

Vol. XIII. No. 12

December, 1921

# THE PLEBS

AGITATE EDUCATE ORGANISE

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ANY ONE WHO  
pretends to be  
neutral writes him-  
self down here as  
a fool and a sham.

*William James.*

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# THE PLEBS

“I can promise to be candid but not impartial.”

Vol. XIII

December, 1921

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## LOOKING BACKWARD—*and* FORWARD

**W**ITH this issue we complete our 13th annual volume. We can look back on 1921 with some pride. The circulation of the PLEBS has been higher than ever before; and the movement for which we stand has grown—and is growing—by leaps and bounds. The formation of the National Council of Labour Colleges is the essential first step towards far bigger developments in the near future.

We can, therefore, look forward with confidence. But we need the support of every I.W.-C.E.r, now as much as ever. *We have to reach that 10,000*—in order to pay our way, and leave a margin for additional propaganda work. We are launching our new Textbook Series; and whether or not we can follow up the first book with others depends on the extent to which our supporters push the *Outline of Psychology*. We have still a debt to clear, and you can help to clear it by selling our Stamps. We don't want well-wishers—we want WORKERS.

We shall do our best to make the New Volume, beginning next month, better worth while than ever.

CATCH US A NEW SUBSCRIBER.

## A BOOK to BUY

*The new PLEBS Textbook, "An Outline of Psychology," will be on sale this month. In reply to numerous queries we must once again make it clear that the fact that "Psychology" happens to be No. 1 in our new series does NOT imply that we regard that subject as of greater importance than others on which textbooks are badly needed. The Psychology Textbook was the first to be completed of the three or four actually in preparation. It is accordingly the first to be published. And on its success—i.e., on the support our friends give to our venture—depends the publication of later volumes. Therefore—let it rip!*

*The following extracts from the Preface and first chapter will give our readers a taste of the quality of the book.*

**E**CONOMICS is the study of man's present relationship to the environment created by the material conditions of production. History is the study of the past interactions between man and that environment. Psychology is the study of the ways in which man reacts to that environment. Man's reaction is effected through a definite mechanism. The better we understand that mechanism, as it works in the individual and in the group, the better shall we be able, by our own conscious action, to adapt ourselves to the economic changes which are taking place in society, to concentrate our efforts into those channels which will lead to results beneficial to our class, and to avoid wasting our energy in unproductive directions.

The student in the I.W.-C.E. movement learns to interpret the social, political, legal, cultural, and religious institutions of society in the light of the *Materialist Conception of History*. According to this conception these institutions, and the changes in them which make up human history, are the results of man's reaction to his economic environment. Man's ideals and aspirations, his beliefs, hopes, and fears, are determined by the methods under which, for the time being, he gets his living. Economic influences mould his character and opinions without his knowing it.

*The way in which man reacts to his environment, and endeavours to act upon it, is called his behaviour.* It is the purpose of this book to introduce the student to the science of human behaviour, and to the study of the mechanism upon which behaviour depends. The mechanism of behaviour, the sum of the tendencies to act, and the underlying physical structures which determine these tendencies, are what we know as "human nature." It is probably true, as the enemies of socialism often say, that you cannot change human nature. Human nature has probably changed little during the last thirty thousand years. The mechanism of human nature is man's heritage from animal and sub-human ancestors, and could be changed only by selective breeding. But human behaviour can be changed, and does continually change, as man's economic environment changes. One group of impulses will be dominant in one form of society, another in another. The man who in feudal times found the pleasantest outlet for his "human nature" in robbery, murder, and rape, might, in modern capitalist society, satisfy the same tendencies by big business, imperialism, and keeping fancy women; the nature would be the same, the behaviour different, because the environment was different.

*The study of behaviour is called psychology.* Modern psychology is determinist. It finds that in human behaviour and human thought,



as in the world of matter and energy, nothing happens without a cause, and that every happening, even such an apparently "chance" one as the particular number that springs to your mind when you are asked to think of a number, is the necessary outcome of what has gone before. . . .

We shall find, further, that the human intellect is incapable of impartiality, except in matters of an abstract kind which do not touch personal inclinations and sentiments (e.g., mathematical study). The intellect is, before everything, an organ of partiality. It is an organ developed in the age-long struggle between man and his environment—developed for the express purpose of enabling him, out of the immense number of stimuli he receives, to single out and act upon those which have a relationship to his well-being, and to exclude and ignore those which have no such relationship, or a less obvious and urgent relationship.

Hence all the bourgeois talk about "impartiality" in education, where it is not conscious hypocrisy, is to be regarded as the outcome of that muddle-headedness and unconscious intellectual dishonesty which a decadent culture fosters and promotes. . . .

No author's name appears on the title page of the *Outline*. The Plebs Textbook Committee is responsible for the work. To secure general uniformity of treatment it was first drafted by one hand and was finally revised for the press by another, but quite a number of comrades have taken part in shaping it. In fact, it is an attempt at "communal production." This notion of communal production will be carried a stage further if all who read and use the book will send us suggestions for the improvement of later editions. Thus we shall initiate a series of books more truly representative of proletarian culture than the work of any individual can possibly be. Thus we shall lay the foundations of a true Workers' Encyclopædia.

## OIL and WATER

*Cleveland Workers' University aims "primarily to develop intelligent thinking, class conscious members, trained to understand their part in order that they may interpret the present and assist in the creating of the free society of the future."* [Oil.]

*The Boston Trade Union College has been organised "in the belief that progress for organised wage-earners can be assured only by social and industrial policies shaped by their own right thinking, and that their ambitions for self-betterment must therefore include a concern for the higher training of the mind."* [Water.]

**I**N view of the fact that the independent working-class educational institutions in this country met in conference a few weeks ago to organise themselves nationally by forming the National Council of Labour Colleges, it is of great interest to read the report \* of a similar conference held in the U.S.A. last April for the same purpose.

The workers' educational movement in America is of even more recent growth than our own. In the U.S., before 1918, there were only four workers' educational bodies. Two new schools appeared in 1918, another

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\* *Workers' Education in the United States* (Workers' Educational Bureau, N.Y., 50 cents).

four in 1919, and a further thirteen in 1920, while the first three months of 1921 added three more. These educational experiments go by various names—Trade Union Colleges, Labour Colleges, Educational Departments, Social Science Schools and Workers' Universities; but, as the quotations at the head of this article show, the name is not a reliable guide to the aim.

The conference was divided into four sessions. The first was devoted to papers by the Educational Directors of the various colleges; the second to papers by prominent trade unionists on Labour's educational needs; at the third papers were read by students from the various Colleges, and at the fourth the teachers spoke on aims and methods.

The second section—the papers given by students on working-class education—is especially illuminating. Student Harry Russell said: "I believe there is a lot for all of us to learn . . . who *wish to hold responsible positions in the Labour Movement*" (italics mine). Student Frank Fenton said: "We will not accept propaganda or canned knowledge." Student Jennie Matyos declared: "We want to know what the ordinary school does not tell us about. When I read ancient history and was told that Nebuchadnezzar (or whatever that fellow's name was) built the hanging gardens for the mistress he liked, I thought he was a wonderful and chivalrous man; but now, when I think of the number of slaves that built those gardens, I want to know what was the price those slaves paid for the caprice of one man and one woman."

Here we have (i) a student who talks about aspirations to become a trade union leader, (ii) one who loses his composure at the very thought of propaganda, and a third, of an entirely different stamp, who brushes aside the picturesque history of the leisured class and exposes to view the harsh history of the toiling masses.

The first question that strikes one on reading these three papers is: "From what sort of workers' educational institutions came those students?" A little investigation reveals the interesting fact that Harry Russell was a student of Amherst College's classes organised for workers, "as an expression of the belief that an opportunity for *liberal* education should be open to all who felt the need of it"; and that Frank Fenton was a student of the Boston Trade Union College, whose aim adorns the head of this article; and whose assistant secretary rejoices in the "quality of the teachers" obtained; "Harvard, Boston Tech., Wellesley and Tufts," she says, "have been very much interested and very generous in their support"—a fact to which Student Fenton's paper bears eloquent testimony! These students are apparently typical products of American W.E.A.ism.

Student Jennie Matyos, however, comes from a different type of educational institution, the Educational Department of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, whose educational secretary states that "it has always been our conviction that the Labour Movement stands, consciously or unconsciously, for the reconstruction of society. . . . We feel that if we are ever to have democratic control of industry . . . the workers must have a knowledge of the principles of industrial control, and of the history, position, problems and policies of the Labour Movement." In short, Jennie Matyos is the product of I.W.-C.E. By their fruits ye shall know them!

Clearly the conference represented both the capitalist-cultural and the prolet-cultural sides of the workers' education movement in the United States, but, despite that, it decided to form itself into the Workers'

Educational Bureau of America. The choice of the title is no accident, for Professor H. W. L. Dana, teacher of the Boston T.U. College, frankly confesses: "I remember suggesting to the W.E.A. in England that I should try to see that our movement in America was called by a somewhat similar title, a fraternal title," and so we have the W.E.B. as a first cousin to the W.E.A. PLEBS readers have the satisfaction of knowing, however, that the bulk of the students are trained in I.W.-C.E. Colleges—the other colleges seem to have great difficulty in getting the workers to come in and lap up the educational bread and milk provided.

The plans of the W.E.B. are similar to those of our N.C.L.C. It is to be a statistical, advisory, publicity, research and publishing body, but its *aim* is different. It is simply to assist the movement for "workers' education": it does not stipulate any *kind* of education. This did not pass unnoticed at the conference. J. B. Salutsky, the National Director of the Educational Department of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, said in his address: "We call our enterprise the Workers' Educational Conference. We emphasise the fact that it is an agency to help in the education of the workers. Yet we refuse to face the fundamental fact in the workers' organisation and movement—the class struggle. We so act because we are anxious to fit our enterprise to the Labour Movement of America and to adapt it to both the radical and conservative elements therein. We wish to please the one side and not to antagonise the other. It is a very pious wish. But will it work? I rather think it will not, and I suggest, therefore, we face the reality." The conference, however, did not face the reality; it decided to attempt to mix the oil of I.W.-C.E. with the water of W.E.A.ism.

There are so many other points of interest in the report that I hope to make some further quotations and comments in next month's PLEBS.

J. P. M. MILLAR

## THEORY *and* PRACTICE

**I**N 1912 Rosa Luxemburg published *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals*.\* She thought that she had but stated the obvious and that her work was at most a popularisation of *Capital*, Vol. III., on the reproduction of capital. But to her great surprise the Marxian "experts" of the Social Democratic Party Press overwhelmed her book with criticism and charged her with having totally misunderstood the Marxian theories and with having solved a non-existent problem.

The imprisonment which preceded her murder gave her the chance to reply in detail to her attackers. This reply is now (1921) bound in with the original work. Plebs who can read German and who have friends in that country need only be told that the price of this well-bound volume (of 550 odd pages) is only 60 marks. To those who are waiting until an English, or, better still, an Esperanto, translation appears, the following summary may be useful.

The first two divisions of Part I. treat the problem of the reproduction of capital and the various theories made concerning it from Quesnay, Smith and Sismondi to Tugan Baranowsky. The third relates this actual reproduction to modern Imperialism. Reproduction of capital is the chief purpose

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\* Students might well read this article in conjunction with the article by Phillips Price in the Oct. *Communist Review*, where he shows how two rival theories of action gathered round Rosa Luxemburg's book and Rudolf Helfferding's *Das Finanzkapital* (1909).



and the next step to the sale of the commodity. Boudin's *Socialism and War* really uses the same key to explain the present phase of capitalism, but the way of approach is not alike. Boudin does not connect his thesis with Vol. II. as Rosa Luxemburg did. [In the new PLEBS edition of *Socialism and War* Boudin might well remedy this and omit the first of his present chapters as not of permanent value.]

*Capitalism needs non-capitalist societies or social classes to solve its problem of reproduction.* That, in a nutshell, is the theory Rosa Luxemburg formulated in 1912. In her view, Marx, in his formulæ of Vol. II., when taking the whole world as being capitalist, stated the final theoretical end of reproduction and not the intervening means; his assumption, justifiable and appropriate for the theoretical and completed analysis of Vol. I., is out of place in Vol. II. The latter she suggests is only a "torso" which Marx was unable to complete, but she does not reject the good in the two later volumes, as De Leon is said to have done.



The old crisis, which was caused by something deeper than a maladjustment between those industries producing means of production and those producing means of subsistence, takes a new form; and reproduction of capital needs militarism forcibly to convert backward countries to civilisation.

There is a wealth of historical information in this third division. For example, in order to show that capitalism must tend to destroy all "natural" societies she gives minute details of the doings of the English in India and the French in Algiers. And what a tale of massacre and famine it is! What unparalleled hypocrisy for any supporter of capitalism now to point reproachfully to Russia! When she shows how commodities are forcibly introduced into conservative societies by the bearers of Imperialist "kultur" (and let our proud fellow-Britons revel in the glories of this page!) she describes the Opium Wars against China. Again, to illustrate her theory that societies of peasants and small producers are removed she tells how the small farmers were driven back in America, and why the Boers in South Africa were also forced to retreat as the shining stars of gold and diamonds lured on the dauntless pioneers of De Beers and Co. Her chapter on International Loans is vividly illustrated by the story of the relations of European bankers with Egypt and the Middle East, and by the financial implications of the Berlin-Bagdad railway. Another chapter (written, remember, long before Boudin wrote) shows the basis and decline of *die manchesterliche Ideologie*. Then she treats Militarism itself as a province for the accumulation of capital and works out, in Marxian formulæ, how the costs of unavoidable war preparations affect the reproduction of capital.

Relentlessly driven on by its own inner laws capitalism must strive to become a world-form of production. But it cannot be that, because, just as inevitably, it revolutionises the non-capitalist countries, provokes their opposition, and wipes out the necessary condition of its own existence.

The new Part II. contains Luxemburg's spirited reply to Otto Bauer, Eckstein, Helfferding, Pannekoek and others. With a trenchant pen she rounds on these disturbed "experts" and shows how they have violated the whole spirit of the Marxian theories by a slavish and even imperfect adherence to the letter. They reduced the Marxian outlook to the acceptance of a rigid scheme of dogmas. Lost in their own abstractions, they became the easy prey of Imperialism in 1914.

They had argued that capitalist society had no problem of reproduction which demanded Militarism and the consequent cutting away of the ground beneath its own feet by destroying societies different to it. Were not the formulæ of Vol. II.—*die mathematische Schemata*—proof enough of that? Marx had done it on paper and one need only obediently accept—not think, or endeavour to explain ugly facts. Socialism was coming not through the insoluble problem of capitalism, not through "increasing misery" or world catastrophe, but by the growing organisation of the workers allying itself with certain layers of the middle class.

Luxemburg takes their arguments one by one and shows that even by the chapter and verse which they professed to reverence these critics are astray. Mental rot and rigidity in theory produced forgetfulness in practice, compromise. With vested interests in the powerful organisation these leaders transformed the means into the end and were misled by their own prosperity. (Incidentally, in these days one is moved to ask—did the critics of the "increasing misery" speak too soon? Ask Central Europe and the present unemployed of every land.)

Otto Bauer was the chief critic, and his writings therefore became the chief target of the Luxemburg artillery. (Kautsky seems to have handed the *Neue Zeit* attack to Bauer.) In order to explain Imperialism Bauer falsified his Marxism and produced a population theory in which *an increase of workers caused the necessary expanded reproduction of capitalism*. In the Bauer society "under-accumulation" and "over-accumulation" was altered into the relation between variable capital and the size of the working class. Rosa Luxemburg does not spare him, and shows that those who would treat her as a heretic have actually themselves thrown Marxism to the winds; and she smashes Bauer's argument with the actual population statistics which show that the increase of population is strongest where accumulation is weakest; she invites him to recant *openly* the other Marxian theories.

The bankruptcy of the German Labour Movement and its easy capitulation to Imperialism was caused by the decay in its theoretic leadership. It was not a case of good theory and bad practice, for that can be only exceptional and temporary. Lack of correct theory must translate itself sooner or later into faulty practice; that is why an insight into social movements makes for greater efficiency in working-class action.

Unfortunately, an eddy of hate in the great maelstrom she so well foresaw sucked down Rosa Luxemburg. But the sense of her closing words are worthy of remembrance. She reminds querulous souls, who dislike seeing Marxians disputing and opposing "authorities," that Marxism is not a dozen "experts" in whom all other Moslems must blindly trust. It is *a revolutionary world outlook*, which must continually strive for new knowledge. Marxism will only thrive in an atmosphere of self-criticism.

# LABOUR *and the* WORLD CRISIS

## VI.—*Exchanges and International Credit*

**I**N the mind of the ordinary workman who pays little heed to things beyond his own immediate circle the credit system is confined to the "tick" he obtains at the grocer's or with the travelling draper. He would probably be surprised to learn that this kind of credit is insignificant compared with that which goes on amongst various groups of capitalists; and still more so when he learnt that the whole system of national and international trade is carried on upon this basis.

The merchants of different nations discovered long ago that it was both unwise and unnecessary to ship gold simultaneously from two trading countries in settlement of their respective trade debts; and a way out presented itself by the creditors in one country accepting payment not from their actual debtors abroad, but from their own countrymen who owed money to creditors in the other country.

Let us assume two merchants in America to be carrying on trading relations with two English merchants:

ENGLAND.	
(4) Buyer.	(3) Seller.
(1) Seller.	(2) Buyer.
AMERICA.	

Note that we have a seller and a buyer in either country.

Now, for the sake of a clear understanding of the process, let us have an imaginary conversation between American No. 1 and American No. 2:—

No. 1.—"I have a payment due to me from London."

No. 2.—"Good for you. I have to make a payment there."

No. 1.—"How much do you owe over there?"

No. 2.—"One hundred pounds."

No. 1.—"Just exactly the sum that's due to me."

No. 2 (*after deep thought*).—"Look here, I've to send £100 over to England, and it costs something to send it; you've to receive £100 from England and that, again, will mean expense. Now if we could only arrange that I paid you, and that my creditor in England be paid by the man who owes you £100, the expense of sending money would be avoided on both sides. What do you say?"

No. 1.—"It seems all right—with safeguards, of course!"

And it *is* all right, in practice. No. 3 (in England) is only too pleased to fall in with this arrangement because, like No. 1, he has an immediate need of money, and by this means he has it without having to wait for the stipulated period of credit to run out. So the "Bill of Exchange," the order written by No. 1 upon No. 2, has become the most important instrument for the settlement of accounts between capitalists, nationally and internationally, and around it has developed a specialisation and subdivision of the financial world.

The merchant who buys a bill probably knows nothing either of the drawer or the man drawn upon; consequently there is an element of risk about the proceeding. To minimise this a special group of men has come into existence whose function it is to know something of these traders and their ability to pay—or otherwise. These "bill-brokers"—the men with this special knowledge—seek out bills in the market; and their approval



or disapproval goes a long way, not only with the merchants, but also with the bankers.

What has a bank to do with them? A great deal. For a consideration, called discount, the banks will advance money immediately, so avoiding waiting for bills to fall due or mature. For example, if the rate of discount is 5 per cent. they will give £95 down for a £100 bill and secure a profit of £5 themselves when collecting it later.

As outlined here all this appears simple enough. But, in reality, the process is complicated by a number of other factors. Let us return to merchants Nos. 1 and 2 (still bearing in mind that they are capitalists). If No. 2 had actually to ship £100 over to England, the cost of railway and shipping transport, insurance, etc., would be, let us say, 5 per cent.; so that to send £100 would mean an expenditure of £105. Now merchant No. 1 knows this just as well as No. 2, and, having this knowledge, will insist upon taking a share of the £5 No. 2 saves by sending a bill across instead of gold. For his bill he will receive £100—*plus* part, or the whole, of £5 cost of transport, etc.

What determines the proportion he receives? Supply of and demand for bills. If the merchants with bills to sell are greater in number than those wanting to buy, they may get nothing beyond the face value of their bills; if compelled to sell at this juncture they may even get less. If the sellers of bills are fewer in number than the buyers the price of bills will rise.

Again, while suspicion that all is not well with the people whose names are attached to a bill may not be sufficiently well grounded to justify its total rejection, it may yet make the buyer very cautious and enable him to exact terms that otherwise could not be obtained.

Yet again, payment deferred for a stipulated period amounts to the same thing as giving up the use of a sum of money for the time stated. Interest will, therefore, be added to the face value of the bill, so that it is made payable with interest. These and other factors will affect the price of a bill and determine how near or far it may be removed from the amount mentioned on the bill itself.

Now we come to another important question. How is the price of a bill in one country quoted in the currency of another? A bill in England may be for £100; but what will it be in American, French, or German currency? Gold is the measure of value and standard of price in almost every country in the world; but, like soldiers who everywhere perform the same function, it is differently dressed. Custom and certain other factors give rise to distinctions in the respective currencies of various countries. An ounce of gold in England is coined into three sovereigns and one half sovereign, a fraction being left equal to 7s. 10½d. The English sovereign is equal in weight of gold to 4.86 American dollars, 25.22 French francs, and 20.43 German marks (pre-war).

This is what is called the "par of exchange," gold for gold. But it has been observed that an individual with a debt of 100 dollars to pay in America may be compelled to purchase these dollars, or bills for dollars, at a higher rate than this, that is, to give a little more than a sovereign for 4.86 dollars. The more English capitalists owe to American creditors the higher the rate; if the reverse, the rate falls.

The obligations of a country, again, do not all come under the heading of trade. There are, in addition, loans made or in course of repayment; profits and interest upon capital employed in one country but owned by

persons in another ; transport services rendered by shipping companies of one nation to merchants of another ; banking services, etc., etc. We cannot describe all these fully within the limits of this article. We can take one or two only as being necessary for the main argument.

A given quantity of gold, as already explained, is coined into fractional parts, each having a definite weight of gold. In its function of measuring value, and as the standard of price, gold expresses the value of commodities. A fountain pen of a given quality is worth, say, one sovereign, or 4.86 dollars, etc. But if, as described in a previous article, paper money is circulated instead of gold, and the quantity of paper issued is in excess of the amount of gold required to circulate by itself, prices rise. The methods adopted to finance the War led to this result. The inflation of the currency followed the process of creating bank credits with the result that the purchasing power of the English sovereign fell. Too many Bradburys were doing the work usually done by the sovereign.

To realise the effect of this, let us imagine ourselves Americans. The English sovereign, at par, equals the fountain pen, 4.86 dollars, 25.22 francs, etc., but now that the fountain pen has increased in price, say, to £2, these proportions have changed. If an American firm sent over to this country a quantity of fountain pens and sold them at the new price (£2), and the sum so realised were put into an English bank, can we imagine this bank undertaking to transfer this credit to America again at the rate of 4.86 dollars to the pound? Not likely. Our banks can no longer obtain gold at the old rate of £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce. To credit the American with 4.86 dollars for every English pound without regard to the purchasing power of the pound would be ruinous.

The capitalist who produces gold does so with the same object as another produces coal—with a view to profit. What profit could he realise by giving his gold in return for the abnormally highly-priced English goods? For an ounce of gold more fountain pens are obtainable in America than in England (assuming American prices to have remained at 4.86 dollars while English prices have risen to £2.) Obviously, in these circumstances gold producers will buy in the cheapest market ; and place their gold where the greatest quantity of goods can be obtained in return. England cannot get gold while this situation lasts. She must, therefore, offer more money for an ounce of gold. Instead of £3 17s. 10½d. it must rise to a level approximating to the degree of inflation. At one period (February 5th, 1920) it rose to £6 7s. 4d. What does this mean? It means that England decided to divide an ounce of gold into a greater number of coins, reducing the amount of gold in each coin. Thus one sovereign was made equal, say, to 3.86 and not 4.86 dollars. In other words, a *new par of exchange* is made in terms of the altered value of money.

Still another influence is at work which at the present time plays havoc with the exchanges. Were the inflation already described the only cause, it might easily be allowed for and no great harm would be done ; the only difference being that prices would be apparently higher in this country than, say, in America. (We say "apparently," because in terms of gold it would not be the case.)

During the war period (and since) various nations went as far in the direction of manufacturing credits as they possibly could without endangering themselves and other nations as well. The general opinion amongst capitalist financiers is that this process has gone a great deal too far. Such

nations, however, could not help themselves. New demands required new waves of credit and new millions of paper money.

When at last peace came no country but America had sufficient gold with which to meet its obligations. The supplies in hand were insignificant compared to their accumulated indebtedness, quite apart from the need of a home supply. For these and other reasons none of them dare allow a free passage for gold to leave the country. The impoverished nations can buy, therefore, only to the extent that their industries revive and turn out exchangeable goods. And this is a terribly slow process.

Some one may say: "They can secure credit as usual." But who will grant credit to a merchant hourly expected to become bankrupt — much less a nation ?

The exchanges tell the tale. At the present time, in relation to the English sovereign (itself depreciated by some of these factors) world currencies are quoted as follows :—

	Par.	Present.
America .. .. .	4.86 dollars	3.94
France .. .. .	25.22 francs	53.50
Germany .. .. .	20.43 marks	955
Austria .. .. .	24.02 kronen	11,000
Poland .. .. .	20.43 kronen	12,000

This is the present state of affairs. The debts of war bid fair to kill by slow starvation more millions than did the shells and bullets of the various armies. And the exchanges, deranged in this manner, are making the capitalist scream with terror at the result of his own frightfulness. How gladly, if it were possible, would he hug his treasure to his breast and fly away to a country where exchanges do not fluctuate and the standard is pure gold !

W. H. MAINWARING

(Concluded.\*)

## PRODUCTION *and* POLITICS

(Concluded)

### X.—*The Framework of the Modern State*

**I**N our October article we dealt with the rising fortunes of the early bourgeoisie, who, enriched by the profits of the wool trade, were, during the 14th and 15th centuries, steadily buying up the estates and succeeding to the social status of the economically decadent manor lords of the mediæval period.

Last month we attempted an examination of what seems not only the greatest, but the most characteristic institution of the Middle Ages, viz., the Holy Catholic Church. In the 15th century, this "ghost of the empire sitting enthroned in the midst of the ruins thereof," still dominated Western and Central Europe. But even as the economy whereon it rested and the feudal polity with which it shared this foundation were in process of disintegration, so was it with the authority and unity of the Church Universal. The transition which it marked, the passing forward from Kindred to landed property as the social tie, was now accomplished. Manorial society was, in its turn, becoming a fiction, and the duties and responsibilities which bound it together were giving way to the cash nexus of an economy wherein

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\* The five numbers of the PLEBS containing previous instalments of this series of articles can be obtained, price 2s. 6d. post free, from PLEBS Office. The same issues contain M. H. Dobb's articles on "Colonial and Imperialist Expansion."



the products of lordship and tenancy were being exchanged within and without the customary boundaries not as use-values, but as exchange-values, as commodities.

With these new relationships between men and things and men and men neither feudalism nor the Church conformed. The intermittent faction-fight between the King, as feudal superior always seeking to expand his prerogatives, and the Baronage, as tenants inferior always trying to control him, a struggle which became definite in the reign of John, and ended only with the victory of Henry Tudor at Bosworth Field, effectively accomplished the ruin and extinction of the feudal magnates, who had reared their pomp and power on the plough-lands of the English manors. The King, aided by the authority of the Church, had utilised the proceeds of his ancient customs on trade and new customs, like tonnage and poundage, to build up a royal revenue, to hire mercenaries, to build and man ships, and to provide himself, from Continental workshops, with a train of artillery. The new economy, with wool and undressed cloth as commodities to export in return for coin and the services which equated with coin, put new power and new opportunities into the hands of him who licensed rival traders, conceded privileges and under prerogatives, strained or else enlarged by patriotic parliaments in time of war, took toll of everything passing in and out of his realm. Economy conflicted with economy and landed class with merchant class to the evident advantage of the Crown.

The so-called "national spirit" developing in hostility to the Universal Church had a most marked self and class interest inspiring it. The fact that in England one-third and in Scotland one-half of the good land was in the hands of the Church explains why, at a time of good prices for wool and high rents for farms, the monastic properties were confiscated and leased or auctioned off to a hungry bourgeoisie. Nothing could have been better calculated to stabilise the centralised authority of the Crown (the special aim of Tudor statesmanship) than an act which gave hundreds of landed gentry a permanent interest in the maintenance of the great revolutionary settlement known as the Reformation. For a revolution it was that Henry VIII. attempted and achieved when he asserted his supremacy over the Church in England and outlawed that of the Pope.

The kings of England had, continually, striven to regulate the appointment of bishops to the dioceses of the ecclesiastical provinces of Canterbury and York. They compelled the bishops and abbots to assume the responsibilities of baronial tenure of the Church lands. But with this they were not satisfied. The Church had its own courts and its own system of law; and these trench upon the King's Courts. When, in the 14th and 15th centuries, Parliament began to erect a system of statute law embodying the ideas of the landed class, and schools of lay lawyers grew up to interpret and administer this statute law, the interests opposed to the Church Courts became irresistible. King, landlords and lawyers moved to the attack. Finally, in 1529, a quarrel over a divorce, a dispute coming within the purview of the Church, being ordered to Rome for final decision, brought the growing rivalry of King and Church to a crisis, resulting in a break with the Papacy and the assertion by the King of supremacy in Church as already in State.

The Church in England henceforward—with a short hiatus under Mary and, again, under Cromwell—became an arm or function of the Crown. The King in Council, from Henry VIII. to George V., has appointed archbishops and bishops, whilst the lord of the manor has appointed the

parish priest. The Reformation made complete the dictatorship of the new landed magnates of commodity production of wool and corn. How this worked out in the sphere of local government we will now examine.

With the decline of the manor as a social institution there passed out of active existence both the *court baron* of the lord, wherein were decided questions affecting freehold tenure, and the *court leet* (or customary court) for those holding in villeinage. The holders in baronial tenure were reconciled to the loss of their "liberties," i.e., class privileges, when common law embodied their memorial customs and statute law became a thing of their own making. Besides, with the disappearance of villeinage they became glad to have their contracts with their tenants guaranteed by the stronger authority of a more authoritative court. Old-world jurisdictions were dying. In the reign of Edward III., it was enacted that there should be chosen in every shire "for the keeping of the peace one lord and, with him, three or four of the most worthy of the county." These became known as Justices of the Peace and, from 1388, were required to meet four times a year in Quarter Sessions. Professor Maitland says of them:—"Parliament constantly adds to the power of these justices; they are in truth men drawn from the same class of country gentlemen which supplies Parliament with knights of the shire." It was these officers—appointed to this day by the Crown (not elected)—whom Parliament instructed "to compel men to work for the legal wage." When, finally, the Poor Law was put in force, these same class-conscious gentry were put at the head of its administration, and, under them, the vestry of the parish, that assembly of men of landed property. To make the dictatorship of the landed class still more secure, and the authority of the Crown more certain, the King appointed a permanent Lord-Lieutenant to command the country force or militia.

This cunning edifice of class-rule, of which the Reformation was the keystone, continued to function down to the Reform Parliament of 1832, when a new and equally aggressive class, raised to economic power on machine production, on iron and on coal, and, to some extent, on transport, came into control, first of that third part of Parliament, the House of Commons, and commenced from this first vantage to breach the defences of the landed aristocracy. As the manufacturers and merchants of the Industrial Revolution swept on to Court, to the House of Lords, into the Executive, bought land, became magistrates and, at the end of two generations, embossed the stamp of "Made in Manchester" over the English country-side, they modelled borough, urban, district, parish and county councils in the image of their own ideas. These developments are better known to the student, more accessible and more easily understood. Hence, we can leave him in the capable hands of those incomparable experts thereon, the Webbs, who will tell him all he can learn, and more than he will ever remember, about English Local Government.

We will, therefore, return to the central authority and have a look at the beginnings of the modern Executive. It is in the reign of Edward II. that we first distinguish the institution of the Privy Council. At that stage the great council of the realm becomes definitely a council of landed magnates. They develop into the House of Lords. The King strives, with varying but increasing success, to gather round him a privately selected body of advisers, depending on his favour, and by no means necessarily of noble birth.

The Privy Council proper emerged in the reign of Henry VIII., and,

beginning with Thomas Cromwell and William Cecil, we find its members, appointed by the Crown, sitting also in the House of Commons as elected representatives of burgesses and landed gentry. This is the first step along the road towards that mockery known to the gullible as "parliamentary government." The struggles of four centuries have been waged over the issue of what repository of economic power—King, landlords, banking oligarchy, mercantile or industrial aristocracy—shall decide who shall be summoned to the meetings of "His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council" or that "cave" thereof known in actual fact (but not in the all-important constitutional fiction) as the "Cabinet."

In Tudor times, there were two secretaries to the King in the Privy Council, who had become known as "Secretaries of State." These gentlemen, like the Lord High Chancellor, kept seals without which no document referring to the business of their respective departments was considered legal. They were responsible for the sealing of "Orders in Council" and, in this way, became responsible for the King's actions. In the course of time, "His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State" have come to have great departments of secretaries and clerks under them. To their number—five—are added the heads of other Government offices.

For the further consideration of the actual machinery of the State the student can refer to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or, if possible, to Maitland's *Constitutional History of England*, and for the unfolding panorama of the constitutional struggles of the 16th and 17th centuries to J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People*, or Trevelyan's *England under the Stuarts*. Broad based on the materialist conception of history he cannot go far wrong; and he will have the never-ceasing joy of its reasoned and careful application to the episodes of his own country's history.

J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

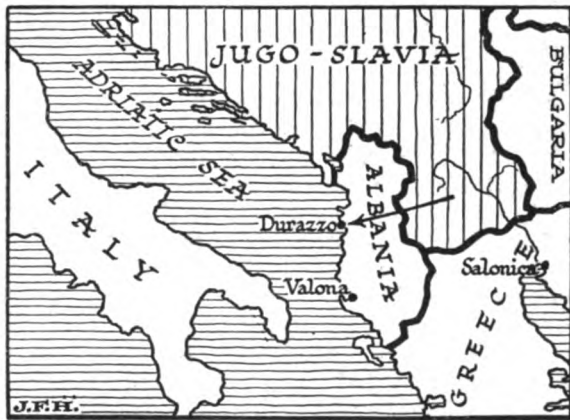
## GEOGRAPHICAL FOOTNOTES to CURRENT HISTORY

### *The Case of Albania*

PRIOR to the Great War the workings of Economic Imperialism could best be traced in areas outside of Europe—in Asia and Africa especially. But one notable effect of the War has been the reduction of large areas of Europe itself to the status of colonies, or "spheres of interest"—with *de jure* independence, but *de facto* dependence on one or other of the big surviving Powers. The tendency towards the formation of "economic world groups," so attractively described by Naumann in his *Mittel-Europa*, was tremendously accelerated, and has now completely obliterated the one-time distinction between European and non-European peoples and territories.

An interesting example of the emptiness of political "independence" is afforded by the case of Albania. Down to a month or two ago no one knew exactly what had happened to that unhappy land. True, its name still appeared on the map. But what the country's status was, and where precisely its frontiers ran, were dark mysteries—almost as dark as the ultimate fate of Memel, and the territory adjacent thereto, handed over by the Treaty of Versailles to the "Allied and Associated Powers," and since used as a French and British base in the Baltic.

Then, in September last, somebody discovered that Albania had been "admitted to the League of Nations" last year. A British representative at the Geneva Conference announced "definitely and without reserve" that the British Government recognised the sovereignty and independence of Albania. And the League issued a vague statement about a "forthcoming" decision on the Albanian frontiers. Simultaneously, it was announced that the Italian Government was worrying about "additional guarantees" for the integrity and independence of Albania; and the British Government intimated its "cordial desire to achieve this end and thereby promote the interests of—Italy!" At that date Jugo-Slav forces were occupying Northern Albania, doubtless with the altruistic aim of saving the League of Nations any trouble in the matter of deciding on frontiers; and more recently these forces have advanced westward and southward. Some 12,000 Greek troops are at the same time concentrated on Albania's southern frontier—only waiting, of course, for the League's decision before piling their arms and returning home. And the League has convened a special meeting to see what can be done about it all.



A happy situation for a free and independent State. What is at the back of all this tangle of rival "interests" and hostile armies? The map explains a great deal. Albania has some 200 miles of seaboard on the Adriatic. Jugo-Slavia wants more coast line. She wants Durazzo, as a port for her southern territory—whose "natural" outlet, Salonica, is now Greek. Italy needs, directly or indirectly, to control the port of Valona, commanding the entrance to the Adriatic; for Italy's eastern coast line is useless unless she dominates that sea. And Italian capitalists are ready, if duty calls, to do their bit for civilisation by "opening-up" Albania. For the Albanians, a primitive people still in the stage of patriarchal clan organisation, inhabit a land believed to be rich in "entirely unexplored and unexploited mineral wealth"—a land, therefore, which, though European, is a fit area for "colonial expansion." And so they are having a taste of the blessings of civilisation.

J. F. HORRABIN

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## COLONIAL *and* IMPERIALIST EXPANSION: *A Marxist Analysis*

### *IV.—The Decline of Mercantilism and the Rise of Imperialism*

**A**FTER 1800 the supremacy of Mercantilism as a theory governing our commercial policy waned; and towards 1830 interest in colonies and overseas trade declined steadily. This was due to the rise between 1760 and 1830 of industrial capital and the manufacturing bourgeoisie. These latter chafed against the restrictions and regulations which Mercantilism imposed on industry and exchange. Industrial capital, chiefly invested in textiles, had little interest in carefully protected trade with colonies. Its watchword was Free Trade; and this is what Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham both preached.

Now, during the class struggle of industrial capital for political supremacy we notice an interesting fact—the previous rigid distinctions between political parties become blurred. As sections of the two previous forms of property, land and merchant capital, came in touch with the new ideas and acquired interests in the new property form, industrial capital, so the policies of the old parties, Whig and Tory, became divided and vacillating. Between 1820 and 1850 the old party lines became merely nominal, and the old Whigs came to have more in common with the old Tories than each had with the younger members of their own party. For instance, in the case of the administration of the Whig Lord John Russell in the late '40's, following on the Ministry of the Tory Peel:—"Throughout the Russell Administration all the lines of party division were blurred. Peel had broken up the Tories and helped to break up the Whigs. Russell had not converted the whole Whig Party to Free Trade. Many influential men would have preferred a protectionist to a Peelite alliance. Melbourne (Whig) was protectionist to the last. The manufacturing Free-Traders preferred Peel to the Whigs, and Cobden once begged him to lead a new middle-class party. . . . After Bentinck's death in 1848 the protectionist Tories came under the control of Disraeli."<sup>1</sup>

The Russell Ministry was defeated in 1851. There followed a short Ministry of the Tory and protectionist Lord Derby "by the courtesy of the Peelites." It did nothing. The General Election gave no decisive result on the old party lines, but it did give a decisive result for Free Trade. There followed consequently a new alignment of political forces, corresponding to the new alignment of economic forces. Gladstone, who had once been a Tory, led the new Liberal Party, representing predominantly industrial capital. Disraeli led the new Conservative Party, representing predominantly the reactionary interests of land and financial capital. A period of Liberal predominance was to follow; and it was Gladstone's legislation that removed the last traces of Mercantilism. As Walpole in the 18th century was the great Prime Minister of Triumphant Merchant Capital, so Gladstone may be said to have been the Prime Minister of Triumphant Industrial Capital in its early stage.

The policy of this period was a decline in overseas expansion and in interest in colonies. Many of the new bourgeoisie regarded colonies as useless encumbrances, or at best not worth the spending of much money.

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XI., Chapter I., p. 20.



Between 1848 and 1862 numerous commissions sat to inquire into colonial expenditure and defence, and as a result between 1862 and 1870 a large number of colonial garrisons were withdrawn.

But after 1870 there was a change. Important inventions in iron and steel, such as the Bessemer process and the Thomas-Gilchrist invention, brought iron and steel to the front in place of textiles as the dominant commodity of Capitalism. In the '70's took place that second Industrial Revolution, as Dr. Clapham calls it, which was to usher in a new stage of large-scale Combinative Capitalism, centring round iron and steel. There existed in iron and steel economies in large-scale industry which did not exist in the case of textiles. In England after 1880 concentration of capital in iron and steel went on apace<sup>1</sup>; and with the need of acquiring large masses of capital for this industry on a large scale the Joint Stock Company became the characteristic of Capitalism. Modern Germany dates from the '70's, and has been built up around her iron and steel, the Thomas-Gilchrist invention enabling her to use the phosphoric ores of Lorraine, which in 1871 she had seized from France; and politically modern Germany represents a compromise between Industrial Capital and Landed Property. The great Powers of the modern world, Britain, Germany, U.S.A., France, have been those possessed of iron and coal. So the rise to predominance of iron and steel capital has ushered in since the '70's an entirely new stage of Capitalism; and—a fact pregnant with meaning for the proletariat—the international differentiation and integration which capitalist specialised mass production produces “are making the developments of modern nations tend to synchronise.”<sup>2</sup>

Imperialist expansion as an economic movement and Empire as a political and moral ideal are the twin children of this new stage of Capitalism. Marx said that the periodic Crisis would bring about the decline of Capitalism. So it has, but in a slightly more roundabout way than he, writing during the early stage of Capitalism, could foresee. Now, Sismondi's theory of Crises as due to the under-consumption of the working class, with its consequent excess of goods produced over consumption, is a fallacy, in that investments, when turned into Constant and Variable Capital, themselves create a demand for raw material, machines, and labour-power. But although the bourgeois economists are right in declaring it impossible for there to be *absolute* over-production as a permanent and chronic condition in all industries in excess of purchasing power, since, as Mainwaring has been showing, purchasing power is created in the process of production itself; yet it is possible to have *relative* over-production for a time. This may be of one branch of goods relatively to others, or of goods relative to purchasing power at the moment, which may have suffered a temporary and artificial diminution owing to credit contraction by the banks.

Now, there exists under Competitive Capitalism a continual tendency for Constructional Goods (machines, etc.) to be produced in excess relatively to Consumption Goods (food, clothing, etc.). For the demand for the former is dependent on their requirement in the production of the latter; and the demand for new machines is recurrent, not continuous. So in Industrial Crises it is in the Constructional Industries that the widest fluctuations occur.<sup>3</sup> Marx hinted at this when he said that the length

<sup>1</sup> Levy, *Monopoly and Competition*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, p. 753, quoting Knies.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed working out of this see Pigou, *Economics of Welfare*, the early pages of his first chapter on Industrial Fluctuations.

of the industrial cycle was conditioned by the average length of life of a machine or locomotive.

When the interests of iron and steel became predominant, their natural object was to find some means of alleviating this recurrent depression, always severest in iron and steel, by creating a new demand for Constructional Goods. This could only be done directly by *extending capitalist production* itself. This would create a direct demand for iron and steel as machinery, new railways, etc. Their interests united with those of financial capital, desiring, on account of the decline in the rate of profit, more profitable spheres for investment of the capitalist surplus. The material signs of this economic tendency to extend capitalist production to new countries was a growing export of capital, which when invested abroad created a demand for the export of iron and steel, and also of consumption goods.

So much has already been written on Imperialism by Marxists that it is unnecessary to do more than summarise briefly its chief events. Whereas in 1865 "a select committee of the House of Commons recommended the gradual abandonment of every W. African colony except Sierra Leone"<sup>1</sup>; whereas Gladstone had diminished British control in S. Africa by the Sand River Convention of 1852, and "Ministers in London viewed its (S. Africa's) sole use to Britain . . . as the maintenance of the naval station in Simon's Bay"<sup>1</sup>; and whereas Gladstone even as late as 1884 had refused to accede to Australia's request to annex New Guinea, in spite of German expansion in the Pacific; on the other hand "about 1885 we recognise that a new view of regarding colonial relations has become popular"<sup>2</sup> and "in the ten years 1880-1890 five million square miles of African territory were seized by and subjected to European States, . . . (while) in Asia during the same ten years Britain annexed Burma and subjected to her control the Malay peninsula and Baluchistan; while France took the first steps towards subjecting or breaking up China by seizing Annam and Tonking; (and) at the same time there took place a scramble for the islands of the Pacific between the Great Powers."<sup>3</sup> "After a series of international agreements completed in 1900 the Pacific had been mapped out as definitely as any continent."<sup>4</sup> In 1884 the Berlin Conference met to arrange the Partition of Africa. Jose, an ultra-imperialist historian, announces with delightful naïveté that Britain was "unaccustomed to this direct State action and a little dazed by the general scramble"; but "her missionaries and her traders saved her."<sup>5</sup> "By 1914 the whole continent with the exception of Abyssinia and Liberia had been subjected to the control and government of European States."<sup>6</sup> So it is we see that superficial similarity to the Mercantilism of the 18th century, which Thorold Rogers noticed in 1888—the State using its powers aggressively to further the interests of capital in all corners of the globe.

As we have already noticed, during periods of economic transition leading to a new balance of economic forces political party-lines become blurred. In England at this period we see the Liberal Party split on the Imperialist question of Ireland and the Liberal-Unionists join the Conservatives. Joseph Chamberlain, a former Liberal, leads the new union

<sup>1</sup> Jose, *Growth of the Empire*, pp. 281 and 318.

<sup>2</sup> Egerton, *Short History of Brit. Colonial Policy*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> Leonard Woolf, *Economic Imperialism*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>4</sup> Jose, *loc. cit.*, p. 381.

<sup>5</sup> Jose, *loc. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>6</sup> Leonard Woolf, *loc. cit.*, p. 37.

of iron and steel capital with finance capital in the rejuvenated Conservative or Unionist Party, clamouring for Protection and Imperial Preference. By 1906 we find the Liberal Party completely converted to Imperialism with Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office. To-day we see Liberals happily wed with Conservatives in a class Coalition under the Imperialist wing of Lloyd George. Further, we have a perceptible change in the principles of the growing Socialist parties. The export of capital, while involving a rise in profits to the capitalists, at the same time involves an increased demand for labour at home.<sup>1</sup> Consequently the working class saw their immediate interests in taking advantage of this to secure reforms in their conditions. As an inevitable result we find British Labour, American Labour, the Social-Democrats of Germany and the French Socialists becoming unconsciously infected with the Imperialist ideology, and adopting a Reformist policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, often scarcely conscious themselves of the new path they were taking. This, of course, produced its antithesis or reaction against it in the Syndicalist movement in the first decade of the present century.

In Africa and Asia Imperialism has produced those conditions which have everywhere characterised the early growth of Capitalism. First is the need of Capital to obtain political power. Hence, the extension of imperial authority by the appointment of advisers to native chiefs and princes, by treaties, as with China and Japan, by "peaceful penetration," as of S. America and Persia, by annexations and protectorates. "Wherever you find that word 'Protectorate' on African soil you may be sure that diplomacy has been up to some of its sharp tricks with the glint of steel in the background," says an American writer.<sup>2</sup> The Boer War arose from a struggle of the English capitalists with money invested in Rand gold mining to get political power in the Transvaal (the Uitlander question). The Jameson Raid was a *coup d'état*, organised by that pioneer of Capitalist Imperialism in S. Africa, Cecil Rhodes, in order to achieve this. The present trouble in India is fundamentally the attempt of native Indian capitalists to get political power; one of their chief arguments being that British authority is used to crush native industrial enterprise.

Secondly is the need for the creation of a native proletariat. This is done either by cutting down the native land "reserves" (parallel to the English "Enclosures"), by taxing him in his tribes, or by compulsory labour sanctioned by the Administration, as in the Congo and Kenya.

Thirdly, there is the need for the imposition on the native of an ideology favourable to Capitalist Production. This is fulfilled by the introduction of European education, European religion, etc. Says the Hawaiian tea-planter in the play "The Bird of Paradise," "I've heard it said that trade follows the flag; my experience is that trade follows the missionary."

Imperialism, culminating in the recent world war, has produced those contradictions which at the present day are the dynamics of further change. It is for the class-conscious proletarian to understand these tendencies of the present by historical comparison with the past. Then he will be able to guide them creatively. Said Spencer: "He who labours in line with evolution, him can we truly call great."

MAURICE H. DOBB

(Concluded.)

<sup>1</sup> C. K. Hobson, *The Export of Capital*.

<sup>2</sup> Edgar Allan Forbes, *The Land of the White Helmet*.

# ECONOMICS *without* HEADACHES

## XII. (Concluding Article)

**P**RIOR to the war Britain exported large quantities of goods over and above what was required to pay for the goods that came into the country, and these goods became capital invested in other countries and produced interest returned to this country. The tendency was for the amount of capital invested abroad to increase and the amount invested at home to decrease. The following table illustrates this:—

harbour and other works. . . . The loan is secured on the general revenues and assets of the Government of Kenya."

Thus is history made in these days! Money is invested in a country; the Government of that country guarantees the interest *and the home capitalists guarantee the stability of that Government*, because if it falls it is possible that the interest will not be paid.

A large amount of British capital has been

Year.	Invested in United Kingdom.	Raised in London for investment abroad.	Capital exported.
	£	£	£
1900	100,121,000	26,069,000	31,200,000
1906	39,314,000	72,995,000	104,400,000
1913	35,951,000	149,735,000	200,000,000 (estimated)

The *Statist* (July 2nd, 1915) estimated that 79·6 per cent. of the capital raised in 1913 in Britain went to other countries.

Mr. Lloyd George in his Budget speech (1915) said: "I estimate foreign investments to stand at £4,000 millions, receiving an interest of £200 millions, which is equal to one-twelfth of the national income, and just less than one-quarter of the total incomes assessable to Income Tax, the sum subject to Income Tax being £900 millions."

A prospectus published in the *Glasgow Herald* (January 25th, 1920) shows how this loaning of money to foreign countries has political consequences:—

"ISSUE of £1,200,000 6% DEBENTURE SHARES in the TRANS-ZAMBESI RAILWAY CO., LTD. Interest on the Debentures is guaranteed by the Government of the Nyassaland Protectorate for 25 years and the annual sinking fund of £30,000 required to redeem the whole of the Debentures . . . is guaranteed by that Government for the first 25 years.

"The Government of the Nyassaland Protectorate has, with the approval of the British Government, agreed to pay and make good to the railway company for a period of 25 years any deficiency in the earnings of the proposed railway which may be required to make up the sum necessary to pay the interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum on such of the £1,200,000 6% Debentures as may be issued."

Another prospectus of the same type was published in the *Times* (November 9th, 1921):—

"BRITISH EAST AFRICA (Kenya Government) issue of £5,000,000 6% stock. This loan is raised to meet the cost of railway,

invested in American railways, steelworks, factories, etc., because America was not until recently in a position to provide sufficient capital for her new development. During the war Britain purchased huge quantities of munitions from America. To pay for them she sent a certain amount of gold; then a loan was raised in America so that Britain could have the goods on credit. Britain now owes to America £1,000,000,000 (one thousand million pounds) upon which Britain must pay interest every year,\* so that, instead of Britain exporting capital to America, the position has been reversed and America is now a capital-exporting country—is, in fact, the great capital-exporting country of the world.

In order to pay for some of the goods sent by America during the war the British Treasury asked British capitalists to hand over their American share certificates in return for War Loan Stock. This buying up of her own industries by America has taken away from Britain a matter of about £10,000,000 annual interest,† and this has now to be paid by British workers as part of the War Loan interest. It has also helped on the movement towards making America a capital-exporting country. America has lent money to Britain, France, Italy and so on. She has more money still to invest as witness:—"U.S. LOAN OFFER TO VICTORIA.—Melbourne, November 8th. A telegram from London to a newspaper here states that a New York bank has offered to Victoria a £3,000,000 loan on terms one per cent. better than those offered to Queensland."

\* She has not commenced doing so yet!

† A very conservative estimate.

Because of all this America has now come to occupy an entirely new position in the world. When she had no capital to export the Monroe Doctrine was her sheet anchor; she was not much interested in the affairs of other people. But now she has money invested all over the world, and desires to see that money safeguarded in precisely the same way that Britain has always safeguarded her interests—by means of a big navy. America is to-day a world Power because she has so many financial irons in the fire.

During the war British capitalists were not able to invest in other countries, and much more capital was therefore invested at home. At the same time the profits made out of munition making and other war contracts gave them much more capital for which they had to find outlets. Old factories were bought up at greatly enhanced prices, new factories were built, and £7,000,000,000 (seven thousand million pounds) was put into the War Loans. In 1919 it became possible for capital to flow more freely again, but the pre-war position has not yet been restored, and it is doubtful if it can be restored for reasons to be given later. The amount of capital raised in Britain in 1919 was £237,888,780. Of this, £187,706,667 was for British issues; £28,950,032 for British possessions; £19,577,481 for foreign countries; and £1,454,600 for India and Ceylon.

Since 1914 new companies have been formed in great numbers, and in nearly every case the capital asked for has been subscribed within a few days of the issue and notices have been published in the financial columns of the newspapers asking that no more money should be sent because the issue had been over-subscribed.

Because many of the British factories have changed hands at fancy prices, the workers have either had to submit to more intensified exploitation or the interest on the new capital could not be paid. The demand for increased production is not unconnected with this aspect of the question.

The British capitalist does not now find it as easy as formerly to secure places in which he can invest his capital, or, in other words, to deposit his wares on loan. America is in the field, and in addition Japan has become a serious competitor. Behind all the talk of Leagues of Nations and Washington Conferences there exists the great economic fact that Britain and America are now real and deadly rivals for the economic mastery of the world. Daily the statesmen of each country flatter one another, and point to the community of interests that bind the two nations together. Exactly the same speeches, with "Germany" substituted for "America," were being made by British and German statesmen up to the eve of August 1st, 1914, but the economic urge drove the nations into war.

At the present time the tendency is for the capitalists of the world to manœuvre for

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## *A Book in Ten Thousand* **The A.B.C. of Communism**

by  
*N. Buharin and E. Preobrazhensky*

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*Publication Department, Communist Party of Great Britain, 16 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. 2*

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the possession of oil resources. Oil is to be the determining factor in world politics before we are much older—if it is not already.

To sum up our talks on a big subject:—The workers produce goods which they hand to the employers. The workers receive wages which only enable them to buy back a portion of the goods they have produced, and the rest remain in the hands of the employers. The employers consume some of the goods themselves, but some are left over; these become capital for home development and for foreign investment. The demand for home capital is limited by the fact that the home market cannot expand while the workers only receive a portion of their product in wages. The investment of capital abroad is a feature common to all capitalist countries with an exploited working class. Periodically the capitalists with capital to invest in other countries find themselves at loggerheads over "concessions" and "spheres of influence." Then comes war. The workers who have been robbed of the products of their labour go to fight others who have been robbed in the same way, in order to decide which set of robbers shall have the market in which shall be sold the very goods taken from the very same men who are doing the fighting.

The remedy? *The goods to those who produce them.*

W. McLAINÉ

[We understand that Comrade McLainé is arranging for the publication of "Economics without Headaches" in book form, with a good deal of additional matter for which there was no room in the limited space at our disposal in the PLEBS.—ED.]



STUDENTS' NOTES *and* QUERIES

W. M. asks for our opinion of the Study Courses recently published by the I.L.P. We think they afford interesting (and amusing) evidence of a recognition on the part of the writers of the necessity for an antidote to I.W.-C.E. . . . One gets some thrilling glimpses of the official I.L.P. mind. In No. 1, Ramsay MacDonald thus differentiates between the I.L.P. and the Communists:—The former believes that "change *should* in general be democratic and political"; the latter that it "*should* be tyrannical and violent." Milk for babes!

In No. 2, *The Principles of Socialism*, Mrs. M. A. Hamilton gets busy calling back the faithless to the great works of MacDonald and Snowden. (Messrs. Cassell will rejoice if her appeal is successful!) We have room for only one gem:—"Marx and Engels thought that the State would 'wither away' once the economic system had been revolutionised by the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. But in this they were Utopian and assumed a simplicity of organisation that cannot exist in the complex conditions of an advanced society, national or international. Just as any association needs an executive, so the community needs a State." If the blind lead the blind . . . !\*

The *Manchester Guardian Commercial* (27/10/21) with the special supplement containing Prof. Cassel's recantation about deflation (which no Economics teacher should miss) had also a plea for the introduction of Economics into the elementary schools. We don't know what the W.E.A. will do about Clay and Marshall when they hear this:—"The central *dogma* of the modern economist—the marginal theory of value—is extremely difficult to make clear to adult minds." . . . We suspected as much before!

*Q.—Has China passed through the same stages of social development as the Western world?* (Frank Tanner.)

*A.—No.* Its still existent semi-feudalism, peasant proprietorship and domestic industry are to a great extent peculiar to itself. Some of the geographical factors behind this peculiar development were discussed by the present writer in an article in the *Socialist Review* (p. 57, this year's volume).

Geographical factors—natural environment—would also help to explain another point raised by the same correspondent—the fanaticism and disregard of life shown by the early followers of Mahomet. Think over the needs and conditions of a warring nomadic life, compare these with the psychology developed by a settled, sheltered life in towns—and the "fanaticism" of the desert-dwellers does not seem strange.

\* See also "Bookshelf" for further comments.

In reply to E. S.:—"Deucalion's" recent *Herald* articles were more witty than wise. And his only apparent "key idea"—that birth-rate governs national and Imperial policy—very nearly succeeds in vitiating any other good points he makes. He would be well advised to study birth-rate as an effect, and not as a cause. He would find, as Marx showed against Malthus, that each system of society has its own law of population. At times, "Deucalion" deserves to be labelled Blatchford the Second—as when he visualises Japan as an entity, stretching out tentacles over the world.

Japan's birth-rate will inevitably decrease as capitalism develops. The class-struggle is already pretty clearly apparent in that country. . . . And as for future possibilities of world over-population, well! the question of birth control has already reached even the Church Congress; so that it is pretty safe to assume that the World Soviet will be able to deal with the problem.

*The People's Marx*, edited by J. Borchardt (International Bookshops, 2s. 6d.—see advt. on another page), will be of considerable use to students and tutors. No two Marxians will agree, of course, as to exactly which passages in the three vols. of *Capital* are the essential ones, and which others, in a volume of selections like this, can be omitted. Nevertheless—after only a preliminary glance at the book—this selection appears to be a good one, and it is issued in a very handy form. It is rather a pity that the title should clash with Deville's work, since its scope is different. A more detailed review will follow this first impression.

M. S.

W. H. M.'s verdict on *The People's Marx* is: "However useful the book may be as a handy summary of the three vols. of *Capital*, and as showing the inter-relation of the simple and the more developed theories, it is not, in my opinion, going to be of much use to the beginner. Extracts do not necessarily make for simplification. There are, moreover, a number of important omissions."

NEW PAMPHLET

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TRA LA MONDO : *Esperanto Notes**Germany*

**T**HE October number of *Germana Esperantisto* publishes the result of a questionnaire issued by the German Esperanto Association as regards the teaching of Esperanto in schools in Germany. From the replies it appears that schools in the following towns had Esperanto classes during 1920: Auerbach, Braunschweig, Bremerhaven, Chemnitz, Cöthen, Essen, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Greifswald, Mylau, Niederhermsdorf, Neustadt in Silesia, Plauen, Selb, Stettin, Weinböhla, Werdau and Worms.

*"Sennacieca Revuo"*

Readers and would-be readers of Esperanto are advised to subscribe to the above-mentioned monthly journal. Subscription 5s. a year to—L. Glodeau, 177. Rue de Bagnolet, Paris. The journal is the familiar *Esperantista Laboristo* under a new title as the organ of the *Sennacieca Asocia Tutmonda*.

*Russia*

*Astrahan*.—Estas organizita Gubernia Esperanto Komitato. La Komitato ricevis subvencio (777.000 rubl. por unua duono de la jaro 1921) de loka sovjeta. Ciuj membroj

de la Komitato ricevas salajron. Komitato jam aranĝis du propagandajn esperanto-koncertojn. Kursoj sub gvidado de K-de Averin.

*Kamen*.—Konsilantaro de 2-a lernejo decidis instrukti esp-on en lernejon, kiel devigan instrufakon.

*Dua Konferenco de Eski*

La 4 Junio, okazis en Petrograd (Rusio) malfermo de dua Konferenco de Esperanta Komunista Internacio (Eski).

En honoran prezidkomitato estis elektitaj K-doj Tom Mooney (Usono), E. Nikolau (Rumanio) kaj Mark Starr (Anglio). Oni decidis sendi salutleterojn al K-doj Mooney kaj Nikolau, kiuj nun estas en malliberejo, kaj al Mark Starr, salutante lin, kiel reprezentanton de strikantaj anglaj karbministoj.

Krom tio estis proponite kaj akceptite sendi saluttelegramon al tria kongreso de Komunista Internacio kaj salutleteron al *Liberiga Stelo*, inicianto de la ruĝa esperantista kongreso.

La Konferenco decidis, ke en laborista esperantista movado de tuta mondo Eski devas agi per principoj kaj taktiko de III-a Internacio.

EL "SENNACIECA REVUO"

## LETTERS from PLEBS

*We invite contributions from readers on all subjects of interest to working-class students. The only condition is that they must not exceed 400 words— and preference will be given to those shorter than that.*

## BOUDIN'S "SOCIALISM AND WAR"

**D**EAR COMRADE,—Along, I am sure, with many other Plebeians, I noted with great interest the suggestion, in the October PLEBS, that there was a possibility of L. B. Boudin preparing a new edition of *Socialism and War*.

May I suggest certain points for his consideration? I have put them down because I regard the book as a masterpiece, and an edition brought up to date in certain particulars would be of priceless value to proletarian students.

1. The subject of Militarism as the handmaid of modern Imperialism might be elaborated, especially in relation to its present-day developments in Japan, America, etc.

2. A chapter, or a section, on the Russian Revolution and its reactions on world affairs would be valuable. (E.g., the granting by the Soviet Republic of the Vanderlip concession in N.E. Siberia and Kamschatka, and the bearing of this on Japanese-American relations.)

3. The all-important question of oil, especially as a probable cause of future war, might well be touched upon.

4. Some examination of the effects of the Peace Treaty on world exchanges, commerce, and national policies would be profitable. How far has the rearrangement of the map by the Treaty provided the basis for another war? New States—new nationalisms—new incipient imperialisms; landlocked countries like Poland and Czechoslovakia, needing a sea-board—all these

"Though man a thinking being is defined  
Few use the great prerogative of mind;  
How few think justly of the thinking few!  
How many never think who think they do!"

JANE TAYLOR (1783-1829)

*If you would like to follow up this interesting train of thought, get the PLEBS Psychology Textbook (2s. 6d. net; post paid, 2s. 9d.)*

factors will play their part in the blood and mud scramble of the future.

5. When the book was written the Monroe Doctrine still governed (or nominally governed) American policy. Since then the U.S. has entered the imperialist race and is out for world mastery. Bound up with this is the whole Pacific Problem and the growth of Japanese imperialism.

6. Some general estimate of the play of all these forces and factors, and their probable influence on the break-up of capitalism, should find a place.

Here is opportunity enough for Boudin's constructive criticism! We all want to hear his views on these and kindred problems. More power to his elbow!

Yours frat., HAROLD CRADDOCK  
Labour College, Kew.

[We are glad to say that, since his return to America, Comrade Boudin has written us to say that he is actually engaged on the work of revising *Socialism and War* for republication. How far he will be able to touch upon the points raised by our correspondent we are, of course, unable to say; but we are bringing them to his notice, and shall hope to have some reply from him on the subject.—ED., PLEBS.]

#### IRELAND A NATION

DEAR COMRADE,—In view of the grim potentialities of the Irish crisis may I, as a cosmopolitan Irishman, place before my fellow Plebeians some of the reasons why scientific Socialists should support the Irish people in their struggle for self-determination?

First, let us ask ourselves, Who are the people who are loudest in denouncing Ireland's claim? Next, what are the ideals of the people making the demand?

The answer to the first question is only too obvious. All the forces of reaction are ranged against Ireland's demand for equality. The watchdogs of privilege are howling to warn their masters of strange footsteps, so much like liberty—to which they have a natural antipathy.

The second question brings to the surface (whenever discussed) a difference of opinion among professed Marxists that can only be accounted for by the use of different standards of judgment. The more abstract school (possibly out of desire to rationalise subjective aversion to concrete realities) dismisses the whole business with a wave of the hand—pooh! It's only a "petty bourgeois" affair—a struggle between English and Irish capitalists. This may be *partly* true. But were it *wholly* true I would still maintain that objection on that ground alone is essentially nationalist, not internationalist—too narrow and pessimistic a view for an aspirant to Marxian degrees to hold with good grace.

What was the Kerensky Revolution? Did it not, though in itself capitalistic, liberate forces that culminated in the

complete overthrow of itself *and* capitalism six months later? And will anybody so blatantly advertise his ignorance of history as to suggest that Ireland has not given to the international working-class movement more men of conspicuous ability than Russia prior to 1917—although with less than one-twenty-fifth the population of the latter? Revolutions are neither started with the word "go," nor stopped to a chalk mark!

Others, equally "scientific," condescend to give Ireland their moral support, the while regretting the necessity of making a "concession" to Irish Nationalism. But is the extermination of individuality our ideal? Who will claim that he is more cosmopolitan in outlook than Jim Connolly was? Yet, just before he faced the firing party, he said to his daughter: "The Socialists will never understand why I'm here. They all forget I'm an Irishman." The *National* is the social unit of the *International*.

Yours for self-determination for all nations.

ANDREW CLARKE

#### THE COMING REVOLUTION

DEAR EDITOR,—This letter is Postgate's fault.

He is wrong in supposing that I re-read Marx; I did not need to. It is, however, a happy consummation when any controversy ends in total agreement on any point, and when Postgate says that he will not get my pound, I agree with him absolutely. Whether he deserves it, I leave to the judgment of your readers.

Yours faithfully,  
GERALD GOULD

[May we suggest to the Associate Editor of the *Daily Herald* and to the Editor of the *Communist* that an even happier consummation to this controversy—for the PLEBS—would be that each of them fined the other a pound for the benefit of our Pound Fund? —ED., PLEBS.]

#### THE DOUGLAS SCHEME

DEAR EDITOR,—As one of "the group of bourgeois dilettantes who have taken up and are exploiting Major Douglas" (I wonder if that very alert personality is aware of his "Newage-slavery"), I join with your correspondent "G. P. D." in thinking it "very desirable that we should have an authoritative examination of the scheme from the Marxian stand-point." Some of the efforts at destructive criticism proceeding from Communist "authorities" have shown a pathetic inability to grasp what the proposals for the socialisation of credit are even aiming at—to say nothing of their far-reaching implications.

I would, however, suggest to "G. P. D." and others who "intuitively feel" as he does, that to ask merely for arguments *against* a proposal is to carry "partiality" to a

point where it becomes a danger to clear thinking. I should be the last to urge that the Douglas proposals should be swallowed whole. But it is essential that they should be adequately discussed, if only because they raise issues which neither Communism nor "Labourism" has properly taken into account. In this connection I may point out the strange fatalism which "G. P. D." displays in speaking of "the power which the flow of time and events will place" in the workers' hands at a moment when the resources of Labour are weaker than they have been for at least half a century, and in face of an economic tendency which, by the development of invention and the application of science to the diminution of toil, is rendering "the worker" *as such* increasingly superfluous.

Some means of distributing purchasing power otherwise than in return for "work" will have to be found in the interests of human survival, to say nothing of personal freedom.

I hope very much that you will give some space to a discussion of the scheme, and so vindicate the position of the PLEBS as the one left-wing organ that never fails to discuss current problems on a scale adequate to their importance. The appearance of H. Cousins' book, *A New Policy for Labour*—an "essay on the relevance of Credit Control"—perhaps affords a good opportunity for one of your reviewers.

Yours sincerely,  
MAURICE B. RECKITT

[We hope to publish a review of Cousins' book, and some comments on Major Douglas's two volumes, next month.—ED., PLEBS.]

#### HUMANITARIANISM

DEAR COMRADE,—Some remarks by "P. L. E. B." in his criticism of Shaw's book, in the August PLEBS, have roused me to protest.

He alludes derisively to the anti-vivisection movement, and speaks of the "slave religion of humanitarianism" as against that of "strong men fighting for their rights" (I am quoting from memory, so trust he will pardon me if not quite correct).

Now is not a fight for the rights of others quite as good a fight as that for one's own rights? And did not such comrades as Marx, Morris, Kropotkin, Carpenter and many others too numerous to mention, carry on a fight primarily for the rights of others, seeing that they were not themselves being exploited (in the direct sense) by the capitalist, at a time when, owing to this very exploitation, the proletariat itself was largely inarticulate?

Anti-vivisection is a great fight for the rights of others. I make no apology for applying the term "others" to the animals, as, in the sense that they suffer wrong through no fault of their own, they are comparable to those of us who are victims of injustice. It is a fight against the infliction of unspeakable tortures on helpless sentient beings with

the idea of escaping suffering for ourselves and our fellow-humans (suffering, moreover, to a great extent brought upon ourselves by our beastly system). The animals being unfortunately unable to organise and fight for themselves, we who have a sense of justice are bound to do it for them. This is what I understand by humanitarianism, and I fail to see anything "slavish" in it.

And in the case of vivisection, too, the injustice and barbarism does not fail to react on human circles. Does not "P. L. E. B." know that a famous vivisector said: "The final experiment must always be on man"? Does he not know that cases of experiments on patients (of course, proletarian patients) have frequently been proved to have taken place in our hospitals and still more in those of continental countries where vivisection is unrestricted and more widely practised even than here?

Yours fraternally  
FLORENCE BALDWIN

#### POETRY AND THE M.C.H.

DEAR EDITOR,—I do not propose to discuss Shelley any further. But one point in this controversy is worthy of notice.

Nearly all my quotations have been from what Ralph Fox disparagingly describes as "bourgeois" critics. I think the sneer is unnecessary, for it is just these same bourgeois authorities who are most illuminating, when their class vigilance is not aroused. We should indeed be badly off if we banned all bourgeois sources of information. On such a subject as the present they are certainly more reliable than Socialist writers, for the latter are (or used to be) anxious to read socialistic sentiments into everything. Edwin Pugh actually wrote a long volume to prove that Charles Dickens was really a Socialist!

Yours frat.,  
ERNEST JOHNS

#### THE GOLD STANDARD

DEAR SIR,—I read Mr. Mainwaring's fifth instalment with the great interest I always have in his articles, but for once I find myself disagreeing with him.

In his last paragraph (p. 331) he says: "The currency of this country became expanded, or inflated as it is commonly termed, and with this came a further rise in prices; for paper, *unlike gold*, is of no use apart from its function as a medium of circulation."

Why insert "unlike gold"? Surely if the currency was increased by a large influx of gold, prices would rise, provided production did not increase accordingly. If commodities of real use, and not for war purposes, had been produced with the assistance of the Bank credit created during the War, surely prices would if anything have fallen very considerably.

Gold used as a commodity does not affect prices, but does so immediately it is used as currency. Is it not the real position that

prices depend on the relation between currency and commodities, whether gold or paper? Of course paper currency can be increased much more easily than gold currency, and therefore it is much easier for those controlling our currency to affect prices by increasing the supply of paper.

Now I am up against the Gold Fetish. I think the Gold Standard is as dead as frozen mutton, and any attempts to resuscitate it are doomed to failure. Nevertheless these attempts do a great deal of harm and the present depression is, I consider, very largely due to an attempt to re-establish the Gold Standard.

That standard is very expensive and not nearly elastic enough for the needs of present-day trade. The great bulk of trade is carried on by credit, and the credit of a country does not depend on the amount of gold it holds but on the man-power, material possessions, and, most important of all, its general stability.

Yours frat.,  
T. W. WYATT

W. H. MAINWARING writes:—

"Knowing that the Editor is out for the gore of those who use up space, I fear it will be impossible to satisfy friend Wyatt. His is a very old complaint and in this case shows signs of complications, which it is not my business at present to diagnose.

"He offers no objection to my remarks on paper money, but would like them applied to gold as well. Unfortunately, even a currency has its laws, and my advice to all those troubled with this quantity theory is to go back to *Capital*, Vol. I., or *The Critique of Political Economy*, and study all the functions of money, taking care not to drop a single one by the wayside. If these books are not available, a little pamphlet by John Barr, obtainable from the *Pioneer*, Merthyr, will be helpful.

"The questions of the relation of deflation and Gold Standard to the present depression, and man-power as a basis for credit, are much too remote and will not draw me for the moment."

#### CORRECTION—THE SIX ACTS

DEAR COMRADE,—As a rule the proof reading of the PLEBS is very efficiently performed, so that it becomes a matter of interest when a discrepancy appears in its pages. "R. W. P." has "jumped" history in his admirable article on "Admiral Parker." The Six Acts he mentions were put into force in 1819, whilst the Nore Mutiny occurred in 1797.

Yours frat.,  
A. C.

## REVIEWS

### BLACK FRIDAY

*The Lesson of Black Friday.* By Gerald Gould. (Labour Publishing Co., 1s.)

The most important lessons of Black Friday are not mentioned at all in this otherwise interesting little book. Those lessons are (i) a recognition of the vastly different psychology and outlook of T.U. leaders and of intelligent, conscious rank-and-filers; and (ii) as a consequence of this, the urgent need for ensuring *rank-and-file control* of whatever co-ordinating structure is set up in the Labour movement.

No rank-and-filer wastes a second thought on the new General Council which—for all practical purposes, and for all the control he has over it—might as well be a Council of French, German or Czecho-Slovakian unions. And does anyone doubt that the Council will be a weapon of purely "moral suasion"—and therefore as ineffective as the late Triple Alliance?

The keen rank-and-filer welcomes wider and more efficient organisation—more often, indeed, than not he is its most active propagandist. But at the same time, and with good reason, he fears lest, with the wider organisation, control should slip even further away from him. The great problem of industrial organisation is to give to the man who actually suffers oppression, who is literally up against it, the "last word" in the initiation of lines of policy and the settlement of disputes.

W. H. M.

### MENTAL TESTS

*The Measurement of Intelligence.* By Lewis M. Terman. (Harrap. 8s. 6d.)

*Measure Your Mind.* By M. R. Traube and F. P. Stockbridge. (Harrap. 10s. 6d.)

During the past year (PLEBS, October, 1920, and August, 1921) I have had occasion to review two books which dealt with the question of levels of intelligence. The results of the American Army tests have brought home to large numbers of people the vast range of variation which occurs in the inborn mental equipment of men and women; variation which ranges in an unbroken series from the helpless, speechless idiot to the man of outstanding genius.

The agents of the governing class may be relied upon, more and more, to apply the carefully worked out schemes of mental measuring which exist for the purpose of securing the greatest possible exploitation of the greatest number of persons in the interests of private gain. The automatic promotion of the most intelligent workers to positions where it pays to play the boss's game, and the appointment by trade unions of their ablest members to positions as full-time officials, where, in response to a bourgeois environment, they acquire a bourgeois outlook, has long been working towards this end, in a rough, rule-of-thumb sort of way. The process will certainly be speeded up now by the deliberate use of standardised mental tests, beginning in the schools in



which the capitalist State educates the proletarian children. Anyone who has followed the discussions at the British Association for the Advancement of Science (meeting in Edinburgh this September) will have no doubts on this point.

This weapon can also be used in the I.W.C.E. Movement, and the Labour Movement generally, for detecting, at an early age, the kind of material we want to get into our classes. With a short course of training, such as could be arranged at many of the stronger educational centres, a certain number of teachers could be fitted to test mental levels in such a way that the best use could be made of the students and scholars in both adult and juvenile classes. Either of these books will furnish a useful sketch of the methods of procedure, and of the results obtained.

Terman's book is widely used by professional teachers. It deals chiefly with the intelligence of children and adolescents. Traube and Stockbridge's book contains more detailed information about the testing of adults, and deals particularly with the American Army tests; but it contains a good deal of journalistic padding which is not worth a Plebeian's money in these hard-up times. Its attitude is the purely brutal one of the advocate of capitalist exploitation in its most "American" form. Terman's book offers the better value to those centres or class libraries that can afford to buy. A set of test material to accompany Terman's book is issued at 3s. 6d.

NORDICUS

## NORMAN ANGELL'S LATEST

*The Fruits of Victory.* By Norman Angell. (Labour Publishing Co., 3s. 6d.)

Mr. Angell, despite all that has happened since he wrote *The Great Illusion*, is still a Liberal idealist, hoping that "reason" will triumph over the "instinct of domination." It is pretty easy for a writer of his ability to prove that if men are taken from behind the plough and put in front of a gun, the world quickly gets into a hell of a mess. What surprises one is his apparent inability to realise that—to *Capitalism*—the gun is just as necessary as the plough. Force *does* pay; i.e., it pays this or that group of capitalists. That it does not pay the "community" is painfully

obvious; but surely no one but Mr. Angell still clings to the belief that the well-being of the "community" counts for aught in the world as at present constituted!

Mr. Angell regards Bolshevism as "the transference of jingoism to the industrial struggle." It seems highly probable that Bolshevism will soon cut the knots he is so laboriously endeavouring to untie. Then once again "dangerous fallacies" will become "monstrous truths."

M. S.

## EDIFYING

*The Acquisitive Society.* By R. H. Tawney. (G. Bell & Sons. 4s. 6d.)

A nicely written book by a gentleman for gentlemen, and for good and docile believers in 'em, such as frequent the W.E.A. The working class proper, not being gentlemen, have no place in it—except to be snubbed:—"It is idle to urge that any alternative is preferable to government by the greedy materialists who rule mankind at present, for greed and materialism are not the monopoly of a class." Get away, you nasty, dirty, ignorant Bolshie!

The sickness of the acquisitive society is to be cured by liberal doses of Christian Religion and Moral Purpose. Industry will be a wholesome job, salaries will be "enough to enable him to perform his work," and work will be carried on "for the glory of God and the relief of men's estate." This book should greatly comfort the gently nurtured.

G.

## A LABOUR CLASSIC

*A History of the Last Hundred Days of English Freedom.* By William Cobbett. Intro. by J. L. Hammond (Labour Publishing Co. 5s. cloth.)

A happily arranged No. 2 of Labour Classics to follow No. 1—Marx's *Civil War in France*. The book is a study of the property relations of the early 19th century, as expressed in the legal and political acts of the time. When that task is done by an observant man, who took his share of the hurly-burly, a reading of the book by students of history and economics is well worth while. The introduction, biographical notes and index by J. L. Hammond add considerably to the value of the book.

G.



## "STAMP IT OUT!"

We're still handicapped by a debt—and it will be bigger directly, because we're issuing that new Textbook. You can help us to wipe it out, and advertise the PLEBS at the same time, by buying and using some Plebs Stamps. 1d. each, 1/- a dozen (tastefully printed in two colours).

# NEWS of the MOVEMENT

Several cheques and postal orders have recently failed to reach the PLEBS Office. We can't afford to lose money, and we are quite sure the senders can't. Will all our friends, therefore, send *crossed* cheques or postal orders, made payable to "Sec., Plebs League"; and will they retain the counterfoil and, if they receive no receipt within three or four days, write to the Office Sec. making inquiries?

*Will all class-secs. please note the special reduction in price we are making in our Plebs Propaganda Pamphlet? (see p. iii. of cover). At 2d. each these pamphlets should go like hot cakes. We don't want to keep propaganda material stuck on our shelves. Help us to clear the stock.*

HULL N.U.R. Class announces a series of lectures on "A Worker Looks at History" (particulars from J. Giles, 14, Malvern Avenue, Cecil Street). They have issued a smart handbill making effective use of a recent PLEBS "motto."

One of the most interesting syllabuses sent to us for some time is that received from the HUDDERSFIELD Plebs Extension Classes. The subject is "History of Trade Unionism and Industrial Development," and the lecturer is our old friend Fred Shaw. Collectors of such documents—and the class-secretary who is not a collector is hardly enterprising—should apply to W. Shaw, 12, Rose Street, Turnbridge, Huddersfield. By the way, our Book Dept. can still supply copies of Shaw's syllabus and book list on "Fundamentals of Marxism" at 4d. (post paid).

Will the BIRMINGHAM Pleb who at the recent Conference at Handforth Club House told "J. F. H." that interesting anecdote about a certain W.E.A. organiser kindly communicate with J. P. M. Millar, 18, Westholme Gdns., Musselburgh, Scotland?

The LONDON Organiser has been busy preparing some Gramophone and Lantern Lectures and is anxious to get bookings. The lectures are of a popular nature, and should be very useful for any new district keen to work up local notice and attract the average man. The subjects include "Russian Folk Songs," "Soviet Hungary," "Russia, Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow," etc. All proceeds, after covering expenses, are to go to the PLEBS Fund. Any inquiries—also slides or donations—will be welcomed. Write London Organiser, c/o PLEBS Office.

At the Conference convened by the ILFORD Provisional Committee for I.W.-C.E. on Nov. 6th several organisations agreed to affiliate, and a class on Industrial History, under the auspices of the London Council, is starting forthwith. The Ilford Plebs Branch has been active at every stage in this development, and is now setting itself to get new students for the class and new readers for the PLEBS. Best thanks.

Another keen branch is that at BLAYDON-ON-TYNE. Formed only a few months ago, it has organised open-air propaganda lectures during the summer on I.W.-C.E., and taken the lead in arranging for winter classes. "Unfortunately," writes Comrade Braun, "we have lost Will Pearson, our class tutor and most practised speaker. His work now devolves on the cubs! But where two or three are gathered together in the name of I.W.-C.E. something will get done!" The right spirit.

The summer course of lectures on the M.C.H. delivered at the Manchester Labour College by Mr. M. Baritz was in every way successful. The titles of the lectures were:—The "Materialist Conception" or "Economic Interpretation" of History, Politics, the British Constitution, Transport, Ethics and Morals, Drama, Music, Literature, Art, Science, Philosophy, concluding with four interesting lectures on the lives of Marx, Engels, Lafargue and Lewis H. Morgan. We congratulate both the College and the Lecturer on such a comprehensive and attractive series.

The West Vale Class HALIFAX Branch, West Riding Labour College, has already made history! It met for the first few lectures in a Sunday School, but was then informed that it must find other rooms, as the subject discussed (Science of Understanding) wasn't in accordance with the ideas of the trustees and parson. The Constitutional Club was next tried for an odd lecture, but apparently was afraid of the Constitution being upset, and again the class had to "move on." A room has now been secured under the local public authority, and (writes the Sec., G. W. Jones) "we are waiting to see what will happen next." . . . What will happen some day soon is that Plebs and such-like folk will be the "local public authority"—and then . . .!!!

A keen New Zealand Pleb, Mary McCarthy, sends us a newspaper report of police-court proceedings against three proletarians charged with selling proletarian literature. The witnesses for the prosecution were policemen and detectives who, disguised as plain proletarians, purchased copies of journals "inciting to violence and lawlessness." (All the bobbies denied having read the wicked journals—they merely passed them on to their superiors!)

"Do you consider yourself a smart constable?" one of them was asked by one of the prisoners.

"I don't think anything about it," was the reply.

"Do you think you could ARREST THE SPREAD OF IDEAS?" he was next asked.

*There was no reply.*

But it looks as if the PLEBS was read "down under"!

W. H.

# NATIONAL COUNCIL NOTES

**S**INCE last month the following have sent along affiliation fees:—EDINBURGH District S.L.C., DERBY L.C., SHEFFIELD L.C., NORTH KENT District Plebs, MANCHESTER L.C., ROCHDALE L.C., BARRY Dock L.C. Class, NORTH OF ENGLAND Council, WEST RIDING Council L.C.; making in all ten affiliations to date. Thanks! MORE WANTED.

LIVERPOOL and District L.C. have a number of pamphlets, *Education and the Working Class*, in stock. As this can be supplied (cash) at 1s. 3d. a dozen, post paid, and retails at 3d., it offers a double advantage to districts—propaganda and cash. Send direct to J. Hamilton, 99, Botanic Road, Liverpool.

BIRMINGHAM and WOLVERHAMPTON areas are busy, and we hope to hear of a joining up there into a joint district area.

J. Burns writes: "Am willing to lecture on Psychology or Industrial History if need arises or has arisen. Can manage LEICESTER, COVENTRY or NUNEATON for regular courses, and Birmingham, Derby, etc., for occasionals." Write, Head Office.

BLACKWOOD District S.W.M.F. Classes have sent in suggestions for Manchester Meet, and hope to be represented there. We should be pleased to hear from other Welsh groups.

Pending the decision of the Governors of the London Labour College on the question of their joining the N.C.L.C., no leaflets, appeals, etc., will be actually issued. The preparation of a short Glossary of Economic Terms and of various Syllabuses is proceeding apace.

Propagandists and speakers on I.W.-C.E. are urgently needed to work Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Redcar and South Bank areas. Write, T. A. Lloyd, 11, Trinity Street, STOCKTON-ON-TEES.

The Secretary of the North Kent District Plebs (L. Barnard) and others have been busy sowing I.W.-C.E. ideas in the monthly *Journal* of the Amal. Soc. of Woodworkers. As the General Secretary says he will be glad of more such articles, other A.S.W. members please note. Barnard says there are a number of Kent members determined to push the A.S.W. into the ONLY educational line.

The Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers have been considering the adoption of an educational policy, and we quote from the report of a Sub-Committee appointed to inquire into the subject:—

## " EDUCATION LEVY

" In the first place we have attempted to gauge the opinions of our members generally towards education by going through the correspondence received from branches upon the matter. They can be summarised under the following heads: (1) Those who give unqualified support. (2) Those who object to paying for education. (3) Those who

object to the amount of the levy. (4) Those who object to paying without a ballot. (5) Those who object to any education.

" Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 may be regarded, we believe, as objections to education. In our opinion, or in the opinion of anyone who has an understanding of what independent working-class education means, and its absolute necessity at the present time, the objections arise from the fact of it not being understood by the mass of the members. Obviously, then, our first work is to establish that understanding. To accomplish this we propose that a pamphlet be issued to the whole of our members setting forth the aims and objects of independent working-class education, such as we propose, the expense of this pamphlet to be borne out of the Educational Fund."

Among the proposals considered for the carrying on of the work the following is important:—

" 1. The raising of a fund for education of membership.

" 2. The division of the fund into two parts:—

" (A) For providing scholarships at the Labour College.

" (B) For providing attendance at Provincial Labour College Classes.

" 3. The scholarships to be allotted on a divisional basis in both cases. It is suggested in the case of (A) that each division be entitled to send one student.

" 4. Each division may nominate ? ? candidates for one vacancy. The Divisional Executive will satisfy themselves as to the qualifications of the nominees—membership, age, activities, etc., and select accordingly. The nominees accepted will then be examined by the Labour College authorities, who will recommend to the Central Executive the students to be sent."

The matter is still under consideration by the A.U.B.T.W., but this preliminary report foreshadows the adoption of an advanced policy of the most definite and far-reaching kind—a model for other T.U. efforts. Will our members get busy on similar lines in their own unions ?

Our N.C.L.C. Districts will of course do their utmost to push the new Plebs Textbook. Other textbooks are in process of drafting—on Economic Geography and Economics. Further particulars shortly.

The Birmingham Conference Report is now out of print. Those who have copies should file this historic document. Please read carefully—and act upon—these points from the covering letter sent out with it:—

" It is requested that the following information should be supplied, at an early date, viz:—

" 1. What proposals have you to offer regarding the division of the country into areas—for the purpose of national co-ordination ?

" 2. Please send copies to Head Office (where available) of all the Prospectuses, Syllabuses, Appeals, etc., issued by your group since its formation. Also a list of whole-time organisers and lecturers employed by you—past, present or proposed.

" 4. Send immediately the name and address of delegate, appointed by you, to represent you on the Council of the N.C.L.C.

" It was recommended at the above-mentioned Conference that areas should:—

" (A) Send along affiliation fee to N.C.L.C. (minimum 21s.) at earliest possible moment.

" (B) Send along account of all interesting matters for inclusion in the proposed Appeal leaflets and for Press propaganda. Also furnish the N.C.L.C. with copies of newspapers in which references respecting the work of Colleges, Districts and Classes and the N.C.L.C. appear.

" (c) Advertise the PLEBS Magazine (the organ of the N.C.L.C.) on every possible occasion, e.g., on notepaper, in the Press, at public, private or semi-private meetings, etc.

" First National Meeting of the N.C.L.C. to be held at (or near) Manchester on Saturday, 31st December, 1921, and Sunday, January 1st, 1922. Name and address of your Delegate to National Council to be sent in to Head Office at once.

" THE OBJECT OF THE COUNCIL is to bring together the various colleges, districts and groups already in existence, with a view to extension and mutual assistance. There is no intention of interfering with local organisations, but rather to enable all to have access to, and obtain advantage from, measures adopted in any part of the country, and to co-ordinate the efforts of our organisation, educationally and financially.

" All communications to the General Secretary, N.C.L.C., 11, Penywern Road, London, S.W.5."

Will every delegate to the first Meet arrange to bring along a display of the Syllabuses, leaflets and propagandist issues sent out by the area he represents? Such a display ought to be a fruitful source of suggestions for united efforts.

Particulars of arrangements for Meet will be sent to delegates by December 5th.

J. P. M. Millar (Edinburgh) writes:—

" I notice that the report issued by the ' T.U. Education Enquiry Committee ' states in the third paragraph that ' apart from the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation . . . no T.U. has yet devised a way by which interest in education may be stimulated amongst its members . . . and a tradition developed within the T.U. movement generally under conditions adequately controlled by the trade unions themselves.

" This is not true, for last year a trade union, the Mid and East Lothian Miners, decided to participate in the work of the Edinburgh District of the Scottish L.C. In

return for an affiliation fee of 2s. 6d. plus 2d. per member per annum, this T.U. not only received representation on the District Committee, but had both the day and evening classes of the College in the Edinburgh area thrown open to its members without charge."

## STOP PRESS

*It has been found impossible to book a Club House near Manchester for December 31st—January 1st, the date fixed on for the National Council Meet. It is suggested, therefore, that the Meet be held January 14th—15th, and arrangements are now in hand for this change. All districts will be sent full particulars in course of next few days, and full details will also be published in January PLEBS. Send your delegate's name in to Sec., N.C.L.C., as quickly as possible, and see that you get particulars of Meet.*

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## The PLEBS BOOKSHELF

**T**HE Book of the Month, for every genuine Pleb, will be our new textbook, *An Outline of Psychology*. I am no psychologist; but I can testify—having read it in script and proof pretty carefully—that it is an amazingly interesting book. I will go even further, and risk the assertion that—quite apart from its merits as a textbook—it is a piece of literature; a fresh, vigorous, *live* piece of writing. And if Plebs' tutors and propagandists don't find it full of suggestive material (whatever their own particular subject of study may be)—then I'm no judge of a book!

It is quite appropriate that this month, when we are publishing a textbook on Psychology, we should have a front-cover motto extracted from the writings of an eminent psychologist. William James was a university professor; but he had his points! And we don't want any student of his work to write in and inform us that in the context to the sentence on our cover James is talking about "the world's salvation"; because we know that already. We know also that on the very next page he writes: "You may interpret the word 'salvation' in any way you like." Well, we interpret it as having a very direct connection with the working class and its historic mission; and accordingly—let Ramsay MacDonald say what he may!—have no scruples about pinching James's phrase for our own propaganda purposes.

Every keen student of economic geography and of world politics will add to his collection of pamphlets *The International Situation: a Study of Capitalism in Collapse*, by Trotsky and Prof. Varga (Communist Party, 3d.). (Our readers will remember that in our August issue we published a translation of a chapter on "The Coming World War" from another work of Varga's (as yet unavailable in English)—*The Present World Crisis in Capitalist Economy*.) How exactly the two collaborators worked in writing this thesis one does not know. Did Varga collect the material and Trotsky "sift" it, and put "punch" into it? Anyhow, whatever their respective shares in it, they have produced a masterly short statement on a vast subject. The next time we are discussing textbooks with folks who say that nothing can be done with a subject in 45,000 words, we shall respectfully beg them to tot up the total number of words in this pamphlet. And some of our "researchers" might well study its careful selection of essential facts, and rejection of all those, however interesting, not absolutely necessary to the development of the main theme. It gets at the *guts* of its subject; and accordingly makes a far stronger impression on the reader than do

works which wander round and round their main point.

\* \* \*

We are indebted to J. Engels, a Rotterdam comrade, for some notes on Müller-Lyer's writings which will be of interest to all students of *The History of Social Development*. That fine book—the only work of its author's as yet translated into English—was, our correspondent notes, designed as a general introduction to a series of volumes on the history of the State, the Family, etc., etc., which was not completed when Müller-Lyer died in 1916, aged 53 years. Another book of his, *The Meaning of Life and Science*, sketches the historical development of philosophical and religious systems, and outlines what he describes as the new *positive* working-class philosophy. "He declares that only the science of culture—sociology—i.e., the science which treats of human beings and their social environment, can solve the problems of to-day; all efforts to frame a satisfying philosophic system on the basis of *natural science alone* being foredoomed to failure owing to their one-sidedness."

\* \* \*

The reviews of *Proletcult* have, as we anticipated, proved interesting. Our revered Fabian contemporary, the *New Statesman*, manages to discuss the book and its contents at some little length without any sort of

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reference to the Labour Colleges or the Plebs League; and concludes its notice with a charming old-world phrase about "existing facilities, or lack of facilities, of serious education for the mass of citizens." Reads almost like a leading article A.D. 1860, doesn't it? . . . The *Times Lit.*, again, though it refers to "Aunt Sallies like the Workers' Educational Association," takes care not to mention the Plebs. "Samuel Smiles we know, and A. Mansbridge we know; but who are ye?" seems to express these haughty gentlemen's attitude to our poor selves. . . . But the *Book Post* has achieved the finest phrase of all:—"Their book is a revelation in *subversive educational ferocity*!"! This more than consoles us for the others.

It is a big pity—with so many good books waiting to be translated into English—that Bukharin's *A B C of Communism* should have been done twice over. There seems to be no doubt that the Communist Party's edition—complete in one vol. for 3s.—is the better bargain; apart from the fact that it has been translated direct from the Russian, whereas the S.L.P. edition is a translation from the German, and the German version, from all accounts, stuck none too closely to the original. Co-ordination appears to be needed in other spheres as well as in our own educational movement.

Who would have expected to find in the works of Jane Taylor (authoress of that justly famous lyric, "Who ran to catch me when I fell?—My mother!") a verse so suitable for advertising a Psychology Textbook as that which we quote on another page? We feel that Jane, had her allotted span fallen a century later, might well have been a Pleb!

A Pleb among the classics! One of the new volumes in the Everyman Library is *The Growth of Political Liberty*, a collection of extracts from historical documents, charters, etc., edited by Ernest Rhys. The introductory matter includes a list of "source books"; and among these is *A Worker Looks at History*, by Mark Starr. The orthodox are beginning to notice our

*The PLEBS invites contributions on Labour problems in general and on subjects of interest to Working-Class Educationists in particular.*

**PLEASE NOTE.**—No contribution should exceed 2,000 words. (This is a maximum—not a minimum.) Articles or letters intended for following month's issue should be sent in not later than the 15th of the month. Will correspondents also remember to write on one side of the paper only, and to enclose full name and address, whether for publication or not? N.B.—No payment is made for any contribution—you get your reward in heaven.

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existence! (But the publishers of the Everyman series don't consider the PLEBS important enough to be favoured with review copies.)

M. S. is very gentle in his comments on the I.L.P. Study Courses (in "Students' Notes and Queries."). "Wat Tyler" in the *Herald* was much more brutal. But the "most unkindest cut of all" was Cole's review in the *Guild Socialist*. This was headed "Partial, But Not Candid;" and one paragraph was of especial interest to Plebs:—"It is curious to remember Mr. MacDonald's frequent and vigorous denunciations of the narrow and doctrinaire education of the Plebs League and the Labour College. The wildest Pleb certainly never conceived an idea of education so narrowly doctrinaire and parochial as that which these syllabuses embody." *Et tu, Brute!*

J. F. H.

END OF VOL. XIII.

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