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The PILEBS

Organ of the National
Council of Labour Colleges

Monthly 4^d

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OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1928

NOV 5 1928

ARE YOU
LIVING
ON YOUR
HUMP?



SEE INSIDE

HAVE YOU EVER STOPPED TO THINK?



—that your efficiency in the Labour Movement depends upon the extent, *and kind*, of your education?

Education, in the ordinary (capitalist) sense, doesn't fill the bill. Class-conscious workers want education in the Social Sciences—the sciences which treat of the basic principles on which the Labour Movement is built.

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THE PLEBS

Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges

Vol. XX.

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1928.

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WHAT OF THE RESIDENTIAL LABOUR COLLEGES?

AS PLEBS readers are aware, the N.U.R. and S.W.M.F., the owners of the residential Labour College, offered to hand over the College to last Congress. By a substantial majority the Congress did not accept the offer. An important reason for this was that many of the delegates felt that they could not, without instructions, commit their executives to the financial expenditure involved.

While the College is affiliated to the N.C.L.C., its control lies wholly with a separate Committee representing the N.U.R. and S.W.M.F. The consequence is that there is no co-ordination at all of residential and evening-class work.

Some time ago the N.C.L.C. submitted a co-ordination scheme to the two controlling Unions. This scheme would have given the N.C.L.C. a share in the control and facilities of the Labour College and

would have enabled the S.W.M.F. and the N.U.R. not only to participate in the control of the N.C.L.C., but also to provide for their members free access to all N.C.L.C. classes. The cost to the two Unions would have been *less* than they were paying for the Labour College alone. Unfortunately, however, the scheme was not accepted.

There is no doubt that a closer connection with the College would benefit the N.C.L.C. and we venture to suggest that such a closer connection would benefit the College still more. Unions are mainly interested in evening class work because that is cheaper and gets to a far larger number of the members. Union interest in the residential work can best be aroused through evening-class schemes and the need to provide competent tutors for the classes. We hope, therefore, that the controlling Unions will bear in mind that the N.C.L.C. is willing to consider any scheme that will bring the residential work and the evening-class work more closely together and is prepared to submit a scheme which will include financial saving.

The Handicaps.

At the present time it seems to us that the Residential College suffers under the handicap that no one accepts any responsibility for the students once they have been at the College. Many of them come from South Wales and in most cases it is hopeless for them to go back to find employment. Others again who are not in the mining industry also often find it difficult to secure re-employment. In any case it seems rather a waste of money for Trade Unions to spend some hundreds of pounds in training a man for two years and to take no steps to see that he is enabled to put his services at the disposal of the movement. If the College were part of the N.C.L.C. in the same way as are the evening classes and the publishing work, it would have the advantage not simply of the support of the two Unions that at present control it, but of the Unions (over thirty) that finance and control the N.C.L.C. In these circumstances it would not be a very difficult matter for students

to be trained for specific purposes, *e.g.*, publicity work, tutorial work, organising work or administrative work. (It is not very uncommon for a Union to have difficulty, for example, in finding a suitable man to look after its journal.) Naturally, the students would have to be most carefully chosen. They might be men and women who had, through the class work, reached a certain educational standard and who had already proved capacity to do effective work for some branch of the Labour movement. It is quite possible, too, that some Unions might be willing to send selected members of their staffs to undergo a special training at the College, provided they were assured of reasonable results.

No one will deny that the College has done good work, but its effectiveness could be infinitely greater if it ceased to be an isolated part and the only isolated part of the Labour College movement.

Our columns are open to PLEBS readers to express their opinions.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF EUROPE—PRE- WAR AND AFTER

By M. PHILIPS PRICE, M.A., 8/6

"This is another of those rare and welcome books which attack a given problem or problems as a subject of European, instead of purely national, importance."—*Economist*.

FALSEHOOD IN WAR- TIME

By ARTHUR PONSONBY, M.P.

Second Impression 2/6

An amazing collection of lies circulated during the Great War.

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“VESTED IDEAS”

The Task Set by the Birmingham Conference

By ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

THE Birmingham Conference of the Labour Party was different from its other annual meetings because by the discussion of the new programme the delegates were brought sharply up against the problems of power. The propaganda of Socialism has spread more quickly than the most fervid pre-war perorator ever dreamed. At the next election the Labour Party may be asked to deliver the goods.

The disputes at the conference were really not about measures, but of methods and of men. The programme lays down general ideas of what is to be done. Most of those are agreed. The problem remains—*how* are they to be carried out, and *who* is to do the job?

The conference decided that a Labour Government must nationalise the land, coal, transport, power and life insurance; take over the Bank of England and stringently control the other sources of credit, reorganise industry, extend education and social services on new lines, and find most of the money from the taxation of the rich.

The delegates showed approval of each proposal with the cheery assumption that someone somehow would do the job for them. But where are those “someones” to be found? The fight with vested interests will be stern enough, but that is not our problem. Our greater danger is the fight with *vested ideas*. The vested interests are on the other side, the easily recognisable enemies. The *vested ideas* have soaked into our own ranks.

How can that be otherwise? The leaders of this generation, both national and local, have grown up in an atmosphere where the things we seek to alter have been regarded as the unchangeable laws of the universe. The effects have been criticised, while the

fundamental assumptions have only been questioned by a few. The whole of the new programme of the Labour Party is a challenge to class interests, the class war is implicit in every page of it. Yet most of the men who are to be given the job of putting it into practice deny in the Press and on their platforms that such a thing as a class struggle even exists.

It is easy to say, as was repeatedly stated at Birmingham, that experts will be employed to run industry, as experts are employed by shareholders. Who is going to “run” the experts, to lay down the main lines of policy?

Not only nationally but locally the new order has to be fought for. Up to now we have been working within the present system. To get the new programme going we must have men and women who can *think outside* the ideas and assumptions in which they have been trained.

If ever the N.C.L.C. class, if ever the Plebs literature with its ? badge was needed, it is *now*. N.C.L.C. propaganda has always insisted on the “working-class attitude of mind” as the basis of attack on social problems. The man or woman soaked in that atmosphere can be trusted by their class in a crisis. They have an antidote in their own hearts to the subtle poison of “tradition,” the insidious flattery of master-class culture.

If the new programme is to be carried to the Statute Book, and got into working order in village and town the Labour Party will need its Ironsides. Stern as Cromwell, puritan as Lilburne, fighting in Parliament, in the new board rooms, in council chambers and chancellories, such men and women, with “the root of the matter in them,” can alone achieve Socialism.

IF YOU CAN TUTOR A CLASS AND HAVE NOT GOT ONE, Write to the N.C.L.C. To-day

EUROPE'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Philips Price's New Book

By AARON DIRECTOR

NO apology is needed for a book dealing with the economic problems of Europe. It is true that the theoretic analysis of the present economic crisis is undoubtedly familiar to all readers of *The PLEBS*. But the inductive evidence upon which such an analysis must ultimately rest is not so readily available. The chief distinction of the book under review* is its attempt to fill in the details of a familiar outline, and to compare the result with orthodox theory. As it is impossible to deal with the entire book in a brief review, we shall find it convenient to disregard certain chapters dealing with the Peace Treaty and debt settlements. While these are good, they add little to what has already been said by such economists as Keynes in England and Moulton in the United States.

A brief chapter summarises the past industrial history of England in terms of business cycles. The summary is based on foreign trade returns. These are, of course, quite inadequate in physical terms, let alone in money terms. Mr. Price could have found a much more adequate summary in a publication of the American National Bureau of Economic Research entitled *Business Annals*. In fact, there is no reference to the very extensive literature on business cycle theory and facts in both English and German.

This is followed by a description of the development of England. We are all familiar with its beginning as a debtor State developed by Dutch capital. During the 18th century England began to invest on a large scale in the colonies she had acquired in this and the previous century.

* *The Economic Problems of Europe: Pre-War and After*. By Mr. Philips Price (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., Price 8/6).

As Mr. Price puts it: "These colonies gave a great impetus to scientific invention and paved the way for the industrial revolution." (Was this the sequence?) The revolts at the end of the 18th century retarded the force which was revived on a greater scale in the next century. European States, bankrupt as a result of the Napoleonic wars, came to borrow British capital both for industrial purposes and for stabilising a debased currency. It is hardly correct to say that the source of this capital was the profit from pre-war colonial investments. Mr. Price does not (and it is impossible to) estimate the extent of these investments and the profits from them. But certainly the development of industry, the payment of low wages and high profits are not to be disregarded. But whatever the source such exports did take place, and during the 19th century England emerges definitely as a creditor nation.

This is followed by an excellent classification of the pre-war world into five categories, based upon the accumulation and import of capital. The countries of little accumulation of capital through tariffs attempted to restrict the importation of consumption goods. This, however, necessitated the importation of capital goods leading to a great development of the heavy industries and the replacement of Manchester by Birmingham.

Then came the development of France, Germany, and the United States. The growth of industrialism and a rapid rise in the rate of accumulation of savings led these countries to a search for markets in the same undeveloped areas which were the recipients of British exports. Marxians see in such competitive situations an inevitable clash leading to imperial wars. Mr.

Price reasons otherwise. The large amount of German holdings in England, France, and Belgium leads him to conclude that the business world of Germany was not planning war. The United States, by reason of its location, could not become a source of friction. The amount of capital involved in North Africa was not large enough to cause a conflict. In Turkey, the then chief source of friction, an agreement was about to be reached dividing the spoils. "This fact certainly does not support the view that the existence of two competing Imperial Powers vitally interested in foreign investments must of necessity lead to war."

The immediate source of the conflict he finds in Russo-Austrian Caesarism in Eastern Europe. "The Russian nobility sought war to escape from internal revolution among the peasants. The Austrian military machine sought it to escape nationalist revolution in the Dual Monarchy; the heavy industries of France, Germany and England sought it to solve the problem of expansion in the East."

Now it becomes a pretty puzzle to determine which of these factors was the most important. On the whole Mr. Price is confirmed in his *opinion* by such historians as Fay, Coolidge, and Smith. But it is another thing to deduce from this that because non-economic factors were the immediate causes of the last war competitive imperialism does not necessarily lead to war. We shall return later to the reasoning which impels Mr. Price to say that "Capitalistic economy was beginning to reach a stage where international agreement over colonies

might have gradually superseded the stage of economic competition and nationalistic wars."

In his analysis of the post-war problem of the disturbance of the balance between production and consumption, Mr. Price holds that the war merely accentuated a movement already well developed, and hence that the stabilisation which was going on before the war is again possible. To this we now turn. Realising that on the whole the world produces more and consumes more than before the war, he finds the centre of weakness in the heavy industries and the crucial problem of these over-capitalisation. The evidence consists of a comparison between capacity, output and capitalisation. Mr. Price has fallen into the very serious error of measuring capital in money terms and production in physical terms. That there is over-capitalisation cannot be doubted. Further, if this were the chief problem it would not be very serious. Since capitalisation is itself a function of income, a reduction in income will ultimately lead to an automatic reduction of capitalisation.

Of the factors leading to stabilisation the first—imposition of tariffs and protection of the home markets—may help a single industry, but cannot assist a world economy. We are thus left with international agreements and the "New Industrial Revolution." The first has been advanced as a theoretic possibility some years ago by Mr. Bertrand Russell. The evidence for such agreements must perforce remain of the vaguest character. (Mr. Price might, however, have quoted his sources so that others could profit by his labour.) But even the existence of such agreements as a means of avoiding international competition is based upon the assumption that it is essential to have complete competition in order to have its virtues and vices. Actually, only sufficient competition is necessary to obtain both, and unless agreement is complete clashes must ensue. Even were such agreement possible, it has other consequences upon employer-employee relationships which Mr. Price does not take into account. Further agreement between

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competitors with rapidly-expanding industries, will divide markets, but not create them.

The name "New Industrial Revolution" dignifies certain technological changes going on in the industrial world. In England they consist of the development of certain new industries, and the transfer of others from certain sections of the country. These industries will provide an outlet for capital investment. As they are now less profitable than foreign investments, Mr. Price relies on State regulation to direct capital investment. It must be recalled, however, that these changes are of degree and not of kind. They in no way alter the basis of ownership and incentive. If industries generate capital in the course of development for which markets must be found the new industries will ultimately do so. The problem is delayed but not solved. If certain sections of England are characterised by growth, others are characterised by stagnation. The artificial silk industry will not alter the economy of the textile industry.

If one were to appraise this book one could say that it can lay no claim to originality, either in theory or inductive evidence. As a study in Imperialism it cannot be compared with the American studies of Scott Nearing and Robert Dunn. It is marred by carelessness in evidence, of which the discussion regarding the gap between agricultural and industrial prices, is the most glaring. Mr. Price's own evidence, when given in detail and not in concealing averages, show a marked improvement in agriculture. Theory should have warned him of this, for an increase in the number of commodities (as is taking place in the manufacturing industries) will, *caeteris paribus*, lead to a decline in their exchange value. A propaganda speech or a newspaper item is quoted with as much emphasis as an authoritative study. The book would be improved by a few maps. The absence of graphs and charts is inexcusable. But the book is well written; it has details which can only be found with great difficulty; it is well worth reading.

THE FREEDOM OF SMALL NATIONS



THE TEMPLE ON THE NILE.
Egyptian independence remains, as hitherto, free from any encroachment by Britain.
(*Kladderadatsch*, Berlin).



NOTE.—Arrow indicates a free and untrammelled citizen of Nicaragua on his way to the Polls!
(*Labor*, Washington).

*A Ten-Minutes' Talk***ARE YOU LIVING
ON YOUR HUMP?**

By J. P. M. MILLAR.

MANY workers imagine that once they leave school they have finished with education. Their idea seems to be that for eight or ten years the teachers have been packing their minds with knowledge just as the camel packs his hump. After school, the theory seems to infer, the workers set out to cross the desert of life and draw their intellectual nourishment from their educational humps. On that principle one can certainly justify the slogan "Too old at forty." Equally one can understand adult workers saying "What's the use of classes for us?"

As a matter of fact most people, after equipping themselves for their jobs in life, live on their educational humps. Naturally, as the years go on the humps become smaller and flabbier and intellectually speaking their owners stagger on through life.

The weakness of the hump theory must be obvious to every worker. Even if he's one of the lucky ones and remains at school until sixteen, what does he know? He can read a little, write a little and calculate a little. Perhaps he can speak a little of a foreign language. Perhaps he has a rough and superficial knowledge of constitutional history. Educationally speaking, however, he has nothing on but a loin cloth.

"That's all very well," some workers may say, "but what's the good of any more education, anyway?"

That Fed-Up Feeling.

One of the worker's great enemies is the fed-up feeling. Often he doesn't know

what to do with himself. But he must do something, so he grouses or makes a valiant attempt to "kill time," as he calls it. If he but knew it, there are books and classes on subjects that would compel his interest and make time fly as his mind is tempted on and on on a voyage of exploration among new ideas.

That Hard-Up Feeling.

Greater still as an enemy of the workers are bad social conditions. Under that we class unemployment, unsatisfactory housing conditions, low wages, and the wearing strain of economic insecurity.

What is the attitude to those problems of the worker who has "no time for workers' education"? He feels himself in the grip of powers he does not control and does not even understand. He tries, therefore, to cultivate fatalism, either cynical or otherwise.

If he but knew it, education—workers' education—would enable him to understand the forces that control him. More than that it would enable him to *control* them not entirely but to a degree that would enable him to revolutionise his economic conditions. Think how, thanks to scientific knowledge, man can build ships that can sail under the sea like a fish and construct aeroplanes that fly many times faster than the swiftest bird. By means of scientific knowledge of a different kind, *e.g.*, history and economics, the worker organised with his fellows can so organise society that every man-jack can enjoy as high a standard of life as does Bernard Shaw or Alfred Mond.

But the worker will do that only if he equips himself with the light of knowledge. That's why every worker should take advantage of the facilities provided by the N.C.L.C. That's why he should do his best to see that his fellow workers take advantage, too. The more we are together in this business of workers' education the merrier we shall be and the sooner we shall be able to control our economic destinies.

NEXT MONTH WE SHALL PUBLISH

A list of the Agents and Colleges that have increased their PLEBS orders.

THE BOOKSHELF

By J. F. HORRABIN

I'M going to open this month with a book for the Free Library list. *The Life of H.R.H. the Duke of Flamborough*, by Laurence Housman (published by Cape) is scarcely worth 7s. 6d. of a Pleb's money; but it is emphatically worth while reading—and putting in the way of other people. It is the most completely damning indictment of the institution of Monarchy I have ever read; all the more effective because it does not use a steam-hammer to crack a nut, but adopts instead the weapon of gentle—O so gentle—raillery, with perhaps just a suspicion of something more corrosive. If institutions can be laughed out of existence then this book ought to achieve its aim. For that its aim is not destructive not all Mr. Housman's protestations, in his final "Foot-note," can convince us.

It tells, under the thinnest of disguises, the life-story of a certain Royal Duke whose surest claim to immortality is that he rode forth on a certain wet day to a review of Guards, in full-dress uniform, and carrying an umbrella. It is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole silly business of pretending that a particular family of people is made of different clay to everybody else. All the foolish lies and conspiracies and publicity stunts necessary for the upkeep of the Royal legend are quietly but devastatingly exposed. To anybody with a taste for irony this book will come as a real treat.

Maybe your Free Library committee will have been warned that it does not show a proper respect for Established Institutions. All the more fun for you in sticking out for its purchase!

* * *

A good many students of Imperialism will know Mr. Leonard Woolf's fine book, *Empire and Commerce in Africa*, and his smaller work on *Economic Imperialism*. His latest book, *Imperialism and Civilization* (Hogarth Press, 5/-) re-states the main

conclusions of those books, bringing them up-to-date by references to events of the last three or four years. It contains no facts which will be new to the intelligent newspaper-reader. Its merit is its beautiful simplicity and lucidity of style and of treatment. In this respect, indeed, I should like to recommend it as a model for all writers of N.C.L.C. text-books. Consider, for example, how much more interesting—and to the "beginner" much more convincing—is this following passage from Mr. Woolf, than a discussion of the difference between two kinds of "imperialism" couched in purely abstract terms:—

Let me give an example which will illustrate the enormous difference between Roman and modern imperialism. When the British came to Ceylon little more than a century ago, the hills and mountains in the centre of that island were wild places, the inhabitants Sinhalese living in scattered villages. The hills and mountains are now over large areas cleared of forest and jungle; the land is owned by English joint-stock companies and is planted with tea and rubber; the estates are controlled by Englishmen in the employ of these companies; the labour on the estates consists of Tamils imported from India, belonging to a different race and religion and speaking a different language from the Sinhalese. The area is administered by an English Civil Servant responsible to an English Governor, himself responsible to the Colonial Office and Parliament in London. The laws and ordinances of this administration, made and applied by Englishmen, regulate minutely the everyday lives of the inhabitants, not only in public order, but also of the ownership of land, agriculture, trade, industry, labour, religion, and education. In other words, the whole life of this area has been completely revolutionised in the space of a hundred years. The impulse towards that revolution was originally economic—the growing of coffee, tea, and rubber by Europeans. . .

The story of the revolution in the mountains of Ceylon can be matched in many other parts of the British Empire. It is a commonplace story of modern imperialism. But now compare it with what happened in a province like Britain in the Roman Empire. The Roman occupation of Britain consisted of a few roads, a few camps or settlements, a certain amount of trade. The Romans brought their civilisation to Britain; but they did not impose it on the inhabitants. There was no revolution in the economic system, or in the tenure of land, or in the way of life of the inhabitants. There was Pax Romana, more peace and rather more security. And so when for the last time the legions fell in and marched

back to Rome, and grass grew on the Roman roads and the Roman wall in the north began to crumble, it was as if Roman civilisation had never crossed the Channel.

I repeat, is not this kind of treatment, dealing in concrete things and happenings, more vivid, more convincing, than one in which only abstract terms are used?

Mr. Woolf illustrates his main thesis, that modern imperialism means a "conflict of civilisations" which is inevitably leading—has in part, at least, already led—to a revolt of the peoples of Asia and Africa against Europe, by admirably lucid accounts of recent events in the Far East, India, Turkey, Kenya, etc. His remarks on Africa are especially significant:—

The revolt against the European's political domination and economic exploitation, which we have already seen in Asia, will inevitably be repeated in Africa. Indeed, there are signs that it is already beginning. What the Japanese Government calls "dangerous thoughts" have already appeared in Kenya, and the Japanese Government's weapon against them, deportation, has been resorted to. But all thoughts are really dangerous to Governments like those of South Africa and Kenya, and thoughts about land and labour cannot be deported; it is clear that they are spreading through Africa.

"Dangerous thoughts." Not a bad slogan for the I.W.C.E. movement, eh?

CAPITALIST "SERVICE"

"The grocery customer will often prefer a second-rate apple in a handsome wrapper to a first-rate one carelessly bundled in plain tissue paper. A motorist will stand for pretty bad gasoline if the gas-station employees wear handsome uniforms, greet the customer respectfully, and wipe off his windshield free . . . That's Service! And remember that only a low and sordid commercialist would look on it as something which merely sells more goods—though it certainly does that, too. But over and above that, it promotes friendliness, good fellowship, brotherhood, and thus makes for the millennial day when all the world shall be one happy Christian fellowship."

(From Sinclair Lewis's *The Man Who Knew Coolidge*).

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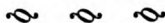
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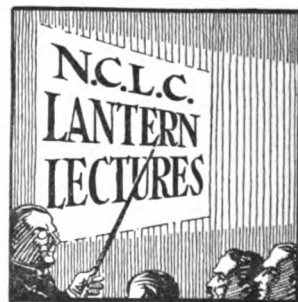
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ENLIST THE EYE

By J. HAMILTON

ELLEN WILKINSON had a timely article recently in the *Daily Herald* strongly advocating the use of the cinema to attract the attention of woman workers.

The difficulty of stimulating interest is a problem which has to be faced by many organisations, particularly the workers' educational movement. The N.C.L.C., in order to attract workers to its classes and public lectures, has for some time provided a lantern slide service and lanterns. Recently we have tested a portable type of lantern which, with battery, can be carried about like an ordinary attaché case. Non-inflammable films are used, which apart from their advantages of lightness and in-frangibility, are also a mere fraction of the cost of lantern slides. The lantern complete costs £9 5s., and the films from 1d. to 2d. per picture.



Many of us are very apt to become conservative in our methods, so this is mainly written to encourage Colleges to utilise the lantern both as an integral part of our tutorial work and as a propaganda medium for public lectures.

The use of the lantern in teaching has become almost universal among educational bodies. Tutors have found that the use of slides or films rivets the attention of the class so that the students really listen to what is said and take an interest in it. In our movement we know the difficulty of obtaining concentrated attention in the evening classes from students who are

EYE

fagged after a day's hard manual or mental labour.

To make it possible for the student to comprehend more readily constant use should be made of well-selected charts, diagrams, lantern slides and films. Verbal description by the tutor cannot by itself convey what is desired, and grown-ups, like children, can be encouraged to talk and ask questions about the pictures. Thus the tutor is enabled to correct some of the misconceptions which even the best pictures can hardly obviate; in addition the illustration will supplement the information conveyed by word of mouth. Besides this, the picture associates itself in the minds of the students with the teaching, thus making a much more permanent impression. Dr. Johnstone, in his biology class in the Liverpool district, invariably introduced a number of lantern slide illustrations during the course, which practice always stimulated and kept up the interest of the class.

The N.C.L.C. has now provided a film of 113 maps which should prove to be very useful to those teaching Economic Geography. Some nine other films are also available illustrating phases of history and modern problems and in addition there is a big supply of "stock" films. It is hoped

to provide the following new films this session:—"War Against War," "The Industrial Revolution" and the "French Revolution."

Several Colleges find a very useful source of publicity and income in organising public lantern lectures. Edinburgh College, for instance, mainly with John S. Clarke as lecturer, has done this very successfully for a number of years. Seven lectures were given last year with a total attendance of about 2,760, realising a clear profit to the College funds of £23. The year before that eight lectures were held and a profit of £54 made. The method is to sell 6d. tickets and spend as little as possible on advertisement. The students in the classes are asked to be each responsible for selling tickets, and this method accounts largely for the success of the lectures. Of course, the ordinary lantern, with slides, is best suited for a large public hall.

The use of the portable lantern in particular would be very useful in stimulating interest if lectures were arranged for Branch (or special) meetings of those Unions with N.C.L.C. schemes.

We hope Colleges will this winter record a great increase in lantern lecture work, for the eye is a better student than the ear.

A NOT UNKNOWN BRAND OF ADULT EDUCATION

"Sometimes pride of intellect disguises itself with a holy tone and reverential mien, as if education were a very solemn affair. When I was a school boy, there was in our town a woman librarian who presided over our little public library with deadly seriousness. She filled the place with crushing and awesome silence, as with reverential whispers she quietly moved on tiptoe among the books like one ministering in the house of the dead. I have known people to behave in this spirit toward literature. I have seen school teachers and professors take such an attitude towards education. It characterises the average baccalaureate address and is discernible in much that is said and written about education. I know several 'prophets' of adult education who succeed in giving a similar impression. Their very souls creak under the weight of the world-mending 'spiritual values' of adult education." (The Meaning of a Liberal Education by Everett Dean Martin).

THE GREAT RACE MYTH

By T. A. JACKSON

CONSIDERING the immensity of the advance made in modern physics, chemistry, and biology it is remarkable how slowly old ideas are dislodged in the crowning science of all—sociology. "Remarkable," truly, but by no means hard to understand, especially to a Marxist.

Theories concerning the electrical constitution of matter may, to a philosopher, be the most breathlessly revolutionary notions that have been advanced since Copernicus knocked the pillars from under the "solid" earth and sent it spinning through space—no longer the centre of creation, but a mere one among the many satellites attendant upon the Sun. They may! But they challenge no vested interest, and they affront no ruling-class prejudice. On the contrary; they open up fascinating possibilities of newer and bigger profits and they can be made to appear new and more damaging weapons against the "materialism" which has been for a century associated with every successive wave of revolutionary unrest.

Not so with sociology. At long last every privileged order depends upon the passive acquiescence of the masses whom its privileges despoil, and this submission can only ultimately be maintained by some form of superstition—belief without evidence, or in spite of evidence, that the privilege arises as a natural necessity and that any attempt to destroy it would bring disaster to the rebels followed by an ignominious return to the nature dictated subjection.

The "Great Man Theory," which Carlyle tried (and failed) to make revolutionary, is not only still with us, but enjoying (as the publishers' lists of new "biographies" show) a renewal of youth, and the War brought a rebirth of its pseudo-scientific elaboration—the Great "Race" Theory.

Or what comes to the same thing, the theory of naturally Evil and Backward races.

Few people would to-day advance in cold blood all the assertions made and "proved" with an elaborate apparatus of erudition about the Germans during the war years. But many have only relented towards the Germans (or Prussians) to transfer the theory of natural vileness to the Russians (or the Jews); and who among prominent politicians and publicists is there bold enough to abandon the time-honoured conviction that the "White" races are and must be for all time superior in all cultural possibilities to the Blacks, Yellows, and Reds wheresoever found?

Dr. Hertz* has the superlative merit of challenging all this "Race" nonsense with a whole army-corps of facts, well-selected and well-arranged. He shows abundantly how impossible it is to classify human beings into races by any but the broadest and most provisional lines of demarcation and that all these lines when drawn leave large marginal areas overlapping. He shows how whether we take skin-and-hair-colouring, skull configuration, stature or language, no hard and fast line can be drawn and that everywhere there is evidence of variation, past, present, and potential. Most of all he shows how impossible it is to find, and how absurd it is to expect to find, a pure-bred race.

Indeed, he has no difficulty in demonstrating that just those peoples who have historically made the greatest stir in the world have been of a highly complex racial admixture and have derived their success from that fact.

He is not content merely to refute; he goes on to explain. Race theories—whether the ordinary "patriotic" infatua-

* *Race and Civilization*. By Frederick Hertz (Kegan Paul, 18/6).

THE CONSTANT DROP OF COPPERS

Wears away the biggest debt. See page 225.

tions common to the most primitive peoples and to the greatest of Empires, or the elaborated "scientific" formulæ which seek to elucidate history and solve current social problems in terms of race—all he shows "have their roots in the desire of certain castes or classes to maintain their privileged position."

Being "little else than the ideological disguises of dominators' and exploiters' interests," they "belong to the earliest stock of human thought" and recur with each social crisis which challenges a dominant class or exploiting order.

They were first given a pseudo-scientific formulation under the stimulus of the French Revolution (represented by reactionaries as a revolt of the naturally "inferior" Gauls against the naturally superior (Teutonic) Franks) and after the Revolutions of 1848 they were elaborated into a system by Count Gobineau, who was confessedly actuated by a "hatred of democracy," of "revolution" and of "liberal ideas."

To him the Germanic races were the natural aristocrats of the world and its well-being depended upon their ascendancy. Expanded by pseudo-Darwinians to comprise the whole "Aryan" races—(interpreted to mean the more or less Teutonic whites)—this became and remains the popular conviction among West European reactionaries.

It was used repeatedly as a reason why the "Teutonic" British should hold the Celtic Irish in subjection, as a reason why negro-slavery should be perpetuated in America, and as a reason why the whole of the earth should become subject to the European Empires—or one among them.

While its special "Teutonic" or "Germanic" form had to be modified drastically to suit the needs of war propaganda, the theory still forms the psychological implication of all British colonial policy—and, be it noted, is not challenged by even the declared colonial policy of the Labour Party. That a revised form of it is the basis alike of Mussolinism and 100 per cent. Americanism needs no proving.

Dr. Hertz, by the way, rather spoils us for the enjoyment of his work, by certain naiveties, in an early chapter, about British colonial policy. He thinks, for instance, that the admission of Indians to self-government on an equality with the British is "merely a question of time." But these faults are as nothing by comparison with the service he renders in demonstrating that the "qualities" of a people depend upon their economic and social circumstances much more than upon any alleged "racial" bias, capacity, or limitation.

It will be a service to the cause to ensure that this book gets into every free library and into as many hands as possible.

STOP PRESS

Mark Starr is leaving for the States for a visit of about a year. He will give a course of lectures at Brookwood, the American Labour College. He carries with him the best wishes of the N.C.L.C.

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The Story of Trade Unionism

By R. W. POSTGATE

(ii) THE FAR- FLUNG LINE

THE second generation of trade unionists was that which founded the trade unionism of to-day. Up till the 'sixties trade unions were things of sudden growth and sudden disappearance: their tactics were primitive, like those of Red Indians or Sudanese tribesmen. They formed in masses to rush the enemy's stockade: their advance was furious and deadly, but if they were checked and defeated, they fled in disorder and their great armies fell to pieces. The new, or reformed old, unions which now sprang up were unadventurous and slow if you like, but they were steady and unshakable. A defeat for these "amalgamated" unions did not mean disaster, for their return in greater strength was certain. Their members were almost irremovably attached to them. They carried their union cards with them to the ends of the earth. Two of the most famous — the Engineers (A.S.E.) and the Carpenters and Joiners (A.S.C.J.)—found, by emigration, that they had branches in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States—some of them counting a very considerable membership. This "far flung battle line," indeed, tempted some of them into the folly of attempting to direct the affairs of their branches in the new countries from a headquarters in another and distant country. Chandler, the A.S.C.J. secretary, attempted to act as general in an engagement with the United States "Brotherhood of Carpenters"; the Operative Plumbers actually amalgamated in this century with the Capetown Plumbers.

The principles on which the new unions were founded were (an unusual thing)

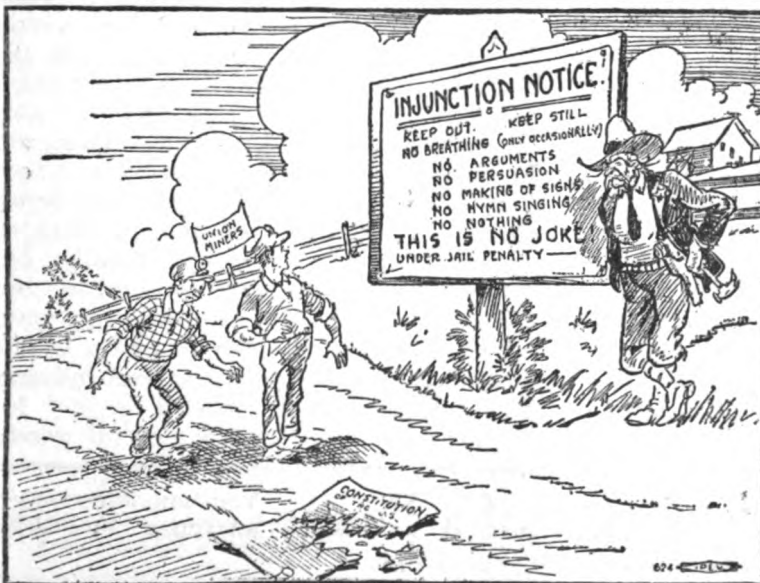
based on a carefully-thought-out policy. The group who directed them—known later as the Junta, but at the time called the Clique—observed that the weakness of trade unionism was due to two main causes (1) Maladministration. The absence of any effective central authority, the brief and vague rules, the independence of the branches, the absence of headquarters' staff, and the general habit of carrying on local and central business in a public-house bar, all produced a continuous and irremediable disorder. (2) There was no bond to hold members to their union. They continually lapsed, through carelessness or other reasons; and only returned when a struggle seemed likely. The unions were skeletons in between strikes. They never had a chance of accumulating any funds. The Clique, whose chief members were William Allan (A.S.E., now A.E.U.), Robert Applegarth (A.S.C.J.), Daniel Guile (Ironfounders) and Edwin Coulson (Bricklayers), either reconstructed existing unions or founded new ones based upon principles which cut at the root of all these diseases. Elaborate and complex rule-books were issued which covered every thinkable difficulty and made impossible any free-and-easy gifts to branches which found themselves in difficulties. All funds were transferred to head office, which received authority to conduct all trade movements, and was given a paid secretary with sufficient staff. To "anchor" the members firmly in the union, high subscriptions were fixed, and high benefits attached. Instead of the old small subscription and single "trade" fund, the union had a subscription three times as high and numerous sickness, accident, unemployment, burial, superannuation or emigration funds. A man would think twice before he sacrificed by "lapsing" all that he had paid into these. It was in pursuance of the same object, too, that the new unions were made strictly "craft" unions. A joiner felt a closer bond to a joiner, and a plumber to a plumber, than either did to the building workers as a whole. They both learnt to look down upon the builders' labourer. The Clique,

moreover, lectured their members roundly on their shortcomings. They told them that their only hope was to educate themselves and "give up the taproom for the lecture hall." They urged them to improve themselves both as craftsmen and as men. The old generation of trade unionists indignantly called them prigs and nuisances, and banged their beer mugs down on the counter. But the new unions grew steadily and bore down the old; and with them they brought the acceptance of another principle, which did not seem called for so urgently. The Clique, children of the age of Mr. Gladstone and John Bright, were enthusiastic advocates of Liberalism and peace between employers and employed. They believed strikes and lockouts were evils which could and should be avoided; and they strained every effort to secure co-operation between capital and labour.

This seems odd enough to a modern reader, odder still that they were able to "get away with it" and show genuine successes and improvements. But the adoption of this policy is really only another evidence that our political thought is determined by the economic circumstances that surround us. Karl Marx, in his famous *Communist Manifesto*, ended with the words "Workers of the World, unite!

You have nothing to lose but your chains." In other words, he based his call to revolutionary Socialism on the fact that the workers had no financial reason to defend the existing system. But now a time was coming when the British workers did not have "nothing to lose but their chains." The British Isles had attained a short period of enormous industrial expansion. The first convulsions were over and the capitalists were reaping the reward of being first in the industrial field. There was scarcely any country that could do without British products, and there was no country which could rival her. A stream of gold was pouring into the islands; and the employers could spare some for their workers. General strikes, Grand National Unions, and "documents" were the last things they wished to hear of. The Clique offered them the hand of friendship, and, tacitly, a bargain was struck. The employers abandoned union-hunting, wages went up and hours went down. The union headquarters tried to, and almost did, make strikes cease altogether.

The Clique, in doing this, was able to point to real victories. There is no doubt that an average British worker was better off, enormously better off, in 1895 than he was in 1855. The employers had been receiving, through certain curious, never-



THE LAW AS A STRIKEBREAKER IN THE UNITED STATES.

(Cartoon from the journal
of the United Mine Workers
of America.)

to-be-repeated circumstances, a long shower of wealth, and the workers had managed to secure a share of it. This success imprinted every feature of the "amalgamated" trade unionism, good or bad, on the unions of the world. Especially was this so in America, where the later years of the nineteenth century saw the growth of unions which were deeply impressed with the success of the British unions, and whose leaders had sometimes been actual members, sometimes, like Gompers, were wholly under their influence. Consequently, the "A.F. of L." unions exaggerated all the principles of the Clique, until (just as a common weed, grown to an enormous size, is a different plant) they were hardly recognisable as unions. It is as though a man wishing for a broad umbrella were to make one so broad that it covered the sky—or as if knowing that he had to drive far along a certain road on his journey, he were therefore to drive along it without ceasing and without end, forgetting the object of his journey and merely going for ever for the sake of going on. The "amalgamated" unions had high subscriptions: the A.F. of L. unions developed giant entrance fees and subscriptions that barred the ordinary worker. The "amalgamated" unions encouraged the craft spirit: the A.F. of L. unions laid a formal ban on industrial unions and split industries up into a tangle of mutually hostile craft unions, for whom co-operation became impossible, as was shown by the great steel strike. The "amalgamated" unions granted power to the central office: the A.F. of L. unions have let a powerful and often corrupt headquarters domineer over union branches till one finds cases where the union has developed an actual "machine" which stamps out rank and file criticism. The "amalgamated" unions favoured peace with the employers when the latter had good reason to agree, the A.F. of L. unions have continued this policy and exaggerated it in face of an "open shop" drive which has

shattered their unresisting forces to pieces.

This extraordinary development was prevented in Britain by two things. One of these was the ending of the period of solitary splendour in which Britain dominated over the markets of the world. Germany, then France, then the U.S.A., and even Japan began to come in as rivals, and to fight for markets and for colonies. The employers were being pressed harder, and they passed on the pressure. Nominally, wages did not go down. All that happened was that prices went up. The period of co-operation came to an enforced end. The second reason was that a new class of worker began to enter the trade union world. The unskilled or semi-skilled worker had never been able to afford high subscriptions, and elaborate craft divisions had no interest for him. The miners began to make their voices heard: in 1872 even the agricultural labourers organised for a short while. In 1889 the world was startled by the uprising of a group of workers whom everybody had declared to be unorganisable. The London dockers came out and remained out for months, aided by generous help from Australia. After paralysing the premier port of the world, they won a victory.

Once these new faces began to appear at trades union congresses, the rule of the old style trade unionists was doomed. Moreover, strange voices were raised within their own ranks. The delegates of the A.S.E. itself became "new unionists," even—terrifying word—Socialists. Under the influence of men like H. M. Hyndman, William Morris, Keir Hardie or Tom Mann, a quite new philosophy was being preached to the trade unionist. In important particulars it varied very greatly, but the new Socialist message was clear on two points—first, that the increasing suffering of the workers could only be ended by the community as a whole taking over industry and distribution and running it, not for private profit, but for the general good:

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second, that it was no good the unions pretending that they were there to co-operate with the employers, they must realise that their *raison d'être* was to resist the employers and defend their members. In other words, the unions were led back to the "class struggle" basis of trade unionism described in a previous article.

Reluctantly, therefore, from 1900 onwards, the trade unions entered into politics as the "Labour Party." They gradually accepted for this Party a Socialist programme. They learnt that all workers had a common interest, and "sympathetic" strikes began to appear again. The numbers of trade unionists began to creep up from the hundred thousands to the millions. The trade union army was beginning to reorganise itself as a single unit when the war of 1914 broke out and altered the whole face of the world.

It is too early yet to say exactly what the effect of the war has been. Certainly the unions emerged from it with many more members, and with a greater sense of their own importance. They had also had ample proof that the claims of the ruling class to hold their power were exceedingly ill-founded; and that whatever mistakes a Socialist Government could make, the class that made the war and made the peace would have no right to throw a stone. By the Council of Action in 1920 they forbade the war that Lloyd George had planned on Russia; and, rather to their surprise, saw the Government bow before them. They stood together in defeat as well as victory: the General Strike of 1926, terribly mismanaged though it was, was a grand gesture of solidarity with one oppressed section—the miners. It may at least be said that the trade unionists to-day have realised that they have a struggle to fight, and that they are nearer victory than they were before the war.

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Letters

IS SHAW RIGHT?

Dear Sirs,—In *Shaw Misses the Banks*, I think Jobane is altogether wrong. He says Shaw would have us believe that the bankers draw interest on £167,492,350. This amount I presume is arrived at by taking the sum (mentioned by Jobane) of £197,051,000, and deducting from it £29,557,650; being 3/- in the £, which Shaw says the bankers keep on hand. But Jobane has applied Shaw's statement to the wrong figures. The deposits are not represented by the item "Coins, notes, etc.," appearing on the *Assets* side of the balance sheet given; but by the very much larger sum (about ten times the amount) under the heading "Current and Deposit Accounts" on the *Liabilities* side. It is this sum which Shaw (as everybody with a practical knowledge of banking knows) says, is used by the bankers to make advances to their customers.

Further, the most elementary knowledge of book-keeping should have prevented Jobane from making such a gross error. Whatever the figures may be, Jobane will admit that the balances due to customers (on both Deposit and Current Accounts) are a *liability* of the bankers to their customers and cannot possibly be represented by any figures which appear as *assets*.

This initial blunder of Jobane's makes the rest of his article (which is full of suggestive errors) hardly worth the paper on which it is printed. To fully reply to it would require another article, from which, with reluctance, I refrain and for which doubtless you could not spare the space.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY NORTON.

7 Percy Street, Liverpool.
September 20th, 1928.

[Jobane writes: Mr. Norton's assumption about the figures is correct. I did not, however, suggest that Deposits are represented by "Cash, etc." I showed them in their place. Com. Norton has, it seems, fallen into Shaw's error in believing that loans, etc., are made from the actual amounts deposited. It is the bankers' play on the word "deposit" which confuses.

When a banker receives (say) £100 from A he credits A's personal account and debits his own cash account. The result on the balance sheet is:

Liabilities.		Assets.	
Deposit	£100	Cash	£100

Now if B gets a loan of (say) £900 his personal account is endorsed: Cr., by loan, £900, and the banker notes in his Loan Account: "Loan to B, £900." The balance sheet then reads:—

Liabilities.		Assets.	
Deposits (credit sides of personal accounts)	£1,000	Cash	£100
i.e. A's £100 cash		Loan	£900
B's £900 Bankers' Inflation			
	£1,000		£1,000

Loans may be made "from the Deposit Account," but not from the amounts actually paid in. Break up the word Deposit and the game is exposed.

I have shown "Deposits, etc.," as a Liability and have not represented them as anything else. Com. Norton's abusive point is not understood.

For the remainder, Com. Norton must be specific—as it stands I can quite logically reply—Pshaw!]

THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE PROBLEM

Dear Editor,—The proofs of my pamphlet: "Is an International Language Possible?" were handed for correction to a member of the Royal Institution, who has been an Esperantist and has been studying artificial languages for many years; also to a University professor, who has made a great study of the question, a professional journalist, and another friend interested in international language and familiar with Latin and three modern languages. The first and the two last of these readers corrected also the revised proofs.

In view of this I should be pleased to make a donation of twopence for every example of the "mistakes" and "misspellings" referred to by your reviewer M.S., which he or any of your readers can discover.

I am sorry that your reviewer should have charged me with "affected neutrality" in "Delphos." I have nothing either to lose or gain from the success or failure of any particular international language scheme. Like *THE PLEBS* I have taken "candour" as my motto, and have written what I believe to be true. Can we not preserve, in considering this important subject, the spirit of open inquiry, and engage in a frank discussion without heat?

Yours, etc.,

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

[M.S. replies: I accept Miss Pankhurst's word about the "affected neutrality," although there is much circumstantial evidence for the charge. Perhaps the Biblical text about "suffering fools gladly" should have applied in this case, but it is difficult when "candour" and ignorance are linked together. In *Delphos*, on p. 61, Miss Pankhurst suggests that Esperanto cannot be set up from the ordinary fount because she is unaware that for a shilling or two any respectable foundry can give her the six

supersign letters required. She says pronunciation is not easy; that Esperanto has sixty-six *a priori* affixes attached to a limited number of usually monosyllabic words. She uses *aliformigilo* and *tagnoktegaleco* as "grotesque examples." All this on one small page shows that Miss Pankhurst does not know what she is talking about. On the next page (62) she says prepositions end in *au*; impersonal pronouns in *u* and *rose* is apparently misspelt. Miss Pankhurst has never heard why *s*, as the sign of the plural, had to be discarded after a trial use. On p. 63 *birdoy* is said to be pronounced *bear-doy*; the Esperanto word is both wrongly spelt and imitated. [Stop it, that's enough about Delphos.—Ed.]

In the smaller pamphlet, 15 pp. out of 27 in the actual text are devoted to general propaganda and the rest to Interlingua—without any mention, however, of those who claim to have improved Peano's project. On p. 28 a piece of alleged Esperanto is quoted from a hostile source to show its inferiority. No modern writer would perpetrate it as it is as typical of Esperanto as *She sells sea shells* is of English. The first word *Me* does not exist in Esperanto. The galaxy of proof correctors were either uncertain or ignorant, for *u* is given without a supersign in *ankau*, but given the French grave accent sign when it occurs twice later in this single sentence of fifteen lines. If Miss Pankhurst were familiar with modern style she would separate the comparatives *plej* and *malplej*. If read aloud this sentence (with three certain mistakes, two offences against style and supersign letters missing throughout) is said to indicate immediately "the great superiority" (that's another 2d.!) of Interlingua in "euphony, in similarity to Latin and intelligibility to all who are familiar with a European Language." It is a "mistake" to accept that as a test. Still on the same page *homogeneous* is spelt with an *i* or did she wish to write *homogenetic*? I apologise for having to use so much space, but PLEBS reviewers do not make unwarranted assertions. And by the way the Editor made my title of the review now in question read as part of the Jespersen book's title.]

This controversy must now close. We shall be glad to have the maximum number of tuppences. Remittances should be crossed.—Ed.

THE GREAT TREK

DEAR Comrade,—Kindly request "Old Timer" to read my letter again. I gave the facts relating to the Great Trek therein. Those facts are true and are in no way invalidated by—

- (1) My being a sentimentalist;
- (2) The fact that Fortes is in touch with present-day African problems. (The Great Trek occurred nearly a century ago); or

(3) The further fact that Fortes is pro-native, a Zulu Home-Ruler or a Nairobi Nationalist. As an internationalist I may be permitted to indulge an admiration for Joan of Arc without being sentimentally "pro-French."

Yours, etc.,

JOHN S. CLARKE.

* * *

The following letter from M. Fortes arrived too late for inclusion in The PLEBS last month:—

Dear Comrade,—The facts in connection with the paragraph of my review with which Clarke disagrees are as follows:—Walker says, on p. 207 of his book, "If any one cause, other than economic pressure, can be named as the cause *par excellence* of the Great Trek, it is fear of that equality [of races]"—a statement which he bases on Retief's own manifesto, prior to his departure from the Cape, giving the reasons why he trekked, and on the writings of other trekkers; a statement, moreover, supported by Theal, Cory and other South African historians. Nor would anyone who has ever had personal acquaintance with the South African Boer of to-day, the sons and grandsons of the trekkers, doubt it for a moment. The Boers were land and stock owners, whose pride was their huge farms and flocks and herds, all tended by slaves. They were bigoted, selfish, and narrow-minded, for "their livelihood (=their farms) and their religion (=Calvinism) were their only concern," as Clarke says. It is true they did not care a rap about Empires; for the most part they were too ignorant to know that Empires were still in existence, or what an Empire was. Each man cared only for his own farm, and his sole aim in life was to be able to stand on his stoep and say: "All that land, as far as the eye can reach, belongs to me; and these filthy niggers, too" (that's how they speak in ordinary conversation). That, of course, doesn't exonerate the British for the part they played in the "developing" of South Africa.

Of course, the Boers objected to the emancipation of the slaves "without adequate compensation"; but then I am of opinion that they had no right to any compensation at all, just as I believe that mineowners and industrialists of to-day would have no right to compensation if their properties were nationalised. But, perhaps, John S. Clarke thinks otherwise, particularly in connection with Russia, to which he compares the state of the Boers.

Finally, I said nothing at all about the "Zulu power." I spoke about the native population of the interior. If Clarke looks up any reliable book on South African history (even Walker's) he will find a record of the Boers' relations with the surrounding natives, of whom the Zulus formed only a fraction, somewhat as follows:—

1838. Battle of Blood River—wiped out the Zulus.

1840 More trouble with the Zulus (Panda).
1841-51. Constant raids and skirmishes with native tribes.

1857. War with the Basuto.

1862. See Walker, p. 319—the raids made by Free State Boers on natives nearly caused war on the northern frontier.

1865. "The Tranvaal's troubles with the Zulus reached their climax."

1865. War with Basutos, continuing, off and on, till 1868.

1837-1868. About thirty years, I think?

As for the "land fit for heroes" Clarke imagines the Boers to have made of Natal: I plead ignorance. As far as my reading goes they wiped out as many of the natives as they could with the aid of God and their blunderbusses, and cut up the country into huge stock farms. If that's a land fit for heroes—I didn't know.

Yours, etc.,

M. FORTES.

* * *

BOOK BUYING

Sir,—The buying of books in the Labour movement is, I should say, about one-fiftieth of what it was in 1919 and 1920 and about a quarter of what it was in 1925. Why is this? The desire for reading has not diminished, I am certain. But wages and employment, particularly with the more studious sections, such as clerks and miners, have. It is because of this and because it seems to me lamentable that those with the appetite for study should be starved that I venture to trespass on your space with a notice of a Bargain List of books which I now have ready and will send to anyone who wants it. The prices range from 2d. to 3s., though the books included are priced at from 6d. to £1 1s. Among the authors are Wells, Cole, Webb, Angell, Lenin, Trotsky, Starr, Horrabin, Gould, Fimmen and dozens of others. Such a proposition leaves but little margin for advertising when the lists have been printed and posted. That is why I ask you to help.

Yours, etc.,

B. N. LANGDON-DAVIES,

Managing Director,

Labour Publishing Co., Ltd.

38 Great Ormond St., London, W.C.1.

[The list referred to by Mr. Langdon-Davies can also be obtained from the N.C.L.C.]

P's and Q's

"By the way," said a capitalist journal the other day, "why does Mr. Snowden persist in using the term 'workers' as exclusively descriptive of the smaller wage-earners? The right to be called a worker is not a privilege of any class. The King himself has a clear title, so have Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Augustus John and Mr. George Robey. The limited use of 'worker' is a deplorable habit of the Labour journalist and pamphleteer."

We gather from this that next year's T.U.C. will be asked to accept the affiliation of the Amalgamated Union of Kings, Emperors and Kindred Trades.

NEW BUNK FOR OLD.

"True charity," says the first number of *Britannia*, is "finding work for the poor and making them do it!"

EXTENDED BENEFIT.

The other day the N.C.L.C. received an application for a free Correspondence Course, accompanied not by a Union card, but by a National Health Insurance Card. Is the Ministry of Health taking a leaf out of the book of Trade Unions by providing N.C.L.C. courses free?

UNFEELING.

"The notion that the *Highway* (the W.E.A.'s official organ) is a Socialist journal is enough to make its readers laugh," writes "Onlooker" in the *Co-operative News* (14/4/28).

TRUE ENOUGH.

The other day we received a letter from a commercial house addressed, "Plebs Provocation Society." After all we do try to provoke an interest in workers' education.

A PAT ON THE BACK.

The Times Educational Supplement (4/8/28) commented favourably upon the classes of the W.E.A. in South Wales. One class on political philosophy at Newport has had a continuous membership for nine years, while the dockers' class is now in its eleventh year with original secretary and students present. At Swansea a class in philosophy—with one exception all colliery workers—studied the Book of Job, Plato and Descartes. From Plato they will learn that the ideal alone is real; from Descartes that existence is doubtful; and the Book of Job alone could provide them with the spirit to bear another course.

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED.

"If we could all be restricted," said Dr. A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, speaking at the Conference of Library Associations, "to something like the *Bible*, Shakespeare, Plato's *Republic*, and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, all the rest could be burnt." Dr. Lindsay is a leading light in the W.E.A.

AMONG THE BOOKS

By

"PLEBS" REVIEWERS

THE *Groundwork of Economics* (by R. D. Richards, B.Sc. (Econ.) University Tutorial Press, Ltd., 4/6) is a book obviously written for students who intend to sit for such examinations as the Institute of Bankers and the Institute of Chartered Accountants. It, therefore, treats the subject descriptively and historically rather than theoretically.

From the beginner's and general reader's point of view this is an advantage as, quite a comprehensive survey is given of the extensive field of economic facts. Here is presented a lucid, concise, and quite interesting account of Banks and Banking, Money and the Money Market, Foreign Exchange, International Trade, etc., together with a compact and succinct application of the "Utility" theory to a whole series of categories: value, price, wages, rent, profit, etc.

Though confined to about 300 pp., the book is not sketchy and certainly not "elementary." It is this which makes it useful also to the Marxian student. It is full of incidental information, such as e.g., p. 68: "British Trade Unionism has also been unified and strengthened by the establishment in 1868 of a central body called the Trade Union Congress, which meets annually for discussing matters of general policy, and by the General Council, set up in 1920. The latter body is composed of eighteen representatives from eighteen federations and amalgamations, and in 1924 was given by the Trade Union Congress the power to direct trade disputes." N.N.

* * *

In *How You Began* (Gerald Howe, 2/6 net) Mrs. Williams Ellis has written an admirable little introductory book on biology for children. She has explained in simple monologue the development from the cell to "You." Her story is necessarily sketchy, but should be an excellent bridge from, say, Dr. Doolittle's escapades to more serious science. The argument is not sufficiently taut to satisfy the adult reader. As an example of style, the following is quoted at random: "For instance, suppose two jelly creatures were tired of floating and banging about. The strong one's child and grand-child would gradually grow beautiful long fins and a tail to steer with, and become a tiny fish. The weak one's child would grow suckers to hang on to the rocks with, and perhaps a shell as well, and lead a very quiet life and be an oyster."

The book is probably the best that can be given to the child of ten who wishes to know how he began, and it is only half-a-crown. All parents will find it a very good little gift-book. There are several good line drawings by Mary Adshead which

add much to the attractiveness of the book's appearance. J.G.C.

* * *

There is, of course, "a stern and steadfast band" of Socialists who hold that no genuine Socialist has time for songs, but most of us are willing to take either an active or a passive part in sing-songs at Socialist gatherings. Now that winter socials and concerts are almost at hand we should ask and keep on asking our soloists and our choirs to sing to us two songs, written by Rutland Boughton and recently published (Curwen, 2/-), viz., "In Prison" and "The Love of Comrades." In the first of these songs, dedicated "To all imprisoned in the mines, jails, factories and shops of the British Empire," words by William Morris, are set to music that echoes the long-drawn sighs of weariness and despondency of the days that drag on within the grim walls.

In "The Love of Comrades," such a sense of power to achieve is added by the music to Walt Whitman's already vigorous poem that this song rings with enthusiasm and confidence in the future. It is written as a solo. I should like to hear it sung by a choir in unison.

The two songs go well together because they present such a contrast.

Both accompaniments are so beautiful that they deserve excellent rendering. It is only fair to warn readers that the average accompanist at Socialist sing-songs would do well to have a trial run-through before the performance. C.D.M.

MY LIFE

By

GEORGE LANSBURY

Henry W. Nevinson in the *Daily Herald*: "The interest rises steadily from first to last, and the reader who is not carried away by the sincerity inspiring a knowledge gathered in a long and intensely active life had better limit his reading to the Society gossip of the daily Press . . . Whether Lansbury tells of London or of Russia or of Paris during the fatal Conference at Versailles, the interest is enthralling."

10s. 6d. nett.

10 Orange St. W.C.2.

CONSTABLE

In his *Decline of Capitalism* (C.P.G.B., 2/-) Varga starts out by having a kick at "Reformist" Labour leaders, but does not stop to make his case. He urges a historical view of recent events. It seems to me we are too near the picture. His second chapter is good, but he makes a bad break in his next by slinging chunks of Marx at worker students, e.g., "The accumulation of capital, though originally appearing as its quantitative extension only, is effected, as we have seen, under a progressive qualitative change in its composition, under a constant increase of its constant, at the expense of its variable constituent —! —!" His "Production," "Rationalisation" and "New Technique" flow much more sweetly. On Monopolies he is somewhat clumsy. Varga must really try again. His "State Capitalism" is good and readable: he sets out clearly many points on which lack of clarity leads to confused thinking. He reviews the struggle for markets in a way which will interest even those who are acquainted with the subject, while his "Redivision of the World" might have been taken from a PLEBS Text-Book.

For the final chapters I have no comment beyond pointing out that mere statements that certain things are so, never made them so, while to talk airily of recent English C.P. successes is, to put it mildly, to draw the long bow. The book is completed with some interesting figures.

On the whole worth while for the student who already knows the subject fairly well and can stomach a ponderous style, but the worker with an inquiring rather than a trained mind would probably never read past the first few chapters—if so far.

JOBANE

* * *

In their report to the T.U.C. on *Labour Conditions in India*, Messrs. Hallsworth and Purcell have pointed to our duty towards the natives who, they say, are living in "a morass of filthy and ghastly conditions, socially, morally and physically." In the book just issued, *Hell Found*, by Dange, who (convicted on a political charge) has literally lived through three years of indescribable conditions in Indian prisons, we have, if true, a story which if called "fiction" would be rejected as quite untrue to life. If there are still left any comfortable individuals who are interested in "life in our prisons," here is an opportunity to sift first-hand evidence and material to start a crusade of first importance.

The capitalist Press will not notice the book (published at 1/- by the Vanguard Literature Co., Calcutta), but the contents are such that the author's own political party will be eager to secure

PLEBS LEAGUE and N.C.L.C. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

*Open to all believers in, and workers for,
I.W.C.E.*

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(payable to N.C.L.C. Head Office).

OBJECTS:

To secure publicity, in every possible way, for the I.W.C.E. movement and The PLEBS. Local groups to organise efforts of any suitable kind. Central funds to be devoted, after meeting net expenses, to advertising The PLEBS.

N.B.—*What about a Thousand Bobs
before Christmas?*

redress by any means available to prevent the continuance of the horrors vouched for. L.

* * *

La Laborista Esperantismo, de E. Lanti (S.A.T., 3d.), bone respondas la demandon: kio estas S.A.T.? Lanti majstre klarigis la neceson de komuna lingvo je la servo de la proletaro. Esperanto estas vere nun vivanta lingvo sur lipoj de batalanta laboristaro. S.A.T. per sia organo *Sennaciulo*, literaturo, inform- kaj helpservado kreas novan supernacian vidpunkton kaj le novan kulturon de la estonteco. Ne forgesu legi la libreton se vi volas esti informita, Satano. 488

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- Authorship and Journalism*, by A. E. Bull (Pitman & Sons, 3/6).
Short Story Writing and Free Lance Journalism, by S. A. Moseley (Pitman & Sons, 7/6).
Pitman's Popular Guide to Journalism, by A. Kingston (Pitman & Sons, 2/6).
Practical Journalism and Newspaper Law, by Baker & Cope (Pitman & Sons, 3/6).
 & Cope (Pitman & Sons, 3/6).
Labour and The Nation (The Labour Party, 3d.).
U.S.S.R. and Disarmament, by W. P. Coates (Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, 1/-).
Communist International Report (C.P.G.B., 5/-).

ANY BOOKS REVIEWED IN THE PLEBS

Can be obtained from the N.C.L.C., 324 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1. Add 1d. in 1/- for postage

WHAT'S DOING

The N.C.L.C. at Work

TOO much emphasis can hardly be placed on the value of lantern lectures as educational and propaganda mediums. The new N.C.L.C. lantern, which uses little films instead of cumbersome lantern slides, will pay for its cost in one winter session. Write the N.C.L.C. for particulars. Colleges which use the old-fashioned lantern can buy or borrow sets of slides from the N.C.L.C.

ASSOCIATION OF ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING DRAUGHTSMEN: Following upon an arrangement come to with the Union's Head Office, members of the Union who desire free Correspondence Courses should write the Head Office and send copies of their applications to the N.C.L.C. Head Office. Members of the Union may also have free scholarships to residential and non-residential day, week-end and summer schools. In the case of schools which cost not more than 7s., a member can be admitted on showing his Union card and the College Secretary will claim the amount of the fee from the N.C.L.C. In the case of schools where the fee is larger than 7s., members must apply direct to the Union and send a copy of their applications to the N.C.L.C. Office. Members of the Union may also attend our classes and the 2/6 fee will be returned to them by the N.C.L.C. Head Office if their attendance is satisfactory. College Secretaries are asked to bring the scheme before the members of the Union. Thanks are due to those who have helped to keep the N.C.L.C.'s claim to the front.

JEAN DOTT LIBRARY: The N.C.L.C. Library is available for N.C.L.C. tutors. Books will be sent to the tutor in return for postage, provided the return of the book is guaranteed by the Divisional Council.

ECONOMICS TEXT-BOOK: The attention of College tutors is drawn to the fact that the N.C.L.C. has taken over Mark Starr's book, *A Worker Looks at Economics*, and that it is now the official text-book for our Classes. The price is (paper cover) 1/- (cloth) 2/-.

LOCAL AFFILIATIONS: Local affiliations are important because of the financial assistance they provide and because the number of local affiliations is one of the best indications of the value of our work. The following is a list of the *new* local affiliations received in September:—London, 5; North Lancs., 2; St. Albans, 2; Slaithwaite, 1; Keighley, 1; Division 12, 1. Is your College in this list? If not, why not?

N.C.L.C. SCHEMES: The attention of the College Secretaries is directed to the importance of sending competent speakers to Branches to encourage the members to take advantage of N.C.L.C. Classes and Correspondence Courses.

DIVISION 2.

The Southampton College annual conference was addressed by T. Ashcroft and the Organiser. The number of delegates showed an increase on last year. Southampton's programme includes special studies on Modern Working-Class Problems in addition to a class on International Problems. The Secretary is to use the new N.C.L.C. lantern for lectures to Union Branches, Co-operative Guilds, and Women's Sections. The Bournemouth College has opened a class at Moordown with Miss Whitehead as tutor, on Modern Industrial History—twenty-three students enrolled the first night. Comrade Barrow's report to the annual meeting is to be circulated to all organisations. Guildford College has arranged for a class on Modern Capitalism. The Littlehampton class are taking a course on Modern Industrial History, with Comrade Harrison as tutor. The Newport, I.O.W., Labour Party have renewed affiliation and are arranging for lectures for all Labour bodies. The Totton class will be conducted by Dan Huxstep. A number of Colleges are taking the subject "The Basic Principles of Scientific Socialism." Sales of PLEBS increasing.

DIVISION 3.

We have started with twenty-four classes this session and hope to increase the number. The Colchester A.E.U. has fixed a fortnightly class and invited other trade unionists. At Brentwood, to supplement class activity, a debate on "Is the General Council Right in the Mond Negotiations?" is arranged for October 20th, with the class tutor, Jack Jones (Labour College staff) and the Organiser saying *No* and *Yes* respectively. Luton has revived and we hope to report progress. At Peterborough the class is studying *Labour and The Nation*, with an eye on learning how to deliver the goods in the next election. Who says women are backward? Mrs. Bowers and Miss E. Cranham are taking Esperanto and Economic Geography respectively at High Wycombe; Miss Thompson, Miss Main and Mrs. L. Thomas are teaching at Wickford, Southend and St. Albans.

DIVISION 5.

Bristol College has reluctantly been compelled to accept the resignation of Comrade Neale from the position of secretary. During his short term of office, he rendered yeoman service to the College. Unsuitable work has forced him to hand over the secretaryship. Plymouth College has held a very good I.W.C.E. Conference. Speeches were made by Mr. Bull, editor of the local Labour paper, Alderman Medland and the Organiser. The results should be encouraging to Comrades Liver and

Pawley, who did much to organise the meeting. Bath has held a successful Summer School, with T. Ashcroft as lecturer. Comrade Hallett, secretary of the Bath Labour Party, rendered invaluable help with the arrangements. During the month the Organiser has addressed meetings for the A.E.U., G. & M.W.U., A.U.B.T.W. and the A.S.W.

DIVISION 8.

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT.—John S. Clarke's lantern lectures at Birkenhead, Earlestown and Liverpool were well attended and greatly appreciated by critical audiences. There was quite a revival of interest at the quarterly delegate meeting of the College when Tom Ashcroft restated the case for I.W.C.E. He took the opportunity of explaining the present position of the Labour College, London. Fifty-nine students attended the Day School in the Co-operative Social Centre, Birkenhead. Ashcroft was the lecturer. W. Holding has undertaken the secretaryship at Wigan. An increase in the class work during the winter is anticipated.

SOUTH LANCS. AREA.—One hundred delegates attended the Annual Conference, when Wm. Paul gave a good exposition of I.W.C.E. The re-union and rally of old and new students was attended by pioneers of the Manchester College. The class list—sixteen classes—has gone out. More classes to follow. Could double the number, given the finance. Tutors' Training Class work still continues. A. L. Williams lectured at the Exchange Labour Club on Lancashire and the Future. J. Hamilton, on Armistice Day, will speak at the same place on The Economic Causes of Wars. These monthly lectures are arranged by the Students' Association. Coming lecturers: Paul, Casey, Shaw, Field and Owen. Tutors are urgently requested to enrol class students for the Association and to increase the sale of PLEBS and text-books.

NORTH LANCS. AREA.—The Delegate Conference was a great success. Some 150 delegates and visitors listened to the case for I.W.C.E., put with great skill by M. F. Titterington and S. O. Davies, and voted unanimously for the resolution calling for wholehearted support for the N.C.L.C. The Day School at Burnley was not very well attended, but S. O. Davies' lectures on the coal industry were well appreciated. Fourteen classes have now commenced, and the enrolments are very good. Nelson class opened its session's work with a social and dance, when the Students' Association Dramatic Group made its first appearance, with a one-act play. We hope to see more of the Group's work in the future.

DIVISION 9.

The Darlington District College held a Day School with Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and W. Coxon as speakers. The afternoon's proceedings were enlivened by the exchanges between Comrade Wilkinson and the Editor or Manager of a local Tory paper. The discussion after Coxon's lecture was made enjoyable by the local leader of the W.E.A. taking part and reading from a letter from Mr. Philip Snowden, which stated that the "Teach-

ings of the N.C.L.C. were dangerous and pernicious." Coxon's replies were characteristic. This College is now opening up the Cleveland area and running an extra class at Middlesbrough. A splendid conference was held by Durham College. W. Coxon and W. Lawther were the speakers, with the Vicar of Escombe in the chair. The Durham College has had a much better start this winter than last. The annual meeting of the North-Eastern College was held last month. The balance sheet came in for some healthy criticism. The tone of the meeting indicated that if the new E.C. does not improve matters connected with the College a big row can be expected.

DIVISION 10 (SCOTLAND).

Councillor A. L. Richie, a very old supporter of and worker in our movement, has been appointed full-time tutor-organiser for Glasgow and the West of Scotland. His address is 246 Main Street, Glasgow. This new district absorbs the old Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Dumbartonshire areas. Mr. Norman Shields is no longer the secretary of our Glasgow Committee and has no right to advertise under our name. The secretary is R. E. Scouller, 95 Bath Street, Glasgow, W.3. Edinburgh and the East of Scotland has classes on the following subjects:—Marxian Economics, The British Labour Movement, Evolution of Capitalism, Finance, Problems of a Labour Government, Modern Social Problems, Working-Class Problems, Evolution of Man, Psychology for Workers, Chairmanship and Speech-Preparation, Business Meeting Procedure, English for Workers, Esperanto. Ayrshire and Aberdeen districts have not yet sent in their lists of classes, but have appointed full-time tutors—Ayrshire, J. M. Williams and Aberdeen, D. J. Williams.

DIVISION 11 (IRELAND).

Miss Ellen Wilkinson and J. F. Horrabin are opening our winter's programme with a conference and public lectures on "A Labour Government and Home Affairs" and "A Labour Government and Foreign Affairs." Classes have been arranged in Belfast, Newry, Lisburn and Newtownards. The subjects include Esperanto, English and Article Writing, Economic and Political Geography, Economics, Modern Finance and Public Speaking. A number of public lectures, including lantern lectures, have been arranged. Compulsory change of occupation has again depleted our voluntary tutors; C. McCrystal, who has given valuable assistance for four years, has been compelled to leave Belfast. Our best thanks and wishes are extended to him.

DIVISION 12.

We are glad to note a revival of interest in our movement in Grantham. The Day School at Long Eaton was very encouraging. Comrade Bull's lecture on "Trade Unions and Social Power" provoked a lively discussion. The evening session was also full of life and interest. Comrade Rorke and his colleagues, who assisted so admirably in running the school, deserve our best thanks. Derby is to have the services during the autumn session of W. Paul, who is taking a class in the town.

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PSYCHOLOGY : <i>Plebs Outline</i>	2/6	2/8
SOCIAL HISTORY :		
<i>A Worker Looks at History</i>	1/6	1/8
HISTORY OF BRITISH WORKING-CLASS :		
<i>A Short History of the British Workers</i>	1/6	1/8
<i>Trade Unionism—Past and Future</i>	6d.	7d.
<i>History of the Great Strike</i>	1/-	1/2
<i>The Builders' History</i>	1/6	1/9
ECONOMICS :		
<i>A Worker Looks at Economics</i>	1/-	1/2
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<i>Value, Price and Profit</i>	1/-	1/2
<i>Shop Talks on Economics</i>	5d.	6d.
<i>Wage-Labour and Capital</i>	4d.	5d.
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<i>Local Government of the United Kingdom and Irish Free State</i>	4/-	4/6
ESPERANTO :		
<i>Esperanto Teacher</i>	1/-	1/2
<i>Esperanto Dictionary</i>	1/6	1/7
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RUSSIA :		
<i>Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution</i>	6/-	6/6
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CO-OPERATION : <i>The Co-operative Movement</i>	6d.	7d.
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EDUCATION : <i>Working-Class Education</i>	1/-	1/1
MARXISM : <i>Marxism and History</i>	1/-	1/2

N.C.L.C. PUBLISHING SOCY., 324 Gray's Inn Rd., W.C.1.

THE PLEBS

What it is and what it stands for

THE PLEBS" is a monthly magazine published to advocate the principles of Independent Working-Class Education: that is, of "education towards class-consciousness." It holds the view that Workers' Education should consciously aim at equipping the workers to achieve their own emancipation from Capitalism. By providing a review for worker-students in whose pages historical, theoretical, and current questions of importance to Labour are discussed from the workers' point of view, it plays an active part in the educational work carried on under the auspices of the National Council of Labour Colleges, and is now that organisation's monthly magazine.

"THE PLEBS" was founded in February, 1909, and has appeared regularly, without a break, ever since. During the nineteen years of its existence its circulation has steadily increased. It now claims to be the brightest of the Labour monthlies.

Its contributors include many of the best known names in the British Labour Movement—men and women belonging to various working-class organisations, political or industrial, but united in their recognition of Labour's need of an education based on the workers' point of view. The fact, indeed, that "THE PLEBS" is neither attached to, nor subsidised by, any of the working-class political parties gives it a special value as an organ of working-class opinion.

It publishes on the 15th of every month articles on economic and industrial questions on working-class history, international affairs, and Labour happenings at home and abroad. It reviews books of interest to working-class students, and records the development of the movement for Independent Working-Class Education in Britain and elsewhere. Its pages include illustrations—cartoons, maps, etc.—and its correspondence columns are an "open forum" for the discussion of Labour problems.

If you want "sloppy" reading—something that assumes you have no intelligence and will leave you undisturbed and unstimulated—Don't subscribe to "THE PLEBS."

But if you want a magazine which will give you something to think over; which aims at helping you to play your part in the workers' struggle; and which believes that that struggle is the fundamental fact in the world of to-day—send a subscription to "THE PLEBS," or arrange to get it from your local N.C.L.C. Class Secretary. To keep up to date you *must* read "THE PLEBS."

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