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THE PLEBS MAGAZINE

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

Vol. IX.

August, 1917

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The Struggle of Classes in Russia

THE phases of a revolution can be followed but imperfectly in the columns of the daily press—especially when that press is foreign and has an axe to grind. Nevertheless, certain broad features of the Russian historical drama stand out quite clearly. One thing certain is that the *national* character of the Russian revolution has already passed away, and that the struggle of classes and of the corresponding *ideologies* is now once more—with even greater violence than under the all-stifling and all-levelling Tsarist regime—in full swing.

The turning-point seems to have been the revolt at the beginning of May, which drove M. Miliukoff, the Imperialist Foreign Minister, from office. For Imperialism is the economic-political expression of modern capitalism, just as Individualism, with its concomitants, Free Trade and Laisser-Faire, was the expression of the capitalism now passed into eternity; and the overthrow of M. Miliukoff (and his fellow Imperialist, Gutchkoff, the Minister of War) marked the defeat of the Russian capitalist bourgeoisie. That such a thing was possible at all was due not only to the natural impetus

of the revolution, but also to the peculiar condition, characteristic of Russia as of all countries which are late-comers, that her capitalism is only in its phase of formation and extension while her proletariat is already organized and permeated by Socialism. The rising of the industrial proletariat at Petrograd—the largest industrial centre in the country—was sufficient to dispossess the Imperialist bourgeoisie from power, and to place the authority, practically if not in form, in the hands of the proletariat. It is, indeed, clear from the evidence which reaches this country that the proletariat of Petrograd, if only it wanted, could even now set up a Government entirely representing its class. As it was, only four Socialists entered the Government, taking subordinate portfolios; but behind them, and controlling every act of the Government as a whole, stands the Petrograd Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, supported, tacitly or overtly, by the organizations of the Peasants, by the all-Russian Congress of the Councils of W. & S.D., and other similar bodies.

But the Russian proletariat is still a young class and daily and hourly receives additions to its ranks from the country districts and the class of ruined independent artisans. Hence its psychology is not homogenous. The newer elements still carry with them some of the psychology of the petty bourgeois and of the peasant proprietor. They are less revolutionary in their social ideals and more inclined towards moderate methods in politics and agitation than their older comrades—older in a social, not personal sense—who may, perhaps, belong to the second or third generation of proletarians and have acquired a more fully-developed proletarian psychology. Hence two main currents of political and social thought are observable among the Russian proletariat; one expressed by the more opportunist Social Democrats, the Minimalists,* as represented by Tchkeidze, Tseretelli, Skobelev, (to mention the three best known leaders); and the other by the more radical wing, the Maximalists, whose leader, Lenin, is the *bête noire* of our press. Owing to the peculiar nature of the Russian Socialist movement, its leaders—especially among the Minimalists—are for the most part "intellectuals" who have spent the greater part of their careers in "underground," conspirative work, very frequently away from Russia—a circumstance favouring such human weaknesses as jealousy, quarrelsomeness, and excessive predilection for theoretical niceties. This distinction between the two currents is probably smaller among the rank and file than among the leaders; nevertheless it is very real and is of practical importance for the tactical conduct of the two rival parties.

Hence the particular form of the solution by which the crisis in

*With them is allied Kerensky, who is a Socialist-Revolutionary, or rather a Socialist-Radical, with tendencies which make him more sympathetic to bourgeois society than are the Social Democrats.

the beginning of May was settled. The Provisional Government having been deprived of its two most important members threatened to resign unless the Socialists agreed to join it ; whereupon the C.W. & S.D., after some negotiation, accepted the offer and sent four of its members, representative of the more moderate Socialist parties, into the Government, in spite of the violent opposition of the Leninites. That was a great step which marked the official triumph of the revolutionary proletariat ; but at the same time it weakened its opposition to the bourgeoisie. Both the new Ministers and the C.W. & S.D. had to agree to support the new War Loan and become converts to the idea of a strong army at the front, capable of taking the offensive. It is true that in agreeing to a coalition with the bourgeoisie, the C.W. & S.D. obtained certain concessions, among which the most important was the renunciation of the old war aims, and the corresponding revision of the treaties with the Allies. But though those old aims have been strictly renounced, it is obvious that there can be no guarantee of finality in any such renunciation, so long as any power remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie ; and this defect has now become aggravated by the resumption of offensive operations without the previous revision of the treaties with the Allies. How weak the position of the Socialist Ministers really is, can be seen from the part they played in the notorious Grimm affair, and the attitude which they took up on the Greek question. Grimm was expelled by them because he had proved a bad internationalist, while the Allies' outrage on Greece was condemned merely because the Greek people had not been given the chance of declaring in favour of a republic.

The Socialist Gironde is thus triumphant, but the Jacobins are more active than ever. Representing as they do the pure proletarian elements, they attack the policy of compromise adopted by their rivals, and demand the supersession of the present Coalition Government by one consisting of representatives of the working and peasant classes only. Such a Government would also be a Coalition Govt., but one directed against the capitalist class. "Historically," this may seem impossible, but revolutions have their own logic. Should the present Government fail to achieve real success in dealing with the economic, political, or military situation, a fresh revolutionary wave may easily sweep it away, and carry on its crest to power the Jacobins who will then apply a drastic solution to all the problems of the day. Whether this will actually happen or not cannot, of course, be foretold ; but what is obvious is that the struggle of classes is already becoming the main factor in the Russian situation, and will henceforth drive the revolution to its logical conclusion (one way or another ; the revolution will either perish or proceed to the next ascending phase of development.

JOHN BRYAN.

President Wilson's "New Freedom"

Declaration of war on privilege and vested interests, the emancipation of the consumer oppressed by high tariffs and uncompetitive prices, and of the small employer crushed out of existence by organized under-cutting of the trusts and restriction of access to credit, was the keynote of almost every speech he (President Wilson) delivered in the campaign of 1912. *President Wilson: His Problems and His Policy.* By H. WILSON HARRIS. (p.96).



NOT long ago President Woodrow Wilson was being confidently regarded in certain Socialist circles in this country and abroad as the fore-ordained Saviour of Mankind, the Sir Galahad of Pacifism and a veritable Prophet of rejuvenated Liberalism. To others of us it seemed unreasonable to expect that the good intentions of this amiable Democratic professor would enable him to hold in check the relentless forces which the development of American capitalism had unloosed, or that Trans-Atlantic Liberalism would survive the International hurricane which had swept down upon its European counterpart. We had always looked upon the United States as the home of bourgeois ideas and institutions and the one nation in all the world which had passed most completely under the sway of capitalist industry. The North American Continent was discovered, explored, colonised and developed by the stalwarts of the West European bourgeoisie, and the whole history of the United States is a shopkeeper's diary. Hence, when the European War broke out and took upon itself the guise of the last struggle of the Liberal Powers against the stubborn remnants of Feudal Autocracy, we realised how easy it would be for the great moneyed interests of the United States to enlist the sympathies of American citizens on behalf of small Nationalities and the Cause of Freedom and Justice. These cultural ideas which have swept the Radicals and a large section of the Socialists of the Allied Nations off their feet have a peculiar power of attraction for a people cradled in what may fairly be described as "the spiritual home" of capitalism. The inter-related sentiments of Liberalism and Nationalism, and the traditions of the French Revolution as well as the memories of '48, find natural lodgement in the bosom of the greatest of all political democracies.

The American people, moreover, have been sighing for a renewal of that freedom which they have been rapidly losing as a result of the almost unhindered economic progress of capitalism; and have, latterly, given their support to Wilson because in the man

and his gospel they thought they had found the soul of the America that can, of course, be no more. They have, like the peoples of all capitalist democracies, been seeking to escape from the subtle bondage into which they have fallen, and have been looking for salvation to the prophets of the New Freedom, of a revised version of Liberalism. When this kind of unrest takes hold of a people there is always a great danger of them finding a revolutionary means of effecting the overthrow of their oppressors. To obviate such a calamity their generous enthusiasm must be deflected whilst there is yet time and must be directed against some foreign tyranny. That is what the American capitalist class has done with the American Democracy. President Wilson and his "New Freedom" have been used, as we Marxians saw they would be used, to make more certain and more complete the enslavement of the American working class. Some time ago a dreadful rumour got abroad in America. The German submarines might stop their exports reaching the stricken fighters for Freedom, and prevent money and mortgages making the passage westwards. On its heels came another rumour, that the Allies might want no more American manufactures in any case. That was equally painful news.

Then American capitalism discovered that it could lift the War to "the high plane" by opposing "construction" to Germany's "destruction" of property. Wilson spoke out in a way that the President of the Steel Corporation described as

explicit, strong, vigorous, comprehensive, and exactly right; the finest address he has ever made.

Whereupon we found that—

Old Glory is flying over virtually every blast furnace and steel works in the Pittsburgh district. *Iron Trades Review*. 5/4/17.

and that—

INDUSTRY SPRINGS TO NATION'S AID—
PATRIOTISM SWEEPS OVER INDUSTRY.

At the same time—

Steel Makers rising to highest duty of co-operation and unified effort on behalf of Nation—

denied that they had wanted war or stood to profit by it; showed that they had lowered their prices and saved the nation at least 18,000,000 dollars, immediately after E. W. Bliss Co., who made a net income of 836% out of the Allies in 1916, had been threatened with commandeering unless they reduced their prices for torpedoes to the Navy Board; assured the authorities that "unless the industries are prosperous there will be nothing to tax, for obviously the Government cannot support a war by confiscatory methods that must speedily bring about widespread ruin"; and shouted at the top of their voices that "no coercion is necessary."

At the same time, as earnest that his "New Freedom" had at last been initiated, the President announced :—

"The industrial forces of the country, men and women alike, will be a great national, a great international service army—a notable and honoured host engaged in the service of the nation and the world, the efficient friends and saviours of freemen everywhere. Thousands nay, hundreds of thousands, of men, otherwise liable to military service, will of right and necessity be excused from that service and assigned to the fundamental sustaining work of the fields and factories and mines, and they will be as much a part of the great patriotic forces of the nation as the men under fire.

This "great international service army"—fore-runners of the wage slaves of a capitalist League of Nations—are, according to the Committee on industrial preparedness—

to work under any private employer engaged on Government contracts, or on farms, and to supply the army and navy.

This Committee on Industrial Preparedness has been at work for considerably over a year, under the direct patronage and official support of President Wilson, who himself wrote to the heads of five national technical organizations, asking them to co-operate with the Naval Consulting Board. It took an inventory of 30,000 industrial concerns and had behind it "the weight of the Chambers of Commerce."

One of its aims was that "of bringing to the American labouring man the realization that he has some further obligation to the Government than he has felt that he has had to date." Its attitude to the State munitions factories was, as follows :—

Even though we have them to act as educational institutions and as clearing houses for specifications and blue prints, in any future war in which this country is engaged, it is going to be the privately-owned manufacturing plants which must feed the guns that will save the Nation. If we can have Government-owned plants, they will come in as assembling plants and as clearing houses for specifications, tools, and skilled munition-workers.—Chairman of the Committee on Industrial Preparedness (*World's Work*, New York, May 1916).

I have known of all this for the last nine months, and, strange to say, I have been sceptical of Dr. Wilson and his procrastinating diplomacy. Here, oh idolators, is another example of the "New Freedom," in the form of a pledge issued for signature to the workers at the Union Ironworks, San Francisco :—

I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America . . . and that (I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me. I do also solemnly swear that I will serve honestly and faithfully the Union Iron Works Company and will allow no person to cause any loss or damage . . . to the property or interests of the Union Iron Works Company and I do take these obligations freely without any mental or other reservation ; so help me God !

(The owners of the company being the Bethlehem Steel Works the oath is most appropriate.)

As for "the officers appointed over me," observe that the President of the Steel Corporation remarks :—

There is a disposition on the part of Government Officials to co-operate with the business men in promoting the welfare of the country. That is what all of us have desired and advocated and now we will probably have as much opportunity in this direction as we have ever desired.

The *Iron Trades Review* reports :—

The business man and the Government are really co-operating. Each is becoming better acquainted with the other. This delightful metamorphosis in the life of the Government and that of business really is worth watching. (We agree.) The cause for it all is the program of national defence. It came into effect when the Government found itself compelled to beckon to the business man for his aid. . . Happily, a path is being beaten between the office of the business man and that of the Government at Washington. Once it is cleared perfectly, let it remain so.

Again, the same oracle :—

The action of the U. S. Supreme Court in ordering re-argument of the various Trust cases, including the Steel Corporation suit, and deferring a decision for perhaps a year, is significant. A new appreciation of the power and effectiveness of real team-play between Government and business is spreading broadly.

So the Americans are all brothers now. The employers are distributing tracts on the community of interests between them and their workers in the pay envelopes ; Pittsburgh varieties of John Hodge are stating that they are loyal to the nation and "equally loyal to the interests of the Steel Corporation," and that body is subscribing 50,000 dollars to the Y.M.C.A. to assist in the Americanisation of employes of foreign birth. The dawn of the "New Freedom"!

J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD, M.A.

THE PAMPHLET.

Our new pamphlet, WHAT DOES ' EDUCATION ' MEAN TO THE WORKERS ?, is now ready. See p. 2 of cover for terms. We want a record sale, and if we go on as we have begun we shall get one. Edinburgh No. 1 Branch, N.U.R., has ordered 1,000 copies. Manchester District Council, N.U.R., (as we reported last month) has ordered the same number. Now then, you LIVE Trade Unionists—let us have your orders. We have made preliminary arrangements for a second edition, which will be put in hand (and supplied) AT ONCE if you demand it. This pamphlet is THE goods!

“Mere Socialist Economics”

A JUSTIFICATION OF “TENDENCY” IN SCIENCE.

THE object of the Plebs League is “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.” It would seem to follow from this definition that the economics of the League are “merely Socialist,” that they are *tendentious*. Do we regard the accusation as a censure? It may be intended as such (though it comes strangely from a professedly Socialist quarter). But the League will accept the reputed stigma with delight, will glory in its shame, nailing its Socialist colours to the mast, to sink if needs must, dying worthily (since it is more pleasurable to die in a cherished cause than to live through the success of a detested one); yet anticipating not defeat or death, but a triumph, the triumph of the class-struggle. For “our war” is the class-struggle—the war that in the end will abolish class, will put an end to exploitation, and thus, by eradicating its causes, will ultimately make war impossible in human society.

What do we mean by *tendentious*? In English the word is comparatively new, but it will be found (in the Addenda, at least) of some of the more recent dictionaries—sandwiched between such neologisms as “teddy bear” and “thermos flask.” The *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, for example, explains that the word is used with reference to doctrines that have an underlying purpose, are coloured by prepossession, or are calculated to advance a cause. And it adds that the term is an Englished version of the German *tendentios*. It was in the German form that one of the present writers first became acquainted with the notion, in a manner which bears illuminatingly on the topic we are now discussing. Of all learned Histories of Philosophy, the most learned—and the dullest—is by one Ueberweg. Writing of rival historians in the same field, he refers to George Henry Lewes’s *Biographical History of Philosophy* as (we quote from memory, and in translation) “tendentiously coloured, and utterly unsuited for use as an introduction to the history of philosophy.” Yes, it is true. Lewes is *tendentious*, while Ueberweg is as free from “prepossession,” from “desire to advance a cause,” as a man can well be who undertakes to write for any definite object. And the result is that Lewes is as interesting as a novel, is more interesting and more readable than most novels, whereas old “Over-the-Way” (as he used to be nicknamed by irreverent undergraduates “swotting him up” for examination) despite his magnificent erudition, succeeded merely in producing a dry-as-dust work of reference from which the human interest of that essentially human subject, philosophy, has been all-too-successfully expunged.

For that is the essential thing—the human interest. We live by desire and emotion ; by the gratification of will and by artistic appreciation ; it is for these ends that we strive to *know*. Emotion is the driving force of human life ; what distinguishes man, *qua* man, from other animals, is the extent to which he endeavours to make reason his guide. But he cannot rationalise his activities, he should not try to rationalise his activities, to the extent of making them unemotional, of depriving them of “tendency.” Thus in proportion, in science, as we move from the purely abstract to the biological and sociological plane, in proportion as the direct human interest comes to predominate in any branch of study, do we find that the subject becomes tendentious ; do we find that it is studied with a desire (conscious or unconscious) to fulfil an underlying purpose, to advance a cause. We do not mean that there is *no* human interest in the higher mathematics. To assert this would be to contradict the very essence of the thesis maintained in this article. It is a question of degree, and the example we have given shows that there is a useful place for tendency even in so abstract a science as the history of philosophy. Broadly speaking, the gradation is plain enough. Tendentious algebra would be absurd ; tendentious arithmetic has landed many an accountant behind prison bars. These are abstract sciences, with which tendency has little to do, and in which the emotional element must be severely suppressed. But the science of economics is studied primarily for its bearing upon the advancement of human social life, and untendentious economics, untendentious sociology, are (we would urge) almost as absurd, nay, almost as impossible, as untendentious violin-playing or untendentious football.

A transitional instance may be adduced in illustration. In its methods history belongs to the more abstract branches of human knowledge, and yet its aims are fundamentally sociological. If we study the works of well-known historians, and separate from the ruck those writers whose books have a permanent human and artistic interest, we find that all the luminous exceptions are characterised by powerful prepossessions. Macaulay glorified the Whig tendency in English political life during the latter half of the seventeenth century and his hero was “Dutch William” ; Froude held a brief for Henry VIII., and wrote to illustrate his views on certain aspects of the English Reformation ; Green and Treitschke, throughout their brilliant expositions, respectively voiced English national and Prusso-German national aspirations. The historian who too conscientiously pursues an elusive “impartiality,” the historian who strives to wash all “colour,” all “tendency,” from his ink, condemns himself to ineffectiveness and dullness, and his books will gather dust on the top shelves while those of “live” writers continue to be our daily study and our nightly delight. Not that all the great historians we have

named knew themselves to be tendentious. Some of them would probably have repudiated the charge with intense indignation. But the man who among them all was perhaps the greatest artist in words, Heinrich von Treitschke, was under no illusions, and in response to certain foreign critics of his *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century* said he was not surprised that his work had incurred their disfavour, adding simply "I write for Germans."

This brings us back to our main text, to "mere Socialist economics." The economics of the Plebs League are "merely Socialist" because they are economics studied by Socialists for Socialists, because our underlying purpose is to advance Socialism, because we believe that Socialist economics are calculated to advance the Socialist cause. And just as the difference between Treitschke and certain other historians is that Treitschke knew himself to be tendentious and they didn't, so the difference between us and certain other economists is that we are frankly aware of the nature of our prepossessions, whereas they falsely imagine that they can keep emotional leanings out of a study which from its very nature is essentially tendentious. Economics that are not "merely Socialist" will almost invariably be found on careful examination to be the economics of the master class. There is an excellent story of an oriental student at a western university who was asked why he regarded with so much disfavour the works of the orthodox economists, the writers who claim to be purely scientific, to be free from all distorting tendency. "I find," he said, "that they are all variations upon one theme. They all endeavour to teach the art of extracting honey from the hive without alarming the bees." But our aim, as conscious advocates of Socialist economics, is the direct opposite. Once more, our object is "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." In a word, the primary purpose of the Plebs League is *to alarm the bees*.

EDEN & CEDAR PAUL.

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Do it Yourself

ONE outstanding feature of the recent industrial unrest which is especially worthy of the attention of Plebeians and of everyone interested in the educational aspect of the working-class movement is the spontaneous awakening of the workers to the fact that *something is really wrong*—a sudden realization that things are not half so well as they look, nor one tenth as well as they might be.

That feeling is only too well-founded; as witness the case of the Munitions of War Act, and the extension of dilution to private and commercial work. Politicians and Labour "leaders" may chant as glibly as they please about their honesty of intention. But this fact remains—the *Bill would have become law but for the strike of the engineers*. I wonder if those on the Clyde and elsewhere who are at present being asked to vote on the question whether they will accept the principle or not, realise that it is thanks to the vigilance and determination of the men in Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, &c., that they are afforded an opportunity of expressing their opinion at all. The *action* of the men gave the lie direct to the mutterings of the officials that "Nothing can be done"—"It's too late"—and so forth; and demonstrated that *anything* is possible when one possesses a spinal column of average stability.

The result of this general awakening is a keen desire to *know* and *understand* on the part of the rank and file. And right here is the point. Literature of any description dealing with questions of a social, political, or industrial nature is eagerly sought for and read; everywhere one sees clear signs of this thirst for information. Can we meet the demand? And if so, are we willing? To both questions the answer must be in the affirmative. Then what is the best way to go about it? Every way! Supply the literature, stimulate discussion, establish classes. Start these latter right in your own department in the workshop; run them in meal hours; and if no-one else can conduct them, *do it yourself*. Don't take up the attitude of—"I don't feel fit or capable." The question is rather—"Are you the most capable?" If so, *get into it*. More capable individuals will be probably fully occupied elsewhere. There is a tendency among working-class students to become unduly conscious of their own weaknesses—especially by comparison with others of longer experience and wider information. This is as it should be—so far as the individual is concerned; but there is the all-important fact to consider of the numbers of *less* informed workers. Everywhere these workers are prepared to listen to you, to attend classes, if YOU give them the chance. Don't wait until you feel that you have nothing more to learn

ere you regard yourself as fit to teach. Concentrate on the simple essentials—convince your fellows of the rottenness of the whole social system, and of the impossibility of “Harmony” so long as they remain wage-slaves. And show them how easily it all might be altered—if they desire it.

On the Clyde this winter we must be busier than ever. Differ as much as we may about the tactics of the struggle, let us unite in recognising the vital importance of the educational work—and in getting that work well in hand. Otherwise we leave the field open for the well-intentioned (?) W.E.A. and its fatal dope. We need—everywhere—better organization; we have got to ensure that wherever half-a-dozen workers are ready to form a class, we have an individual ready to “supply the goods.” That means a call for Volunteers! It is up to You to answer it.

A. McMANUS.

The Old War and the New ?

“In the class struggle is included everything that a Socialist—whose fatherland is the International—has to defend as a Socialist.”—K. Liebknecht.

Turati’s “Towards New Dawns . . .” is a new version of the old Socialist-Patriot tale that “this is the last war,” that “we must fight to kill war,” that “this war will create a new and freer Europe,” &c. Some months ago Turati, when speaking in connection with the Italian Socialist Party’s peace proposal in the Chamber, enumerated the following conditions of peace:—

“An independent Poland, a restored Belgium and Serbia,” &c.

“And what about Italy?” interjected a deputy. “Italy must obtain its Italian provinces and strategic safeguards where necessary,” replied Turati.

This answer provoked a strong discussion in the Party, for Turati’s words actually endorsed the Imperialist policy of the Italian bourgeoisie. In the same way we see revisionism oozing out of every pore of Turati’s article. In spite of fine phrases, Turati endorses war as a weapon in the Socialist armoury.

Doubtless in acting as he (Wilson) has done (says Turati) his main object has been the defence of American interests, bourgeois and capitalist interests. . . But, as a matter of fact, *the capitalist and bourgeois interests which he defends coincide perfectly with a greater interest, that of civilization.*

There we have the old Socialist-Patriot argument again! The German majority Socialists said: “We must fight Tsardom in the interests of Kultur.” The French Socialist-Patriots said: “We must fight the Kaiser and defend civilization.” Turati overrates the idealism of Wilson’s peace message. Actions speak louder than words and Turati himself acknowledges that the U.S. entered the war to defend American interests, i.e. those of American Imperialism.

He also thinks that the Russian revolution is a factor which necessitates Socialists reconsidering their former attitude towards the war :

With the Petrograd revolution, initiated and controlled by proletarian forces, all imperialistic desires felt by the Muscovite power necessarily disappear. The war remains henceforward purely defensive. More important still, it has become a war on behalf of the newly acquired liberties, against a German occupation which might possibly lead to an attempt at restoring the old regime.

From this it is clear that Turati still clings to the principle of national defence which caused the downfall of the Third International. This fallacy has been exposed time after time by internationalists and repudiated by the Zimmerwald manifesto. A special Conference of the Swiss S.D.P. was held at Berne last June to consider the question of national defence. By 222 votes to 77 the Conference repudiated the principle. Comrade Paul Graber, from the French part of Switzerland, put in a nutshell the attitude of the Swiss S.D.P. towards war : " Not a cent and not a man for the army ! " Now Switzerland is a democratic republic and has as many liberties to defend as the Russian revolution. Yet the Swiss Social-Democrats have come to the conclusion that international Socialism is incompatible with national defence and have thrown the latter overboard. It is the irony of fate that along comes Turati—after he has seen all the horrors inflicted upon the Italian proletariat by the war—advocating this " new " worn-out principle, and urging the Russian proletariat to spill more blood and kill more proletarians of other countries. If killing is the sovereign " Socialist " remedy, what need is there to bother about Marxism and other Socialist principles ?

Neither America's entry into the war nor the Russian Revolution have in the least affected the Socialist attitude towards the war. In spite of fine phrases, America defends its capitalist interests, and the bulk of the members of the American Socialist Party is opposed to the war. In a similar way, the Russian internationalists condemn the war and demand peace at any price. It is only the Socialist-Patriots and Ministerialists like Kerensky, Skobelev, Tseretelli, and their Revisionist following who (1) asked the German and the Austrian proletariat to start a revolution (a most illogical proceeding from the Marxist point of view, for revolutions cannot be ordered as we order a new suit of clothes) and (2), urged the Russian proletariat to employ the weapon of war should the " enemy " proletariat fail to bring about a revolution.

After all " freedom " means A COMPARATIVE LIBERTY FROM TOIL, which depends upon the economic development of a given country, and upon the postulates of this development, of which the people of the country are conscious. Even if the Kaiser over-ran Russia, he could not set back Russia's economic development, nor suppress the consciousness of the people and restore Tsardom. The attempt to restore the Manchu dynasty in China, an Asiatic country, has failed completely ; the more would it fail in enlightened Russia.

War is not a Socialist weapon. Socialist soldiers, just as Socialist hangmen and Socialist torturers, are an impossibility.

ALEXANDER SIRNIS.

S.W.M.F. :—New Rules

The following are some of the most important items in the new draft Rules recommended by the Executive Council of the S. W. M. F., with the amendments thereto submitted by the various Lodges throughout the coalfield. The rules were considered and adopted at a Special Conference, and will be of considerable interest to Trade Unionists generally. The words and sentences printed in *italics* indicate the amendments submitted by the Lodges and endorsed by the Conference.

OBJECTS.

(b).—To secure the complete organization of all workers employed in and about collieries situate in the South Wales Coalfield; *with the view to the complete abolition of Capitalism. Membership of the Federation to be a condition of employment.*

(c).—To take into consideration the question of trade and wages in relation to the members of the Federation; to regulate the relationship existing between members and their employers; *with the view of increasing the members' control of the conditions of employment,* and generally to improve the conditions of employment of the members and to protect their interests.

(d).—To promote and secure the passing of Legislation for improving the conditions of the members, *and to secure members a guaranteed livelihood irrespective of all cessation of work when such is the result of causes beyond the immediate control of the members,* and to join in with other organizations for the purpose.

(i).—NEW RULE—To acquire or to join with any other organization acquiring premises *or adopting any other means* for the purpose of educating and training Trade Unionists in social science, and to take part in the political and industrial life of the Labour Movement and to manage or administer or to join with other organizations in the management and administration of such premises *and all such means* when so acquired and the educational and training work carried on by *and in connexion therewith.*

(j).—This clause deals with the election and payment of M.P.s and Local Representatives—to which was added the following :—*On proposed Labour legislation a conference shall be called to discuss same and instruct our Members of Parliament.*

(l).—To join or affiliate with kindred organizations for the purpose of promoting *the socialization of all industries in the interests of the workers* or securing any of the objects hereinbefore stated.

NEW CLAUSES.

To build up an organization that will take over the mining industry and carry it on in the interests of the workers.

To secure a working day of 8 hours bank to bank by Legislation.

GOVERNMENT.

That the Executive Members be elected annually in the month of January by a ballot from nominations sent in by the respective Lodges of the Districts.

BENEFITS :—UNEMPLOYMENT.

(b).—*Any member victimised shall be paid the rate of wages of his particular occupation. (Existing Rule 10/- per week and 1/- for each child under 14 years of age).*

THE MEET

The Annual Meet of the Plebs League will be held, by kind permission of the Governors, at the Labour College (13 Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.) on Sunday, August 5th, at 2.30 p.m. If necessary, it will be continued on Monday. Tea will be provided on Sunday, and **ALL THOSE WHO INTEND TO BE PRESENT ARE REQUESTED TO NOTIFY THE SECRETARY (127 Hamlet Gardens, Ravenscourt Park, London, W.6) NOT LATER THAN AUGUST 3rd.**

We have decided, for reasons of space, not to reprint the Agenda this month. Two or three amendments on points of detail have been received, but these can most easily be dealt with during actual discussion.

We take the opportunity of repeating our invitation to all friends interested in the aims and work of the League to attend the Meet.

MARX Portrait Postcards. Going well. Ordered yours? (1d. each; 8d. per doz. post paid). All Profits to Plebs Publication Department.

The Burning Question for all Workers. **NOW OUT.**

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

(What it is, and what it isn't).

Price 2d. Published by the Building Workers' Industrial Union.

Single copies 2½d., post free; or 3/6 per quire of 26 copies. From C. W. TRURAN, B.W.I.U., 440, Harrow Road, Paddington, W.(9); or from J. HAMILTON, 10, Mill Lane, Islington, Liverpool,

Correspondence

THOSE S.L.P. PAMPHLETS.

Dear Comrade,—In criticising the S.L.P. pamphlets in the June *Plebs* Walton Newbold treads warily. One has the impression that he is aware he is on thin ice; and his generous appreciation appears to be an effort to hide his shivering embarrassment.

Yet, despite his measure of praise, Newbold persists in his opinion that the S.L.P. pamphlets are "too theoretical," and "do not hitch on easily enough to the everyday interests of the working man." Further, he says, "they are written as if by history students and economic students for students of economics and history." Surely in writing this criticism he forgot the major part of the contents of the S.L.P. "projectile," to wit, the De Leon pamphlets. Undoubtedly De Leon was an expert in historical learning and criticism; and his more important contributions to Marxian sociology are masterpieces. But De Leon was also an eminent orator and publicist. Most of the De Leon pamphlets are verbatim reports of addresses which he delivered to crowded audiences of American workers. They were not written; they were spoken. They are brilliant expositions of the principles of the S.L.P., sparkling with wit, and abounding with telling illustrations of the rottenness of Craft Unionism in the U.S. They are ruthless in their exposure of the treachery of the American Labour leaders. They are not dry as dust lectures, but addresses with a "punch" in them. They punch the capitalists in the concrete; they punch the political hirelings of the capitalist class; and they punch the blacklegging craft unions. This is clear from the applause with which they were punctuated, and the angry questions put to the speaker by Labour Fakirs with sore heads.

Having digested much of De Leon's intellectual provender, I am glad to recommend it as 'the meat.' It is the kind of food which gives brawn and backbone to rebels. It encourages a healthy faith in the ultimate triumph of the proletarian cause; and dissipates the jaundice of disillusionment. I want more of the same kind of pabulum. So, as a member of the British S.L.P. I submit a criticism to its Executive, but from a different view-point to Newbold. I think it is time the Party issued a series of pamphlets dealing with the British variety of Labour leader, and with the pseudo-brands of Industrial Unionism masquerading as Guild Socialism, Syndicalism, &c. which are being so much advertised just now.

Here the party has a big field to explore and fine opportunities for trenchant criticism. These pamphlets would supplement the De Leon masterpieces and illustrate with British examples the lessons he drove home with such poignancy and force.

Of course, this is a matter for the S.L.P. itself to attend to. In the meantime the work before the Plebs is to get on with our educational propaganda; with classes, lectures, pamphlets and books. Ultimately, I hope by the aid of all these influences "capitalism will be exorcised," as Newbold neatly puts it, "by a vigorous application of class-conscious activity."

Then shall we be able to say to Brother Capitalist in the language with which Marx closes his apostrophe to Senior :— "And now, good sir, farewell, and may we meet again in yonder better world—but not before."

Yours fraternally, FRED SILVESTER.

HBT. COLLINS (Cardiff) also writes an interesting letter protesting against Walton Newbold's assertion that the S.L.P. pamphlets are "theoretical, and too advanced for beginners." "In my home," he says, "three of us have been reading De Leon, and we are steadily adding to our pile . . . The

reading of these pamphlets has given me a new outlook." He goes on to suggest that the many workers who can follow and understand all the scientific intricacies of gambling, racing, and card-playing, surely possess mental power sufficient to enable them to master the problems confronting the working class, if they are once set on the right path. And the S.L.P. pamphlets, he maintains, will do this for them.

AS TO POLITICS.

ROBERT LOWE (Ashton-in-Makerfield) writes strongly supporting Political Action as essential for the development of revolutionary class-consciousness; mere industrial organization, he urges, being insufficient to achieve this end. "I am a miner," he writes. "Connected with the mining industry are joiners, fitters, and a number of other trades. Now is the mere fact of these trades joining up with the Miners' Federation going to change the mental outlook of these workers or the miners?" It is this *outlook* of the workers which needs revolutionizing, and every means to this end must be made use of.

ABER (Abertillery, Mon.). Sorry, no room this month. By the way, you don't send your name and address.

News of the Movement

We referred last month to the circular letter sent out by the N.E. District Secretary of the W.E.A., with copies of Mr. Mactavish's pamphlet, *What is Real Democratic Education?* to T. U. branches and Labour organizations; and we drew the attention of Plebs Leaguers to the curious statement contained in that letter, to the effect that "Mr. Mactavish's criticism does not apply to the Central Labour College, but to the educational principles and policy which the Plebs League is endeavouring to induce the C.L.C. to adopt." Our friend Ebby Edwards promptly wrote asking for an explanation of this passage, and received the following reply:—

Newcastle-on-Tyne, June 27th, 1917.

Dear Mr. Edwards,—You ask for an explanation of the statement "the educational principles and policy which the Plebs League is endeavouring to induce the C.L.C. to adopt, &c." The grounds for making this assertion are:—

(1) *Educational Principles*. The Plebs League advocates dogmatic instruction in economic doctrines, and is therefore opposed to Freedom in education.

(2) *Policy*. It advocates distrust of the W.E.A. amongst Trade Union working-class organizations.

On neither of these matters have the members of the bodies responsible for the C.L.C. been consulted.

I remain, Sincerely Yours,

H. A. TREVENA (Dist. Secretary).

The letter needs little comment. It carefully evades the question whether "the educational principles and policy of the Plebs League" are not also the educational principles and policy of the C.L.C. The suggestion that the "members of the bodies responsible for the C.L.C." undertook that responsibility in entire ignorance of what the College's principles and policy were, is ingenious but unconvincing. It was precisely because the South Wales Miners and the Railwaymen understood very well the difference between the C.L.C. on the one hand and Ruskin College and the W.E.A. on the other, that they, first, supported the C.L.C., and later, decided jointly to own and control it. "Distrust of the W.E.A."—and of "Freedom in education"—necessarily follows the adoption of an independent working-class educational policy; just as distrust of the Liberal or Tory parties—and of "Freedom in politics"

—accompanies the adoption of an independent working-class political policy. We repeat what we said last month—that the attempt to suggest that the educational principles and policy of the Plebs League differ in any way from those of the C.L.C. amounts to deliberate misrepresentation. And we certainly do not regard this letter as a satisfactory explanation of that misrepresentation.

While we are “up North-East” we may as well refer to a remark of Mr. W. Straker’s in the June monthly circular of the Northumberland Miners. Mr. Straker prefaces some observations on the subject of Education by declaring that “the question of the education of the workers is of greater importance than any other question we have to deal with.” He proceeds to regret the “feud” between the “truth-seekers” (cf. above paragraph) and to plead for less “bigotry” and more co-operation. He concludes—“If the Central Labour College, Ruskin College, and the W.E.A. would co-operate, some splendid educational work would be accomplished.” May we, by way of reply, put it this way to Mr. Straker:—We regret the “feud” between the miners of Northumberland and the mine-owners (both of whom we will describe as “coal-seekers.”) We plead for less “bigotry” and more co-operation. If the Northumberland Miners’ Association and the Cramlington Coal Co., Ltd.,—or any other big firm—were to “co-operate,” some splendid coal-getting work would be accomplished. But would the Northumberland Miners be any better off?

We step across the Tyne to Co. Durham. The debate between Will Lawther and Coun. J. Lawson took place at Consett, on July 8th, and was particularly successful. Lawther put the case for the C.L.C. in vigorous style, while his opponent described independence in working-class education as “isolation,” and urged that the workers must “participate in all the educational advantages of the country.” The vote was taken, and the audience backed Lawther and the C.L.C. by 71 to 59.

At the meeting of the Halifax Trades Council on July 10th, in the course of a discussion on the methods of the Industrial Unrest Commissioners and on the way in which these gentlemen were appointed. Mr. Waight declared that in his opinion (we quote from the *Halifax Evening Courier*) “the local secretary was elected because he was a prominent member of the W.E.A.” which was playing a part, in a most insidious manner, detrimental to working-class interests in this country. The game at the bottom of the W.F.A. effort was, both now and after the war, to keep the workers in their places as wage-slaves and maintain the system of production for profit. *As the Council had pledged its support to the Central Labour College, it was out to fight the W.E.A.* We commend this last sentence to the notice of the W.E.A. North-East Dist. Secretary. . . One further reference to this ubiquitous organization, and we have done—for this month:—We learn that the E.C. of the Coach-makers’ Society recently decided to let the W.E.A.’s appeal for a renewal of affiliation “lie on the table.” Somebody else has seen through the “Freedom in education” stunt!

The N.U.R.-A.G.M., on the motion of Edinburgh No. 1 Branch, resolved “that the time is now opportune to make a grant of £50 to Bro. W. W. Craik for services rendered to our organization.”

Heartily congratulations to our friend C. T. Cramp on his election to the Presidency of the N.U.R. Bro. Cramp is an old champion of the C.L.C., and we trust that during his term of office the influence and activities of the College may “increase and multiply.”

Congrats. also to Geo. Brown, of Bristol. He has now a handle to his name (see back page of cover).

There is apparently keen competition between rival "newsagents" at the Road Board Camp for C.O.'s, Denton, Newhaven. The programme of a camp concert (how *wicked* that C.O.'s should be allowed to have concerts!) held there recently contains a number of adverts.—more or less "genuine." In one corner we read that "Owing to increasing sales of *Freedom* and *Satire* it is not necessary to advertise in this programme." In another—

Put not your trust in *Freedom*,
 Let *Satire* lure you not,
 Each article breathes serfdom—
 Both papers ooze with rot.
 Secure your PLEBS from

A. FLETCHER (Cook's Hut).

We trust our esteemed contemporaries will not take proceedings (of any kind) against us for reprinting this heartless verse.

* * * * *

BIRMINGHAM readers please note :—In connection with the Social Science Class a garden party will be held at the Clarion Club House, Lyndon End, on Sunday, August 19th. Assemble tram-terminus, South Yardley, 3.30 p.m. Tea, adults 1/-; children, 6d. and 9d. Tickets from Fred Silvester, 8, Evelyn Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham.

* * * * *

Our best thanks to E. Farnsworth, of Netherfield, Notts., and (again) to E. R. Robinson, Birmingham, for their splendid efforts to increase the circulation of the *Plebs*. . . From another Comrade we have received an interesting letter in which he informs us that a friend who, because of the nature of his business position, is unable publicly to identify himself with the Plebs Movement, is anxious (anonymously) to send along a regular donation to our Publication Fund. We hereby thank him, and invite others, similarly placed, to follow his example. If you can't *work* for us and with us, send a P.O. occasionally!

* * * * *

By the time this issue of the magazine is published, a meeting of London Plebs Leaguers and friends will, we hope, have been held, and preliminary plans laid for activities during the coming winter. Report next month.

Review

A RAILWAY GUILD

Towards a National Railway Guild. (National Guilds Pamphlet, No. 4.)
 17 Acacia Road, London, N.W.8. (price 2d.)

I hope I may be pardoned (being a railway-man) for expressing my opinion that *Towards a National Railway Guild* is the most important of the pamphlets yet issued by the Guilds League. A comparison of the growth and present position of the Industrial Unions of this country shows that the N.U.R. stands first and foremost, and it is almost certain that the first 'Guild' to be established will be one for the Railways. I held that opinion *before* reading this pamphlet and my opinion is stronger than ever *after* reading it. Space will not permit of any thing like an adequate review of its 16 pages of concentrated wisdom. The writer shows how the existing Conciliation Boards

(replaced by " All Grades Negotiation Boards "), District Councils, Shops Committees, &c., can each be made to play their part in obtaining the required Control, and also realises that the first assault must be made against the steel-faced defences of ' Discipline and Management.' The pamphlet, if widely read—as it deserves to be—by the rank and file on the Railways, should help considerably towards bringing about the fusion of forces of the N.U.R., R.C.A ; and A.S.L.E. & F. ; pointing out as it does the common road for all railway workers towards self-government and freedom. The foot-note, too, on pp. 10 and 11, is a valuable contribution towards solving the vexed question of ' craft ' and ' industrial ' unionism and should be studied by all railway shopmen.

Seeing that the pamphlet is intended for circulation among the rank and file, it might, I think, have been more clearly shown, and emphasised, that management by the railway workers themselves would make it possible for all to receive full and adequate (equal ?) payment for services rendered, by common agreement between the Railway Guild and the State—and such other Guilds as may exist. For the rest it is a notable and clearly written booklet on a subject of vital and engrossing interest, and should be studied not only by Railway workers but by Trade Unionists generally, who would all be closely affected by such a revolutionary change as is here outlined.

A. J. WHITLOCK,
(Hon. Sec. S.E. Dist. Council, N.U.R)

A FORTHCOMING BOOK.

It has come to my knowledge that the Labour Movement in general and the Miners in particular are to be given an opportunity of making a notable addition to their libraries in the shape of a new book by Geo. Harvey, of the Durham Miners.—*The Miner's Chart.*

The author will need no introduction to the " Old Guard " of Plebeians, but for the benefit of new readers of the *Plebs* I may say that, though the author is comparatively young, he has had an experience in the Labour and Socialist movement which makes one confident, that his book, which is to deal with Industrial Unionism, particularly in relation to the Mining industry, will be more than ordinarily valuable. Harvey has been a miner all his life, and a keen and earnest member of the Durham Miners' Association for a good number of years ; and when not engaged getting coal, he has been busy piling fuel around that small spark of enthusiasm existing amongst the workers. He joined with Ablett and others at Ruskin College in founding the Plebs League ; he was also Editor of our Marxian contemporary, the *Socialist*, during the years 1910-11-12 ; his earlier small pamphlet on Industrial Unionism and the Miners was, as I remarked last month, in my opinion a model of what such a pamphlet should be.

I have had the privilege of looking over the chapter-headings and summaries of his book—which, it is hoped, will be ready during August. It commences with a general outline of early Unionism ; the failure of the Miners' Federation illustrated by a record of the crises commencing with the " great Coal War

of 1893," and terminating with the Minimum Wage Strike, 1912. The following chapters deal with recent history—the struggle between the New Unionism, supported by the S. Wales and Durham Miners, and the old Craft policy adhered to by various other associations. The Miners' Federation is then critically analysed and compared with the organization of the Coal magnates, and the verdict arrived at is that the Federation is outworn and outgrown, and, in its present form, can only be a hindrance to the interests of its members. In this same connection, the author also pays some attention to the political and educational sides of the Labour Movement, the struggle of the C.L.C. and W.E.A. having a chapter to itself—a point of especial interest to Plebeians.

In later chapters we are taken across the seas to the U.S.A., Australia, Germany, &c.; the conditions and development of the Labour Movement in each country being dealt with. Finally comes a discussion of the constructive side of the New Movement; the difference between Industrial Unionism, Syndicalism, and Guild Socialism is explained; and—so far as the material and economic conditions permit—the author describes to us the form of social organization, which will displace the present one.

My space is limited; but I should like to point out in conclusion that the Marxian method of treatment is followed throughout this book—a method which is conspicuously lacking in some of the stuff written for the benefit of the workers. I earnestly advise all Plebeians, (particularly the miners), to secure a copy of the book, which should be ordered from Geo. Harvey, Wardley Colliery, Pelaw-on-Tyne, Durham; 1/-, post paid. Order at once. And let us hope other books of a similar kind will follow. Who's bound to do one for th' engineers?

FRANK JACKSON.

OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF THE MODERN BRITISH WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT. By W. W. Craik. Price 7d. (post paid). 2nd Edition now ready.

We have received numerous indignant letters from Literature Secs. and individual subscribers whose orders for this book have not been executed. In justice to ourselves, we must point out (once more) that the Plebs League is *not* responsible for its publication and distribution, and that complaints ought therefore not to be addressed to us. We ourselves have been inconvenienced—Plebs classes have been inconvenienced—in exactly the same way as our correspondents have been. We must ask our correspondents to acquit us of any complicity whatever—and we shall be very glad to publish any explanation which the Sec. of the London Dist. Council of the N.U.R. (the publishers of the book) may care to send us.

We are, *now*, able to supply single copies. Orders for quantities should be addressed to W. T. A. Foot (Sec., London Dist. Council, N.U.R.) 119, Harvist Road, West Kilburn, N.W.6.

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The Plebs' Bookshelf

The Fabian Research Department (membership of which, by the way, is open to all Trade Unionists, and not merely to Fabians) justified its existence by the publication of the *Labour Year Book*. It has now put Trade Unionists in its debt still further by the issue of *Trade Unionism on the Railways: Its History and Problems*, by G. D. H. Cole and R. Page Arnot (Fabian Research Department, 25, Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W.1.) price 2/6 (cloth) and 1/- (paper). As a handy reference book for railwaymen, and for all students of industrial organization, this volume will be exceedingly useful. If you want to know just what the All-grades movement of 1908 was, or the 1911 Conciliation Scheme, or the N. Eastern Scheme; if you want a brief outline of the history and constitution of the N.U.R., or the A.S.L.E. and F., or the R.C.A., or an account of the various negotiations between the N.U.R. and the Craft Unions; if you want to look up the facts concerning Government control of the railways during the War, the employment of women, or the Triple Alliance—here it all is, in compact form. Historically, as a work of reference, the book—so far as I am capable of judging—leaves nothing to be desired. Most Plebeians, however, will turn with keenest interest to the chapter headed "The Problem of the Railway Shops," in which an attempt is made to discuss "the merits of the case between the N.U.R. and the Craft Unions." And here there is little doubt that the authors are not quite so successful. They begin by recognising that "the fundamental quarrel between the N.U.R. and the Railway Shops Organization Committee is a quarrel between Craft and Industrial Unionism." But they end by advocating "some sort of compromise." The railway shops, they declare, are on the border-line between two industries, and they "incline to the view that they are just in engineering territory." In their discussion of the problem, they ignore altogether the railway Industrial Unionist's strongest argument—that stated by W. W. Craik in his *Modern Working Class Movement* (pp. 92-3. and footnote). Their statement of the case for the railway Industrial Unionist makes it appear that he takes his stand on the argument that all workers *under the same employer* should be organized together. They call this "a strong case from the practical point of view; but it does not touch the theoretical argument of the engineering Industrial Unionist." Perhaps not. But as I have said the theoretical argument of the railway man doesn't get a mention.*

However, this omission does not make the book any the less useful and valuable on the historical side. In the short description of the activities of the N.U.R. District Councils, by the way, the work of the London Council in organizing classes in connection with the C.L.C., and in publishing Craik's book, receives special reference. And another 'by the way' in conclusion;

*An R.C.A. friend of mine is equally dissatisfied with the statement of the case regarding fusion of the N.U.R. and R.C.A. The authors, he says, are "official-minded."

it appears a little strange to put two authors' names on the title-page, and in at least three places in the book (pp. 43, 67, and 93) to make use of the first person singular.

* * * * *

Hats off to Galsworthy! He has dared—in face of all the sentimental slush about national unity, brotherhood of the trenches, &c., &c.—to write a play (*Foundations*) the time of which is “some years after the war,” and the main point of which is that things will be rather worse than better afterwards. One of his characters, a footman who had “done his bit” in the trenches, laughed a particularly scornful laugh at the mere suggestion that the war had ever been likely to do other than make things worse; and the whole play, in fact, was a very scornful laugh at the slush-merchants. London—naturally—rewarded Galsworthy's courage by staying away from his play, which ran for only just over a fortnight.

* * * * *

A. M. Thompson, as some Plebeians may have noted, is in Petrograd as the correspondent of the *Daily Mail*. I have not read his articles—the headlines are enough. Here are one or two:—“Dreamers in Petrograd: Intoxicated With Liberty: Idealists and Fanatics.” “Russian Chaos: Extravagant Labour Demands: Syndicalism Rampant.” “Russian Industry Clogged: Workers Exhausting the State: Mad Methods.” “Russian Work and Pay: 12 Days a Month: Socialist Chaos: Wild Wages Demand: Strangling Industry.” I hope the articles will be reprinted under some such title as “How the British Democracy Helped the Russian Democracy in its Struggle for Freedom.” As the Swiss *Volksrecht* (quoted in the *Cambridge Magazine*, July 14th) observes—speaking generally, and not of Thompson in particular:—

While the Russian proletariat is straining every nerve to complete the ruin of what it has overthrown, and to save the country from the danger of counter-revolution, its appeals to international unity and the common struggle for the saving of all nations from this bloody war are deliberately represented to the French and English workers and soldiers in a false light, in order to incite against it the masses of the people of the West, bound hand and foot by martial law . . . The revolutionary uprising of a people has never yet suffered such treachery from the very quarters whence it was justified in expecting sympathy and help.

Wise men, by the way, get the above-mentioned *Cambridge Magazine* regularly and study the Foreign Press Supplement closely; they also cut out the poems by Siegfried Sassoon which occasionally appear and stick them alongside W. N. Ewer's—to serve when needed as intellectual tonics.

* * * * *

Some two years ago Mr. Austin Harrison announced to the readers of the *English Review* his discovery of the real originator of the European War—one Marx—who, so far from being a “mere literary agitator,” was the “inventor” of the “diabolical materialist theories which had corrupted the mind and heart of Germany. Now, in the July number of his review, he writes under the heading of “A New Language”—

A new thing has emerged from the Russian Revolution—class Internationalism or the Social Democratic State . . . From the diplomacy of Courts, Russia has passed overnight to the phraseology of Marx, skipping the intervening language of the Bourgeoisie and we do not understand . . . The essential need of the moment is for the Allies to try to speak the same language. . . .

Versatile folk these intellectuals! Two years ago they were all full of "Prussian materialism"; now they have "taken up with" Russian revolutionism, class war, and all the rest of the exciting new programme. One would much like to know what Gorky, whose "In the World" is appearing in the *English Review* thinks of his English editor!

J. F. H.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

On the morning of the battle of the Messines Ridge, the Premier staying at Walton Heath, directed that he should be called before 3 a.m., in order that he might hear the roar of the explosion in Flanders.

If you're waking, call me early; call me early, Jeames & Co.,
For I want—at a safe distance—to hear that Knock-Out Blow.
I want to feel the earth shake when they explode that mine,
And yet be safe—a hundred miles behind the firing-line.

* * * * *

All Socialists may be roughly divided into three classes. The first are known as Marxists, taking their name from a remarkable German who was steeped in a morbid atmosphere of Munich beer and metaphysics, out of which emerged a book called *Das Kapital*—a book which is learnedly discussed by thousands who have recoiled, stunned, from the attempt to read it. He laid down the cheery little doctrine that all movements for social improvement and the betterment of man's relations with man should be suppressed, thereby hastening a great and desirable social revolution with fire and sword. Then there is a huge group which goes to the other extreme and pins its faith on the gradual education of mankind. It is not only opposed to violence of any kind, but is even opposed to political action as an organized party. Between these two are the Socialist parties of the various constitutional governments, who, as a whole, believe in legislating the race into Socialism with any machinery of government that may be at hand. (From an article on Aristide Briand, *Munsey's Magazine*).

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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,

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