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The Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges

THE PLEBS

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The PLEB POINT of VIEW The "Left Wing" and Workers' Education

A GLANCE at the history of the working class in the British Islands reveals the interesting and significant fact that every movement for real (*i.e.*, independent) working-class education has always been closely associated with the development of a Left Wing programme and policy ; that is, with some actual and definite manifestation of class-consciousness *in action*. It would, indeed, be surprising if this were not so, since the very essence of the idea of Independent Working-Class Education is the conception of education as a weapon in the class-struggle of workers against exploiters ; and that conception could only come when the need for such a weapon was acutely realised.

The history of Left Wing movements is a history of I.W.C.E. experiments. The three "revolutionary periods" in our modern working-class history were all periods when this vitally important conception of education as a weapon was more or less clearly realised.

Take first that earliest period when the developing Industrial Revolution had created a great, town-dwelling proletariat, and before the prosperity of the mid-nineteenth century had dulled the workers' consciousness of their separate class interests : the period immediately preceding and succeeding the repeal of the Combination Laws. Here, manifested in various forms, immature as yet, but spontaneous growths from the workers themselves, was a real class-consciousness, a vivid recognition of the antagonism of interests between capitalist and wage-slave. And here also we find—in Hodgskin, Doherty, Bray and others, and even in Lovett's earlier educational schemes—as clear a perception of the antagonism of ideas resulting from that antagonism of interests. Hodgskin's defiant words—"Better for men to be deprived of education than to receive their education from their masters ; for education, in that sense, is no better than the training of the cattle that are broken to the yoke"—express the spirit of working-class independence in education as unequivocally as it has ever been expressed since. The idea was born ; and it was born, note well, in the thick of class conflict.

There followed half-a-century of prosperity and class-collaboration.

But when next the foundations of British capitalism begin to crack—before Imperialist development brought back a spell of prosperity again; in the 'eighties when Socialism once more became articulate in England, and when the beginnings of the New Unionism marked the end of a chapter of working-class history, once again the I.W.C.E. idea emerges. Morris's words on our cover this month express the same spirit as Hodgskin's. The early "propagandist" work of all the Socialist Societies was an effort towards making use of the weapon of education—"Education towards Revolution," in Morris's phrase again. Another chapter of Left Wing history was written; and again the "education idea" plays its part—as an integral part of the workers' struggle.

We come down to our own day, and the beginnings of our own movement. How was that movement born? It was a part, and an integral part, of that Left Wing "ferment" which stirred the British Labour Movement in the years immediately preceding the World War. Once again workers were realising that never, under capitalism, could their ideals be achieved; once again they were becoming conscious of their common class interests, and their common class enemy; once again, too, they were seeing the need for new and more efficient methods of organisation to meet the vastly increased power of that enemy. And once again a section of them realised that—"Education cannot be imposed from above, it cannot be handed down by a superior class to an inferior class. The working class must achieve its own salvation. It must develop its own social intelligence, an intelligence which grows out of the economic world in which it lives and moves and has its being" (PLEBS, Vol. I, No. 1).

The men who saw this, and who translated their ideas into actions, were none of them standing aloof from the day-to-day business of the class-struggle. Every one of them, in his Union or in his locality, was a Left Winger, pulling his weight in the work of the movement. Their "new idea" did actually grow out of the economic world in which they lived and moved and had their being; and it took root and grew apace precisely because of this.

The moral of it all? . . . Our movement has grown to proportions we hardly dared dream of a few short years ago. A big movement—a successful movement—entails specialisation. It means "whole-timers"; men devoted solely to our own particular business. We have to see to it that none of us forget that, for us, Education is a

means to an end—the more effective waging of the class-struggle—and not an end in itself. As individuals, and as an organisation, we have got to keep in touch with all that is militant, all that is *moving*, in the workers' movement. "Keeping in touch" means ourselves playing our part. We are of the Left Wing, because the very idea we stand for is a Left Wing idea. Our history is a Left Wing history. Our present and future lie with the spread of Left Wing ideas and the increase of Left Wing activity. And only so far as our ideas result in a growth of working-class militance will our educational movement be justified.

J. F. H.

N.C.L.C. DIRECTORY—*Additions and Corrections.*

Hon. President: A. A. PURCELL, add M.P.

PLEBS ANNUAL MEET

TO all whom it may concern, and especially to Groups of the League, please note we are holding our annual general meeting at

"The Woodlands,"

Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire,

on Saturday and Sunday, September 12th and 13th.

We have booked thirty places at this very comfortable Guest House, and we hope to have a large number of Plebs from in and around Manchester with us. Additional accommodation can be provided in the neighbourhood if required.

We want as representative a gathering as we can possibly get, and there is plenty of time for Groups to get together, send round the hat and send a delegate to the Meet. We need all the advice and help of the rank and file, and look to you to support this event to your utmost.

The cost of accommodation will be about 8s. 6d. per head from tea on Saturday to tea on Sunday.

How to get there

All visitors except from the South book a week-end ticket direct to Whaley Bridge. They will have to change at Manchester, but Manchester Plebeians will be on the spot to render assistance.

Visitors from the South book to Chinley (week-end ticket); this saves 4s. but entails a three-mile walk.

Will intending visitors let us know at their earliest so that we can be sure of sufficient accommodation?

An Agenda will be published next month. Any resolutions from Groups should reach the office by August 15th.

The very heartiest invitation is extended to all sympathisers and Plebeians. We want to make this Meet really successful, so roll up, Plebs!

W. H.

The COBER HILL SCHOOL

A Diary of the Week

We make no apology—even in troublous times like the present—for devoting some space to this account of our Cober Hill Summer School. Not only the intrinsic interest of the discussions but the general atmosphere of keenness and good comradeship which prevailed are things which we want to share with the hundreds of Plebs who could not attend.

SATURDAY, July 4th.—A real summer day—just the sort of day to sprawl on the lawns at Cober Hill and thank God one was booked for a week off! Plebs, hot and dusty from travel, trickled up to the Guest House all afternoon, “clocked on” in the register, dumped their luggage, and re-appeared quickly in flannels and *ninon de foie gras* (or whatever it is girls’ dresses are made of). It was too glorious an evening to come indoors for a social. Instead, we strolled around the gardens until the moon came up, renewing old friendships, making a start on new ones, and exchanging sighs over some of the pals who for one reason or another were unable to be with us. Still, we’re a fairly representative bunch—strong contingents from London and Manchester, and ones or twos from Crewe, Cumberland, Sussex, Scotland, South Wales, Chesterfield, Derby and the House of Commons. And more arrive to-morrow and on Monday.

Sunday, July 5th.—Mass-party walk over the cliffs (the cliff-paths, rather) to Hayburn Wyke. J. F. H. accused of qualifying for a T.U. leaders’ job, owing to his partiality for leading his regiment from behind. . . . Bathing parade in the afternoon. Seldom have the grim rocks of Cloughton Wyke served as background to so much feminine grace and beauty, so much manly muscle. [That will do.—ED.] . . . After supper, School opened. Owing to Ellen Wilkinson’s regretted indisposition—after a week of all-night

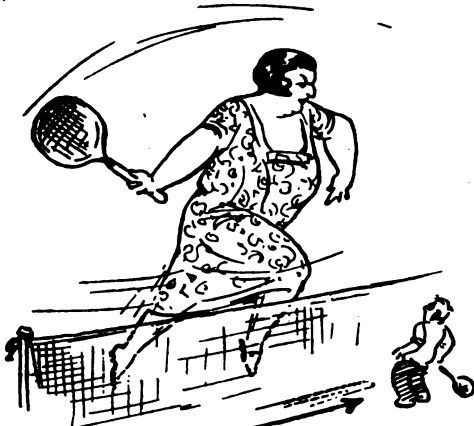
sittings at Westminster—Jack Murphy filled the bill with an extremely interesting historical sketch of the growth and development of the Left Wing Movement in Britain ; perhaps the most appropriate opening subject possible for a School aiming at discussing present-day problems from a Left Wing point of view. Naturally, in view of the lecturer's own experience, the Shop Stewards' movement during the War came in for a good deal of attention, and Murphy's analysis of the various factors which led to its disintegration was keenly discussed ; as was also the rôle of the Communist Party in the Left Wing Movement to-day. Among those taking part were J. F. H. (who presided), Wm. Paul, Ellen Wilkinson, P. Burns, W. T. Colyer, Mrs. Buck, J. E. Matthews and Mark Starr. Paul's contribution was especially interesting. He defined the three main tasks confronting the Left Wing as—(1) getting clear ideas as to how far the workers can, or cannot, make use of the machinery of capitalism in their struggle for its abolition ; (2) planning for the defeat of Liberalism—not merely the Liberal Party as a separately organised force, but Liberalism as now more and more manifested in the councils of the Labour Movement ; (3) clarifying our own and the workers' ideas on the subject of the British Empire. . . . A collection in aid of the Special Appeal for the *Sunday Worker* realised £1 4s.

Monday, July 6th.—This morning was given over to bowls, bathes, walks, tennis, etc. (Dr. Marion Philips showed that, had circumstances dictated a different career for her, she would have made Mlle. Lenglen look to her laurels.) Other groups were busy rehearsing for the evening's programme. . . . Quite a large audience, including other visitors to Cober Hill, the staff, and several comrades from Scarborough, gathered in the lecture-theatre after supper for Wm. Paul's song-recital, "Music and Revolution," and the readings of two plays—Calderon's *Little Stone House* and Lady Gregory's *Rising of the Moon*—by Plebs. Paul was in great form—"Let My People Go," "I Had a Horse," and two famine songs, one Russian and one Irish, being among the most loudly-cheered items in his repertoire. Miss Biddick, of the Guest House staff, was his accompanist. Those taking part in the plays were Winifred and J. F. Horrabin, Mark and Kathleen Starr, P. Burns, J. E. Matthews, and Wm. Paul, with comrade Leith Michie as stage-manager. . . . A "supplementary" collection for the *Sunday Worker* fund produced £1 9s.

Tuesday, July 7th.—Sunday evening's debate having made it apparent that there was ample room for further discussion of the various "group" points of view existing among Left Wingers, this morning was devoted to statements by three comrades—Willie Gallacher, Leith Michie, and C. L. Malone—on "Why I believe

in the C.P., the I.L.P., and the Labour Party" (respectively). Com. Tom Nelson presided.

GALLACHER, who opened, said he was in the C.P. because he was a revolutionary. There were two policies before the workers—(1) to attempt to build a new society on the foundations of the old (the I.L.P. policy); (2) to sweep away the old foundations before beginning on the new building. This last was the Communist policy. He did not believe in trying to "patch up the unpatchable." The capitalist class would fight for their privileges. An insur-



MARK STARR SAYS THIS IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO PLAY TENNIS AGAINST MARION PHILLIPS

IT IS ADVISABLE NOT TO SIT IMMEDIATELY IN FRONT OF J.T.MURPHY WHEN THE DEBATE GETS WARM



rectionary struggle was therefore inevitable. Hence the need for a disciplined party to take the lead. . . . If you adopted policy (1) you were forced, first of all, to *strengthen* the foundations on which you intended to build; *i.e.*, you had to make capitalism secure. The I.L.P. policy, in effect therefore, was "serve Mammon before you can serve God." There was no mid-way between the two policies—class-collaboration or class-war. He did not agree with his old friend, John Wheatley, when the latter said that the class-war, like measles, was an ugly fact—to be faced, and got rid of. The ugly fact was the exploitation of the workers; and the class-war, as the only means of ending that evil, was a good, not a bad, thing.

MICHIE declared that whatever might be the attitude of certain leaders, rank-and-file I.L.P.ers stood for class-war. He protested that there was all the difference in the world between making use of parts of the present social structure and building your new society "on the *foundations* of the old." He denied that the I.L.P. was simply pacifist; its pacifism was directed against *capitalist* war. He came from a non-industrial area in which a certain amount of tact and caution in propaganda was absolutely necessary if any,

headway was to be made. As a matter of fact, was the C.P.—anywhere—making new Socialists? Was it not, in the main, enrolling as members people who had first been made into Socialists by the propaganda spade-work of other organisations, notably the I.L.P.? And was not this latter work quite as important as the business of criticising leaders and policies, on which the C.P. largely concentrated?

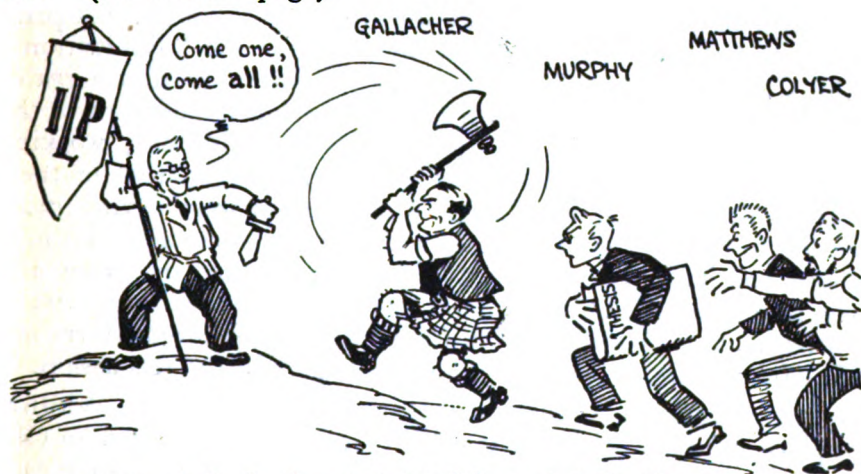
MALONE said that all Left Wingers would agree with Gallacher's broad statements on class-struggle *v.* class-collaboration. He was perfectly convinced that sooner or later the capitalist class would fall back on armed force. But Left Wing policy must be discussed and decided upon, not in relation to abstract principles, but in relation to the one ultimate test—Will it, here and now, help on working-class aims? He wished to work inside the Labour Party, because only there did he feel that he was in contact with the mass of British workers. But he wanted to see a Minority Movement inside the Labour Party, just as they had a Minority Movement among the Trade Unions; a "ginger group" which would exercise real influence on policy because of the active part its members took in the day-to-day work of the movement. He hoped that, just as members of all the various groups had found it possible to work together on the *Sunday Worker*, for example, so this School would result in more co-operation in future, on class-war lines, between the organisations represented.

Comrades Burns, Colyer, Starr, Matthews, Winifred Horrabin, Ellen Wilkinson, Paul, J. F. Horrabin and Amy Colyer, took part in a lively discussion, which was cut short by the dinner-bell.

In the evening, C. L. Malone (J. E. Matthews in the chair), brought us down from theories and policies to practical details in a talk on "Ways and Means of Re-organising the Labour Party." Remarking that it would be fatal for the movement if the discussion of such things were dubbed "disloyal," Malone pleaded that it was our business as Left Wingers to press for (1) a new—and clearer—statement of the aims of the Labour Party; (2) the choice of leaders by the whole movement, and not by the Parliamentary Party alone; (3) better "staff work," *i.e.*, more contact between the political party and the representatives of the T.U. movement, and the establishment of a "Planning Department" at Ecclestone Square; (4) more democratic control in order to counter the influence—and money—of the many wealthy men who had come into the Labour Party recently; (5) the formation of our own staff of departmental chiefs in readiness for Labour's next period of government, and the full use of the various Advisory Committees which so far mainly existed only on paper; (6) the elimination of wasteful overlapping, *e.g.*, between the Joint Research Department, the

Labour Research Department, and the I.L.P. Information Committee; (7) an adequately planned and staffed Press, Publicity, and Advertisement Department.

The chairman announced that he should allow no "back-chat" in this discussion, but on Gallacher's urging that the utmost latitude should be allowed at a School of this kind for interruptions, questions, etc., a vote on the question of "back-chat or no back-chat" was taken, and "back-chat" won. . . . Notable points in the discussion were Gallacher's declaration in favour of prohibition in Labour Clubs—which was loudly cheered; and his innocent inquiry, "What is a thesis?" addressed to one of the other speakers; and Colyer's plea that considerable care would need to be exercised in building up any department on a basis of revenue derived from advertising, lest—as in the case of capitalist newspapers—policy should be dictated by big advertisers. . . . At a "sing-song" after discussion, J. E. Matthews rendered his spirited ballad "The Plebs at Cober Hill" (see a later page).



MICHELLE defends the I.L.P. citadel against the Communist hordes

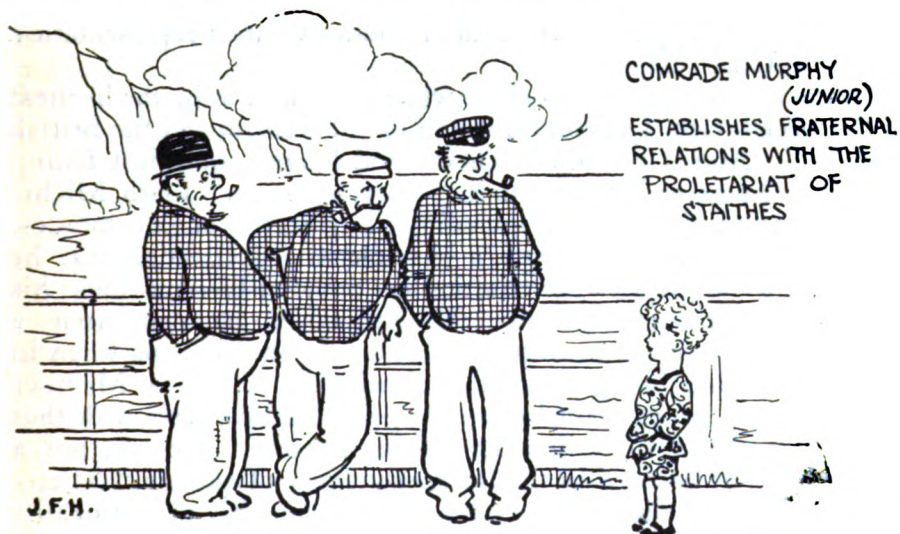
Wednesday, July 8th.—Various rounds in the Bowls Tournament decided immediately after breakfast. . . . Much excitement caused on the green by the appearance of an immaculately-gowned young woman, discovered to be entered on the list as Clara Vere de Vere. Colyer somewhat perturbed on finding that the dazzling one was to be his partner. Later investigations revealed that Clara was none other than Sam Knight, artfully disguised. . . . At ten-thirty Gallacher opened a discussion on R. Louzon's article in the July PLEBS, "How shall we Prepare for Revolution?" As a summary of his arguments appears in his article published on another page of this issue, there is no need to detail them here. In the very keen debate which followed, Colyer (presiding), said he felt that Louzon's

characterisation of the Communist Party as "militarist" in spirit was due to there having been occasions when the Party had—mistakenly—tried to apply "discipline" to the thoughts, as well as to the actions, of its members. It was one thing to demand from members absolute loyalty, so far as their actions were concerned, to the expressed will of the majority of their fellows (he himself had been imprisoned in the States for his part in a policy which he had opposed, but which, once the Party had adopted it, he had made it his duty to support); but it was quite another and a very absurd thing to attempt to "discipline" people's thinking. In a witty reference to Paul's singing of "Stenka Razin," Colyer said he thought he was not alone in feeling that it would have been better to have made an attempt to convert the luckless heroine before throwing her into the Volga. And he suggested that had it not been for the impulse in certain quarters to throw people overboard instead of reasoning with them patiently, Louzon and some others of his group might not be where they are to-day. . . . J. F. Horrabin followed with an emphatic declaration that The PLEBS did not print the article because of its (alleged) demand for the "liquidation" of the C.P., but because it made what appeared to him a really powerful plea for the recognition of different spheres of work in the pre-revolutionary period, and of different organisations, working in co-operation, to undertake that work. He urged that in their insistence on "joining the Party," Communists were paying more attention to labels than to things; and that the work of the Labour Colleges and The PLEBS, which could not be carried on under any Party label, should be recognised by all revolutionists as vitally important. . . . Matthews, De Caux, Burns, Winifred Horrabin, J. T. Murphy and Mark Starr, also took part in the discussion.

In the afternoon, a motor excursion to Staithes, *via* Whitby, took place, the idea being a mass-visit to comrade Umpleby, an Old Pleb, and a member of last year's School at Cober Hill. Five cars and a char-a-banc set out on the expedition; but owing to defective staff-work only three cars—fourteen souls in all—reached the destination. (The others all survived.) We inspected Umpleby's books, and then he showed us round the village and the harbour.

Back over the moors to Cober Hill, and, after supper, a highly successful impromptu Fancy Dress Dance. No one would have believed that so much variety and ingenuity of costume could have been devised and carried into effect inside of three-quarters-of-an-hour. Prizes were awarded to Mrs. Murphy ("United Front—L of a mess behind"), Dr. May (Nun), Mr. Berry (Nurse and baby), and Willie Gallacher (Khan of Bokhara). Other striking efforts were Joe Matthews—as a cripple, labelled "After a Discussion

on Trotskyism"; Kathleen Starr as a Vamp, and Mark as a Bolshevik (capitalist press version); Mrs. Knight as a Spanish damsel, Winifred Horrabin as a footballer (how these women do love to get into trousers!), Wilde as a Ku-Klux-Klansman, Rawlinson as Mussolinistopheles, Burns as a Don Cossack, Betty Paul as a bit of Turkish Delight, Evans as a Sheik, and J. F. H. in holy orders. The dramatic moment was the entry of our hostess, Miss Andrews, as the Cannibal King, complete with necklace of bones and fur trimmings! [Much regret was expressed that we had not with us J. P. M. Millar as the Fat Boy from *Pickwick*, Geo. Hicks as Don Quixote, Jack Hamilton with the House that Jack built, and R. W. Postgate as a Little Ray of Sunshine.]



Thursday, July 9th.—Semi-finals and final of the Bowls Tournament (open to all guests at Cober Hill) played off after breakfast. One Pleb only—Winifred Horrabin—got through to the last lap; and amid scenes of unparalleled excitement she and her partner, Mr. Driver, defeated their opponents, Mr. Schofield and Miss Buck, by 15—4. . . . Then the bowling-green became a class-room, and Wilde took the chair for Mark Starr's lecture on "Problems of Trade Unionism." Mark made effective use of the blackboard in pressing home on his audience some striking figures relating to the numbers of possible and actual Trade Unionists, rival unions in various industries, percentages of unionists in particular industries, etc., etc. He outlined the case for amalgamation, and the needful steps to be taken before workers' control of industry could be a reality. Another point he urged strongly was the representation of Trades Councils in the T.U. Congress. . . . Murphy, leading

off the discussion, while paying tribute to the usefulness of the facts and figures the lecturer had presented, urged that we could not usefully study Trade Unionism and its problems as isolated phenomena, but only in relation to the whole working-class struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Matthews put in a plea for the agricultural workers, as being vital allies during any insurrectionary period when home-grown food supplies would be essential. Gallicher wished Starr had concentrated more on the problem of smashing capitalism rather than on that of "carrying on" industry afterwards. He urged that Left Wingers ought to press at the T.U.C. for the appointment of special commissions to go into the question of amalgamation, and for the giving of much greater powers to the General Council. J. F. H., Mrs. Buck, and Mrs. Colyer, also spoke, the latter strongly supporting the idea of Trades Council representation in the T.U.C.

In the evening came the debate which promised to be the liveliest of the week—Geo. Lansbury opening on "Socialism and the British Empire." And it *was* the liveliest—and longest, only just failing by two minutes to last over until Friday morning. Leith Michie presided, and a big audience, including many Scarborough comrades, attended. G. L. opened with a characteristic declaration that he believed in no popes—ecclesiastics or economists—but took his own individual point of view. He had never, he said, been a theorist, but preferred to come to conclusions on problems when in actual life he was brought face to face with them. As a Member of Parliament, he was called upon to deal in various ways with that "jumble of nations" called the British Empire. He was not a nationalist, but believed in the interdependence of nations. Therefore he did not believe it to be his duty to help stir up nationalist revolts in the various parts of the Empire. He wanted—so far as the subject peoples of the Empire would of their own free will agree to this—to maintain unbroken the link binding them to this and other countries of the Empire. In regard to India, he said the Socialist policy must be to discover the greatest common measure of agreement between the Indians themselves, and to press for more education in India. It was certain that, at present, the bulk of the Indians do not want the British to leave the country altogether. He disagreed entirely with the view that it was necessary or desirable that the Empire should be broken up. He did not want to maintain the Empire *as now constituted*—any more than he wanted to maintain this country as now constituted. He wanted Socialism here, and he wanted to work with Socialists in all parts of the Empire to transform it into a real commonwealth of nations, based on the economic interdependence of every part; just as the Russian Soviet Government had successfully brought about a Union of the various terri-

tories formerly forming the Tsarist Empire. He believed that Finland and the Baltic States, and probably large areas of China also, would sooner or later be brought within the Soviet Union, since it was obviously natural that these areas should be in close relation with Russia. The various republics of the Soviet Union had certain fiscal arrangements between themselves, and he saw no reason why in the same way—to safeguard certain standards of living—the component parts of the British commonwealth should not give one another preferential treatment. Russia would not buy from the outside anything that she could herself produce. Why, then, was it wrong for British Socialists to give “preference” to their own people? He did not believe in a *tax* on goods produced under bad conditions, but in a tariff *bar* against them. . . . The whole trend of things to-day was towards World Unity. He wanted to make the British Commonwealth a step towards that Unity. It would be a poor argument for Internationalism if we who spoke the same tongue could not hold together in one commonwealth.

Gallacher opened the discussion. Speaking with considerable feeling—which now and then got the better of him—he characterised Lansbury’s attitude to the question of the Empire as one of treachery to the working-class. Lansbury, he insisted, had never made up his mind whether he was talking about some ideal commonwealth he was hoping for or the actual Empire as it is. That Empire was maintained by the bomb and the bayonet, and he challenged Lansbury to press, in the House and in his paper, for the immediate withdrawal of all British troops and arms from India. Unfortunately, Gallacher spoiled the effectiveness of much of his criticism by certain over-statements and personal charges which made it very difficult for later speakers to regain the dispassionate atmosphere essential to clear discussion. . . . Winifred Horrabin—with some emotion—appealed to all taking part in the discussion to control their emotions, and at least to try to understand the opposite point of view. She entirely disagreed with Lansbury’s position, but she was convinced that if Lansbury once felt that the position he was taking up was injurious to the workers’ interests, he would ask for no further reason before giving it up. . . . J. E. Matthews sought to pin Lansbury down to the position of being prepared to fight for the Empire, since he had declared it to be, in his belief, an instrument of progress. G. L.’s reply was, of course, that as a pacifist, he was not prepared to fight (in the sense of killing) for anything, not even Socialism. [Which, though it “let out” G. L., certainly left Socialists who do not share his beliefs about killing in the quandary Matthews indicated.]. . . . J. T. Murphy argued that, despite his professed disbelief in nationalism, Lansbury had throughout spoken from the nationalist, British, point of view—seeking to conserve

certain privileges for those of his own race and tongue ; and never taking his stand as a member of an international *class*. . . . Mrs. Colyer quoted certain recent utterances by G. L. on the virtues of inconsistency, but urged that the apparent inconsistency of a working-class leader of his record in now lining up—or seeming to line up—with the Imperialists was a really serious blow to the Labour Movement. . . . J. F. Horrabin declared that just as, in Lansbury's own words, it was "natural" that Finland should sooner or later become part of the territories forming the Union of Soviet Republics, so it was "unnatural" that the disconnected and widely dissimilar areas constituting the present British Empire should form a separate group. He felt that the real fundamental difference between Lansbury and his critics was that Lansbury thought it worth while to work for what he had himself called a "Socialist-capitalist Government" as a transitional stage, whereas they felt that nothing short of an absolute break with the old order was of any use. . . . Mark Starr urged that Lansbury should beware of "doing the Devil's work in God's name." Lansbury might have what he considered good reasons for advocating a particular policy ; but when—as in this case—such advocacy assisted the common enemy, Capitalist-Imperialism, and caused confusion in the workers' ranks, it ought to be practised very warily. . . . Comrades Burns, Colyer, Buck, and May also spoke ; and G. L. replied. A collection made (at Lansbury's suggestion) for the Workers' International Relief realised £1 11s.

Friday, July 10th.—J. F. Horrabin on "The Place of Workers' Education in the Left Wing Movement."* Comrade De Caux (late of Brookwood Labour College, New York), presided, and supplemented Horrabin's observations on the American Workers' Education Movement with some first-hand impressions of his own. Notable points in the discussion were Comrade Mrs. Smith's plea for more study by the Labour Colleges of Marx's writings, as re-translated (and freed from German Social-Democrat distortions) by Russian Marxists ; W. T. Colyer's description of the "mind-shaping" methods of American State education, and our need seriously to study these ; T. Nelson's argument that educational work should be controlled and directed by the one workers' revolutionary party, and his suggestion that Plebs, if they were no more than Plebs, were holding back from the front-line battle ; Winifred Horrabin's reply that no Pleb worth his salt confined himself to educational work, but played his full part so far as he was able in all the struggles of the workers (though not necessarily under the banner of one particular Party) ; Wilde's suggestion that the length of

*See this month's Editorial.

residential terms must be settled in relation to the specific work which students are being trained to undertake ; Burns' appeal for a Plebs textbook on the Russian Revolution ; and Starr's insistence that, in putting the truths of Marxism into working-class phraseology, and " getting them across " to thousands of workers, the Labour Colleges were doing vitally important work, and one which would only be hampered if they allied themselves exclusively with any one Party. . . . Horrabin, in reply, made an appeal to all Left Wingers



to join the Plebs League—and a prompt request for membership application-forms indicated that the appeal had borne fruit !

Our last bathing-parade this afternoon ! And as if to mark its regret at our going, the North Sea had itself gone so far out of Cloughton Wyke that we had to march o'er rock and fen, o'er crag and torrent till at length we came up with it.

After supper, grand final social, sing-song, concert, dramatic performance and dance. Comrade Sam Knight presided and also acted as choir leader. Item one was a dramatic version of a scene from *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists*, in which comrades Joe and Ada Matthews and L. Michie took part. Joe's rendering of the famous speech about " You and your b—y desert islands " was immense ! Then followed some musical items—pianoforte solos by Mr. Pybus, and songs by Miss Parr and Miss Buck (all visitors to the Guest House). Next came a dramatic reading of " King Alfred and the Cakes," from Maurice Baring's *Diminutive Dramas*. J. F. H. as the very cultured monarch, Joe Matthews as the ultra-bucolic neatherd, and Winifred Horrabin as the buxom lady of the cakes, all won their meed of laughter and applause. More musical items by Messrs. Pybus, Driver and the Foster Quartette ;

a monologue by Comrade Wilde ; and then Lady Gregory's *The Workhouse Ward*—with last year's cast ; J. F. H. and Mark Starr as the two old paupers, and Kathleen Starr as the portly country-woman. The fact that Mark's whiskers came unstuck before the finish only added to the general hilarity. . . . To end up with—some dancing ; and, somewhere about midnight, "Auld Lang Syne," three cheers for the Cober Hill staff by the Plebs, three cheers for the Plebs by the staff, "The Red Flag," and "The International."

A jolly week, and a useful one. Would that there had been more of us there to enjoy it, and benefit by it.

Wimereux next. And then what about a National Plebs School at Cober Hill for a fortnight in August next year ?

HOW NOT TO PREPARE FOR REVOLUTION !

Com. W. Gallacher here summarises his opening speech in the discussion at the Cober Hill School on Louzon's article last month. For a brief report of the rest of the discussion see p. 305.

THE article translated by Eden and Cedar Paul which appeared in last month's PLEBS under the heading "How Shall We Prepare for Revolution ?" is a glaring example of the confusion and trickery by which the "liquidationists" seek to undermine the Communist International. Of course it is all very cunningly done under the plea of being more revolutionary than the revolutionaries, but the outstanding and undeniable fact remains that it brings those who are parties to it into line with the international financiers and their Social Democratic lackeys. If one is facing, and fighting against, well-known and ruthless enemies, and while the fight is hottest another attacks from the rear, all the protestations under heaven will never convince the attacked that the attacker is a friend. Nay, rather will he see in him the most cowardly and contemptible type of enemy.

Of such is the group in France represented by Louzon. While his article is in the main muddled and stupid, nevertheless it is dangerous in so far as its misleading phraseology is deliberately used to create confusion. Consider this for a start : "Then abjuring his old 'errors' (it is Trotsky to whom he is referring) he goes on to say that he was wrong when, in the days before the November revolution, he deplored the 'sectarianism' of the bolsheviks." You see how it is done. All that Trotsky did prior to the November revolution was to "deplore" the "sectarianism" of the bolsheviks.

Not much wrong with that and, of course, it leads up naturally to the question which, presumably, forms the premise for Louzon's article :—

“ But was Trotsky wrong in those days, and is he right in his recantation ? ”

Obviously, if Trotsky's offence merely consisted of “ deploring ” the “ sectarianism ” of the bolsheviks, then there would have been little need for a “ recantation.” But the bolsheviks were not sectarian, and Trotsky, able as he is, could not have “ deplored ” that which had no existence.

The bolsheviks were a well-organised, self-disciplined party of workers ; everyone contributing his or her best to prepare the party for its great task of leading the workers in the insurrectionary struggle against Capitalism. In the building up of that party Trotsky played no part. Instead of helping to build it, he did what he could to destroy it, attacking it on every opportunity with as little scruple as his self-appointed disciples are doing now.

Trotsky realised his errors in 1917, and joined the Bolshevik Party. As a member of the party and *following the instructions of the party* he has given great service to the revolution. But the old strain of egotism is still there. If he does not keep it in check, if he allows it to drive him against the party, then he can quite easily undo all that he has done. It is with this thought in mind that the Imperialists have recently been trying to play him up against the other leaders of the Russian Communist Party.

So much for Trotsky “ deploring ” the “ sectarianism ” of the bolsheviks. Louzon then goes on : “ This (Trotsky's) present contention amounts to this, that a strongly disciplined and rigidly centralised party is essential to the triumph of a working-class insurrection. Who can doubt that he is right ? An insurrection is a military affair. . . . Had there not been a Blanquist Party, strictly disciplined and highly militarised (the true forerunner of the Russian Communist Party), the rising of March 18th, 1871, would have been nothing more than a localised outbreak.”

Now if Louzon, Rosmer and Co. believe that, why don't they start organising a Blanquist Party ? For let me say as plainly as it can be said that the Communist International has nothing whatever to do with Blanquism, and the Russian Communist Party is fundamentally different from the party of the Blanquists. The Blanquists believed that a small disciplined military group could at a given moment take the bourgeois by surprise and by a sudden attack wrest the power out of their hands (just as the reformists believe that a small group of duly elected persons can talk their bourgeois into a state of coma and painlessly relieve them of all their possessions). The Communists maintain that this is impossible

and absurd. Only a mass rising of the workers can succeed in overthrowing the bourgeois, but it can only succeed if the rising is led and directed by a revolutionary party of the workers. Without the party the masses cannot carry through a revolutionary struggle, without the masses the party is helpless. In the war against Capitalism these two must go together, the party and the masses, and any attempt to separate them is either a sign of political bankruptcy or a conscious fear of the perils of revolution. But Louzon favours Blanquism. Let us see where it leads him :—

“There can be no victorious insurrection, there can be nothing more than a *putsch* unless the movement is led by a militarised organisation—by a bolshevik party, in a word.”

“That is not the point in dispute. The delicate problem is one of a very different order. What we want to know is, whether a militarised organisation (indispensable for the success of an insurrection) is equally indispensable when our task is to *prepare the whole working class for the revolution*. Can such an organisation effectively foster class consciousness?”

“Trotsky, following Lenin, and Lenin, following Marx, have said that insurrection is an art. To avoid ambiguity (I, Louzon, will correct the three of them), we shall perhaps do better to say that insurrection is a technique. Now, every technique, insurrection not excepted, needs appropriate tools. The technique of insurrection needs the tool which is a militarised, centralised and disciplined party. But, for the very reason that such a party is a tool of this kind, it cannot at one and the same time be a tool fitted for the very different technique of creating a class-conscious and organised proletariat.”

Now that, if it does little credit to their intelligence, makes their object very clear. A bolshevik party will be useful at the moment of insurrection, oh yes, they very considerably grant that, *but it's of no use now*. It's a quite different “tool” that is wanted for the period of preparation. Louzon and his friends will take possession of the field now, and the Communist Party will hide itself somewhere out of the way. Then when Louzon and Co. have “educated” the workers to such a revolutionary fervour that they rise in insurrection, they will intimate that their part of the job is finished and invite us to step out of obscurity and carry through the revolution. It's very kind of them, I'm sure, but I think the intelligent reader will readily understand that a party that has not participated in the everyday struggles of the workers, that is not part and parcel of the workers' organisation, will make a poor job in leading the workers in the biggest fight of all. Another point that Louzon seems to forget is that if there are “tools,” then there must be a “user” of the “tools”—a directing force behind the “tools.” If he

will think over this, he might begin to understand the subject he is attempting to discuss. Prior to the insurrection there will be many "tools" in use, educational and agitational. At the period of insurrection there will be military and other action. All these, the "tools" used in the preparation and the "tools" used during the insurrection itself, must be under a common direction. This direction can only be given by a well-organised, thoroughly disciplined *political* party with its members effectively carrying out the party policy in all spheres of working-class activity. And a bolshevik party *is a political party*, a political party of the workers and not as Louzon tries to suggest, a narrow "sectarian" or "militarist" organisation. The Communist Party will prepare the masses, and itself, for insurrection. No other party can do that work.

The Labour Party, despite its rotten liberalised leadership, can contribute during the period of preparation. The PLEBS, carrying as it does Marxian education to the active workers, will do its share. The Minority Movement will put new fight into the trade union movement and prepare it for the responsible part it will have to play. But while each of these may be a useful "tool," to use the language of Louzon, no one of them is capable of acting as the "tool" director. None of them would make the claim of being able to do so, yet all would admit that central direction is absolutely necessary, if these different movements are all to contribute most effectively towards the common end. Where is the central direction to come from? Let each reader face that question free from all prejudice, so sedulously created by reformists and "liquidationists," and there will be but one answer—the Communist Party.

But Louzon, anxious to give his absurd arguments an appearance of reality, says: "Even as far as Russia is concerned, we have to ask ourselves whether the same sort of considerations do not apply. Down to the opening stages of the insurrectionary period the Bolshevik Party exercised but little influence on the Russian working class." That is a deliberate and stupid lie. Right from the time of the first revolution, the bolshevik party was the most potent influence in the Russian working class. It was because of its influence that Trotsky and the Mensheviks so violently attacked it, just as it is because of its growing influence among the British workers that the party here is being so violently attacked by the bourgeois and the "Menshevik" Labour leaders. For twenty years the bolsheviks were with the workers of Russia in every struggle against oppression. For twenty years they went on building up their party from the workers, and when the test came they were ready for it. So must we, in this country, struggle, so must we build, if we would not fail when the crisis comes upon us.

The most foolish and most dangerous blunder of all is when he

says : " Is it not possible that Trotsky was right to renounce these ' errors ' in 1917 ; and that he was also right to revive them in 1924 ? "

" The situation in Russia has changed a good deal in the meantime. . . . There must, consequently, be a correlative change in the *type of organisation*. The organisation best suited to war time is not the organisation best suited to peace time."

So, the bolshevik party, having carried through the revolution in Russia, will now at the request of Louzon, quietly drop out of the picture, and a new type of organisation specially prescribed by Louzon and Co. will take its place. That is, of course, if " war-time " has passed and " peace-time " taken its place.

Has it not dawned on these " technicians of insurrection " that " war-time " will never pass while Capitalism exists, and that to loosen the revolutionary grip would simply be to invite the counter-revolution to walk in. Peace-time ! And the Imperialists plotting and planning for an advantageous opportunity for launching an united offensive against the Russian Workers' Republic. Was there ever such blind, or criminal, folly ?

But it is all of a piece with what is going on right throughout the whole International. There are Louzons in every country, all of them, consciously or unconsciously, doing their work as the hidden wing of the Capitalist offensive against Soviet Russia and the Communist International.

WM. GALLACHER.

THE SMITH

An Ancient Craft & Some Modern Developments

Here is a study, by a worker engaged therein, of a particular craft and the way in which it has been affected by modern industrial developments. We shall be very glad to publish similar articles by workers in other industries, and herewith extend a cordial invitation to our readers to follow this lead. Who'll be in time for next month ?

MANY Labour College students will be familiar with a passage in Jenks' *History of Politics* where he says :— " If anyone with the necessary knowledge and patience would write a history of the craft of the *smith*, tracing its development in all ages and in all countries, he would do yeoman service to the cause of social history." The writer of this article has

no claim to either of the qualifications stated, particularly the second, but feels sure that a great deal that is interesting to students of Industrial History may be gleaned from a survey of the developments that have taken place in this very ancient and very important craft, and the effect of these developments on those, who, like the writer, follow it at the present time.

The craft of the smith is certainly one of the earliest in the history of industry, and if we consider that (in the modern sense of the term at any rate), industry implies the use of tools, and that these did not possess any great degree of utility until made of metal—particularly iron and steel—and were therefore the product of the Smith, we will find it hard to dispute the claim that he is the father of all the ancient craftsmen. When we further reflect on the tremendous advantage over their stone and bronze-implement-using neighbours and enemies gained by the tribes who earliest acquired the art of using iron, we get a good indication why “there is a Smith in the Pantheon of many ancient peoples.” He it was who beat out the flaming masses of metal on the anvil and shaped them into the various implements of warfare, the chase, and agriculture, thus adding to the destructive and productive powers of man, and further, when the art of converting iron into steel had been acquired was able by the process of “tempering” to endow implements with seemingly magic qualities so that the sword, for instance, could be bent until the point and the hilt almost met without snapping, while its piercing and cutting powers were greatly added to.

Because of his supreme importance as the maker of the implements of war and peace, we are told that the smith was held in high estimation in Anglo-Saxon times. “His person was protected by a double penalty. He was treated as an officer of the highest rank, and awarded the first place in precedency. After him ranked the maker of mead, and then the physician.” In the royal court of Wales he sat in the great hall with the King and Queen, next to the domestic chaplain; and even at that early day there seems to have been a hot spark in the smith’s throat which needed much quenching; for he was “entitled to a draught of every kind of liquor that was brought into the hall.” Working conditions like these must make many a modern follower of the craft long for a return of the good old times.

However, great and mighty changes have taken place in the technique of the smith’s craft, and it is their effect on the present-day smith that we are endeavouring to trace out. Let me say, however, that this article is only concerned with that branch of the craft concerned with the working of iron and steel; the followers of which are usually termed blacksmiths to distinguish them from copper-smiths, tin-smiths, etc.

One of the earliest developments in the blacksmith trade was division of labour. This was largely due to developments taking place in industry as a whole ; for instance with the growth of travel would arise an industry devoted to the production of road vehicles—coaches, etc.—and the necessary ironwork would be the work of the class of smith who followed the coachbuilding industry, hence coach-smiths. A better example is mentioned by Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations* in regard to the making of nails by hand. He tells us that he himself had seen a young lad who ever since he started work had been employed at nail-making till he had acquired such proficiency that 3,000 nails was his ordinary day's work ; whereas a general blacksmith put to nail-making would with difficulty manage to make 400 nails in a day. These tendencies—for the smith to follow a particular branch of industry and become specialised as a ship-smith, engine-smith or wagon-smith, and inside these industries to become still further specialised by being kept to the performing of one particular job or operation, are very marked to-day. The great revolution in the trade, however, was a result of the invention of the steam hammer by Nasmyth ; an invention, by the way, which has not yet celebrated its centenary.

While power-hammers of various kinds were in operation before the introduction of the steam-hammer they did not mean any great alteration in the actual practice of blacksmithing. They merely supplied extra-human power for the purpose of hammering out pieces of iron to a required size. Nasmyth, however, produced a hammer which, while with one stroke it could give a blow equal to a ton weight, the next blow need not be any stronger than just sufficient " to crack a nut without bruising the kernel " if such a blow was desired. But while it completely revolutionised the work of the smith only one very important development need concern us here, and that because it has gone far, and will probably in the future go further, in the direction of abolishing any special skill required on the part of those who follow what was at one time a highly skilled occupation.

The use of the steam hammer had no sooner become general than it was recognised as a very potent instrument for the purpose of mass production. Samuel Smiles, in his *Industrial Biography*, written, I should say, at least fifty years ago, quotes as follows from the *Engineer* of that period, " There is one use to which the steam-hammer is now becoming extensively applied by some of our manufacturers that deserves special mention, rather for the prospect which it opens to us than for what has already been actually accomplished. We allude to the manufacture of large articles in *dies*." The article then goes on to tell of locomotive wheels being stamped out in this fashion and proceeds, " It is evident that wherever wrought-

iron articles of manageable size have to be produced in considerable quantities, the same process may be adopted, and the saving effected by the substitution of this for the ordinary forging process will doubtless ere long prove incalculable." This prediction has been completely justified in the process of time. The reader will probably be acquainted with a saying of Marx in *Capital*—"The blacksmith forges and the product is a forging." This is no longer true regarding the bulk of smith-work. No longer does the smith forge out and shape his work and therein embody the skill and craftsmanship of his ancient calling; to-day dies and stamping tools, in which the shape of the article to be produced has been cut out, take the place of his skill and he becomes a mere feeder of these tools, supplying them with the hot metal which they greedily devour.

Another development from the steam-hammer is the drop-hammer, which is solely used for the purpose of stamping, and it is reckoned that the introduction of one of these hammers is equal to the displacement of six blacksmiths; and, be it carefully noted, these hammers do not necessarily require to be operated by a skilled man. Of recent years there has been a great addition to the number of what are termed "forging machines" in operation. The effect of this machine so far as it concerns the status of the smith as a skilled craftsman, and its usefulness to the boss from a point of view of profit, is apparent from information supplied to me by a smith employed in a shop where one of these machines had been introduced. He was receiving 6d. each for a certain article; on this job being produced by the machine the price was reduced to 1d.

The above illustrations—which could be multiplied many times over—will be sufficient to show the trend of development so far as the technique of the trade is concerned. It remains now to state as briefly as possible its effect on the worker engaged in the trade. It will be plain to all that the smith to-day is not such a highly skilled worker as his predecessor, and this is shown by a comparison of his wages with other so-called skilled trades. There has for a long time been a tendency in many districts to let men who have not served an apprenticeship do smith's work; this being only possible because of the fact that the changes that have taken place, in many instances, make the work of such a character that no special skill is required. It is a well-known fact that in some places a worker, who has been employed for some time as a blacksmith's helper, is more suitable for particular jobs than a stranger brought in, no matter how skilled a craftsman the latter may be. This means that a great deal of trade-union time and energy is devoted to the task of safe-guarding the craft privileges, which might be devoted to the task of raising wages. At any rate it seems certain that at some future date the craft of the smith, with many another craft that was formerly highly

skilled, will have disappeared altogether and will rank only as ordinary labour.

Regarding organisation, the two conflicting lines of thought are, whether it is better to continue organised on the craft basis as at present, or whether in future to organise on the basis of industry, *i.e.*, for the smith to belong to the union catering for the industry in which he is usually employed (and very often unemployed).

JOHN WILSON

(Lanarkshire Labour College).

NOTES BY THE WAY

Engels and Lenin and The Labour Party

No. 10 of *The Communist International* contains an interesting article on the Labour Party by C. M. Roebuck, in which some very important remarks of Engels are quoted and commented upon. These show that Engels fully believed in the formation of a mass organisation based on the trade unions, *provided that the workers "enter the movement as an independent class,"* as a step towards a real Socialist class Party. "One or two million workers' votes given for a *bona fide* Labour Party at the present time," he wrote in 1886, "are infinitely more important than a hundred votes cast for a programme that is irreproachable from the theoretical point of view"; and during the great dock strike he welcomed as of the greatest significance the fact that "The workers without being Socialists themselves chose leaders for themselves exclusively from amongst the Socialists." He pointed out that the formation of a real class party has been prevented in Britain by the fact of England's industrial monopoly in the world's market and the sharing of the English workers in the fruits of this monopoly. He did not foresee that this industrial monopoly by means of Imperialism was to continue for another twenty years, and the political organisation of the workers to go no further forward than this "first step."

The result was that the Labour Party, instead of forming the stepping stone to a real class party, became the prey of bourgeois ideology through the middle class intellectuals of the I.L.P. and Fabians, and continued to represent purely sectional T.U. interests on specific questions. Lenin, in harmony with

Engels' view, regarded the Labour Party as an important *transitional* step; but in opposition to Kautsky he did not regard it as the suitable instrument of a class policy, but "*only the first step.*" He regarded it as being "*not a party in the ordinary sense of the word,*" but as the parliamentary representative of the trade unions, expressing the collaborationist view of the T.U. bureaucracy, dominated by capitalist ideology, but nevertheless for the masses a step forward to a real class party. The writer of the article concludes that, since the middle class elements are seeking to transform the Labour Party into "a third party of the bourgeoisie," this must be resisted by the formation of an opposition "*working-class bloc*" within the Labour Party.

No. 11 of the same journal contains useful articles on the position in Germany as a result of the election of President Hindenburg, and by E. Varga on the possibility of the successful working of the Dawes Scheme.

Notinde

Spite de persekuto kaj murdo et Bulgarujo kaj aliaj landoj la anoj de Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda plimultiĝas. En la nova *Jarlibro* troviĝas 2705 adresoj el 40 landoj. Kanpreneble pli nombriĝas la neŭtralaj Esperantistoj sed ĉui S. A. T'ano sindediĉas laŭ la devizo "Esp. je la servo de la proletaro."

La Laborista Esperanta Klubo (141 High Holborn, W.C.1) havas tre interesan programon (Julio-Sep.) kaj ĝi bonvenos vizitantojn ĉiu sabate je la oka.

Ni gratulas la *Daily Herald* pri ĝia

enpreso de Esp. notoj laŭ la ekzemplo de la PLEBS. Ĉiam la koko krui matene.

En Svedio kelkaj reakciaj estroj kalumnias la raporton de Brit-Rusa Delegitaro Laborista. Esp. kamaradoj el Goteborg petis kaj recevis senperan informon pri la afero.

The Powers Behind the Pact

So much surprise would not have been expressed at the pact proposals made by the German Government if these had been read in conjunction with the Iron and Steel Franco-German Kartel which has been formed. Iron and steel imported from France will be distributed by a German combine. The *M. G. Commercial* (9-7-25) speaks of this agreement as containing "the seed of a Continental syndicate" and continues:

"The peculiar significance of this agreement for Germany is that the Raw Steel Association has eliminated French competition and completely rules the home market, while export trade is not impeded owing to the special concessions. The fact that German production so far only amounts to 70 to 75 per cent. of capacity should prove some safeguard against the Association's misuse of its monopolistic position. If the German Raw Steel Association makes a sensible use of its powerful position, all danger of foreign competition on the German home market will be eliminated, while German exports of finished goods, as well as of semi-products, will be in no way affected by special regulations. A close working combination between Minette ore and Ruhr coal will pave the way to a *powerful Continental iron and steel cartel, which will have to be taken into account abroad*. The agreement is to run for three years, but it is to cease immediately if the Franco-German trade agreement is not concluded, or if it is broken off."

Meanwhile official Labour wants nothing said against the Pact that would injure the Protocol, and the opposition to the Pact is largely not on the grounds that it—alongside the £40,000,000 British loan proposed to help German Big Business flood world markets—is an attempt to isolate working-class Russia, but that it departs from the supposed "splendid isolation" of Britain from European squabbles and makes possible the

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bombing of London by French aeroplanes because Germany—Britain's ally in the Pact—is relatively unarmed. This is the mess into which statesmen fall when they try to solve capitalism's problems for it, instead of pushing on international unity amongst the workers to combat the Kartels and Trusts of Europe, Ltd.

More Machines

In following up our studies of Modern Capitalism, we take this from the *Daily Herald* (4-7-25):

"A description of a new development in machinery which has the effect of speeding up the output of a bottling works is one of several interesting points mentioned in the annual report for 1924 of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops.

"By means of this machinery bottles will be washed, dried, filled, corked and delivered at the rate of 230 dozen an hour. The whole process will be mechanical, from the feeding-in of the bottles to the taking-off of the finished product.

"Three new labour-saving machines, all of German invention, have also been introduced in the fish-curing trade, one for heading the fish, another for splitting white fish, and a third for boning herring for the boneless kipper trade."

If the capitalists had not filleted the brains of many workers, these improvements could be turned to good account.

Even in conservative agriculture the *M. G. Commercial* (9-7-25) can speak thus of the recent Agricultural Show:

"This year at Chester half a score of firms are showing tractors for field use, in many cases with special cultivators and harvesters coupled up to them. More surprising than this is the number of heavy lorries, traction engines, and steam rollers on view, while as individual power units there are some forty petrol or oil engines, not to mention steam boiler plants and dynamos. So far as cultivators and harvesters are concerned—or harrows and ploughs, hay-loaders, mowers, and reapers—it is hard to think that there is any pattern of machinery in present use which does not find a place on one or other of the 438 stands which occupy nearly half the showground.

"One entry should prove to the northern farmer one of the first attractions of the show. It is the crop-drying plant entered by Messrs. Gascoigne, of Reading, which, together with a plant of very similar design—the 'Cyclone' fan of Messrs. Matthews and Yates, of Manchester, is being used for demonstration by the Oxford Institute of Agricultural Engineering.

"The process is designed for hay-making in the rick, not in a barn but in the open, and during the last few days two stacks of hay have been made from new-cut grass in the show-yard. . . . An ordinary farm tractor supplies the power, by which hot or cold air, as required, is fanned up the centre of the rick, the air being heated on its way through the fan by paraffin flares under pressure. A rick of some twelve tons can be turned into hay

by sixteen hours' blowing, at a running cost, it is claimed, of less than 2s. 6d. a ton."

At Dayton, Mr. Bryan was annoyed when questioned about Joshua's sun stopping exploit. What with this machine for drying his hay and the Daylight Saving Bill, Joshua, nowadays, would be on the "dole."

Publications

Imitation, we're told, is the sincerest form of flattery. Anyway, the Labour Publishing Co. has asked that a book by M. Starr on elementary economics, to appear in their shilling series in September next, shall have as its title *A Worker Looks at Economics*.

I.W.C.E. in Italy

From Comrade Dr. Schiavi, translator of The PLEBS Economic Geography Textbook into Italian, we have received some notes on recent developments of the Proletarian University of Milan. By a resolution passed last year the University has adopted a "Fundamental Course" which is to serve as the backbone. There are other courses and lectures held on Sundays with cinematograph and so on. The Fundamental Course consists of forty-five lectures in biology, economic geography, general history and economic science, followed by seventeen more on "Socialism from Marx to the Russia Revolution." 330 students enrolled themselves for this course, including twenty-one women, the attendance being very irregular. About seventy took the whole course. They numbered fifteen clerks, five intellectuals, and fifty manual workers.

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T.U. or Labour Party Branch*

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

LETTERS

TROTSKYISM—ETC.

SIR,—In the July PLEBS Postgate says: "If I were in Russia I should certainly be in the C.P." In 1921 I heard Ramsay MacDonald, speaking at the Oxford Union, express a similar sentiment (which, I think, is also printed in his book, *A Policy for the Labour Party*, though being abroad I cannot look up this reference). It is, of course, possible that the R.C.P. might treat these two willing recruits with a certain lack of hospitality, but I do not doubt that both Postgate and MacDonald would be as enthusiastic in supporting the Communist International where it was to their advantage to do so as they now are in attacking it. (*cp.* Newbold's ranker confession of the same opportunism when he said, in *Forward* last year, that he joined the C.P. when he thought there were prospects of an early revolution and left it when it appeared such prospects were "off" or a long time.)

Nor do I doubt that if the tables were turned and the Communist readers holding anti-Trotskyist views were in a minority, Postgate would hasten to "support" them as a tick wherewith to beat the Party to which he formerly belonged. As Postgate may remember me telling him personally last January, no Trotskyist Communists can regard a deserter's support as flattering: Postgate and his fellows are out to give a kick at the only fighting working-class party; Trotsky and his followers have been advocating a policy to strengthen it. Trotskyists scorn and repudiate the "encouragement" of the Postgates who are, perhaps, the most treacherous of all the enemies of a Party founded by a Trotskyist, greater than Trotsky himself,—Lenin.

I may say that the June *Labour Monthly* has not reached me abroad, so that I have not seen what Dutt and Ewer are alleged to have written herein; in so far as they may attack because they misunderstand) Trotskyism. I should probably disagree with them, but this is beside the point,

To Speakers,
Tutors, and
Students

Comrades! How often have you been held up for want of just that one little fact which would clinch your argument?

You Know that capitalist concerns are paying large dividends on watered capital.

You Know that the workers' standard of life is steadily going down.

You Know that international capitalism controls international politics. But when that tiresome fellow at the back of the hall shouts out "Can the speaker give us a single instance?" well, you just can't lay your hands on one.

This is where the LABOUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT comes in.

The L.R.D. is the workers' research organisation, owned and controlled by Labour organisations and their members.

It exists to collect and distribute the information which every worker who wants to educate himself or to work out a policy for the movement *must have*.

It answers the questions which the workers are asking to-day and prepares the answers to those which they will ask to-morrow.

And it publishes the only Labour journal of workers' research in the United Kingdom.

Every I.W.C.E.er ought to be in the closest possible touch with the L.R.D., for Research is the essential hand-maid of Education.

The capitalists know this. Look at the thousands of pounds they give to endow University chairs of research.

Come and see the Labour Chair of Research. Look at the work we are doing, and see how you can help us to make it better. Or if you can't come

WRITE for samples and specimen copy of the *Monthly Circular* (free, to members only) from

The
LABOUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
162 Buckingham Palace Rd., London, S.W.1

because, however violent the results of discussions in the Communist International may appear to be to outsiders, and whatever "splits" may be discovered by those whose wish is father to the thought, Trotskyists and anti-Trotskyists present one united front against the Baldwins and Rothermeres, the MacDonalds and Postgates, and all the traducers of the working class. This is the discipline of the Communist International at which Horrabin and Postgate sneer for no other reason than that they fear (and envy) the strength it gives.

Yours, etc.,

Athens, July 5th. A. E. E. R.

[Experience has taught us that it is hopeless to try and persuade a Communist (authorised variety) that in criticising the Communist Party or the Comintern one is not necessarily "trading the working class." Or that one might be actuated in so doing by some other motive than "fear" and "envy." Once you have decided that you and your group have "cornered" integrity, courage, clear-sightedness, and all the other virtues, controversy with other people becomes a simple matter of firing off the old, old epithets. But you mustn't be surprised if the other people can't help smiling.—Ed., PLEBS.]

DEAR EDITOR,—Both Postgate and Horrabin miss the whole point of Dutts' criticism of Eastman's book. R.P.D. did not argue that the book "was not Marxist because it indulged in personalities" (Postgate), nor, as Horrabin has it, that "Marxism doesn't deal in personalities," but that *no Marxist can make personalities the vera causa of High Politics*. This is precisely what Eastman does, and why his book violates a fundamental canon of Marxist thought.

Yours fraternally,

ROBERT W. BUCHAN.

[Eastman wrote an obviously honest book exposing a "personal" squabble—and then people talk pompously about "personalities" not being the *vera causa* of High Politics! High Politics were not under discussion. It was, on the contrary, a rather low business which Eastman was writing about.—Ed. PLEBS.]

DEAR EDITOR,—I am disappointed with the July PLEBS. Too much space is taken up by the washerwoman's back-chat such as Postgate has been inflicting upon the magazine in recent issues. The PLEBS was published, if I remember rightly, first of all to give expression to the conception of real working-class education, and secondly as a magazine for the Marxian student. From my personal knowledge of classes and study circles where the rank and file of the League meet, the members want the "mag" to fulfil the above two rôles, and they are not particularly concerned as to why Postgate, Horrabin and Co. left the Communist Party. Who are these individuals that a magazine should be published to enable them to indulge in monthly quips and jests and back-chat? Here is the I.W.C.E. movement embarking upon the T.U.C. project, a course involving eternal vigilance on the part of the custodians of The PLEBS idea, and half the E.C. wasting time when they might be building up the League.

Get back to work, educational work, in the performance of which you can always count upon the help of

Yours fraternally,

GEO. L. DEACON.

[Com. Deacon remembers quite rightly. The PLEBS was (and is) published with the objects he mentions. Otherwise his letter is just a little inaccurate. For instance, 2½ pages out of 40 last month were devoted to what he calls "back-chat." But as Deacon dislikes back-chat we mustn't reply to his personal remarks—or we should earn more of his censure. Quaint, though, how some people deprecate a row—and yet haste to join in! However, this one shall end here.—Ed., PLEBS.]

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The PLEBS at COBER HILL

The following Biographical Ballad was composed on the spot by Comrade Joe Matthews, and sung on various occasions by the entire troupe at Cober Hill. Despite this provocation the weather remained fine throughout the week.

THE Plebs at Cober Hill
Are all a merry crew.
In case you do not know them
We'll introduce to you. [all

(Chorus)

*Oh, it ain't gonna rain no mo', no mo'
It ain't gonna rain no mo'!
But how in the world can the old folks
tell
It ain't gonna rain no mo'?*

Now Comrade J. F. HORRABIN
Whose cartooning never flags
With his artistic temperament
Has adopted Oxford bags.

And then there's J. T. MURPHY
A busy lad is he,
He'll keep on writing theses till
We build that Mass Party.

There's also Comrade COLYER
A Yank up to the hilt.
You could almost fill the River Thames
With the ink that he has spilt.

And next comes KATHLEEN STARR
And her husband who Esperants.
When the "worker looks at history"
He'll make the boss class dance.

And then there's WULLIE GALLACHER
A rowdy Red was he.
But now our Wullie has become
The pet of the I.L.P.*

Wee ELLEN WILKINSON comes next
Who in the House now sits.
Her talk upon silk-stocking tax
Gives all the Tories fits.

Then Comrade WILLIE PAUL
With his figure so sublime,
With his Stately book, and his singing
too,
He puts in overtime.

*An allusion to Gallacher's acceptance
of an invitation to speak at the I.L.P.
National Summer School this month,

And then there's WINNIE HORRABIN
She really is a peach,
But do not hold your subs too high
Or how can the poor girl reach?

And here we've young GEORGE LANS-
BURY,
Who of Poplar never tires.
To love us all as brothers is
The task which he aspires.

And now there's our MALONE—
A quiet and gentle soul—
Whose visit to the Balkans put
MacDonald up the pole.

And then there's Mrs. GALLACHER
A buxom wench is she.
With the lazy life she's living here
She seems to fade awee.

And all the other comrades
Not mentioned here by name.
Perhaps they're really lucky but
We love them just the same.

And the writer of this song—
Which we have sung so well—
Will leave off now in case you shout
That he should go to heaven!

New "Plebs" Pamphlet

THE BANKS & THE WORKERS

By Arthur Woodburn

24 pp.

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Per 12 (postpaid) 3s. 3d.

An admirable introductory "textbook-in-
little" for Economics Classes.

The NATIONAL COUNCIL of LABOUR COLLEGES

HEAD OFFICE—62 HANOVER ST., EDINBURGH

Gen. Sec., J. P. M. Millar (to whom all reports should be sent)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.—*Will College Secretaries and others kindly note that the N.C.L.C.'s address is now—62, Hanover Street, Edinburgh. Communications sent to 22, Elm Row, are liable to be delayed.*

A. A. PURCELL'S smashing victory in the Forest of Dean Election has given the greatest satisfaction to all I.W.C.E.ers throughout the country. Hearty congratulations to our Hon. President.

Nelson District Weavers' Association.—This Union has arranged a small Educational Scheme with the N.C.L.C. and has paid its affiliation fee.

Bury and District Textile Warehousemen.—This Union has also arranged an Educational Scheme with the N.C.L.C. The Scheme provides for free access to classes and free correspondence courses.

A.S.L.E. & F.—This Union's Educational Scheme, which provides for free access to classes and free correspondence courses for the whole of the members, begins on August 3rd. Branches of the Union have given good support to our Movement in various parts of the country, and we are now delighted to welcome the Union as a whole. Heartiest thanks are due to those who pushed the N.C.L.C. Scheme. The Union is issuing to its members a special pamphlet on the Educational Scheme. The pamphlet embodies the address given to the Union's Conference by the N.C.L.C.'s General Secretary.

N.U.D.A.W.—It is of tremendous assistance when the officials of Trade Unions actively encourage their members to take advantage of Educational Schemes. So far as N.U.D.A.W. local officials are concerned we are specially indebted to A. Schofield, Secretary of the Bristol and District Branch.

Civil Service Clerical Association.—A note from Comrade Bewick states

that the Union's Conference passed the following resolution:—

"That the incoming Executive consider carefully how to meet the educational needs of the members, and as a first step set up a Sub-Committee to explore the respective merits of (1) the Workers' Educational Association, (2) the Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee, and (3) the National Council of Labour Colleges."

Our sincere thanks are due to Comrade Bewick and his colleagues for ensuring inclusion of the N.C.L.C.

I.F.T.U. Scholarships.—The two scholarships allocated to residential Labour College students were won by W. H. Williams (S.W.M.F.), Pontypool, and A. H. Paton (N.U.R.), Leith. Mr. Paton is an old student of the Scottish Labour College, Edinburgh District. The six scholarships open to non-residential Labour College students were won by J. G. Clancy (A.U.B.T.W.), London, Miss D. S. Luker (Nat. Union of Printing and Paper Workers), Gloucester, A. Gardiner (Nat. Union of Textile Workers), Huddersfield, H. Short (N.U.R. and N.U.D.A.W.), Birkenhead, W. Pearson (Durham Miners), South Shields, T. Campbell (N.U. Boot and Shoe Operatives), Kilmarnock. There were over one hundred applicants.

Typographical Association.—Comrade O'Brien of this Union would like to get in touch with other members interested in N.C.L.C. work. Letters should be addressed to him at 9, Theatre Street, Norwich.

Transport Workers' Scholarships.—The Flour Milling Section (Birkenhead and Seacombe Branches) sent on their own behalf four of their members to attend the Birkenhead Week-end School.

Co-operative Union.—Comrade Pountney has a resolution down for the London Co-operative Society worded as follows:—

"That this Society urge the Central

Education Committee of the Co-operative Union to convene at an early date a delegate conference on 'Working Class Education and a Workers' State' under the joint auspices of the Central Education and the N.C.L.C."

All I.W.C.E.ers are urged to give them what assistance they can.

Winter Classes.—College Secretaries and officials are urged to organise their classes well before these are due to start. Many Trade Union branches do not meet more than once per month, and unless circulars giving particulars of the classes are issued five weeks before the classes are due to commence, many branches will get the information too late.

What the Divisions are doing

Div. 1.—J. D. Thom sends in a very interesting account of the work done in his part of London last year. In conjunction with the Organiser he ran four week-end schools in July. The third Annual Garden Party was held at Kew on Sunday, July 5th, and was the greatest success of all. About 400 people spent an enjoyable afternoon and evening. In addition to the usual sports and dancing, Cedar Paul and the Upton Socialist Sunday School girls gave some much appreciated vocal turns. A playlet entitled "The Conversion of Henry Dubb," arranged by Comrade Miles of the East Islington Labour Party, also afforded great pleasure. A series of one-day summer schools has been held at East Ham, under the joint auspices of the Division and the East Ham North Labour Party. The lecturers included A. M. Robertson, T. Ashcroft, W. T. Colyer and J. F. Horrabin. The Division would welcome the co-operation of other Labour Parties in an arrangement of this kind. A new class has commenced on Industrial History at 89, Beckett House, Tabard Street, London, S.E. 1, on Tuesday evenings (near the Elephant and Castle).

Div. 2.—The last Div. Council Meeting decided to accept the services of Mr. E. J. Knight, of Shere, Surrey, as tutor. He has spent some time on the Continent and studied the question of Agriculture in Denmark. Eastleigh Labour College have had week-end school with Mark Starr as lecturer.

This College, only formed last February, has already twenty-seven regular readers of PLEBS. M. H. Dobb is giving two lectures at Guildford on Post War Imperialism and on the Gold Standard. These lectures are part of a big rally organised by the Trades Council and Labour Party and the Guildford Labour College. We hope to have a number of students at the Training Centre during August.

Div. 3.—Com. Edwards, Secretary, St. Albans Labour College, reports a very successful session's work, one of the distinctive features being that to illustrate one course of lectures the class read a play entitled "Captain Swing." The class had the assistance of Com. Gardiner as tutor. A. S. Bools, Secretary of the Peterboro' College, is to be congratulated on having arranged his 1925—6 winter session class as early as June.

Essex District Council, N.U.R., not only renewed affiliation but distributed to its branches through the valuable services of W. H. Letts, 106 lists of available lectures and play-readings. Braintree weekly class is getting good publicity in the local paper, *The Newcomer*. Speaker supplied to the Luton Trades Council on June 30th for its Centenary Celebration of Repeal of Combination Acts. "Works of G. B. Shaw" and "World and the Workers" were subjects of a Day School at Grays on July 19th (M. Starr and J. F. Horrabin, lecturers). Peterboro' Class is organising Conference for August 30th to launch Economic Geography Course in September. Editor of PLEBS has promised to help. A full day's programme has been arranged for School at High Wycombe, August 23rd, where Furnishing Trade Workers are keen on their scheme. Will Colleges and Class Councils book September 5th as date of Divisional Conference? Wanted: more voluntary teachers for increasing number of classes within reach of London. Please apply at once to Organiser Starr, 25, New Street, London, S.W. 1.

Div. 4.—A Week-end School is being run at Chepstow on August 22nd and 23rd. The lecturers are Miss E. C. Wilkinson, M.P., W. H. Mainwaring, N. Edwards and J. P. Gerry. The cost is 16s. 3d. Applications should be sent immediately to W. J. Owen, 13,

Waengron Street, Cwm-Celyn, Blaina, Monmouth, South Wales. A series of Guide Lectures has been arranged at the Welsh National Museum, Cardiff, and the Corporation Museum, Newport, for the students at the Newport, Cardiff and Barry L.C.s. Arrangements are complete for holding a Day School at Newport with the assistance of Com. N. Edwards; Llanelly Labour College reports Week-end School arranged for July 25th and 26th—lecturer, J. T. W. Newbold. In connection with the Ogmor Miners' Scheme a successful educational conference was held at Gilfach where a local College Committee has been formed to control the educational activities in the area. N.U.R. Sub-Council No. 4 (Barry) and No. 5 (Cardiff) have unanimously accepted the educational scheme submitted to the Area Council of S. Wales and Monmouth.

Div. 5.—Cheltenham L.C. has arranged a Day School for Tuesday, July 14th, an afternoon lecture for women and one in the evening for the general public. Others are contemplating following this example. At these, the Chinese question is popular. A number of branches of affiliated Unions are taking advantage of the branch lectures offered. One branch asked for, and got, a lecture on The First Fruits of Dawes. This kind of contact is bound to result in larger attendance at next winter's classes. It is gratifying to report that "our" Purcell is fighting a constituency in this Division. He and the Lydney Class members, who are assisting him in the fight, are giving a brilliant advertisement to the N.C.L.C.

Div. 7.—Hearty congratulations to Com. Riddiough on his election to the Executive of the N.U. of Textile Workers.

Div. 8.—S.E. Lancs Area Council is able to report a record year's work with 54 classes and 1,539 students, of whom 439 were members of Unions having National Schemes. A successful Day School was held at Penketh, near Warrington, on June 27th. Attendance of sixty-five at lectures given by A. L. Williams and J. Hamilton. Week-end School held at "Beechcroft," Birkenhead on July 11th and 12th had an average attendance of fifty-five at each of the four lectures. An innovation

much appreciated was the musical selections during tea by Mr. A. Briggs and friends. M. H. Dobb's lectures created great interest. J. Hamilton's contribution was a lantern lecture on "Buildings and Builders." Arrangements have been made for a course on Local Government during the winter session under the auspices of the Birkenhead Trades Council and Labour Party.

Div. 10.—*Scotland.*—The Annual Report issued by the Lanarkshire Labour College is very encouraging. The number of classes conducted was fully forty-seven, the total number of students being 1,123.

Div. 11.—*Ireland.*—A. A. Purcell is lecturing in Belfast on the 28th of August. Applications for tickets should be sent to Mr. A. Ellis, 33, Delaware Street, Ravenhill Road, Belfast. A successful Day and Week's Summer School was held in Barrycarry July 11th to 18th, more than sixty persons taking part. The lectures included "The Irish Labour Movement," by W. McMullen, M.P., and "Trade Unionism in the Linen Industry" and "The Trade Boards in Ireland" by Councillor Harry Midgley. A. Ellis gave a short course of lectures on "How International Questions Affect Home Affairs," and dealt with the Historical Significance of the Rubáiyát of Omar and the Rubáiyát of a Proletarian, the work of Omar being excellently read by Mrs. Boyd. Bathing parades, boating, climbing, fishing and the famous Gobbins Cliffs also received due attention. Irish "Spirit" was up to the Rothesay standard. This is the first Summer School held in the North of Ireland. Four scholarships were granted by Belfast Organisations and one by the British Transport and General Workers' Union.

Div. 12.—On June 28th a successful Week-end School was held at Sutton-in-Ashfield. Com. Hicken (Treasurer, Derbyshire Miners' Association) would have been the lecturer but for the crisis in the Mining Industry. In his absence, the Organiser lectured on "China." Thanks to the enthusiastic endeavours of Com. Weston, Secretary of the Northampton L.C., the Northampton School was a great success. On July 11th and 12th it was Nottingham's turn. Com. James, the Secretary,

worked hard to make the school the success it was. Mark Starr spoke on "Trade Unionism—Past and Present" and aroused great interest. The growing success of the movement in Nottingham is due in no small measure to the keenness of Com. Stephens (Sheet Metal Workers). Arrangements in hand for another week-end school in Mansfield. During the month the Organiser visited Grant-ham Trades and Labour Council, who are arranging an N.C.L.C. Class next session as an antidote to three years of the W.E.A.

were twenty-three students present for the full week-end, and a further forty "rambled" out on Sunday. Comrade A. L. Williams, of Birkenhead, gave three instructive and topical lectures: "Men and Rails," "Economics of Post-War Capitalism," and a "Policy for the Left Wing."

Though the intellectual programme was so ably administered, one must pay homage to those who assisted in the social side of the school, particularly to Mr. Crompton and Mrs. Mills. Crompton, accompanied by Mrs. Mills, must have sang well over one hundred songs, over a wide choice, Strauss, Bach, Wagner, it was all the same to Crompton, and he gave us, indeed, a musical feast.

We had a play reading by M. Phillips, also a midnight ramble to Eccles Pike, at the top of which we had more songs.

Mention should be made also of the Elder-Moores Gavotte. Shortly before breaking up, these two engaged in a caricature of modern and classical dancing; this cocktail of a dance, a mix-up of a "Rudolph Tango," "The Dance of the Nymphs" and "Apache Dance," reduced the company to helplessness. And it was worth going a long way if only to see the usually sedate Esperanto tutor twirling on his toes with a rose in his lips, and the Plebs secretary holding him in his arms as gently as a nymph. Hurry up the next week-end, Moores!

Directory.—Additions and Corrections
N.C.L.C. Central Office—62, Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

Div. 3.—Grays L.C., Sec.: Mr. G. Hightus, 16, Spencer Walk, Tilbury, Essex.

Div. 4.—Gwaun-cae Gurwen C.G., Sec.: Mr. J. Williams, 31, Colbren Square, Gwaun-cae Gurwen, Glam., South Wales.

Div. 10.—Glasgow L.C., Sec.: Mr. A. Villiers, 38, Flemington Street, Springburn, Glasgow.

HIGH JINKS

Manchester Plebs, in conjunction with the College, during the week-end, July 4th and 5th, held a very successful week-end school at the "Woodlands," Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. There

PLEBS SUMMER SCHOOL

Wimereux (Boulogne) Aug. 8—15th.

BOOKINGS are now complete for this School, and all who have registered should ere this have received full instructions and particulars as to time and place of departure, etc., etc.

The programme of lectures for the week will include the following:—

Based on Forthcoming PLEBS Textbooks:
HISTORY OF BRITISH WORKING-CLASS. 3 lectures by R. W. Postgate. (I.) 1760—1832; (II.) 1832—1852; (III.) 1852—1925.

MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY. 2 lectures by J. F. Horrabin.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY. Lectures by A. B. Swales (Chairman, T.U. Congress) and Geo. Hicks.

LEFT WING PROBLEMS. Ellen Wilkinson, M.P.

We hope also to have talks from comrades representing Belgian and French workers' educational movements.

JOIN THE PLEBS LEAGUE

The general aim of the League is—"To develop and increase the class-consciousness of the workers, by propaganda and education, in order to aid them to destroy wage-slavery and to win power."

It works for this aim by assisting the National Council of Labour Colleges, and by bringing together Left Wingers for the purpose of discussing the problems of the workers' movement.

Annual Sub., 1s.

Badge 1s.

IT MAKES ME SAD TO THINK OF TEACHERS.

It makes me sad
To think of teachers.
In college they are so busy
Learning what others have thought,
They have no time
To think,
They are so busy
Passing examinations,
They have no time
To live.
Then they go to the schools—
To be an example, and to teach the
children
How to live.

It makes me sad
To think of teachers
Teaching that right and justice
Rule the world
(Whilst the children see injustice and
slavery all around them),
Thinking they know the truth
And teach it,
When all the time they are only allowed
to teach Capitalist truth.
No wonder people say in public places
"Those are teachers!"
It makes me sad
To think of teachers.

LEONORA THOMAS.

Have you got it?

WHAT TO READ: A Guide to Books for Worker-Students

7d. (postpaid 8d.) Per 12, 5s. 6d.

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

REVIEWS

THE STUDY OF IMPERIALISM
Europe Overseas. By J. A. Williamson
(Oxford University Press, World's
Manuals, 2s. 6d.).

THIS little volume—in a very useful series—contains a good deal of interesting material for history and geography tutors. It traces the process called (in polite society) “the expansion of Europe”; touching on the Portuguese and Spanish empires; the emergence of England, France and Holland as oceanic powers, and their struggles for colonial supremacy; and concluding with sections on the empires of to-day. It has several useful maps, and other interesting illustrations.

Of course, it is written from a quite “orthodox” standpoint, and not at all from the point of view of a critic of capitalist imperialism. Still, the opening section, on *The Outward Impetus*, does definitely declare “the germ and origin of the European domination of the world” to have been “the penetration of unknown lands and seas for purposes of commerce.” There is no cant about the White Man’s Civilising Mission in the book. On the contrary, there is a very clear realisation in the concluding pages of the real forces and factors operating behind some of the outstanding prob-

lems of the present day. Thus, for example, in discussing Britain’s present position in the world, the author points out how “in the last generation the food-producing and raw material-producing countries have begun to industrialise themselves,” and how this process (which “will go very much farther yet”) must inevitably produce very far-reaching effects among the concentrated populations of Europe.

Altogether a decidedly useful addition to the worker-students’ library.

J. F. H.

SIX CENTURIES OF AGRICULTURE
The English Agricultural Labourer
1300—1925. By M. F. and T. R.
Fordham (Labour Publishing Co.,
1/- and 2s. 6d.).

To attempt such a history as this in a little book of 62 pages of large type is to invite almost certain failure, and it says much for the authors that the book can certainly not be described as such. For anyone not acquainted with the main changes through which agriculture has passed since Norman times, the book may be recommended as a short and stimulating introduction.

It seems a pity, however, that it was not written on the lines of the valuable Syllabus series published by the Labour Research Department. A better sense

Preliminary Announcement.

Early in October we hope to have ready
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AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE

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of proportion could have been maintained and a bibliography appended to each chapter. There is great need for a series of little books dealing with particular periods of agricultural history; e.g., with the breakup of the feudal system, with the Elizabethan Enclosures, with technical advances in Tudor and Stuart times, with agriculture during the Industrial Revolution, and so on. Such studies would be very valuable, and would be more fitting subjects for booklets of 60 pages than are the six centuries 1300—1925.

L.

THE GOLD EXCHANGE STANDARD
The Return to Gold. T. E. Gregory
(Benn, 2s. 6d.).

Those who know Mr. Gregory's manual on Foreign Exchange will expect a clear and lucid statement on this other intricate question. In a little more than 50 pages he summarises the departure from and return to the gold standard in a way that teachers and students will appreciate. The movements of sterling-dollar rates are registered, the pertinent points from the Cunliffe Report extracted, and the present situation explained. It is not generally known, for example, that the return to the gold standard meant the ending of the nominal convertibility of the single currency note; now you can only buy a bar of 400 ozs. fine for £1,699 11s. 8d. It is probable that soon the issue of currency notes will be, like nearly all the bank notes used in Britain, under the control of the Bank of England, and subject to the same regulation of a gold backing apart from the Bank of England Fiduciary Issue which is now £19,750,000 (*cp. PLEBS Outline of Economics*, p. 54). At present there is a maximum fiduciary currency note issue of £248·2 millions of currency notes and the Bank of England will probably receive a large portion of this in addition to its original power.

After the descriptive portion of his

book, Mr. Gregory makes some cautious forecasts. He is at some pains to repudiate the charge that industry has been sacrificed to the interests of international finance. His main points are: (a) an increase of 1 per cent. in the Bank Rate is only 1s. 8d. a month extra for every £100 the industrialist borrows and hence is not a heavy charge on industry; (b) the margins of finance speculations are much finer than in industry and therefore the financier is hit harder than the industrialist; (c) a high Bank Rate attracts gold and hence increases the supply of competing potential capital. The reply to (a) is that, however small per £100 the extra cost may be, on mass borrowings over long periods the extra charge may be enough to give the industrialist less than his average rate of profit and so "chill" industry. In (b) and (c) the international character of High Finance is ignored.

In many places the author apparently is only concerned with the *quantity* of gold available in relation to its uses in currency and elsewhere and he discusses its *value* from that point of view—an error for which Woodburn's pamphlet is the corrective. At present the Note issues of the world are 50% backed by gold; the output of gold is declining but at the 50% ratio, reserves and note issue with a yearly increase of 3% will exist in the desired proportions in 1937. Before then there will be some gold to spare. Therefore Mr. Gregory suggests an increase in prices until about ten years hence when a fall is probable. If more cheques are used instead of notes and coins, the movement will be altered.

In his closing words Mr. Gregory turns a flashlight upon another reason for using the international gold standard; in "an age of Socialisation and vigorous class opposition," paper money could be used to wipe out whole social classes. Here is no conception of the banker acting as the social book-

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keeper for the good of the Workers' Group instead of the Big Five; no idea of industry consciously directed and controlled as the departments of a well managed concern; no acknowledgment that the value of gold is given to it by the labour necessary to produce it, or that the assumption of being able to turn paper money of account into real money is false, and that the whole inverted pyramid stands because the workers will still produce surplus value and the capitalist State create legal tender for their financial masters when required. To say that would be to vacate the Sir E. Cassels Readership in the University of London.

S.

The Country Councillor. By H. Samuels, Barrister-at-Law (Labour Publishing Co. Paper, 1s. Cloth, 2s. 6d. 96 pp.).

The main object of this book is that the reader may be able to gather a general idea of the system of rural government in England and Wales and to learn what the County Councils, Rural District Councils, Parish Councils and Boards of Guardians may do, and what they must do, in the exercise of the functions allotted to them.

In this task the author has succeeded admirably and in very simple language has supplied a collection of useful information usually only obtainable in large, highly-priced, technical books.

This book will be most useful now that interest in rural affairs has been revived (through the T.U.C. General Council's Agricultural Workers Campaign and the Labour Party and I.L.P. backward areas campaigns); and not only to workers living on the country side but also to propagandists from the towns and to all wishing to understand the general agrarian situation.

J. E. M.

TRADES BOARDS AND TRADE UNIONS
The Legal Minimum. By J. Hallsworth (Labour Pub. Co., 1s.).

The last annual general meeting of the Shop Assistants' Union decided to reconsider their support of Trades Boards for the Distributive Trades in view of the fact that a legal minimum wage tended to make the workers contented with a bare subsistence level and stultified trade union organisation.

The whole matter has since been referred by the E.C. to the branches for consideration.

In other industries affected by Trades Boards the same question is being raised. How far can the workers improve their conditions by political action, and to what extent is this reliance on political activity detrimental to industrial organisation?

In all such discussions this new book by J. Hallsworth is invaluable, not because he debates the point, but because he marshals the facts concerning the attempts to fix a minimum wage by law, and their effects on the workers, in a concise and readable form.

It is not disputable that Trades Boards have raised the conditions of some of the worst "sweated trades," but the author shows by his tables of statistics that in no case have they raised wages to even the meagre standard of minimum "human needs" formulated by Seeböhm Rowntree. Moreover, throughout the proceedings of various Trades Boards the point is repeatedly emphasised that the Boards merely attempt to fix wages according to the "capacity" of the least fortunately placed section of the industry in the poorest area.

In fact, the attempt to deal with the worst abuses of "sweating" by Act of Parliament is merely an act of social sanitation which the boss class will perform in their own interests. But the workers can expect no tangible benefit until their industrial organisation is strong enough to compel it.

To all who are interested in the scope and working of Trades Boards and similar legislation, we can heartily recommend this book.

D. S.

FOR NOTE-TAKERS

A Systematic Course of Précis-Writing.
By J. Compton, M.A. (Harrap, 2s. 6d.).

A précis may be defined as a concise but adequate summary of any written or spoken matter. From our point of view, the chief value of a précis is that it enables us to retain the essential facts of a speech or article for easy reference. Writing a précis is also of assistance in mastering an obscure or difficult argument. Indeed,
(continued on p. 336.)

in the author's words, "any kind of note-taking is a modified précis."

Précis-writing requires practice. Mr. Compton has collected here a large number of exercises rising from single sentences in Section I. to complicated commercial and legal documents in Section IV. The first three sections contain passages in prose and verse from standard authors, including Shakespeare, Bunyan, Wordsworth, Stevenson, Meredith and Browning. Some of these provide interesting material for the précis-writer. To make a "concise, but adequate, summary" of the "Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister" would be amusing as well as educational.

E. J.

THE GOD IDEA

Socialism and Religion (S.P.G.B., 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C. 2½d. post free).

This pamphlet sets out from the starting point that "Socialism is the natural enemy of religion. Through Socialism alone will the relations between men in society, and their relations to Nature, become reasonable, orderly and completely intelligible, leaving no nook or cranny for superstition. The entry of Socialism is, consequently, the exodus of religion."

It is not possible to study this work without realising more clearly the Socialist conception of religion used

as a weapon by the possessing class to justify its exploitation of the workers, and to prevent those workers reaching the degree of mental clearness necessary for the overthrow of the state of society in which the masses toil in life-long misery in this world with sometimes a vague hope of something better in the "next," as well as for the benefit of the idle class who hope to get the best of "both" worlds.

The pamphlet states that "Religion is the paralysing hand of the dead past upon the living present," and further shows by many quotations from various authorities that "Whenever knowledge takes a step forward, God takes a step backward."

A mere recital of the chapter headings of this work (the only one of its kind at present in the English language) will give an idea of its scope. Some of the headings are "The Genesis of Religion," "The Rise of Christianity," "The Reformation," "The Exodus of Religion," "The Modern Purpose of Religion," "Was Jesus a Socialist?," "Socialists and the Religious Conflict."

Anyway, don't let's talk about it any more, but just write off and buy two copies—one for yourself and one for that chum of yours who would be of service to the workers' struggle if only he could drive this God idea out of his mind by the realisation that "Man made God in his own image."

J. E. M.

MARKED PASSAGES

For Imperialists

A little Hindu boy was asked by an inspector:

"Why does the sun never set on the British Empire?" He answered: "Because God does not trust them at night."

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"No, sah, ah doan't neber ride on dem tings," said an old negress, pointing to a roundabouts. "Why, de other day, I seen Rastus Johnson git on and ride a whole dollar's-worth, an' git off at de very same place he got on at. So I ses to him, 'Rastus,' I ses, 'yo've spent yo' money' I ses, 'but where've yo' been?'"

GOD SAID

"You weary me with praying,
You tire me with your junk.
I'm sick of your petitions
And all your preacher's bunk.

"If you want the earth—go take it,
Quit whining of your need.
I've filled the earth with plenty,
Have your brains all run to seed?"

"Quit hollering out for Saviours
To be martyred in your sight,
Get off your knees, you lobsters,
And learn to think and fight."

COVINGTON AMI,

The Wobbly poet.

(Lifted from *O.B.U. Bulletin*.)

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|--|--------------|----|----|--|--------------|----|----|
| To stock of publications, Jan. 1st, 1924 (valued at selling price less a percentage) | 777 | 3 | 8 | | | | |
| To printing, line blocks, bookbinding, purchase of books, etc. | 1,014 | 13 | 8 | | | | |
| To gross profit (as reduced by revised basis of stock valuation) carried to Profit and Loss Account | 963 | 13 | 2½ | | | | |
| | £2,755 10 6½ | | | | £2,755 10 6½ | | |

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st DECEMBER, 1924.

| | £ | s. | d. | | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------------|----|----|--|-------------|----|----|
| To Office rent | 53 | 18 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Cleaning and heating | 24 | 3 | 2 | | | | |
| „ Telephone | 3 | 5 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Stationery | 30 | 7 | 7 | | | | |
| „ Salaries | 377 | 0 | 3 | | | | |
| „ Bank charges | 3 | 1 | 5 | | | | |
| „ Audit and accountancy fees | 15 | 15 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Repairs to office | 6 | 13 | 11 | | | | |
| „ Insurance | 0 | 18 | 0 | | | | |
| „ General expenses | 14 | 0 | 7 | | | | |
| „ Interest on loan | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Postage and carriage . | 229 | 15 | 5 | | | | |
| „ Advertising | 67 | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| „ Expenses of lecture tour, lectures and travelling expenses .. | 9 | 1 | 2 | | | | |
| „ Summer schools | 65 | 9 | 8 | | | | |
| „ Badges | 3 | 16 | 10 | | | | |
| „ Affiliation fee, N.C.L.C. | 5 | 5 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Dinner expenses | 8 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Subscriptions to Me- morial Funds | 6 | 4 | 2 | | | | |
| „ Bad debts written off | 17 | 7 | 9 | | | | |
| „ Furniture amount written off | 15 | 4 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Reserve for doubtful debts | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| „ Balance carried to Balance Sheet | 80 | 10 | 6½ | | | | |
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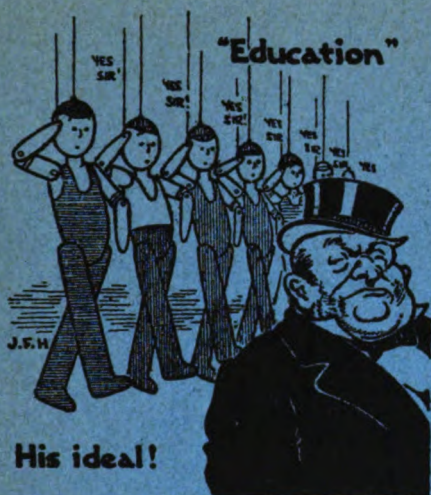
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