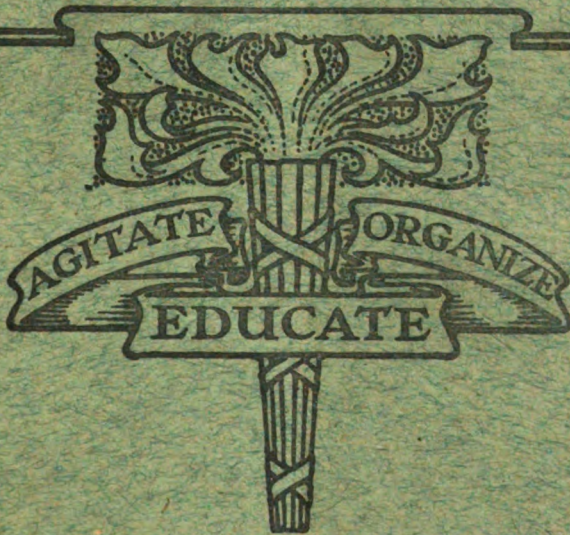


Vol. VIII, No. 10

November, 1916

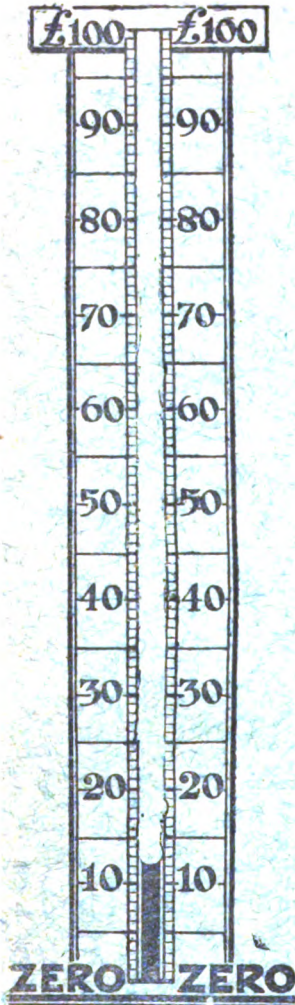
The
PLEBS
MAGAZINE



*Printed by Fox, Jones & Co., at Kemp
Hall, High St., Oxford, & published
by the Plebs League
at the same address.*

MONTHLY

TWOPENCE



We have to
get this
down
to



Zero

Things we should like to know:

Whether we can do it by Christmas.

Whether everybody's not tired of seeing this Thermometer here.

Whether one good shove, all together, wouldn't finish it.

THE PLEBS MAGAZINE

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

Vol. VIII

November, 1916

No. 10

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| "WHAT LABOUR WANTS FROM EDUCATION." | |
| By G. H. D. COLE - - - | 217 |
| FROM COLLEGE TO COLLIERY. By MARK STARR - - - | 220 |
| A "SUMMER SCHOOL" EXPERIENCE. By GEO. DAVIES - - - | 223 |
| CO-PARTNERY CULTURE. By M. F. TITTERINGTON - - - | 226 |
| THE C. L. C. SECRETARY: Correspondence and a Comment - - - | 228 |
| CORRESPONDENCE: From W. G. COVE, S. W., M. N. J., MRS. L. P. C., H. D. W., PROF. E. V. ARNOLD & A. F. M. - | 229 |
| REPORTS: NEWCASTLE & DISTRICT CLASSES; PADIHAM CLASS; &c. | 233 |
| CUTTINGS. - - - - - | 234 |
| REVIEW: A "MARXIST." By G. S. - - - - - | 236 |
| THE PLEBS BOOKSHELF - - - - - | 238 |

"What Labour Wants from Education"

[Up to the time of going to press we have received no reply from Mr. J. M. MacTavish, whom we invited last month to deal with Messrs. Craik & Ablett's criticisms. We are very glad, however, to publish the following article by Mr. G. D. H. Cole, and we shall hope to discuss various points raised by him in our next issue.—Ed., *Plebs*.]

I AM not Mr. MacTavish, and I do not know whether he will take up the challenge offered to him in the last number of the *Plebs Magazine*. But I feel that there are certain things I want to say about the perennial conflict between the C.L.C. and the W.E.A., and, though I have not the honour of being Mr. MacTavish, I am going to say them.

The first difficulty I find in both the C.L.C. and the W.E.A. position is the assumption that Labour wants anything at all from education. Very slowly, I know, there are springing up over the country small groups of Trade Unionists who realise what education might mean to the workers. But none can deny that the great mass of Trade Unionists and the great majority of the Unions are still quite unconscious that working-class education is of any special importance to them, or that there is any need for them to take up a definite attitude towards it.

Nor will it be disputed that this is a very dangerous attitude to adopt at the present time. There is no doubt that very big changes in our educational system will come after the war, and that those changes may be either very advantageous, or very bad, for the Labour movement. Lord Haldane's propaganda in favour of making education more and more a system of technical training serves to throw clearly into the light one of the dangers Labour has to face. This makes it imperative that means should be found whereby the Labour movement may formulate an educational policy, and press that policy with all its strength.

That, I take it, was the one and only object of Mr. MacTavish's pamphlet. If he gave no very clear guidance, it was of set purpose that he did not do so. His object was to state in broad general terms the need for an educational policy, in order that the Labour movement itself might think it worth while to decide what that policy should be. Mr. MacTavish's pamphlet was intended simply to give a lead: it is to be followed by a series of representative Labour conferences up and down the country, and out of these conferences it is hoped that a Labour educational policy will emerge.

Readers of the *Plebs* will not dispute the need for such a policy; but they will maintain that what I have said does nothing to dispel their hostility to the W.E.A. and all its works. As one who claims to be a friend both to the C.L.C. and to the W.E.A. [I feel that the hair of Messrs. Ablett and Craik will stand on end as they read these words], I want to state as shortly as I can my point of view with regard to the two organizations, and to do this as frankly as I can. It may be that I shall offend both of them by what I say.

The C.L.C. is a propagandist organization, now happily maintained by two great Trade Unions. It aims at education with a definite class bias, because it believes that, the class division of society being fundamental, there can be no education which is not in fact class education, whatever it may be in theory. It is a college to which Labour men may come for full-time education, and in addition it runs, in many districts, classes at which propagandist education of the same kind is given.

The W.E.A. is an organization which claims to be non-sectarian and non-party-political. It professes to administer education without class bias, and it acts in conjunction with the Board of Education and the Universities in forming Tutorial Classes in many districts at which education, nominally not of a propagandist type, is given.

There are really two issues involved in the controversy which the C.L.C. carries on so bitterly. One issue is theoretical, the other practical. Let me take them in turn.

First, is working-class education without a class bias possible? I agree with the C.L.C. in thinking that it is not, at any rate on such practical subjects as history, political and industrial, and economics. If the W.E.A. maintains that impartiality on such subjects is possible, then I disagree as much as Ablett or Craik would disagree. But this does not make me at one with the C.L.C. practice, because it seems to me that the C.L.C. not only takes sides, as it must and should, but also takes sides in a narrow way. It is far too sure that it possesses the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and it is far too intolerant of Labour men who, being on the same side, still do not share all its dogmas. I do not say that it is too Marxian; but it is too tied to its interpretation of Marx, and too ready to insist on its own terminology and its own way of thought as the only form in which truth can find expression.

I agree, then, with the main position of the C.L.C., so far as adult working-class education is concerned, and I agree further that, in the attitude which it takes up towards elementary and secondary education, Labour must, and should, be guided by class bias. It is not on theory, but in practice, that we really fall out.

The professions of the W.E.A. to be non-party-political may be all wrong. But, from a practical point of view, the W.E.A. is an organization of which Labour can make exactly what it likes. The constitution gives to Labour the whole control of the W.E.A., if Labour chooses to exercise that control. Labour could sweep away to-morrow the clauses which make the W.E.A. a non-party-political organization, if Labour desired to do so. But, when many Trade Unions still profess to be strictly non-political, can we hold that Labour does so desire? I am as anxious as any one to sweep all such nonsense out of the W.E.A.; but I am not convinced that the Trade Unions themselves would back the suggestion.

The next point is the co-operation between the W.E.A. and the Board of Education and the Universities. I am as ready as anyone can be to bid that connection good-bye. The sooner Labour can stand on its own educational legs, the better for itself and the worse for the capitalist system. I do not believe that Oxford and Cambridge or the newer Universities are going intentionally to help Labour to secure emancipation. I am only waiting till Labour is prepared to take over the W.E.A. and to run it as a definitely Labour concern—and to *pay for it*. Meanwhile, as I see no hope of securing Labour money for education, I believe in spoiling the Egyptians, because there is no real danger of the capture of the W.E.A. by the enemy. No-one who knows the actual working of the Tutorial Class movement, the actual spirit of the students, and of many of the tutors, will have any hesitation in saying that the effect of Tutorial Class education is to make men and women

more conscious of exploitation and more determined to end it. Here and there, a class may go astray ; here and there you may get a reactionary tutor doing some harm ; but, taken as a whole, the personnel of the W.E.A. movement is far more class-conscious than the Trade Union movement as a whole, and the tutors are generally a good deal more advanced than the average Labour leader.

I look upon the W.E.A. as a means of stimulating Trade Union interest in education, and in time of inducing Trade Unions to provide the money for undertaking adult working-class education on their own behalf. I do not agree with the official W.E.A. philosophy ; but I am convinced that the majority of the active members do not agree with it either. I am convinced that, taken as a whole, W.E.A. and Tutorial Class education is filling a gap which cannot, for lack of funds, be filled in any other way at the present time ; and therefore I am a Tutorial Class tutor and I remain connected with the W.E.A. I should like to see the W.E.A. simply and solely a working-class organization, just as I should like to see it working in close alliance with the C.L.C.; but, if I cannot have that, I shall try to keep on fair terms with both; and I shall wish all success to the W.E.A.'s attempts to stir up interest among Trade Unionists in the problem of education after the war. It may be that in taking up this attitude I shall please nobody ; but of that I must take my chance.

I have not entered into the special arguments advanced against Mr. MacTavish's pamphlet by Messrs. Craik and Ablett, because it seemed more valuable to devote my space to a discussion of the general position. Further, I should like to make it quite clear that I agree with everything said in the last number of the *Plebs* about Prof. Arnold's lectures. Many idiots lecture to all Labour bodies, and I only hope that you will go on with your account of Prof. Arnold ; for his later *New Age* articles are even more amazingly silly than those with which you dealt last month.

G. D. H. COLE.

From College to Colliery

OH, what an Irishman's rise was here, my fellow Plebeians ! What a change it was to leave the cultured precincts of the C.L.C. and, instead of winning knowledge, win coal. How sad to note the contrast between the spacious dwellings of the consumers of surplus value and the mean barracks of the surplus-value producers ; and to forego the delights of park and music for a mining-valley and the occasional weird bellowing of the Salvation Army. 'Twas enough to make the angels weep and

Isn't it about time we landed at Zero ?

the body of Samuel Smiles turn in its coffin. Alas ! Smiles—for he died twelve years ago—is now, like Luther, gone to a Diet of Worms ; and this sad fate awaits us all if we are not sensible enough to be burnt, in which case the destructive process will be hastened. It is a cheering thought that some folk may, at any rate, be of use when they are dead—if not when alive—by providing a feast for somebody.

But I digress. The path to work was not an easy one. Colliery managers have an objection to the colour of the hair, and also to the opinions of the unfortunate youths who thus reverse the path to fortune. Knowledge is power certainly. But in the past, knowledge has been divorced from the manual worker, and the power which it is supposed to give has been to him a power to rise *out* of his class and find " a soft job." Let us hope that this is another accepted idea the C. L. C. will smash. Before this happens, however, the Unions behind the C. L. C. will have to insist upon the reinstatement in work of their students. Of course, up to the present no Union has any legal right to force any coal or railway company to employ any particular individual ; and it will be a big step forward towards " control " when they can do so. The absence of any such powers now does not prove that they will never exist, for " Man makes his own history." Laws, though immutable everlasting entities to the lawyer, are mobile passing expressions of relations to the Marxian. One might remark, in passing, that reinstatement should be secured by the Unions centrally ; for otherwise, in the mining industry, the student's reinstatement would rest upon the uncertain stage of mental progress which has been made by his local lodge or branch. A moment's reflection will convince any person that this reinstatement question will have to be faced, or the C. L. C. might as well be shut up, if its work is thus to be robbed of completion. We can dye our hair, if the colliery people object to its colour, but never our C. L. C. knowledge. Besides the C. L. C. is not going to die ; willy-nilly, the employers will have to recognise that we are come to stay.

The problem of education is much discussed just now. Efforts are being made to bring the college nearer to the colliery, the workshop to the laboratory, thus linking practice and theory together for the purposes of holding " our " own in industrial competition with other nations. Be the results of these efforts what they may, so far as the working-class is concerned the problem has been solved by the movement which centres round the C. L. C. The theories taught in our College will stand the test of practice. They can be connected with, and will explain, the facts of the workers' everyday life.

For example, when searching for work at a modern colliery, one feels how out of date, how hopelessly obsolete, has become

individual, small production. A few years ago, one man might have owned and worked, with a little help, a small coal-level on the hillside. But deep seams and the mighty, costly, modern means of production make these the days of social, big production. The shareholders of the colliery company now exercise "their abstinence" and "directive ability" in receiving dividends, leaving the work of direction and supervision to be performed by an official class of overmen and managers.

Again, one feels what a useless burden is one's labour-power until he can persuade some official to allow him to "sign on" and become a unit in the regiment of social production and with his fellows collectively sell his only commodity.

Should he feel curious to know why he is placed on the night shift, *Capital Vol. 1, Chap. 21, Sect. 2*, will enlighten him:—

Thus additional labour, begotten of the greater tension of labour power, can augment surplus-product and surplus-value, without corresponding augmentation in the constant part of capital.

The capitalist wishes to keep his means of production constantly on the move during their natural life and no part of the twenty-four hours must be wasted.

As he walks along the lengthy underground roads, with their rails, ropes and haulage engines, etc., he wonders what *rate of profit* the company returns, and then, bearing in mind the huge amount of constant capital, wonders what must be the *rate of surplus value*.

And having at last reached the particular shrine at which he must bow before the mighty King Coal, in a space two feet high which compels a devotional attitude of body if not of mind, he can, as he fills boxes and trams, speculate upon the portion of surplus-product contained therein; if he be on time-wages the portion of surplus-labour contained in his working-shift. No other economist but Marx will provide him with a clear explanation of the relations between time and piece-wages, and skilled and unskilled labour, in the production of surplus-value.

The pay-docket on a Saturday is viewed in a different light than before if one has read in *Vol. 1, Chap. 19*, of the concealment of surplus-labour in the wage-form of payment:—

The wage-form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working-day into necessary labour and surplus-labour, not paid and unpaid labour. . . . All the slave's labour *appears* as unpaid labour. In wage-labour, on the contrary, even the surplus-labour or unpaid labour, *appears* as paid. There the property-relation conceals the labour of the slave for himself; here the money-relation conceals the unrequited labour of the wage-labourer.

I could go on, but it is like bringing coals to Newcastle to fling chunks of Marx at Plebeians, for they know the way in which the founder of Scientific Socialism dealt with every possible phase of the system of capitalism in his writings.

It has been argued that Socialism—"human nature being what it is" (What is it? by the way)—would destroy the worker's "incentive to labour." I am afraid this incentive is being destroyed now when the worker recognises that the more work he does the less there remains for his fellows and the more surplus-value he creates. This is another "fetter upon production" being evolved by capitalism. Readers of Shaw's *Man and Superman* will remember how Henry Straker, the chauffeur, cut short some gush about "the nobility of labour" by telling the speaker he would not talk in such a fashion if he had ever done any. We need more Henry Strakers. "The nobility of labour" is a useful sophism to aid in making docile workers—a piece of capitalist humbug. This "eternal nature-imposed necessity" will some day be tackled in a scientific fashion. Was it not Engels who said that "Liberty consists in an understanding of necessity"? At any rate the route from college to colliery, with its accompanying stiff body, aching limbs and sore hands and knees, does help one to throw away this remnant of capitalist ideology. Out of our falls we learn to rise!

Take heart, proletarians! No long-winded Commissions do we require to solve our educational problems. We are the bearers of scientific truth, the proud possessors of the theories which explain the facts, reconcile the contradictions, and destroy the mysteries—the truths, which understood, will make us free.

MARK STARR.

A "Summer School" Experience

(The writer of the following article is not a "C.L.C.er," nor even—hitherto—a reader of the *Plebs*. His little chapter of autobiography is therefore all the more interesting. As M. F. Titterington is also writing in this number of the magazine, it will perhaps prevent any suspicion of collusion if we state that M.F.T. had never mentioned his experiences to us, nor, so far as we know, suggested to Mr. Davies that he should write anything for the *Plebs Magazine*.—Ed.)

AS one who has had practical experience of the W.E.A. and its system of education, I am glad to contribute my impressions for the benefit of *Plebs* readers.

Let me first explain how the opportunity came to me:—The Club and Institute Union, Ltd., an organization composed chiefly of Working Men's Clubs, offer three scholarships yearly, tenable either at Oxford, Cambridge, or Bangor Summer Schools, run under the auspices of the W.E.A. The allocation of the scholarships this year was to Bolton, Bradford, and Blackwood, the sojourn of the Bradford student, who by the way is an old C.L.C. student—M. F. Titterington—coming concurrently with my own.

I will first deal with the spirit exhibited by the paid officials of the W.E.A. in authority at Bangor School, which was chosen by the three Union students, (although the Bolton student's attendance preceded that of my colleague from Bradford and myself.) I reached Bangor on Saturday, July 29th, and the usual formality of introductions followed upon my arrival. On the following (Sunday) evening a discussion on the "Work and Utility of the W.E.A." was arranged. The Secretary of the School, in an elaborately detailed outline, opened the discussion. At the conclusion of his speech, I pointed out a matter he had omitted to mention, which I considered was vital to the discussion, viz:— "On what source did the W.E.A. depend for its financial resources?" The answer was "that seven-tenths of the financial support of the W.E.A. was provided by generous sympathisers, the other three-tenths being provided by tutorial students' fees and subsidiary affiliated organizations."

Acting upon the information thus elicited I proceeded to criticise the organization, arguing that the fundamental principles of the W.E.A. being "Educational," "Non-Political," and "Non-Sectarian," and bearing in mind that it depended for its chief financial support upon certain broad-minded gentlemen who realised that the working-classes were insufficiently educated, and who were prepared to support an organization for the advancement, *within limits*, of the education of this class, the W.E.A. as an efficient organization was useless, inasmuch as it was precluded from launching out into any definite scheme of social reform, which is so essential to any live working-class organization; since the moment they did this the financial support of these "generous sympathisers" would be withdrawn, and some gentlemen would be thrown out of a fairly lucrative livelihood.

With these and similar arguments my colleague from Bradford and myself criticised the organization, he, more than I, emphasizing his hostility to the movement. Nevertheless, the discussion was conducted in good faith, and at the conclusion I was perfectly satisfied.

Judge of our surprise, however, when on presenting ourselves at the College the following morning, my colleague was handed a letter from the Secretary, informing him "that owing to certain statements which he had made the previous evening, the Committee regretted they could not make arrangements with any of the teaching staff for his tuition." In effect, of course, this was an order to clear out—condemned without even a trial. Things did not, however, materialise exactly as the Summer School Committee had arranged. My colleague showed me the contents of the letter, and we immediately sought and obtained an interview with the Chairman and Secretary, and pointed out to them that we considered their action very high-handed, and should cer-

tainly not let the matter rest there. The Chairman promised to again call the Committee together; both of us emphasizing the fact that we withdrew nothing that had been said, neither were we prepared to remain at the School on sufferance; for although I had not received a similar letter to my colleague's, it was made plain to us at the interview that I also had offended against prescribed rules. Neither of us attended the classes for tuition that morning. The subsequent decision of the Committee, which we received (verbally) the same day was that their former decision was revoked, and the Committee climbed down.

The position, we felt, was still unsatisfactory, inasmuch as the original intimation had been conveyed in a written statement; so we insisted that the subsequent decision should also be conveyed in writing. This was ultimately received, though it necessitated our absence from the College for another day (Tuesday). These facts are sufficient to illustrate that the officials of the W.E.A. object to criticism, and, if possible, will not tolerate it. We, however, were free students who had signed no declaration of faith and therefore considered ourselves free to offer any criticism which we thought fit.

Coming to the educational part of the School, I might say that I was taking the subject of Economics, and apparently was the only student studying this subject, my tuition being private. I can conscientiously say that I was not at all enamoured of this system of education. Imagine me, a Welsh miner, whose economics are based on practical experience and observation, meeting a University tutor whose economics were based on text-books alone. What was the obvious outcome? Simply a clash of opinion. I can, therefore, summarise my educational experience by quoting from the report which I made to the organization responsible for my attendance at the school, viz:—"I am afraid I must confess that the educational advantages which I have derived from the course have been more in the abstract, than in the technical sense."

Previous to attending this Summer School, I had an open mind as to the value of the W.E.A. as an organization, and the utility of the Summer School movement. Whilst there, and since, my ideas have undergone a material change, and my object is now to divert the support of the Club and Institute Union, Ltd., from an organization which would violate the principles of democracy by suppressing free expression of opinion, to some other organization which embraces the ideals of all true lovers of freedom.

I am pleased to say that the C. & I. Union Executive are investigating the matter, and I await with equanimity their decision.

GEORGE DAVIES.

[Secretary, Working Men's Club and Institute, Blackwood, Mon.]

Help us to clean up that Thermometer.

Co-Partnery Culture

The education which Oxford can give by broadening his knowledge and strengthening his judgment would make him at once a more efficient servant of his own society and a more potent influence on the side of industrial peace. (Page 83).

On the one hand a career must be opened to talent. There must be that free movement from one class to another that alone can ensure that the manual and intellectual work of the nation is performed by those best fitted to perform it, and that fresh streams of ability are continually drawn from every quarter of society. (Page 85)

Oxford & Working Class Education.

ONE would be inclined to be flippant if the thing were not so damned serious. Two things I knew before the War were W. W. C. and the W. E. A. In the company of the former I heard the latter discussed at the Oxford Union (the University Debating Society), disguised as the Oxford and Working Class Education Report.

One outstanding result of the War will be a revaluation of educational values and the creation of a new political Plimsoll line. The W. E. A., composed of genuinely well-meaning people, politically cute people, and overawed fellow-workers, has set about this obvious problem which is proved to be the key to all problems. They have begun by a pamphlet, the semblance of a programme, and an invitation to critics. The JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT from which the quotations which stand at the head of this article were taken also contains the following :—

It has become incumbent upon the Universities to watch carefully every sign that a new class is ready to receive their guidance, in order that the seed of University culture may be deposited wherever it has suitable material on which to work.

The W. E. A. is acting upon that advice and believes that it can diffuse education by creating a diffuseness of mind, an impartial mind of pristine purity, in short, a pure educated mind. Pedagogic prophets offer an educational elysium where the wicked (facts) cease from troubling and the W.E.A.ry are at rest. "Come and join that happy band." Not G. B. S. likely ! It is just because of the fear that it is a bourne from which no traveller returns, that one cannot accept this form of Co-partnery. Educational Co-partnery is a reflex of Industrial Co-partnery. That may be considered economic heresy. Industrial Co-partnery has been offered as a policy to reconcile employer and workman. (To save time and space may I refer readers to *Co-Partnery in Industry*, by C. R. Fay, (Cambridge Manuals of Science) as a handy summary of the case for Co-partnery ; and to "Sharing Up" a short review of same by myself in the *Plebs*, Oct., 1914.)

The points of Industrial Co-partnery are, (a) Workers employed are Co-partners by having shares allotted to them in production ;

(b) Increased returns are appropriated by all shareholders from increased total production. The cult of Co-partnery is caused by keen competition. Economic necessity makes some workers Co-partners. The resultant increase brings nominal and actual increase in wages but does not alter the relative disparity between employer and employed. The action of Co-partnership intensifies economic organisation and offers advantages to employer and employed when compared with outsiders; to the former tactical and financial advantage, to the workman a (slightly) relatively better standard of living. Obviously if adopted generally these advantages would be negated and as a result there would be a higher economic organisation. *As control is in strict proportion to shareholding there is never any chance of capturing the industry.* Stakes in Industry are not always steaks in one's inside. Co-partnery does not assure prosperity; it shares it capitalistically. The economic bottom dog is fed with his own tail and the licence remains in the hands of the industrial and political authority.

Educational Co-partnery is the parallel. The W. E. A. stands for Educational Co-partnery. Here for the asking are the educational fruits of co-partnery culture. They are choice preserved fruits. They will be allotted in seedlings when the ground is prepared for University Culture. Workers are to be asked and encouraged to take their allotted share; but the control of the mental machinery, and the financial oil which makes it run so smoothly, will never be theirs if the Co-partnery game is played according to its present code of rules. "To own and control" are the roots of the grammar of Working Class Education. "Pure" education is a sample which should never induce workers to buy. An education which touches the economic spot is needed. Educational activity for the purpose of economically freeing society from class dominance; social science which bares the bone of contention, surplus and unpaid labour. The method is Independence in all spheres of Organised Working Class activity.

"It's dogged as does it." The Plebeian plod may be slow but it is not given to pioneers to run. May I refer you to the quotation given in W. W. C's article in last month's *Plebs*, page 197. That is the latest pronouncement. It is the revised version of the old educational gospel. Nothing is changed but the form of the words.

There are some old saws about Ethiopians, Utopians and sun-spots which I must look up.

MEREDITH F. TITTERINGTON.

The Good Plebeian looked at the Thermometer, and "bang wen saxpence,"

The C. L. C. Secretary

SOME CORRESPONDENCE AND A COMMENT.

I.

(Copy.) National Union of Railwaymen, Unity House.

4th October, 1916.

Mr. Reynolds, The Labour College.

Dear Mr. Reynolds.—I received your letter of yesterday's date, and in reply beg to say that at a meeting of the Governors of the College, held on the 29th ult., it was agreed that you be requested to leave the College for the present, and this decision was arrived at in consequence of the Military Service Act. I shall, therefore, be obliged if you will give effect to the Governors' decision at once.

In the event of your desiring to remove to your native place, the Governors have no objection to make a small grant to you, in order to pay your railway fare.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) T. LOWTH, (Secretary to the Governors.)

II.

(Copy.) National Union of Railwaymen, Unity House.

6th October, 1916.

Mr. J. Reynolds, The Labour College.

Dear Sir.—Your letter of the 5th inst., to hand.

In reply I beg to say that the proposed grant mentioned in my previous letter will be paid to you as soon as you are prepared to leave the College.

With reference to the last sentence in your letter, I have to say that the Governors of the College have given me no instructions relative to the recognition of any services you may have rendered since the 30th June.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) T. LOWTH, (Secretary to Governors.)

III.

N.U.R. WEST MIDLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL.

EXTRACT FROM QUARTERLY REPORT. (OCTOBER, 1916.)

Resolved to condemn the action of Governors of our College in discharging the Secretary without that notice—or salary in lieu of notice—agreed upon between the former Board of Management and the Staff, and we hereby appeal to the E.C.'s of the N.U.R. and S.W.M.F. to call upon the said Governors to resign, and enable those bodies to elect men who will honestly endeavour to carry out the wishes of the Members of the Unions affiliated. in the matter of Labour Education—present and future.

ARTHUR W. BECK, *Secretary.*

Correspondence

A SCHOOL TEACHER'S VIEW.

Sir,—I am not a product of the C.L.C., but of the ordinary course of studies on which a certificated elementary school teacher is "nurtured." I have enjoyed the *Plebs* for many months, and especially the Special Number on "Labour and Education."

It seems to me that anyone who has been interested in the development of the school as an institution must have observed that the prevailing form of society and the most powerful economic classes in the various epochs have been responsible both for the type of teacher employed and for the particular brand of education given in the schools. The early church "mothered" knowledge not because she desired the people to know, but rather because she knew the value of the commodity—education. The priestly schoolmaster found his knowledge essential to economic, political and social power, and he took care that the knowledge implanted was such as to ensure his own economic and social status. Why can't we be as wise as Mr. Schoolmaster-Priest, and as thoroughly class-conscious as he?

What of modern times? The fundamental laws of the industrial era are an increasing concentration of capital in a few hands, and of industry in large factories. There must be a large number of workers intelligent enough to obey instructions, with a few who have sufficient scientific equipment to invent and repair machines. The recognition of these factors is the reason for the cry of "more technical education" and "more vocational training." What strikes me as indeed funny is to see even Labour Councillors taken in by the cry. They wax eloquent about the "educational ladder," and "free access to the schools" for all the workers' children. They forget that the "ladder" they wish to put up leads the lad who has been trained at their expense into that "higher state of society" which we designate the "official staff."

The problem I have to face in my work as a school teacher is how to make the children class-conscious under present conditions. I believe that much can be done even with young children, were the necessary apparatus provided. Take the teaching of history. At present it has to be taught to the immature child by means of story and tableau. The essential elements are picturesque and dramatisation. But the incidents which lend themselves most easily to dramatisation are those which identify the child with Kings and Chancellors. The child does not come to realise the fluidity of historical development, neither does he identify himself with the struggles of his class in the past. But this could be done, even in the elementary schools. Let the child become a maker of tools—from the rude implements of Paleolithic man to the more complex manipulation of modern machinery. Let him get a conception of the struggle for existence by lessons on the development of his class, and he will be ready later for the C.L.C. propaganda.

One further word. Some of the prominent men in the Labour Movement seem to think that the war will result in an increased emphasis being placed

upon education. I agree; but that type of education which will "increase the productivity of labour," and bring about "a better understanding between workmen and their employers," does not satisfy me. Let there be no mistake—"what labour can get from education" depends upon the subjects that are taught and the point of view of the teacher.

(Rhondda.)

W. G. COVE.

R. B., SENTIMENTALISM, &c., &c.

SIR,—I need not tell you that penwork and composition are not my strong points. With one exception, that letter of mine in last month's *Plebs* was my first offence. The exception was a letter I once wrote at Fred Maddison, the super-jelly-fish, in protest against what I considered an unwarranted attack on Keir Hardie in the *Railway Review*. So you will gather from this that when I do start spilling ink I have just *got to*—can't help it.

You charge me with "sickly sentimentalism." I plead Not Guilty. The cultivation of the herb Sentiment was not encouraged in the school where I graduated. I was the second of a family of four, left fatherless. At the age of eight my poor little nose was applied to the industrial grindstone. That is fifty years ago. Circumstances—chiefly economic—have kept it there. When I look back down that half-century, and think of the foul charge (joke, this) you bring against me, I could smile! My occupations and experiences have been numerous and varied; including coal-mining in Pennsylvania, mule driving and grade work on the C. P. R. in N.W. Canada, and three years for the Western Union Telegraph Co. on construction work in the N. W. States. I am an old member of the K. of L. Hanging up in front of me is an A. S. R. S. emblem which states that I joined that Society on Nov. 6th, 1887, and which was presented to me for my &c., &c.

And I'm still a-doing of it! Take that charge back, comrade; it doesn't fit.

I am a disciple of Robert Blatchford. For why? When Blatchford first found me, I was practically an un-read man. I read him first in the *Sunday Chronicle*, when he fought the battle of the Manchester Slums. Again, in the early days of the *Clarion*, he took up the cause of the M. S. & L. men. He wrote *Merrie England*, and simple a book as that may seem to-day, it came to me as an eye-opener. Also *God and My Neighbour*—and these two books served for me as an introduction to other books and other authors—Carlyle, Ruskin, Jefferies, Darwin, Marx, Engels. It was R. B. who taught me how to think, and I don't forget.

Re those "Two for Our Side"—I'll share A. B. of Aberdeen with you; if you don't mind; and as a fellow-member wish him good luck, and trust his extra copies will bear good fruit. As for A. D. B., Somewhere in France, he's in a minority of about a hundred to one.

This about let's me out. If my effort wearies you, accept my sympathy. It's all I have to offer. But believe me to be,

hton-under-Lyne.

Yours in Friendship, S. W.

Sir,—Your Weymouth⁷ correspondent must be a rum kind of fellow, for though he be "no hero-worshipper" he seems pretty much riled at J.F.H.'s references to Blatchford.

It's no use using soft words about men like Blatchford. If Blatchford is a Socialist to-day, then so is Lord Derby. We can't bother about the label; what we can do is to examine and expose the stuff inside the wrapper. . . . But we must not be too "vitriolic." Let us pray.

(Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancs.)

M. N. J.

Sir,—I am sending you herewith two subscriptions (5/-) to make up for the loss of W.D.'s subscription. I honestly do *not* think the *Clarion* is "still doing good work."

You have a fine motto—stick to it!

(Sheffield.)

(Mrs.) I. P. C.

HOW "IT" STRIKES AN IDEALIST.

SIR,—Thanks for October *Plebs*. I was very gratified to find someone denouncing woolly-mindedness and loose-thinking. It is *the* curse of our present system of academical education.

Is there no good in the W. E. A.? Denunciation is all very well, so is explanation of previous denunciations. But why fill up the *Mag.* with them? Is the C. L. C. immune from criticism? Wipe away the film of other people's and organization's evils which blurs your vision. See clearly into the future and announce construction for all you are worth. Criticise your construction, and make your ideals better and better. If the C. L. C. has really got IT, then others will follow. It is sad to see all that energy spent in telling other people why they haven't got IT.

We want a new kind of education—those with well-filled purses just as much as the empty-headed toiler. Give men and women desire and function, and then structure follows as the day the night. Open men's eyes, trust them² to do the seeing.

YORK.

H. D. W.

(We tried in our² October number² to "open men's eyes," to some of the dangers of sham education. We trust H. D. W. to "do the seeing."—Ed., *Plebs*.)

"TRADE UNIONS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE."

Sir,—I have been² favoured by a copy of the *Plebs Magazine*, containing a criticism of my lectures on "Trade Unions and Friendly Societies in the Roman Empire." This criticism does not seem to raise any point upon which an answer is desired from me. . . . The article seems to me to consist merely of banter. The writer seems to approve my choice of subject, and the only definite criticism is that I do not treat of Roman slavery, which is

another subject. I cannot, of course, tell my hearers more than is known, nor prophesy where the future is uncertain. There is evidently something more behind this criticism, but at present I haven't the least notion what it is. That all education should be based upon politics I agree. Yours faithfully,

EDWARD V. ARNOLD.

Bangor, N.W.

(We are sorry Prof. Arnold failed to grasp the point of our article. We are quite ready to forgive him that, however, for the sake of the candid admission he makes in his last sentence. The only question now remaining to be settled is—*What* politics?—Ed., *Plebs*.)

A W.E.A. DEFENDER.

Sir,—It seems to me that you hit the W.E.A. rather hard. The W.E.A. is not out to help "the working class in its industrial and political struggle against capitalist rule and oppression." It is not "an association which really aims at the emancipation of the working class." It is not a class-conscious organization. I wish it was.

I take it one goes to the W.E.A. just as one would go to the evening classes run by the School Boards or to a literary and debating society. It has an educational value from the ordinary standpoint, i.e., as the bulk of men and women see things to-day, as the bulk of (say) the N.U.R. see things to-day. I grant that this is the capitalist standpoint, but unfortunately to-day most people agree with the capitalist system although it surely does not agree with them. In the language of this system the work of the Plebeians would probably be termed propaganda, not education.

I believe I am class conscious, yet I am a member of the W.E.A. I feel that I get general information there, but for specific information regarding my class I have to depend on class-conscious organizations and their press. I like the *Plebs* and I should like to attend C.L.C. classes, but until these are available I have to be content with the W.E.A. That organization is democratic and if I don't get my way all the time it may be because the others are not class-conscious. We can get Industrial History and Marxian Economics, but unfortunately there is neither demand nor supply; nobody seems to want them and very likely there would be a difficulty in getting suitable teachers. But there is nothing to prevent the W.E.A. taking up these subjects when the difficulties are overcome.

If I may be permitted an analogy, (though not a perfect one perhaps) I should say that while the class-conscious Plebeians have got the N.U.R. to assume joint control of the C.L.C., they do not condemn the N.U.R. because the whole of its members are not class-conscious. I assume that they will strive to make the others class-conscious. Yours fraternally,

(Aberdeen.)

A. F. M.

(Our point is—What has organized Labour, for whose support the W.E.A. appeals, to do with "education from the ordinary (i.e., capitalist) standpoint?" And how are we going to make the backward brethren class-conscious by giving them this "ordinary" education?—Ed., *Plebs*.)

Reports

ADVANCE NORTHUMBRIA !

NEWCASTLE AND DISTRICT.—At last ! After many rumours, and much talk of classes in this district, they have " become flesh." On October 14th, a meeting was held in the Newcastle Socialist Society Rooms, at which, after an outline of the class-work of the C.L.C. had been given by Will Lawther and Ebby Edwards, it was decided to start a class in Economics, to be held in the same rooms, with W. Lawther and G. Harvey as tutors. Sixteen names were given in, and H. Shutt, 15 Greenhow Terrace, Elswick, Newcastle, is Secretary. A further meeting (same place) is to be held on November 11th, to consider the formation of a class for the study of W. W. Craik's new book on *The Modern Working-Class Movement*. The Newcastle District Council of the N.U.R. is taking an interest in this latter proposal, and has promised its support.

So, after many moons, it has come to pass that the North-East will step into line with the advance-guard of the Labour Movement.

DURHAM CLASSES.—The three classes (see last month's *Plebs*) are now in full swing, and an effort is to be made by various lodges of the Durham Miners to get an " object " incorporated in the Rules to support the C.L.C.

WESTERHOPE, WALBOTTLE AND DISTRICT.—A class under the able tutorship of W. Lewcock is to be formed in this locality, to take W. W. C.'s book as the subject for study and discussion. W. L.

[We congratulate the bold North-Easters on their programme of activities for the coming months. Newcastle and Durham evidently intend to get "some" move on. We have also to thank the organizers of the Newcastle classes for giving the *Plebs* a mention in their advertisements in the *Labour Leader*. If, whenever they are running an advert. in any journal, local secretaries would follow Newcastle's example, and insert a line—" Read *Plebs*, 2d. monthly"—it would help considerably in making the *Magazine* more widely known.]

* * * * *

PADIHAM C. L. C. CLASS.

It is impossible to hold a class this winter for various reasons, principally on account of the effects of the Military Service Acts. The sale of *Plebs* is also affected by regular readers going away.

We have made use of the Special Number on **Labour and Education** by posting copies to secretaries of the Textile Unions, enclosing a letter calling attention to the C. L. C. view of education for the workers.

J. W. HUDSON.

* * * * *

THE G. F. T. U. & THE W. E. A.

The Report of the Annual Council Meeting of the G. F. T. U., held at Leeds in July last, came into our hands just too late for comment last month. On the resolution " that an instruction be given to the Management Committee to affiliate with the Workers' Educational Association, as suggested in the report," there was an interesting discussion, in the course of which our friend Titterington drove home some good points.

As Trade Unionists (he said) they were out for the *express purpose* of solving industrial problems. They had a particular object in view. They were expressly organized for the attainment of that object, and no diversion from that should be allowed. They had only one object in view, and that was the complete emancipation of their class. In order to give expression to their activities they had devised political machinery on an independent basis, and they desired to give expression to their industrial activities in that way. *How were they to get the outlook whereby they would expand T. U. & political independence? By educational activity, and that must be independent.*

There is the case for the C. L. C. in a nutshell. And Titterington quite rightly labelled the W. E. A. an "educational co-partnership" concern.

The Secretary of the Federation (Mr. W. A. Appleton), in defending the resolution, uttered several beautiful sentiments. "They were out for education, and that was a much wider thing than the study of economics. A man should be taught to discover and enjoy the beautiful in life as well as the practical." (Next time there is a strike for a wage-increase in one of the affiliated Unions, will Mr. Appleton tell the men that, as T. Unionists, they should be out for fulness of life—a much wider thing than an additional one-and-six a week?) "They had no right to attempt the domination of intelligence or the control of intellectual outlook. Democracy would stultify itself if it permitted its disciples only to study what was palatable. It was their business to place *the truth* before people . . ." (Democracy, of course, doesn't stultify itself by meekly taking Oxford's word for it that any particular teaching it chooses to offer is *the truth*. And if T. Unionists have "no right to attempt the domination of intelligence," what right has Mr. Appleton or any other T. Unionist to talk about Compulsory T. Unionism?)

Another gentlemen (a J. P.), supporting the W. E. A., deprecated any "suspicious, standoffish attitude" and hoped the delegates wouldn't "maintain class-feeling" . . . The delegates didn't. The resolution in favour of educational co-partnership, class unity, and impartial teaching, was carried by 63 to 23. We congratulate the 23.

Cuttings

EDUCATION TOWARDS REPENTANCE.

We are at this time a dedicated people; but every serious man and woman knows that there is much in our national life conflicting with the spirit of our dedication. There are indulgences which sap our strength, and there are still sectional interests which conflict with the interest of the whole community. Indeed, the sin of which we chiefly need to repent is the broken fellowship, which appears most prominently, but not solely, in the antagonism of capital and labour. . . . We are capable of repentance now because we are become sufficiently noble as a people to be capable of hating and destroying those things which deface that nobility.—REV. W. TEMPLE (President of the W.E.A.), article on "The National Mission," in the *Observer*, October 22nd, 1916.

PIETY IN PARLIAMENT.

The Lobby Correspondent of the *Daily News* (October 18th) gives the text of two new prayers read for the first time in the House of Commons recently. One—for those who have suffered through the war—runs as follows:—

O merciful God and Heavenly Father, our only help in time of need, look with pity upon those whom war makes desolate and broken hearted. Endue them with all patience and fortitude, lift up Thy countenance upon them and give them peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

They will need "all patience and fortitude"—while waiting for their pensions!

* * * * *

A PATRIOT.

Another patriot writes in the *Drapers' Record*, and the direction of his passion must be equally interesting to a large public. He says:

Some drapers, like myself, may have some Berlin wools made in Germany bought before the war, and sold at 2½d. per oz. Are we still to sell them at that price, and the British at 5½d. oz.? Many other things I could mention. I say *crush the German*, which cannot be done by selling "their old stock at old price.—

Daily News, Oct. 17th, 1916.

* * * * *

THE DANGER OF PEACE

It is rumoured that the conductors of the great business corporations of this city became aware on Thursday of the peace move, and held a conference on Thursday night. The conference decided that there would probably be a panic in the market if *such serious news* came from Washington as official.

NEW YORK PRESS CORRESPONDENT, OCT. 9TH, 1916.

* * * * *

EDUCATE—ORGANIZE.

Big business, progressive methods, and scientific research come together, and must come together. *Syndicating businesses and organizing scientific education and research are two aspects of the same job.*—The writer of "The Elements of Reconstruction" articles in the *Times*.

How long will it be before Labour realizes that consolidating its industrial organizations and organizing scientific (Labour) education and research are also *two aspects of the same job*?

PLEASE NOTE:—

That the Thermometer (see cover) is still a short distance away from Zero, and that a small subscription now, from *all* readers, would clear it once and for all.

That any subscriber who could make good use of a small "show-card," advertising the *Plebs Magazine*, can be supplied with same on application to the Secretary.

Review

A "MARXIST."

We have already reviewed in the *Plebs* (May, 1916) Robert Hunter's *Violence and the Labour Movement* (Routledge, 2/8 net). But we need offer no apology for printing the following further comments on the book by an old friend now in France.—Ed.

Hunter's earlier chapters—the historical ones—are much better than the later ones, in which he attempts to criticise the contemporary movement. Like a good many more of us, he can see things clearly enough where his own beliefs are not concerned, and can form a pretty sound judgment of the failings of a gospel which has no attraction for him personally. His analysis of the faults of Anarchist doctrine and action, for example, is right enough.

But he is nevertheless a middle-class theorist in the worst sense of the term—and this in spite of his cheap sneers at the middle-class protagonists of the Anarchist and Syndicalist movements, and his boast (cf. p. 317) of "practical" experience of labour problems "from the inside." What could be more futile than his attempted explanation, or interpretation, of the organization and movement of Labour in the early days of the Industrial Revolution? Firstly, he very properly points out that all revolutionary changes in modes of production, with their consequent far-reaching effects on the lives of the working masses, result in outbreaks of violence—with the object of smashing the new processes and re-establishing the old and obsolete methods; a result due, as he admits, to the generally prevalent ignorance of social evolutionary forces. That in the course of these outbreaks it should be perceived that mass action is not only desirable, but necessary, is to be expected. But what is to be said of an alleged Marxian Socialist who writes of this early movement as though it were inspired by an intelligent appreciation of the forces confronting it, and a clearly-defined purpose?—who laments "the ruin that overcame this magnificent beginning of the revolutionary working-class movement," and proceeds—

Quarrels between Leaders, the incoherence of their policies, and divisions over the use of violence, utterly wrecked a movement that anticipated by 30 years the Social-Democrats of Germany.

It was "individualism," in short, which, according to Hunter, broke this early movement—and yet he has only just before been rebuking the Anarchists for ascribing all actions to individual motivation! What he does (in such a sentence as that quoted above) is to try to weigh in the same scales the *un-conscious* and the *conscious* actions of the working-class. And a little later he condemns himself out of his own mouth by stating that Marx, between 1847 and 1864, spent most of his time working out the *first* real theory of social evolution, upon which was based the organization of the S.-D's of Germany. On p. 338, he writes—

When Marx began his work with the labour movement there was absolute ignorance among both masters and men concerning the nature of capitalism.

Yet it was "quarrels between leaders," &c., &c., which wrecked a movement begun at such a time!

The real object of Hunter's book is to placate the powers-that-be by presenting Socialism as a respectable movement, which strictly follows the line laid down by the capitalists themselves for orderly progress. Therefore Socialism must be sharply distinguished from Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism, and other forms of "Anarchism," which would introduce forms of "violence" into the (theoretical?) conflict between Capital and Labour. So anxious is he to comfort the capitalist that he even ventures to affirm—by implication, if not in so many words—their own pet dogma that strikes really gain nothing for the worker. Trade Unions are effective when using their powers politically (*i.e.* under the conditions laid down for them by capitalist legality). Any attempt to depart from the purely political activities favoured by the "leaders" of the movement is but another expression of the Propaganda of the Deed—Violence!! Particularly does he adopt this attitude towards the spreading gospel of Industrial Unionism; and he does his best to enlist Marx on his side in the condemnation of industrial action—an old, old story! Marx certainly criticised direct industrial action in his own day and time, and laid stress on the need for political action. But his criticism was based on the conditions of his own day; and certainly in no utterance of his can one find the contemptuous belittlement of the power of industrial organization as a means of improving working-class conditions, such as one hears from some of his self-styled followers to-day. If Marx emphasised the need for political action, it was because at the period at which he wrote the industrial organizations of Labour were suffering under great legal disabilities. The necessity of the period was the legal right to association, and it was precisely that aspect of Labour's political needs that Marx most insisted upon. But for what purpose was this organization to be legalized? To those who know their Marx the answer is clear—For any and every purpose making for the improvement of the immediate position of the workers, with a view to the ultimate goal of Labour—social ownership of the means of production. Even were we to think otherwise—and were to regard Marx as an opponent of industrial action—we would cheerfully consign Marx and the "intellectuals" to a warm place, and "carry on" with the business of industrial organization. And that without belittling the splendid foundation work achieved, once and for all, by the said Marx and his disciples—of whom Hunter is *not*.

What the Hunters and other cut-and-dried theorists fail to realize is that for the mass of the workers the question is not "What theory is most logical?" but "What action is most effective?" There is no need either to magnify or to minimize the political power of Labour under present conditions. But since revolutionary changes in the processes of production have more immediate effect on the lives of the workers than the progress of new ideas ("In the beginning was the deed"—"Men act first and think after"), the relative values of industrial and political activity are obvious.

In spite of all this, Hunter is not *too* bad, and has provided some of unwith entertainment, and some enlightenment. He did much better in *Poverty*, however, and he would do much more service for the movement in that lies than in this role of theorist-critic.

G. S.

The Plebs' Bookshelf

Mr. Benjamin Kidd, the author of *Social Evolution*, died on October 2nd, at the age of 58. I remember, when I was a boy—not so very, very long ago—hearing my elders speak of *Social Evolution* as though it were *the* book the world had been waiting for. But already the world appears to have forgotten all about it. Has anybody read it?

According to the *New Statesman*, the book was translated into at least a dozen languages (including Chinese, Czech, and Arabic), and in some countries was used as a university text-book of sociology.

It contained an argument against Socialism as the enemy of organic progress, and for orthodoxy in religion as the only means of keeping the people in a state of subjection and submission.

Apparently, the "argument" hasn't worn well. And *Social Evolution*—if it survives at all—will be relegated to a place in the museum of literary curiosities.*

* * * * *

Cunninghame Graham, in the preface to his new book, *Brought Forward*, announces that he will write no more (letters to the newspapers excepted, one supposes). Well, for a writer who has persistently kept up the somewhat irritating pretence that he was not a man of letters at all, he has a pretty considerable list of volumes to his credit. He must have spent a good deal of time and care over them, too, for people do not write as skilfully as he does by accident. Why, then, that everlasting air of apology—or mock modesty—with which he introduces his "trifles" to the public? In this last preface, he says his "works"

are to be found but in the hoof-marks I have left in all the years I galloped both on the prairies and the pampas of America. Hold it not up to me for egotism, O gentle reader, for I would have you know that hardly any of the horses that I rode had shoes on them, and thus the trails are faint.

There is a sort of eighteenth-century-aristocrat flavour about this horror of being taken for a mere literary man. Cunninghame Graham is surely big enough to do without poses.

* * * * *

We have quoted in our "Cuttings" pages recently one or two verses from J. C. Squire's little volume, *The Survival of the Fittest, and other Poems* (Allen & Unwin, 1/- net). It is a book which warms one's heart—vitriolically, so to speak. The dedication runs thus:—

TO W. IN THE TRENCHES.
You live with Death: yet over there
You breathe a somewhat cleaner air,

*Only since writing the above have I discovered that Kidd is one of Arthur M. Lewis's "awful examples" in *Ten Blind Leaders of the Blind*—which I blush to confess I had not read.

and, as might be expected after such an opening, the verses deal faithfully with some of the horrors of war—away from the firing-line. *Bridging the Gulf*; or *The Union of Classes* is a soul-satisfying poem, telling how the rich, in war-time, have

at last seen the sense of the Gospel
That they should not be selfish, like hogs,
That the Children may eat till they're round and replete,
But they *must* leave some crumbs for the dogs.

The Higher Life for Clergymen provides adequate comment upon that striking utterance of a certain prominent cleric—"Conscription is a step towards the Higher Life." And there are the Epigrams—*On Base Metals* (after *Glasgow*) and *The Trinity*, already quoted in the *Plebs*; *Lord Molasses* (lines written on reading that Lord Devonport had urged in the House of Lords that, in the interests of national economy, a considerable reduction should be made in the amount spent on Army pay and allowances); and *The Dilemma*, which many readers will remember was first printed in the *Herald*:

God heard the embattled nations sing and shout
"Gott strafe England!" and "God save the King!"
God this, God that, and God the other thing—
"Good God!" said God, "I've got my work cut out."

One gets quality, if not quantity, in this volume.

* * * * *

Mr. Henderson (the Bomb Shop, 66 Charing Cross Road, W.C.) has issued a shilling edition (1/3 post paid) of Mr. Gilbert Cannan's "book of fables," *Windmills*. I shrink from trying to describe it. To say that it is a satire on Imperialism seems inadequate. For it is also (or aims at being) a satire on Civilization and Human Nature and Religion and Sex and all manner of things. Perhaps Imperialism and War catch it most; so that it is certainly a book to read just now. So by all means read how George Samways, born on a desert island, returned to Fatland and civilization; and what he thought about it, and what his mentor, Siebenhaar, told him about Women, and Love, and Nationality, and Society, and High Politics, and so on. It is all very amusing, and very brilliant, though one cannot help feeling that Mr. Cannan has no more definite *point of view* than that afforded by a profound feeling of disgust at modern civilization in most of its aspects. So that one is left a little dissatisfied.

* * * * *

Mr Henderson has also just published two more of Miles Malleeson's plays—*'D' Company* and *Black 'Ell*—in one volume, 1/- net. As the titles suggest, these plays deal with aspects of the war. I have not yet read them; but two ladies of my acquaintance who have done so have each shed some tears over them—which is evidence, at least, that Mr. Malleeson "gets there." I hope to refer to the two plays later.

* * * * *

For the benefit of certain correspondents who have recently made inquiries about the American edition of Carpenter's *Love's Coming-of-Age*, may I point out that it is obtainable from any bookseller in a shilling edition, published by Messrs. Methuen.

I can recommend another good novel to Plebeians (you made a note of *Long Will* last month?) This new one is *The Family*, by Elinor Mordaunt, published last year, and not yet I think, obtainable in a cheap edition. It is a study of the fortunes of the various members of the family of a country "gentleman"—all of them bred to be "ladies" and "gentlemen," and nothing more. "We belong to a past age," remarks one of the sons—who eventually made a living out of pugilism—"we're survivals, that's what we are. We can fight and ride and shoot; but that's all there is to us." (The war must have found hundreds of these gentlemen an occupation for which they were fitted.) *The Family* is a fine book. I notice, by the way, that Heinemann's 7d. Series includes a novel, *The Garden of Contentment*, by the same author. Whether or not it's up to the level of *The Family* I don't know, but I should say that anything of her's is worth noting.

Talking of "gentlemen" reminds me that in a review of a book about Siberia, recently published, it was mentioned that on the Yenisei there is one word of English origin in popular use. That word is *shentilman*, and it is the greatest insult in the native vocabulary. With vivid recollections in my mind of sundry recent numbers of *Punch*, and other periodicals circulating among "gentlemen," that little bit of information afforded me great satisfaction.

The October *Ploughshare* (Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, W.C., 7d. post free) contained an interesting article on John Bellers, "Quaker, economist and philanthropist," whose *Essays about the Poor, Manufacturers, Trade, &c.*, first published in 1899, Marx refers to in Vol. I. of *Capital*.

I presume that most Plebeians will have read the S.L.P. Manifesto on State Socialism, which appeared in the September *Socialist*, and has since been issued in leaflet form. It, and the article in the October *Socialist* on "Imperialism, State Socialism, and Labour," should certainly be studied by all class-conscious trade unionists.

We have received from Johannesburg two issues of the *International*, the organ of the International Socialist League of South Africa. It is a vigorous and hard-hitting little journal. Here is a reference to the W.E.A.—which is evidently the same W.E.A. in South Africa as elsewhere—

It is distinctly a side-tracking movement. The capitalists have made our propaganda almost impossible—whether by meeting, press, or otherwise—and now they come along with safe professors ramming capitalist tainted history, economics, &c., down our throats. From Africa's sunny fountains—there comes the same old tale!

J. F. H.

S. W.'s letter (on another page) will be read with interest by all Plebeians. As a matter of fact I never accused him—directly, at all events—of being a sentimentalist. But, judging by his letter, has he any right to plead Not Guilty to such a charge?

J. F. H.

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 NINTH Annual Meet will be held in London, August 5th, 1917.

The *Plebs* Magazine.

The Magazine is published monthly. price 2d. (2½d. post paid).

Subscriptions (payable in advance): six months 1/3, Yearly 2/6.

P.O's TO BE FORWARDED TO

GEO. MELHUISE, Treasurer,

127 Hamlet Gardens,

Ravenscourt Park, London, W.

The "Plebs" League

(Organ: "PLEBS" MAGAZINE, Published Monthly,
Price 2d.)

Executive and Officers of "Plebs" League:

SECRETARY

Mrs. W. HORRABIN

TREASURER

GEO. MELHUISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mrs. W. HORRABIN, 127 Hamlet Gardens, Ravenscourt Park,
London, W.

J. F. HORRABIN, " " " " "
O. KEIGHLEY, 25 Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith, London, W.
B. S. MACKAY, 28 Oxford Gardens, Notting Hill, London, W.
G. MELHUISH, 80 Clessold Road, Stoke Newington, London, N
J. V. WILLS, 10 Layard Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.

ORGANIZERS

NOAH ABLETT, 44 Glanville Street, Mardy, Glam.
G. W. BROWN, 112 Bishop Road, Bishopston, Bristol
FRED BURGESS, 47 Clonbrock Road, Stoke Newington, London, N
W. E. CRAWFORD, 60 Abott Street, Doncaster
EBBY EDWARDS, 3 Duke Street, Ashington, Northumberland
W. T. A. FOOT, 119 Harvist Road, West-Kilburn, London, N.W.
T. P. KEATING, 80 Clarendon Road, Luton, Beds.
J. LEACH, 15 Church Street, Bolton
R. MELL, " " Street, Hull
F. B. SILVESTER, " " Evelyn Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham
W. STEWART, 5 Portallo Street, Belfast
CHARLES WATKINS, 47 Laverack Street, Richmond Road,
Handsworth, Sheffield
W. M. WATSON, Weston Cottages, Cowdenbeath, Fife
H. WYNN-CUTHBERT, "The Ferns," Pavilion Road, Worthing