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JUNE-JULY, 1928

**SANDINO:**

*By*  
**A. A. PURCELL**  
M.P.

**THE "BANDIT"  
OF NICARAGUA**

GIFT  
JUL 6 1928

**SHAW'S  
GUIDE TO  
CAPITALISM**

*By*  
**ELLEN WILKINSON**  
M.P.

*By*  
**W. T. COLYER**

**UNCLE SAM  
AND HIS PILE**

N.C.L.C., SWINTON HOUSE, 324 GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C.1

# Scarborough Summer School

**COBER HILL GUEST HOUSE,**

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IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND, BUT—IT'S  
OFTEN TOO LATE TO BOOK.

# THE PLEBS

*Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges*

Vol. XX.

JUNE-JULY, 1928

No. 6

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## PROPAGANDA—OR EDUCATION?

**I**T is impossible to pass over the proceedings of the Conference of the General and Municipal Workers without comment. According to the Press, including the *Daily Herald*, it appears to have been stated on behalf of the Executive that the W.E.A. is an educational body, while the N.C.L.C. is a propagandist body. Everyone knows that the W.E.A. is the darling of the Tory Board of Education simply because, with an odd exception here and there, it provides education from the University point of view, *i.e.*, from the governing-class standpoint. We need hardly remind our readers that if the indus-

trial constituencies followed the example of the University constituencies, no Labour man would ever have appeared in the House of Commons except as a visitor, because neither Trade Unionism nor the Labour Party has any standing in the eyes of the vast body of "educated" people.

From the statement made at the Conference it appears that history, for example, as seen by a professor, bound with a thousands golden threads to capitalism, is education. History, seen on the other hand, from the point of view of a worker-historian, is propaganda. Well may the capitalist Press rejoice in its headlines over

such an opinion coming from such a Conference.

It appears to have been stated or implied that the N.C.L.C. is closely associated with the Communist Party and the Minority Movement. At this time of day one would think it unnecessary to state that a Trade Union Educational body that does not take its orders and its subsidies from the Board of Education is not necessarily an agent of Moscow.

The N.C.L.C. is not more closely associated with the Communist Party and the Minority Movement than is the General and Municipal Workers' Union itself. As the principal trade union organisation the N.C.L.C. is financed and controlled by some thirty-five unions with a membership of well over two million, and Communists attend our classes just as they also join Trade Unions. Among the Unions which make substantial contributions towards the N.C.L.C. and are directly represented upon the Executive are the A.E.U., the N.U.D.A.W., the Shop Assistants, the National Union of Textile Workers, the Amalgamated Society of Dyers, and others. These Unions finance and control the N.C.L.C. in order to provide independent working-class education, and not propaganda for the Communist Party or any other party.

The Northern District Executive of the Union proposed that instead of £400 being handed to the State-subsidised W.E.A.\* and £100 to the Trade-Union subsidised N.C.L.C., as was proposed by the Executive, the amount should be equally divided. This was turned down, it being stated, apparently on behalf of the platform, that to

\*Its Trade Union money is a drop in the bucket compared with the State subsidies.

carry such a resolution would mean a victory for the Minority Movement!

The Communist bogey was used at the last General Election to do the maximum amount of damage to the Labour Party. It is regrettable that the same bogey should be used to damage an educational organisation that has been built up by Trade Unionists to educate Trade Unionists.

As evidence that the N.C.L.C. still has the confidence of the British Trade Union Movement we have much pleasure in mentioning that in the same week in which the General and Municipal Workers were discussing education, the National Union of Corporation Workers decided to affiliate to the N.C.L.C. (fee 3d. per member per annum) and thus, like the other N.C.L.C. Unions, provide their members with free access to N.C.L.C. classes, free correspondence courses, and free access to day and week-end schools.

Since the above was written we have been informed by the Union that the report submitted to the Union's Conference was "less hostile" to the N.C.L.C. than that taken up previously. We are very glad to learn this, but in view of the widespread publicity that was given to the statements discussed above, we hope the Union will feel that we are justified in vigorously defending ourselves.

Then and Now.

In the course of his presidential address at the annual conference of the No. 2 Division, N.C.L.C., held at Southampton last month, Ald. J. F. Lane, J.P., the mayor of Battersea, said some wise things. Comparing the difficulties in regard to education which beset the workers of a generation or two ago with those faced by their descendants to-day, he remarked—





*Then, the outstanding difficulty was the lack of educational facilities. To-day, one might well say that the workers' main difficulty is the multiplicity of educational facilities, and the nature of those facilities.*

Education, in fact, is cheap nowadays. But like a good many other things, it is often cheap and nasty. Not nasty to the taste, may be; but nasty in its after-effects. To put it plainly, it's doped. And since they cannot entirely avoid the dope, the workers must see to it that they have an antidote. The educational work of the N.C.L.C., as Ald. Lane observed, is invaluable "as a corrective" to the various biased brands of education with which capitalism tries to fob off the working-class.

### The Cloud of Liars.

And how puny, when one comes to think of it, are our biggest efforts so far, compared to the mighty machinery for the dissemination of false ideas controlled and used by capitalism. Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, M.P., has just published a book (which should have a place in every working-class library) entitled *Falsehood in War-Time* (Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d.). It is a careful study of some of the various legends—atrocity stories and so on—circulated during 1914-18; deliberately and carefully circulated, many of them, by Government order. And they were all lies. Just plain lies.

The N.C.L.C. exists because the falsehoods of peace-time are even more numerous, and certainly more insidious, than those propagated in wartime. Press, schools, and—often—pulpit are busy spreading lies designed to glorify Things as They Are. And against this vast array of skilled liars, a mere handful of tutors and

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students, intent on getting at the real truth about society. . . We need to put our backs into our work!

### The Magazine.

A friendly critic writes complaining that The PLEBS is "all book-reviews." We had been half-expecting that particular comment. But what of it? As the organ of an educational organisation we are very definitely concerned with books. Our readers, if they are students (as they ought to be), want to know about books. And writers for The PLEBS, so far as is possible, aim not merely at stating boldly whether a book is good or bad; but at giving PLEBS readers some idea of its subject-matter, so that even though the book itself may be inaccessible, some knowledge of its contents may be available to every student. Many of the articles in this current issue are book reviews; but will anybody argue that they are not at the same time articles on subjects of interest and importance to workers?





# UNCLE SAM AND HIS PILE

By W. T. COLYER

**J**ESUS of Nazareth is reported to have remarked that "no man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other." On this occasion, as on so many others, the Galilean extremist was misled by his belief that all human beings really want to know where they stand. He overlooked entirely the type which prefers to take no stand at all, but rather to oscillate.

Professor Harold Underwood Faulkner\* emphatically belongs with the oscillating type. In his *Economic History of the United States* he has produced a book that is in parts very good. As a whole, however, the volume suffers severely from the oscillation that must be constantly going on inside a man who tries to combine the roles of workers' historian and associate professor at Smith College, one of the institutions where young women of the upper-middle class are taught how to become 100 per cent. American.

We get, for example, in the first three chapters a very useful summary of the economic conditions which preceded and led up to, the severance of the British connection. Then in Chapter IV., "National Beginnings," the Smith professor gets well on top of the workers' historian. The hardship and chaos that ensued for the small farmers and mechanics after the Revolutionary War, are admitted, but slurred over; the brutality and corruption of the Constitution-framers are just hinted at; and then we are told how under Alexander Hamilton, the cleverest and most ruthless of all the oppressors of the common people, "the foundations of a sound policy were laid." (p. 58.) The financial problem "became a question not of doing justice to those who had made sacrifices for freedom, but simply one of establishing the credit of the Government." (p. 59.)

\* *Economic History of the United States.* Harold Underwood Faulkner. (Workers' Educational Bureau Press, New York City.)

THEY THINK THE SAME ACROSS THERE!



Ex-Soldier:—"I'll say so!"  
[Baltimore (U.S.A.) Sun]

The ex-serviceman, Dan Shays, who in the winter of 1786-7 led an armed rebellion based on the principle that "the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscations of Britain by the joint exertions of all, and therefore ought to be the common property of all," is dismissed in a single unsympathetic sentence. An American Postgate is needed to do justice to Shays' memory.

Much more satisfactory is Professor Faulkner's treatment of the Civil War. He is excellent in his description of the development of the antagonism between the Southern plantation owners and the Northern manufacturers, backed by the Northern agriculturists who wanted the "homestead" system rather than plantations in the new territories that were being

opened up in the West. The political consequences of the invention of Whitney's cotton gin are clearly shown. By solving the problem of profitable production of short-fibred cotton (as distinct from the earlier variety which presented greater difficulties to the cultivator) this machine gave a new lease of life to slavery, brought on a war with Mexico for the annexation of new territory suitable for cotton-growing, and developed a subsidiary slave-breeding industry in Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky. Slave-labour had become largely uneconomic in the last-mentioned States, and production of slaves for sale superseded production for use.

After the Civil War came the development of the great railways and industrial trusts. In dealing with these, the workers' historian is allowed to fulminate in general terms here and there, but the Smith professor keeps him well under control. An illustration will indicate what is meant. Prof. Faulkner mentions the Northern Pacific Railway (pp. 175 and 177) only to tell us that the panic of 1873 was "precipitated by the undue optimism of Jay Cooke and Company in pushing the Northern Pacific," and that "the Northern Pacific, chartered by Congress in 1864, and likewise subsidised with land grants, had laid five hundred miles of track when Jay Cooke and Company failed."

If we turn to Prof. Charles Beard's *Contemporary American History*, we learn that the Northern Pacific land grants were estimated by a railway official to be worth enough "to build the entire railroad to Puget Sound, to fit out a fleet of sailing vessels and steamers for the China and India trade and leave a surplus that would roll up into the millions." Standard Oil, the lumber barons, the Steel Trust and the Chicago packers are honoured either with the briefest of general reference or with respectful silence.

Lack of space does not explain such very serious omissions. Room is found for plenty of patches of Smith College rhetoric

like the following, under the subheading "American Idealism":

"The public school system, beginning with the city playground and the kindergarten and culminating in the State university is one of the crowning achievements of our civilisation. Supplemented by private contributions to education and to the advancement of science, the possibility of intellectual improvement has been opened to all." (p. 286.)

Inevitably, the account of the American Labour Movement is sketchy and incidental. The Professor's general attitude manifests itself in his remark that "fortunately the A.F. of L. has been guided from the start by hard-headed and practical men, whose experience in the rough school of labour politics has led them to make haste slowly." (p. 194.) What is meant by a "practical man" is made clear by a quotation from Adolph Strasser, of the Cigar Makers' Union. This gentleman said to a Senate Committee in 1883:—"We are all practical men. We have no ultimate ends. We are going on from day to day."

On the subject of American Imperialism our historian is full of "idealism and faith," which he extols in his countrymen. "The invasion of Europe by American capital. . . . at all odds is quite unlikely to be followed by political dominations" (p. 255.) "American far eastern policy. . . . has had the good effect of helping to save China from the clutches of the foreigner." (p. 254.) A note of mild remonstrance is traceable in the references to "our interference" in Cuba in 1898, and to the extension of American "political sway in the Caribbean." However, "the nation still possesses boundless wealth and the possibility of the brightest future" (p. 289) which will doubtless comfort the hundreds of thousands of "hard-headed and practical" A. F. of L. members at present "going on from day to day" without anything much to eat.

If the text had been as good as the numerous illustrative maps which accompany it, this book would have been very much more worth while.

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## BE A BRIGHTER PLEB

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# THE MAGNIFICENT OBVIOUS

## *Shaw's Tourist Guide to Capitalism*

By ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

**A**T a Labour Conference during the war a famous Labour leader confessed that he had been a fool for the last twenty years. Mr. Philip Snowden replied sweetly that the right honourable need not have taken so much trouble to state the obvious.

But it is the obvious that needs stating—that so seldom gets stated. First principles are unfashionable. So here comes Bernard Shaw to state the obvious about Socialism and Capitalism. His book\* is like a huge Kauffer poster, just as simple and as magnificently effective.

### Equal Incomes for All.

Now I suppose we (that is, politicians and Labour leaders and N.C.L.C. secretaries and so on) will hurriedly try to explain him away. "Socialism," says Shaw, "means equality of income." Chorus of "No, really, no," from the hot and bothered ones. But what else can Socialism mean? To deny that is to prove oneself either a snob or a fool. A snob, if you cannot bear to think of a world where there isn't someone with more money than yourself for you to cringe to, and with less money whom you can patronise; or a fool if you haven't grasped the first essential of the gospel you are supposed to be preaching.

Shaw takes all the stock arguments against Socialism. He just *looks* at them and somehow where was a stumbling-block is a laugh. About that pet excuse of the people who go to Court—that the "rich give employment"—Shaw remarks:

"There is no merit in giving employment. A motorist who runs over a child gives employment to an ambulance porter, a doctor, an undertaker, a clergyman, a mourning dressmaker, a hearse driver, a grave-digger, in short to so many worthy people that when he ends by killing him-

\* *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism.* (Constable & Sons, 15/-.)

self it seems ungrateful not to erect a statue to him as a public benefactor."

### Useful Women and Useless Men.

The cult of man as the breadwinner, while women's work of bearing and rearing children is not regarded as work at all, is calmly exposed as "nonsense."

From first to last women's work in the home is vitally necessary whilst millions of men are engaged in wasteful and positively mischievous work, the only excuse for which is that it enabled them to support their useful and necessary wives.

The chapter on Education, characteristically called "Religious Dissensions," is a joy.

"It is not good sense" [says Shaw,] "to lead a child at ten o'clock to attach religious importance to the belief that the earth is flat and immovable, and the sky a ceiling above it, in which there is a heaven furnished like a King's Palace, and at eleven, that the earth is a sphere spinning on its axis and rushing round the sun in limitless space with a multitude of other spheres."

I would like to quote yards from "Current Confusions," but I leave it as a goldmine to the people who can laugh at themselves.

All the same, even Shaw has his Achilles heel. There are moments when he descends from the mountain and becomes an Elderly Gentleman with money put by, and a disinclination to have people messing about with it. He laughs at the gods of the Philistines, but bows in reverence before that curious idol of the well-to-do middle-aged, "The Gold Standard."

Cute publicity-merchant that he is, Shaw has addressed his book to the Intelligent Woman. He gets his audience both ways. The woman who hasn't read it thereby admits her lack of intelligence, but the subtle appeal is to the male. What man, even in 1928, can resist that little trick in the autograph albums of the "nineties"—

the turned-down page on which is written "for women only," even though he knows he will find written under it "Aren't men curious?" The average man, though he may hate Socialists and all their works, will want to see what this fellow Shaw is putting the women up to.

### Seeing Things Afresh.

I once went through the National Gallery with an artist. He would not let me look for "hidden meanings" or "higher values" or anything like that. He just made me see the obvious—the colour in the shadows of a Velasquez, the placing of the lances in a Uccello perspective. As I stood silent afterwards on the terrace overlooking Trafalgar Square he said, "What are you looking at?" "I'm seeing London," I replied, "seeing a whole lot of things about it for the first time."

When you have been under Shaw's guidance for five hundred pages you look at civilisation with new eyes. You see quite a lot of things that you'd just "accepted" before.

## A FABLE

[Lord Eustace Percy, the Minister of Education, recently told certain Tory critics that W.E.A. classes were carefully inspected, and thoroughly deserved financial grants from the Government.]

**T**HERE was once a man who wished to capture elephants, in order to make them work for him contentedly.

So he took some tame elephants, and got them first to lead the wild ones into the pound; and afterwards, when the wild ones began to grumble, to distract their attention by using all kinds of bewildering arguments.

But some of the man's friends were simple folk, and were puzzled when they saw the tame elephants mixing with the others in apparent friendliness.

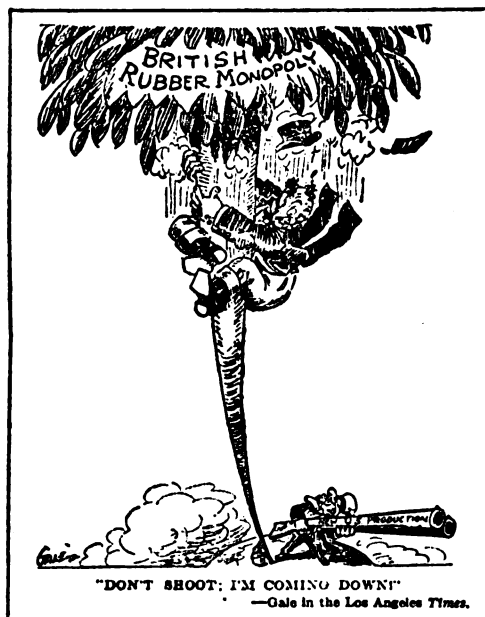
"Do not fear," said the clever man. "I inspect them carefully and continually, and feed them with my own hay."

Then his friends saw that it was better to keep tame elephants than to treat the wild ones better, and so left well alone.

# THE EMPIRE AND RUBBER

By D. PARSONS

**T**HE Imperial Government on April 4th suddenly announced its abandonment of the Rubber Restriction Scheme. On the advice of a special committee presided over by Hambling, of Barclay's Bank (a well-known anti-restrictionist), over the heads of its Advisory Committee and against the



THE END OF BRITISH RUBBER CONTROL  
An American view.

wish of the trade organisations, the Government thus abolishes, from next November, the State interference imposed in November, 1922.

The interference had a significance beyond the immediate question of the plight into which the rubber industry had fallen owing to over-production; a condition that threatened imperial peace and profits in the Far East. For the plantation industry in Malaya, Ceylon and (to the extent of a third) in Dutch East Indies\* was dominated by British capital; some 92 million sterling is

\* Plantation production in these areas accounts for all but a fraction of world production.



concerned. On the other hand the largest consumer of rubber is the United States; the automobile industry providing the predominant demand.

The Restriction Scheme, therefore, which imposed a minimum price of 1/3 (raised later to 1/9) per lb., and provided that as the price in any quarter rose or fell so the export of each company should be expanded or cut down according to an agreed scale, was not only a source of profit to British Imperialism but actually revenue paid by the United States. The debt payments under the Baldwin agreement were to be borne by the 1/- a day, fever-stricken natives, Chinamen or Indians (officially "migrated") in the plantations of Malaya.†

† See *British Imperialism in Malaya* (L.R.D.), chapters 3 and 4, for history of restriction and condition of workers.

The scheme started well enough. The average price which had been in the neighbourhood of 9d. before adoption quickly rose above the 1/- level and actually in the last quarter of 1925 touched 3/11. Since then it has sagged again. From May, 1926, to October, 1927, it fell from 1/9 to 1/5; in the following quarter it rose to 1/7, but in the quarter ending April it was only 1/0½. It closed the quarter (after the announcement of ending restriction) at a little over 8d.

Meanwhile the profits of rubber companies have been soaring. The *Economist* profit figures show a return of a fifth or a third each year on the capital invested.

The consequences of restriction (it is perhaps worth remarking that a stable price level was not one of them) were those that opportunity and jealousy gave to the rivals of British imperialism. Non-British producers scored (British-owned companies in Dutch areas conformed to restriction) and American capital set out on the war-path.

The Dutch Government refused to come in from the start, and the especial significance of this was not so much the rivalry of Amsterdam plantations as that of the native-owned small plots. According to Eric Macfadyen (*Nation*, May 10th):—

"To-day only about one-third of the plantations are owned by interests domi-

ciled in Europe. The several hundred thousands of Asiatic peasants of every race and creed . . ."

These peasants constituted a *potential* and to some extent actual rivalry that was one of the factors undermining British monopoly (expressed as it was in an artificially high price).

The second factor, or group of factors, was the action of American manufacturers in forming a huge buying pool (with resources of eight million, recently raised to twenty million sterling, and which was "in close touch with British producing interests"), in trying to start new plantations in Liberia, the Philippines and Brazil and especially in developing the reclamation industry to one of the major industries in the States. Re-manufactured rubber is not a rival all along the line but is clearly a pretty sharp competitor.

The action of the Imperial Government in stopping restriction thus takes significance partly as a retreat; it acknowledges, in Amery's words, that "the whole situation in the rubber market" under the scheme "was entirely artificial" and "beginning to topple"; and it means recognition of loss of valuable revenue. But it is also partly a counter-attack. The suddenly reduced price was a smack in the face for American pools with stocks of rubber, or for U.S. investors in British companies, and while it will not put the manufacturers of reclaimed out of business it will cut their profits.

The effect on the native producers will, however, be even greater. The British-owned rubber companies will proceed to tighten up their amalgamations (the process has already begun), but the peasant holders will in many cases be forced out of business. It is hoped that native production will fall by a third. If so, the counter-attack will, in turn, have repercussions throughout the Singapore hinterland and islands. The Government had earlier altered the restriction scheme to keep the small producers out of sympathy with the wage labourer. Now these will find a common enemy again.

---

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## 5—WHAT THE MIND DOES

By J. P. M. MILLAR

**W**E all think (even if sometimes in a squint-eyed way), but how we think is an important question to the worker-student. Practically all *Plebs* readers have read *Marxism and History\** and know that it is impossible to fully understand man's ideas without a knowledge of the material conditions in which they were born. Even the

feel ourselves thinking. We are quite aware that we think as we are that we walk or eat or pay our union dues.

Through the efforts of science we know that the brain does our thinking. We are, therefore, in a better position than our ancestors, who had all sorts of queer notions as to where the thinking process was carried on. Some thought it was done in the blood; others that it was carried out in a little gland in the head—the pineal gland.

This knowledge, however does not help us much. Cutting up the brain, taking its temperature with a thermometer, peering into it with a microscope or weighing its parts with a balance won't enable us to understand thinking (as distinct from the brain) any more than pulling a motor car

## THE SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR

*"Professor Baroot, prof. of industrial sociology in the University . . . say, that guy never went at teaching with any of those old-fashioned stand-off methods. He told me himself . . . he didn't give more than half of his time to teaching, and that because of his subject—it was his job to show the students that the great American industrial corporations can care for their men and prevent accidents and keep clear of anarchists and labour troubles better than any small firm—as I say, because of what he taught he was as thick as thieves with a lot of managers of big industries, and it was his job to keep in with those guys and get them to contribute to the University . . . Yes, sir, he just showed what an up-to-date and forward-looking professor can be."*

From Sinclair Lewis's new novel, *The Man Who Knew Coolidge*.

idea of a mermaid is not a pure product of the mind but has arisen by linking together mentally the body of a woman with the tail of a fish.

The question arises, however, of just how the material conditions are transformed into thoughts, or, if you like, reflect themselves in the mind. That they are so transformed is obvious, but *how* is quite a different matter.

What part does the mind play? Is it a mere mirror reflecting what goes on round about it?

Thinking is a fact that is perceived or experienced by one or more of the senses. We don't *hear* ourselves thinking, but we

\* Recently published by the N.C.L.C. at 1/2 post free.

to pieces would enable a savage to understand motoring. He could understand motoring only if he were able to see the motor in action. The same is true of golfing. A savage couldn't understand golf no matter how long and how carefully he examined a golf club. He could detach the head from the shaft, peel off the leather grip and examine the parts with the utmost care and yet have no idea whatever of golf.

### The Raw Material.

Just as a man can't make bricks without clay or bread without flour, neither can he think without something to think about. Thinking can't, any more than baking, be carried on without raw material.

How does the mind or the thinking pro-

cess gather its raw material, how does it get in touch with its objects? It gathers its raw material by means of what Bunyan in the *Pilgrim's Progress* called the "five gateways of the soul." These five gateways are, of course, the senses—the senses of sight, smell, hearing, touch (feeling) and taste.

By means of sight I see the colour of my watch. By means of hearing I observe the sound it makes. And so, altogether, I get an idea, a mental picture, or, putting it in another way, a thought about my watch.

My idea of my watch is obviously the same as my mental picture of my watch. But my picture of my watch and the watch itself are quite different although closely connected. For instance, the mental picture of my watch is inside my head, but

the watch itself still remains outside of it—fortunately for me. Again, because my picture of my watch, although derived from the watch, is different from the watch, makes it possible for me to hand over the watch to a pawnbroker without parting with my mental picture of it. Note, also, that though I leave my watch at home I carry my mental picture of my watch with me, and, though it will not keep the time, that picture enables me to distinguish between my own watch and my neighbour's and so prevents me from inviting imprisonment by taking his.

This illustration brings us to the very important distinction between *Thinking* and *Being*, an aspect of the problem of thought we shall look at next month.

## IS THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT TOO LATE?

By A BIOLOGIST.

### IV.—CONCLUSION.

**I** COME now to the question which forms the title of these articles, and, on the whole, I am inclined to leave its solution to those who have made a more profound study of latter-day tendencies than I have done. But I incline to think that it is now too late in our scientific-industrial, civilisation-phase for any successful effort at reconstruction. Certain tendencies have acquired such momentum that merely to arrest them means something very like social collapse.

The position of the coal industry suggests that, in a small way. To an economist who considers "production" from the scientific aspect, the practice of exporting coal on the big scale, such as it existed before the war was a ruinous business. For civilisation on our present scale is impossible without an abundant source of energy, such as coal. Coal easily got was *our* energy-source, yet we were content to export it in the crude state. What we ought to have been doing was to use this unique raw

material for the manufacture of all sorts of chemical substances. We ought to have realised that it was irreplaceable; that it was capable of being seriously depleted in a relatively short time and that what we called "production" was really exploitation. Now an economic policy with regard to the utilisation of coal meant unemployment on a big scale—such as we see to have occurred for other reasons. This is what I mean by saying that certain tendencies have become so powerful that to arrest them involves serious industrial dislocations.

### Science and World Politics.

And there is now no stopping of scientific investigation! So long as scientists were regarded as old gentlemen who went about with spectacles and butterfly nets, research was of little account in world-politics—it was a harmless way of amusing oneself. Nowadays the picture is a different one, for the scientists are being "trained" in hundreds where there used only to be one or two; and they are going



into Government departments and big industrial concerns and quite a large fraction of all the investigation that is being made is made in secret and for belligerent or industrial ends. Moreover, there is such engrossing interest in investigation of any kind, that the scientist who is worth anything doesn't think at all about the outcome of his discoveries—it's the making of them, even in quite a small way, that matters. But every morning some one (a great many, really) get out of bed and wonder what new thing they can exploit and turn into profit. And again, it's the business of many really acute men who make munitions of war to think out what new destructive applications can be made of scientific results.

Thus the momentum of investigation is carrying us—where?

**What will Labour do?**

The "dark horse" is Labour interest in scientific and industrial research. What

are we going to do with it? That industrial and social reconstruction is not to be effected without very serious disorganisation may be taken, I think, as certain. Former civilisations simply crashed because anticipatory politics did not exist—it exists now and the mere fact that we can contemplate and discuss social collapse on a big scale shows that we are thinking about how to muddle through.

It is curious that craftsmanship survived the collapse of at least the Greco-Roman civilisation, and that encourages one to think that much of our scientific methods and their results will also carry over into the new civilisation that will rise out of the partial ruins of this one. How much will carry over obviously depends on the interest which Labour politicians are likely to exhibit, in the future, towards the university and factory research which has, in recent years, grown so enormously.

## SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

SCARBOROUGH, JULY 7th to 14th

<i>Title of Lecture.</i>	<i>Lecturer.</i>
"Some Problems of a Labour Government" ...	JAMES MAXTON, M.P.
"The Financial Problems of a Labour Government" ... ..	A. WOODBURN (National Secretary Scottish Labour College).
"A Labour Government and British Empire Problems" ... ..	J. F. HORRABIN (Editor of PLEBS and Prospective Labour Candidate for Peterborough).
"A Labour Government and the Co-operative Movement" ... ..	MRS. ELEANOR BARTON, J.P. (General Secretary, Women's Co-operative Guilds).
"A Labour Government and Foreign Problems"	H. N. BRAILSFORD.
"A Labour Government and India" ... ..	A. A. PURCELL, M.P. (British Trades Union Congress).

BRUSSELS, AUGUST 4th to 10th.

"The Concentration of Capital and the Trade Union Movement" ... ..	EDO FIMMEN (Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation).
"International Trade Union Movement and the Problem of the Subject Races" ... ..	EDO FIMMEN (Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation).
"A Survey of the History of Belgium" ... ..	STAFF OF THE BELGIAN LABOUR COLLEGE.
"The Belgian Trade Union and Labour Movements" ... ..	STAFF OF THE BELGIAN LABOUR COLLEGE.
"The Belgian Co-operative and Workers' Educational Movements" ... ..	STAFF OF THE BELGIAN LABOUR COLLEGE.

# SANDINO

## The "Bandit" of Nicaragua

By A. A. PURCELL, M.P.

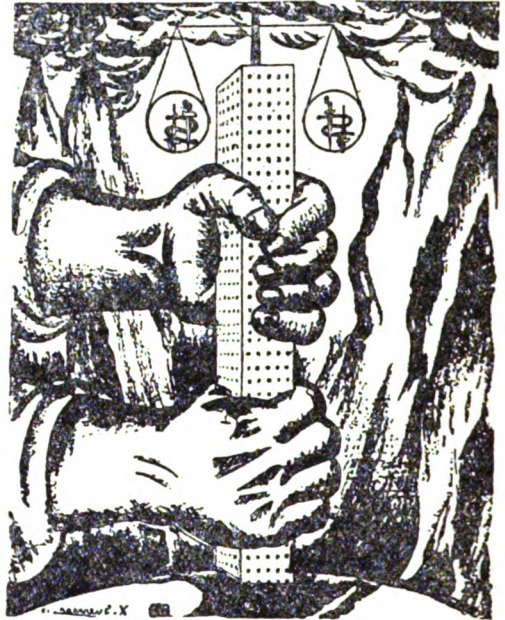
**T**HE United States making war on Nicaragua? "Well, what of it?" some folks will ask. "Where is Nicaragua, anyway? And how does it matter to us what happens in potty little countries like that?" . . . They have forgotten, these happy-go-lucky people, that fourteen years ago this summer something happened in the "potty little country" of Bosnia, the repercussions of which mattered a whole lot to them, and to all the world, between 1914 and 1918. It's never safe nowadays, in international affairs, to shrug one's shoulders and mutter "No concern of ours."

Nicaragua, as most PLEBS readers will know, is a little republic in Central America — situated midway between Mexico, at the north-western end of the Isthmus, and Panama, at the eastern end. On one side its shores are washed by the Caribbean Sea; on the other by the Pacific.

United States intervention in the affairs of the little State began as far back as 1909. The nominal reason was the usual one—a matter of concessions, safeguarding of U.S. "interests," and so on. But there was a deeper reason for American concern in this particular instance. The only alternative route to Panama for a canal across the Isthmus lay across Nicaragua,\* and control of this was of course essential to American plans for dominance in the whole Caribbean area, the link between Atlantic and Pacific. The U.S. Government sent marines to Nicaragua—to "keep order"; and they also sent a Mr. Thos. Dawson (who had been a prominent figure in the Panama "revolution," through which the U.S. gained control of the canal zone) to negotiate with Nicaraguan politicians.

This was in 1910. Four years later the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty gave the United States (for the price of 3,000,000 dollars) the

\* See Geographical Footnote, PLEBS, February, 1927.



A MEXICAN POINT OF VIEW.

The combined efforts of the Latin-American nations can tear down the monument of Commercial Imperialism erected by the United States.

(*El Libertador*, Mexico).

exclusive right to construct a trans-isthmus canal and to establish a naval base on the Gulf of Fouseca. That sale, the Nicaraguan nationalists declare, was put through by "a fake congress behind closed doors guarded by Conservative Party troops backed up by Yankee bayonets."

There is no space here to tell in detail the tale of events since 1914. From then until now, except for one brief interval, American marines have remained in Nicaragua, and "supervised" all elections. Faked parliaments have carried measures desired by Wall Street, and bought-and-paid-for Presidents have done their little bit to make Nicaragua safe for the American investor. All the time there was a growing resentment among the common people at this exploitation of Nicaraguan resources



in the interests of foreign capitalists in league with their own rulers.

In 1926 a "Liberal" revolt against the Conservatives (i.e., pro-U.S.) Government gained several victories. It was headed by men who aimed simply at a share in the spoils of office—wanted, that is, to get on to the U.S. pay-roll. The Calles Government in Mexico helped this movement by sending arms. At once the great "Red Peril" scare was raised in every American newspaper—"Soviet Plot in Mexico"—"Reds Plan to Get Control of Central America"—etc., etc. President Coolidge sent more troops and warships to Nicaragua. It was not "war," nor "intervention"—oh, no! The U.S. forces merely "protected American property," and established "neutral zones" between the contending Nicaraguan armies. But somehow or other, as a result of this, the Liberal (rebel) troops were surrounded and cut off from their supplies, until it was impossible for them to carry on the campaign.

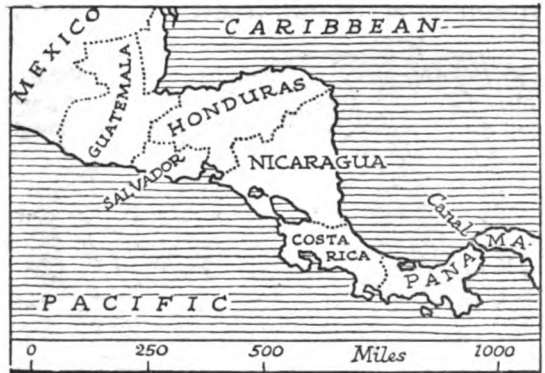
Then a special envoy from the United States met the Liberal leaders in conference, and offered them terms to sell out—with the threat that if they refused the full force of the U.S. marines would be used to disarm them. It was quite literally a case of "selling out"; for the price offered by Coolidge and Wall Street was 10 dollars in gold for every rifle surrendered.

The Liberals gave in. All but one man—a young "General" of 35, ex-farmer, ex-mechanic, ex-mine-worker, named Sandino.

He, with a few hundred men, took to the hills and raised the banner of Nicaraguan independence—a red and black banner, the colours of the Nicaraguan Federation of Labour. For a year now the American marines, aided by bombing and fighting 'planes, have been doing their utmost to kill or capture him; and the capitalist Press of the United States has been trying to "kill him with its mouth" by screaming "Bandit!" and telling blood-and-thunder yarns about the "atrocities" he and his men are committing.

Sandino is no bandit. He is a man of the people, steeled to hatred at seeing his

country violated by foreign money-lords and corrupt native politicians. The story goes that Moncada, the Liberal leader, tried to bring him over to his side by offering him as a gift a girl of great beauty. Sandino leapt to his feet. "This girl," he shouted, "is Nicaragua. She shall not be yours or any man's to violate or give away." He took the girl to a convent of Sisters of Mercy. And "Nicaragua shall not be yours or any man's to violate or give away" became the slogan of a new nationalist revolt.



His followers are mostly poor men—workers. And the peasants of the countryside keep him and his men in food—and information. Knowing the country well, and with the mountains at his back, he can hold out against a vastly superior enemy. He is a young man—born in 1893. His farm was ruined as a direct result of American intervention in 1912. (He was not one of the big landlords who did well out of the intervention.) He worked in the mines in northern Nicaragua. In 1924 he went to Mexico, working in the Tampico oil-fields. I met him in Mexico City in 1925. He is short of stature, with a clean-cut, keen face. When, in 1927, the Liberal chiefs sold out to the Americans, Sandino, then a general in the Liberal army, called his men together:—

To some he said: "You are heads of families. You must not be sacrificed. I bid you farewell." To the others he said: "If there is any one of you who for any reason cannot follow me, he is free to give up his rifle and go home. You need give no explanations. I know that no one of you is a coward."\*

\* Article by S. de la Selva, *New York Nation*, January 18th, 1928.

His demands are few—but fundamental. He summarised them thus to Carleton Beals, correspondent of the *New York Nation*, who got through the lines and interviewed him:—First, immediate withdrawal of the American marines; second, the appointment of a provisional president who has never yet held that office nor been a candidate for it, and who must be a civilian; third, supervision of elections by Latin (i.e., South) Americans. He will accept, he says, no public post or salary for himself, preferring to return and earn his livelihood at his own trade.



THE DOLLAR DICTATOR.

UNCLE SAM (at the Pan-American Congress at Havana): "What you Latin-American nations must clearly understand is that by America is meant the United States."

(*L'Œuvre*, Paris).

To a letter from the Admiral in command of the U.S. forces demanding his surrender, Sandino sent a curt reply addressed "To the Representative of Imperialism in Nicaragua."

So, while Mr. Secretary-of-State Kellogg publishes his proposals to "outlaw" war, the Government of which he is a member sends more marines and more warships to Nicaragua. And with the echoes of the Teapot Dome scandal still reverberating round the world, American politicians declare that the U.S. must intervene in Nicaragua to teach the Nicaraguans "honest politics."

Meantime, one man and his handful of followers refuse to bow the knee to Dollar Dictatorship. The name of Sandino, the Liberator, will come to be honoured more and more by the common people of every land.

## THE BOOKSHELF

By J. F. HORRABIN

HERE is yet another decidedly worth-while book to put on your Free Library list, and to make a whole bookful of notes from when you get the loan of it:—

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By Count Corti. (Gollancz, 25s. net.)

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the extent of the Rothschilds' power—political power—and prestige in the Europe of a century and more ago. And I fancy that some of the reviewers who have pretended to a familiarity with these matters were not really much better informed than myself. For this is not the kind of story told in the orthodox history-books. Its author, besides reading enormously, has had, as he tells us, to do a fair amount of "private detective work" in the capitals of Europe before he felt himself competent to set out the facts in proper perspective. And one can scarcely see the House of Rothschild itself giving him any assistance.

This volume traces the history of the House from its beginnings, in the last quarter of the 18th century, down to 1830. The founder of the firm was one Meyer Amschel Rothschild (born—in the Frankfurt ghetto—in 1743; died 1812). He, beginning as a small moneylender and dealer in coins, made himself a banker and financier. And his methods, and the circumstances in which they proved so successful, were typical of those by and in which his five sons carried the House to the position of a European power.

#### —to the Seats of Power.

Through a general, who was also a coin-collector, Meyer Amschel won access to the court of a German monarch, the Elector of Hesse; and he waited long and with all the patience of his race for the opportunity to "assist" the Elector in more serious matters than bargains in rare coins. (Letting that gentleman have the best of these small bargains was all part of the Rothschild game.) Opportunities came. The Elector did a thriving trade with Britain, by selling, or rather hiring out, his peasants as cannon-fodder to the English Government—these were the "Hessian" mercenaries one hears about in the American War of Independence. Meyer Amschel at length secured for his firm the discounting (with commission) of the English bills received as payment for the services of these poor wretches—or as "compensation" for their loss.

Also, there was a pretty considerable amount of "private" business connected with the Elector's household which came to

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**CONSTABLE**

be handled by Rothschild père. The Elector was a gentleman of robust appetites. The lowest estimate of his illegitimate children puts the figure at seventy-odd, and official documents take cognisance of no less than 41 of his natural sons. Such a family took a good deal of providing for. The Salt Tax had to be "adjusted" in order to permit of proper allowances being paid to the young people—and their mammas. Meyer Amschel "got inside" on such work, being eventually appointed Crown Agent. He realised—and his sons after him—that private loans to Royal and other important personages were a means of putting said personages under an obligation to the moneylender — so paving the way for "public" jobs later. Moreover, the line between the personal expenditure of monarchs and "national" expenditure is sometimes a rather fine one. As their historian writes of the Rothschild connections with the Imperial House of Austria years later—"Transactions constantly arose in which the financial interests of the Imperial House had to be made to harmonise with those of the State in such a way as to avoid

public criticism. . . The Rothschilds were particularly skilful in handling such cases. . . ." ("Made to harmonise" is rather nice, isn't it?)

### War Profits.

Meyer Amschel's big chance came with the Napoleonic wars. By this time his sons were coming into the business, the whole conduct of which was kept in the hands of the family. The House embarked upon various sorts of trading operations connected with war requirements. "War profits realised at this time (1792-95) formed the real foundation" of the Rothschild fortunes. During the next twenty years, up to the fall of Napoleon, the family established itself as an international banking-house, with a courier service and a pigeon-post of its own which was always ahead of the official news services, and which accordingly enabled it to "get in on 'Change" ahead of all rivals, and to make itself indispensable to various Governments. Also, when important State missives came to be entrusted to its couriers, it could take a look at valuable inside information.

The five sons who were now the active heads of the business were Amschel, who remained in charge of the old H.Q. in Frankfort; Solomon, in Vienna; Nathan—most astute of them all—who came to Manchester in 1798, remaining there for six years, and from then onwards living in London; Carl, in Naples; and James, in Paris. Through Nathan, the House first secured the job of smuggling British Government gold, through France, to pay Wellington's army in Spain; and, later, the immeasurably bigger job of handling the British payments to the various Continental Powers allied against Napoleon. Between 1811 and 1816 Nathan and his brother "forwarded" some £20,000,000 in this connection. Then, after Napoleon's exit, they handled the payment of the French indemnity to the victors; and advanced loans for "re-construction" to the war-ravaged States (Prussia was practically dependent on them), and to the "numerous small princely families" hard hit by the wars.

### Financing Reaction.

During the years of Reaction which followed, the Rothschilds stood behind Metternich, finding the money for the stamping out of Revolution, and earning their title of "International Tories." For their services to the Austrian Imperial House all five brothers were made Barons. (There are not many humorous touches in Count Costi's book, but one appears when they sent in suggestions for their coat of arms to the College of Heralds, and the Heralds, in the course of certain objections to the proposed design, struck out a lion from the crest, with the dry observation, "The lion is a symbol of courage only, which does not apply to the petitioners.")

One or other of the brothers was always in attendance—like the Oil Kings of a later day—at the international Congresses held during those years. (Another gleam of humour: Brother Carl made his visit to one of these Congresses synchronise with his honeymoon—so combining Business with Pleasure in a characteristic family fashion.)

But though in this way, as Count von Stadion wrote to the Austrian Emperor, they "incurred the envy and hatred, and to a certain extent the persecution, of the whole Liberal Party in Europe," the wily brothers safeguarded themselves, largely through Nathan, by keeping in touch with "Liberal" elements wherever such seemed likely to emerge as ruling groups. Thus it was with Rothschild money that Louis Philippe landed in France and stepped into the seat of the Bourbons in 1830. In the last resort the brothers stood for no politics but punctual payment!

At the 1830 revolution in France this volume breaks off. A second volume is to bring the story down to our own time. Every student of the history of finance and banking will look forward with zest to its appearance.

\* \* \*

Martin Lawrence, Ltd., announces that it is making a special offer to purchasers of the *Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution*, under which the two volumes of this work may be obtained for 17/6 instead of 20/-, on condition that the second volume is ordered before the date of publication. The books may be ordered through the N.C.L.C.



# SOCIAL CHANGES IN AN EAST ANGLIAN TOWN

## *Glimpses of the History of Ipswich*

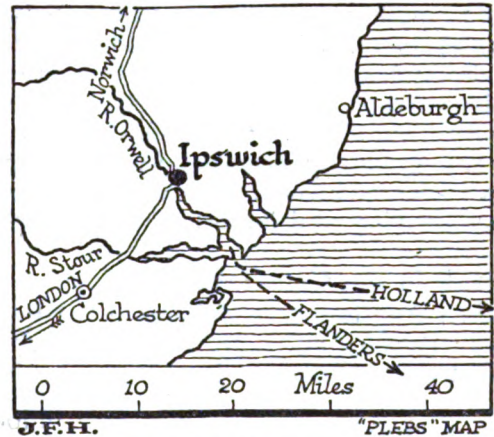
*This is an essay written by G. W. Robinson, of the Ipswich N.C.L.C. Class in Social History. As an example of local research we commend it to other students, and invite similar contributions to our pages.*

**T**HE town of Ipswich is very old and has seen many remarkable changes. Our class meeting room is situated in one of the streets which has been prominent in the commercial development of the Borough, for Silent Street, where the central Labour Headquarters now stands, was, some years ago, the place of residence of many of the most important merchants. Tradition has it that it became the street of silence in the year of the Plague. The site of Ipswich has, for thousands of years, been the habitation of man, for implements used by Paleolithic and Neolithic peoples have been found in the gravels of the river valley and at various places in and around the town.

Ipswich in the time of the Roman occupation seems to have been isolated—the result of its position geographically. But we may rest assured that Roman activity did not pass without affecting, in more ways than one, the development of this port. The influence of the Saxons can be traced, for, by local characteristics it can be seen that the mark system was in operation and flourished for a considerable period. Ipswich stands about twelve miles from the coast, the wide river Orwell facilitating the navigation of fairly large ships right into the town. The river left the town open to the pillaging maraudings of the Danes, but in more peaceful times it has influenced greatly the growth of the town from the industrial point of view.

### The Rise of the Merchants.

The reign of King John was a very important one for the people of Ipswich. For it was in the year 1199 that Ipswich received



its Charter. This Charter exempted the merchants of the town from such taxes as stallage, pontage and lastage, and customs in any seaport or town in the land, and this exemption from taxation did no doubt influence merchants to make Ipswich the place of their transactions. It also allowed the formation of a merchant guild, which was instituted quite apart from the municipal government of the borough. Admittance to the guild was allowed to any burgess. Neighbouring lords and merchants were entitled to become "foreign burgesses," as they were called, on payment of a fee in money or kind.

At the time of the first enclosure movement Ipswich figured largely as a port. Wool from the pasture lands of Suffolk was received for export, and in 1294 it is on record that Ipswich ships plied the waters to Flanders and the Continent. The Flemings, who were introduced into East Anglia, seemed to have settled around the town, a few settling in the borough. Although the production of woollen goods at

home would naturally decrease the amount of wool for export, the traders maintained their business by exporting the finished goods to France and Germany in exchange for silks and cutlery. Manufactured goods were not the only exports; grain, butter, cheese and quantities of beer being exported, balanced by wines, oils, timber, spices, with leather and iron from Spain. Dutch and Flemish trades also carried a good deal of the trade of the town and county at this time.

The peak of the manufacturing activity was about 1400. Woollen goods were less in demand, and after was to come the water-driven loom, and subsequently, with the general use of coal and steam, the local industry gradually decayed, leaving only a few traces, some of which exist to-day, of a once thriving and important industry.

### Revolt in the Countryside.

East Anglia was prominent in the Peasants' Revolt, although only one rather shortlived disturbance is reported in Ipswich. Certain priests and husbandmen, living outside the town, led the people, according to local records, to commit some "breaches of the peace," but on the whole it was in the surrounding towns that the peasants made themselves heard and felt. Bury St. Edmunds was one of the storm centres and from there the fire spread all over the district.

There is a gap in local history during the fifteenth century, and we jump to the time of the founding of places called "houses of industry," where the poor and unemployed were provided with food and shelter, of a sort, in return for so much work. These houses were a feature of the countryside. Christ's Hospital, founded in Ipswich in 1590, employed children at carding and spinning at very early ages. In the year 1593 unemployment became a problem for the local authorities, and legislation took the form of forbidding any clothier to send more than half his work to be carded, woven or spun outside the town without leave of the bailiffs. As early as 1539 we find in Ipswich a foreshadowing of the factory system. In that year the weavers of Ipswich

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and some of the surrounding towns, in petitioning Parliament, stated that the clothiers were employing weavers and fullers on looms in their own houses. The petition also proclaimed against organisation on the part of the master clothiers, for the purpose of regulating the price of weaving labour, at a scale that was inadequate to the cost of living.

### The Civil War.

The political struggles of the sixteenth century affected the borough. Parliament found a supporter in Ipswich during the Civil War. The walls of the town were rebuilt and strengthened against the possible attacks of the King's troops.

A writer named Evelyn, who visited the town in 1677, writes that Ipswich trade for the most part was the carrying of coals from Newcastle to London, although formerly Ipswich had been a clothing town. Charles II. heard Ipswich described by the Duke of Buckingham as "a town without inhabitants, a river without water, streets without names." This description may be all too



true, for industry began to slacken, or rather the old industry, as the Northern and Midland towns increased in importance, because of the existence of minerals in their areas. If Suffolk had had coal deposits, history would tell a different story.

The enactments made by the authorities are interesting. In 1665 no freeman was allowed to open a shop without the payment of one shilling to the bailiffs, and no mechanic might exercise his trade without a similar fine of sixpence. On the 16th May, 1695, the order was made that any freeman allowing foreigners to sell goods lost his freedom.

### Working-Class Discontent.

Records of upheavals by the workers in the eighteenth century are constantly appearing. People were jailed for assembling to take flour by force, and on September 29th, 1766, they gathered in the market place and compelled the dealers to sell butter cheaper than the market price, and at the same time threatened to sack and ruin the granaries and mills unless corn or flour was served out. On one or two occasions the town authorities purchased supplies from London, in order to feed the people and thereby safeguard property.

A canal was constructed from Stowmarket to Ipswich in 1798, encouraging trade throughout the countryside and increasing the land values. Ipswich had always been a port of fair importance, and when the extension of the Dock came in 1842, it brought a trade greater than most people expected. Large iron and engineering works stand on either side of the dock and a local firm exports agricultural implements. Although Ipswich industry is ancient, we find that in 1928 it is not backward in industrial organisation, most of the larger firms being members of the Federation of British Industries. The latest introduction is the beet sugar industry, subsidised by the Government, which has given employment at certain times of the year. Organisation from the workers' point of view is on the whole good. In 1924 we returned a Labour member, although we were defeated in the next fight, and it is probable that we shall win next time. Ipswich during the General Strike did its duty to the miners. The local Co-operative Society has a membership of about 26,000 out of a population of about 80,000. The workers have begun to take a hand in the making of Ipswich history, and further changes, we may be sure, lie not far ahead.

## THE "ROMANCE" OF WAR

"You bet, old chap, instead of listening to him, I shoved my bayonet into his belly so that I couldn't haul it out." No, this isn't a *Daily Mail* Bolshevik describing how he got rid of a Grand Duke, but a French proletarian on the fields of Flanders overheard telling a pal of how he rid the world of a German proletarian. It is an extract from *Under Fire, the Story of a Squad*, by Henri Barbusse—one of the latest additions to the *Everyman Series* (2/-) and, I think, the most powerful anti-war novel ever written. It does not for a moment set out to be "propagandist"; it simply describes the war as it was seen by mud-covered, louse-bitten inhabitants of the trenches. Church and State all combine to cast a glamour over war so that most of those who haven't been on the battlefield imagine war is a romantic experience in which one runs the danger of being killed in a sudden, clean and gentlemanly sort of way. *Under Fire* blows that lie to fragments. It should be made a text-book for the senior pupils of all

schools. Until that is possible, it is up to the Labour College movement to see that *Under Fire* is widely circulated. The only book that compares with Barbusse's is *The War In Pictures*. That the pictures are not the kind one sees at the cinema is evidenced by the fact that the Berlin police endeavoured to stop the sale of the book.\* Only Barbusse can do justice to these pictures—"It is some months now since death hollowed their eyes and consumed their cheeks, but even in these storm-scattered and dissolving remains one can identify the havoc of the machine guns that destroyed them, piercing their backs and loins and severing them in the middle. By the side of heads, black and waxen as Egyptian mummies, clotted with grubs and the wreckage of insects, where white teeth still gleam in some cavities, by the side of poor darkening stumps. . . one discovers naked yellows skulls wearing the red cloth fez. . . ." If there are humans who can read *Under Fire* without turning a hair, the *War In Pictures* will give even the most callous a sickness in the pit of the stomach. J.P.M.M.

\* The N.C.L.C. has been able to get a few copies—price 6/6, post free.

## P's and Q's

**A** PLAY recently produced in London—Mr. Benn W. Levy's *Mud and Treacle*, at the Globe Theatre—has a W.E.A. lecturer as its principal male character. And the bad lad actually strangles the heroine in the last act! The night we saw the play several persons booed at this; but whether they were loyal W.E.A.ers, indignant at any suggestion of moral turpitude in their instructors, we do not know.

\* \* \*

Anyone who has read Woodward's *Washington: The Man and the Image*, reviewed by J.F.H. in the "Bookshelf" recently, will smile a trifle sardonically at the epithets now being hurled at Sandino of Nicaragua by the Press of the U.S. (see Purcell's article this month.) The same folk who acclaim Washington as the Great Patriot, Father of his Country, and so on, now scream "Bandit" at the man who is doing to-day what Washington did a century and a half ago. But it makes all the difference, of course, on which side you're "patriotic."

\* \* \*

Readers of the article on "Oil in Iraq" in our March issue will perhaps have noted the Press announcement about a fortnight ago that two further wells, producing respectively 140,000 and 300,000 gallons a day have been brought in on the Iraq side of the Persian frontier. On the Persian side, it was reported a month earlier, a big well with an estimated output of half-a-million gallons a day had come into operation. And there are people who say the War wasn't worth while!

## A GOOD NOVEL

*Apparition*. By F. Le Gros Clark (Knopf, 7/6).

**T**HIS book is not a bit like *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists*. Yet, in attempting to classify it one feels compelled to place it with that classic work, because it is so definitely a part of the history of the class struggles.

"Desiring a formula, that shall embody in some part the soul of this generation," writes the author in a prefatory note, "I have lighted on the stage direction from *Macbeth*, quoted on the title-page—'An Apparition of a bloody child rises.'" And he proceeds to show us the torturing struggles produced by controversy and changing ideas in one middle-class family.

*Apparition* is not an easy book to read, for Mr. Clark has chosen a difficult method for getting his meaning across. But the meaning is there and is worth digging for. It is a piece of analytical investigation into the thought processes of a group of human beings, and a sincere description of the struggles that take place in the mind of a man who realises that he must leave his own class

At Leipzig during the second week of October there is to be a Conference of German Teachers on the subject of Workers' Education. Any N.C.L.C. tutors will be welcomed by the Conference. Particulars may be had from Gertrud Hermes, Bornaische Strasse 108, Leipzig S3.

\* \* \*

### THE A.E.U. SCHEME.

Dear Sir,—You will no doubt be interested in the following resolution, which was moved by Mr. J. D. Lawrence, one-time contributor to the PLEBS, and seconded by Mr. W. Pitt, at the tenth National Committee Meeting of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, held at Southport, May, 1928:—

#### RESOLUTION.

"That the E.C. be requested to make a thorough examination of the operation of the scheme, and if, in their opinion, it is not returning to the Society the cost involved in the scheme, they may consider steps towards its modification or termination."

Voting—in favour 2 votes, against 50.

The decisive way in which the resolution was defeated speaks volumes for the N.C.L.C., especially in view of the subtle way of trying to get the scheme ended. The real reason for wanting to end the scheme was the fact that the curriculum of the N.C.L.C. included Marxian economics and that the teaching was Marxian in character.

Yours faithfully,

C. T. PENDREY.

[The A.E.U. gets more value out of its educational scheme in proportion to the amount paid than any other Union. We shall be glad to give space to Mr. Lawrence or Mr. Pitt to make any statement.—ED.]

and take up a fight for another and, to him, completely alien one. He finds himself in opposition to family 'duties,' taboos, codes and manners that impede his every step. And he finds himself almost as much of an obstacle as his surroundings. He emancipates himself with much suffering (the bloody child quotation proves to be an apt one) and at the end we leave him submitting to be used first by what Shaw called the Life Force, and secondly, after he has broken with his family, to the tide that is sweeping over the world at the present time.

"Whatever comes, I shall have to participate in it, eat it and drink it, and nourish myself on it and grant it recognition. . . If I find myself next week mingled in some revolutionary pie. . . it is the world to-day."

The workers in the book, vividly drawn as they are, are rather symbolic than real—like the workers in *Masses and Man*. But Mr. Clark shows such delicate and sympathetic insight into the tragedy of the working-class, the mass tragedy as well as the individual tragedy, that we are left hoping he will some day give us a novel that will depict the larger struggle as clearly and cleverly as this does the individual one. W.H.

# AMONG THE BOOKS

By  
"PLEBS" REVIEWERS

**T**HE Seventh Edition of *Outlines of Local Government of the United Kingdom (and the Irish Free State)* by J. J. Clarke, M.A., F.S.S. (Pitman & Sons, 4/- net) is indispensable to all students of the subject and to members of local authorities. The numerous changes in legislation affecting local government necessitate this revised edition. A new chapter is included on the complicated subject of Valuation and Rating, and a very comprehensive bibliography completes an adequate survey of all aspects of the subject. Students who are taking the N.C.L.C. Correspondence Course on Local Government will find this Outline a very suitable text-book as a substitution for the author's fuller and more expensive work on the subject.

J.H.

\* \* \*

*Intelligence and Mental Growth* (by Claude A. Claremont, Kegan Paul, 2/6) is of handy pocket size, but lacks an index. Intelligence and its relation to mental growth is subjected to a reasoned analysis; ingenious use is made of diagrams, and a trinity, i.e., "percipience," "intelligence," "movience," is introduced. The validity of the popular tests as a guide to grading intelligence is questioned, the importance of environment and education in developing intelligence is emphasised. The author encourages the lay student to shed his awe of the 100 per cent. scientific mind. The book leads a tentative left at J. B. Watson's Behaviourism—presumably in defence of Vitalism.

J.A.B.

\* \* \*

*The Goodness of Gods* (Watts & Co., 7d. net). This little book by Professor Westemarck is an indispensable adjunct to the study of the Evolution of Religion and its relationship to social life. The style, paper, printing and matter of the book are excellent value for 7d.

A.W.

\* \* \*

*What is Mutualism?* by C. L. Swartz. (Vanguard Press, 2/9 post free) has the support of the Mutual Associates, the Literarian League, Foundation of Financial Research and the Mutual Credit League. Knowing this one might expect its matter to be a *mixed-stew*. On reading the book such expectations are realized. We are informed that Mutualism is anti-Trust and anti-Socialist; has a special hatred of Bolshevism, etc. Here are a few choice shots:—"The Bolsheviks caused famine in Russia in 1921," "Lenin like all soap-box orators . . .," "The more purely Marxian the type of Socialism the worse [for whom?] this exploitation would be."

So this is Mutualism!

E.R.

Romain Rolland's play, *The Fourteenth of July* (Allen & Unwin, 3/6), has a special significance for the worker-student. It is a play about the beginnings of the great French Revolution: as the name signifies, the subject is the taking of the Bastille. It is by a writer who appreciates the significance both of the event and of the chief actors in that great historical drama. But, further, it is a play in which these leading characters "disappear in the great ocean of the people," are subordinated to the activities and emotion of the masses—"The Crowd"—that is the real hero and heroine of this play; and the author concludes a fine prefatory note by the significant statement that "The end of art is not dreams, but life. Action should spring from the spectacle of action."

This is therefore the kind of play which in the dearth, as yet, of modern proletarian drama, is likely to commend itself to workers' dramatic groups. But it must be remembered that the acting and handling of crowds is one of the most difficult as well as one of the most powerful forms of dramatic expression and effect.

T.A.

\* \* \*

*The Municipal Year Book, 1928* (published by the *Municipal Journal*, 15/- net) is the indispensable reference book for all Local Government officials and those taking an active interest in local administrative affairs. This edition includes new sub-sections on "Road Costs and Income," "Refuse Collection and Disposal Costs" and "Street Cleansing Costs." A summary of the 1927 Municipal Year, together with Section 20, keeps us abreast of recent legislation affecting Local Government. Mr. A. Collins, the financial expert, rightly says of the statistical part of the work that it is "the finest collection of municipal statistics in the country," but the omission of all reference in the tabulated statistics of Housing Progress to the Liverpool figures is rather remarkable, considering that the Liverpool programme, from July, 1924 to 1928, of 169 flats, 108 tenements and 9,926 houses is a very outstanding one. To all Plebeians serving on Local Authorities and those taking up the Correspondence Course on Local Government this book will be of special interest and use. It should be in every Public Reference Library.

J.H.

\* \* \*

## CAN YOU SPARE A BOOK?

**W**E have received an appeal from the Secretary of the Cambrian Collieries' Library and Institute, Clydach Vale, Rhondda, asking for books. Unemployment and short time have resulted in the library, which is maintained solely by the miners' contributions, having had to mortgage its assets to carry on at all; and though the demand for books is greater than ever, no new purchases have been possible for some time.

If any comrades can spare any books—fiction, and juvenile literature, as well as any more serious works—they will be gratefully received by the Secretary (63 Howard Terrace, Clydach Vale).

# MATERIALISM & DETERMINISM

*E. and C.P.'s "Sophistry."*

**D**EAR COMRADE,—What do E. and C. Paul really mean in the concluding statement of their review of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*? They say:—"In theory, Lenin was a determinist of the hard-shelled, the oriental, the fatalist kind. For him, as for Engels and Marx, freedom was only 'a knowledge of necessity.' In practice for them all, as for Marx in the foregoing quotation, freedom was revolutionary freedom, freedom to change the course of the world."

Are we to infer from this that Marx and Lenin contradicted in practice the Determinism which they accepted and elaborated in theory?

It is true that Marx and Lenin were actively concerned with the struggle for revolutionary freedom, but surely in no other sense than from a knowledge of necessity. Marx and Lenin were not Utopians. They, whatever can be said of their reviewers, understood what they meant by Dialectic Materialism.

In the case of both Marx and Lenin, the need had arisen of recognising the necessary conditions for advancing the cause of revolutionary freedom and for thus contributing their quota to the task of changing the world. But they only proceeded along the lines of recognising the historical necessity of the proletariat as the means with which to accomplish this change, and endeavoured as a result of this knowledge of necessity to advance the struggle. They laboured to carry on this struggle along the lines of getting the proletariat itself to recognise its position in capitalist economy; to recognise its conflict of interests as against those of the bourgeoisie, and the implication that would develop from this, as far as the class struggle is concerned. Surely, this cannot be characterised as "determinism of the hard-shelled, the oriental, the fatalist kind."

Rather can we say that freedom for them, as for any consistent determinist, can only mean, in the real sense of the word, freedom from failure. What is this but a recognition of necessity, a recognition of social laws and a placing of themselves in harmony therewith?

This Marxism may be "out of date," but it is of much more service to the theoreticians of the proletariat than the psychological verbiage of the Bergsonians and Freudians.

Yours fraternally,

J. JONES.

Dear Comrade,—If Eden and Cedar Paul were to cease writing upon Marxian dialectic Materialism where their knowledge of it ends, they would

occupy very much less space in The PLEBS. Their so-called review of Lenin's book is simply a pretentious and speculative piece of fustian.

Their specious and didactic pedantry, which with them serves as erudition, is neither discerning nor profound. The Pauls wish for a "synthesis"—but themselves are a composite error! Having never comprehended scientific dialectic materialism, they get no further than sophistry.

It is difficult to suppress laughter when the Pauls "wonder"—although as yet only "sometimes"—whether 'dialectic,' as used by many Marxists means any more than "that blessed word Mesopotamia"! This from people whose weakness is well-known for word-mongery. That it means nothing to the Pauls is a proposition we need not dispute. What is also equally obvious is that they neither belong to the "many Marxists," nor to the Marxists at all, so far as the Marxism of Marx is concerned. If they are Communists it must be either by the Grace of God or the will of Allah—certainly not from an understanding of Marxism. That is abundantly clear from their review of Lenin's work, in which we get little or nothing of a view of this brilliant piece of criticism, but, indeed, a clear enough view of the intellectual confusion of the "reviewers." For that we ought to be duly grateful, since it enables us to dispose of the pretensions of the Pauls to be exponents of "revolutionary theory," and to exhibit the worthlessness of their "criticism" of the real exponents of this theory.

What worth has a criticism which pretends to dispose of a theory with a mere assertion that it is "out of date?" In what and in how far, we are not informed. Only the peacocky assertion—"out of date." "The writings of Dietzgen," we are told, "are somewhat severely handled by Lenin, amid lukewarm commendation." In this assertion, it is certainly a case of wish being father to the thought.

"The writings of Dietzgen" have for some years now been a thorn in the flesh of the Pauline up-to-date psychology mish-mash. It is true that Lenin criticises certain expressions of Josef Dietzgen, which he says lend themselves to mis-interpretation—these arise partly from the fact that Dietzgen, simultaneously criticises the idealists, on the one hand, and the undialectic materialists, on the other, and partly from Dietzgen's endeavour to present the subject in a popular style, both of which grounds are admitted by Lenin himself. But it is also true that Lenin regarded Dietzgen as "a dialectic materialist"—(see the section on Feuerbach and Dietzgen, p. 93)—and quotes him much more frequently for than against, and brackets him with Marx and Engels against Empirio-Criticism.

Our advice to all Plebeians is to read Lenin's book. They will find it far more fruitful than the barren if oracular assertions of those who take their time from the clock of decadent capitalist ideology.

Yours fraternally,

J. REYNOLDS.

# WHAT'S DOING

## *The N.C.L.C. at Work*

**T**HE following is a list of *new* affiliations obtained in May by the local colleges: Glasgow 2, London 1, S.E. Lancs. 1.

**NATIONAL UNION OF CORPORATION WORKERS.**—We welcome with great pleasure the decision of this Union's Conference to arrange an N.C.L.C. scheme providing the usual facilities. The date of the scheme's commencement will be announced later.

**SCARBOROUGH SUMMER SCHOOL.**—Have you sent us your booking fee? Please make this school and the Brussels School known to your friends. Members of the A.U.B.T.W., Transport Workers, General and Municipal Workers, Draughtsmen, Railway Clerks and English Bakers who desire free scholarships should apply to their Unions immediately.

**ANNUAL MEETING.**—The forms intimating the names and addresses of the delegates appointed should now be at Head Office if difficulties are to be avoided.

**CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.**—One of our students, Vernon Meek, of Liverpool, has advanced sufficiently to contribute a short article in the worker Esperantists' weekly "Sennaciulo."

**UNIONS WITH N.C.L.C. EDUCATIONAL SCHEMES.**—In the case of day and week-end schools care should be taken to send particulars to the branches of Unions with N.C.L.C. schemes and to make it clear that admission is without charge so far as the members are concerned.

**PLEBS AND N.C.L.C. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION.**—We are pleased to see that the Manchester group has organised a special scheme to help the college with the sale of literature. Plebs League Groups all over the country would do a tremendously useful job by assisting in the distribution of the PLEBS. Will all other groups give consideration to this work?

### DIVISION 1.

The Lancing week school has now been merged into the national schools at Cober Hill and Brussels and our two women scholarship students will go to Cober Hill. The Winterfold (near Guildford) week-end school on September 22nd-23rd promises to be a great success. J. F. Horrabin will be the lecturer. Charge 10/-. Booking fee of 4/- should be sent on at once to the Organiser, 71 Prebend Gardens, W.6. The Limehouse and N.W. Ham I.L.P. Branches have now each fixed up a six-lecture course on Modern Problems. E. Ham. Co-op. Comrades' Circle is also running a six-lecture course on Modern Problems. The Newdigate week-end school on May 5th and 6th, with T. Ashcroft as lecturer, provided a great time for the students. The play-recital of *The Hairy Ape*, by T. Ashcroft, was excellently done. Woolwich Labour College day school on May 12th at Shornells on Imperialism

and the State was so successful that the students are asking for another visit from J. Jones, the lecturer. A London N.C.L.C. Tutors' Council has now been formed with a very ambitious programme. F. J. Adkins opens a discussion in June on Teaching Methods. R. S. Redgrove addressed the May monthly discussion meeting on the Purpose of Education and aroused a very spirited discussion. The June meeting discusses Parents' Councils. The July Divisional Council discussion meetings will be held on the 15th, owing to the national annual conference falling on the 8th.

### DIVISION 2.

The annual meet of the N.C.L.C.ers for South Sussex organised by the Littlehampton class was favoured by a fine day for the trip up the River Arun to Amberley Woods. There were four speakers, viz., Wynn-Cuthbert, Joe Mathews, Harrison and the organiser. Some of the students are doing summer studies by means of correspondence with Wynn-Cuthbert. Guildford College is organising a day-school for June 10th at Blackheath with the organiser at tutor. The College dance realised a profit of £3 5s. The Oxford College is organising a day-school at Fruitlands, Carterton, near Witney, for June 24th. All organisations in Oxford and Witney are invited to send delegates. The annual conference at Southampton was notable for a fine address by the president, Alderman J. Lane (Mayor of Battersea). The next Divisional Council will be held at the Builders, Clapham, on July 26th, at 11 a.m. At Bournemouth week-end school Principal Ashcroft was in great form and his lecture and play recital were enjoyed immensely. Many thanks are due to the Bournemouth I.L.P. for their co-operation and also for the display of national dances by the children. The organiser visited branches of A.E.U., Shop Assistants and Plasterers. The Labour organisation of Dorking, Bishopstoke, Romsey and Totton are arranging for meetings to hear the case for N.C.L.C. educational work. Division 2 has lost a good friend and supporter through the death of Wm. McConnel, of Southampton (Organiser for General and Municipal Workers' Union).

### DIVISION 3.

Grays and Braintree class members continue to meet weekly. At Grays the A.E.U. branch had a lecture on Fordism on May 21st. Braintree Women's Section listened appreciatively to a talk on "Dangers of Education." The day school at Flackwell Heath was a success, thanks to the hospitality and assistance of Comrade Bowers and other High Wycombe helpers; a school for Ipswich was also carried through. S. Bucks Labour Party allowed us to participate in their draw and our secretaries did trojan work as ticket-sellers in the

short time available. St. Alban's balance is, for the first time, a credit one. The Esperanto class is carrying on and a school is arranged for June 24th. Billericay Labour Party was visited and the students will join Brentwood and Southend in a one-day school at Wichford on July 15th. Norwich receives J. F. Horrabin on June 24th for a day school, and Luton A.U.B.T.W. has arranged a special lecture for June 29th.

#### DIVISION 5.

A Tutors' Class for the summer months has now been arranged by the Bristol College, and the College Council is endeavouring to arrange a few Summer Schools. The services of T. Ashcroft, Labour College, London, have been secured. The Esperanto Class at Redfield decided to continue through the summer. Meetings of the A.E.U., the Shop Assistants and the A.U.B.T.W. have been addressed by the Organiser. A day school will be held in Cheltenham on June 23rd, when the Organiser will lecture on "Capitalism in Politics" and "Problems of the Mining Industry." A summer school will be held in Torquay on the 21st and 22nd of July, and Comrade Burley, the College secretary, and his colleagues are to be congratulated upon the splendid arrangements made locally. Bath Labour College has arranged for a Speakers' Class to be held during the summer.

#### DIVISION 7.

The Division held its first day school under the auspices of the Keighley College on May 26th at Goitstock. Forty-two students attended, sixteen of whom were members of unions with educational schemes. The Divisional Organiser gave the lectures. The secretary of the College, Com. Fahy, has now secured work in the Yeadon area and he intends to form a college in conjunction with the Dyers and N.U.T.W. His address is 15 Westfield Terrace, Yeadon. Miss Driver, N.U.T.W., will act as the secretary of the Keighley College. The address will be given later. The Bradford College is to have a day school at the Dyers' Club, Elmroyd, Brighouse, on Saturday, June 16th. A tea will be provided at 2/- per head. Lecturers are A. Haigh, of the Leeds College, and J. Bailey, of the Bradford Co-operative. Imperialism, Co-operation and Socialism are the subjects. Halifax College has decided upon Sunday, July 8th, for their day school at Hardcastle Craggs. All comrades from other districts are asked to meet at the Hebden Bridge Car Terminus at 1 p.m. The lectures will be taken by the Divisional Organiser and Comrade Highley.

#### DIVISION 8.

**S.E. LANCS. AREA.**—The Manchester Students' Association has re-arranged its groupings as follows: (1) Literature Sales and Library; (2) Dramatic; (3) Socials and Finance; (4) Equipment: (a) Diagrams, Maps, etc., (b) Lantern Slides, etc. The Dramatic and Equipment groups are already at work. Diagrams and maps passed by the Tutors' Council are being reproduced by the Equipment group. We are fortunate to have Comrade H. Coates as leader of this group. A day

school will be held at Greenfield, near Oldham, Sunday, July 22nd. Councillor J. Hamilton will give two lectures.

**LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT.**—There was a very representative annual meeting addressed by J. F. Horrabin. Mrs. Horrabin also attended and stressed the need for increased interest and support for the "Plebs" and Students' Association. Despite the wretched weather, and the rather out-of-way venue, 45 students attended a day school at Parkgate on May 20th, when J. F. H. gave two lectures on Empire problems. Interest is being maintained through the medium of Speakers', Tutors' and Esperanto Classes and Study Circles.

#### DIVISION 9.

The North-Eastern Labour College is arranging classes throughout the Wallsend Parliamentary Division in conjunction with the Wallsend Divisional Labour Party. The Wallsend Labour Party has made a grant of £10 to the College. The College is running a Tutors' class and more Tutors' classes are being set up in the North-East area. The Durham College is making efforts to revive temporarily lapsed classes. A Tutors' class is being run by this College at Durham. The Willington Class gave a farewell party to W. Moran on the eve of his departure for South Africa and marked the occasion by presenting him with a book, beautifully and suitably inscribed. The book was inscribed by one of the students. Musical items were a feature of the party. The women students and the Women's section of the Labour Party attended to the catering. The Darlington Labour Party has affiliated to the Darlington College. The number of affiliations to this College has increased recently. The duties of Secretary of this College has been taken over temporarily by Comrade Mr. Berriff in place of Mrs. Berriff. The cause of this temporary transfer is the birth of a son.

#### DIVISION 11.

Special attention is being given to the Trade Union branches. Up to date 22 branch lectures have been arranged with affiliated organisations. J. Giddons is assisting with lectures on "The Modern Press" and C. McCrystal on "The Modern Artist and the Wage Struggle." The students recently enjoyed a reading of F. Brockway's play, "The Recruit." The Organiser addressed the Belfast Trades Council on the Problem of Unemployment; a useful discussion ensued. The Flax Workers' Trade Union has affiliated to the Belfast College and the Typographical Association is taking a postal vote on the question of affiliation. Efforts are being made to arrange week-end schools in Londonderry and Belfast.

#### DIVISION 12.

The day school at Northampton was very satisfactory. The group is arranging an outing at an early date. Lincoln's summer class started off well and if the interest is maintained the effort will amply justify itself. Attendances at a number of other classes show that in the early summer at any rate a certain amount of successful class work is possible.



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