Revolutions; 9, The Rise of Social Democracy; 10, Where Capitalism stands to-day.

It was pointed out in last month's *Plebs* that the Outlines for the first course of Lectures are appearing in the *Railway Review* (commencing Dec. 24th, 1915). The duration of each lecture is one hour, and one hour is allowed for questions and debate. Suitable text books are obtained from the C. L. C., and in addition classes are availing themselves of a Fabian book-box. Although unfortunately, it is not possible for every student to write an essay, this is encouraged, and students who do so have them corrected by the lecturers. Further classes are shortly to be started in the Northern and Eastern districts of London.

And let me here pay one word of tribute to the magnificent work done by Messrs. Craik, Holder, and Pratt, of the C. L. C., who are taking charge of the classes. No effort has been too great for them to make, and every student will join with me in offering them our thanks for their enthusiastic co-operation.

In conclusion, a word with my N. U. R. colleagues: The proper educating of our members must be officially recognized, financially and otherwise, as one of the objects of our Union. The whole of the country is now covered by District Councils which are eminently suited to putting into operation schemes similar to the one outlined above. Get to business!!

W. T. A. FOOT,

Secretary, London District Council N. U. R.

Patriotism and Business

(Some extracts from an article which appeared in the *New York Vorwarts*, December 4th, 1915. Translated by Will W. Craik.)

The Berlin *Vorwarts* has the following sentence in the article to which it owes its latest suppression:—

"Defence of the Fatherland, Freedom, Kultur—these words are to-day no longer satisfying. There are certain words by which one individual can mean one thing, and another something else."

Could *Vorwarts* have written as it would, it would have given a more vigorous expression to these thoughts, something in the sense of the words:—"Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels!" Indeed, after the experience of this war, all these phrases about Fatherland, Patriotism, Freedom, etc., with which the ruling classes of the world inflame the peoples against one another, merely to the end that they may be able to shear more than hitherto, can now only be taken seriously by the thoughtless. If at this time, all the hidden reasons for the war became open to the light of day, if all the mysterious causes for this fearful murder became known, the masses of the people would smite themselves on the head, and exclaim: "What terrible asses we have been!" . . .

Certainly, he who has kept his wits about him, and with unclouded eyes seeks to penetrate to the causes of events, can, without difficulty, recognize what role business-promoting and profit-seeking play in the war. Indeed, here and there, the rulers and their organs are obliged quite naively to admit the reasons which impel them to go to war.

Take, for example, Bulgaria, the latest country to plunge into the war—of course in the name of Fatherland, Freedom, Independence, and other empty words, from which each can choose for himself some meaning or other. Bulgaria's real reason for engaging in the war-adventure is betrayed in a passage from a memorandum, which emanates from the Bulgarian Government itself. There it is quite openly declared that:—

The reward of neutrality is governed by economic and political circumstances. Bulgaria has ready for export about 80,000 to 90,000 wagons (10 tons each) of maize, barley, wheat, oats, rye, millet, hay, etc. We must export this grain as quickly as possible, thereby stimulating our trade, importing into our country the necessary money, enabling the landowners to perform their obligations, and thus preserving this exclusive wealth, which we enjoy, from destruction; and this is the more necessary as our granaries will quickly become filled with the corn and maize of this year's harvest, a harvest that promises to be a remarkable one. Germany and Austria-Hungary are shut out from American and Russian exports. There, our grain can therefore be readily sold, and sold, moreover, at the high price of 60 to 80 francs per 100 kilos. Bulgaria would commit a great crime if she did not take measures by which her harvest might find sale at these high prices. In Russia, owing to difficulties of export, there is plenty of grain and prices are low. In Italy, France and England, prices have certainly risen; still, this rise in prices is counter-balanced by high insurance (freight) premiums, so that our landowners could, comparatively speaking, draw but a very small profit out of these raised prices. If we export our grain to Italy, France and England, we shall be able to profit by the high prices only to an insignificant extent, and should in any case obtain not as much as half of what we could obtain from Germany and Austria-Hungary.

So, since Bulgarian grain fetches double the price in Germany that it would fetch in France, Bulgaria enters the war. And for this reason, the Fatherland is declared to be in danger, and the blood of the young must be poured out on the field of battle.

And the people cry "Hurrah!"

Outlines of Political Economy

*STUDY OUTLINE No. 15.—ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE SURPLUS VALUE —THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OF PRODUCTIVE LABOUR UNDER CAPITALIST PRODUCTION.—*When is labour *productive* labour? Viewed in the abstract, the labour of the individual

is productive when it results in a useful product. Viewed within the limits of the present form of the labour-process, where the product is the result of the varied detailed activities of a number of individual labourers, the definition given above does not hold for the individual labourer. The latter is no longer productive as an individual, but only in so far as he is a part of the collective labour.

Is it not, however, this characteristic which, under the present capitalist system specially marks off labour as productive labour? The aim of the capitalist production is not use-value as such, but value, or, more specifically, surplus-value. Unless the labourer, through the function of his power, yields to the capitalist a profit, his labour is not considered as productive labour.

A CERTAIN DEGREE OF PRODUCTIVENESS OF LABOUR THE PREMISE OF SURPLUS-LABOUR;—Surplus-value may be produced through prolonging the working-day beyond the time necessary for the support of the producer. We have seen that this constitutes *absolute* surplus-value, which operates in relation to the *duration* of labour. On the other hand, the production of relative surplus-value; which is realized by curtailing the time which is necessary for the labourer to work for the production of an equivalent to the wages paid, operates with revolutionizing effects upon the technical processes and organization of labour and, thereby, upon society as a whole,

Given the length of the working day, a rise in the rate of surplus-value can result only from an increase in either the intensity or productiveness of labour. If the latter are given, then a rise in the rate of surplus-value can result only from an increase in the length of the working-day. Apart, however, from the length of the working-day, there can be no surplus-value unless the labour of the individual has acquired that degree of productiveness which enables him to devote part of the working-day to surplus-labour, for others.

Surplus-labour, which implies a certain development in the productive power of labour, is the basis of existence for all historical proprietary classes,—slave-owners, feudal lords, and capitalists.

PRODUCTIVENESS OF LABOUR A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT;—The productiveness of labour necessary for surplus-labour is not a natural, but a historical, acquirement. Only after thousands of years of gradual development did it become *possible* for one individual to maintain another, and it only became *actual* when force was employed to compel one man to labour for the maintenance of another

NATURAL CONDITIONS AND THE PRODUCTIVENESS OF LABOUR;—The productiveness of labour may, of course, vary in different parts of the world, according to the varying natural conditions in these parts, e g, climate, soil, &c., and this fact, in turn, will express itself in greater or fewer wants; more or less effort for the satisfaction of wants; a longer or shorter necessary labour-time. To that extent, there is a natural limit to surplus-labour.

Nature may be so bountiful, that the work of one day will be sufficient to satisfy the wants of seven days. If, however, capitalist production estab-

lished itself in the bounteous region, and paid for the labour of seven days with the product of one day's work, then it is obvious that the fertility of nature cannot explain why the individual, who formerly worked only one day, must now work seven; the favourable natural circumstance makes it *possible* to have six days' surplus-labour, but not *actual*.

On the other hand, these natural limits are pushed back in the degree that industry develops and the instruments of industry are perfected. And, whatever may be the degree attained by surplus-value through the productiveness of labour, the cause of surplus-value is always surplus-labour.

Capital, Vol. 1., Chap. 16.

STUDY OUTLINE, No. 16.—VARIATIONS IN MAGNITUDE OF VALUE OF LABOUR-POWER AND MAGNITUDE OF SURPLUS-VALUE.—THE OPERATING FACTORS OF THESE VARIATIONS;

—It is assumed in this section that commodities are sold at their value and, that the commodity labour-power sometimes may rise above, but never fall below, its value. What are the factors which in general give rise to variations in the magnitude of surplus-value and magnitude of the price of labour-power? They are three;—(1) length of working-day: (2) intensity of labour: (3) productiveness of labour. It is obvious that a number of varying combinations is here possible with, of course, varying results. It is only necessary to consider the principal combinations.

FIRST CASE.—Assume factors 1 and 2 to be constant, and let 3 vary. This variation does not alter the total magnitude of value produced in the working-day, but varies only the quantity of products over which this value is spread, and, therefore, the value of each individual product.

On the other hand, the magnitude of surplus-value will increase with an increase of 3 and fall with a decrease, while the magnitude of value of labour-power will fall with an increase and rise with a decrease of 3.

In this case, the variations in surplus-value are the *consequence* and never the cause of variations in the value of labour-power. First, change in productiveness: second, change in value of labour-power: third, change in surplus-value. The first change leads to the second change according to the law which determines the value of labour-power by the value of the means of subsistence. The value of the latter falls with the increase in the productiveness of labour required for their production.

The above was the only case considered by Ricardo, who erred in regarding factors 1 and 2 as invariable and in neglecting to investigate surplus-value as a whole, independently of its divisions into rent, profit, &c.

SECOND CASE;—Assume factors 1 and 3 to be constant, and let 2 vary. An increase in intensity means not only more products in a given time, but the expenditure of more labour and, therefore, an increase in the magnitude of value. The variation of 2 may, therefore, act upon the magnitude of surplus-value and the magnitude of the value of labour-power so as to vary both in the same direction.

THIRD CASE;—Assume factors 2 and 3 constant, and let 1 vary. According to the length of the working-day so will be the magnitude of value created.

All variations in the relation between the magnitude of surplus-value and the magnitude of the value of labour-power, follow from variations in the absolute magnitude of that part of the working-day during which surplus-value is produced.

Variation in the absolute value of labour-power is in this case, through increased wear and tear, the *consequence* and not the cause of the variation in the magnitude of surplus-value.

If the working-day is reduced, the absolute and relative magnitude of surplus-value falls, but the value of labour-power is unaltered. The reduction of the working-day never takes place by a lowering of wages below the value of labour power. On the other hand, such a shortening generally follows or precedes an increase in the productiveness and intensity of labour.

CASES OF SIMULTANEOUS VARIATIONS IN THE THREE FACTORS;—If all the factors 1, 2 and 3 are assumed to vary simultaneously, many different combinations are possible. Once the laws worked out in the foregoing are understood, the other cases and results can easily be grasped. The most important of these other possible combinations are, as under;—

Assume increase of 1 and decrease of 3. Decreased productiveness is here only considered with reference to the determination of value of the means of subsistence entering into the consumption of the labourers.

Let the working day be 12 hours and the magnitude of value produced be 6/-. Let the surplus-labour time be 6 hours, the absolute magnitude of surplus-value will be 3/-. The relative magnitude of surplus value to value of labour power, which is 3/-. is as 1 : 1.

Let the productiveness of labour decrease so that the value of labour-power rises from 3/-. to 4/-. The absolute magnitude of surplus-value will remain as before, viz. 3/-. , if we assume, further, that the working day has been prolonged by 2 hours. The relative magnitude of surplus-value has, now, however, fallen. It stands now to the value of labour power as 3 : 4.

Assume now that the working day is prolonged by 4 hours, i.e. from 12 hours to 16 hours. Absolute magnitude of surplus value has increased from 3/- to 4/-, but the relative magnitude of surplus-value to magnitude of value of labour-power is as 1 : 1.

Assume that factors 2 and 3 increase with a decrease in 1. With the increase in productiveness and intensity more products are produced in a given working-day. This will have the effect of curtailing the necessary labour-time.

If the whole working day were reduced to necessary labour time, the basis of capitalism—surplus-value—would vanish. On the other hand, in a communist society, the necessary labour time would be extended, (1) because the notion of what is necessary as means of subsistence would have widened and (2) part of what is surplus-labour, under capitalism, e.g. the formation of a reserve fund, would become part of the necessary labour.

PRODUCTIVENESS OF LABOUR AND DURATION OF LABOUR UNDER CAPITALISM;—Every increase in the productive power of labour makes possible a decrease in the intensity of labour.

While, under capitalism, economy in means of production and in labour is enforced in each individual business, competition leads to a wholesale

squandering of labour in capitalism at large: witness, for example, the creation of a whole host of unproductive functions and classes which, although necessary to the present form of economy, are in themselves superfluous. This circumstance, *from a social point of view*, hinders the development of the productiveness of labour and acts against the shortening of the working-day for the productive labourers.

Capital, Volume I., Chapter 17.

STUDY OUTLINE, No. 17.—THE RATE OF SURPLUS-VALUE AND ITS EXPRESSION—FORMULAE FOR EXPRESSING THE RATE OF SURPLUS-VALUE OR DEGREE OF EXPLOITATION;—The function of labour-power, viz. labour, being the source of surplus-value, and the price of this labour-power being advanced as variable capital, the rate of surplus value must be calculated only by relating the magnitude of surplus-value to the magnitude of the variable capital. The formula for expressing this rate is, therefore, $s/v.c.$ If $s=50$ and $v.c.=50$, then the rate of surplus-value is 100%. The formula may also be expressed in terms of the working-day by relating the magnitude of the surplus-labour time to the magnitude of the necessary labour time: thus $s.l.t./n.l.t.$ If $s.l.t.=6$ and $n.l.t.=6$, then the rate of exploitation is 100%.

THE RATE OF PROFIT DOES NOT EXPRESS THE RATE OF SURPLUS VALUE OR EXPLOITATION;—The rate of surplus-value must not be confounded with the rate of profit which is calculated on the whole of the capital, constant and variable, and is expressed thus, $s/c+v$. If $s=50$ and $c+v=100$, then the rate of profit is 50%. The rate of profit could, therefore, never be identical with the rate of surplus-value *unless* the whole of the capital advanced consisted in variable capital. The rate of profit, it follows, does not express the real degree of exploitation. Indeed, it conceals the fact of exploitation and the real nature of capital, which is, above all, the "command over unpaid labour."

Capital, Volume I., Chapter 18.

STUDY OUTLINE, No. 18.—VALUE OF LABOUR-POWER IN THE FORM OF VALUE OF LABOUR—VALUE OF LABOUR, A SUPERFICIAL APPEARANCE;—The value of labour-power appears upon the surface as the value of labour, and wages, therefore, as the return for the expenditure of so much labour. Classical political economy never penetrated beneath this illusory appearance, and vulgar political economy, which readily takes the appearance for reality, has clung to the illusion.

Labour *creates* value but has itself no value. Value represents the social labour materialized in a commodity, the magnitude of value being determined by the quantity of labour and the quantity being measured by its duration. How, if labour is a commodity and has a value, is this value of labour determined? Assume the labour expended to be of 12 hours duration, how is this value of 12 hours labour determined? By the 12 hours labour which it contains. This is not a determination but a tautology.

Classical economy, finding no way out by this means, eventually although involuntarily, arrived at the determination of the value of days labour

by the value of the means of subsistence required to reproduce a day's labour which was, in effect, the value of the means of subsistence necessary to support the *labourer* for a day. *The value of labour is thus replaced by the value of the labourer*, or of the *power* of the labourer, which is the commodity sold by the labourer to the capitalist. But Ricardo and his followers failed to realize the significance of this changed category and remained unconsciously in inextricable confusion.

SOME DECEPTIVE PHENOMENA;—The money relation conceals the division of the working-day into paid and unpaid labour, so that all labour appears to be paid for, in wages. The capitalist pays the labourer in order to possess the utility of his power, viz. the labour, say for 12 hours. The wages then *appear* as the price of 12 hours work instead of as the price of the power capable, by its function, of 12 hours work.

The deception is strengthened (1) by the variations of wages with the variations of the working-day, and (2) by the differences in the wages of different labourers doing the same class of work.

These deceptions, which are absent under slavery and feudalism, serve as the basis for all the illusions as to the freedom of the labourer under capitalism as well as for most of the apologies of the spokesmen of capitalist economy.

W. W. C.

(To be continued.)

Reports

TOM REES CHARGED

On Saturday, Feb. 19th, at Bow Street, Tom Rees, London District Secretary of the A. S. E., was charged under the Defence of the Realm Act with "impeding and delaying the production of war material." "This, the first case in the London area," said the *Observer* report, "was of *vital importance to engineers and workers generally*." The case was adjourned for a fortnight. One passage (also from the *Observer* report) is worth quoting here;—

It was alleged against defendant (said Mr. Bodkin, who appeared for the Ministry of Munitions) that he had put unlawful pressure on men who were willingly and patriotically at work to cause them to cease work . . . the object being to force the owners to increase the rate of pay. The pressure took the form of imposing penalties and threatening the men with exclusion from the benefits of the society—a most serious matter when it was recollected that some of these men had been paying into the funds of the society for years. "So," said counsel, "this prosecution is in a sense as much in the interests of the men as . . ."

Council was here interrupted by loud laughter from the men in Court.

Will YOU send us something THIS MONTH ?

BLACKPOOL C. L. C. CLASS

Since October last, the class, with Comrade P. H. Taylor as teacher, has been taking a course on Logic, outline-lectures on which were obtained from the College. We have also had separate lectures on "Ancient Hindustan and Babylon," by Com. Hutchinson, and "Modern Militarism," by Com. Paul. Recently we have been discussing the question of Conscription, and have issued a leaflet which has elicited some amusing—and instructive—comments from the local press: and this, in turn, gave us the opportunity of making the C. L. C. better known hereabouts.

As a result of discussion after reading one of W. W. Craik's articles in the *Railway Review*, we have arranged a debate for Sunday, March 5th, on the subject, "That Industrial Unionism is the embryonic structure of Socialism, and that it is the best means of fighting the immediate battle of the working class." Com. R. Hutchinson (S. L. P.) will take the affirmative, and Com. A. Ward (B. S. P.) the negative. The fixture promises to be a success, as some of our members are members of the Blackpool Trades Council, which is at present confronted with problems arising out of methods of organization.

W. PICKLES, Secretary.

DURHAM C. L. C. CLASSES.

The two classes on economics at Chopwell and Consett continue with increased success, both as regards the numbers attending and the attention and interest taken in them by the students. With a view to furthering the interests of working-class education and the College, a conference is to be held at Newcastle on Saturday, March 18th, when Mr. Will W. Craik will give an address on "The Relation of the Central Labour College to the Labour Movement." It will be in the B. S. P. rooms, Royal Arcade, Pilgrim Street: chair to be taken at 3.30 p.m. by Mr. Ebby Edwards, of Ashington. Propaganda meetings will also be held at Ashington, Newsham, Prudhol, Walbottle, Cornsay, Chopwell, and Consett.

On Feb. 6th a motion was before the delegates of the Durham Miners' Association asking that £50 be granted annually to the W. E. A. The Executive Committee, in asking for support for same, pointed out the great need of future labour leaders being equipped for their work. (Rather rough comment on present ones). Several delegates objected to the motion appearing, pointing out that on the inception of the C. L. C., a motion to send students to that institution was ruled out of order, as the advice of the counsel was that they could not support educational institutions until the rules were altered accordingly. Since then, an attempt to insert an object "to support Ruskin College and the W. E. A." was voted out by the delegates. However, on this occasion, the chairman, Ald. W. House, stated that the motion to support the W. E. A. was in order, as they had similar objects to the Durham Miners' Association.

As we wish to let workers know the differences that exist between the teaching and principles of the C. L. C. and the W. E. A., we have endeavoured to get Mr. Trevena, Organiser for the W. E. A., to debate with Mr. W. W. Craik the question "That the W. E. A. is a danger to the working-class movement," but up to the present we have not been successful.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF THE C. L. C.

In connection with the joint committee of the Women's League and the N. U. R. Women's Guilds, a special class for women Trade Unionists is being held at the C. L. C. on Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. The subject being taken is "The History of the Modern Working Class Movement," (see bus quoted in Mr Foot's article on another page). Eighteen members were enrolled at the first meeting on Feb. 16th, and there is every likelihood of this number increasing. This is the first class for women only held in connection with the C. L. C., and we are certain that it will be useful, not only in itself, but as a means of making more widely known the vital principle of independent working-class education.

WINIFRED HERRIN (Hon. Sec.)

OLDHAM C.L.C. CLASS

The class is this year taking a course in Economics. Most of our old students have rejoined us, as well as a few new comrades. Mr. Frank Jackson, of Rochdale, is conducting the class, and he has been of very great assistance to us in unravelling the many knotty points in the subject. The whole class highly appreciates his good work. Miss Alice Smith recently gave a paper before a local debating-society on "Working Class Independence in Education," in the course of which she very clearly stated the present situation; and in the ensuing discussion, she carried all before her. Everything points to progress for the movement here in the near future.

G. MEARNS (Sec.).

Correspondence

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION ON THE RAILWAYS

SIR,—I cannot consider G. W. Brown's reply to my letter to be a satisfactory answer. He correctly gives the two main points: (1) that there is a feeling among the lower-paid grades that there is no reason why loco-men should be more highly paid than they; and (2) that if loco-men amalgamated with other grades, the other grades would have a voice, thus leading to a lowering of wages. He then seizes upon an illustration, making an additional point of it which he says answers everything, and yet at the close throws doubts on its accuracy.

Now I am not a great deal concerned about what the speech-makers on either side have to say. What I have said is a matter which can be deduced from premises drawn from every-day experience and does not need *investigating*. Even G.W.B. himself may have noticed that most men seem to think they deserve a little more in the way of recompense than they are getting. The cleavage of interest between the different grades on the railway is most clearly marked between the loco. and the other grades; in the daily course of work many matters crop up at which they look from different points of view. And I say these things cause loco-men to think

they are liable to be left out in the cold where all grades are grouped together either in the branch-room or on composite boards, on questions which involve a conflict of interest.

The comparison between the hours of labour on the N.E. and those worked on the other companies is not a fair one at the present time, since the latter unfortunately have had the progress of their new programmes interrupted by the outbreak of the war. With regard to *detrimental* instances of the working of amalgamation, I should say the question is not whether composite boards have ever brought worse conditions for any particular grade, but whether they have done as well as sectional boards could reasonably have been expected to do. Would G.W.B. have proclaimed a triumph for sectionalism if the sectional boards had obtained an 8-hour day for loco-men ?

Although a member of the N.U.R. I cannot help thinking that the advocacy of composite boards including loco-men may do the society harm. In my own district I can see the number of N.U.R. loco.-members growing less, whilst the Associated branch which has only been in existence a few years has two-thirds of the men as members. If the *imaginary* theory is correct I suppose they must all be labouring under a delusion, but I fancy there is a little to be said for their view of the case. I thank G.W.B. for his freely-offered advice, and in return would suggest that some of the N.U.R. officials may be suffering slightly from "swelled head" and may some day recover to find that this question has been settled by all the young hands having joined the sectional society.

Yours, &c.,

L.B.

THE LABOUR YEAR BOOK.

Sir,—In my notice of the Labour Year Book in your February issue, I wrote that Henderson had just been ordered out of his Department by a labour vote. I was, of course, wrong. I apologise for being so careless, and hasten to add that I am glad I was wrong. Henderson should never be ordered out of any Government post, so long as that Government is not Labour or Socialist. He is in his right place as a hack in the coach of Asquith Runciman, George & Co. But he should be kicked out of the Labour Movement. As a "representative" of Labour he is as big a fraud as—Ramsay Macdonald. Ask the Clyde munition workers.

Yours, etc., R. KENNEY

The Plebs' Bookshelf

No student, as I remarked last month, and least of all a student of existing social conditions, can afford to shirk the task of keeping, and indexing, news-cuttings. And happy the man who has not only kept his cuttings, but who can lay his hand on the particular one he wants at any moment ! (Mr. Arnold Bennett, if I remember rightly, somewhere attributes his not inconsiderable success to an efficient system of filing cuttings.) A little book just published by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, entitled *Everyman's Student's System*,

(1/6 net), should be useful alike to the beginner and to the luckless wight (I speak feelingly) whose cuttings have, so to speak, got on top of him. The system described is an adaptation of the Loose-Leaf and Card-Index systems to the needs of students, journalists, public speakers, &c. It is not necessary, of course — unless one has more money than gumption — to adopt the system in its entirety; every individual student can again adapt it to his own individual needs. But it is useful to know that the methods in use in business offices, where economy of time and trouble has been reduced to a fine art, are adaptable to one's humbler requirements. The suggestions made by the author could be applied in various ways, and—most important —“ they have been planned for the great host of students and workers of all kinds who demand something practical, and also workable by the man or woman of limited time.” And, besides proving to you that cuttings can be kept satisfactorily, the book should give you many useful tips as to methods of classifying and indexing your books, notes, and pamphlets.

* * * * *

Messrs. Constable are announcing the new volume of Shaw plays, which includes *Androcles and the Lion*, and *Pygmalion*. (This is even better value than was at first promised, for *Pygmalion* has apparently been substituted for *Great Catherine*—which was as nearly boring, even when particularly well acted, as anything Shaw wrote could be.) The preface to *Androcles* is stated to be the “longest yet.” Before writing it, Mr. Shaw, says the *New Statesman*,

read the New Testament through with an open mind; the result is an exposition of his views on Christ and Christianity. He finds the biological and economic doctrines propounded by our Lord to be perfectly sound; he shows that for nearly 2,000 years mankind has been deliberately obstructing the practical application of Christ's teaching; and the upshot is the revolutionary suggestion Why Not Try Christianity?

Pygmalion, instead of a preface, has a sequel, which informs us that the flower-girl did not marry the professor, but tells whom she did marry, and how the marriage turned out. We hope to deal at greater length with the volume in the *Plebs* later.

* * * * *

I don't see the Merthyr *Pioneer*, or I should have commented long before this on Shaw's tribute to Keir Hardie, published in that journal presumably about last October. I have had to wait until such time as the *Pioneer* travelled out to New Zealand, and the *Maoriland Worker* travelled back here with the article reprinted therein. I wish we had space in the *Plebs* to quote it in full; it's great. One or two specimen extracts will have to suffice.

As for example:—

I really do not see what Hardie could do but die. Could we have expected him to hang on and sit there among the poor slaves who imagined themselves Socialists until the touchstone of war found them out and exposed them for what they are? What was there in common between him and the men who are so heroically determined to resist Conscription that they declare that nothing short of Lord Kitchener's telling them that it is necessary will induce them to embrace it? Hardie actually thought it quite a serious matter that the Government should imprison Labour leaders under ancient

Mutiny Acts: suppress Labour papers: refuse to fix minimum wages on pretexts fifty years out of date: commit the country to war behind the back of the House of Commons: . . . Hardie, aghast, said: "Are you Democrats? Will you stand this?" They replied, "Oh, for God's sake, shut up. Don't you know we are at war? Is this a time for Democracy, and truth-telling, and Liberty, and Socialism, and all that platform tosh? Can't you wait until the war's over? Then you can twaddle again as much as you like to catch votes for us." . . . Everything that honest and humane men wished to defeat, discredit, and destroy in Germany, Hardie wished to defeat, discredit, and destroy there: and he proved his sincerity by spending his life in trying to defeat, discredit, and destroy them here also. He was not the man to shout oaths and abuse at foreign enemies of the people whilst diligently polishing the boots of domestic ones. When history puts all the boots on the right legs, the stupendous impudence of the cry of "unpatriotic" levelled at a man who had devoted his whole life to the service of his country, by people to whom patriotism was such a novelty that they could do nothing but get into everybody's way with their idiotic fussings, and provide a golden harvest for swindlers with their mania for subscribing to something, will be apparent.

The National Guilds League has just issued a second pamphlet—*The Guild Idea: An Appeal to the Public*. This, as well as the first—*National Guilds: An Appeal to Trade Unionists*—is obtainable (price 1d., postage extra) either from the Victoria House Printing Co., Ltd., Tudor Street E.C. or from the Secretary, N. G. L., 16, Grosvenor Road, S.W. We hope to discuss these pamphlets, and the 'Guild Idea' in general, later on. Meantime, I may remark here that they are very well worth reading, and admirably printed and 'got up.'

Some two or three months ago, Mr. Fisher Unwin published *The Quintessence of Capitalism*, translated from the German of Werner Sombart. (I am hopeful of getting a review of it some day soon from a certain Marxian, now 'somewhere in France', who has been reading it in the intervals of doing his bit towards reducing the number of Sombart's fellow-countrymen.) The publisher's advertisement of the book was one of the quaintest things I have struck lately. It ran as follows:—

Capitalism is one of the most popular catchwords (sic) of the age. We are constantly hearing of the capitalist, of the capitalist system, and so forth. *Yet there is no work which gives a clear statement of the true nature of capitalism and of the capitalist spirit.* Prof. Sombart's book—a history of capitalism in Europe from the Middle Ages onwards—provides this desideratum, &c. &c.

I've heard Capitalism called some horrid names, but I've never heard it described as a "popular catchword" before.

The February *English Review* contained a particularly interesting article by Edward Carpenter, entitled "The Story of My Books." An author's own comments on his books—and his critics—are always illuminating (for example, Shaw's preface to *The Irrational Knot*, or Well's to the last edition of *New Worlds for Old*). With characteristic quiet humour, Carpenter describes *Towards Democracy* as having taken up "some sort of rather indefinite place in the world of letters": and he goes on to remark;—

I do not know that I have ever seen a serious estimate or criticism of that book in any well-known literary paper. Like others of my works it has come into the literary sheepfold, not through the accepted gate, but "some other way, like a thief or a robber." It has been generally ignored by the guardians of the gate, yet it has quietly and decisively established itself, and the "sheep" somehow have taken kindly to the "robber."

He has many interesting facts to relate as to his difficulty in finding a publisher for *Love's Coming of Age*: the recent Wilde trial had frightened everybody, and "silence must henceforth reign on sex-subjects."

... What a landslide has occurred since then. . . . To-day the tide of such literature has flowed so full and fast that my book has already become quite a little old-fashioned and demure.

But then as he observes later ;—

The whole structure of civilization-morality is being rapidly undermined. The moral aspects of property, commerce, class-relations, sex-relations, marriage, patriotism, and so forth, are shifting like dissolving views. Nietzsche has scorched up the old Christian altruism: Bernard Shaw has burned the Decalogue.

Te Deum laudamus!

Another notable magazine article was Rebecca West's "Women of England," in the *Atlantic Review*. Miss West must have smiled at the chance—or irony—which made the article immediately following hers one by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., (no less!) with the touching title "Labour and Capital—Partners." But space is getting short, so I daren't begin to quote. I promise myself the pleasure, some day soon, of making a little nosegay of blossoms from John D.'s Garden.

Miss West's name recalls the fact that she is doing a book on Henry James for Nisbet's *Writers of the Day* Series. That promises to be a good shillings-worth. We all want some Rebecca West properly printed and bound in cloth covers: up to now we've only got news-cuttings. And this again reminds me that W. L. George's book on Anatole France in the same series (1/- net) is great. Get it. If you've read no Anatole France it will whet your appetite. If you have, you will enjoy it still more. Just one sentence;—

Blasphemy has its uses: it parts the sheep from the goats. . . . Blasphemy need not be ignorant: indeed, true blasphemy is possible only in the enlightened: the unenlightened find it easier to believe.

We have received from the Church Socialist League (IIc, Featherstone Buildings, Holborn, W.C.) a Syllabus for Study Circles (3d.), prepared by N. E. Egerton-Swann and M. B. Reckitt entitled *Christianity and Socialism*. The Christian (or Church) section may not interest Plebs readers overmuch, but the greater part of the syllabus is exceedingly good, and certainly suggests that the C. S. L. is more in touch with modern tendencies than some other more famous organizations. The book-lists are very well done—though of course there are omissions. With certain sentences in the Introduction Plebeians will heartily agree ;—

It is becoming apparent to Socialists of every kind that the time has come for them to link up their ideas with their intelligence
Before we can educate our masters we must educate ourselves.

* * * * *

A Swansea correspondent asks for the names of "any good novels dealing with the social question—like Jack London's *Iron Heel*, for instance." Well, the *Iron Heel* is rather in a class by itself—or would have to be classed with the 'Utopias' (no irony intended) rather than with novels dealing with the social question as it exists to-day. One would bracket it with, say, Well's *In the Days of the Comet*, and *The World Set Free* (no cheap editions of either yet). Here are two or three novels well worthy of a place on a Plebeian's bookshelf—if they are not there already; No. 5, *John Street*, by Richard Whiteing, *The Pit*, and *The Octopus*, by Frank Norris (all in Nelsons' 7d. Series); *The Jungle*, by Upton Sinclair (6d. edition); *The Man of Property*, by John Galsworthy, (Heinemann, 1/- net); *A Poor Man's House*, by Stephen Reynolds, (Macmillan, 1/- net); *The Children of Light*, by Florence Converse, (Dent's Wayfarer's Library, 1/- net). And then, of course, there are Constable's shilling editions of the Shaw novels—particularly *An Unsocial Socialist* and *The Irrational Knot*. I hope these will last him until next month at any rate.

* * * * *

Shocking complaint, war-fever. I meant to have left myself more space to refer to the ravings of certain distinguished sufferers; to the pathetic case of A. M. Thompson, for example, who in his delirium forgets to make his utterances in the *Sunday Chronicle* square with his cries and groans in the *Clarion*; to that gallant knight, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, whose ravings recently took the form of an attempt to prove to the readers of *Everyman* that the war is a catastrophe for the capitalists, but a little millenium for the workers; to Citizen Stanton, in whose frothings and foamings the readers of the *Daily Express* find comfort and encouragement. But I must leave these great ones, and just mention a humbler, though not less touching, case—that of one Coun. Eldred Hallas, of Birmingham, who has broken out in a penny pamphlet, published by the local branch of the Socialist National Defence Committee. People in delirium see queer things. The Councillor, whose pamphlet is called *The International*, sees Marx—presumably in a Prussian helmet and jack-boots—"setting to work to fashion the International into an all-powerful engine of Pan-Germanism". The monster, finding the "French workers not so docile as he had hoped, heaped abuse on them, both he and Engels calling them 'frogs'" !!! Nay, more! "Such phrases as 'asses' and 'dirty dogs' sprang readily to Marx's pen, and he applied them impartially either to the French or English as occasion served." Such phrases would certainly have sprung to Marx's pen if he had been alive to-day! Ah well, some of us are evidently seeing visions. There is a moral to the Councillor's pamphlet—a priceless moral—"Well, we must not only wait and see; we must watch also." We must, indeed. J. F. H.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Socialist Review. Jan.—March, 1916. (1. 1. P., 6d. net.)

Violence and the Labour Movement. By R. Hunter. (Routledge, 2/6 net.)

The "Plebs" League

Object

To further the interests of Independent working-class education as a partizan effort to improve the position of Labour in the present, and ultimately to assist in the abolition of wage-slavery.

Methods

The holding of an Annual Meet: the issuing of a monthly Magazine, mainly devoted to the discussion of the various questions of Labour, theoretical and practical: the formation of local branches and classes for the study of social science, in connexion with the Central Labour College, and in every way to assist in the development of the latter institution, and its maintenance of a definite educational policy.

Membership

Open to all who endorse the object of the League.

Each Member shall pay 1/- a year to the Central Fund towards meeting the expenses in connexion with the Annual Meet, &c.

Management

An Executive of five members elected annually, and the Editor of Magazine, who shall be responsible as to publication and meets, &c.

The Magazine shall be 2d. per copy, 2½d. post free.

Subscriptions payable in advance: Quarterly 7½d., Half Yearly 1/3, Yearly 2/6.

✉ The Eighth Annual Meet will be held in London, (Bank Holiday) August, 1916.

P.O.'s to be forwarded to

J. REYNOLDS, Secretary-Treasurer,

13 Penywern Road, Earls Court,
London, S.W.

The "Plebs" League

(Organ : "PLEBS" MAGAZINE, Published Monthly,
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