

GIFT
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PLEBS

The Organ of the
Labour Colleges

DECEMBER 1927

FOURPENCE

*Among the subjects
discussed in this issue
are :—*

THE PLIGHT OF
THE COTTON INDUSTRY

THE AFTERMATH OF
DAWES IN GERMANY

FRANCIS PLACE :
ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

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THE PLEBS

*The Organ of the National Council
of Labour Colleges*

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CONTENTS

	Page
Pleb Point of View - - - - By J.F.H.	378
The Plight of the Cotton Industry By P. L. Taylor	380
Francis Place - - - - By Raymond Postgate	384
Odd Chats to New Students - By "Marxist"	387
The Aftermath of Dawes in Germany By M.H.D.	390
America's Place in the Sun - By J. Hamilton	393
Reviews : Marxism, Etc.- - - - By T.A.	397
Letters - - - - - - - -	400
N.C.L.C. Notes - - - - - - - -	403
The Plebs Bookshelf - - - - - By J.F.H.	407

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The Pleb Point of View



DURING the past few months, representatives of the N.C.L.C. and the Plebs League have been discussing practicable methods of so reorganising the League as to give it a definite place in the I.W.C.E. movement, with definite work to do now that the publishing side of its activities has been taken over by the N.C.L.C. A draft scheme has now been agreed upon, which awaits ratification by the Executives of both bodies. This ratification will, we hope, be forthcoming during the present month, so that it will be possible to publish the scheme in our January issue.

But there is no reason why we should not state here and now that the scheme puts in the very forefront what was the primary aim of the League on its foundation close on twenty years ago—*viz.*, a pledge from all members to assist in securing an adequate circulation for this magazine. A subscription to THE PLEBS will be an integral part of the membership subscription. And every member will be asked to make himself a circulation agent.

* * *

As our readers know—it has been stated over and over again in these pages—we depend for our distribution, to a far greater extent than almost any other Labour journal, on the efforts of our voluntary supporters. Were this not so, our financial position would be even worse than it is. The point is that that position is serious. The magazine has been run at a heavy loss during the past twelve months. Now, although the N.C.L.C. has taken over responsibility, this deficit will constitute a very serious drain on its funds—and these have never yet been adequate to the increasing demands made upon them as our educational work grows and develops.

What is to be done about it?

Well, in the first place, we appeal—again—to literature and class secretaries everywhere to make a special effort to clear up their accounts with us. A lot of people owe us quite a lot of money. We have given considerably more credit than we can hope to get for ourselves. *And we have got to pay off part, at least, of the load of debt which is crippling us as a condition of going on at all.*

In the second place, we want an increase in circulation. Next month's issue commences a new volume. Certain changes are under discussion, and these may take shape in the January issue. In any case, we ought to have a circulation for THE PLEBS commensurate

with the large increase in the number of students in N.C.L.C. classes. If you think the magazine itself is at fault, write and tell us so—and say in what way you would alter it. If you've tried to get us new readers, and failed, tell us what the difficulty was. Join with us, please, in a determination to make 1928 a successful year. We want a 50 per cent. increase in circulation—not by the end of next year, but at the beginning of it. And we can get it—if the energy and enthusiasm in which our movement abounds is concentrated on this particular aim for a month or two.

* * *

The only reference to workers' education in G. D. H. Cole's *Short History of the British Working-Class Movement* reads: "From the foundation of the W.E.A. in 1903, adult education spread rapidly among the workers. It spread much faster still after 1919, when new bodies, such as the largely Marxian and dogmatic N.C.L.C., challenged, but did not equal, the developing activity of the W.E.A."

*This Month's
Puzzle*

What does this mean? Is it dogmatic to say that the working-class exists and has special needs? Is a facing-both-ways attitude a virtue? Further, why not, among the valuable appendices of his book, was there not included a list of unions with education schemes to throw some light upon the phrase, "but did not equal"? If G.D.H.C. reckons classes in literature and such like attended by school teachers to get qualifications for their school work or middle-class people finding individual hobbies, we grant him numerical superiority. If he reckons in the amount of money grants received from the capitalist State, again he wins and is justified in his statement. But we would have him compare *workers'* education and participation in and support by workers and trade unions.

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THE PLIGHT OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY

THE Cotton Yarn Association, by which the cotton spinners had tried to stabilise yarn prices and their own profits, has broken down, for the reason (so it is alleged) of the impossibility of maintaining the minimum prices against the competition of "independents" who remain outside and refuse to enter the Association. Such a breakdown is merely typical of the failure of capitalism, and its natural offspring Imperialism, so far as any and every trade which is an export trade is concerned. The monopoly position of British capitalism is now gone. Faced with the increasing competition, on the one hand, of U.S.A., on the other of the new colonial capitalism, she is faced with a decline which shows itself first and most sharply in the present crisis in the export trades.

Of these export trades the Lancashire Cotton Trade has always been the most important. Not more than 20 per cent. of its total production is consumed at home, leaving 80 per cent. to be sold abroad. With the possible exception of Australia, none of Lancashire's foreign markets have increased their trade takings since the war as compared with pre-war, and all the great Eastern markets show a decline. As these markets have always been Lancashire's best customers, and as India, in particular, has alone taken fully 40 per cent. of Lancashire's total exports, it is easy to see how the fall in Lancashire's output has had to follow the fall in India's and China's demand for goods. For instance, in sixteen years India's consumption has increased 10 per cent.; her home production has increased over 100 per cent., and her imports from all outside countries has fallen $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. Similar figures could be given about China and Japan. With such a falling off in demand (despite increased consumption in the markets), Lancashire found herself with too large a production, and no markets. She tried the pre-war device of short time; but that did not work because conditions had changed. Previously it was the spinning section only that went on short time; the manufacturing section continued to scramble for all the orders that came, and soon the looms got short of yarn, and the spinners' short-time working produced an artificial shortage. But now there were so many fewer orders coming that the manufacturers also were forced, some to close altogether, some to work fewer hours and some to work shorter hours. The result was that the short-time policy was no cure for the crisis in the spinning section at all: the mills were still producing more than the looms could take, and this at an

increased cost per pound owing to the fact that the standing charges remained the same and had to be spread over a smaller output.

Consequently, many of the spinners, to get cash for their stocks, had to reduce the already poor prices to an absolute dead-loss price. As the Masters' Federation had only control over hours worked and not over prices taken, the Yarn Association was formed in the belief that if all yarn sold went through the Association, then the Association could see that no weak sellers cut down prices to a low level. It was an extension of the Cartel method from hours worked to both hours worked and quantity produced *plus* prices taken from buyers.

Now this attempt has failed, because of the inherent difficulties arising from the fact that some of the mills were refloated, and over-capitalised, in 1919-20, and some were not, and also because of the lack of knowledge of world economics on the part of the heads of the Cotton Trade. Many of these leaders still believe in Cobdenism, and few have realised the difference which capitalism in India (both European and native) has made by getting Protection for her Cotton Trade both against Lancashire and all other competitors. This the Government of India has been forced to grant to the capitalists there, partly as a bribe to keep their support. Similar developments have taken place in China. Yet all the time the Lancashire leaders have continued in the old sweet way believing their trade untouchable. Swarms of brokers, commission-agents and individual merchants bleed the trade. There is no unity between the spinning and weaving sections of the masters : both fight against one another as though they were enemies. Meanwhile, the merchants are "on velvet," since they can, and do, play one firm of producers off against another firm. The competitive, individualist spirit of the 19th century is rampant amongst all the employers ; and as the manufacturing employer must buy his yarn cheaply, even though he knows the price may ruin the spinner who produces the yarn, he will go behind the back of the Yarn Association to buy from those spinners who are also willing to go behind the Association. Such spinners are always to be found, even though they are in a minority : they consist of those who have not added to their overhead charges by recapitalisation, and can produce all the cheaper as a result, and also of those who have recapitalised but find themselves without ready cash and are forced to turn their stock into cash by quick sales below the minimum prices of the Association. In addition to these and other little jealousies which affect the situation, there is also the drive of the financiers, who, because they are fewest in number and know the value of co-operation over competition, are in the position of playing firm against firm for their own profit. So long as banks can recover their overdrafts and interest, they do not trouble about either loan-holders or shareholders ; but have care only to see that they have

first call on the assets in case of bankruptcy. The result is that we see the Lancashire Cotton Trade losing its position and gradually sinking into a deeper crisis without hope of recovery.

Meanwhile the Trade Union organisation in the trade remains weak and sectional. It is doubtful, especially in the weaving section, whether more than a half of those employed in the trade are in any union whatever, while the leaders remain hopelessly conservative and out of date, so far as economics is concerned, preserving the old 19th century ideology of a privileged "labour aristocracy." Like the employers they live in hopes, and like the employers they are occupied in trying to bring their malcontents into line instead of studying the causes of the decline in their trade. They know all about the over-capitalisation of the spinning mills, but they know practically nothing about real unity between the different sections of the Trade, and less than nothing about the position of the Makers-up and Packers and the Clerks and Warehousemen in Manchester and Liverpool. Such a thing as a Federation or an amalgamation of all unions concerned in every section of the cotton trade is something somewhere in the high heavens, and unattainable so far as they are concerned. Yet sooner or later they will have to tackle the job. The masters in the Allied Trades (Bleaching, Dyeing, Printing, Packing and Making-up), like the steamship companies, have tackled their problem co-operatively, not for the benefit of their employees, but for profits. The figures published by the *Board of Trade Journal* from the Census of Production are conclusive on that point. The figures of "Cotton piece goods bleached but not dyed or printed" show that in 1912 there were 2,474 million yards of cloth so treated, and the added value was £3.1 millions. In 1924 there were only 1,810 million yards so treated, and yet the added value was £6.5 millions. In other words, the figures show a decrease of 27 per cent. in *quantity* bleached (and so much less work for the workers), and yet there was an increase in total *price* of 181 per cent. It is small wonder that the Bleachers' Association has done so well. Similar results can be shown to apply to the Calico Printers and the Dyers, also the Makers-up and Packers.

But while the employers in these finishing sections of the trade are combining to secure monopoly profits out of a smaller volume of trade, the textile unions have practically no connection with the workers in these huge allied trades. It is obvious that the unions are afraid of a coming demand for longer hours and lower pay; and yet they are doing nothing to prepare for this demand when it comes. Still less are these unions doing anything to co-operate with their poorer fellow-workers in the colonial countries and to form with them a common united front. More and more spindles and looms are being sent from Lancashire machinery firms to the Far East.

More and more Hindus, Chinese and Japanese are being industrialised. The capital employed is often European. The wages paid are very low, and the standard of living of the poor industrialised workers is appalling. Anyone reading the report issued by the Right Hon. T. Shaw, M.P., on the condition of Indian Textile Workers will see how shocking are the housing conditions, etc., of these poor people. Despite Mr. Shaw's comparisons of output and costs, the growth of industrialism in India continues because capital can and does get a better return out of native exploitation than it can get out of Lancashire workers now. While British capital keeps up its profits by monopolist action wherever it can and by exporting capital to more profitable colonial fields, British workers are asked to make "sacrifices." To-day it is the turn of the woollen workers of Yorkshire. It will be Lancashire's turn to-morrow.

All that the trade unions have done to help the native workers of India to organise themselves to improve their appalling conditions is to send out a delegation to make enquiries and to issue a report. All that the I.L.P. can do to help the cotton workers is to press for a "Government enquiry into the management and control of the cotton industry." It is difficult to see what good such a second Samuel Commission is likely to do. Do the I.L.P. want Workers' Control, or are they anxious to teach the cotton masters their business? In what way will such an enquiry bring the Lancashire cotton-operative, as a producer, into touch with the Indian coolie as a consumer? How will it arrest capitalism's decline or the struggle of the capitalists to preserve their rate of profits by increased exploitation of workers in the colonies and at home?

What is really required is a facing of the facts, unpleasant though they be, an understanding of them, and a new policy based on that understanding. *First*, there is needed a strong and determined effort to make the unions 100 per cent. strong; *second*, the closest working arrangement possible between all sections of the trade unions, including those of the employees in the allied trades; *third*, the drawing in and strengthening of the unions controlling the Clerks and Warehousemen in Liverpool and Manchester, and their amalgamation with the combined Textile Unions; *fourth*, it is necessary to develop the unions dealing with Indian, Chinese and Japanese workers, and the strengthening of the international unions as a whole. Over and above all these is the importance of the workers gaining power, and using this power in the interests of the working class not only of this country but of the colonies as well. These things will only be when we realise our own class-consciousness, and when the workers realise that the Cotton Trade, the Woollen Trade, the Iron and Steel Trades and all other trades are really all one, and that unity between them all is absolutely essential.

P. L. TAYLOR.

FRANCIS PLACE: ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

IT is curious to reflect how the accident of after-history gives individuals undeserved reputations. Here is Francis Place, with the name of an advanced democratic agitator because he was instrumental in securing the repeal of the Combination Acts, a victory which the later growth of trade unions has magnified enormously. Yet if his extreme democratic friends had had the access which we have to Francis Place's private papers, they would without doubt have given him the title at the head of this article. His intrigue for the repeal of the Combination Acts takes a relatively small space compared with the records of his other anti-democratic intrigues.

Even the repeal of the Combination Acts he justified to himself by a most extraordinary argument. As soon as unreasonable restrictions and oppressions ceased, he believed, the working class would perceive the fundamental truth of political economy—that unrestricted competition made for the good of everybody, and that both prices and wages must be fixed by the law of supply and demand. They would then abandon trade unionism, which they only supported owing to the confusion and irritation caused by the Combination Acts. Consequently, the best way of wiping out trade unionism was to repeal these Acts.

Anyhow, from 1825 onwards, he was chiefly occupied in a most perilous and ingenious intrigue, in which his heart delighted—which was to secure that the working class was induced to support a Reform Bill with all its physical and moral power, and to secure that the Bill as passed excluded the working class from the vote altogether and gave political power to the middle class. No one but Place, probably, could have succeeded in so ticklish a task. He was aided, probably, by the fact that at the back of his tortuous mind he did really believe in universal suffrage ("for which the people are not yet fitted"), and so could conscientiously remain on friendly terms with its advocates and become aware of their plans.

Lovett, Hetherington and the other radicals who consulted him from time to time would have been scandalised to learn what he really thought, not of them, but of their followers. "Vehement, reckless, resolute rascals," he called the supporters of universal suffrage, adding, "among these men were some who were perfectly atrocious, whose purpose was riot, as providing an opportunity for plunder." Cobbett, he considered, was "an unprincipled cowardly bully." As the time for the final struggle grew near, he was alarmed to see that the views of such men became more and more influential.

Lovett had founded a "National Union of Working Classes" (nicknamed the "Rotundanists") which had become the mouthpiece in London of all the working men who thought on political questions at all. They did not find it difficult to "over-trump" Place's left-wing Whiggism when all they demanded was that the extinction of the oligarchy and its rotten boroughs should be accompanied by the enfranchisement of the workers, as already existed in Preston and Westminster.

But Place needed the support of the working class. He was already involved in proposals for armed insurrection (the revolt was to begin in Birmingham while the "London mob" kept a sufficient portion of the soldiers in London by rioting), and for this the support of the working class was essential. In 1831 he was able to trick Lovett's Union out of its position as spokesman for the working class. A meeting held in Lincoln's Inn Fields to form a Political Union which, like the Birmingham Political Union, should concentrate all the forces of all wings of the reformers. As was to be expected, Lovett's group carried a resolution to the effect that half the Council of the new Union should consist of working men. Place at first despaired, but then realised that this resolution might be made cunning use of.

The enrolment of members took place in the usual slack manner at a public house. Place was present all the time that the first few hundreds of members were enrolled. Any working man who presented himself was asked a few casual questions: if he was a Rotundanist no more was said; if not, he was invited into the committee room and, with many flattering expressions, asked to name a few "honest well-intentioned working men" who could be elected to the Union Council as opponents of the Rotundanists. With infinite pains a list of harmless docile "decoy ducks" was thus secured. The doors were anxiously watched in case the Rotundanists enrolled in sufficient numbers to upset the apple-cart; but, fortunately, they were unaware of what was going on. Before long there were enough flattered "non-political" working men enrolled to make the election of Place's puppets certain, and the thing was done.

Now he had a grip on a section of the working class he could go rapidly forward. His instructions to his speakers were "to talk in support of universal suffrage, but to move resolutions supporting the Government." The excitement caused by the obstinate resistance of the Lords was such that he was really able to cover up partially the fact that the Reform Bill would disfranchise the working class.

Place's Union could, and did, now speak boldly in the name of the working class, but he was still very anxious to avoid the appeal

to force, lest the Rotundanists in the excitement came to the top again. It was Parkes of Birmingham, apparently, who provided him with the means. **TO STOP THE DUKE, GO FOR GOLD**, he wrote on a piece of paper; and then suddenly, delightedly, realised he had found the means by which the shopkeepers and employers could break the obstinacy of the Duke of Wellington without calling on their unshaven and dangerous allies.

The Lords stood a rush on the banks for about forty-eight hours, all told. Then they flung up their hands and the resistance collapsed. The Reform Bill was carried: the old oligarchy ended, the shopkeepers got the vote and the working men lost it even where they had had it in the past.

Place's satisfaction was immense; but there was still one thing to do. The London working men had learnt from him a lesson in turbulence which they must now unlearn. For this he turned to his friend, Mr. Thomas, the chief of the new police. He had for a long time been urging him to take a new line against "mobs"—not to wait till they became disorderly and then arrest some who became martyrs at once. Rather, let him arm his constables with clubs and attack any mob, before it misbehaved, and "thrash it as long as any remained together, but take none into custody." "There would soon be no such mobs." These tactics had been tried once in 1830; they were now to be used against the advocates of Universal Suffrage.

The Rotundanists, in May, 1833, determined to hold a protest meeting at the corner of Gough Street and Calthorpe Street (off Gray's Inn Road). This had been forbidden, but they decided to hold it, expecting no doubt that some of the speakers would be arrested and have to testify to their faith in court. They were unpleasantly surprised when the meeting had been held (in perfect quiet, as is admitted) for a short while. Two columns of police deliberately charged it from two sides, beating the audience with their bludgeons. They made no arrests, but clubbed the reformers, as Place exulted in his notes, "for nearly one hour." They certainly made it quite clear to the working class that future franchise meetings would only be held by police permission.

Naturally, not everybody was as pleased as Place. Some of the audience had, indeed, struck back, and one policeman, Cully, had been killed. A most extraordinary scene followed at the inquest. The coroner pressed the jury to return a verdict of murder, but it refused and produced a verdict of "justifiable homicide." The indignant coroner, a Government man, ordered them to reconsider their verdict. They replied that they had already considered it sufficiently. He declared that it was contrary to the facts. They replied that they, as the jury, and not he, were the judges of that.

He stated that he refused to accept the verdict. They answered that they would return no other. So they remained for nearly three-quarters of an hour, the coroner and jury exchanging abuse or glowering at each other for long periods in silent rage. At last, warned by the excitement in the streets and the public galleries, the coroner decided to accept the verdict under protest.

RAYMOND W. POSTGATE.

ODD CHATS TO NEW STUDENTS

I.—CHANGING THINGS AND CHANGING MINDS

I EXPECT you've heard people say : "Nothing will be right in the world until we get a change in the hearts of men, until people become less selfish and wicked" ; or again : "It's all this machinery and towns and science that's wrong with the world : things will never be right until we go back to the simpler life which men led two or three hundred years ago and regain the 'soul' which modern machinery has destroyed." Many Socialists even speak of Socialism as merely a new religion which is going to change men *spiritually*, and hence tries unselfishly to do good to all classes and not selfishly to serve the interests of the workers alone.

Now this may sound all very well in the pulpit or when mixed with the Salvation Army band, but it's all muddled, unscientific nonsense. Why? you say. Simply because it is contrary to all the facts of history and of evolution which science in the last hundred years has discovered. Science shows that man, like the rest of the universe, has *evolved* according to certain scientific laws—he has not dropped down from heaven or been created and developed by some "spiritual" hand. This is mere common sense. We all know that man is born in the womb and develops from babe into man by quite regular stages : we do not expect a child to be born by purely "spiritual" means, and we do not expect a new man, full-grown, to be suddenly created on the earth out of nothing. If anyone started telling you this was going to happen, you would probably think him mad, or else think it meant that the world was coming to an end.

In other words, you know that man, like everything else, is subject to regular scientific laws, and that he is not affected by the chance happenings of mysterious "spiritual" influences which you can't foresee. Before science had *explained* how things happened, people, because of their ignorance, fell back on ghosts and goblins and spirits as the reasons for events occurring as they did—for birth, for disease, for accidents, for death, for good weather and bad weather, earthquakes, storms, etc. Now we know better, and we have no need for these superstitions. Every mother knows that if

she wants her child to grow up sturdy and strong and happy in body and mind, then it must be well fed and well looked after when young. In the old days, when a child was ill, or was morose, ill-tempered or unhappy, the parents said it was "possessed of a devil." Nowadays the good mother, instead of whipping the child, takes it to the doctor to find out what's wrong. In other words, you know that man's life and mind and personality and actions are the result of his *material conditions*. Before there can be any "mind," man must be born in the ordinary material way. And to improve his mind and his happiness and his "spiritual qualities," you must start by improving his *material conditions*. Isn't that just common sense? Well, that's what we mean when we say that we are "materialists."

Just as this is true of each man, so it is true—even more true, perhaps—of men as a whole, of men in groups and classes, of *society* as a whole. Society is changed by changes in material conditions, in its material basis, *not* by changes in the "soul" of man or the "spiritual qualities" of society. The "soul" of society either doesn't exist except as a word (as a sort of unattached label), or else it is simply a label for certain mental attitudes and activities of actual people. If it means the latter, then it is a *result* of material conditions and can only be changed by changing material conditions, *not vice versa*. Hence, if we hate society as it is to-day, with its degradation, slavery and suffering for the masses, coupled with decadent luxury for the few, the right way to set about it is not to "change the hearts of men," but to change the material basis of society—to change *things* first, and not "minds." To change things, it is necessary to get together all those whose material circumstances cause them to want this particular change, and so to develop an organised mass movement of these people to secure the *power* to effect this change. "Historical Materialism," which you hear us talking about, isn't really such a mouthful as it sounds. It merely explains history as the result of material conditions and the changes in them, and explains social evolution as the result of the struggle of first one class and then another whose material circumstances caused them to strive for a change in the material basis of society and so to revolutionise society.

But perhaps you will be asking: What is the material basis of human society? Obviously an exceedingly important part of it consists of machinery, railways, buildings, towns, offices, which together go to make up what is called the "economic system." These things at any rate are the most important from the point of view of historical development, because it is these things which change most. It is these things which distinguish us to-day from 500 years ago and distinguish us from the primitive savage. Man's "nature"—his body and brain—hasn't changed much over the last

3,000 years ; but the tools and machinery and the economic organisation of these have changed enormously, and it is *this* change that makes all the difference, and *this* change which has produced changes in man's mental character and behaviour. The growth of machinery and of the knowledge how to use it and organise it in the best way (science) have increased man's power over nature, increasing enormously man's power to win his food and fuel and clothing from nature, *i.e.*, his power to *produce*. All progress depends first of all on increased plenty of the food, etc., needed by man. True, man does not live by bread alone ; but at the same time man cannot live or display any so-called "spiritual" qualities unless he has bread. Hence, machinery and science, which increase plenty by increasing the productive power of human labour, are not the enemy. They are the basis of all progress, and to destroy them would put the clock back hundreds of years and cause more starvation than exists at present. What is wrong with things to-day is that science and machinery are owned by a few and run for the benefit of the few, and the workers who run the machines are mere slaves who get little of the benefit of their increased productivity. The cure is for the ownership of science and machinery to be taken away from the few and placed in the hands of the workers as a whole and used for the benefit of the workers, so that they may have food in their bellies, warm clothes on their backs, decent houses to dwell in, and then may be able to make a start of developing a higher "mental" and cultural life. Of course, you won't persuade the few who at present live on the backs of the many to see this. *They* won't want to "change the material basis of society" ; they'll jolly well hang on to what they've got, and will only give it up if they're *forced* to. Who is there to force them to? Why, the workers, of course, and *only* the workers ; because it's *they* who suffer the poverty and slavery and unemployment of the present system, and they alone who are driven by necessity to want a fundamental change. "Necessity," you know, "is the mother of invention." Hence, further progress can only come through a class struggle of the workers against the monopolising capitalists, in which the workers take machinery and science into *their* hands and use and develop it for the benefit of all. Such a change in the economic basis of society will change the *whole* of society as well : it will turn over a new page of history in which for the first time the mass of the workers will have time and opportunity to develop their "minds" and "souls" and live as free men. But such a new stage is *only* possible *after* this revolutionary material change in *things* has been made.

Yes, that opens up a lot of further interesting questions, doesn't it? But those questions must wait for another time.

"MARXIST."

THE AFTERMATH OF DAWES IN GERMANY

THE Dawes Scheme in 1924 seemed to have stabilised capitalism in Central Europe. With a stabilised currency, a "scientific" reparation arrangement and facilities whereby Germany could reconstruct her industry by foreign loans, it seemed that the post-war crisis was passed and that capitalism in Europe would return to the "normal" pre-war line of development. Actually the recovery of Germany in the ensuing years exceeded even the fairest hopes of the ever-optimistic commercial journalists. Industrial reconstruction was quick and phenomenal. Reorganisation of industry on the lines of cartels and horizontal trusts took place in wholesale fashion. A campaign of "rationalisation" brought a thorough overhauling of obsolete and wasteful methods and the installation of new plant and new processes. After a brief period of financial apprehension following the currency stabilisation, a trade boom of considerable dimensions raised production to its pre-war level and at the same time increased employment and the demand for labour. Germany was hailed as the classic instance of capitalism's power of recovery. Those who had formerly talked of "the decline of capitalism," now talked of a "new industrial revolution." Reformists, previously terrified by the growing revolutionary temper of the masses, now breathed again, and smilingly awaited a new period of undisturbed reformist class-collaboration. The gospel of "Americanism" was trumpeted aloud by "progressive" capitalist and reformist alike as the golden road to the new era of capitalist prosperity.

All the time, however, there were a few voices that whispered that all in Central Europe was not as fair as it seemed. The Communists spoke of "partial stabilisation" of capitalism and stressed the "*partial*." In the capitalist camp there were Cassandra-voices such as Mr. J. M. Keynes. It was pointed out that Germany's recovery was due to the large influx of foreign capital, which in the early years more than balanced the reparation payments which Germany had to make under the Dawes Scheme. It is always easy to have a "trade boom" and to finance "rationalisation" and the construction of new equipment if capital is flowing in from abroad: capitalists can both pay good wages and at the same time find funds for capital extensions (which in turn create activity for the constructional trades) if they can borrow the proceeds freely from abroad. It has been estimated by the President of the Reichsbank that Germany has imported capital since 1924—in other words, has incurred an indebtedness abroad—to the extent of 10 *milliard*

marks (about £500 millions). In the same period reparation payments have amounted to less than 2 *milliard marks*. As a result, Germany has had a continually increasing "adverse balance" of trade (excess of imports over exports), which in the first seven months of this year amounted to over 2 milliard marks, or about £120 millions: in other words, she has been enabled to import foodstuffs, raw material, etc., to the value of £120 millions without giving any equivalent in return.

This state of affairs clearly cannot continue. The import of capital (which is mainly American) can hardly be maintained indefinitely on its present scale; about a third of it has consisted of short-term credits which might quickly, not only cease to continue, but actually be withdrawn at the first breath of a financial "draught." Even should this import of capital continue on its present scale, the interest payments which Germany has to make abroad will mount each year until they more than balance in each year the volume of new annual borrowings. Moreover, next year the figure of Germany's reparation liabilities mounts steeply to its maximum under the Dawes Scheme.

In the near future, therefore, Germany's apparent prosperity is likely to come to an end, and trade boom to give place to a crisis. The expansion of capital equipment which at present keeps the constructional trades active, and the economies introduced by new methods, requiring as they do the outlay of capital, are likely to halt. The "adverse balance" of trade, endangering exchange stability, will create the situation where imports have to be reduced and exports stimulated by deflationary action to reduce the internal price-level. This, if it occurs, is then likely to be followed by a wave of unemployment and by the demand from the German capitalists for wage-reductions; while German exports will increase the pressure of competition on the general world market.

Already apprehensions of such an approaching crisis are beginning to be felt inside Germany and outside. The President of the Reichsbank, alarmed at the growth of foreign indebtedness, has taken action to limit fresh borrowing from abroad and to raise the bank discount-rate. Mr. Gilbert Parker, who is one of the officials appointed under the Dawes Scheme to control Germany's finances on behalf of her creditors, has recently presented to the German Government a report, severely criticising their Budget expenditure. The particular items which he singles out for criticism as "extravagant" are expenditure on education and on social services: in other words, he sees the necessity, if the Dawes Scheme is to continue its successful operation, for expenditure for the benefit of the workers to be reduced. This is prophetic of what is probable in the next few years. At the same time the London market has shown a sharp

fall in recent weeks in the prices of high-class German loans, which, according to the City Editor of *The Commercial*, "points clearly to the existence of a certain apprehensiveness regarding the development of the German economic and financial situation"—a situation which this City Editor goes on to describe as "an obviously disquieting state of affairs." Even among the conservative trade union bureaucracy in Germany there has been in the last six months a certain activity, pressing for wage advances to cover the recent rise in rents, etc., or resisting a proposed fall, as in the coal industry. But according to the Department of Overseas Trade Report, these wage-increases are soon likely to be nullified by a further rise in prices, resulting from the action of combines and cartels on the home market; while if deflation should occur, the German capitalists are likely to start a campaign for wholesale wage reductions. A new left-ward move among the German masses, of which the recent local election results in Germany may be a preliminary symptom, may well be witnessed within the coming year.

Events are accordingly showing that Germany is no exception to the statement that European capitalism has reached a stage of decline. They are showing how limited is the possibility of "Americanisation" and "rationalisation" arresting that decline. It is, of course, true that capitalism can do something to help itself if it can cut down costs and so widen its margin of profits; and, if market demand is sufficiently elastic, the resulting expansion in the scale of production may in the long run expand the demand for labour. But the extent of such possibilities has been enormously exaggerated. They generally require an initial outlay of capital, which is just what European capitalism (faced with a much slower rate of accumulation than pre-war or even with *disaccumulation*) at present finds it difficult to supply. Moreover, it is extremely improbable that such economies can suffice to offset the results of the declining super-profit which Europe can draw from export trade with colonial countries, in face of the increasing competition of U.S.A. and the growing industrialisation of these former colonial markets; for it is this worsened position in the world market which is at the root of the economic crisis in Europe, and particularly of the crisis of British capitalism that is shown so forcibly in the present plight of our export trades. But even were the German capitalists to manage to offset by the economies of "rationalisation" the effect on their profits of decreased export demand, it would by no means follow, as the Reformists proclaim, that this would bring benefit to the German workers. Capitalism to-day is not what it was in the 19th century, when competition tended to pass on the fruits of productive economies in cheaper prices to consumers. To-day capitalism is becoming increasingly restrictive and monopolistic,

restricting the scale of production and retaining the fruits both of lowered costs and of raised prices for the capitalist class. At any rate, rationalisation and "Fordism" have not saved German capitalism. What measure of success they have achieved has only been built on an import of American capital. To-day the new economic crisis which looms on the horizon—even though it may be at the moment "no larger than a man's hand"—shows that the stabilisation which the Dawes Scheme introduced for a period to Europe is no more than temporary and conditional in kind.

M.H.D.

AMERICA'S PLACE IN THE SUN

STUDENTS of Economic Geography are conversant with the rapid rise of the United States to the leadership of imperialist nations. A few facts and figures will be useful for purposes of comparison.

Nature has been exceptionally lavish in bestowing all the needs of modern industry, with the exception of tin and rubber, within its borders. (It is reported that an American capitalist, Mr. Firestone, has come to an agreement with the Liberian Government to develop rubber-growing and that this project, harbour works, and native employment schemes will be proceeded with shortly under American capital.) An interesting statement was made by Judge Gary at the Annual Meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, 1920. He said the United States comprised 6 per cent. of the world's population and 7 per cent. of the land area, and had :—

20	per	cent.	of	the	world's	supply	of	Gold.
25	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Wheat.
40	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Iron and Steel.
40	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Lead.
40	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Silver.
50	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Zinc.
52	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Coal.
60	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Aluminium.
60	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Copper.
60	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Cotton.
66	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Oil.
75	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Corn.
85	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Automobiles.

Three-fourths of the known reserves of coal are in N. America. There is almost no coal in S. America, hence dependence on the United States. One-third of the world's reserves of iron ore are located in the United States, the fourth largest iron field in the world being in Cuba. (Perhaps one explanation of the Spanish-American War.) The greatest single iron field is in Brazil, as yet practically

untouched. The United States is not so well situated as to oil reserves, these constituting one-eighth of the world's total. Hence her touching interest in Mexico and the Caribbean Coast. "Oil may soothe the troubled waters of the eternal seas, but it only adds unrest to the troubled waters of international diplomacy."

To turn to another comparison, we find that *Commerce and Finance*, May 26th and July 28th, 1920, gives the world's wealth estimates, in terms of dollars at their purchasing power value, as follows :—

United States	...	...	...	\$500 billions.
British Empire	...	...	...	\$230 "
France	...	...	...	\$100 "
Russia	...	...	...	\$60 "
Italy	...	...	...	\$40 "
Japan	...	...	...	\$40 "
Germany	...	...	...	\$20 "

The increase of productivity, even up to 1914, was exceedingly rapid. Many factors have contributed to this amazing development. There is more natural wealth within the country than in any other. Her area is continental in size, constituting a geographical unity with an unrivalled commercial situation fronting two oceans, the Atlantic and Pacific. There is unrestricted internal free trade. Contrast this with a similar land mass in Europe, with its political disunity, and her population is not nearly so dense as to make self-support a problem, owing to her immense natural resources. She has availed herself of the skill of thousands of mechanics in the prime of life, by immigration, whose education and training has been a charge on the countries of their origin. And, finally, the burden of militarism and war which has oppressed Europe has been avoided. Even her share in the Great War was trivial in comparison with the European belligerents.

The United States is inevitably embarked upon a career of capitalist imperialism, not so much territorial as economic. There is a silent financial conquest taking place of many countries. Take Canada as an example. Here the race for capitalist and financial supremacy is virtually a foregone conclusion. Scott Nearing declares : "The economic title to Canada's investment field has passed from British to United States bankers. The political title still remains in British hands. History shows that economic possession ultimately carries with it political control."

It is significant that in 1924 the Canadian Premier, Mr. Mackenzie King, in criticising the Lausanne Treaty, declared that there were three proposals confronting Canada :—

- (1) Complete independence.
- (2) *Amalgamation with the United States.*

- (3) A more clearly recognised relationship as a self-governing nation within the Empire.

Is it conceivable that the possibility of (2) would have been mentioned prior to 1914? Finance dictates, as the following figures show. The British investments in Canada in 1914 exceeded £500,000,000, while United States investments were less than £130,000,000. In 1920 there was a shift to £400,000,000 and £350,000,000 respectively. And unofficial estimates for 1923 place the United States 25 per cent. ahead of British investments. "The war not only destroyed a part of the British market in Canada by stimulating development of local Canadian industry, but it hurt British industry at home by stimulating the export of Canadian manufactured goods to the home country. At the same time, British investments in Canada virtually ceased." Between 1920 and 1923, it is estimated that the amount of Canadian manufactures controlled in the United States increased from 50 to 60 per cent.

A similar tale of financial conquest can be said of South America.

L. C. Knowles, in *Economic Development of British Overseas Empire*, states, for instance, "There are in fact certain regions which, though they do not belong to Great Britain, are in reality her financial colonies, and of these Argentine is a great example." Alas! the scene changes, and the bold American financier appears. Hence the mission of the Royal Ambassador of Commerce to re-establish British supremacy. As the *Advertisers' Weekly* phrases it, "Pageantry and a great deal of old-world formula surround the return of the Prince of Wales this week-end from the fourth of his great tours; but the modern business world, which has shed most of the picturesqueness of the old Guild and mystery days, is not misled by the survivals of Court ceremonial. *The Prince of Wales's tours have served a great imperial trading purpose.*"

In Germany it is estimated, at a conservative figure, that American invested capital, exclusive of the Dawes Loan, amounts to £75,000,000, with a further £25,000,000 under consideration. This is a formidable encroachment upon Germany's economic territory. As an example, we have the transference to American control of zinc production, as the result of an agreement between Harriman and Co., New York, the Anaconda Copper Company, Montana, and the Upper Silesian Zinc Mining Company, Giesches Erben. The rivalry of financiers and concession hunters over the prostrate body of China has as many possibilities for war to-day as the imperialist rivalries in Africa and Persia had prior to 1914.

We will fittingly conclude our economic survey by a comparison of the United States after two wars, taken from a house organ of the

National Cash Register Company, making due allowance for its capitalist ideology.

UNITED STATES AFTER CIVIL WAR—1861-1865.

1. Debtor nation.
2. United States borrowed heavily from Europe.
3. Paper currency at a discount—not on a gold basis—gold at a large premium.
4. European currency at a premium—dollar at a discount the world over.
5. United States credit was exhausted—looked to Europe for aid. Hundreds of thousands of the best men on both sides killed or impaired by disease.
6. Industries in their infancy.
8. Inadequate banking system.
9. Foreign trade small—imports exceeded exports.
10. War left large part of country devastated and balance impoverished.
11. Commercial and industrial development dependent on European capital.
12. Decline of merchant marine.
13. High prices and high wages prevailed in United States only.
14. Large immigration set in.
15. Public debt small.
16. Government expenses quickly reduced and inflation stopped.
17. Period of great railroad building began.
18. Period of labour-saving invention set in.
19. Lack of transportation.
20. Took ten years for rates on commercial paper to decline from eight per cent. to five per cent.
21. Took fifteen years for prices to decline fifty per cent.
22. No quantity production. Manufacturers used hand methods.
23. Booze. Cost the people millions of dollars each year.
24. No suffrage for women.

UNITED STATES AFTER WORLD WAR—1914-1918.

1. Creditor nation.
2. Europe owes United States ten billions in Government loans and three to four billions more on private loans.
3. United States has one-third of the world's gold.
4. European currency at a discount. Dollar at a premium the world over.
5. Europe's credit is exhausted. All are looking to United States for aid. Millions of the best men on both sides killed or impaired by disease.
6. United States is powerful and natural resources developed.
7. Industries developed and on a firm basis.
8. Good banking system.
9. Foreign trade large. Exports exceed imports by three billions in 1919.
10. War was world-wide. No part of the United States destroyed.
11. Commercial and industrial development of Europe and United States dependent on United States capital.
12. Large merchant marine developed.
13. High prices and wages prevail all over the world.
14. Prospects of large immigration.
15. Public debt twenty-five billions.
16. Government expenses must be reduced. Deflation is under way.
17. Reconstruction needs of the railroads are enormous.
18. More labour-saving devices are necessary.
19. Huge transportation systems. Good management needed.
20. Interest rate on commercial paper is eight per cent.
21. Wholesale prices are on the downward trend.
22. Modern methods of manufacturing—quantity production.
23. Prohibition. Saves millions of dollars.
24. Woman Suffrage. Better Government (?).

Reviews of Books

MARXISM

Karl Marx: a Symposium. Edited by D. Ryazanoff, 6/-.
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. By D. Ryazanoff, 7/6.

(Both books published by Martin Lawrence).

On History. A. L. Rowse (Kegan Paul, 2/6).

THE two volumes of Martin Lawrence constitute a very real addition to the literature of Marxism in this country. The former, by its very nature, is of a slighter character than the latter. A large part of it consists of personal reminiscences of the life of Marx, all very interesting to those (of both extremes of anathema and of adoration!) who require to remember that he was human after all; but not addressed, and necessarily adding little, to our understanding of his theoretical system. And even those Essays which are devoted to the various aspects of his intellectual and practical contributions afford but little opportunity to their writers to deal adequately with any of the matters which are touched upon.

English readers will doubtless turn with greatest eagerness and curiosity to the Essays by Lenin and Luxemburg. Perhaps, unfortunately, of these deals with the controversial points in their interpretation of Marxism which have caused such a stir in Marxist circles on the Continent. Luxemburg's Essay here on "Stagnation and Progress of Marxism," while written with all the brilliance of that vivid and eager mind, is remarkable chiefly for her sharply-expressed dictum that the main reason for stagnation in Marxist theory is the fact that the first volume of "Capital" analysed completely and finally all those processes which are fundamental for the prosecution of the class struggle. In this general statement, as well as in various passing references to the cultural life and growth of the working-class, Luxemburg is sharply provocative—which indeed appears to have been one of her main rôles throughout her intellectual contributions to the literature of Marxism.

Lenin's Essay is of a very different character. It is a masterly expansion of his opening assertion that "Marx con-

tinued and brilliantly rounded off the three main currents of XIXth century thought, the currents that flowed in the three most advanced countries in the world: classical German philosophy; classical British political economy; and French socialism." In that section in which he summarises Marx's work in Economics, Lenin devotes a relatively considerable space to "the theory of land-rent"—a theme which is by no means of merely theoretical interest, but also of first-class and ever-increasing practical significance. But the deepest and most permanent impression of this brilliant Essay lies in its exposition of the essentially unitary character of the whole system of Marx—in philosophy, in economics and in socialism.

The second of these volumes is, we venture to think, far more important. Here Marxism is applied to the life and work of Marx himself—it is shewn as the explanation not only of social growth in general, but also of its own rise and development. This is one of the triumphs of the M.C.H.—that it is self-explanatory as well as explanatory of so much else.

Ryazanoff presents us with a searching account of the economic social and intellectual background against which Marx played his part. Readers will find here many illuminating flashes and sidelights upon the course of European history during the middle decades of the XIXth century. And with this, the book affords us a vivid account of the labours, both intellectual and political, of Marx and Engels: the evolution of the new theory of history; their part in the formation of the Communist League and in the Revolution of '48; the consequent development of their theory and their tactics; the controversies with Weitling and with Lassalle; the founding of the International; the Paris Commune; the struggle between Marx and Bakunin; and their various activities in connection with the developing prole-

tarian movements in the several countries. Never before has the story of this great and fruitful collaboration been written, certainly not in English; in this admirable appreciation, the rich and various results are unfolded before our eyes with all the power and appeal of a great and moving drama.

The book further contains an interesting introduction on its author, Ryazanoff, and his "twenty years of unstinted effort and boundless devotion to Marxian research."

In his very interesting Essay, Mr. Rowse draws attention to the present position of historical study, in which an over-prominent place is occupied by research and specialised studies while there is a deplorable dearth of generalisation. The fact that there has arisen no school to replace the old complacent if brilliant Whig historians is no mere matter of the lack of literary style—conspicuous as is the contrast in this connection. There is the more fundamental defect of a generalising unitary principle: "Fine writing must come as the result of a fine conception."

But while the historians have thus tended to degenerate into researchers dominated by the aim of specialisation and whose work is unrelated to any framework of study of general movements, the rapidity of material progress and the pervading influence of theories of

evolution have made "transition" the key-word of present-day conceptions; and the theory of History which will replace the outworn formulæ must of necessity derive its character from this mental temper. With this premise, our author turns to an appreciation of "the immense importance" of the work of Marx. After a brief and somewhat inadequate statement of the M.C.H., he deals convincingly with certain of the commoner objections which see in it either "a false simplification excluding from any important rôle in history factors other than economic" or "an antiquated utilitarian psychology"—and from this proceeds to a discussion of several more detailed applications of the theory, e.g., to Puritanism, to the rise of the Medieval Cities, to certain political ideals, religious doctrines and scientific theories.

While this new knowledge bears with it "the immense work of re-interpretation of the past," it is also "the first step to acquiring that control of circumstances upon which the progress of society depends," and there remains to the historian the exhilarating task of the preliminary work of spreading that knowledge in order that light may be thrown upon the problems of our age by this new conception of the forces that made and are still moulding it.

This is a valuable and a revealing tract.
T.A.

There is no "love interest" in the five-act drama *Night*, by Marcel Martinet (C. W. Daniel Company, 5/-net), translated from the French by Eden and Cedar Paul, but there is ample compensation to students of sociology in the problems of war and revolution which the play raises.

It is the story of a revolution that went wrong, and post-war events in many European countries have gone to the making of it. The "fed-up" troops refuse to fight, organise soldiers' councils, and otherwise follow the good example of Russia, but are eventually cozened and betrayed by a demagogic "Provisional Government"; the officers return and the "fight to a finish" begins anew. In the course of the action we have interesting studies of peasant and soldier psychology and some memorable pictures of individual personalities in the revolutionary struggle: Ledrux, the cautious but daring leader; Favrolles,

the fire-eating demagogic turncoat; Bourbouze, the "simple-hearted" general, who is not so simple as he seems; the crafty Emperor, whose "renowned political wisdom" does not desert him in his hour of adversity; Boldier-Dupatoy, the oily politician, who can so easily bamboozle the war-wearied soldiery.

One would like to see this play attempted by Labour dramatic societies, although the cast is rather a large one. The stage setting should present no difficulty.
E.J.

* * *

Plebeians who like Literature (with a capital L) should besiege the local libraries for *Eros the Slayer*, by Aino Kallas, translated from the Finnish by Alex. Matson. These two sad love tales of Estonian life in the Middle Ages are, one would think, unique in present-day literature for their beauty and restrained power. The quiet strength of this writ-

ng thrills us when the forcible-feeble 'realism' of a Masefield only provokes laughter.

Incidentally we have here a vivid picture of feudal conditions, and especially the condition and status of woman. We are reminded once again that even the eternal theme of sex love is governed by contemporary ideas of morals and marriage, which in their turn are derived from the economic bases of the prevailing social system. E.J.

Particularly to those of us who realise the deficiencies of elementary education from the point of view of organised Labour a study of such a book as *History of Elementary Education* by C. Birchenough (University Tutorial Press, 6/6) is essential. There is a wealth of detail concerning the pioneers of education, their methods and their aims, which is followed up to the latest regulations of the Board of Education. The cruelties inflicted on children in the name of education and religious instruction are almost unbelievable. A Charity School Reader used by girls at Sheffield in 1789 contained such reading lessons as: "Do no wrong. It is a sin to steal a Pin. Swear not at all or make a Bawl. Use no bad Words."

When in other early schools the rule of making the Bible the only reading lesson book was lifted, the arithmetic tests were given a religious flavour thus:

"At the marriage in Cana in Galilee there were six waterpots of stone, holding two or three firkins apiece. If they held two firkins how much water would it take to fill them? and how much if they held three each?"

But apart from such piquant passages the book is a mass of detail on the growth of our elementary schools.

M.S.

The Soviet Union Yearbook, 1927, Ed. by A. A. Santalov and Louis Segal, Ph.D., M.A. (Allen & Unwin, 7/6 net) continues the series of Russia Yearbooks and considerably improves upon the earlier ones in the series. One of the chief new features is the handy historical summary of general economic development, and of the banking and financial system, and also the combined and much more complete tables of industrial production. Its 430 pages are a mine of information about all things Russian—political organisation, foreign relations, agriculture, industry, economic geography, trade, finance, labour, the co-operative movement, and the educational and legal systems. Moreover, there are several good maps, including two on the mineral resources of the Union, which should be useful for class work. Everyone, if he have not 7/6 to spare, should at least see that this invaluable reference book is in his public library.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Early Socialist Days, by W. Stephen Sanders (Hogarth Press, 3/6).

Jim Connolly and Irish Freedom, by G. Schüller (*Daily Worker*, Chicago, 10 cents).

Lccal Government for Beginners, by M. I. Cole.

Capitalist Combines, by G. M. Colman.

How to Read Literature, by G. E. Wilkinson.

The Economic System, by G. D. H. Cole (W.E.A. Outlines, Longmans, 2/- and 1/- each).

A Defence of Communism, by Ralph Fox (C.P.G.B., 1/-).

Disarmament and the Coolidge Conference, by Prof. P. J. Noel Baker (Hogarth Press, 2/-).

Towards Industrial Peace: the Proceedings of a Conference of the League of Nations Union (P. S. King, 6/-).

Nouvelle Histoire de France (Librairie Gaonach, Quimper, 9 fr.).

Samuel Crompton and the Cotton Industry (Bolton I.L.P., 2d.).

War: The Communist International's Position, by A. J. Bennet (C.P.G.B., 3d.).

Propaganda Technique in the World War, by H. D. Lasswell (Kegan Paul, 10/6).

History of the French Revolution, Vols. 1 and 2, by P. Kropotkin (Vanguard Publishing Co.).

Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, by N. Lenin (Martin Lawrence, 10/6).

The Chinese Puzzle, by A. Ransome (Allen & Unwin, 5/-).

L e t t e r s

ESPERANTO.

DEAR Sir,—R.W.P. attacks Esperantists for using a foolish argument. There are silly sheep in every fold, and it is possible that someone has been talking nonsense. Still, though I have been in the Esperanto Movement for twenty years, I have never met the statement complained of. It certainly does not represent us.

He says that Esperantist literature contains the most intemperate statements. Possibly—but I should like chapter and verse.

When Beaufront talks of “horrible noises (in Esperanto) unpronounceable without injury to the jaw,” he may be funny, but is he really entitled to the serious respect R.W.P. asks for him? I, at any rate, have no respect for a man who utters deliberate nonsense, whatever his standing. Truth, sincerity and accuracy, not personality, position, or wit, are what command respect.

It is *not* necessary to “scrap” or to “smash up” a typewriter to write Esperanto. All standard firms supply the Esperanto accent free with a new machine, or add it to an old one for a few shillings. The printer of PLEBS had to procure the Esperanto type before he could use it. Obviously! But he did not “have to alter his machine.” Let us stick to facts. And R.W.P. still does not tell us whether, while condemning the six accented letters of Esperanto, he is prepared to swallow the thirteen accented letters of French.

Let us look at the “complex conjugations and declensions of Esperanto” which R.W.P. ridicules. Here is the conjugation of every verb in the language. -I, -U, -AS, -IS, -OS, -US, for infinitive, imperative, present, past, future, and conditional respectively, plus six participles. (Compare the 2,300 endings of the French verb.) The declension of every substantive is simply the letter -O, plus J or N for plural or objective case. Could anything be *less* complex?

Finally: is the assumption really true, that that language is best, the meaning

of which can be most easily guessed by linguists who have not learned it? I think not.

Faithfully yours,
MONTAGU C. BUTLER,

Secretary, Brit. Esperanto Assn.

Comrade Boubou (Orleans) was provoked by R. W. Postgate's article to a reply amounting to about 4,000 words, from which we translate the following points:—

He quotes his own experience in the Educational Workers' International for which by Esperanto he has gathered valuable reports. On the grounds of its widest use (95 per cent. of the users of any international speech), the simplicity of its structure and its success against some 50 later projects, he supports the international language, although he has studied and used its chief rivals.

The “s” for the plural ending and “e” for “and” instead of “kaj” were actually tried out and found unsuitable by Zamenhof. The plural ending “j” and “ojn” and “ajn” should not be difficult if one can say “boy,” “coin” and “line.” Every language but English has supersigns—some have subsigns also!—and so only to English eyes must they seem unusual and ugly. Esperanto has only six, with one of them “h” disappearing in use, compared to twelve and a double letter in French and twenty in Czech. “Sennaculo,” like other weekly papers in printed by linotype.

Pronunciation and sources of vocabulary must not be judged solely from the points of view of the polyglots and their ability to read at first sight owing to their knowledge of the Latin languages. It is not for them that an international language is *needed*. Experience showed that an accepted fixed basis was necessary for further growth determined by usage. Thus Esperanto attains further successes while its rivals split and split again into little sects advocating their own particular reform.

The logical use of the affixes and the unvarying grammar are a godsend to the Orient peoples. How can that grammar be said to be complicated and retrograde when by twelve verb endings every tense can be conjugated as compared to the

Russian 157, German 364, English 652 and French 2,265 changes to do the same work.

The accusative ending gives clarity in meaning and flexibility in sentence construction and the same applies to the agreement in number and case endings of the adjective with its noun. Worker-Esperantists, however, do not boast of the perfectness of their language because a language only exists in its use and we are "perfecting" it by ceaseless application in realising our working-class international aim.

[We have received several other letters on this subject—in fact Esperantists are even more pugnacious than economists—including a lengthy one from a comrade in New York, but the above are all we have space for.—Ed. PLEBS.]

OXFORD "SNAGS."

Sir,—S.L.C. and Z. have taken W.H.M. more seriously than I, in what will ever be an interminable argument between people who are afraid of atmosphere and people who are not. S.L.C., for instance, still flogs the query of what Oxford's intention is in netting trade unionists. The real concern is: what can intelligent trade unionists get out of Oxford, not what can Oxford get out of them. In the current PLEBS, Raymond Postgate reveals a few of his credentials—English, French, Latin, Greek, Italian, and some German. N.C.L.C. products? Not a bit of it! They reflect a bygone study under more suitable conditions than a working-day and evening study ever can provide.

In conclusion, I always notice in discussion of this topic, that the fear of those who oppose university schemes is, that the best brains of our movement chance to be lost, which is tantamount to saying that it is the best brains amongst trade unionists which consider the scholarships worth while. Conclusive evidence of the potential value of the schemes.

Yours, R.E.B.

Sir,—Charles L. Gibbons displays a presumption and a capacity for jumping to unwarranted conclusions remarkable even for a Plebs writer. To base a personal attack on a chance coincidence of not uncommon initials may be in accord with the new proletcultural Science of Understanding, but it is difficult to reconcile with common-sense, logic,

honesty, or courtesy. Unlike some of his colleagues, I am not in the habit of seeking to conceal my identity under initials or pseudonyms. I categorically repudiate all responsibility for the letters referred to, and trust to have an equally public withdrawal and apology from Mr. Gibbons.

Yours faithfully,

W. H. MARWICK,

Tutor-Organiser, W.E.A. (Scotland).
September 6, 1927.

Dear Sir,—Why Mr. Gibbons should assume that I am Mr. Marwick is a problem for the psycho-analyst. Perhaps he saw in my letter a resemblance to the epigrammatic terseness which distinguishes Mr. Marwick's lectures? Or perhaps he found in it something faintly reflective of his political philosophy? I do not know, and I decline to guess. In any case, it is obviously unfair that he should thus be saddled with opinions he would possibly repudiate.

Now for Mr. Gibbons. His objection that a general indictment of Oxford is incompatible with an official position in the W.E.A. is so abysmally silly that I am almost unable to answer it. When I criticised Oxford I was not implying that every graduate who comes from Oxford has perverted notions on politics and economics. The intelligent ones refuse to believe all they are taught, and there is no reason in the nature of things why they should not go into the W.E.A. It is a mistake to suppose that every student succumbs to his education: the one splendour of the system is in the sparks of revolt that flash out every now and then. Communists have been born in middle class suburbs; atheists have been the sons of clergymen; and in general, the most successful revolutionists have usually been conventionally educated men with sufficient strength of mind to save themselves from being victimised by it. Even Oxford does not turn out mentally standardised graduates as a factory turns out standardised plates and penknives.

Yours faithfully,

W. H. McKENNA.

8th September, 1927.

MARX AND MATTER.

Dear Comrade,—Comrade Price's article in the July PLEBS is very interesting, but it lacks proletarian dialectic

thought. In the last paragraph of his article he says "Marx of course did not live in an age nor did he foresee it, when science would break down the boundary between Force and Matter."

If the above quotation is a true statement of the facts, how does Price account for the fact that Marx lived in the same age as Dietzgen, and Dietzgen by the use of the Dialectic formulated by Marx and his own theory of understanding which arose out of it, was able to break down the "boundary line between Force and Matter" as the following quotation from Dietzgen's "The Nature of Human Brainwork," page 128, Positive Outcome of Philosophy, shows?—"In the universe which constitutes the object of science and the faculty of reason, both Force and Matter are unseparated. In the world of sense-perceptions Force is Matter and Matter is Force." Where is your "boundary line," Comrade Price? In his introduction to the same work, page 30, Anton Pannekoek says:—"This modern world of philosophy, being a Socialist and proletarian one, takes issue with the bourgeois conception. It was first conceived as a new view of the world, extremely opposite to the ruling bourgeois conceptions by Marx and Engles, who developed its sociological and historical contents." His philosophic basis is here developed by Dietzgen, its real character is indicated by the terms dialectic and materialistic. This theory was for the first time sketched in its main outlines in the Communist Manifesto and later on fully developed in a number of other works and thoroughly vindicated by innumerable facts.

S. GORDON WORNELL.

AUSTRIA.

"Zed's" conclusions last month about the Austrian Social Democrats, and the lessons to be drawn from their story are probably quite true (writes a Pleb). But for fairness' sake it should be pointed out that he never even mentions the defence put up by the Social Democrats themselves for failing to make more progress towards Socialism.

Vienna was in 1919 actually blockaded. The Czechs had seized the coal supplies on which the factories depended, and the peasants (who in any case could

only have fed about half Vienna) refused to sell food at any price to it. The workers were faced, not with privation, but literal famine. The whole city was dependent on the food-kitchens kept by Mr. Hoover's organisation and other "charitable" bodies. Even so there were many deaths from starvation. The workers did anxiously discuss the propriety of going "all Red" and carrying through the Revolution in Vienna, but always came up abruptly against this appalling difficulty. "Can Bela Kun or Lenin send us any bread trains?" asked Bauer at one Workers' Council meeting. The answer had to be "No."

Lenin—who always would take "a one in four" chance of revolution—might have risked it. Bela Kun did, and failed, and it is a much worse hell to live in Hungary as a worker to-day than in Austria.

Zed replies:—This argument could equally well have been applied to the Bolsheviks not seizing power on November 7th, 1917, in Petrograd, because they didn't know whether the rest of the country would go "Red" as well. It is equivalent to refusing ever to take the initiative. Actually at the time there was a "Red" Hungary and also a "Red" Munich which could have been a mutual support to one another; while there was a fair chance, once the torch had been lighted in Vienna, of other parts of Germany also going "Red"; while Italy might also have had a revolution, had not the leaders of the Socialist Party used precisely the same Menshevik argument as to the "impropriety" of taking the initiative. In fact, the failure of Vienna to give Soviet Hungary the necessary support was perhaps a not unimportant factor in the isolation and the overthrow of Bela Kun's Government. The food problem was certainly a serious one; but hardly more serious than that which faced Petrograd and Moscow at several stages of the Russian Revolution. At any rate, it shows the importance of the workers issuing a bold agrarian programme to secure the support of, or at least to neutralise, the peasantry; and this was exactly what the Austrian Social Democrats refused to do, because, while using Left phrases, they refused to face up to the problem of seizing power.

The N.C.L.C. at Work



(Reports for this page should be sent to J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary, National Council of Labour Colleges, Swinton House, 324 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1).

LIST OF NEW AFFILIATIONS: The following is a list of the new affiliations received in October by the local Colleges:—Guildford, 3; London, 3; Bournemouth, 2; Glasgow, 2; S.E. Lancs. Area, 2; Belfast, 1; Lanarkshire, 1.

IS THE NAME OF YOUR COLLEGE HERE? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

REMOVAL OF HEAD OFFICE: Head Office has been removed to SWINTON HOUSE, 324 GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C.1. The telephone number is MUSEUM 9247. Please make a note of this. *The Plebs Office has been moved to the same address.*

CORRESPONDENT WANTED: Mangal Das Goradia, c/o Jamnades Kanji, 55/74 Canning Street, Calcutta, India, desires to correspond on such subjects as Socialism with a British worker who writes good English.

A GRAMOPHONE RECITAL has been organised for the financial benefit of the N.C.L.C. Classes in the Liverpool Area. This is an idea that might be taken up by other districts. The admission programme was priced at 4d. and refreshments were available at moderate charges. It will probably be as easy to get 6d. as 4d.

TRANSPORT WORKERS' SCHEME: A number of free N.C.L.C. Correspondence Courses will be available at the beginning of the New Year. Members desirous of having these Courses are asked to apply immediately to the District Secretary through their branch secretaries.

NATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL—7/14th JULY, 1928—SCARBOROUGH: For students who desire to pay their fees of £3 3s. by instalments the N.C.L.C. has arranged either to accept instalments direct or for local College Treasurer to accept the instalments.

"LABOUR JOURNALISM": The N.C.L.C. has prepared a course on the above sub-

ject under the heading of "English and Article Writing Advanced." Full particulars will be sent on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

JOHN S. CLARKE'S BOOK: The N.C.L.C. Publishing Society, which has taken over the Plebs publication work, is publishing the first of a new shilling series which will be ready on the 1st of December. The book is entitled *Marxism and History* and has been written by John S. Clarke. J.S.C. is a regular contributor to the *Forward* and was the first tutor to take a Labour College Class in Scotland. Thanks no doubt to his long experience of lecturing he has the ability to put scientific fact in a way that fascinates the aver-

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WHAT THE DIVISIONS ARE DOING.

Division 1: No report.

Division 2: The Southampton conference was the best thing yet done in this area. The Organiser addressed a number of branch meetings and ward meetings with encouraging results. We are rewarded by the opposition with a tremendous publicity campaign. Woolston has been visited with better results, thanks to the Organiser of the General Workers. Wynn-Cuthbert represented the N.C.L.C. at the Tolpuddle Martyrs anniversary and addressed two big meetings along with Frank Smith, M.P. Fred James is out to beat the record set up by the Bournemouth class with its enrolment of 70. Weymouth Trades Council are taking steps to start an N.C.L.C. movement. The Guildford conference was fine. The Oxford class takes the lead for the best bit of advertisement for the N.C.L.C. with 50 posters on the hoardings. Littlehampton class is now under a new tutor, viz., Dan Huxstep. Joe Matthews is still helping the cause in the Worthing and Brighton area. Comrades Wynn-Cuthbert and Redgrove are due to visit Littlehampton this year. Reading College is now under the control of Comrade Derricott, of the Labour College. Heartiest congratulations to J. Lane, the President of the Divisional Council, on his election as Mayor of Battersea.

Division 3: With the help of Comrade Feder and local enthusiasts a class has been opened at Wickford and an additional one at Cromer. Another class is in formation at Feltham. Cambridge, despite its successful meeting by Ellen Wilkinson, still needs more recruits for its Tuesday night class. Southend suspended its class for the bye-election, but will enjoy a visit from T. Ashcroft for a Day School on December 18th. Special lectures have been given to the Brentwood and St. Neots A.U.B.T.W. and the Colchester A.E.U. branches. Homework of a high quality is a feature of

our Norwich and Braintree and High Wycombe classes. Will Colleges please note that the Division E.C. meets on 31st December and send in reports of the session's work and any matters for discussion? J. M. Allen is giving valuable assistance in urging members of Shop Assistants' Union to take advantage of the education benefit and branch lectures are being arranged. Comrade Rolph, of High Wycombe, is assisting our sorely-tried finances by allotting us a share of the proceeds of a local sweep. Others please copy.

Division 4: Thanks to the efforts of N.U.D.A.W. and Comrades Williams, Tilley and Roberts, we were able to secure a favourable vote for the Stockport Society's N.C.L.C. resolution. The vote was 44-31. Rhondda L.C. reports 20 classes—13 general classes and 7 special classes for women. Following the inception of the N.U.R. class at Treherbert, eight "nons" were brought back into the fold. Merthyr L.C. reports a successful meeting at Treharris and with the co-operation of Comrade Bridges a local class is to be established. At the quarterly E.C. reports to hand showed that 48 classes are now under way. Blaina, Abertillery, Aberavon, Glynneath and Ystrad Mynoch, are not yet in the fighting line. To meet the urgent demand for tutors, a Tutorial Sub-Committee has been appointed, composed of Comrades Geery, Rees, Nicholas and the Divisional Organiser. We shall now expect some results. We congratulate Evan Evans—Ammanford Class—on his appointment as checkweighman out of a dozen candidates. Under the auspices of the Ogmore Vale L.C. a successful Conference was held in the Workman's Hall, Nantymoel, followed by a mass meeting of miners in connection with the district campaign. Later the Organiser addressed the Miners' Lodges in connection with the Union Campaign.

Division 5: The Organiser addressed the Torquay A.U.B.T.W. and the Secretary, W. Connett, is to convene a meeting with a view to starting a class. Following the Organiser's visit to Plymouth, W. H. Pawley is to convene a conference so that classes may be organised. The Organiser would be glad to hear from anyone in that area prepared to act as tutor or class leader. Cheltenham

ham Trades Council is arranging a public meeting for the furtherance of Independent Working-class Education. Comrade Quelch is making strenuous efforts to make the class movement a success. In Bristol, the Council elections somewhat affected the class work, but good progress is being made and the Trades Council has decided to cooperate in the running of classes. During the month several sections of the Women's Organisations have been addressed.

Division 6: The class at Aldridge is arranging a social evening as a means of creating a greater interest. The class is now the largest in the Walsall College district. Nuneaton College is also making headway and is arranging for a week-end school. Organiser Barr addressed the North Staffs. Trades Council and as a result the class now running at Hanley has received an increase of students. Birmingham classes are all doing well, while the new class at Smethwick has now about thirty students. The Organiser addressed Coventry Trades Council and a College is being started.

Division 7: The Beverley College has had a good start with thirty students. Comrade Dickinson is the tutor. Plebeians and others interested in I.W.C.E. in this area should give every support to this College as it is in the centre of W.E.A.'ism. The A.E.U. Branch at North Howden have organised a class. Twenty members were enrolled. Comrade Brewer (London Labour College) will lecture on Industrial History. Wath Main miners have affiliated to the Division upon 2d. per member basis and the Organiser is arranging a class to be personally conducted. Bentley class upon the History of Socialism is taken by Howell Morgan (London Labour College). The Secretary, Mrs. Jackson, 240 Askern Road, Bentley Toll Barr, would like more students. Keighley Wednesday Class is going strong and every week new members of the N.U.T.W. are enrolling. The Sunday Morning Class is taken by Fred Thomas (Ruskin College). Roland Hill, who takes the Skipton Class, had a nasty accident when running to catch his train for the class and badly sprained his foot. May it soon be well enough to give him the extra ten seconds needed. Reports

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from other Colleges show that average results are being maintained.

Division 8: The Municipal elections resulted in a considerable number of N.C.L.C. adherents being successful. In Liverpool the Auditor of the local College and the Organiser were returned. It is hoped to start classes shortly in conjunction with the Liverpool Federation I.L.P. and the Wavertree Divisional Labour Party. The Organiser is contributing a series of articles on "Co-operative History" to the *Liverpool Labour Voice*. N. Lancs. Area has just bought one of the new portable lanterns and is anticipating making lantern lectures a marked feature of its work. Another campaign is being inaugurated to get the Lancs. and Ches. Miners' Federation to adopt an N.C.L.C. scheme. A. J. Cook has written in support, and if all those interested will back up by getting branches to send in resolutions for the annual delegate meeting in January we should be successful this time.

N. Lancs. Area: North Lancs. has nearly four hundred students. The divisional and area organisers are visiting Barrow in the hope of reviving the class work in the locality. Interested readers of PLEBS are requested to get in touch with A. L. Williams, 17 Burlington Street, Blackburn. A request has been received from the Junior Section of the Shop Assistants' Union in Preston for a special class for its members. The Preston Branch of the N.U.R. has affiliated its whole membership on the 2d. per member basis. N.U.R. members in other towns please note. The four classes held under the auspices of the Nelson and Padiham Weavers' Associations are very successful.

S.E. Lancs.: Additional classes have been arranged for Crawshawbooth, Ashton-under-Lyne and Hyde. Manchester Borough Labour Party intend to follow up their last session's class by selecting students for a special speakers' training course. W. Greaves will again take charge. We are conducting a class on Local Government for the Stalybridge Labour Party; the class is well attended and is stimulated by the fact that two members have won seats on the Borough Council. This constitutes the first Labour representation on the Council.

Division 9: A very successful conference was held at Middlesbrough with Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and J. F. Horrabin as speakers. A further conference is being held at Darlington on December 3rd. Comrades Coxon and Rees will be the speakers. The first meeting of the new Executive of the North-Eastern College decided to start an intensive campaign among local organisations. The Newcastle branch of the Shop Assistants' Union have a class. The Durham A.U.B.T.W. are responsible for starting a class as has Middlesbrough. The class leader of the latter is Comrade Oliver, branch secretary.

Division 10: The Scottish Divisional Committee have recommended a scheme of reorganisation for Scotland which will, it is agreed, go far to carry the educational work a step further. So numerous are the voluntary tutors who make the work in Scotland possible that it is impossible for them to be mentioned by name, but the Scottish Organiser desires to take this opportunity of expressing the appreciation of the organisation for the services so effectively rendered by the voluntary staff. Ayrshire has eleven classes and one women's class, and is arranging a class in Dumfriesshire. Dumbarton has three classes, Edinburgh twenty-three classes and a women's class. Glasgow is organising its annual John Maclean Memorial meeting. Lanarkshire has twenty-four classes. Fife has eighteen classes and Stirling two, while classes are also being run in Dundee.

Division 11: No report.

Division 12: Comrade Foulger, late of the Labour College, London, has got into harness now that he has returned to his former employment. The class at Mansfield is thriving under his tuition. It is hoped the class which he has undertaken at Huthwaite will be equally successful. Comrade Lygo's efforts at Ilkeston are gradually meeting with the success they deserve. The Northampton and Wellingborough comrades are expecting good results from the conference which is to be addressed by Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and J. F. Horrabin on December 3rd at the Gloucester Hall Labour Club, Wellingborough. W. G. Cove, M.P., is to take the chair. The event is eagerly anticipated. Elsewhere the class-work goes steadily on.



The PLEBS Bookshelf



A RECENT addition to that wonderful series, the World's Classics, is of particular interest to Socialist students. It is a collection of pamphlets of various periods,* arranged in historical order, and extending from a sixteenth century onslaught on "Bishshopes, Abbottes, Archedeacons, Prestes, Monkes" and other ecclesiastical grades, to a Fabian pamphlet by H. G. Wells.

"Anthologists," says the editor in his preface, "have not yet tamed and uprooted the jungle of English pamphlet literature. . . This *Miscellany* is the product of an unadventurous and unmethodical survey along the edge of the forest." Even so, it is a fascinating little volume, full of sidelights on the social and political history of four centuries. It is especially interesting to trace the lineal descent of the Socialist pamphleteers of our own day down from the militant Protestants of the Reformation period, and the Puritans and Dissenters of the sixteenth century, through eighteenth century satirists like Defoe and Swift, and Radical free-thinkers like Paine, to nineteenth century pamphleteers on social questions like Kingsley and, later, Wells. Some of the pieces here reprinted (e.g., those by Greene, Gay, and Johnson) have a literary value only; but most of them bring back to the student very vividly the spirit of controversies of other days.

"Since printing began," says the editor, "almost every phase of British history has had its attendant spate of pamphlets." He proceeds to give some historical details of a famous pamphlet battle of the late sixteenth century which read curiously like certain happenings of our own time. The tracts and broadsides by the Puritan "Martin Marprelate" had to be printed on a press which was carried from place to place up and down the country, and a London

* *A Miscellany of Tracts and Pamphlets*: Edited with a preface and introductory notes by A. C. Ward (World's Classics: Oxford University Press, 2s.).

printer who was believed by Queen Elizabeth's Government to be responsible for their production had his house near Temple Bar raided and his plant destroyed! "The events of the ten months following make a thrilling story, in which detectives, *agents provocateurs*, and mysterious midnight movements appear, with agitated and incensed prelates in the background, supported by jailers, torturers and executioners. Frowning darkly over all, Elizabeth herself. . ." For 'prelates' read newspaper proprietors, for 'torturers,' the C.I.D., and for 'Elizabeth,' Sir Wm. Joynson-Hicks—and it all seems quite familiar, doesn't it?

* * *

The first pamphlet in the collection—*A Supplication for the Beggars*, by Simon Fish (1529)—is noteworthy as a sample of revolutionary bourgeois pol-

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emics, dating from the time when the middle class itself was in revolt against the established order. It is typically bourgeois in that, while really a bitter attack, for good, sound, economic reasons, on unproductive Churchmen, it disguises itself as a plea for the poor—the beggars, “needy, impotent, blinde, lame and sike”—who cannot obtain the charity to which their woes entitle them because the monks, friars and priests grab everything. This exaggerated sympathy for the sufferings of other classes has been a prominent feature of every middle-class “reform” campaign from Simon Fish’s time down to Mr. Lloyd George’s. How much better off the beggars were after King Henry VIII. had followed Master Simon’s advice and sent the monks and friars packing, let history—working-class history—relate.

* * *

Other items in the volume are John Knox’s ferocious *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, which reads very like an anti-Votes-for-Flappers leading article of our own day; Sexby’s vicious onslaught on Lord Protector Cromwell—*Killing no Murder*; Defoe’s satirical *Shortest Way with Dissenters*, for written which (when the powers-that-were awoke to the fact that it was aimed at them) he was put in the pillory; and Swift’s *Modest Proposal concerning the Children of Poor People in Ireland*, as savage an attack on the heartlessness of a ruling class as was ever penned. The “modest proposal” was that the children of the poorer classes should be bred in order to be killed and eaten—a food “very proper for Landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children.” After this, we get Tom Paine on *The American Crisis*—the pamphlet beginning “These are the times that try men’s souls. . .”; and this is followed by Dr. Richard Price’s *Discourse on the Love of Our Country*—the Old Jewry sermon which, as readers of Brailsford’s *Shelley, Godwin and their Circle* will remember, was the immediate cause of Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and thereafter of countless speeches and pamphlets on the events and ideas of 1789-1792. Next comes Shelley, on Franchise Reform (1817), and lastly—and the very titles are significant of a new and more

“material”-minded age—Kingsley on *Cheap Clothes and Nasty* and Weis on *This Misery of Boots*.

A Socialist anthology, on similar lines, would make an interesting volume—pamphlets typical of the various schools of Socialist thought, arranged in historical order and with explanatory notes. I commend the idea to R. W. Postgate.

Meantime, discerning book-buyers will add this little World’s Classic volume to their collection of historical literature.

* * *

Judging from my correspondence, there are a good many Anatole France lovers among the readers of this page. In case any of them feel like giving themselves—or any friend—a nice little present, I would call their attention to the very handsome set of eighteen volumes, including all the principal novels and tales, which the Library Press, Ltd. (83 Southwark Street, London, S.E.1) is offering on the instalment plan. The price of the set, bound in limp leather, is £6 15s. cash; or 12/6 down, and 10s. a month for thirteen months. A card to the above address (mentioning THE PLEBS) will bring you a booklet giving full particulars and specimen pages.

* * *

The “Ormond Poets,” edited by G. D. H. and M. I. Cole, and published by Noel Douglas (each 64 pp., paper 1/-, cloth 2/-) are really charming little volumes of selected poems from the work of famous poets. Also, so far as I am any judge, the selections have been remarkably well done. The first six volumes are Shakespeare, Blake, Cowley, Shelley, Drayton, and Herrick. Is it too much to ask that some later volumes should include poets of especial interest to workers—like Burns, John Clarke, and Morris? J.F.H.

CORRECTION.

In our November issue on Page 368, line 23, “Colonel Baker” should have read “Bailey”; and on Page 359, line 15 of the article, 15 cwt. per acre should have read 15 cwt. per *dessiatine* (=2.7 acres).

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Dundee and District Calendar Workers	National Union of Textile Workers
Electrical Trades' Union	Nelson Weavers' Union
Managers' and Overlookers' Society	Padiham Weavers' Association
Military Musical Instrument Makers' Union	Scottish Union of Bakers and Confectioners
National Union of Distributive Workers	Scottish Painters' Society
	Tailors' and Garment Workers' Trade Union

Applications for free Courses must be accompanied by Union Card.

Send 6d. in stamps to J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary, N.C.L.C., 62 Hanover Street, Edinburgh, for two booklets—"Education for Emancipation" and "The Trained Mind—Trained for What?"