

# PLEBS

September, 1923

Sixpence



Yes, but which am I to read?

(See page two of cover)

LATEST PLEBS PUBLICATION

NOW READY

*Order at once*

# WHAT TO READ

A GUIDE TO BOOKS FOR  
WORKER-STUDENTS

in History, Economics, Philosophy, Geography,  
Psychology, Biology, English, Modern Problems, &c.

64 PAGES

7<sup>D</sup>

(8d. postpaid)

Per dozen, postpaid, 5s. 6d. Per 25, 10s. 6d.

PLEBS, 162a Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

WITH SPECIAL  
8 pp. SUPPLEMENT

The Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges

# THE PLEBS

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

---

---

Vol. XV

September, 1923

No. 9

---

---

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
OUR POINT OF VIEW.. .. .	385
THE DIARY OF A WEEK (Illustrated) .. .. .	390
HOW LABOUR GOES WRONG. By R. W. Postgate .. .. .	396
THE BANK RATE. By Maurice Dobb .. .. .	399
GET READY FOR WINTER. By J. P. M. Millar .. .. .	403
ECONOMIC INFLUENCES IN SOCIAL LIFE. By Dorothy Swaine Thomas .. .. .	406
CLASS ROOM NOTES FOR STUDENTS AND TUTORS .. .. .	410
AN ENGLISH PRIMER FOR WORKER-STUDENTS. By J. F. H. .. .. .	411
BRIGHTENING UP THE SYLLABUS. By T. Ashcroft .. .. .	413
THE MARXISM OF MARX. By R. Holder and R. Murdoch .. .. .	415
REVIEWS: The Cult of Confusion; Psychology; An Elizabethan Capitalist; Astronomical Reactionaries; Essay Writing; The Railways; A Very Good Book; India; The Civilisation of Crete; etc... 417-425	
ESPERANTO NOTES .. .. .	425
LETTERS: From L. W. E. T. Harris, and H. Haynes .. .. .	426
THE N.C.L.C. AND ITS WORK .. .. .	427
LABOUR COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION .. .. .	430
THE PLEBS BOOKSHELF. By J. F. H. .. .. .	431

Special 8pp. Supplement—Syllabus of Lectures on R. W. Postgate's *The Builders' History*, by J. Hamilton.

---

---

## OUR POINT of VIEW

ONCE again, when the Trades Union Congress meets at Plymouth during the first week of this month, the question of Working-Class Education will come up for discussion. And, as before, the issue before the delegates will be "Independence or Co-Partnership in Working-Class Education." That is the plain issue which The PLEBS has now been emphasising for over fourteen years, and which the representatives of the National Council of Labour Colleges have been putting to the Educational Sub-Committee of the T.U. Congress



during recent months. Is the Trade Union movement to own and control its own educational institutions—as it owns its own press—independent of State doles or capitalist University assistance ; and are those institutions to stand for a frankly *Labour* education, to aim at inculcating a definitely *working-class point of view*—just as a Labour newspaper stands for a Labour policy ?

An increasing number of Trade Unionists are coming to realise that “education of any sort” will not do—that, in fact, no education at all is preferable to education of certain kinds.

*The One Thing Needed* What Labour needs is an education which will make Labour men and women more class-conscious, and equip them for the responsibilities and duties

which are class-consciousness translated into action. We hope, therefore, that the Congress delegates, before they assent to the spending of a single shilling on educational work or educational organisations, will satisfy themselves that the work in question, and the organisation to which it is entrusted, aim, first and foremost, at Education towards Class-Consciousness. That is the “one thing needful,” beside which all other considerations are of quite secondary importance. All the culture in the world is useless—to *Labour*—if it is not based on a Labour point of view. We would remind delegates of Lord Robert Cecil’s caustic remark to an educational conference some short time ago—“Why do you want more education, and more educated people? Look at Europe to-day. ‘Educated’ people have made it what it is.” Labour’s need is not simply for “More Education.” It is for *Education of a different kind.*

There are two minor points connected with the report which the Education Sub-Committee will be submitting to the Congress on which we want to comment here, and which

*Two Points for Delegates* we hope will be raised when the report is discussed. The first is that the representatives of the National Council of Labour Colleges—by

far the largest and most rapidly developing purely working-class educational organisation—have only attended the Sub-Committee’s meetings *in a consultative capacity.* No member of the governing body of the Labour College, London, which is owned and controlled by the National Union of Railwaymen and the South Wales Miners’ Federation ; nor any executive member of the National Council, which consists of representatives of the provincial colleges and classes, was invited to sit on the Sub-Committee set up to inquire into the subject of Labour education. That state of affairs ought to be remedied immediately.



Second, it is a matter for regret that no recommendation is made in the report in favour of the calling of a conference on Education, at which delegates from all the Unions interested would have the opportunity of hearing representatives of the various working-class educational organisations, and of questioning them on their aims, principles and policy. Such a course ought most emphatically to be followed before the Trade Union movement as a whole is committed to any educational scheme.

*If any Pleb reading the above is acquainted with a delegate to the Congress, and will send him on a marked copy of this magazine before the discussion takes place, we shall be very glad to supply him with another copy for himself, post free, on application.*

One of the most useful suggestions put forward in the course of the discussion after Mark Starr's lecture on "The Future of Our Movement" at the Summer School, was "Occupational" that Plebs and N.C.L.C.ers who are members of the same Union should get into touch with one another through a corresponding secretary, and thus be enabled to work together and back up one another in I.W.C.E. propaganda within their Union. It very often happens that, say, an engineer in one district is entirely ignorant of what his fellow unionists in some other area are endeavouring to do in this respect; and a good deal of wasted energy—and proportionate disappointment—is the result.

This ought to be, and can be, remedied. To *link up* comrades in widely separated areas is precisely what the Plebs League exists for. And it must link them not merely as Plebs, but—more exactly—as Pleb-engineers, Pleb-railwaymen, Pleb-painters, Pleb-general workers, and so on. Then, in touch with one another and working "according to plan," they can put into operation schemes for securing the support of their respective Unions for our educational movement.

The practicable way of getting this idea launched seems to be this:—If any member of any Union will write to The PLEBS, stating that he is willing to act as Corresponding Secretary for his particular Union, and quoting his address, then it is easy for his fellow-unionists who read the magazine to get into communication with him, make suggestions, and decide on a course of action. We believe—to take a single instance—that if twenty-five branches of the A.E.U. send up a resolution to Head office, that resolution *must* go before the Executive. There are, we are certain, sufficient Pleb-engineers scattered about the country to take advantage of this rule—if they first get into touch with one another. And this could be done through the medium of the magazine.

Now let us have half-a-dozen of these "occupational groups" to announce next month. If there's a dog's chance of getting your Union to do anything for Independent Working-Class Education, volunteer for the Corresponding Secretary's job and send along your address. We can't pull things off unless we organise. Let's organise a little more effectively.

The *Guild Socialist*, a monthly periodical which is the "house organ" of Mr. and Mrs. G. D. H. Cole, contained a good deal of matter last month for reflection. The editors lament that "our plant" (National Guilds—the word "plant" is not apparently used in the American sense) has been "hard hit." But "it will bloom fairer and stronger another year if we tend it carefully now." Those phrases are most important and enlightening. That is just what the Guilds movement is doing; it has left the revolutionary movement altogether, and sits in a corner "cultivating its plant." Other people do the spade work and get the bumps in the everyday industrial struggle: far away Mr. Cole sits among the cabbages and peas.

In a vague feeling that their movement is out of it, the editors have decided to change the paper's name, and it will become *New Standards*. This name presumably means not only a change of flags ("the red flag fades to pink..."), but many flags going all ways. Some still, we suppose, will carry the old red flag (with reservations), some already are carrying publicly the Fascist banner and march to Italy. Mr. Cole, as ever, will proudly and all alone follow that arm of the signpost which has no direction marked on it at all.

These are insults in return for praise, for, as very often, the paper contains much good advice to *THE PLEBS*. If we had time, we could make an interesting psychological study in repressed desire out of the way in which they continually mind our business for us. But what we are really concerned with is a piece of more colossal impudence in their advertisement, which not only tries to steal our motto, but actually claims that the Cole's new journal stands for "Workers' Control in Education."

Remember Cole's record—as supporter of the W.E.A. and everywhere that he can trying to take support away from and injure the independent working-class education movement.

Is there no limit to the indecency W.E.A.ers permit themselves? Workers' Control in Education! Take it away—this red herring stinks!

A report of the strikingly successful Summer School at Culcheth

appears on another page. But no report can do justice to the really lasting impressions of a gathering of friends such as this. Handshakes with old friends; talks with new ones and the discovery of similar hopes and tastes and ideals—these things stimulate one for keener work in the future even more than the formal lectures and discussions. Our critics call us “materialist.” But if they had heard us singing “Auld Lang Syne” on our last evening at Culcheth they would have realised—if they had a mind to—that Plebs are not quite dead to spiritual values!

The fact is, of course, that movements, besides standing for certain principles, consist of men and women. And not the most intellectual of us can afford to do without the inspiration that comes from meeting, in the flesh, the men and women who are working in the movement with us. This, far more than any other consideration, is what makes a Summer School worth while. We hope that an even greater number of Plebs will get together next year.

Through the generosity of the A.U.B.T.W. we are enabled to present to our readers this month, as a Special Supplement, the syllabus drawn up by J. Hamilton on *The Builder's History*, by R. W. Postgate. This will be of interest to all students of working-class history, as well as to tutors arranging classes under the A.U.B.T.W. Education Scheme. The book itself, a really first-class piece of work in every way, and one which will undoubtedly take its place as a classic of proletarian history, is published at 12s. 6d. It runs to more than 500 pages, and contains 8 photogravure illustrations, and a special fold-in chart. Again, through the generosity of the A.U.B.T.W., the book is available to Plebs and League members at the reduced price of 5s. 6d. (6s. 3d. postpaid)—the price at which it is supplied to A.U.B.T.W. members.

## THANK YOU!

“I have enjoyed *and passed on to others* my last twelve months' PLEBS. I enclose cash for another twelve.” (B., Chester).

“The PLEBS gets better—if that is possible—every month.” (G. G., Stafford).



## The DIARY of a WEEK

THE PLEBS—N.C.L.C. SUMMER SCHOOL AT CULCHETH,  
AUGUST 11th—18th.

*Our Summer School was not merely a success—it was a triumph. As a school, and as a holiday, it far surpassed everybody's anticipations. All those who attended are resolved on still bigger things for next year. Meantime, the following diary of the week's work and play should whet the appetites of those Plebs unable to get to Culcheth.*

**S**ATURDAY, AUG. 11TH.—Culcheth Hall takes a little bit of finding. There appear to be railway stations all around it, but none of them nearer than a mile or two away. Once inside the Hall grounds, however, no one worried any more about transport difficulties. *This* is good enough—given reasonable weather—for the next seven days! Trees, flowers, lawns, all in the pink of condition. A bowling-green big enough for half-a-dozen games at once, without too many collisions; three or four clock-golf greens; tennis courts—grass and gravel; a croquet lawn; and a liberal allowance of deck-chairs. And the internal arrangements of the Hall itself as good as the gardens—a large, airy dining-room, spacious, comfortable bedrooms, billiards in the lounge, and a piano in the drawing-room! (Also, as we quickly discover, a staff who could not be more enthusiastic about making the week a success if they had all been born I.W.C.E.ers!

We find, moreover, that we have not come to Culcheth unheralded! Our old friend, Lord Pembroke and Montgomery of the Primrose League, has been writing to the local press bewailing the evil days on which Culcheth Hall has fallen. It appears that before its acquisition by the Leigh Co-Operative Society, the Hall was the residence of one Squire Withington, "whose devotion to the Conservative cause will be remembered by many of your readers." "Those who knew him," his lordship groans, "can well imagine what his feelings would be to-day if he could see his home converted into a school for the teaching of Bolshevism and revolution...." Ah, well! The Squire would only be feeling what quite a number of his like who used to own halls and gardens in Russia are feeling to-day—and what we hope a still greater number of British and American and French and German squires are going to feel in the near future. And, as someone promptly

recalled, Squire Withington wasn't the only man who came from Culcheth: Walton Newbold was born here!

Plebs kept arriving right up to supper-time. The Lecture and Sports Committees got busy fixing up programmes. Everybody inspected the Bowling Cup, presented by the West Riding Council—adorned with the Yorkshire coat of arms (flea, fly, fitch of bacon, etc.), a clog in place of the helmet, and a shawl "torn in the industrial arena" for mantling! Yorkshire brazenly challenges the Rest of the Movement for its possession.

The Commissar  
& the Cup



*Sunday, Aug. 12th.*—Morning lecture (outside on the lawn) by Jack Hamilton, on "The Co-Operative Movement;" S. Ainsworth (Bury) in the chair. An excellent historical summary of the development of Co-Operation, and an appeal to N.C.L.C.ers to do more than we have done in the past to secure the support of Co-Operators for our own educational movement. One good suggestion made in the course of a keen discussion was that a short history of the Co-Operative Movement, on the lines of Mark Starr's *Trade Unionism*, should be prepared and issued by The PLEBS.

During the morning and early afternoon Plebs from Manchester and other neighbouring towns kept rolling in, until by 3 p.m. there were close on 100 present. Mark Collins presided over a "Rally," and aroused much enthusiasm by quoting extracts from the Pembroke and Montgomery lament over poor Squire Withington's hypothetical feelings. The Editor of The PLEBS delivered an address on "PLEBS Plans and Prospects," outlining the future publications we have in view, and appealing for a big effort to push the circulation of the magazine up to 7,000 at least this winter.

After tea, Mark Starr spoke on "The Story of the Robots," with readings from the play, and a hot discussion followed on the work and relative significance of the Capeks, Shaw, Anatole France, Galsworthy, etc., etc.... A crowded day, and one of the best attended and most enthusiastic Plebs "Meets" ever held.

*Monday, Aug. 13th.*—Preliminary rounds in the Bowls Handicap immediately after breakfast. At 11, J. F. Horrabin lectured on "Geography and History," Com. Garside presiding. J. F. H.

explained that this and the later lecture he is to deliver form a highly condensed summary of the Economic Geography Textbook to be issued this autumn: Part I., Historical; Part II., The World of To-day.

This afternoon and evening were given over to the Great God Sport. Bowls, tennis, croquet, clock-golf, and leap-frog in full swing. ("Our John Willie" distinguished himself at the latter.) After tea an open-air whist drive.



The two  
youngest members  
discuss things



*Tuesday, Aug. 14th.*—Mark Starr lectured on "The Future of Our Movement;" J. W. Thomas in the chair. A really able survey of the whole N.C.L.C. field—pointing out gains, but also indicating weak-

nesses. The discussion which followed was so keen that it had to be adjourned until after dinner, and it lasted altogether for more than three hours. It was concentrated chiefly on two points—the relation of the Labour College (London) to the class movement, and the organisation and administration of N.C.L.C. areas. With regard to the first, it was unanimously agreed that the N.C.L.C. and Plebs League should support the L.C. Students' Association in its agitation for representation on the governing board. On the second point, Com. J. Hamilton, the N.C.L.C. President, declared that one of the tasks to be undertaken immediately by the N.C.L.C. Executive was the delimitation of districts and areas, and the preparation of a standard scheme of administration, etc., which—with local modifications—would serve the needs of all districts.

In the evening, H. A. Hawkins (Hurst) presided at a reading of *The Insect Play* by J. F. Horrabin, which aroused great enthusiasm, and—again—a good discussion. Unanimous instruction to the reader to wire for a copy of Toller's *Machine Wreckers*, in order that a reading of that play may be added to the programme.

*Wednesday, Aug. 15th.*—First of a series of three lectures on Modern Germany by T. Ashcroft—"Germany, 1815—1871;" Com. Faulkner in the chair. A detailed analysis of the various classes and economic forces at work in Germany before and after '48. The discussion got "off the rails" a bit—on to geographical factors, their importance and influence; but this only indicated that folks are getting interested in geography—which is all the better for the prospects of the Geography Textbook.

This afternoon, in perfect weather, the semi-finals and final of



the great Bowls Handicap were played. Yorkshire had two representatives still unbeaten—Mark Collins and Miss A. Crabtree (both of Halifax), their respective opponents being J. Garside (Lancs) and Geo. Williams (Notts), the latter of whom had fought his way up to the last lap from scratch. Great enthusiasm—on the part of the Rest of England—when both the Yorkshire players were defeated. But the enthusiasm was short-lived, for after Garside had defeated Williams in the final, and so secured the trophy, he broke the news to us that though now resident in Lancs, he was born a Tyke—from “Yelland”!

After tea we had a discussion on a subject which by universal consent was of first-class importance—“Next Year’s Summer School.” It was agreed that it should be held in the north of England; if possible at a seaside place; and that it should extend over a fortnight (the first two weeks in August if possible). Kathleen and Mark Starr and J. F. and Winifred Horrabin were appointed as organising committee, and urged to complete arrangements as soon as possible, in order that full particulars could be announced in *The PLEBS* at an early date, and the greatest possible amount of publicity should be given to the scheme. N.C.L.C. districts urged to appoint Summer School organisers, to canvass support, collect instalments of fees, etc. All present swore a solemn oath to be there next year, whatsoever they might have to pawn in order to do so!



After supper, M. H. Dobb opened a discussion on “The Communist Party and Its Attitude to I.W.C.E.” At “lights out” time the battle was still raging. It was adjourned until next morning. Almost as many points of view were put forward as there were speakers; and one can say at least that everybody felt better for letting off steam.

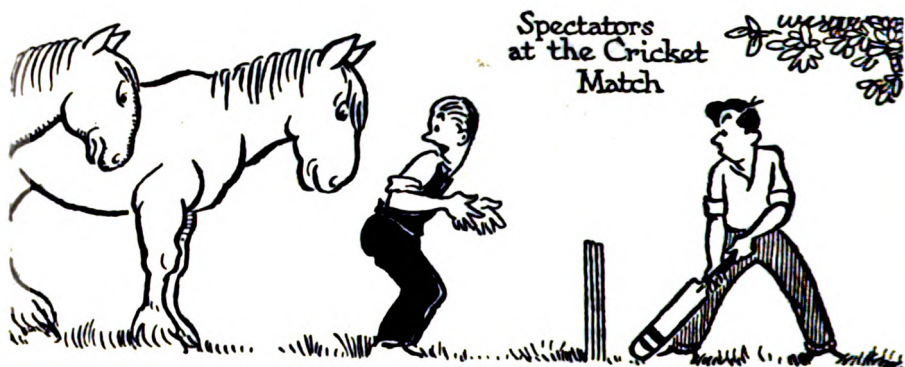
*Thursday, Aug. 16th.*—The second of J. F. H.’s Geography lectures—“The World of To-day”; C. F. Booth (Liverpool) in the chair. General consent that the Geography Textbook will fill the bill if it covers the ground outlined in these two lectures.

Afternoon, a cricket match between Yorkshire, captained by Frank Dixon, and the Rest of England, under H. A. Hawkins. White Rose again triumphant—by 43 to 40. Brilliant individual

displays by K. Bumstead, J. Garside, J. W. Thomas, S. Ainsworth, and nearly everybody on both sides.

In the evening came the one thing which damped our spirits—J. W. Thomas taken seriously ill. J. W. T. has been the life and soul of the whole week—depression proportionate.\*

His "brother-in-arms," Mark Collins, lectured after supper



on "The Thinking Organ," Miss Crabtree presiding. The lecturer's excellent charts and diagrams were particularly admired. A good discussion on the psychology of education and educational methods.

*Friday, Aug. 17th.*—T. Ashcroft's second lecture on "Germany, 1871—1914"; B. Lomas in the chair. A fine series of side-lights on the development of modern Imperialism.

Another cricket match in the afternoon—Ladies *v.* Gents—distinguished both by some remarkable play (and umpiring) and some striking figures on the field. The ladies' team, being weak in bowlers, had kidnapped the two fastest bowlers the men possessed; and these, arrayed in skirts and bandeaux, skittled the Gents out in great style. The latter meantime had persuaded two ladies to come to their rescue—in male attire; and if these ladies were (regretfully) unable to score centuries, they certainly added a lot to the picturesqueness of the occasion.

After tea came the reading of *The Machine Wreckers* by J. F. H. Then, after supper, a short whist drive. And, to wind up a great week, a social and "sing-song." The amount of talent discovered at this last moment was remarkable. Modest violets who had hidden themselves all the week came out and bloomed like anything!

\* We had to leave him at Culcheth when we came away on Saturday; but trust that ere these words are in type he will be restored to his usual health and spirits once more.



Mark Starr, C. F. Booth, and Frank Dixon discovered that they could recite. J. F. H. and Com. Knowles (of Hindley) found they could sing comic songs. And there were some *really* good musical contributions by Miss Davies, our "hostess" at Culcheth, R. H. Hawkins and H. A. Hawkins. Mark Collins gave us John Hartley (*Clock Almanack*) instead of Jo Dietzgen. And as midnight chimed we disturbed the ghost of poor Squire Withington once more by singing "The Red Flag."

In the course of these proceedings Mark Collins, as "Commissar" of the School, expressed our thanks to Miss Davies and her excellent staff for their ready courtesy and efficient service throughout our stay at Culcheth; and J. F. H., on behalf of all who attended, thanked the West Riding comrades, particularly Frank Dixon (organising secretary), Mark Collins and J. W. Thomas, who had taken the initiative in arranging the School, and been responsible for all preliminary arrangements.

*Saturday, Aug. 18th.*—Departures began—alas!—immediately after breakfast. Those comrades who could stay heard the third of T. Ashcroft's lectures, on "Germany To-day." It is good to know that the material of his excellent series will appear as articles in *THE PLEBS* this winter.

Looking back over the week, however, one feels that by far the most valuable thing about it—more valuable than the lectures, good as they have been—is the stimulated sense of comradeship, the inspiration that comes from meeting, and getting into closer touch with men and women with the same enthusiasm and hopes. All of us who were at Culcheth will put our backs into the work more this winter than ever before. And let us do our best to get new recruits for next year's School.

---

Arrangements are in hand for a

## FORTNIGHT'S SUMMER SCHOOL

next August. Get in touch with PLEBS office as early as possible if you're interested. If you can't come for the fortnight, come for a week.



## HOW LABOUR GOES WRONG

**T**HE latest publication of the Labour Publishing Company is a work of quite unusual importance.\* It is a study of how Labour rises to power, by the private secretary of the late Hon. John Storey, Labour Premier of New South Wales. It is the first serious study at all of what happens to a constitutional Labour Party when it gains or approaches power, by the means favoured by our right wing leaders here. The case of Russia is entirely different, so is that of Germany. Labour in Australia has done precisely what Labour here desires to do; it has secured political power by means of the ballot box. The Labour Party there consists of a very similar amalgam of political groups and trade unions. The problems which they have had to face and failed to handle are precisely those which are going to face the Labour Party here some day.

Childe's book is practically a history of Australian Labour, especially its recent history. The volume before us contains several sections. Firstly a logical analysis of the Labour Party machinery. This, because it is dullest, is put first. Secondly, an account of the attempts to control the politicians. Thirdly, an account of the heterogeneous elements that make up the Labour Party. Turning to the industrial side, the author gives a history of the movement, of the attempts at federation and then amalgamation, of the revolt against politicians, of the extraordinary career of the I.W.W., and of the One Big Union movement.

We have then a study of a movement which very considerably resembles our own, but it has this advantage—that it has in every way developed further and is of a limited area suitable for study. The Labour Parties in Australia have actually been in power in New South Wales, and in Queensland for a long period; and for short periods in the Commonwealth Government. The industrial unionist movement has got as far as floating a fully drawn up One Big Union. In both cases enormous mistakes have been made, but often mistakes from which something can be learnt.

Over fifty pages deal with the efforts made to control politicians when they get in, or near, power. They are mostly a record of

---

\* *How Labour Governs*, by V. G. Childe (Labour Publishing Company, 12s. 6d.). The book contains an unusual number of technical faults. The printing and binding and paper are not very good for 12s. 6d. It is really Volume I. of a work in two volumes, but this is not stated in the book; instead, a purely superficial attempt is made to make it look like a complete work. The title is not the correct one for this first volume. The author's own attitude is inconsistent in various places in the book, and always obscure.

failures. In the hope of holding the politicians to the Labour programme, after all a reasonable request, the party eventually worked out a system of triple controls. The politicians were firstly controlled by the Caucus, which is the Parliamentary Party. Secondly, by the Executive, which eventually claimed to pass all bills before a Labour Government should introduce them. Thirdly, the annual conference passes a platform, which the Labour Government is bound to observe strictly and treat as sacred, passing the bills therein contained.

These triple controls have been brought about because of various past conflicts. Yet they are not effective. For example, in 1911 Neilson, Lands Minister, was vigorously carrying out the unpopular—with the farmers—policy of resumption of Crown Lands. The Labour Government had a majority of two. Two members in sympathy with the farmers then resigned their seats, alleging that they had discovered they could not agree with the platform. Faced with the prospect of defeat, the Government ignored the platform, dismissed Neilson, and put in his place one of the resigners. Moreover, not only do Governments not obey Caucus and Convention, but they have actually artfully turned Caucus discipline, meant to check them, into a device for stifling criticism. These attempts at control have not held in the politicians in any way, or forced them to carry out a Socialist policy. On the contrary, men like Holman, Ryan, Theodore, and Hughes have in their time practically been autocrats. They have not even secured the Party the elementary right to choose who shall be Ministers. "In 1919 J. M. Hunter was holding no less than three portfolios in a temporary capacity, although Caucus had more than once laid it down that this gentleman was to be only an honorary Minister." (Queensland.)

But as Labour begins to approach power, other interests appear in its ranks to exercise in some cases the control which the Party fails to do. The two most striking, and surprising, influences in Australia appear to be the Roman Catholic Church and the liquor trade. The small ("cocky") farmer element we expect, but these are new allies. In the case of the booze trade, they are allies who have their price. In Queensland, and in New South Wales until the Federal military authorities intervened, the Labour Governments allowed absolutely unrestricted drinking during the war—again throwing the platform to hell. They reaped their reward at the elections, when every public house showed Labour colours and the licensed victuallers' cars collected Labour voters. The methods of the cementing of this alliance in N.S.W. were exposed in Parliament afterwards. Among other things,

The secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' Association had given a member of the State Parliament (whose name will be found in the Federal Hansard)

£500 to control conference in the interests of the trade in 1921. The same gentleman was subsequently told by official members of the State Ministry not that he must not contribute to the Party funds but that he must cease subsidising private members.

These methods have had their effect upon the personnel of the Labour Party. "Boodlers" seem to swarm; there is a dreadful stink of corruption about all this narrative. From outside the curse of graft rots the Party right through until it gets as bad as forged ballots in Unions (p. 67) in the selection of candidates. Worse than all, these have been exposed and nothing, it appears, has happened.

Given this corruption, and certain other difficulties, the industrial movement also falls into its own slough of despond. The Australian Workers' Union, an immense body, claims to be the "One Big Union," the aim of the recent revolutionary agitation in Australia. It has certain appearances of being such, in extent and character of membership. But it is a "mass union"; all its members are a great lump, undifferentiated and just catalogued by residence, not industrially. Because of this, and of the great differences, the ruling clique of officials, of none too good reputation, have dug themselves in so that they cannot possibly be moved. The use to the workers of this union is growing less and less. The craft unions, positively, were better.

The absorbing analysis of one fight between this union and the real O.B.U. propagandists fills the last chapter of the book. But before the end is reached of this chronicle of apparent success and real disaster, a shaft of unsteady light has appeared. The story of the I.W.W. in the earlier chapters brings us suddenly an echo of the heroism and enthusiasm of real revolutionaries, of "Boston and Valmy, Yorktown and Jemmappes." For the first time there were men who urged the workers to fight for themselves alone. They carried the class-struggle to its uttermost limit: sabotage, note-forgery, burning Sydney. They sacrificed themselves without question. Hitherto we have only read of this or that place taken by a Labour leader, this or that bribe accepted, this or that election wangled. Now for the first time it is of heavy sentences, frame-ups by the police, mobbing by patriotic roughs that we hear. Here is something at last to admire.

"You were the fool that charged a windmill. Still

The miller is a knave and was afraid."

And from the I.W.W., thinks our author with reluctant admiration, came all that the Labour movement has done recently in Australia—the stoppage of conscription, the consequent expulsion and the One Big Union movement.

R. W. POSTGATE.

# The BANK RATE

*An article on Current Economics which will interest every student of international affairs.*

**D**URING the past few weeks the various financial papers have been discussing the action of the Bank of England in raising the Bank Rate to 4 per cent. in the first week of July. Some theorists, such as Prof. Cassel, have justified this ; others, such as Mr. Keynes, have severely condemned it. It is vitally important for working-class students to understand the issues in this controversy : what are the effects of movements of the Bank Rate and what its political significance ? For on our understanding of this issue depends our power of forecasting movements in the price level, in unemployment, and in the general productive activity of capitalism. Moreover, behind this controversy lurks one of the important conflicts of interests inside the capitalist class, which is of considerable political significance in the present crisis-period.

Now the Bank Rate is the rate which the Bank of England charges to borrowers who come to it for credit advances. These borrowers are usually merchants and manufacturers who wish to have credit in order to carry stocks of raw materials or of manufactured goods. Their demand for credit will depend in part on the profit they expect to get out of trade or production, in part on the cost of obtaining credit (*i.e.*, the Bank Rate). A credit advance as a rule takes the form either of an "overdraft," giving the right to draw cheques up to a certain amount, or of discounting a Bill of Exchange.\* The effect of such an advance is to give to the borrowers more purchasing power, in the form of the right to draw cheques, than they would otherwise have. If they use this purchasing power, the demand for goods increases, and the general level of prices tends to rise.

It will be clear that a raising of the Bank Rate will make borrowers less willing to borrow, or at any rate to borrow as much as before. Hence merchants and manufacturers will get less credit advances from the banks : they will find money "dear" ; and they will have less purchasing power to spend on replenishing stocks, employing labour, etc. The result will be a tendency for the general level of prices to decline.

The three important effects of a raising of the Bank Rate will therefore be :—

1. To lessen trade and industrial activity.

---

\* See PLEBS *Outline of Economics*, p. 66.

2. To lessen the demand for labour and so increase unemployment.
3. To lower the general price-level.

But other effects also follow. In the first place, this decrease in the amount of credit advances will decrease the amount of cheques coming to the banks to be cashed. It will, therefore, decrease the demand for, and the amount of, pound Treasury notes in circulation. It will, therefore, raise a little the value of each pound Treasury note, or its purchasing power in terms of commodities in general.

In the second place, it will make it more profitable for foreigners who have money to lend, to send it to London and invest it there (either in bills or short-term bonds or securities), where the rate of interest is high. Hence there will be a demand for sterling (or for bills on London) in the international money market, which will raise the value of sterling relative to other currencies. In other words, the foreign exchange will move in favour of Britain. Another influence aiding this will be a slackening off of imports, owing to the lower price-level in Britain, and a consequent tendency for an export surplus, creating a demand for bills on London to pay for the exports.

Hence the other two important effects are :—

4. Improvement in the internal value of the currency.
5. Improvement in the external or foreign exchange value of the currency.

It will be noticed that 3 and 4 are identical things looked at from different sides. Price of Goods is Goods expressed in Money. Value of Money is Money expressed in Goods. One is the "reciprocal" of the other. Hence we can lump both together under the term *Deflation*. It will be noticed that, although these effects will be most obvious when the Bank Rate is *raised*, the same effects are likely to happen if the Bank Rate is merely kept too high.

But Deflation once started tends to go on in a vicious circle. When prices are falling, merchants and manufacturers who hold stocks of goods stand to lose. If the price level is falling 5 per cent. a month, and at the beginning of the month a capitalist has bought stocks at £100, at the end of the month the stuff will only sell for £95. Hence business men will be very cautious of replenishing stocks and starting production going, if they think prices are going to continue to fall. They will let their capital stay in the form of money at the bank, rather than put it into goods. In other words, money will circulate less quickly, because people wish to keep a larger proportion of their resources in the form of money (which is rising in value) and less in the form of goods (which are falling in price). Now this slowing down of the velocity of



circulation of money has a deflationary effect on prices.\* Further, business men are still less inclined to pay the heavy costs of borrowing from the banks, and the volume of credit advances made by the banks declines. The more prices fall, the greater becomes the burden of the Bank Rate, and the greater its deflationary effect.

Now, ever since the spring of 1920, when the Bank of England raised its rate to 7 per cent. with the object of stopping Inflation, this process of Deflation has continued. As was shown in *The PLEBS Unemployment Number*, and as I showed in the January *Communist Review*, there were during the summer of last year distinct signs of a revival of trade and production. An actual trade boom was in progress in U.S.A. last winter. In this country costs had been "cut" enormously, stocks of commodities were very much depleted. Demand for coal and pig iron had recovered considerably. Dr. Varga in his excellent report to the Comintern, published in English as *The Process of Capitalist Decline* (which everyone should read), gives evidence of this revival in several capitalist countries. There was, however, in this country (and also in some others) one thing that stopped that revival from taking place—the deflationary influence of a high bank-rate.

What was the object of the Bank of England in keeping its rate so high? Its object was to achieve 4 and 5. The restoration of the pound sterling to its pre-war parity—with gold and with the dollar, and so to restore the gold standard. But in trying to achieve 4 and 5, the deflationists also produced 1, 2 and 3. Now, 1 and 3 are severely detrimental to industrial and commercial capital—they mean less business and no profits. On the other hand, 4 and 5 are beneficial to the financial interests—restore the "prestige" of the City of London, and make all debts calculated in sterling of a greater *real* value.

Here, then, is the germ of that important clash of interests between industrial capital and the financial interests, to which Mr. Philippe Price drew attention about a year ago in *The Labour Monthly*. The industrialist desires Inflation; the financier and banker desire Deflation. To some extent, of course, the industrialist and the financier are linked together in the form of Finance Capital. But there is still sufficient difference between them to produce a conflict.

---

\* See *Economics Textbook*, p. 58. A modern statement of the formula of the price-level, which better fits post-war conditions, is  $P = \frac{KR}{N}$ , where P = value of money, R = total resources of commodities, N = quantity of money in circulation, and K = proportion of resources which people keep in the form of money. If K (which is a fraction) gets larger, P (value of money) gets larger. See *M.G. Reconstruction* No. 11, p. 660.

Until the spring of this year all was going well with the deflationists. For, while deflation was in progress in this country, in U.S.A. there was inflation. In 1922 in U.S.A. the price-level rose about 12 per cent. This was depreciating the value of the dollar and hence of gold, since the greatest demand for gold comes at present from the U.S.A., which alone among the leading nations is on a gold standard.\* Hence sterling and gold were coming nearer to one another. In February, however, the Federal Reserve Board of U.S.A. (largely representing J. P. Morgan interests) put up its rate by  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. ; and this had the effect of checking the rise in prices and of producing a small fall and a slackening off of industrial activity. Sterling and gold moved apart again.

This, of course, did not please Threadneedle Street and Lombard Street at all. The first week in July the British Bank Rate was raised, in order to raise the prestige of Queen Sterling and her paramour, the City of London. This action, combined with the psychological effects of the reparations deadlock are the two factors intensifying the crisis of capitalism as it affects this country at the present time. This conflict between industrial and financial interests is an important cause of instability in world capitalism at the present time. It renders schemes for stabilisation, like those of Prof. Cassel and Mr. Hawtrey, unpractical; since it will not be scientific but economic interests which will predominate in the regulation of the bank-rate and the currency. Moreover, before the war speculative "manipulation" was confined mostly to the Stock Exchange and Produce Markets. To-day a powerful combine, with political and financial influence, can extend its "manipulation" to the value of the very currency itself, as Stinnes is said to have done in Germany. The immense centralisation of modern capitalism, both economically and politically, gives to one powerful group of interests the power to wreck the whole economic life of the nation, perhaps of the whole capitalist world.

MAURICE DOBB.

---

\* See "Students' Notes."

---

*Plebs Propaganda Pamphlet*

**DO YOUR OWN THINKING**

12 pp. pamphlet, with pictorial coloured cover. . .

Price 2d. 1s. 6d. per doz.; 5s. 9d. per 50 (postpaid).

# GET READY for WINTER

*The National Secretary of the N.C.L.C. here supplies some useful hints to local organisers.*

**N**OW is the time—despite the thermometer—to be maturing plans for the winter campaign. Hence these few remarks on propaganda leaflets. To what extent does our movement make the fullest use of the leaflet, in relation of course to the cash available for printing? Some local Labour Colleges seem to make no use of leaflets at all—at any rate they forward no copies to the N.C.L.C. ; others simply issue handbills stating that the local College exists and giving a list of classes with particulars of fees. Now leaflets can be a very powerful propaganda weapon, and provide one of the best ways of attracting students and support if properly drawn up and *distributed with care*.

To take the latter point first. Merely giving away leaflets anyhow is wasteful in every way. They should be distributed only in likely quarters—T.U. branches, Trade Councils and other working-class organisations, and distributed at Labour meetings and in workshops.

So far as the first point is concerned, if the leaflet merely states the existence of the College and where the classes are held it takes for granted that the recipients know what the Labour College stands for and desire to come to the classes. Unfortunately, that is not often the case. A properly drafted leaflet must therefore set out to create that knowledge and to stimulate that desire and it must proceed to do so not by setting the compositor working overtime putting together words like proletariat and bourgeoisie. *Punch* did the Labour Movement a service some time ago when it caricatured the Labour orator addressing a working-class audience in the following terms :—“ In plain English, if the bourgeoisie persists in intransigentism the proletariat must resort to sabotage.” The leaflet must attempt to interest the worker and must talk to him in plain terms.

The following are the explanatory parts of two leaflets, each of which concluded with a list of local classes and affiliated bodies. They are instanced not because of any particular merit, but because they have been successfully used and indicate something of the kind of leaflet that will be most effective :—

## A WORD WITH YOU !

Do you know what Independent Working-Class Education stands for? Its purpose is to enable the Workers to under-

## THE PLEBS

stand the world in which they live—particularly the exceedingly complex capitalist system of society—in order that their Industrial, Political and Co-operative efforts may be better and better directed. For that purpose the Scottish Labour College (Edinburgh District) is running the undernoted Lecture Courses in Edinburgh and Leith. The courses are FREE to members of the affiliated organisations detailed overleaf—for others the fee is only 2s. 6d. for the Session.

Don't you think the College can help you to pull your full weight in the Working-Class Movement? Join a course NOW and bring your friends both men and women. You are living in one of the most critical periods in the whole course of human history. Whether the Working Class marches forward or is driven backward depends on such as you. Think! An educated Working Class has a future—an uneducated Working Class has none.

### ARE YOU A LIVE-WIRE ?

*Why are you in a Trade Union ?* Because you can't leave your hours and your wages to be settled by the Boss. You know that the longer you work the more he gets and the greater the number of your unemployed fellow workers. You know that the less he pays you in wages, the more he is likely to get in profits. In other words, his interests and yours *conflict*. Because they do conflict, you form a Trade Union to protect your standard of life and the bread and butter of your dependants.

*Is Organisation alone sufficient ?* Has Trade Unionism alone been as successful as you would like? You will agree that it hasn't and a moment's thought will make it clear that merely joining a Union doesn't make a man or woman a really *effective* Trade Unionist, or mere numbers an *effective* Trade Union—one "Live-Wire" is worth twenty "Dead-Heads!" What is wanting? Not the *desire* to be able to do something, but *lack of sufficient knowledge*—the worker must know HOW!

Everyone is aware that the capitalist system of society is the most complicated that has ever existed. In consequence, the problems of Trade Unionism, which are of course problems of society, are bound to be exceedingly complicated. Because the capitalist system is so complex there are multitudes of opportunities for misleading the workers (compare for instance the activities of the Press during a strike), and in self-protection workers must get for themselves an understanding of the system in which they live. That is where the Scottish Labour College comes in.

*What is the Scottish Labour College ?* It is a working-class

educational institution which has been built up by workers who have realised the urgent need for this knowledge ; who have realised that only *educated* Trade Unionism is *effective* Trade Unionism. They realise, moreover,—and this is very important—that just as it would be ridiculous to join a Trade Union financed or controlled by the Bosses, so, for education in social, economic, and Trade Union questions, it is equally foolish to support Colleges and classes run by employers or employer-controlled education authorities.

At the present moment the College is managed by some 270 Trade Unions (*e.g.* Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers), Trade Union branches, co-operative societies and working-class political parties. It carries on classes all over Industrial Scotland on subjects of practical importance to the workers such as Industrial History, Economics, Trade Unionism, and the History of the Working-Class Movement.

What can the College do for your Organisation ? What can it do for YOU ?

J. P. M. MILLAR.

## The NATIONAL COUNCIL of LABOUR COLLEGES

is composed of Educational Organisations (such as the Labour College, London, the Scottish Labour College and provincial Colleges, and the Plebs League) providing *independent working-class education* by means of

*Residential Tuition*  
*Evening Class Tuition*  
*Summer and Week-end Schools*  
*Correspondence Tuition*  
*Lectures by Post*  
*Publications (Magazine, Textbooks, &c.)*

It is supported by the A.U. Building Trade Workers, the N.U. Distributive and Allied Workers, the Scottish T.U. Congress, the Federation of Building Trade Operatives, and scores of T.U. branches, Trades Councils, &c. Get *YOUR* organisation to arrange an educational scheme in conjunction with the N.C.L.C.

*WRITE NAT. SECRETARY, 22 ELM ROW, EDINBURGH*



## ECONOMIC INFLUENCES in SOCIAL LIFE

**A**DVOCATES of the "economic interpretation" of history have long maintained the importance of the economic as the underlying factor in social problems. This assumption is important to socialist theories, since it places the emphasis on change in the fundamental, or economic factors, rather than on "social reform," or the attempt to solve social problems without first making an economic adjustment. But, however valuable such a theory may be as a working hypothesis, and however necessary it may be to assume the truth of this hypothesis for all practical purposes, it should never be regarded as established until all the available facts relating to it have been collected and analysed. It should therefore be of great interest to all who hold this theory to see what light is thrown upon it by scientific analysis.

The scientific way of testing the influence of a particular factor in a problem where there are several factors which may possibly be causes is to vary the factor which we want to test, and to keep the other factors constant. If we find that there is only one factor which is variable, or that one is overwhelmingly variable, then we may assume that the variable factor has been the principal cause. Compared with the factor of economic change, most other causes of social problems, over a long period of time, have been relatively constant. Great changes and upheavals in the economic life have occurred since the Industrial Revolution, which have no parallel in any other field. We cannot assume, for instance, that any increase in the total amount of marital unhappiness could cause a sudden rise in the divorce rate. There were, for instance, a great many more divorces in the U.S. in 1906 than in 1904, but we know that the amount of unhappiness was probably no greater in 1906 than in 1904. The explanation undoubtedly is an economic one: the costliness of the proceedings makes divorce possible only when a person is on a firm economic basis, and likewise the increased economic independence of women in a period of prosperity may be important. Looking at these two years, we find that 1904 was a year of business depression in the U.S., prices and wages were low, there were many commercial failures, and there was a great deal of unemployment. In 1906, on the other hand, there was general prosperity, prices and wages were rising, and there was comparatively little unemployment. Is it not more reasonable to seek the cause of the change in the social factor, divorce, in the

Change in economic conditions rather than in a change in a psychological factor like happiness? Again, in the case of disease. We are all subjected to contact with tuberculosis germs. But we are not all equally susceptible, and the disease occurs, generally, among those closest to the poverty line. Furthermore, increases in certain years, correspond to years in which there was business depression and widespread unemployment. So also the variations from year to year in the marriage rate cannot be explained by any variation in the sex instinct from one year to another, but, in general, by the conditions of business and employment.

It is interesting even to know the fact that social conditions change as a result of economic conditions, but the importance of this knowledge is greatly increased if we can tell anything about the degree of relationship. Is the infant death rate more closely connected with business conditions than the general death rate? Do crimes against the person and crimes against property give evidence of the same degree of economic causation? How far can we say any particular social problem is determined by economic conditions?

By statistical analysis, we can obtain results which show the degree of relationship between business conditions and social events. Our method is to obtain series of statistics over a number of years which will show the changes in economic conditions, and other series which will show the changes in social conditions, and to compare each of these social series with the economic series. We want then to express the relationship between each particular social series and the economic series in quantitative form which we can compare with each of the other relationships.

Cycles of business, that is, alternate periods of prosperity and depression, are the common lot of all capitalist countries, and therefore, a satisfactory index of economic conditions must be one that will show most clearly these cyclical fluctuations. Because of the complexity of modern industrial life, this series must represent as many types of economic activity as possible. In constructing a business cycle for the United States,\* the following types of economic activity were represented: wholesale prices, commercial failures, employment, coal and iron production, railway freight-ton mileage, bank clearings, and imports. After both the social and the economic series have had all influences but the cyclical removed (that is, the general upward movement, or downward movement which is the long time trend, and the normal seasonal movement)

---

\* See article in Quarterly Journal, American Statistical Association, Sept., 1922, "The Influence of the Business Cycle on Certain Social Conditions." By Ogburn and D. S. Thomas.

we can measure the relationship between the economic cycles and the social cycles. To do this, we obtain what is known as the *coefficient of correlation*. If for every upward movement in the economic series there is a corresponding upward movement in the social series, and the downward movements also correspond exactly, we have a perfect correlation, which is expressed as 1. Any lesser correlation will be expressed as something between 1 and 0, that is, as a fraction. For example, nine-tenths will represent a high, five-tenths a moderate correlation, and 0 a lack of all correlation. Conclusions follow from results obtained in studying the conditions in the U.S. Similar work on English material, although not in form for publication, indicates that these conclusions are also applicable to conditions here.

1. *Marriages*.—The correlation between marriage rate and the business cycle is high, being nine-tenths for the period 1870—1920. This means that in times of unemployment and business depression the marriage rate falls to a minimum and rises with the return of “good times.” The constriction of the marriage rate below what might be considered normal is bound, in itself, to have undesirable social results. There seems to be evidence that prostitution and illegitimacy increase when the marriage rate is below normal.

2. *Births*.—The correlation between the birth rate and the business cycle for the same period is fairly low, three-tenths, if we assume that it moves one year after the changes in business conditions. This relation is probably only secondarily an effect of business changes, and is primarily due to changes in the marriage rate.

3. *Divorce*.—The correlation is high, seven-tenths, for the period 1867—1906. The economic influence on the divorce rate has been emphasised earlier in the article.

4. *Disease*.—There is evidence that the diseases of poverty fluctuate closely with the business cycle. The coefficients of correlation have not been computed.

5. *Death*.—The general death rate shows a surprisingly high correlation, sixth-tenths. This means that there are more deaths in times of prosperity than in times of depression, but the faulty death registration in the U.S. may affect the result. Similarly infant death rates show a correlation of four-tenths. This may mean also, of course, that the bad effects of a period of depression do not show their results immediately, but lead to deaths several

years later, in a period of prosperity. This seems to be also the medical opinion.

6. *Suicide*.—The suicide rate in the U.S. for the period 1900—20 shows a high negative correlation of seven-tenths, that is, there is a large number of suicides in times of depression, few in prosperity. The economic factor is undoubtedly an important cause of suicide.

7. *Crime*.—Crime may, in general, be considered in three classes. (a) There are "professional" crimes, that is, those committed by habitual, expert criminals. These are not numerous enough to obtain adequate statistics of their fluctuations, but they are probably unaffected by short period changes of economic conditions. (b) There are crimes due to psychological causes. These are fairly numerous, and include a large number of juvenile crimes, sexual crimes, etc. Statistics were not available in the U.S. The English figures suggest an economic influence. Recent statistics of the rejections of drafted men in the U.S. because of mental disorders, however, show that a much larger number came from urban than from rural districts. This would tend to show the economic influence in causing mental disorders, and hence its indirect influence in causing the so-called psychological crimes. (c) By far the most numerous class of crimes have a definitely economic origin. Crimes against property, with violence, including burglary, housebreaking and robbery, and the more numerous crimes against property without violence, including all sorts of larcenies, receiving stolen goods, etc., all seem to show a close connection with the business cycle. The figures were not available for the U.S., and these conclusions are based on English returns. The only satisfactory statistics in the U.S. were certain New York figures for total convictions for crime. These showed a fairly high negative correlation of four-tenths; convictions were large in economically bad times and small in good times.

This article is in many ways inadequate, based as it is on unfinished results. The excuse for it is that the results are suggestive, and that they give some idea of the far reaching social effects of the trade cycle. They show the futility of regarding the trade cycle as only a business phenomenon, and indicate, on the other hand, that it is closely interwoven with the social fabric of modern life. Furthermore, it suggests that the social problems arising from these conditions described above are dependent on economic conditions to so considerable an extent as to make fundamental change impossible until there has been a fundamental change in economic conditions.

DOROTHY SWAINE THOMAS.



## CLASS ROOM NOTES

### for Students and Tutors

**S**TUDENT asks why M. H. Dobb in the July number said that "the value of gold at present depends on the value of the dollar, which in turn depends on the degree of inflation and the level of prices in U.S.A." Is not this a contradiction of the Marxian theory that the value of gold is determined by socially necessary labour?

If STUDENT will refer to Chapter II. of the Economics Text-book, page 22, he will see that the statement that value equals labour-time is true *only under certain conditions*. Moreover, it is an *abstract* theory, worked out on certain assumptions for the purpose of an analysis of capitalism. Price *in the concrete* differs from labour-value and is influenced by other factors (scarcity and demand). Now, since the war, with the abandonment of the gold standard by the belligerent countries of Europe, circumstances have so changed as to make the old theories of money partly obsolete. The only country where gold is wanted as money in considerable quantities is U.S.A. The demand has shrunk, supply has gone on increasing; and because there has been a surplus supply of gold the price of gold has fallen below its pre-war value. Hence, every increase in the demand for gold as dollars in U.S.A. (owing to inflation of credit there) makes the surplus supply smaller, and so tends to restore the price of gold to its pre-war value. The reason why Com. Dobb used the term "value of gold" instead of "price" was because in the popular usage of the term "the value of gold" in current financial and monetary discussion is synonymous with the Marxian use of "the price of gold," and Com. Dobb was using it in its popular sense. When a theoretical use of a term conflicts with the popular use of it, it is often better to use the latter, except where one is expressly writing in technical terms. At any rate, apart from theory, Dobb's statement is a statement of *observed fact*.

The level of prices, which is merely an expression for the value of all commodities in terms of money, increases the more currency of all kinds (including cheques) there is in circulation. Hence, inflation of credit in U.S.A., and a consequent increased paying of cheques, raises the price-level, in turn increases the demand for gold as money, and so raises the price of gold. During the last eighteen months this has actually been the effect of credit inflation in U.S.A. To-day it is much more important for students

to learn about what influences the *price* of gold, than to go into the more abstract and difficult theory about its connection with labour-value.

### The U.S. and the Caribbean.

Readers of the Geographical Footnote in *The PLEBS*, July, 1922, on "American Expansion in the Caribbean," will recall that the typically American form of "annexation" is to get the Washington Government (*alias* Wall Street) appointed as "financial adviser" to a particular territory. This method squares better with "American traditions," since it leaves the territory in question nominally independent. An article in the *Daily Herald* (Aug. 21) supplies further examples of its working, particularly in the Caribbean area. "Guatemala is learning that the price of an American loan is independence. An American financial commission is arranging Columbia's finances, and Peru and Bolivia are thoroughly under the Wall Street thumb. Uruguay, however, has just refused the onerous terms of the National City Bank, and has resolved to float an internal loan."

The case of Columbia is particularly interesting, because, as readers of *The PLEBS Outline of Imperialism*—or of Scott Nearing's *American Empire*—will remember, the U.S. Government made a mortal enemy of the Columbian Republic by its refusal to pay the price Columbia asked for the right to build the Panama Canal, and its subsequent assistance of the Panama province "rebellion." Years after this—in 1921—it voted some millions of dollars to Columbia in compensation. It would now appear that the "grant" paved the way for a little "supervision." Remember (*a*) that Columbia is too near Panama to be safe as an entirely independent, and possibly hostile, state; and (*b*) that there is oil in Columbia.

## An ENGLISH PRIMER for WORKER-STUDENTS

**F**OR a long time we have most of us felt the need of a good, simple primer of written and spoken English adapted to the needs of our students. R. W. P. has recently been recommending Cobbett's *Grammar*. But although Cobbett was a genius, and his book a classic, the very fact that it was written a century ago, though it might attract some people, makes it not altogether suitable, as it stands, for general use to-day. Probably anyone who has already had a grounding in English would appreciate Cobbett. But an elementary book, giving the grounding was still desirable.


The Labour Publishing Co. will issue this month *English for Home Students*, by F. J. Adkins (cloth 2s. 6d., paper 1s. 0d.). This little book was written expressly for Labour College students, and the manuscript has been read and discussed by three or four Plebeians. We propose to stock it along with our own Text-books, and to recommend its use to our classes and individual students. We believe it to be, within the limitations of its size, as good a handbook of English as could be desired. It deals with its subject in a practical way—for example, it discusses the art of public speaking, from the preliminary working up of the subject matter, through the preparation of notes, to the actual delivery, with hints as to vocabulary, jokes, interruptions, platform confidence, *rapport* with audience, etc.

[When does one say "effect," when "affect"? When "who," when "whom"? Why is "between you and I" wrong? How does one use commas, semi-colons, and other "stops"? These and a hundred similar questions are answered in this little book, and answered in an easy, colloquial style which quickly arouses the reader's interest. There will be no excuse, after this book is published, for any PLEBS contributor sending in copy needing editorial correction or emendation!


Bring *English for Home Students* to the notice of your friends, and send orders direct to The PLEBS Office.

J. F. H.

## ESPERANTO & LABOUR



WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
UNITE  
" KARL MARX "



PER HELPO DE ESPERANTO  
L.L. ZAMENHOF  
J.F.H.

2d

Issued by the BRITISH  
LEAGUE of ESPERANTIST SOCIALISTS  
(B. L. S. S.)

## Just Out

### The Case for the International Lan- guage

16 pages

2d

This pamphlet should be used to prepare the way for Esperanto classes. It points out how useful to the Workers' Movement an international language could be, and gives samples of Esperanto grammar to show how easily it can be learnt.

Can be supplied from PLEBS Office,  
2½d. postpaid, or 1s. 6d. per dozen.

## BRIGHTENING UP the SYLLABUS

**T**HE kind of syllabus used to announce a course of lectures may have a good deal to do with the success or otherwise of the course. The more serious type of student will be most attracted by a quite serious, "business-like" syllabus—one which merely summarises the main heads of the lectures and which makes no special attempt to be attractive in any other way. On the other hand, the newcomer will often be frightened off by a syllabus of that kind. It looks too "learned." He wants something more conversational—something which states the gist of the lectures in the terms of his own experience and outlook.

The two kinds of syllabus are well exemplified below. Both are versions of the same thing, but each appeals in a different way. The first is a syllabus of the usual kind. The second represents an attempt to "brighten up" the material in order to appeal more directly to a popular audience. And we can do with a good deal of this "brightening up" in our ordinary class work!

### COURSE OF SIX LECTURES ON SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

LECTURE 1. *The New Science of Behaviour*, discusses two old and widely accepted theories of conduct, (a) that man's conduct is consciously ordered in accordance with his desire for happiness or his personal interest; (b) that the motive of all human behaviour is the satisfaction of the instincts of self-preservation and sex.

The lecture proposes to demonstrate how large a part impulse plays in human behaviour, and to shew the necessity for extending our views as to the springs of human action by the inclusion of another instinct—the herd instinct.

LECTURE 2. *The Individual and his life in Society*, shows the way in which each individual becomes moulded to the traditional ways of thought, feeling and action of his particular society, and is thus prepared to play his own part in that social life. It will consider the several stages through which the behaviour of the individual passes in his progress from infancy to maturity.

### COURSE OF SIX LECTURES ON SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

LECTURE 1.—Have you ever wondered *why men swear*? Nowadays, *women swear too!* Why? Do they think the matter out first, and then use the "swear-word" because that best expresses their feelings? *Do they, or we, think at all?*—think before speaking or acting, that is? We nearly always do just the opposite—go on acting till our actions land us in a hole, and only then do we begin thinking—how to get out! We all do this, and we all know we do it. Yet we still go on *acting first and thinking after*. Why?

LECTURE 2.—Did you ever *cry for the moon*? And have you "learned better" since? Most of us have. Youth would remould the world nearer to the heart's desire, but Age is *grateful for—the old-age Pension!* What power is it that thus brings our high hopes to the earth? Is it because we have made up our minds to practise *plain living and high thinking*? Or that we have reasoned out the unreasonable-

LECTURE 3. *The Underlying Principles of Social Thought and Action*, discusses the necessary conditions for social life, and its basic principles. It shows how the group instinct functions in various types of human association, e.g., the mob, a crowd collected by some common interest, an organised unit such as an army. Finally it considers the effect of social life upon the individual for good and ill.

LECTURE 4. *The Group Instinct in War-Time*.—(a) Psychological reactions of war-time, Fear, Intolerance of isolation, Vitality of Rumour.

(b) Significance of such reactions. The stimulation of the herd instinct. National Unity—the Classes and the Nation.

LECTURE 5. *Peculiarities of Particular Societies*.—"Other peoples, other manners." National characteristics. The Cases of Germany and Japan. Class Customs and Ideas. The determinant of special modes of thought—Race or Class?

ness of our early dreams, and resigned ourselves to "the inevitable?" But whence came *our ideas* as to what is inevitable? Are they *really our own*? Or are they only those of the people around us and of the newspapers we read? Are they the *views which "everybody" holds*? Why is it so very easy to be "in the fashion" in our views, and so very *difficult to be "different"?*

LECTURE 3.—Have you ever been *one of a mob*, and felt its fickleness? Do you remember what it's like to be *swayed hither and thither* by it in mind and feeling as in body? Is that why "three policemen are a match for a mob of three hundred?" What then is the difference between *a mob and an army*? How is the raw recruit changed by the discipline and associations of army life? Is it the same with *the individual and social life*? and is this *good or bad*?

LECTURE 4.—Has *the experience of the War* anything to teach us from the way in which "the nation" thought and felt? Is it true that *all classes united* in face of the common danger? Where did that sudden unity spring from? Was it a lasting unity, and did it include everybody? There was *the profiteer*, for example; was profiteering a sign of national unity? And *the Church*—did it do *its duty in War-time*? Or did it do the things it ought not to have done, and leave undone the things it ought to have done?

LECTURE 5.—"*Other Times, Other Manners*,"—and other ways of thought. Our barbarian forefathers thought that *Hell was a very cold place*, and Heaven a place of endless fighting and feasting; and they did their level best to make earth as like that heaven as possible! Why have opinions changed so since then? Of course, they were "barbarians" while we are "civilised," but—*What has made us "civilised" in our ways and thoughts*? And what is the difference between "civilised" and "uncivilised" peoples of to-day? Is it because we are white, and they are black or yellow? But the ways of life and thought among the Japanese have already changed profoundly; and the *Hindus and Chinese are changing too*. Why? What causes the changes in customs and outlook?



LECTURE 6. *Lessons for Organised Labour*.—The possibilities of the Social Instinct. The necessity for the conscious direction and systematic cultivation of the instinct in order to convert the existing chaos into organised structure. Natural Selection and group life. Static and Dynamic Views—the necessary motive in the social unit of the future.

\* LECTURE 6.—*Do leaders lead, or do they simply "feather their own nests?" Is leadership necessary at all? If so, why, and what are the qualities our leaders should possess? And, above all, where are they leading us? Up to the present, Labour has generally been led "up the garden" by the Liberals and Tories; how can it get out of the high road to the new social order? What has our new knowledge to tell us about that?*

T. ASHCROFT.

## The MARXISM of MARX

IN his second article Comrade Murphy makes the general charge against those workers in the Labour College movement who replied to his first, that they concentrated on the questions of "the relations between the Communist Party and non-party organisations, and of what organisation should control workers' education," in spite of the fact that he himself had never mentioned the Communist Party.

Quite so. But although Comrade Murphy did not actually mention the Communist Party, that is not to say the question of the relationship of the Plebs League and the N.C.L.C. to the Party was not the real aim and motive underlying his criticism of the educational methods of these bodies. The experienced Marxian student always endeavours to get down to the reality underneath. And it is fairly clear to those who read between the lines (even if Comrade Murphy's personality and position were unknown to us) that his *primary* aim was not a discussion as to how we may perfect and simplify the teaching of Marx's theories to the mass of the workers, but to set going a discussion on Marxist education with the ulterior motive "of a wrangle" as to the relationship of the Plebs League and the N.C.L.C. to the Communist Party.

With this object, Comrade Murphy makes certain charges against the teaching of the Labour Colleges which are entirely groundless.

"He started out to fly his kite  
With strongest string he had."

The weakness of his string is openly and plainly demonstrated in his second article. The camouflage of educational criticism is cast to one side. The real crime of the Labour College movement, according to Comrade Murphy, comes out in his charge that we have "a non-Marxian conception as to the role of a worker's revolutionary party in the class struggle"; that "syndicalist elements within the Labour Colleges and Plebs League dominate them," and that these elements "resent the new competitor in the advent of the Communist Party."

One can do nothing but laugh at these childish arguments, which only demonstrate Murphy's complete ignorance of the Labour Colleges.

A revolutionary party working on a real Marxian basis has still to develop, and far from having "a non-Marxian conception as to the role of the Party," I contend that the teachings of the Plebs League and the N.C.L.C. will play a decisive part in the formation of such a party by the organised workers.

On the other hand, the Communist Party as a Party has proved by its tactics its own non-Marxian conception of such a role—in its neglect to apply on its formation in 1920 the principles set forth by Marx himself in the first few paragraphs of Sect. 2 of the Communist Manifesto, and I emphasized in my first letter, that it was the ignorance of these principles which unfitted it, as a Party, to undertake the discussion of working-class education,

although I am also well aware that many members of the Party have profited by the experience gained since 1920, and are doing their best to retrieve the errors of the past.

Meanwhile, I will again close with a quotation, but not poetry this time :—

"The greatest mistake—the worst one for a Marxian to make—would be to assume that the masses doomed by the entire social order to gross ignorance and degradation can be led out of darkness into light along the straightforward path of strictly Marxian education."

This will no doubt sound very

DEAR SIR,—The only thing wrong with Murphy is that he did not push his idea far enough. On the principle of learning from those who regard us as enemies we may notice that a successful parson will always take care to see that every member of his flock has something definite to do. Only in this way can interest be generated.

But a vastly more important point for us to grasp is that only in this way also can people be educated. We learn by doing. It was only in his application of this maxim that Squeers was astray.

The education given by the Labour Colleges is condemned to futility if the practical object to be attained is not clearly discerned and defined. However imposing the list of subjects may be, if the knowledge gained is not regarded as a tool, an instrument for the accomplishment of a definite object, it ceases to be anything more than erudition or lumber.

Postgate, Starr, Craik and the rest, invaluable in their respective spheres, are in this point of view people of little account. They influence only those who stand close to them, those who are prepared to learn. If they were all added together and multiplied by ten their number would be insignificant.

And it is by numbers that a movement is made. We need *momentum* and there is no momentum without mass.

It follows that we must reach the outer circles, those whom we snobbishly condemn as apathetic, refusing to admit that their apathy is caused by our lifelessness.

heretical to the "Infantile Left," who fly kites; but who makes this statement? No one else but Comrade Lenin.

It behoves us to get down to the difficult task of perfecting and simplifying both the substance and method of our teaching. Instead "of a wrangle" in the PLEBS with Comrade Murphy as to whether we have non-Marxian ideas regarding the role of a revolutionary party, let us extend an invitation to both him and other Communists who may think as he does to attend our educational classes and see for themselves.

ROBERT HOLDER.

I have read somewhere (Postgate perhaps can tell us whether it is a fact) that a potent but overlooked cause of the French Revolution was the broadcasting of pamphlets in which the ideas of the philosophers were expounded by some of the most learned men in France.

Whether it was done then or not it ought to be done now. If we are certain of our objective we know or can ascertain the first practical steps essential to its attainment. These must be put into terse simple language and circulated by the million so that the humblest worker will be given something to do, or at the very least will know that he is personally helping to create the atmosphere, the spirit of expectation, which will not only hasten but compel the advent of the great change.

At present there is an impassable gulf between Postgate (whose name is here used as a convenient symbol for all the leaders and advanced theorists) and the mass of the workers. They remain unenlightened, and his effectiveness is diminished by 75 per cent. or more.

We must call in the aid of another word from the triad on the cover and organise education, the education of the ordinary man, on an unexampled scale.

This is the only way of arriving at the Marxism of Marx. At present it does not matter whether we have it or not, for what should we do with it if we had it? It may be said that this is not the PLEB's job. The reply is 1. Why not? 2. Is there any other job of equal importance?

Fraternally,

ROBERT MURDOCH.

# BOOKS REVIEWED

## by PLEBS reviewers

### THE CULT OF CONFUSION

*Short Talks upon Philosophy.* By Sir H. H. Cunynghame, K.C.B., M.A. (Constable & Co., London, 245 pp., 8s. 6d.)

**T**HESE talks, though not specifically history, constitute in summary a comparative exposition of the principal philosophic systems from their beginning with the ancient Greeks down to modern times; they also embody references to modern evolutionists and the new psychologists.

The nature of "Ideas," the necessity for a right understanding of terms, the main differences between Platonic and Aristotelian thought, are all well done, while the Schoolmen are more fully treated than is usual in summaries. Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Bergson, etc., have each their place in the pageant, much prominence being given to arguments of idealists on the one side and mechanical materialists on the other, the latter being not quite fairly treated.

Though the language is, in parts, a little more technical than need be, on the whole it is fairly simple, while on the other hand the thoughts are slightly confused in presentation so that readers unfamiliar with the subject might have a rather hard task. This is a pity because the author appears to have striven manfully to disentangle the strains of thought such as Pantheism, Scepticism, Idealism, Materialism, etc., from the different systems in which they have been mixed in different degrees.

But with all the good that can be said for it, the book, when considered apart from its historical value, gets us nowhere. For notwithstanding the author's plea for an inquiring open-mindedness and less rigidity in logic when dealing with social life or religion (p. 223), there is a confusion not only in the manner of presenting thoughts, but often in the thoughts themselves. This evidently arises from the adoption

of preconceived and rigidly fixed notions of God, Immortality, Freewill, Mortality, Justice, Life, Mind, what is Good for Society, and so on. And all the time he has no clear idea of how he gets such thoughts. Accordingly we are taken through the confusion of the past to the confusion of the present, where we are left in company with the fashionable philosophic followers of Bergson, Einstein, and all the up-to-date fourth dimension "Lifers" at present doing "Time" in "Space."

From one point of view it might be described as "Hints and Helps in the Theory and Practice of Wondering," but the following quotations will show it to be something much more subtle:—

P. 4.—"With regard to philosophical theories we must keep an open mind."

P. 4.—"...so many wild systems are being spread abroad that it is necessary to try and trace them to their root principles."

P. 204.—"Everyone must desire the reconstruction of a Society that reposes on inherited wealth or position without any corresponding services to humanity. . . . But so much hypocritical cant has been put forth . . . about the sacred rights of the downtrodden, that we are in danger of digging up the subsoil of Society and putting it on over the top soil; a result that will be fatal to progress. A protest against the growth of this opinion was therefore needed."

P. 58.—[Christianity came] "as a direct message from God in the person of His Son whose life presented the highest ideal of Altruistic morality and whose resurrection was a proof of the immortality of the soul."

Such passages make it clear that along with the good things, as we see them, there is mixed the "impartial" propaganda of the opponents (maybe "inconscient") of the working class, who see in the growth of the newer materialism of the proletarian schools, the challenge to their own

source of moral authority, *viz.*, God or whatever new name they give Him such as Life, Spirit, Time, etc. It pretends to be an unbiassed exposition of philosophic principles, but is really an intellectual smoke screen defending the present social system.

There is not a hint of the Materialist Conception of History—the scientific outlook that is rapidly spreading its influence over the five continents, and which underlies the explanation of all historical forms of intellectuality; nor a mention of Dietzgen's *The Positive Outcome of Philosophy*. Since every educated person is nowadays expected to know something of these, why are they left out? Surely there could have been some attempt at attack—agreement hardly being expected—but to leave them out in the year 1923—!

The practical effect of this publication will be to extend that confusion of thought which is the distinguishing mark of philosophy. So, considered in this light, it cannot be recommended to Plebs unless they are already adepts in the science of understanding, and have plenty of time and money; in which case they may find the copious examples of reasoning decidedly useful as material for polemical practice.

F. CASEY.

#### PSYCHOLOGY

*Psychology of Laughter and Comedy.*

By J. Y. T. Greig (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.).

*Psychology and Politics.* By W. H. R. Rivers (Kegan Paul, 12s. 6d.).

Psychology, this embryonic science, which The PLEBS Textbook has claimed to be part of the fighting culture of the proletariat, is an unsatisfactory business. Here are two of the latest books on various aspects of the subject—both depressing. The first because it leaves one with a sense of complete futility, the second because its accomplishment is so meagre and negative.

Mr. Greig gets nowhere. He maunders on, telling funny stories about children and evolving the most preposterous theories about laughter, most of them the outcome of a sexual obsession. What are we to make of a respectable university don who sees nothing in man's headgear down the ages but an ever present phallic

symbol, and who imagines the phallic symbols of the hat, hump, nose, chin and stick of *Punch* "produce sexual behaviour" in the spectator of a punch and judy show. Mr. Greig is, of course, vastly amusing, and if you want to be taken out of yourself read this book of his about psychology.

Man for him is not a political animal, not even a social animal, but a cluster of responses to external stimuli, mostly sexual. As "fighting culture," his book is as useful as a textbook on pure mathematics.

The late Dr. Rivers is, of course, a very different matter. This posthumous book brings to those who knew him personally the sad reminder that there is gone from us a man who for all his naïveté in matters of practical politics had a firm belief in his ability to apply scientific methods to political problems, a man alert, keen, with a strictly disciplined but broad mind and a zest for exploding fallacies; a man who would have been better than anyone else London University could have sent to Parliament. Rivers had previous to the war spent a slippered life in study and laboratory when his experience in hospitals, during the whole five years to the peace, when he treated nervous cases and studied all the psychoneuroses of military and civil life, changed his whole mental outlook, broadened his sympathies and in his own words "so brought me into contact with the real problems of life that I felt it was impossible for me to return to my life of detachment. After three post-war years at John College, Cambridge, he was invited by the Labour Party to become Parliamentary candidate for London University. He accepted, and threw himself, in the few months that were left before his premature death last summer, with all his energies into politics.

These five lectures on the relation of psychology to politics show on more than psychology provides a basis rather for the criticism than the construction of political theory. Concealed as they are in the spirit of Graham Wallas' *Human Nature and Politics* and *Our Social Heritage*, they are not, naturally enough, at all revolutionary. They do, however, contribute from the ethnologist's point

view the oft-heard dictum that Socialism is incompatible with human nature and contain several interesting anecdotes about the social systems and habits in Melanesia. Rivers warns us at the outset not to expect too much. Remembering this, we were not too disappointed.

The first of these two books shows us that psychology if it is to be of any use to Plebs students must be allied rather to sociology than to sexual pathology, and the second that even socialised psychology can be very tame. K. P.

#### AN ELIZABETHAN CAPITALIST

*Shakespeare, the Man and his Stage.*  
(Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d.)

A model of book-building by extracts. We read a good deal about one, Philip Henslowe, an early specimen of the parasite who has ever since been battenning upon the most defenceless of the brain-workers, the authors, artists, and actors, who find such difficulties in organising themselves effectively. He was "the first Englishman to make a fortune by the stage," and his methods are full of interest, even to-day.

"He began life as an apprentice in the leather trade, but by marrying his master's widow obtained some capital and speedily began to enlarge it in various ventures, including pawnbroking and the purchase of slum property as well as theatrical management."

His pawnbroking business "supplied him with costumes. Unredeemed pledges of spendthrift gallants who bought expensive clothes and, as Donne wrote, brought them next week to the theatre to sell." Moreover, "he was constantly buying large quantities of rich material for 'our tyerman,' the costume maker, whose workshop adjoined his theatre, the Rose." He sold these costumes to his actors. "Henslowe's company complained that they lost money through unnecessary and dishonest gatherers, the men who took the money at the door. One used to slip the money down his neck under pretence of scratching his head."

In 1615 his company drew up a long list of "Articles of Oppression against Mr. Henslowe." "Item having the stock of Apparell in his hands to

secure his debt, he sould tenn pounds worth of ould apparrell out of the same without accounting or abating for the same... Alsoe hee hath taken right Gould and silver lace of divers garments to his own use without accompte to us."

"It was clearly a fixed policy with him to keep his people in his debt and so in his power. A favourite trick was to disband the company in order to tighten his hold over its members by re-engaging them on lower terms. 'Should these fellowes come out of my debt I should have noe rule with them.' An actor who was not "ready apparelled at three of the clocke in the afternoone" when the play was timed to begin was fined three shillings; if late for rehearsal one shilling; if "overcome with drinck at the time when he ought to play" ten shillings; if unable to play at all, twenty shillings. "But the worst offence of all was to wear out Henslowe's rich costumes by going to the tavern without changing them; insurance against this danger was provided by a fine of £40." To get the modern equivalents we should multiply these sums by at least ten; perhaps even by fifteen in these post-war days.

But it was in his handling of the literary side of his business that his methods seem most modern. "When Henslowe realised what marketable commodities plays were he set people to work making them, just as he kept tailors at work making costumes—to sell them at a profit to the company acting at his theatre. His methods are well illustrated in a letter by one of his staff hacks offering a play 'which I will undertake shall be as good a play for your "publiq" house as ever was played, for which I desyre but ten pounds, and I will undertake upon reading it your company shall give you £20 rather than part with it.' In another letter he assures Henslowe that he will not reveal the terms of the bargain and reminds him 'neather did I acquaint the company with any money I had of you.'"

"And just as Henslowe kept a tireman to alter and remake costumes from stock, so he kept skilled men in his company to adapt and prepare for the stage the plays he laid in as raw material for the purpose; his accounts

record a payment for this purpose 'unto Mr. Alleyn, the 25 September, 1601, to lend unto Benjamin Jonson, upon his Ardicians in *Geronymo*, the some of forty shillings.'" Nor was Ben Jonson the only writer who had subs from Henslowe. Here are a few more entries from his account book:—

"Lent Thomas Deckers and Harey Chettell the 2 of May, 1599 to discharge Harey Chettell of his areste (arrest) from Ingrome the some of twenty shellings in redy money, I saye lent.....XXs."

"Lent unto Mr. Dickers the same time unto Mr. Dickers in earnest of a booke called *Orestes Fines*.....Vs."

"Lent unto Mr. Dickers and Mr. Chettell the 26 of May 1599, in est of a booke called the *Tragede of Agamemnon*, the sum of .....XXXs."

'Succeeding entries show that for his £27 Dekker helped to provide about ten plays during the year.'

Even to-day, in spite of Actors' Associations and Authors' Societies exploitations of a similar sort, disguised but not really altered by the changed conditions of our day is only too frequently to be found. We leave it to the victims to read the moral. A.

#### ASTRONOMICAL REACTIONARIES

*From Nebula to Nebula.* By G. H. Lepper (Member of the Pittsburgh Bar). Privately published, U.S.A.

Those students whose liking for Astronomy has been developed by the novels of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, and particularly class tutors who picture the beginning of life should be immensely interested in this work. Astronomy has been considered one of the most "exact" sciences, but in his introduction the author's analysis closely resembles J. London's *Martin Eden*. He says, "the generality of mankind appear to labour under the fond delusion that in the serene domain of pure science are to be found all the noblest scientific virtues in their highest perfection—receptivity, open-mindedness, frankness, catholicity, intellectual hospitality and the like." Following this he intimates that contrariwise scientists become conservative and in proof of his contention quotes Doctor Chas. G. Abbott, Director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, who deals

with critics thus: "No argument can refute them because they have not the requisite learning to comprehend it, which is no disgrace but which should make men modest enough to have faith in those who excel them immeasurably. Hence it is the policy of most scientific institutions to avoid entirely discussions of these subjects with such correspondents."

The book shows a fine grasp of dynamics, chemistry and the other complementary sciences and is written with the "punch" that indicates an active, pugnacious and logical mind. He disagrees with Newtonian dynamics, facing his opponents with variance of fact from theory. His statement, "The epochal events in the history of Astronomy have all been spectacular revelations of truths that ought to have been intuitively perceived," sounds strangely like our summary of social science. He points out the odds against the originator of a new theory being right and the gauntlet of criticism which has to be run, completing it with the statement that natural truth exists independently of human wishes and opinion and cannot be settled by a council of the wisest (echo of *Psychology Textbook*!). His theory is that Gravitation is the all-powerful force controlling the universe. He differs vitally from Newton in ascribing the tides to solar attraction, and argues that the irregularities on the moon's surface are due not to volcanic action but to snow. He also disagrees with the somewhat popular theory that the moon was once part of the earth and was thrown off in some cataclysm. A portion of the work is devoted to Laplace's Nebula Hypothesis, which he riddles with clever argument and sarcasm. He asserts that the sun, far from being a slowly cooling body, is growing by gravistatic heat, and humorously refers to the contradictory current theory as presented in Sir R. Ball's *Story of the Heavens*, p. 522, in the following words: "Here we are told, in so many words, that to warm the sun the way to do it is to cool it and in order to cool it we must heat it." If any reader thinks this an exaggeration let him turn to the *Story of the Heavens* and go over the reasoning used in the paragraph referred to. He deals with the possibility of Mars being habitable,



showing how facts have been mangled to meet theory, and suggests this planet is covered by partly frozen oceans. The book is valuable for the cosmogonies where, having given the current theory, he proceeds from many angles to rip it to pieces. Faced with the book, the reviewer feels almost impotent to portray the vigour with which it is written.

As to the Solar System he visualises this as falling in a huge spiral (note the analogy to nebula) and dealing with the earth points out the concentration of land masses around the North Pole as a proof that the earth is "falling" northward. He makes the suggestion that had our maps been printed *upside down* this would have been obvious and I commend this to students of Economic Geography. He flatly refuses to accept the theory of the conservation of energy, postulating an inexhaustible supply of heat by natural pressure and states, "The size of a planet determines its character absolutely. If over large it generates too much gravistatic heat to make life possible on its surface; if too small it does not generate enough to keep its oceans from freezing and life is again rendered impossible."

Finally, he calls attention to the practical outcome of his gravitational heat theory in words that will make proletarians think furiously. Drawing attention to the change of solids into liquids under extreme pressure and the consequent creation (or liberation?) of heat he writes, "Construct presses of materials capable of highest possible leverage on, say a body of lead or iron, imbedded in which should be a coil through which water might be kept circulating. Under these conditions the pressure . . . liquefied metal would continuously preserve a high temperature and steam would be generated without interruption." He suggests this would get over the problem of decreasing coal supply (he doesn't mention hydro-electric production of force) and though his theory seems to approximate to Perpetual Motion, this quotation will show the connection between "Celestial Mechanics" and "Capitalist Production!"

Probably the book has a limited circulation. The copy I saw came from the Public Library. I can assure

students interested that they will be amply repaid by the time required to read the 401 pages.

T. D. SMITH.

#### ESSAY WRITING

If the views which Mr. F. H. Pritchard expresses in his introduction to *Essays of To-day: An Anthology* (2s. 6d., Harrap) are authoritative, then the Essay can play no part in a propagandist movement. Such a title as "Essays in Revolt" must appear to him to be a contradiction in terms. "The man who is violently discontented with things as he finds them may preach stirring sermons, write exquisite sonnets, deliver inflammatory harangues or turn pamphleteer: he will assuredly not write good essays." "Charles Lamb's soul in gentle rebellion (against ledger entries, etc.) was moved to express itself in terms of Old China and Roast Pig."

"The most trivial occurrences will serve to set him a-dreaming—the crowing of a cock, the books on his shelves gleaming in the firelight, a scent wafted in through the open window, the patter of raindrops on the leaves—and as gently and equably as he muses, so he writes. Thoughts, irresponsible and unbidden, come straying into his consciousness and he dreams perhaps of what has been in some golden age of the past, or, in a glowing vision of the future of what might be. With a sure but light touch he sets down these fancies in gentle prose, to soothe, to charm and to encourage his fellows."

"For the nonce the Essayist is king and without question we accept his lightest word and put our trust in his shadow. All existing ideas of relative values are cheerfully set aside. We lose a train, but care not. Rather are we pleased to discover that the loss has been the means of opening a new door in our consciousness of what is beautiful and significant." (Think of that: the new door opened in my consciousness would be the inadequacy of language to express emotion.)

"And the sight of a master craftsman doing with such apparent ease what the reader could not do for himself will unfailingly produce in him the *cacoëthes Scribendi*."

It would appear then that the aim of this book is to engender a sort of disease: a malignant itch.

Now surely the attitude of the healthy man towards writing is that it is a necessary evil to be avoided as long as possible: as for instance in the matter of answering letters. (Perhaps the greatest discovery of the great Napoleon was that letters left unopened for a month had answered themselves.) At any rate the essay as exemplified in this collection is in no sense helpful to a beginner, unless, indeed, he be a young journalist. For these essays represent the flowering of maturity; the reflections which arise of themselves from the stored experiences of years.

But to encourage youth to counterfeited such ripeness is to encourage it in unnatural practices.

The Roman Church has, I believe, an instinctive distrust of "Literature" and on the whole I share that feeling particularly when the mechanician takes literature in hand with his exercises, annotations and further suggestions. As for example: "The cherry is a companionable fruit." Sum up the outstanding qualities of each of the following in a similar sentence: pineapple, nectarine, hip, haw, sloe, pomegranate. Write an essay on (i). The Deceitful Apple; (ii.), Cherry Stones.

I have felt it necessary to clear this book out of the way because it obscures and confuses a really important question: the writing of English. In G. W. E. Russell's Essay on style, included in the volume, we get this statement: "Matthew Arnold once said to me—'People think I can teach them style. What stuff it all is! Have something to say and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style.'" *Have*

*something to say*—excellent counsel. A man who sits down to write, having nothing to say, soon finds himself playing with words for their own sake. Crabbe, who incurs Mr. Pritchard's reproof for what he says, remarks that the essay "suits the writer who has neither talent nor ingenuity to pursue his inquiries further," and "the generality of readers who are amused with variety and superficiality." So much for the essay as an accomplishment: a sort of verbal tight-rope walking. Natural enough perhaps in certain stages of a writer's development, yet nevertheless distinctly "cultivated." But Essays in the sense in which they are treated in the W.E.A. book by Henderson and Freeman are in reality nothing more ambitious than ordinary English compositions, and as a guide to the writing of English that book is distinctly useful. Of course students must be able to express themselves in writing; but any book which suggests that writing is a series of monkey tricks is a misleading book. There is no room for frills and day-dreaming when one is engaged in one's spare time in coping with the tremendous accumulations of to-day's knowledge masses. As an instrument for handling these masses writing is of the first importance; but there should be nothing self-conscious about the instrument.

One last word: the Essays themselves are many of them most valuable: e.g., Cunningham Graham's "Castles in the Air." But even the best things can be put to wrong uses; and to spin exercises out of these essays and to suggest that youngsters ought to study them in order that they may develop the itch to write something similar is to use them wrongly.

A.

## FOYLES, The Booksellers, offer:—

### Karl Marx: "Capital"

Vol. I. Translated by Moore and Aveling. Revised and Amplified according to 4th German Edition by Untermann.

Vols. II. and III. Translated by Untermann from 2nd and 1st German Editions respectively. Published 1919-1921. Brand New 12/6 per volume. Postage 9d. per volume.

Ancient Society or researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization. By Lewis Morgan. Latest Edition Brand New, 10/6. Postage 6d.

For either of these Works Mention Offer 30s.

Books Purchased: best prices paid.

For Books always send to FOYLES, 121-125 Charing Cross Road, LONDON, W.C. 2

## THE RAILWAYS

*Labour and Capital on the Railways.*  
(Labour Research Dept. Paper 1s.,  
cloth 2s. 6d.)

This is the fourth book of a series issued by the Labour Research Dept., dealing with Labour and Capital in the chief industries of this country. Ever since the grouping of British Railways there has been a need for an account of their position and in view of the threatened attack upon the railwaymen's present conditions of employment, the Labour Research Dept. are to be congratulated on their timely production.

The first two chapters deal with the organisation of the industry on the capitalist side and the remaining chapters are devoted to an examination of the past and present position of the workers in the industry.

Chapter I. gives an excellent and brief account of the early history of the railway companies, showing the excessive amount of watered capital that was created in their early days due to preliminary and parliamentary expenses and to the purchase of land for which they had to pay huge sums to the landowners. Competition also played its part in creating watered capital and led to a vast amount of waste from which the railway companies have always suffered. Upon the huge sums of watered capital profits have had to be paid and this partly accounts for the disgraceful working conditions existing in pre-war days. The second chapter deals with the development of the companies from the early days of competition to the present time when they practically enjoy a monopoly. As early as 1846 railway amalgamation commenced and the process continued until the Railways Act of 1921, in spite of Parliamentary opposition on many occasions.

In 1911 the railwaymen came out on strike, the immediate cause of the stoppage being dissatisfaction with the Conciliation Boards, the then existing negotiating machinery between the companies and the men. The companies and the Government fought together against the railwaymen, but a partial success was gained by the latter.

The War came, and the railways were under Government control until 1921.

During the same year (1921) the Railways Act was passed which reduced the number of companies to four. The advantages accruing to them are clearly shown in the figures given in this chapter and Appendix 1—increased dividends to the shareholders, 700 per cent. increase of reserves over 1914, loss of risk on securities and increased price of stocks, guaranteed 1913 revenue and 20 per cent. of any saving made in the future.

The remaining chapters deal with the position of the men in the industry. The first of these chapters show the main reasons for the low position in which railwaymen found themselves in pre-war days. Brief references are also made to the difficulties of organisation among the men and the dangerous character of railway work.

Chapters IV and V give a short history of the railway Trade Unions, covering the formation of the A.S.L.E. and F., R.C.A., N.U.R., the 1911 strike and the gaining of recognition.

Chapter 6 deals with the position of the men during and since the war. Railwaymen were parties to the industrial truce, but in spite of this they had to demand increases in wages owing to the increased cost of living. The 1919 strike and the resulting gains to all railwaymen are briefly dealt with. An outline is also given of the position in the industry up till June of this year, showing that as far as grouping is concerned the men are not likely to maintain their present standards unless a united front is set up among the unions as in 1919.

The two appendices showing the capital of the new companies and the wages in the industry should prove very useful. The book should be purchased by every active member of the railway unions and also by all those interested in industrial and political affairs. It maintains the very high standard set in the previous studies of the engineering trades, the Press and Parliament.

L. G. F.

VERY GOOD BOOK  
*English Social Life in the Eighteenth Century.* By M. Dorothy George  
(Sheldon Press, S.P.C.K., cloth 3s. 6d.,  
or in two parts, paper, 1s. 6d. each).  
This book can be strongly and

emphatically recommended to all PLEBS historical students. It is very full and very useful. The editor's work has been done most competently and intelligently: her own comments have been pared down to the absolute minimum. The book deserves the most considered and genuine praise.

It is a collection of documents (a thing to which I am partial)—letters and descriptions extracted from an enormous range, and carefully chosen. It is not a history and cannot take the place of a history. But as an illuminant and a supplement of the existing economic and political histories, all insufficient, it is invaluable. It is absolutely the thing for the class leader in search of happy illustrations and anecdotes, or for the solitary student who finds his way slow. The price is also not alarming.

There are others in the series which seemed to be interesting. We inquired for a full list of these publications, but the publisher did not even reply. Otherwise we might have told you more.

R. W. P.

#### INDIA

*One Year of Non-Co-operation.* By M. N. & E. Roy, C.P., of India. 2 Rupees (Vanguard Bookshop, Post Box 4336, Zurich).

Under this inadequate title are grouped together fifteen essays which summarise the 1921—22 happenings in India, and analyse in masterly fashion the fall of Gandhi, the position of Das, and the various social layers expressing themselves in the Indian Congress. M. N. Roy was the one solitary voice which foretold the failure of Swaraj, and when the story of the triumph of the Indian workers is told no small place will be given to the Roys, who have brought the outlook of the Third International to illumine the retarded and peculiar economic development of India.

The duty of British workers—often unconsciously Imperialist—to understand what British Imperialism is doing in India, and the futility of a Tolstoyan non-resistance, as displayed there, are added reasons for reading this and the Roys' other books.

M. S.

## The COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

*Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.*

No. 25 NOW ON SALE No. 25

Contains Special Articles on the

- XII Congress of the Russian C.P.  
By Bocharin and G. Zinoviev
- Hamburg and the Ruhr By Karl Radek
- The Coming of the German Revolution  
Discussion on Ruhr Tactics  
By Sommer and A. Thalheimer
- Progress of the Capitalist Offensive  
By Z. Leder
- Independent Working-class Education in  
Britain By A. Mc. Manus
- The Frankfurt Conference By A. Losofsky
- Book Reviews By A. Mc. Manus

Subscription Rates 12/- per annum, 7/- per 6 months (post free). Single Copies 1/-, plus 1½d. postage. Terms to agent, and organisations.

All Communications should be addressed **MANAGER, COMMUNIST BOOKSHOP, 16 KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON, W.C.2.**

#### THE CIVILISATION OF CRETE

*The Minoans.* By George Glasgow (Jonathan Cape, 4s. 6d.).

The Minoan civilisation of Crete is of immense importance as being the oldest European as against Oriental civilisation; not because that miserable adventurer, Comitadji and jingo "Mr. Venizelos" was born in the island. Mr. Glasgow in this brief book brings out the main features of that civilisation which have a general appeal. He treats the social and political life of the time—about which we have no direct evidence—with wise discretion, but in treating of Minoan religions, the absence of any evidence for an organised priesthood should have been stressed and the contrast drawn with the paralysing effect of the Egyptian priesthood on art.

The presentation generally follows good authorities. It is a pity that on p. 24 a relative chronology (i.e., a

sequence of strata or types) is confused with absolute chronology (the dating of strata or types by cross reference to a historical system of solar dating—the Egyptian) since the work of Evans in Crete is the finest example of both these proceedings to be found anywhere. On p. 64, LMII., seems to be confused with LMIII., and on p. 86 the fact that the sword (rapier) only slowly developed from the dagger is forgotten.

V. G. C.

PRICE REDUCTION

Trotsky's *My Flight from Siberia*, reviewed by "B.P." in our last issue, has been reduced in price from 1s. 6d. to 1s. This has been made possible by the very large sale the book is having in several countries. It is obtainable from the Young Communist League, 36, Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C. 1.

Too SLIGHT  
*Agriculture and the Guild System.* By M. Fordham. (P. S. King and Son. 1s. Cheap edition I.L.P., 4d.).

In this pamphlet Mr. Fordham sets out to show how we may reconstruct the agricultural industry. "To find a remedy we have to secure Democratic Control of Agriculture, the limitation of the rights of private owners over the land, the establishment of just prices and just pay . . ." Few would quarrel with such a programme. That which follows is very readable but somewhat unconvincing. Perhaps, however, that is the almost inevitable result of attempting to compress a programme into pamphlet form, and as the author promises us a book in the near future, criticism (or appreciation) may justly be deferred until that appears.

C. L.

ESPERANTO NOTES

*Ernst Toller: Esperantist.*

THOSE interested in *The Machine Wreckers* (See PLEBS, May, 1923), will read with pleasure the following, written in the prison *Festung Niedersch'onenfeld* (25/5/23):—

"*Tre Kara Kamarado,  
Kun 'gojo mi donas al vi la permeson traduki en Esperanton partojn el mi "La Transformigo." Mi tre 'satas la interligigan valoron de Esperanto. Mi esperas ke 'gis mia liberigo—mi devas 'pentofari' ankoraŭ 'cirkaŭ 14 monatoj—mi mem estos funde lerninta 'gin.*

"*Kun plej bonaj salutoj,  
"ERNST TOLLER."*

In other words Toller while "doing time" is learning the international language. His is another name for propagandists to add to those of Gorky, Einstein, Rolland, Barbusse, and Hans Ryner.

*Co-Operators, Anarchists and all!*

The constitution of the New Zealand Labour Party is published with an appendix "Objective and Platform," which includes the universal language—Esperanto—to be included in the curriculum for all State schools. *The Post* (14/7/23) reports that the All-

Polish Congress of Postal Workers, representing 35,000 members, placed on record its opinion that all of them should buy and study "The Teacher," published by Professor Kronenberg. The London Co-operative Society has classes at Highgate, Tottenham and Clapton (Educational Report, 2/7/23). The Anarchist congress held at Lisbon in March decided that international correspondence should be conducted in Esperanto only.

*A Document.*

Here is a fit place to correct, from an official source, an impression that the Communist International has adopted an international language. Document No. 3720 of the Executive Committee of the Communist International:—"Be it known to Esperanto, that up to the present no international organisation has decided on any international language, and that no international language organisation has the right to use the authority of Komintern. (Signed) W. KOLAROW."

*An Interpellation.*

For the first time an international auxiliary language has been the subject of an interpellation in the Polish Parliament. The mover, Arthur Pankratz,

first showed how respectable Esperanto is by citing the support given by the League of Nations, various States, and the Pope. Then he began to show how Esperanto was being used by the working class.

"In addition to the above-named religious and Right-political organisations, Esperanto is used by various national Labour organisations, such as exist in almost all countries. The most important of these organisations, a purely international one, embracing all persons without regard to nationality, and organising them on a world-wide basis, is Sennaci-eca Asocio Tutmonda, with headquarters in Paris. The Association issues its own organ *Sennacieca Revuo*, which is contributed to by world-famous authors. The Association does not follow any narrow political tendency, but expresses through its Review the opinions of representatives of all shapes of Left politics."

*National Robots.*

When Domain, the manager of the Robot factory in *R.U.R.*, is elated by the coming of the ship which he wrongly thought meant that the universal uprising of the Robots was broken, he lets fall some exceeding significant remarks: "From now onwards we shan't have just one factory. There won't be Universal Robots any more. We'll start a factory in every country, in every state... each factory will produce Robots of a different colour, a *different language*. They'll be complete foreigners to each other. They'll never be able to understand each other... The result will be that for ages to come one Robot will hate any other Robot of a different factory mark."

Fortunately for the Robots the idea came too late in the play and in real life Esperanto is giving to *national* Robots the means of mutual understanding.

## LETTERS

THOSE THESES

DEAR COMRADE,—In the correspondence regarding the recent publication of the *Report* and *Theses* of the Fourth Congress of the Third International, two points appear to have been overlooked.

Those who have defended the publications as being valuable records of an important congress fail to notice that the records are quite incomplete. A full record would be a valuable document; a selection of speeches made on no defined principle is almost useless.

The second point is that B.P.'s adverse criticism, while it had a good cause, was also useless since it failed to indicate the proper line that should be followed in such publications. The correct line is to publish a full statement of the formal conclusions (the Theses) with an explanatory introduction and a summary of the debates for the information of the ordinary member. In addition, if possible, a verbatim report should be issued as a work of reference and a complete record.

The present publications are of

neither of these types and are therefore deserving of criticism. But B.P.'s criticism was nasty, brutish and short; it is difficult to believe that it was inspired by any desire to improve the standards of Communist literature.

Yours,

L. W.

SOME JOB!!

DEAR COMRADE,—Could you turn your attention towards the production of a text-book on "The Upbringing of Children"? Something to tell us how to bring up our children (individually and collectively) to be pushing, class-conscious proletarians, taking a pleasure, too, in their own class strivings. On the face of it education of the children ought to be the method above all others by which socialists are made. But somehow it has been a failure, owing largely, I suppose to people not realising that it is not sufficient to teach children *about* socialism, but that you must fill them with the right emotions. Of children brought up in the socialist movement only a small minority, like Karl Liebknecht, become revolutionary fighters. Many become careerists and



finish up by betraying their class, like William Morris Hughes. The majority become muddle-headed mediocrities, like Theodore Liebknecht.

Now some or other essential ingredient is lacking in both of these latter. Could you produce a book that would enable any enthusiastic proletarian to provide his children and his comrades' children with an *all round* proletarian up-bringing? The following might be among the subjects included:—

(1) Bodily health and development. This is essential. Of course, we can't under present circumstances give them what we wish, but you might give much help and remove many misunderstandings. I mention this first only because it starts first.

(2) Mental development. This should be fully encouraged from very early childhood. Unlike the up-bringing of many wage-slaves, our efforts should aim at the encouragement of self-confidence. (If we can give our children at the start a good opinion of themselves and their working-class mates, the boss himself will make them fighters.) Also the initiative born of self-confidence. Not that I want them to grow up individualists, but I think their co-operation in the end would be all the more effective if built upon the fact that they have the courage and capability to act when necessary on their own (the ideal Communist group!). Idealism too must be encouraged, for a too purely intellectual Marxism is no guarantee whatever against defection.

(3) Education in socialist subjects and practical training in co-ordinated

work. This is the function of our Sunday schools and young workers' organisations, but hitherto most of them have quite missed the mark.

(4) Problems of adolescence; and how to carry all the foregoing into manhood and womanhood.

Yours fraternally,

E. T. HARRIS.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

SIR,—Our two great industries, gold and sugar, have always been under produced, and yet to-day we have in South Africa more unemployment, in proportion to our population, than any country in the world. Starvation and destitution is rampant among all *colours*, and yet output is greater and profits higher, then ever before. Why?

Considering that the gold mining industry literally eats up human life—a miner's average life at the game being only about four years—one might be forgiven for imagining that the whole available breeding power of the proles would be necessary to feed the bloody monster. It is not the case. New methods and the progress of technique have "scrapped" thousands of workers, black, white, and brindle, while demand continues to exceed supply.

Absorption into new industries takes place slowly—it never has (and maybe never will under Capitalism) kept pace with the surplus labour power continually being displaced by efficiency methods and machinery.

Yours for the revolution,

Johannesburg. HARRY HAYNES.

## The N.C.L.C. and ITS WORK

**W**ILL Secretaries please note that the address of J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary N.C.L.C. is now 22, Elm Row, Edinburgh, and that Treasurer Mark Starr, 100, Grosvenor Road, London, S.W. 1, will be very glad to receive any outstanding affiliation fees or special levies. Will secretaries also please keep Head Office advised of local activities and be prompt to notify changes of address.

Limited supplies of outlines for six lecture courses on Industrial History and on Trade Unionism are still available for affiliated bodies. Others on Imperialism and Thinking have been undertaken by T. Ashcroft and F. Casey.

Manchester and District Labour College organised a successful educational conference on 25th August. T. Ashcroft was the speaker, the chair

being taken by J. Jagger (N.U.D.A.W.) On the same day the Labour College representatives of the neighbouring county were equally busy, for in Leeds there met another conference, organised by the West Riding Council, for the purpose of getting the support of county Trade Unions. Yorkshire, by the time this appears in print, should have an all inclusive Yorkshire Council as recommended by the last annual meeting of the N.C.L.C. The speaker at the conference was J. Hamilton.

The London I.W.C.E. Council is holding a series of Sunday afternoon meetings at the Labour College, Penywern Road, Earl's Court, at which all friends are welcome. On August 26th Maurice Dobb opened a discussion on "The Economic Aspect of Reparations." On Sunday, September 23rd, at 3.30, E. Belfort Bax will lecture on "Turning Points in History," and it is hoped that a good muster of Plebs and I.W.C.E.ers will be present. Make a note of the date now.

The N.C.L.C. and the S.L.C. were successful in getting the question of affiliation put on the agenda of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives and affiliation was secured. The Lancashire District Council of the N.U.G.W. decided unanimously at Manchester on August 11th to support I.W.C.E. locally and to recommend it to the whole Union. Bristol is busy with rambles and preparation for winter courses; a Week-end School—Lecturer W. H. Mainwaring—will be held on October 6th and 7th.

Successful Week-end Schools are reported from Ashington, Bristol and Liverpool; others are planned at Cambridge, Colchester, Cardiff and Swansea.

We earnestly recommend all N.C.L.C.ers to read the reports given in the September *Journal* of the A.U.B.T.W. for the latest news about that Union's Education Scheme which are too full to be included here. Copies of this can be obtained by all bodies affiliated to the N.C.L.C. upon application to the Head Office of the Union.

The Workers Union Triennial Conference—at which its Rules can be altered—is to be held shortly. Halifax Branch propose the following new object:—Provision of education of an independent working-class character as provided by the N.C.L.C.; Alterations of other rules will provide the funds for this Object by the allocation of 3d. per quarter for each member per year. 75 per cent. of the Fund to be used for provincial work and 25 per cent. for scholarships at the Labour College. There is also a stipulation that the receivers of the scholarships shall undertake to place their services at the disposal of the Union members for at least three years when they return from College.

The National Painters' Society in 1924 has the same opportunity of altering its rules. Amendments are already being circulated (see Halifax Amendments to Rules in the August issue of the N.P.S. Journal) to effect the same changes as those proposed in the Workers Union. Members of the Workers Union and the N.P.S., we look to you. Don't miss this chance.\*

We understand the Bakers Union is also moving in the matter of I.W.C.E. Would any baker supply us with further details and also shove the affair?

All communications respecting the work of the Scottish Labour College in the Fife area should be addressed to the General Secretary.

Glasgow District S.L.C., is holding its annual organising conference on the 1st of September, with James Maxton, M.P., and Walton Newbold M.P., as speakers, and with the Reverend Richard Lee, "the Bolshevik parson," in the chair. St. Rollox Co-operative Society has generously agreed to provide the delegates with hospitality in the form of a substantial tea.

The Scottish Area committee of the Transport and General Workers Union (John Veitch, Secretary) has recently passed a resolution regretting that the state of its political fund does not at present allow it to provide free educa-

\* See paragraph in "Our Point of View" on 'Occupational' Plebs Groups.

tional facilities through the Scottish Labour College for the union's members throughout Scotland and recommends its branches to take the matter up locally. It is now for the S.L.C. districts to follow up the matter. The National Committee of the College still awaits advices from the E.C. of the A.E.U. with reference to putting the new educational rule of that Union into force. The matter so far has not got beyond the stage of inquiries. A local Union, the Mid and East Lothian Firemen and Shot Firers Association has affiliated to the Edinburgh District of the College.

Representatives of the E.C. of the N.C.L.C. met the Executive Officers of the N.U.D.A.W. at the end of last month and a circular to districts will be issued very shortly.

#### A SET BACK

We chronicle our failures only to overcome them. At the last A.G.M. of the N.U.R. (July, 1923), a proposal to appoint a Committee to prepare a national scheme was defeated by fifty-three to thirteen votes. We understand that this question was overshadowed by the previous criticism of Labour College itself. However, the reforms necessary in the residential institution should not block the N.U.R. from taking up the provincial work with other national bodies. We shall be glad to hear from N.U.R. members ready to try again.

#### PERSONAL

All N.C.L.C.ers and Plebs will join in hearty congratulations and good wishes to J. P. M. Millar and Maurice H. Dobb on the occasion of their marriages. May we hope that Mrs. Millar and Mrs. Dobb will be invaluable allies in the work of the movement.

PRESTON Labour College held its first week-end school on July 15th and 16th. In spite of being rather hastily organised, it proved a great success, fifty students attending the lectures, delivered by T. Ashcroft, of the Liverpool Labour College. The first lecture, on Friday evening, was delivered in the I.L.P. rooms, where last winter's lectures were held. The subject was "The Co-operative Move-

## N.C.L.C. Lantern Slides Scheme

*J. Hamilton, 99, 11 Channell Road, Fairfield, Liverpool, can supply the following sets of slides:—*

- 1 **Primitive Man**  
(comparison with modern races)  
*38 slides      57/- per set*
- 2 **The Industrial Revolution**  
*56 slides      84/- per set*
- 3 **The Co-operative Movement**  
*46 slides      69/- per set*
- 4 **The Paris Commune**  
*57 slides      85/6 per set*
- 5 **The History of the Labour College Movement**  
*25 slides      37/6 per set*

### IN PREPARATION

- 6 **Capitalist Imperialism**  
*Probably 40 slides      53 per set*
- 7 **The Russian Revolution**  
*Probably 50 slides      53 15 0 per set*

The sets therefore cost 1/6 per slide. Add cost of postage. All communications to above address.

**CASH WITH ORDER**

ment, its value and limitations." The presence of a number of keen co-operators added greatly to the interest of the subsequent discussion.

On Saturday, the meetings were held at the residence of Comrades Mr. and Mrs. Taylor. The afternoon's lecture was on "The present Crisis and Unemployment"; and in the evening, a lecture recital on Shaw's *Major Barbara* proved of great interest. The lecturer emphasised the value of the drama as an instrument of propaganda in our movement. Altogether, the school was worthy of the high reputation that Preston has already won for itself, and gave every encouragement for yet greater achievements in the future.

We understand from Com. J. W. Thomas, of Halifax, that negotiations with certain large branches of the Yorks. Miners' Association, by which I.W.C.E. lectures would be delivered under the Miners' Welfare Fund scheme, are far

advanced. We recommend miner-comrades in other areas to get into touch with Com. Thomas, in order that a concerted attempt, on similar lines, may be made for the benefit of our movement generally. Letters addressed to him c/o PLEBS Office, will be forwarded. (Please enclose stamps for reply, as he is an enthusiast, but not a millionaire.)

With a view to interesting the mass of organised labour in educational work, the Sheffield Labour College has organised a Conference to be held in the A.E.U. Institute, on Saturday, September 15th. Wm. Paul will address the delegates on "Education and the Workers." Further particulars from S. H. Cree (Sec.), 21, Brathay Road, Sheffield.

Elsewhere reference is made to the T.U. Congress. Now is the time to reap the harvest of many years of labour. To work!

## Labour College Students' Association

**T**HE farewell social mentioned in last month's notes passed off successfully. After tea, recitations, selections and solos were rendered between the dances. Then came the final handshakes and sincere good wishes given to the students who would soon depart to their various localities, to further the cause of I.W.C.E.

Since then, I have heard that some of the students have not restarted work. Possibly they will have their jobs back during this month. Unfortunately, reinstatement is a sore problem with returning students, and it is advisable that comrades gaining scholarships at the Labour College should endeavour to obtain from those in authority in the mines and railways a written guarantee of reinstatement at the expiration of the two years' residence. If refused, one would be more or less prepared for the inevitable and could arrange matters accordingly.

It is well to note that the governing body of the Labour College have

arranged that two scholarships consisting of three months' tuition in Germany be granted to L. C. students. The examination has been held and the two successful students intend beginning their course sometime in September. Let us hope this will be a regular feature. An interchange of students between various countries is very desirable and should be fostered by the whole Labour College Movement.

The welcome given to the L.C.S.A. by The PLEBS is indeed pleasing. The students' appeal for representation on the governing body of the Labour College has been a long process. It is to be hoped that this will be realised in the near future. The L.C.S.A. will press for this and persist in their demand for representation until granted.

Next year, it is rumoured, the A.U.B.T.W. and the N.U.D.A.W. will be represented by students at the College. We look forward to this accession to our ranks.

A. G. E. (Secretary).

## The PLEBS Bookshelf

**I**T is rather a matter for surprise, when you come to think of it, that The PLEBS should not long ago have tackled the job of compiling and issuing a Guide to Books. No job, surely, more needed doing. No publication could be more useful to working-class students—with limited means and limited leisure. If there is anything more disheartening than to face a fat library catalogue, knowing that somewhere among this mountain of books there must be volumes which would give you just what you want, but with no earthly idea which those volumes are—may I be preserved from it! There have been Plebs (and others) who have solved the problem by only reading, or at any rate buying, volumes with "Kerr," or "Plebs League," or some other safe imprint on the cover. But that is an unsatisfactory solution. You miss an L of a lot of good stuff.

\* \* \*

Well, the job has been tackled at last, and our *What to Read: A Guide to Books for Worker-Students* is now on sale. We don't claim for it that it is a Perfect Publication. We don't guarantee that it mentions every single book that is really worth while; or that it may not mention some books which may not be absolutely and finally the best in their field. We are not, in short, omniscient; though we realised before we had had the job in hand very long that omniscience was necessary if the book was to give universal satisfaction. So we adopted the method which was the best substitute for omniscience we could manage—"pooled" the knowledge of as many students and scholars as possible. The Editorial Committee was enlarged to include twenty or thirty people with specialised knowledge of one subject or another. And none of their contributions were accepted just as they stood, but were

**TRADE** BY  
MARK  
STARR

**UNIONISM:**

Past & Future



Robert Owen  
1771-1858

The PLEBS LEAGUE - **6<sup>D</sup>**

**NOW READY**  
40 pages. 6d.  
(Postpaid 7d.)

**A TEXTBOOK IN  
LITTLE**

- I. The Beginnings
- II. Revolutionary  
T. Unionism  
(1799-1850)
- III. T. Unionism,  
1850-1900
- IV. T. Unionism in  
the 20th Cen-  
tury
- V. The Next Stage

*Foreword by Geo. Hicks*

PLEBS, 162a Buckingham Palace Road, LONDON, S.W.1.

passed round for comment, amendment, and—most often—abbreviation. The Guide at any rate embodies a tremendous amount of research, discussion and careful inquiry.

I had better say at once that no single person among the compilers has read all the books listed; and that we do NOT suggest that it is the duty of every Pleb to read all of them. We have tried to indicate the essential books in each subject (would that we all had time to read even those!) and, also, to mention other volumes which would be useful to students specialising in any particular branch of study. With this object, two sizes of type have been used—larger for the important books, smaller for the less essential, but still useful ones. Moreover, *please note*, *What to Read* is not merely a book list. It is, on the other hand, we do not hesitate to declare, an eminently readable publication. It is a collection of "potted" reviews—and reviews do not lose in brightness for being brief. It tries, within the limits of its size, to give some indication of the value, and the scope, of each book. And—a very practical point—it quotes prices, so that you'll be able to decide whether this is a book you can afford to buy or one that you will perforce have to consult at a library.

Now may I suggest that it is up to every reader of this magazine to buy *What to Read*—and to boost it. Just point out to folks that, even if they've no time for reading, a booklet like this lying on the parlour table creates an impression of learning and great wisdom!

Every single student of every N.C.L.C. class ought to have a copy. A publication like this might well serve as the nucleus of a real working-class library. Further, this book is not merely useful in itself; it can be used effectively as propaganda for I.W.C.E. It does very definitely, both in choice of subjects and choice of books, embody a point of view—the Pleb point of view. No one could look through it without getting some sort of an idea of what our movement stands for and what it is out for. For the aim of this Guide, like the aim of the Labour College movement, is not merely vague cultural development, but Education towards Class-Consciousness. We're printing a big edition, because we believe we're delivering the goods. We look to you to do your damndest for us.

POSTSCRIPT.—In answer to numerous inquiries about date of publication of the Economic Geography Text-book:—The book itself is almost completed—by the time this magazine is published it will, we hope, be actually so. There remains to be done (a) the work of revision, &c., in committee, and (b) the drawing of the forty odd maps which will illustrate the book. These two jobs can be got on with simultaneously, of course, and the chances at present are that the book will be in the printer's hands by the beginning of next month (October) and on sale by the beginning of November. We shall publish next month a short Synopsis of the contents, so that classes intending to begin a course immediately may have an idea of the kind of scheme adopted.

J. F. H.

## THE PLEBS

*Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges*

48 pages monthly.

Annual subscription, 7s. postpaid; 6 months, 3s. 6d.

PUBLISHED BY THE PLEBS LEAGUE AT  
162a BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., LONDON, S.W.1



## Craft v. Industrial Unionism

One of the most pressing problems that confronts organised labour to-day is discussed in the September issue of THE LABOUR MAGAZINE by

G. T. CRAMP

SIDNEY WEBB, M.P.

Other articles on current topics by

PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P.

F. W. JOWETT, M.P.

A. GREENWOOD, M.P.

R. B. SUTHERS

OTTO GLOECKEL

## THE LABOUR MAGAZINE

is the official organ of the Labour Movement.

Price Sixpence, Monthly. Annual Subscription 7s. 6d. post free.  
33 Eccleston Square, S.W.1.

You will find the SOCIALIST view (which is the *Industrial Unionist* view)  
In the Organ of the S.L.P.

## THE SOCIALIST

Politics, Economics, Industrial Unionism, and Current Events. 2d. monthly. 16 pp.

Order from The S.L. Press, 46, 48 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.

## THE WORKERS' WEEKLY

(Incorporating *The Communist*).

One Penny :: :: every Wednesday.

## THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

Contributors include all the most prominent leaders of the Third International

Sixpence Monthly.

16 KING STREET, Covent Garden, LONDON, W.C.2.

The paper for all young workers

## THE YOUNG WORKER

(Incorporating the "Young Communist") Official organ of the  
Young Communist League

12 pages.

2d. Monthly.

3s. per quire of 26.

From the Y.C.L. 36 LAMB'S CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

BOOKS for WORKER-STUDENTS

# HALF-A-CROWN

each (*Postpaid, 2s. 9d.*)

AN OUTLINE OF MODERN  
IMPERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF ECONOMIC

A Short History of the MODERN

WORKING-CLASS MOVE  
MENT

*W. W. Cro*

A WORKER LOOKS AT  
HISTORY

*Mark St*

A WORLD HISTORY FOR  
WORKERS

*A. Bar*

CREATIVE REVOLUTION

*E. S. C. Pa*

*Special Plebs Students' Edition*

REVOLUTION : from 1789 to 19

*R. W. Post*

400 large pages. Limp Cloth Binding. 9s. 3d. *postp*

PLEBS, 162a Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.

Printed at the Athenaeum Printing Works, Bathurst.