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THE PLEBS

AGITATE EDUCATE ORGANISE

Our STAMP-IT-OUT fund

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THE PLEBS

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

Vol. XIII September, 1921 No. 9

CONTENTS

The FIRST PLEBS TEXTBOOKS

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

¶ The manuscript of the first of the new series of PLEBS Class Textbooks is now completed, and the book will be in the printer's hands this month. We hope to publish it during October. Prices, terms for quantities, and full details will be announced next month.

¶ Its title is

AN OUTLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY

and we will content ourselves for the present by saying that every student of Dietzgen and of the Science of Understanding will want this clear, simple, scientific exposition of the actual mechanism of human thinking and feeling. The book has been carefully considered and discussed in detail by a special Editorial Committee of teachers, students, and specialists in

this particular subject; and it will contain a Lecture Syllabus based on its contents, Glossary, Bibliography, Index, etc.—will, in fact, be a *textbook* designed and planned for class use.

¶ *Every penny you can send us towards our Publication Fund will therefore be welcome.* The price of the book will be kept as low as possible, but the cost of publishing a large edition of any book is considerable. We look to every one of our friends to get behind us in the new venture.

¶ A second announcement of equal interest to Plebeians concerns W. W. Craik's new book—a popular exposition of the work of Dietzgen. Originally planned as one of the PLEBS Textbooks, the book grew beyond the limits as to size, etc., set for that series. It will, therefore, be published separately, during October, it is hoped, and will be a bigger and consequently rather more expensive book. But its author's name is sufficient guarantee of its value. It will of course be obtainable, in single copies or in quantities, through the PLEBS Book Dept.

¶ These two books will together form a basis for class-work in one of the most essential subjects of study. The first will deal with *the way in which men react to their environment*—"natural" and economic. The second will describe *the way in which man thinks* about that environment.

Get ready to order at once next month!

The CONFERENCE *on* TEACHING METHODS

The Plebs Conference on Teaching Methods and Class Co-Ordination will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 8th and 9th, at Clarion Club House, Handforth, Birmingham.

All those intending to be present—and we hope every class-tutor and secretary will do their utmost to attend—should send in their names, mentioning what accommodation they require, to—

T. D. Smith,
12, Old Meeting Street, West Bromwich,

before Oct. 4th. A full agenda of the Conference will be published in next month's PLEBS.

STAMP "IT" OUT

"IT" is a debt we've to clear—and it will be bigger directly, because we're going to get the new Psychology Textbook out. You can help us to carry on, and move forward, by sending for some PLEBS Stamps. One penny each—as many as you like to send for. (Send an extra 1d. to cover postage.) The class-sec. who hasn't a supply to sell to students and supporters is not doing his bit for us. The stamps are printed in two colours, and are miniature posters advertising the PLEBS. Stick 'em on your notepaper, your envelopes, your leaflets, on the literature you sell, on the class-room wall, and anywhere else where they'll attract notice! *Send for a few to-day.*

SUGGESTIONS *for* STARTING CLASSES

The following article consists of extracts from a special section on this subject included in a booklet on "Workers' Education" (revised edition) by Arthur Gleason, of the Bureau of Industrial Research, New York. The writer, A. Epstein, has organised classes in the Pennsylvania district. Plebs who are just now making plans for the forthcoming autumn and winter should find his suggestions interesting and useful.

HOW can an interest in workers' education be awakened? What is the best way of starting a class? How is a class taught? What methods hold interest?

No cut-and-dried method can be laid down in answer to these questions. The problem is one dealing with human beings. . . . It may not be amiss, however, to present some of the processes and plans used successfully in organising workers' classes in typical industrial centres in this country. The suggestions are made without any sense of finality.

Approach

Perhaps the first step of importance in organising workers' educational classes is the problem of how and whom to approach in order to present the idea of workers' education. From what little experience can be gathered it appears that the best means of approach in a typical industrial centre is the City Central Labour Body. The Central Labour Union is best because it is usually made up of the most active members of the individual locals who can be counted upon to report back to their own organisations. . . . *An effort should be made to interest a few of the delegates to the Central Labour Union in workers' education before the meeting.*

Appeal

The fundamental requirements in an appeal on behalf of workers' education are the faith and enthusiasm of a few men or women. The fact that only a few are conscious of the significance of this movement should not deter those active few from presenting their ideas. Some of the most successful experiments were sponsored by only a few men who had sufficient enthusiasm and devotion. A few suggestions as to the appeal made by James H. Maurer and the writer in organising the Pennsylvania educational work are herewith presented. In appearing before a labour union on behalf of workers' education they pointed out :—

1. The benefits derived from such work by the British labour movement and a comparison of the effectiveness of that movement with our own.

2. Education, at the present time, is only one-sided, and is controlled by one class. The schools and colleges of to-day present definitions of such words as "justice," "truth," "loyalty," "duty," "patriotism," etc., in a way that suits the employers of labour, and not the organised workers. All forms of education in existence to-day—schools, press, churches, the movies, etc.—are presenting this one kind of education. Instances are cited of teachers of long experience dismissed as soon as they identify themselves with organised labour. . . .

3. The emphasis of to-day is laid upon money values rather than human values; the well-known men in America are men of money and power and not the men of science, art, or social vision. . . .

5. Although the employers have had the benefit of education, they still feel the necessity of keeping in touch with new events by bringing men of prominence to their

clubs and luncheons and having talks on important subjects. Thus, the employers realise the necessity for further study while labour has had neither fundamental education nor discussions on present-day problems.

6. Just as one can be a good American only after he knows something of the ideals and history of America, so one cannot be a good trade union man without knowing something of the history, struggles, and ideals of the labour movement.

7. Labour education is especially necessary at this time, when the struggle between capital and labour is becoming sharper; when an attempt is made to crush unionism altogether. Organised labour is spreading out into the fields of co-operation; into banking, into controlling its own press, etc. These constructive ventures demand trained and self-disciplined rank and file.

An organisation committee of three or five active persons should then be appointed. No person should be appointed on such a committee who cannot devote at least one or two evenings a week to this work. The committee should secure a list of the meeting-places of the local unions and apportion the work so that each member of the committee can visit those locals which meet nearest his place of residence and on such evenings as suit him best. Union organisers who are really devoted to education can do effective work in stimulating interest.

Funds

There are many methods of financing labour education. There is no difficulty in raising the money, once an interest has been aroused in the significance of the work. When local instructors can be secured, student fees may at times cover most of the expenses. When local teachers are lacking or student fees are insufficient, local unions should be visited and appealed to. *From what experience we have had, it was found that but few locals refuse a contribution to workers' education when the appeal is presented to them.* Some labour schools have had a specified affiliation fee which was charged each local union. In the smaller cities, however, it was found that it was best to have no specified amount. Unions have usually been found to become generous contributors as soon as the work is appreciated. An assessment of one cent per month a member is also suggested by some local unions as a measure of the amount of their contribution and as a means of securing funds. A plan of assessing a certain sum by the central labour union to each affiliated local for education is also going to be experimented with soon. Part of the funds, it has also been found, can be raised through entertainments, such as dances, lectures, raffles, etc. This, however, should be used only as a last means. In our experience a trade union college, financed on money from local unions, is preferable to one financed on money from international unions or even central labour bodies. The workers take a much keener interest if the work is financed by their own local money. *In short, the best way seems to be that the central labour body should take the initiative in voting sympathy with workers' education, and in bearing the expense of promotion, but that the classes should be supported mainly by the local unions.*

A circuit rider, an itinerant preacher, who will push the idea in industrial communities may be used. He will form a local committee and sow pamphlets. Later, he will swing round in his circuit and revisit these experiments. An enthusiastic local educational director elected by the class can be counted upon to carry on meetings in the absence of the travelling teacher.

If a group is not ready for regular classroom work, it may often be drawn into current events discussions. Their interest in "live topics" may lead them into study.

Classes held before business meetings sometimes get attendance which would not be called out to an educational meeting alone.

Earnestness, drive and imagination cannot fail to create classes.

How to Maintain the Interest of the Students

Frequent conferences between the students of different classes help greatly to instil enthusiasm in the class. If possible, debates or "get-togethers" should be arranged. Such social functions may also help to maintain the interest of the group. Another suggestion is to have the students report back to their local unions the subject discussed in the class. This would stimulate the attention of the students and would spread the idea continuously.

COLONIAL *and* IMPERIALIST EXPANSION: *A Marxist Analysis*

This is the first of a short series of articles on a chapter of modern history of special interest and importance to proletarian students. Next month's instalment will deal with "The Class War of Merchant Capital."

I.—THE BEGINNINGS OF MERCANTILISM

IMPERIALISM is one of the complicated facts of to-day which the bourgeois theorist views with blurred vision, and which his theories consequently merely scratch on the surface. The proletariat, if it is to destroy capitalist Imperialism, must be wiser; it must understand its root causes and real nature. As an approach to the problem let us examine the nature of the earlier colonial expansion of the 16th and 17th centuries and single out its essential features.

The Renaissance in Europe in the 15th century was the result of accumulation of wealth in the hands of the burghers of the new towns; it was the mental expression of the rise of the money-lending and merchant, in a word, trading class of the towns, struggling against feudal restrictions. The original source of this accumulation was serf labour on the land; but this wealth had been drawn into the towns. The system of Primogeniture (inheritance of land by eldest son) sent the younger sons of the nobility to seek their fortunes in the towns. Money-lenders had grown rich in lending at high interest to feudal lords to finance wars and crusades. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 finally flooded the towns of Europe with refugees bringing treasure, which enriched the towns and provided additional material means of accumulation. "Town-rents" accruing to original burghers and "usury" are given by J. A. Hobson as the two chief means by which "feudal wealth was converted into burgher wealth."[1] There was in the towns in the latter half of the 15th century much burgher wealth seeking profitable usage.

For this reason ocean voyage and discovery followed close on the heels of the Renaissance. Frequently the former is spoken of as the result of the latter, instead of both as the result of a common economic cause.

[1] *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, Chap. I.

Hitherto Europe's trade had been with the East—by the Mediterranean to the Levant, and by caravan-routes to the Far East. Consequently it was the towns of the South and of the Mediterranean—Venice, Genoa, and the rest—which mainly prospered.

The towns of the West and the Atlantic seaboard were at a disadvantage, and they looked to the discovery of new sources of treasure and for a new route to the East. It was Vasco da Gama from Portugal who explored the African coast and rounding the Cape of Good Hope in 1498 discovered the sea-route to India. It was Columbus, with the blessing of Spanish merchants but the hostility of the nobility, who in 1493 stumbled upon the West Indies in mistake for India. It was between Portugal and Spain that the Pope in 1494 divided the New World. It was John and Sebastian Cabot from Bristol who in 1497 discovered the mainland of North America. The main achievement of the Cabots was the opening up of the valuable Newfoundland fisheries, so valuable that by the middle of the 17th century "the Newfoundland trade was by far the greatest English enterprise in America; . . . there were said to be employed in it 270 sail of ships and 20,000 seamen."[1] Later the French adventurers Verazzano and Cartier followed in 1524 and 1534.

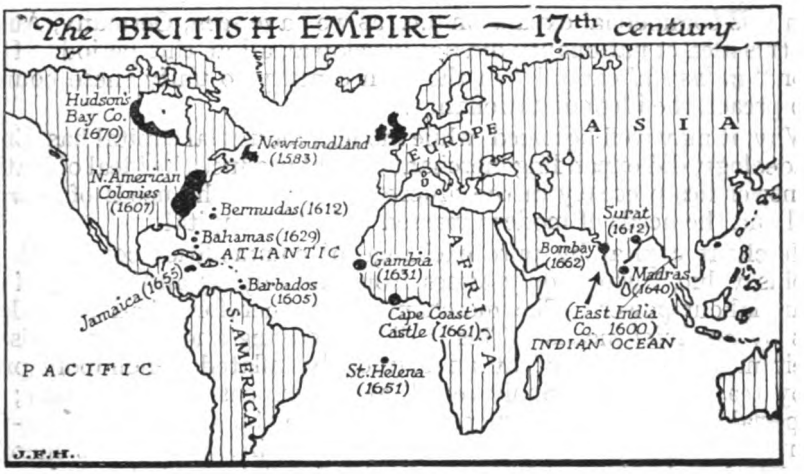
The Tudor monarchs in England, relying on the support of the burgher class against the feudal nobility and the Church, lent much support to this overseas expansion. John Cabot received "great honours"—and £10!—from Henry VII.; Henry VIII. developed on its modern basis the beginnings of a national navy; and Elizabeth carried on this work and zealously encouraged the piratical voyages of Drake, Raleigh and Hawkins. She lent the royal ship *Jesus* to Hawkins to assist the slave trade; and her whole policy was distinctly favourable to merchant interests. But these "great captains of the age . . . were buccaneers and pirates on the look-out, not for opportunities of trade or for the foundation of colonies, but for plunder"[2]; and a pirate-captain like Drake was the ideal patriot of the time, rather than the colonist or trader. They captured Spanish treasure ships and raided Spanish towns in the West Indies, this rivalry being the cause of "the first of England's great commercial wars"[3] in 1587. They were the aggressive pioneers of Mercantilism. But "by the time of William III. English trade had become important enough to turn buccaneering from an heroic virtue into a crime which had to be suppressed."[4]

The period of systematic colonisation and trading began about 1600, after the close of the war with Spain. After 1600 numerous joint-stock companies were formed for trade and colonisation. In 1606 the large Virginia Company was formed, and gained a charter from King James I. allowing it to colonise the coastline of North America from Cape Fear to the Bay of Fundy; and in 1620 it obtained wider powers of monopoly of trade and power to sub-let its land. It was from the Virginia Company that the Puritan middle-class emigrants of the *Mayflower*, forming themselves into a small joint-stock company, purchased the right of colonisation in what they named New England. Other merchant companies of this sort were the Massachusetts Bay Company (1629), and the Hudson Bay Com-

[1] Egerton, *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, p. 13.
[2] Thorold Rogers, *Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 321.
[3] Jose, *The Growth of the Empire*, p. 20.
[4] Thorold Rogers, *loc. cit.*

pany, mainly interested in the fur trade of the North-west. The East India Company was founded in 1601 and set up " factories " (trading depots) at Surat on the West coast and later at Madras and Calcutta ; the Muscovy Company was formed to trade with then scarcely civilised Russia ; and four West African trading companies were chartered between 1588 and 1631. The Dutch and the French also had their East India Companies, the Dutch especially aiming at a monopoly of the spice trade in the Far East.

> For eighty years the Indian Ocean was a private lake of Portugal's owning. Then dynastic troubles betrayed the little kingdom into the power of Spain, and the whole structure of her Empire collapsed. Spain wanted gold not trade. . . . . So what had been Portugal's became Holland's, and hard on the heels of the Dutch came the roving English.[1]



After 1600 the power of Spain declined too. The power of feudal and ecclesiastical property with no interest in commerce was supreme in Spain (witness the Inquisition), and though it was willing to assist the acquisition of treasure which found its way into its coffers, it had little use for spending national wealth in furthering permanent schemes of trade benefiting merely the merchants. " It was because of the decay of Spanish greatness that England was allowed to develop in peace its colonial settlements."[2] Likewise Venice, Genoa, Florence and the Hanse Towns of North Germany declined, for " the great maritime discoveries . . . . transferred the centres of commercial activity as well from the Baltic as from the Mediterranean ports to the harbours on the Atlantic seaboard."[3]

Now, bourgeois historians are wont to treat the political, legal, moral, philosophical ideas of any period as separate from the economic, and as evolving in separate watertight compartments. Proletarian Marxism, on the other hand, sees social evolution as a unitary process, and shows how all these ideas are shaped and determined by economic conditions. It does not deny these ideas influence within limits, nor does it assert that man is influenced only by consciously selfish motives, as critics like Bertrand Russell and Graham Wallas would seem to suppose. Marxists merely indicate the fact that man's political, philosophical and moral ideas are

[1] Jose, *Growth of the Empire*, p. 49.
[2] Egerton, *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, p. 16.
[3] Myers, *General History*, pp. 433-434.

products of his thinking, conscious and sub-conscious, and that it is his material environment, together with prevalent social ideas, which mould his thinking.

In the period we are considering, the rise of the idea of " Nationality " did not just " happen " as by some supernatural agency. Just as the ideal of " Empire " arose in the 'eighties of last century, so the ideal of the Nation arose to dominate man's political thinking in the 16th and 17th centuries as the product of the specific psychology of the rising merchant class, giving political expression to the interests of " merchant capital." But in the countries which, owing to their geographical position (in this case the underlying geographical factor to some extent shaped the economic) and to other reasons such as the slow break-up of Feudalism, did not take part in this commercial expansion (i.e., as we have seen, Germany, Austria, Italy) this idea of nationality did not develop at all at this period. It was left for " *industrial* capital " in the 19th century to unify these countries and to preach the ideal of nationality.

Why, it may well be asked, while modern industrial capital has Empire as its ideology, did expanding merchant capital produce the ideal of Nation ? The answer lies precisely in the difference between the needs of *merchant* capital and the needs of modern massed *industrial* capital.

Merchant capital by pure exchange of commodities could not reap " surplus value," which only arises from the buying and selling of proletarian labour-power. The merchant class, therefore, had to make its profits by *artificial* means. This it did by buying and selling goods, not at their natural value but at an artificially inflated " monopoly price," thereby reaping a " monopoly rent " at the expense of consumers ; just as imperialistic Trusts to-day seek to increase the share of surplus-value accruing to them by means of monopoly. The interests of the merchant class, therefore, lay in securing a monopoly of certain markets—at home for colonial products, in the colonies for home products. And since " during the 15th century . . . the country was becoming one economic whole, instead of, as hitherto, a mere collection of almost isolated municipalities,"[1] and since it was nationally that trading charters were given and the various spheres portioned out among separate companies, it was *National* Monopoly that became the watchword. The predominating cause of wars during the 17th and 18th centuries—and European wars were frequent as compared with the preceding two centuries—was " interference " with this National Monopoly. The colonies were looked on merely as convenient means of enriching the merchants of the home country. Monopoly was secured by Prohibitive Duties on imports at home, and by numerous restrictions on colonial trade and later on colonial domestic industries. This general system of politico-economic theory is known as Mercantilism, a system of national monopoly, which the Bourgeois Economists, spokesmen of industrial capital, starting with Adam Smith, attacked so vehemently between 1750 and 1830.

Thorold Rogers, writing in 1888, and viewing with hostile eye the first appearing of modern Imperialism in the shape of " raids " on Tonquin and Zanzibar and the partitioning of Madagascar, comments on the likeness between it and the early 17th and 18th century Mercantilism. This exceed-

[1] W. McLaine, *Evolution of Industry*, p. 7.

ingly cute observation has been amply justified during the thirty years since it was made. But whereas the need of merchant capital, invested in trading companies and shipping, was monopoly of trade, and its ideology consequently nationalism, the need of modern industrial capital, invested in iron and steel, is surplus-value and monopoly of labour-power. Hence the latter demands the industrialisation of backward countries and the proletarianisation of native peoples, whereas early colonial expansion did not. That is the distinctive essence of Imperalism.

MAURICE H. DOBB

LABOUR *and the* WORLD CRISIS

The previous instalments of this study of economic crises in general, and of the present world depression in particular, appeared in the July and August PLEBS.

III.

WE described last month some of the conditions and methods through which capitalism expands and effects an increase in the scale of production. We have now to consider other factors. What is it that limits production?

The great majority of the working class in these days have experienced something of the misery consequent upon reduced production and general depression. Their minds and hopes are filled with longing for a return of the " good old times " when work was plentiful and wages relatively good. The cause of this periodical movement, this alternation of good and bad times, is beyond their ken altogether, and few really care to inquire deeply into the subject. The one thing uppermost in their minds is to obtain regular work and at least temporary relief from want. Reference has already been made to the fact that capitalism is not carried on to satisfy the needs of society—heeds no demand but one made by those able to pay. Only thus can the real object of capitalist production—surplus-value—be realised. While profits flow in all is well and production goes on steadily. Every possessor of money is ready and anxious to invest in the profit-making process.

When production slows down and prospects are not so bright he is not so ready to invest. Money is kept, accumulated. At such times the banks become generous and offer money at a low rate of interest, as an encouragement to people to use their capital and thus enable them to make a profit. Capital, steadily accumulating, seeks new and more profitable spheres of investment. It demands an extension of production. New undertakings are established, possibly new industries opened up, and the movement for expansion begins.

The establishment of new undertakings creates a demand for the product of the old. Means of production are required from one, means of subsistence from another, while the patient, docile worker, by the working of these mysterious social forces, has at last been rewarded, has regained his right of existence, has found a job! A general feeling of confidence begins to pervade the whole sphere of capitalist enterprise. The world puts on a smiling face.

But the lust for profit is insatiable and urges on the capitalist to overreach himself. Trade is booming. Profits are assured. Capital is borrowed and speculation becomes the order of the day. Everybody joins in. . . . And then the end comes, and they all gasp with horror at the threatened general ruin.

This is what has taken place times out of number in the history of capitalism. But a movement of this kind requires more than a feeling of confidence on the part of a few capitalists to begin it. There must be a much more material basis. The force which stimulates the increase and expansion of production is high prices, and the bright prospects opened up through them. Prices rise in response to new and additional demands, and with higher prices come increased profits. But what of the downward tendency—the reversal of the whole movement? What force is it that serves now to expand and then to contract the process of production?

As already suggested in the first article, the force or forces must be looked for in the process of production itself. The conditions of production are such that, if not fully complied with, they serve to impede rather than assist further production. In their negative aspect everybody is all too well acquainted with them. They are lack of markets and materials, the effects of which need not be emphasised to the average workman. There is, however, another in which he is not so deeply interested, namely, lack or scarcity of labour-power.

Reference has already been made to the part played by banks. Through the operation of Banks and the credit system the normal tendency towards expansion is intensified. Banks accumulate the latent money-capital of society and throw it into active circulation, and this grows in proportion to the mass employed. They seek to employ as much as possible of their own capital and the money deposited with them. There is a tendency to draw too much upon their resources. More money is required for circulation, too, all of which brings about a scarcity or stringency of money. This is expressed in a rising rate of interest following an increase in the bank rate of discount. This process will probably have developed some little way before the impending crash becomes generally felt. The higher rate of interest depresses the actual rate of profit realised by the direct capitalist. The rate of accumulation slows down. The relative scarcity of labour-power during these periods creates favourable conditions for the workers, who make use of the opportunity to increase wages. This again eats into the rate of profit, and along with the other factors sends up what the capitalist generally terms " his " cost of production.

Conditions differ widely in various industries. Some can expand and contract much more easily than others. Agriculture, dependent as it is upon natural conditions and the fluctuations of the seasons, and the extractive industries as a whole, drawing supplies of raw material direct from nature, these offer greater difficulties to expansion than others where the technique can be applied almost at will. Prices of raw materials will, therefore, rise enormously under the influence of these conditions, and much more rapidly than those of the finished product.

Again, the need for an extended market to absorb the additional products increases the period of circulation—the time taken to dispose of the goods—and sends up the expenses of distribution. These expenses grow with the distance of the market and the wider the range over which the product is circulated. The capitalist must, therefore, wait a longer period

for the return of his capital and borrows more, pending its return, in order to keep production going on uninterruptedly. This takes place at the very moment when a stringency of money is beginning to be felt and larger demands are made upon the banks.

When, finally, the difficulties are experienced of extending the market as rapidly as production itself is expanding a surplus appears, goods accumulate, warehouses become full, there are surplus stocks on every hand.

The expansion of production itself creates the difficulties here enumerated, which now express themselves in a falling rate of profit. With a fall in the rate of profit enthusiasm dwindles. No further enterprises are started. The high rate of interest and the difficulties in obtaining credit would themselves be almost sufficient to account for this, apart from the general feeling of pessimism. Expansion slows down—gives way to contraction. The forces of production turn against the capitalists themselves.

At the commencement of this series we indicated something of the definite proportions required in an expanding scale of production, and now we see that a failure to observe this leads to a slowing down of at least some industries. This will take place, first of all, in those branches that fail to dispose of their product. It will now be necessary to revert once more to the question of fixed capital.

The production of this class of products would be ample, as pointed out, when the quantity is sufficient to replace the amount used up each year, *plus* the amount required for the renewal of parts, *plus* the amount required for the production of new additional products as a result of the capitalisation of surplus-value. In actual practice, however, this does not suffice. The amount of capital employed each year is not uniform, and that because the scale of production is not uniform.

When production slows down fixed capital is not consumed as rapidly as hitherto. The demand for machinery consequently falls. On the other hand, when production increases, the demand for machinery grows, and this demand tends to bring about abnormal and disproportionate production of this class of goods, as compared with the total product of all industries. More means of production are bought than can be satisfied by the industries supplying raw materials. One of the greatest problems peace brought arose out of the altogether disproportionate development of the engineering and constructional industries during the war.

This deviation from the necessary proportions of industry results in failure, on the part of some, to dispose of their product. Higher and higher mount the stocks of accumulated goods, while the charges upon the capitalist for loaned capital, etc., continue. The matter does not and cannot rest there. Pressure is brought to bear upon him by the very institutions that previously encouraged him to seek their assistance. The previous process is reversed and once again it is seen how closely production and demand are related.

The closing down of a factory, workshop or mine reduces the demand for the class of goods required within that factory, etc., as means of production; reduces, too, the demand for means of subsistence amongst the workmen previously employed. A contraction of production and a reduction of demand in one quarter is followed by similar movements elsewhere, resulting naturally from the interdependency of all branches of production; and the dislocation in one branch is accentuated by its spread into others.

The force which now operates is a fall in prices, lowering the rate of profit. The pressure brought to bear upon individual capitalists compels them to sell, and competition for markets is fought out on the basis of reduced prices. Relative under-production, so called, is experienced during the expanding phases, and over-production during the downward phase, both of them being relative to the demand made at the time. The apostles of harmony and industrial peace would have us believe their own simple tale that over-production is due merely to reduced demand, no more, no less. And under-production to increased demand, no more, and no less. Everything is reducible to this mystical "demand."

The activities of banks tend to make these crises more violent in character. They can assist individuals by granting credits to stay the evil day; so that when they themselves are in their own interest compelled to take action the condition of instability has become general, and this gives the whole phenomenon a catastrophic character.

One point must, however, be emphasised; i.e., that the breakdown does not take capitalism back to the starting-point of the previous cycle. The system as a whole is slowly and continuously expanding. The crisis is an alternating movement between more and less speedy development.

W. H. MAINWARING

(To be continued.)

TEN-MINUTES' TALKS *with* NEW STUDENTS

VII.—PRODUCTION AND POVERTY

AT the present time somewhere about one worker in three is unemployed or is working such short time as to be for all practical purposes in the same position. In addition, millions of those who are on full time have had their wages so seriously reduced that their position is not very noticeably better than that of the unemployed. Never before has there been such mass poverty. Try as we may to disguise the fact, Britain is simply a gigantic workhouse, a land of beggars.

What is the explanation? We're told that economic conditions necessitate large numbers of unemployed, and sweeping reductions in the wages of the rest of the workers; that, regrettable as it may be, it is impossible for industry to provide the means of life for large sections of the population. Wages, education grants, unemployment doles, all are cut down, because the country, so it is asserted, cannot produce the necessary wealth.

But can we agree that poverty is inevitable—is in the nature of things? It is undeniable that there was a time when poverty not only existed but was bound to exist. In primitive times, though all men were equal, they were all equally poor, equally uncultured, and it is easy to understand why. All men were poor because man's tools were so crude, so primitive that they sufficed to produce only the barest living. In the systems of society that

followed primitive communism—chattel slavery, with its slaves and slave-owners, and feudalism with its serfs and lords—we find that although the slave-owners and the lords were wealthy, the great masses—the slaves and the serfs—were exceedingly poor and uncultured. In those days it was possible for only a few men to have wealth and culture, because although tools had improved somewhat they were still crude. The masses, as in primitive communism, were condemned by the as yet unsolved problem of production to lifelong poverty. Does the same reason for poverty exist to-day?

Before Capitalism, all works had to be done by power derived mainly from the muscles of men, assisted by the muscles of horses and oxen, and by the power taken from the rivers by means of the old-fashioned water-wheel. To-day we use mechanical power. According to one authority, the factories of Britain derive from coal alone the power of 175,000,000 men, and if we add to that the power got from coal used in ships and on railways, the 20,000,000 or so adult men and women of Britain have at their disposal the power of 265,000,000 men. To-day a crane can lift ten tons as easily as a boy can lift a box of matches; and again, thanks to mechanical power, a modern steam-hammer can pound a ton of iron into a pancake as easily as a man can crush a walnut with a stone. All this mechanical power is the product of Capitalism.

If we turn to the production of useful articles, we find that a worker with the best modern machinery can make two hundred pairs of boots in the time it took the old cobbler to make one pair. The best modern weaving machine can weave two hundred times as much cloth as the old handloom. What is more, the new machines go on weaving while the workers are away at dinner, and, should a thread break, the machine stops of its own accord. For the manufacturing of matches, a machine exists that turns out 144,000 boxes of matches per day. At one end it takes in solid blocks of pinewood: at the other it runs the finished matches into boxes, closes the boxes, puts them in packages of a dozen, and seals them up! Again, all these wonderful labour-saving machines are the products, the handiwork of Capitalism.

Capitalism has completely altered the position. Capitalism's great gift to man has been to increase productivity enormously. Capitalism has put into our hands tools and machines so gigantic and so productive that they make the greatest tools of the past seem mere playthings. *In doing so, it has completely wiped out the iron reason that condemned the masses to poverty in times gone by.* It has made communism and culture possible together. In the past communism meant poverty for all; thanks to Capitalism, communism to-day would mean wealth for all.

"Ah," you say, "but have you not just shown that we haven't got wealth for all?" True! Capitalism has solved the problem of production, but it has left *another* problem *unsolved.* That problem can only be solved by an educated working class. Next month we shall see what that problem is.

J. P. M. MILLAR

LIVE CLASS-SECRETARIES ARE NOW GETTING BUSY WITH THAT PLEBS PAMPHLET

The CURRICULUM *of the* LABOUR COLLEGE

A short sketch of certain changes now in course of adoption. Class-organisers everywhere will study it with considerable interest.

FOR some little time the staff of the Labour College, with a few friends, have been discussing the College curriculum in the light of the experience gained during the past few years, with a view to such changes and extensions as appeared likely to lead to better educational results. Information regarding subjects taught and methods adopted in working-class educational institutions in Russia, America and other countries has been collected and studied. Finally a draft scheme was drawn up and presented to the Governors; who, realising that it was in the interests of the members of the two Unions controlling the College that the utmost should be done to increase its value and efficiency, promptly adopted the scheme, and it will be put into actual operation—so far, at any rate, as its principal features are concerned—when the College opens later this month.

A brief outline of its main points will be of interest to all friends of the College, as well, we hope, as of some usefulness to class secretaries and others making their plans for the winter's work in their respective districts.

The chief aim of the scheme is the *correlation* of all lecture courses, new and old, with a view to a coherent, connected programme of studies covering the period of scholarship (two years). The various subjects taught are not, that is, to be taught or studied in "watertight compartments"; but related to one another, and treated *as parts* of the curriculum as a whole. This will eliminate unnecessary overlapping, and at the same time add to the interest of each separate subject, since every possible point of contact with his other studies will be emphasised for the student. It will necessitate, of course, close co-operation among the lecturers, and joint planning of their respective syllabuses.

The second point of importance is the inclusion in the curriculum, particularly during the earlier period of scholarship, of certain courses of *general instruction*—in history, geography, literature, etc.—without which as a basis the more specialised studies which form the essential part of the College teaching are, it is felt, largely reduced in value and effectiveness. The majority of the College students have had to make the best of the very unsatisfactory "general education" provided in the State elementary schools; and without at any rate some "rubbing up" of this very elementary knowledge they are not likely—having since they left school been perforce occupied with other matters than study—to tackle successfully advanced Economics or Modern History. A specialist, in any case, is the better for a general "all round" grip of other subjects. Furthermore, a majority of the College students will later take up work as class-teachers or propagandists; and the value in either instance of some general knowledge is too obvious to need pointing out.

One important extension of the curriculum will be the addition of a course in Elementary Physical Science (biology, etc.). Another will be a series of lectures on Literature, historical and modern.

The general plan of the whole course (six terms) will be as follows :—

1st Term.—Introductory Courses on the General Scope and Aim of Labour College Education : and General Elementary Lectures.

2nd, 3rd and 4th Terms.—General "Foundational" Courses in Social Science.

5th and 6th Terms.—Final Courses (in which students may specialise) : Social Science Theories applied to *Contemporary Problems.*

An important change is also suggested in actual teaching methods. Instead of, as hitherto, the *lectures* being the principal means of education, a *course of reading* in each subject will be the main consideration. Lectures will be confined to broad outlines, and to notes and comments on the text-books being read. In addition, regular weekly *group-interviews* will enable the tutor to see that every student is following the course diligently and efficiently, and to deal with individual cases needing extra coaching, etc.

The whole scheme makes necessary the appointment of two additional resident lecturers, and one or two more visiting lecturers. The Principal of the College will take no part in the ordinary curriculum, but devote himself in the main to the special Lecture Courses and regular interviewing of students with a view to following the development of the general educational scheme and its value to the students individually and collectively. This will enable him, also, to exercise general supervision over the work of the College as a whole. And—which is a matter of first-rate importance to the movement generally—the increase in staff will leave each member freer for the writing of booklets, leaflets, syllabuses, etc., which are so urgently needed by the classes everywhere.

This short sketch will serve to show Plebs that our work is *developing*, and that we do not intend to rest content with what has been achieved in the past. It should also give them some material to use in the work of persuading their own fellow-Unionists to support the Labour College.

G. S.

CO-ORDINATION *of* COLLEGES *and* CLASSES

The manifesto on this vitally important subject issued by the Manchester and Sheffield class centres has aroused keen interest in every part of our movement. Last month we printed the comments of Will Lawther, of the North-Eastern area. Below are letters from the secretaries of two other important district councils—London and Liverpool ; and also an interesting suggestion from an individual Pleb.

I AM glad to see that the College Governors intend to go into this very urgent question. The provincial movement has two main difficulties to contend with :—

(1) Lack of steady financial support.
(2) Insufficient number of trained tutors.

As regards (1) the Governors of the College could help by impressing those Organisations which finance the College that they have *a two-fold obligation :* (a) To support the College ; (b) to support the Provincial Classes, which disseminate the specialised knowledge obtained through the College to the rank and file. *We find in this area (Merseyside) that the N.U.R. members generally have not realised this two-fold obligation. The support from their Branches and the number of their members attending classes, compares very badly with other Organisations. We even find N.U.R. Branches and Officials actively supporting the W.E.A.!*

On this matter of finance I note that the Nat. Amal. Union of Building Trade Workers is levying its members 1s. each annually for educational purposes. The allocation of this

amount has not yet been decided upon. The Governors of the College should take steps to see that this levy is not diverted to Ruskin College, W.E.A., or other pseudo-working-class educational bodies. Pleb members of this Union should likewise get busy in the matter.

Regarding the question of tutors, the time has passed when classes can be put in charge of inefficients who simply make confusion worse confounded. The standard demanded in this area is a high one, due to the competition of the W.E.A. and University Extension Movement. It is not helpful to allow some aspirant to take charge of classes, and then find him break down under the fire of criticisms and questions. As one means of finding out the qualifications of tutors, the College, as the centre of the movement, should institute annual examinations in Economics, Industrial History, etc., somewhat on the lines of Oxford Locals; diplomas to be awarded to successful candidates.

Steps should be taken at once to link up the whole of the Colleges, Councils for I.W.-C.E., and Classes into a National Organisation; the initiative to be taken by the Governors of the College as most conducive for success.

JOHN HAMILTON
(Sec. Liverpool and Dist. Council I.W.-C.E.)

The question of the co-ordination of the classes in various parts of the country is of tremendous import to the future development of the Labour movement.

For a number of years the College had to wage a bitter struggle for existence and recognition, but at long last its advocates convinced the majority of the members of two of the principal Trades Unions of the practical value of its education to them as wage-workers; with the result that these two Unions, the N.U.R. and the S.W.M.F., took upon themselves financial responsibility for the College, thereby enabling it to devote all its energies to the educating of resident students.

The first battle in the fight for independent working-class education was won. But this has only paved the way for the next stage in the fight. The College is or should be a means to an end, viz., the education of the masses, and these can only be educated by means of classes. Up to the present, the energies of the College have been fully occupied in developing and perfecting itself as a College; and we have to bear in mind that, out of the whole T.U. movement, only two Unions are committed to the control and management of the College. It is this fact which accounts to a large extent for the problems confronting the classes.

However, in spite of this drawback, educational classes have sprung up in all parts of the country, due largely to the propaganda of the Plebs League and its supporters; until now they have reached a point at which the need for some method of co-ordination is urgently felt.

This need for co-ordination has already gained expression to some extent by the formation of Educational Councils linking up the classes in a certain area. To-day these Councils and the classes under their control are in precisely the same predicament as was the College itself prior to its being taken over by the two Unions named. They are dependent for their existence on the voluntary support they obtain from T.U. branches and other Labour organisations in their respective localities.

It is plain that if class work is to be conducted efficiently the classes must be placed on as sound a basis as the College itself. But when we come to examine the relationship between the College and the classes we are faced with a somewhat difficult situation. The classes draw support and obtain students from many Unions which do not recognise or participate in the management of the College. The branches of these Unions in the localities where Educational Councils exist have been converted to the support of the classes, but their Unions as a body are not converted to the support and upkeep of the central institution. This is a contradiction that must be removed if the classes and the College are to function efficiently. In the meantime can we expect the two Unions responsible for the management of the College also to make themselves responsible for the class work outside the College?

In answer, I think we can say that whilst we cannot expect them to make themselves wholly responsible in a financial sense, they can render valuable assistance by helping to organise and co-ordinate the class-work. By so doing they would go a long way towards gaining the support of the rest of the T.U. movement for the central institution. The fact that many branches of other Unions already support the Councils and their classes proves that it is only properly organised propaganda that is needed in order to win over the bulk of the T.U. movement to the College. That, at least, is my own experience as regards the various T.U. branches in the London area.

ROBT. HOLDER
(Organising Sec., London Council I.W.-C.E.)

DEAR COMRADE,—The chief difficulty of the classes throughout the country is the scarcity of teachers. I would like Plebs' opinions on the following suggestion:—

> A PLEBS scheme for sending students to the Labour College for six months, expenses paid, with, say, 30s. a week paid to student towards his home expenses.

Any person wishing to become a member of the scheme pays 1s. a month for six months, at the end of which time a number of students

will be sent to the College. Sufficient finance will be in hand to send one student from every 320 (about), and each member would have the same opportunity, as the method of choosing students would be by " draw."

Yours frat.,

W. HODGMAN

[The chief difficulty about our correspondent's scheme is that the whole scheme of study at the Labour College is based on a two years', not a six months', course; and without a separate curriculum—and a separate staff—for the short-course students, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to fit them in. Our own feeling is that a more practicable scheme to press upon the Governors would be the institution of a Summer School at the College—say, of a month's duration—for intending tutors; in connection with which Plebs scholarships, on the lines our correspondent suggests, could very well be instituted.—ED., PLEBS.]

ECONOMICS *without* HEADACHES

IX.

THIS commodity, labour power, having been bought by the capitalist, becomes the vital factor in the process of surplus-value production. The labourer in whose body it resides applies himself in the factory to the work set for him by the employer; he takes up tools, works upon raw materials, and in due course finished goods pass from his hands on their way to market. While he works, some of his physical and mental energy are exhausted, and these can only be replenished by the food he eats and the rest he takes. For working he will receive (as the average worker receives) just about enough wages to enable him to buy commodities sufficient to keep him physically active and to reproduce his kind.

But the goods he is turning out must be of greater value than the value of the goods his wages will buy. The machine he operates cannot confer any addition to the value of the finished goods except that portion of the value of the machine worn away in the process; the raw materials cannot increase in value of themselves, because as finished goods the raw materials simply express themselves in another form.

No matter how simple the process of wealth production may be, the labourer must receive enough to keep him alive. When the handicraftsman was the typical worker of his day he received his individual wage—the exchange value of his labour power—and gave to the employer of his day the use value of that power. But social development brought new forms of manufacture, and the worker in combination with his fellows was able to give to the employer a greater return.

When men are grouped together for work it is possible for them to do more as separate individuals. When a fire breaks out at a farm miles away from a fire brigade depot, there are two ways of tackling the job. One is for each helper to seize a bucket, run to a pond, fill the bucket, and return with it to throw the water on to the flames. If this is done everyone may work very hard without doing much—except probably a lot of obstructing. But if people line up, form a chain, and pass the buckets from hand to hand it is probable that ten times as much water will be thrown where it is needed, and much useful energy will be saved. Now if these fire fighters were workers in the ordinary sense, and were actually paid wages while doing the job, each would have to receive a wage enough to keep him alive whichever system was in operation. But the second system would give the employer infinitely greater returns without adding in any way to the market value of the labourer's energy. In this way, the experience of the ages results in giving to the purchaser of labour power better value for his money, but gives nothing extra to the seller of that commodity.

The bricklayer working at the top of a high scaffold would not do much in the course of a day if he had to carry up his own bricks and mortar as well as build the wall. So a labourer fills the hod and mounts the ladder while the " brickie " uses the hammer and trowel. The result is that one bricklayer and one labourer do the work of three or four men who did not specialise in one particular line of work. In the engineering shop division of labour is carried out to the *n*th degree, and the employer gains every time. Instead of an all-round mechanic taking on the job of machining a cylinder (say) throughout, the piece of work passes from man to man, one worker turns the outside while another bores it, and so on. Each worker, because he specialises on one operation, becomes more expert at his task, and in addition no time is lost changing over the tools, altering the machine or " setting up." All the time, the worker receives just what he received before the age of either grouped labour or machinery—just enough wages to enable him to buy the commodities necessary to enable him to go on working.

The apologist for the capitalist argues that the added return that comes to capital because of the adoption of new methods of organising work is due to the ability of the capitalist in perceiving the possibilities of the new methods and putting them into operation. If every new concern started business on a hand-labour basis and recapitulated industrial development inside its own walls something (though not much) might be

said for this point of view. But a new concern starts where all its predecessors have left off, so to speak; in other words, it takes advantage of all the progress made down the centuries—grouped labour-division, machinery, etc.—and the capitalist calmly claims all these results of social development as the reward for HIS ability.

But the capitalist need not have ability. It is no part of the duty of the investor as such to know anything about the technique or organisation of an industry. It is not necessary for him to know where the place is in which his money has been invested. Division of labour has been applied even to the task of money investing, and the capitalist can always find someone ready to relieve him (for a consideration) of the work of discovering the most profitable investments, leaving to him only the simple and pleasant occupation of receiving dividends.

In an earlier day, the employer who wanted to get more out of his labourers strove to increase the number of hours worked by them. He knew that his workers must work for a given time to produce their own sustenance, and the longer they worked beyond that time, the better for him. Now, it is not possible for the working day to be lengthened. Trade union activity and legislation have fixed time limits. So that if the employer wishes to increase the amount of his surplus value he must find out how to reduce the time taken by the labourer to produce his own wages; and he is not slow to adopt any and every method for this purpose.

But, the capitalist argues, modern industry with its costly machinery requires large amounts of capital, and the increased returns are his rewards for the risk he takes with the money he advances. Risk! His machinery stands where it did and is not likely to run away of its own accord; and the portion of his capital he considers has been "advanced" to the labourers in the form of wages has not been advanced at all, for the workers have always to advance their labour power to the capitalists before they receive any wages. In many cases in this country labour power is advanced two weeks before any wages are drawn.

W. McLAINE

STUDENTS' NOTES *and* QUERIES

Q.—Can a theist consistently believe in the Materialist Conception of History?

A.—Well, hardly! Though theists can do wonderful things when they try.*

To reply belatedly to W. B. (Gorseinon):—

(1) As you suggest, exchange value is determined by the socially necessary labour time of reproduction, and that labour is general or abstract as opposed to the particular and concrete labours of the gold miner and others.

(2) Value is to gold what length is to the measuring tape; a material expression of a social or a mental relation. When gold became widely used it became the money commodity—a monarch enjoying world-wide sway.

(3) Obviously the value of gold can be ascertained only in exchange. Even if gold itself never comes into the transaction, the man selling his commodity mentally equates it to a certain amount of money when he gives it a price. If the other commodities given for gold have a greater value, then the gold-mining industry will show a profit greater than the average rate, and in time capital will flow in from other industries. Gold production will be increased and relatively the production of other commodities decreased until equal values are again exchanged. Because gold varies so little in value as compared, say, with strawberries or wheat, it was used as a measure of value. The fact that an ounce of gold always costs £3 17s. 10½d. does not interfere with the operation of the law of value. For when gold decreases in value, the price of gold being fixed, prices of other commodities go up. If gold increases in value, prices fall.

Q.—If, as you state, price is the monetary expression of value, how can an object have price but no value? In other words, how can it be an expression of something non-existent?

A.—Because the money expression, though it cannot be explained apart from value, is something different to the thing it expresses. A comes from C, but A is not C. This is why conscience, honour, antiquities, "old masters," or virgin soil, none of which can be reproduced by human labour, have a price. Anything can be sold in capitalist society if it can be monopolised and separated from its possessor. (*Capital*, Vol. I., p. 75; III., p. 742.)

H. B. criticises our usual method of presenting history in "watertight compartments"—in sharply defined successive periods of Chattel-Slavery, Serfdom, and Wage Slavery. He argues that such presentation is untrue, since it gives no hint of the actual overlappings and retrogressions. Our

*A pamphlet just received from the "Christian Counter-Communist Crusade," entitled *Communism or Religion*, answers our correspondent's question from the theist's side. "It cannot be too clearly emphasised," says the writer (who quotes the important passages on the M.C.H. from the *Communist Manifesto* and the *Critique*), "that the Marxist doctrine is not so much a positive denial of spiritual sanctions as a complete, logical, materialistic philosophy of life, economic and social, in which God and the supernatural have no place or part."—ED., PLEBS.

defence is that the generalisation is broadly true, and, if supplemented by references to the overlapping and "intermixture" of the different periods, is of immense service in giving us a sense of *social development*. It should interest H. B. to know that W. W. Craik thinks the period of the decay of ancient civilisation, in which the wage-labourer can clearly be seen emerging direct from chattel-slavery, is worthy of closer study than it has hitherto received.

Among T.U. journals the *Assurance Agents' Chronicle* stands in a class by itself. Its editorial and other contributions manifest a theoretical insight quite out of the ordinary. It has just issued in pamphlet form (28 pp., 3d.) a series of articles on *Trades Unionism*, by W. McLaine. Classes with members suffering from shortage of funds would find this useful as a concise summary of T.U. development.

M. S.

TRA LA MONDO: *Esperanto Notes*

THE Universal Esperanto Congress, which took place in Praha, Czecho-Slovakia, during the first week in August, once again demonstrated the possibility of holding an international gathering in a common tongue. Congressists to the number of 2,600, representing forty different nationalities, took part; all the meetings, of course, being conducted in Esperanto. A number of sectional meetings of various organisations and interests took place during the week, and among these was the meeting of the revolutionary organisation, Liberiga Stelo. Henri Barbusse, unable to attend in person, accepted the hon. presidency of this gathering. An extract from his letter of acceptance appears below.

* * *

A communiqué received from the Petrograd *Esperanta Informejo*, Fontanka 17, Petrograd, states that the following Esperanto societies exist in Petrograd:—

(1) Union of Young Esperantists.
(2) Anarchist Esperanto Group.
(3) Group of Esperantist Postal Officials.
(4) The Esperanto Club.

The last-named is housed in good premises, and the officers receive a salary from the Government.

* * *

KARA KAMARADO.—Ĝis nun la Universala-Lingvo montriĝis kvazaŭ distrilo, komfortilo ebliganta plifaciligon de interrilatoj inter iuj personoj, iuj grupoj; ĝi nur ŝajnis faciligilo por komerco, ia elegantaĵo kaj delikataĵo por intelektuloj, kaj tia propagando entenis mi ne scias kion suprajan, aristokratan kaj monduman. Plejparte el tiuj, kiuj sin dediĉis al ĝia disvastigo ne difinis al ĝi tre vastan kaj profundan celon, sed ĝin konsideris kvazaŭ luksan ornamaĵon de la civilizacio. Ili faris nur ian kosmopolitismon el Universala Ekspozicio.

Nun ili ekvidas la teruran potencon, kiun kaŝenhavas la Universala Lingvo kaj la grandegan pozitivan kaptecon, kiun ĝi kapablas apliki sur la ideojn, perforte kunligante ĉion, kio estas simila.

La burĝaj kaj mondumaj esperantistoj estos pli kaj pli mirigataj kaj terurigataj de ĉio povanta eliri el tiu talismano: Instrumento donanta al ĉiuj ajn homoj la eblon interkompreniĝi.

La starigo de via internacia Asocio, kiu estiĝas meze de la necertecoj kaj fantaziaĵo de la burĝaj esperantistaj organismoj, signas la novan kaj definitivan etapon de la ideo. Vi nun staras en vera efektiviĝo kaj sur la vera kampo, kien vi devis preni lokon.

Kun fervoro mi akceptas la honoron, kiun vi faras al mi metante vian baldaŭan kongreson sub mia prezido. Treege mi bedaŭras, ke nur per la penso mi ĉeestos, ĉar pro multaj motivoj mi ne povos partopreni tiun kunvenon. Sed estu konvinkita, ke mia simpatio por via afero kaj por vi mem ne estas supraĵa kaj vorta: ĉiel laŭeble mi penos por helpi vin.

Kredu, vi kaj viaj kamaradoj, je miaj fratece sindonemaj sentoj.—HENRI BARBUSSE.

DEKALOGO DE LA PROLETARIO!

Laŭ germana traduko el "Isvestija" (Moskvo)

1 a. Ciu laboristo estas via frato, lernu ami lin, ke vi ĉiam en ĉio kaj ĉie estu unuanimaj.

2 a. Kondutu ĉiam honeste, estu honorinda kaj virta.

3 a. Gardu vian sanon, evitu la alkoholon kaj la kunularon, kiu degeneras viajn korpon kaj animon.

4 a. La liberan tempon dediĉu al la legado de instruaj libroj, al promenadoj en la naturo al kantado gimnastikado, ludadoj.

5 a. Amu la naturon, koniĝu kun ĝi, diferencigu la bonon de la malbono.

6 a. Se vi volas, ke la juneco estu al vi kara rememoro, tiem travivu ĝin honeste.

7 a. Estu konscia, via tempo estu dediĉata al la laboro kaj tiun ĉi finu perfekte. Venku malamon kaj koleremon.

8 a. Plenumu gaje kaj volonte la devojn ŝarĝitajn al vi.

9 a. Pripensu, ke klereco estas forto kaj potenco kaj penu fariĝi utila membro de la homa socio.

10 a. La venkon ni nur povas batall per la konscio, ke tio, kion ni plenumas, estu ĝusta kaj utila al la tuto, ke ni fidele kaj firme devas interligiĝi kaj ke ĉio kion ni entreprenas unuece kaj solidare, estas unu paŝo al la granda venko, kion ni perbatalas per la unueco de la pensoj kaj la forto de la korpo. Antaŭen, fortigu ni brakon kaj spiriton. (El *Der Arbeiter-Esperantist*.)

LETTERS *from* PLEBS

Proletarian Philosophy

DEAR EDITOR,—I am entirely in agreement with "Tutor" that scientific method in the hands of scientists is largely unconscious, though the case of Russell is hardly in point since (i.) Russell's training on the scientific side has been purely mathematical and not concerned with the interpretation of concrete experience; and (ii.) in his later work Russell has completely recanted the traditional Platonic standpoint taken up in his H.U. booklet (see especially "Scientific Method in Philosophy" in *Mysticism and Logic*).

The point I wish to stress with regard to Dietzgen is that his works are not perhaps the most efficient vehicle for the study of scientific philosophy. The laws of motion formulated by Newton are for most practical purposes the basis of all our mechanics, but no teacher would tell a new student to study the *Principia* for an introduction to this branch of science. The reason is obvious—not that Newton's discovery has been superseded, but that succeeding authors have been able to present the same truths in a more attractive way.

Now I do not think that Dietzgen has put the principles of scientific philosophy in a supernally attractive form, though it is to his honour that he was a pioneer in that field. But "Tutor" will find the same point of view presented in a more interesting style in the opening chapters of Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*. Consequently I am certain that if W. W. Craik's new book is anything like his *Short Outline* students will probably get a better idea of what Dietzgen stands for by studying it than by "detailed perusal of the works of Dietzgen."

But there is one thing I should like to suggest in this connection; seeing that a galaxy of scientific philosophers have, since Dietzgen's time, followed a similar train of thought, no restatement of the principle of scientific philosophy can afford to refrain from drawing on such additional sources for illustration and clearness. In particular Ostwald's *Natural Philosophy*, Pearson's *Grammar of Science*, Mach's *Analysis of Sensation* and Whitehead's *Concept of Nature* stand in the first rank for the exposition of scientific determinism. And by neglecting to honour those who cast out devils by another name we only aggravate the charge of doctrinarianism which our opponents bestow upon us.

As to the relation of psychology and scientific philosophy, raised by "Tutor" at the conclusion of his letter, it must be emphasised that scientific philosophy comprises three entirely different fields—(i.) the critique of traditional teleological philosophy; (ii.) scientific synthesis (inter-relationship of the sciences); (iii.) the science of understanding. I agree with "Tutor" that modern psychology does not exhaust (iii.); for in understanding there are two fundamentally different issues to consider: (A) the factors which determine how our interest shall be directed and thus influence our perspectives and the extent of our experience, (B) the actual integration of experience (i.e., principles of scientific reasoning). Roughly the first only of these is dealt with by contemporary analytical psychology; and for the present, therefore, the discussion of formal reasoning does constitute a constructive field of philosophy outside the domain of psychology.

I, too, would like to "draw" E. & C. Paul to explain by what inventive process of association they connect the atavistic crudities of M. Henri Bergson with the New Movement in psychology, and integrate them in a system of proletarian philosophy. Were it not for the fact that Bergson is such a manifestly shallow thinker that to see through his fallacies is an intelligence test, I cannot imagine any writer more subversive of the Plebs outlook to recommend to students.

Yours frat.,

P. L. E. B

Why Bergson?

DEAR EDITOR,—I notice in the August PLEBS that Gwyn Hughes delivered two lectures on Bergson under the auspices of the Ferndale Plebs group; and E. & C. Paul in their "Brief Course of Reading in Psychology" say:—"We have explained elsewhere our conviction that certain elements of Bergsonian philosophy are essential constituents of the new proletarian outlook."

As one who has attempted to study Bergson's *Creative Evolution*—with little success so far—I should like someone to explain wherein lies Bergson's contribution to "the essential constituents of the new proletarian outlook."

Let me relate my own difficulty in attempting to understand *Creative Evolution*. In the first instance, Bergson's poetical and metaphysical weaving of words hinders an understanding of the essence of his subject. Next, what does he mean by his "vital impetus," and by such phrases as "the natural bent of our soul," "the metaphysician that we each carry unconsciously within us," "real duration is that duration which gnaws on things, and leaves on them the mark of its tooth," "real time," "abstract time" and so on?

I notice that E. & C. P., in their "Brief Course," don't mention Dietzgen. Also in their review, "Thinking about Thinking," they say that Dietzgen attempted answers fifty years ago to "How do we know?"—"How do we think?" without saying,

whether Dietzgen succeeded in explaining "the general nature of thought" or not.

Now, my contention is that Dietzgen's positive achievement and contribution to proletarian culture lies in his scientific analysis of the nature of thought. Why Dietzgen should be overlooked and ignored, and such stuff as Bergson's philosophy presented as "essential constituents of the new proletarian outlook," I can't understand. There must be some reason; that reason some person might explain, if possible.

In conclusion, I may mention that quite a number of Dietzgen students in Glasgow have tried to study Bergson, and the general opinion is that he is an elusive bourgeois metaphysician making a last stand for bourgeois ignorance.

Yours in anticipation,
S. M. CONNELLY

Rutherglen, Lanarks.

WHY RUSSELL?

DEAR EDITOR,—If *The Analysis of Mind* is no better than *Problems of Philosophy*, I do not intend spending money or wasting time on it.

In their review of the first-named book E. & C. Paul tell us that Bertrand Russell has made a valiant effort to wrestle with philosophical problems that are possibly unanswerable, and that Dietzgen "attempted" answers to them fifty years ago. Oh, why is Joseph Dietzgen ignored so much and when will he come into his own? (We don't even get an article concerning him in the PLEBS.)

Dietzgen certainly showed us that there are no unanswerable riddles, and he positively answered the questions E. & C. P. opened out with. Pannekoek tells us in his Introduction to the *Nature of Human Brainwork* that Dietzgen's works are supplementary to those of Marx, and that a shortcoming of Marxism is cured by Dietzgen. Engels pays him a similar tribute.

Let us congratulate ourselves that the enigmas Russell cannot understand were solved by a proletarian thinker half a century ago.

Yours frat.,
OLIVER JONES

A CORRECTION

DEAR COMRADE,—E. & C. Paul, in their excellent suggestions for a reading course in psychology, give the price of Bernard Hart's *Psychology of Insanity* (Cambridge University Press) as 4s. 6d.

As this book is one of the clearest elementary expositions of how the mind works, the nature of the complex, rationalisation, etc., that a beginner could wish for, it is worth while mentioning that the price is only 3s., or post free 3s. 4d.*

Yours frat., NORDICUS

[* But the PLEBS Textbook (see announcement on another page) will be even better value.—ED., PLEBS.]

MARXISM AND LITERATURE

DEAR EDITOR,—As no protest has yet been made against Ernest Johns's attempt to subject literature to the Marxian test, and as your own critique of *Robinson Crusoe* in the suggested form may give an impetus to similar perpetrations, I feel that a note of dissent even from a novice among PLEBS' controversialists should be recorded.

It is often said of us Marxians that we are narrowly dogmatic and have a tendency to become stereotyped, and although I have always rebelled against the acceptance of such judgment, yet there are times when my comrades set me wavering. Our scientific basis must inevitably tend to make our views on all questions of fact identical, and this is good, but surely all works of the imagination should be left to float free from the contracting tests of science. If the course which Comrade Johns suggests is pursued, not only shall we all be studying the same didactic literature, but also the same selected works of fiction, and from the same viewpoint—and how tenuous that list of "accurate" novels will be!

We know that, broadly speaking, a writer is the product of his times; for instance, that Henry James could hardly have imagined his decadent-patrician types had he written in the Middle Ages, but the essential quality of Henry James's novels does not lie in the fact that his types are true, and that the life which he depicts corresponds with the social life of the time. So far as an outsider can judge indeed they present a distorted vision even of the "smart set," and are most inaccurate in the implied supposition that the working class does not exist—but who cares? Those who admire Henry James's work regard these idiosyncrasies either as a negligible or as a necessary part of his creative genius.

Again, if asked to review Meredith's *Tragic Comedians* for the PLEBS, must the reviewer judge each incident and character in relation to the facts of the closing episode of Lassalle's life?—and must Meredith, like Drinkwater, be discredited because he ignored the movement for the sake of the man? Must we abjure Ibsen in favour of Defoe because the former's imaginative quality tended towards *selection* of facts as a framework for creation, while Defoe was content to reproduce exactly what was true—for, as Taine says of *Robinson Crusoe*: "Art cannot have piled up this heap of dull and vulgar accidents—it is the truth."

Let us break free at the outset from Comrade Johns's paralysing project, and admit that Art cannot be fettered, and that if we seek in fiction the reflection of contemporary society we shall inevitably be led astray. No artist can portray in fiction the life of his times. At best he can illumine that which had come within the range of his experience, and even then the illumination, as a truth revealer, must necessarily

be imperfect. For instance, what kind of social background will our descendants be able to reconstruct from the novels of Hardy, Conrad, Montague, Cannan, Galsworthy and the numerous writers who may outlast our age? Contrast the mental conclusions arrived at through reading Wells' *Tono Bungay* and any of Hardy's novels. Two different countries and epochs seem to be portrayed. If Hardy alone should survive as the standard novelist of our times, will a fact-seeking posterity reject him because his studies of peasant life do not correspond with the outstanding industrialism of the Victorian era?

The novel is essentially the literary medium of self-expression for the writer, and as such we must accept it. We can apply many tests to gauge its merits, but it will no more bear the test of accuracy than an epic poem. If it does, then the novelist has failed in his art. It is precisely because the facts which form the basis of a novel have been transformed in the imagination of the writer that we find recreation in reading fiction. The personality of the writer is everything, the theme is of little account. What would become of the works of Rolland, Flaubert, Querido, Stevenson, France, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, or even Zola in the hands of Comrade Johns's precise and capable "guide"?

Yours frat.,
MYFANWY WESTROPE

[Our correspondent's letter deserves—and will get in forthcoming numbers of the PLEBS—a longer reply than we have space for here.

But we must point out that she is confusing two separate lines of approach to Fiction (and to other imaginative art):—(1) The "utilitarian" attempt to use novels as "social documents," as supplementary matter to more formal historical studies. This, we think, is quite legitimate, but—as our correspondent rightly points out—it ought not to be allowed to influence our standards of judgment or our power of appreciation of works of art as such. (2) The attempt at a *critical appreciation* of works of art based on our Historical Materialist point of view, and on a study of the social conditions of the period which produced any particular writer. This is another matter. Either Marx formulated an interpretation of man's history which covered the whole field, or he did not. We think he did. That it is only too easy to *apply* his historical method crudely, and without knowledge of *all* the facts, we admit. But if our correspondent can tell us of any line of approach to Literature—as Literature—which promises to throw more new light on its development, or to assist in a greater degree in forming a *critically intelligent* appreciation of it, than the line of approach offered by Historical Materialism, then we should be delighted to hear of it.

It is simply mid-Victorian nonsense to talk about the "contracting tests of science"; or to say that art is "a medium of *self*-expression."—as though the artist's "self" was an isolated entity, removed from all contact with the life and thought of his time.

As for Taine on *Robinson Crusoe*—well, Taine's views on English literature are not of immense importance. But our correspondent may be interested to know that there are writers (and critics) to-day—by no means Marxians!—who regard Defoe as one of the greatest *artists* in the whole range of English literature.—ED., PLEBS.]

MORE ABOUT SHELLEY

DEAR EDITOR,—There is really no need for Ralph Fox to waste space in explaining that the capitalist allies of the Chartists left the proletarian section badly in the lurch when they had achieved their own class ends. 'Twas ever thus, my friend; but it doesn't prove that the capitalists were not truly revolutionary. It only shows that their revolutionary fervour had very distinct class limits. Cromwell and his colonels were revolutionary—even to the extent of committing the supremely revolutionary act of cutting off the King's head—but read their debates, and see how determinedly they took their stand for the rights of private property menaced by the proletarian levellers.

To return to Shelley. It is of course impossible to *prove* that his inspiration was purely capitalist, but I think it is a misuse of words to class him "beyond all equivocation a Socialist," and I am perfectly certain it is a grave misstatement to say that "the very basis of his philosophy was economic communism." Shelley absorbed his social and political views from his father-in-law, Wm. Godwin, and was his lifelong disciple. Godwin is described in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as "the philosophical representative of English radicalism," and "the friend of Sheridan and other Whig politicians"; at one time he "regarded Napoleon as the saviour of society."

Shelley's closest friends were Byron and Leigh Hunt. They were planning at the time of his death the joint production of a periodical to be called *The Liberal*, in which the political views of the trio were to find united expression. Again turning to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, we find the sentimental humanitarian Hunt described as ". . . cheerful and humanising. He is perhaps the best teacher in our literature of the contentment which flows from a recognition of everyday joys and blessings!" Count them over one by one, Comrade Fox, on behalf of the English proletarian of 1819!

As regards Byron, there is no need to labour the point that *he* was no "economic communist," but the following fact is interesting as proving the limitation of his ideals. In Italy he joined a secret society, the Carboneria, whose object was the liberation

of Italy from foreign domination, and the establishment of constitutional government. This he described as " a grand object—the very poetry of politics ! "

Birds of a feather flock together ! and I venture to think that Shelley has been correctly described in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th edition) as " the supreme poet of the new era which, beginning with the French Revolution, remains continuous into our own times."

That era, I need hardly say, is the era of capitalist democracy !

Yours frat.,
ERNEST JOHNS

P.S.—I am more than gratified by the support of my little suggestion *re* Novel Notes. The Ed. gives us just what I had in mind in his treatment of *Robinson Crusoe* —most excellent choice for a commencement of our excursion into fiction !—but I do wish he could make it a special feature every month, devote half a page to it, and *number* each novel dealt with. My reason in asking this is to facilitate reference : it is not always possible to read a book immediately after the notes appear in the PLEBS, and when the opportunity to do so occurs we may have difficulty in finding them. However, the Editor has given us a start, and I hope he will persuade Postgate and Newbold to quit their fratricidal slogging match and lend a hand. Among the books which might well feature in this series I would name :— Fielding's *Amelia*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Dickens' *Hard Times* and *Barnaby Rudge*, Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, Meredith's *Egoist* and *Evan Harrington*, Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, Surtees' *Handley Cross*, Cuthbert Bede's *Verdant Green*, Stevenson's *Weir of Hermiston*, Hewlett's *The Stooping Lady*, Doyle's *Micah Clarke*, George Douglas' *The House with the Green Shutters*.

This last is its author's one and only novel. It is a wonderful psychological study. First published about 1906, it has been reprinted recently and can be obtained at any bookstall for 2s. I wish " Nordicus " could be induced to review it for us.—E. J.

DEAR COMRADE,—To Plebeians who do not know the book I would like to recommend *The Forerunner*, by Dmitri Merejkowski. The translation published by Constable is, I think, out of print, but is obtainable from most lending libraries.

This novel deals with the life and times of Leonardo da Vinci, whom it takes as the " forerunner " (in the John-the-Baptist sense) of the new revelation, destined to arise out of Russia. The epilogue to the book, which should be read first, contains a 16th century prophecy of the day the dawn of which was witnessed in Russia in 1917.

Yours fraternally,
LONG JIM

TEXTBOOKS AND THEIR USE

DEAR EDITOR,—It seems to me that an elementary course of the biological and kindred sciences (such as geology), especially in their relation to the evolution of man's control over nature in its widest sense (wind and water, animals, minerals), should be an essential part of a Labour College curriculum.

The late Henry M. Bernard (who catalogued the vast collection of corals at the Natural History Museum) was definitely linking up Biology and Socialism along a line of investigation more or less original when he unfortunately died. But he left behind him a book pregnant with ideas, viz., *The Scientific Basis of Socialism*. Dr. Victor Shelford, of Chicago, has also published a most interesting and suggestive work, *Animal Communities in Temperate America ; A Study in Animal Ecology*. Again, a most useful book has just been published by Dr. James Ritchie, *The Influence of Man on Animal Life in Scotland ; A Study in Faunal Evolution*. All these may be regarded as dealing with branches of Bio-geography (or Zoo-geography), which have a very direct bearing on Economic Geography.

Some study of Anthropology (the zoo-geographical and physical study of mankind in relation to his environment) should also be useful. Students would then be able to refute Prime Ministers and pamphleteers, when these state, for instance, that the Rhine in Alsace-Lorraine is the " natural " boundary between the French and German nations, the fact being that it is nothing of the sort, for though on occasion rivers are made to serve as the geographical boundaries of States, they have always been avenues of approach to the valley lands on each side, just as mountain ranges, on the contrary, have generally constituted obstacles to the free movement of peoples.

Lecturers would have to draw up their own courses for most of the above subjects, as elementary textbooks are practically non-existent, although until the promised Plebs textbook on Biology appears that by Chalmers Mitchell and G. P. Mudge might serve. And this brings me to the question of how textbooks are to be used.

With some experience of lecturers of our older and newer Universities I have always felt that the relationship in class between lecturer, student and textbook is badly organised. The usual method adopted, especially at our more modern institutions, is for the lecturer to recommend a textbook to his class and then to *ignore* it and proceed to give lectures entirely arranged by himself. A lecturer on Zoology for instance recommends Thomson's *Outlines of Zoology* as a textbook ; and then delivers his own lectures on the subject. His students are for the most part busily taking down in notebooks as much as possible of what he says and most of what he writes on the blackboard in the way of schedules and diagrams.

Now as all this is probably already down in black and white in considered language in the recommended textbook, the time of the student has been uselessly occupied in the mere physical act of hurried and continued note-taking, and in consequence it has been practically impossible for him to concentrate his attention on the more important items.

I suggest that the lecturer should adopt another method; insist on each student having a copy of the textbook, and then read it out line by line, *amplifying* it here and there where necessary, and *emphasising* the important and difficult points, which the student should then make a special note of, either on the margin of the textbook or elsewhere.

Yours, etc.,
A. P. L..

[Our correspondent will note with interest that his criticisms of the customary methods of lecturing have been in part anticipated in the new Labour College curriculum described an another page.—ED., PLEBS.]

UTILITARIAN HISTORY

DEAR COMRADE,—May I contribute my criticism of Postgate's objection to our studying mediæval guilds, or primitive communism, or any part of history before the French Revolution?

By confining ourselves to modern economics and to one point—the class struggle—we shall make trustworthy revolutionaries; but we shall not make the men who will build up the new proletarian social organisation.

At present, I believe, an important question under discussion in the Russian Communist Party is. "Are the trade unions to become part of the State organisation for the control of production (as our guild Socialists and industrial unionists would have it); or are they, like the mediæval guilds, temporary fighting organisations, which will find themselves unnecessary and dissolve when the class that made them has won State power and consolidated its system?" In this controversy, surely, a knowledge of the functions and historical development of the mediæval guilds would at least be of some value.

Another question of the future will arise with the entire change coming in the status of women, for their present position will be entirely upset by the recasting of our systems of housing and domestic organisation. Here some knowledge of primitive communist institutions and their modern counterparts in "uncivilised" countries will surely play its part, even if mainly in the conversion of the men-folk—including even some members of the Communist Party.

If Comrade Postgate had only cast his attention more thoroughly back into history, to the social circumstances under which States, ancient and modern, were built up, he would not have been afraid that capitalism in its old age would succeed in building up a league of governments, with its horrible possibilities, and he would not have written such a pamphlet as *Doubts Concerning a League of Nations*.

Yours fraternally,
E. T. HARRIS

R. W. POSTGATE writes: This controversy should be getting near its lawful end, both sides having said their say and reached the point of flat negation—as witness J. T. Walton Newbold, M.A., of Manchester, who merely repeats his original contentions in a slightly crosser tone.

But I would like to answer two points of Comrade Harris's: (1) He has revived a none-too-good pamphlet which I wrote years ago, but fortunately attacks in that publication the one point I do still believe, viz., that the capitalists *may win*. If I believed (like our primitive Communists) in a *certain* victory of the workers, I would get a nice quiet job and abandon my present activities. If it's certain, why worry? Why run the PLEBS? (2) If the Russian Communists are really thinking of basing their organisation on the experience of the guilds they are being sadly misled by historical pedants who think this experience applicable to modern large-scale production.

THE EDITOR'S SNAIL

DEAR COMRADE,—The illustrator of Wells' *Outline of History* sticks the shell of *Planorbis* on the back of *Helix Aspersa*! Biology weak—or has Penywern Road opened a snail farm for the breeding of "hybrids"?

Yours, etc., P. G. H.

[It was an Allegorical Animal.—ED., PLEBS.]

APOLOGY AND EXPLANATION

DEAR COMRADE,—For the regrettable circumstance brought to our notice by the comments in "Students' Notes and Queries" concerning an article which appeared in the *Socialist*, 23/6/21, we tender our apology.

It is our practice to acknowledge the source of every article we use, hence our regret when we inadvertently transgress.

It often happens that other papers cull articles from our columns without acknowledgment. This is surely a more deliberate act of discourtesy than the mere failure to detect lack of originality in an article. Yet on these occasions we write to the people concerned—not write about them in the columns of our paper. Thus we "play the game."

Yours frat., R. H. EDWARDS
(Editor, *Socialist*)

[We wish to make it clear that it was the writer of the article, not the Editor of the *Socialist*, who we thought stood in need of some advice as to "playing the game."—ED., PLEBS.]

£7 WORTH

DEAR EDITOR,—The following are the best books I have read, and I recommend them for every Pleb's library. I give them in what I consider their order of importance, from the point of view of ease in digesting them :—

Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists (Tressall), 3s. 6d. ; *Village Labourer* (Hammond), 8s. ; *Organic Evolution* (Lewis), 4s. ; *Condition of the Working Class*, 1844 (Engels), 6s. ; *The State and Revolution* (Lenin), 1s. 6d. ; *Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (Hobson), 3s. 6d. ; *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (Kropotkin), 3s. 6d. ; *Ten Blind Leaders of the Blind* (Lewis), 4s. ; *Econ. Consequences of the Peace* (Keynes), 8s. ; *Iron Heel* (*Jack London*), 3s. ; *Eighteenth Brumaire* (Marx), 4s. ; *Capital*, I. (Marx), 8s. ; *Theoretical System of Marx* (Untermann), 8s. ; *Capital*, II., 8s. ; *Positive Outcome* (Dietzgen), 8s.

There are 15 books costing about £4. I should like to add to my own library those following also, if any Pleb would advise me as to their value :—*Unskilled Labourer* and *Town Labourer* (Hammond), 8s. each ; *History of T. Unionism* (Webb), 5s. ; *Outline of History* (Wells), 21s. ; *Revolution*, 1789 *to* 1906 (Postgate), 18s.

The total cost of the above library would be about £7, and I suggest that it would be a credit to its owner !

Yours frat.,

J. F.

[" J. F." will find that the five books in his second list are all well worth a place beside his others. We invite readers to express opinions as to whether his whole list forms as good a £7 worth as could be selected.—ED., PLEBS.]

A GERMAN TRIBUTE *to* "CREATIVE REVOLUTION" *

The following extracts are taken from a letter written by a German reader of the PLEBS, *a tutor of Marxist classes in Berlin.*

EVEN before I left the Higher School . . . I became a Socialist. In rapid succession I passed through the various phases characteristic of our day for those in search of a philosophical platform—psychoanalysis, Russian literature, Bergson, etc. I tried hard to advance, though at times the intellectual light seemed dimmed, continuing to feel that even my comrades of the Left Wing had failed to discover a satisfactory synthesis. . . .

After the outbreak of the war life became rather complicated for me, as for other Reds. " During the more active stages of the war," say the writers of *Creative Revolution*, "it was not easy to talk about the class struggle without enjoying the hospitalities of prison." I have twice enjoyed these hospitalities ! . . .

Creative Revolution has in many respects brought me a positive redemption. There is no eluding the pitiless severity with which it strips off the veil of illusion. (I say this even though here and there it has seemed to me that the writers' delicacy of touch—the delicacy of those who prefer the rapier to the bludgeon—is carried almost to an extreme.) All pre-war Socialism was perhaps affected with this disease of illusionism in the domains of psychology and of theoretical and applied sociology. The Socialists accepted the ideology of the " progressive " bourgeoisie in other spheres besides that of politics pure and simple. This bourgeois ideology clung to Socialism like an incurable disease.

But *Creative Revolution*, with its inexorable realism, deals the death-blow to "democracy." Most of the questions upon which it touches are discussed with such clearness that hardly any reader can evade the issue. The book is a challenge. If its purport be truly understood, many will react to it quite differently from Ramsay MacDonald, with his praise of its literary excellencies while dissenting from its general trend. . . .

Creative Revolution boldly attempts the synthesis of positivism and revolution. It has helped me, within my personal consciousness, to bridge the chasm between my philosophical and my political thinking.

* Special PLEBS edition, with new Foreword, 224 pp., 2s. 6d. Post paid, 2s. 9d.

NEWS *of the* MOVEMENT

Will class-secretaries, tutors and organisers note that this page of the PLEBS *can—if they choose to make it so—be of considerable value as a means for the interchange of ideas on methods of tuition, organisation, etc., etc.? A paragraph on subjects of this kind is of much more general interest, as well as of more use-value, than a mere formal report of normal activities—though of course we're glad to hear of these.*

The curtain now goes up on our autumn and winter campaign. . . . News about Textbooks on another page. . . . Stamps still selling—have you got yours? . . . Are you using the PLEBS Pamphlet to prepare the ground for the winter's work in your district? . . . And are you Pushing the Plebs? Ten thousand a month this winter is the watchword. What about it?

We've a bunch of announcements to make about the opening of activities in various centres, so we must be brief. The annual meeting of the NORTH EASTERN Labour College Area will be held Saturday September 24th (note alteration of date) in Burt Hall, Newcastle. Walter Gribble has been appointed Organiser for the district, and anyone desiring his services should write Will Coxon, 5, Byrom Street, Newcastle, at once.

Matt Collins reports "hustle" in the HALIFAX district. Four classes are to be run at Halifax, four at Bradford, two at Spenborough, two at Shipley, one each at Brighouse and Farsley, and "probables" at Dewsbury, West Vale, and Siddal. Some business! We look to Yorks. to help us reach that 10,000 mark—and to sell a few stamps.

Ten thousand a month. Don't forget.

The Sec. of the HULL N.U.R. class writes: "At the close of our class last Sunday we made a presentation to our tutor, Comrade J. H. Burns (of the Plebs E.C.), who, although he has only been with us a short time, has endeared himself to our students by his frankness, thoroughness and thoughtfulness. The presentation took the form of a silver cigarette case and gold-mounted holder. We all feel that his lectures—on Psychology—have given us a fresher outlook."

The third annual Garden Party organised by the MANCHESTER Labour College will be held at Dalton Hall, Victoria Park (kindly lent for the occasion by Principal J. W. Graham), on Saturday, September 10th, 2.30 to dusk. Manchester has found this function useful in three ways—raising funds, enabling old and new students to meet, and providing opportunity for propaganda. The PLEBS, and all sorts of I.W.-C.E. literature, will be on sale, and Comrade I. Brassington will speak on I.W.-C.E. Tickets, 1s. each, from A. Gwilliam, 69, Heywood Street, Alexandra Park.

Manchester begins class-work on Sunday, October 2nd. At the College (32a, Dale Street), the following is the programme:—Sundays, Economics and Industrial History (J. McGee); Mondays, Discussion Class; Tuesdays, Industrial History (Comrade Kershaw); Arithmetic (O. Stapleton); and Grammar (W. Abrahamson); Wednesdays, Philos. Logic (W. Greaves); Thursdays, Economics, G. Penlington; Fridays, Economic Geography (G. Penlington). Chas. Hoyle, 38, Lock Road, Altrincham (Lecture Sec.), will supply further particulars.

The SHEFFIELD College's Annual Conference was very successful—90 delegates, from 46 different organisations. W. Paul's rousing address on "The Why and the Wherefore of Labour Colleges" was heartily applauded. Since then conferences have been held at Rotherham and Mexborough, while plans are being made for meetings at Doncaster and Chesterfield. In fact, the Sheffield chaps are out to awaken the district—and they make effective use of mottoes from recent PLEBS' covers on their agendas, etc. They're making plans for about 50 classes this winter (commencing Sunday, October 2nd) in Economics, Industrial History, Science of Understanding, Psychology, Modern W.-Class Movement, Economics, Geography and Biology. That tireless and enthusiastic worker, E. Bradshaw, is secretary (34, Tylney Road, Park, Sheffield). And if PLEBS' sales don't go up in these parts in the near future it clearly isn't going to be his fault.

DERBY is getting a class going this winter, under A.S.L.E. & F. auspices. Write, J. Sanders, 21, Lyndhurst Street, for particulars.

LONDON can manage 3,000 of our 10,000 total PLEBS' sales, if it sets about it. Everybody interested should write (i) *re classes*: R. Holder, London Council I.W.-C.E., 11a, Penywern Road, Earl's Court, S.W.5; (ii.) *re* PLEBS sales: London PLEBS Organiser, same address. . . . Two new London districts have got busy lately:—ILFORD,

with a Plebs Branch (sec., A. J. Okey, 46, Farnham Road); and St. John's Wood, where M. H. Dobb is taking a class in Economics (Thursday evenings), and G. Saville in Industrial History (Sunday evenings). Write Dobb, at 5, Abbey Road Mansions, St. John's Wood, for further particulars. If his lectures are as good as his article on another page, we've gained another tutor worth having!

Ten thousand a month. Don't forget.

September's the month of conferences and annual meetings! Liverpool Council I.W.-C.E. holds a Conference on Working-Class Education in the Engineers' Institute, 83, Price Street, Birkenhead, on Saturday, September 3rd, 3 p.m. The annual meeting of the Council will be held a fortnight later, Saturday, September 17th, 3 p.m., at Comm. Party Rooms, 14, Marmaduke Street, Edgehill.

Liverpool's report, 1920-21, shows a total of 68 organisations affiliated to the Council, those gained during past year including St. Helens Trades Council and Labour Party, and Southport Trades Council (seceded from W.E.A.). In all, 28 classes were run last year, and 800 students enrolled; and a Birkenhead student has won a N.U.R. Labour College scholarship (two years). The Council also published W. F. Hay's admirable propaganda pamphlet, *Education and the Working Class*, and organised much propaganda speaking in T.U. Branches, etc. A fine record—and another bar to Jack Hamilton's Distinguished (Proletarian) Service Medal! Write him at 99, Botanic Road, Liverpool, for any further particulars.

And don't forget—10,000 *a month.*

W. H.

COMRADES

W. J. Hewlett, whose tragic death in Russia was announced in the Labour Press last month, was a Pleb who had done magnificent work for our movement. We are sure that the sympathy of all our readers will go out to Mrs. Hewlett and her little ones in their grievous loss.

James Winstone was one of the older guard who had, in the S.W.M.F., championed the cause of the Labour College and of Independent Working-Class Education.

We honour their memory.

REVIEWS

Psychoanalysis and Marxism

Psychoanalysis and Sociology. By A. Kohnai. (Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.)

The first part of this book reminds one of the old epigram about the young novelist who thinks he is being psychological when he is really being dull. Nevertheless the theme is of special interest to us, though the author's treatment provides little stimulus.

Like the physiologist, the psychoanalyst obtains his theories by comparing normal and abnormal conditions. Freud's discoveries revealed that in mental disorders the determining factor is the inhibition of certain instinctive tendencies in childhood, the memory of which is completely suppressed till made available by analysis. Thus it was found necessary to figure a repository of suppressed experiences not normally accessible to consciousness, though actively influencing conduct by their effects (the unconscious strata of the mind).

Study of the characteristics of the unconscious processes revealed a mode of functioning of a different order from the predominant features of the adult consciousness; more akin to the mental life of the child. It became clear that the "obsessions" and "phobias" of mental patients demonstrated the day-dreaming characteristic of the primitive mind enjoying or rejecting the object of its repressed desires in the form of *symbols* based on association. The recognition of a number of commonly recurring symbols in the dreams of normal people, in art, religion and folklore, led the way from what was originally a medical treatment of the subject to a consideration of the part which mental processes, peculiarly evident in diseased states, play in a less pronounced form in everyday life. Thus the psychologist brings to the study of society *an analysis of the mental constituents common to different ideologies.*

But the rôle of the psychological factors in the interpretation of historical development is not a dynamic one. Psychologically man remains very much what he was potentially in the New Stone Age; and the effective factor in social development is that which initiates a new shuffle in the same stock-in-trade of mental tendencies. It is the material conditions created by man's tool-using habit which provide the substance of a new symbolism in which identical aspirations renew themselves. Marxism is concerned with the dynamics of social development, social psychology with the statics.

From one angle, however, the contribution of psychoanalysis is of value to us, now that

the "impossibilist" objection to Marxism has given place to an exclusively religious criticism—thanks to the Russian Revolution. In its rigid determinism it penetrates the last citadel of those obscurantists who decry our "deadening fatalism." Two prominent elements recurring in religious belief (and its intellectual complement traditional philosophy) are especially in conflict with our standpoint:—belief in a conscious intention behind phenomena, and in free will. These two tendencies, teleology and libertarianism, are identified by Ferenczi and others as, respectively, regression to the "magical" or animistic stage of childhood, which endows external objects with human motives and regards them as capable of being propitiated; and a still earlier phase in which the mind is not conscious of any inhibiting stimuli and enjoys the sense of omnipotence. Hostility to determinism in general and to Marxism in particular is the projection of the conflict between the infantile omnipotence phantasy and the partial recognition of inflexible order in the outer world on the part of the adult mind. In popular parlance it is "growing pains."

The second part of Kolnai's book sets out to be an analysis of the mental ingredients of the Marxist outlook. That the study of the mental tendencies which dispose an individual to this or that outlook may be of profit will be freely admitted, and false pride will not deter an honest and thoroughgoing determinist from examining the relation of his special interests to the symptoms of mental patients. But by laying bare the source of our predilections for one object of study rather than another we do not discredit the conclusions at which we arrive in our studies. No doubt the psychologist will one day explain why Darwin was led to examine the evidence for a common ancestry of organisms, and correlate this with the mental processes of children, savages and lunatics; but that will not in the least affect the value of the evidence Darwin collected.

In Kolnai's case, whatever useful work might be done under this heading is vitiated by his notion of what a Marxist believes. Marxism, like every new movement, attracts (to quote Shaw) those who are too good and those who are not good enough for other movements; so that Kolnai has little difficulty in selecting a particularly neurotic specimen to burlesque as a bearded fanatic who sees in the dictatorship of the proletariat immediate and unconditioned social bliss. This belief is according to Kolnai (*inter alia*) Marxism. It is hardly worth while replying to a critic engaged in tilting at windmills which, unlike those of the Spanish nobleman, are not even real ones.

P. L. E. B.

The Fraud of "Nationalism"

The Problem of Upper Silesia. With maps. Edited by S. Osborne. (Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.)

Upper Silesia, it is beginning to be clear, is another Alsace-Lorraine. The same factors are to be observed in each case—the problems of strategic frontiers and raw materials, together with the secondary consideration, energetically exploited to look like the main issue, of a population (of wage-slaves) subject to "alien" rule.

The excellent maps in this volume illustrate a good deal more than the problem of Upper Silesia. They illustrate the utter, wasteful futility of running "national" frontiers across industrial areas which, organised for communal service instead of for private profit, and administered as a whole, would be twenty times as productive as when divided between capitalist-imperialist groups. And they show pretty plainly how Economic Imperialism—the all-devourer—has, since the war, been operating on the territory of Europe itself, and not merely in "colonial" areas.

Q.

A Good Book on Psychology

Psychoanalysis; Its History, Theory and Practice. By André Tridon. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.)*

I was led to read this book by a disparaging review in a journal representative of bourgeois science. It accused Tridon of spreading himself over too wide a field; thereby sacrificing detail. As excessive details are often used by class-conscious bourgeois teachers to hide the direct social, political or economic applicability of a subject of study from "the masses," I guessed Tridon had touched the reviewer's "Capitalist Society" complex. I found I was right.

This book is unusually concisely written; some of the sentences seem to be fired off like pistol shots. It is singularly free from technical terms, which are relegated to a glossary. I don't want to advise Plebs to purchase expensive works on Psychology—particularly as we hope shortly to have our own Plebs Textbook ready. But this book is well worth borrowing from the libraries.

Many works on the new psychology are spoilt by too fanatical discipleship of one or other of the modern schools. The differences in the theories of Freud, Adler and Jung's followers (or such of the latter as have not become unintelligible mystics) centre around the nature of the universal urge, which unconsciously impels us to act. Tridon recognises all the primitive urges as playing a part in human behaviour. The three tendencies, self-expansion, safety and sex, are ever driving man onwards, and impelling him to respond to the changes which take place in his environment, to strive for the restoration of power, safety or physiological equilibrium when these are disturbed. Tridon regards the ego-urge, the need for self-expansion, self-assertion, the will to power, as a particularly human development, the quality by which man's striving differs most from that of the other animals; and as the particular urge by virtue of which man progressed from the biologic to the tool-making economic phase of evolution.

Of particular interest to Plebeians is Chap. VIII., on "Feminism and Radicalism," both of which Tridon traces to the ego-urge. "The ego-urge, which drives human beings constantly to seek a new and higher level, to better or, at least, to modify their environment in a way that bears the stamp of their personality, is the most potent driving power back of the vague tendency called radicalism. I call it vague, for its meaning has been changing with every century, and so has its object" (p. 97). The "radicals" in every age "all had a dream of a new social order, giving them more freedom, by which they meant, consciously or unconsciously, more food and power. And each successive revolution meant that a larger number of egoes had dreams of power and wrested it from the smaller number of egoes detaining it at the time" (pp. 97-98).

The author quotes from Freud's *Reflections on War and Death* calling attention to the fact that the war has shown the ordinary citizen how States, while they condemn wrongdoing in their individual members, employ, when at war, every form of violence, cunning and lying, to gain their ends, repudiate treaties and guarantees, and make unabashed confession of their greed and aspiration to power; and he goes on to point out how this "ethical corruption" of war must extend into the "social war." "The social war means, in terms stripped of any ornaments, that a growing number of egoes is going to contend for the ownership of the earth with a diminishing number of egoes." (Good Marxism!) "Upon the willingness of the minority to resign itself to unavoidable defeat, or its attempt to postpone the fatal hour by resorting to unethical methods of warfare, whose efficiency is tremendous but only temporary, will depend the questions whether the growth of the ego-urge at the present juncture will mean evolution or revolution."

The real enemies of progress have always been the "enormous sluggish masses of people without imagination, suffering from neophobia, the fear of new things." Such people only move when the changes in their normal environment become so great as to be intolerable, and goad them to action. Then they move, as bullocks move before the

* The publishers of this book declined to send the Plebs a review copy. In view, however, of its especial interest we publish "Nordicus's" article.

stockman's whip. There are many indications that changes in the environment which will lead to such movement are rapidly approaching; we may expect as a consequence of the tendencies inherent in capitalism an enormous increase in the number of thwarted ego-urges, and an enormous increase in the mass of active discontent at no distant date. As the author says (p. 247): "The discontented man is the hope of the world."

From the above extracts it will be seen that Mr. Tridon has *got there*.

NORDICUS

The School, and its Task. By "Wage-Drudge." (Memorial Press, Hurst, Ashton-under-Lyne. 1d.)

This is the latest addition to a series of small pamphlets described as "Brain Dusters." That it is, up to a point, well suited for PLEBS propaganda may be judged from its "text"—"The School is as much under the control of the capitalist as the Factory; and no ideas are taught therein save such as are in the interests of the continued domination of the profiteer and the exploiter."

But the writer spoils a good case by overstating it. He exaggerates the effectiveness of the "pithing" process. If the result of capitalist education was so to warp the brains of the worker as inevitably to make him (p. 5) "beyond the help of God or man," and (p. 7) "the lifelong enemy of the emancipation of his class," then the outlook would be hopeless indeed. Fortunately, actual experience of the wage-system tends to undermine the ideas about it inculcated in the schools; and this, *plus* I.W.-C.E., makes increasingly for proletarian class-consciousness, not helplessness. The author must study the forthcoming PLEBS textbook on Psychology, and learn how human beings react to environment more effectually than to ideas. Q.

The PLEBS' BOOKSHELF

IN the June *Communist Review* W. McLaine has an article entitled "Art and the Worker." It is a plea for proletarian culture in the wider sense of the term, and as such I welcome it. We must have authors, says McLaine, who will "write of our aspirations, our hopes, our future society"; artists who will "paint Labour at its task in the field, the forge, the factory," who will "use their imaginative genius to glorify the beauty of honest toil"; poets who will "provide songs for the common people to sing." Agreed—heartily. But then follows a sentence against which I protest; and I think protest is desirable, because in this sentence McLaine holds up as laudable what I should regard rather as a besetting sin of propagandist art, and a pitfall which it should be the business of proletarian artists to avoid. "Our playwrights," says he, "must prepare proletarian dramas that . . . *end, not in virtue rewarded, but in international concord and working-class triumph.*"

I hope they'll do nothing of the sort—though I suppose it's inevitable that a lot of them will! It is a good many years now since G. B. S., in one of his dramatic criticisms, warned us that "since we shall always have a dozen dramatists who can handle *conventions* for every one who can handle *character*, we are coming fast to a melodramatic formula in which the villain will be a bad employer and the hero a Socialist; but that formula is no truer to life than the old one in which the villain was a lawyer and the hero a Jack Tar."

Formulas, conventions, are always easier material to work on than life itself, honestly observed; and we who hope for the appearance of proletarian artists and dramatists must be as ready to condemn the second-rate as to applaud the real thing. The drama that ended in "virtue rewarded" was a drama of (bourgeois) convention; and the drama that ends, as a matter of course, in "international concord and working-class triumph" will be equally a drama of (proletarian) convention. Mere idealisation of the proletariat, or of proletarian hopes and fears, will not produce real proletarian art; any more than an idealised picture of a Good Shepherd nursing a lamb was necessarily great religious art—though quite a lot of Victorians thought it was. Melodrama is—well, melodrama, because it substitutes conventions for real observation. And we don't want proletarian melodrama—or proletarian sentimental fiction. We want artists, soaked in the proletarian spirit, to draw real life for us; if we prefer to be spoon-fed with pictures of what we like to flatter ourselves is real life, then it will be all the worse for us. Art—proletarian or other—must concern itself with life, not with formulas.

* * *

While I'm on this subject of Proletarian Art I'm bound to say I *don't* like the *Review's* cover designs, which are hardly up to the standard of its contents.

* * *

I hope that some day we shall number among our Plebs textbooks one on Literature. I hope so, (i.) because some knowledge of and interest in general literature is, I think, invaluable for providing a "general" background to our more specialised studies—a highly desirable and very necessary thing; particularly for teachers and propagandists;

and (ii.) because such a textbook would give us a means of approach to scores of studious, "bookish" workers for whom Economics and purely Industrial History have no appeal. In the meantime I know no better book to use than A. Compton-Rickett's *History of English Literature* (Jack, 8s. 6d.), which in part at any rate meets *our* needs in that it sets out to lay "particular emphasis on the social background," and discusses literary development, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as related to general social development. It is a fine piece of work, and we shall doubtless need it for its greater range and detail even after we get—if we do get!—a textbook of our own.

A smaller book recently issued by Messrs. Philips (New Era Series, 2s. 6d. limp covers, 3s. 6d. cloth) is *Bookland*, by W. H. King. It is a very readable bird's-eye view of the history of English literature, a little too conventionally rhapsodical perhaps for a critical reader, but calculated to whet the appetite of a new student. It has not, however, Compton-Rickett's "grip" of the subject, nor to anything like the same extent his special appeal to students of social history.

* * *

CORRECTION:—The book by the late Sir Leslie Stephen which I quoted last month on *Robinson Crusoe* was his *English Literature and Society in the 18th* [not 19th] *Century*.

* * *

If you live within evening-paper-distance of London you will know Low's cartoons in the *Star*. Low, like Dyson, and "Espoir" of the *Communist*, hails from Australia, and I wish we had him, too, on a Labour paper. A volume of his cartoons has just been issued by Allen & Unwin (2s. 6d.). His

great invention is the "Coalition donkey," the two-headed animal seen above. I have reproduced it here because it seems to me a beautiful symbolic figure for our "coalition" educational organisation—the Alliance-between-Labour-and-Learning W.E.A. The moke has, too, a suggestion of Mr. Facing-Both-Ways about him; which also makes him a fitting symbol for the apostles of Impartiality. And just think what a perfect appellation the "W-Hee-Haw" would be!

* * *

The Report on Russia, Political and Economic, just issued by His Majesty's Stationery Office (Russia, No. 1, 1921), contains a good deal of interesting matter, and 167 foolscap pages of type is not dear at 2s. The Report was prepared by a specially appointed Committee of five, including originally the Rt. Hon. Wm. Brace, M.P.; but "pressure of other public duties" caused the Rt. Hon. W., etc., to resign, and his place was taken by Major Watts Morgan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P.

The only point in the Report which I have space to refer to here relates to the Committee's "conclusions with regard to the pre-war activities of the Bolsheviks," No. 3 of which is:—"The Marxist doctrines advocated by the Bolsheviks were unintelligible to all but a few of the workers to whom they were addressed"; while No. 5 tells us that "The Bolshevik party thus became divided into two parts:—(*a*) A small minority of doctrinaires . . . (*b*) A large majority of workmen to whom Marxist doctrines were either unintelligible or imperfectly understood."

I presume that Major Watts Morgan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., concurred in these conclusions. What I'm curious to know is whether—seeing that the Committee could hardly collect exact evidence as to how many Russian workers found "the Marxist doctrines" unintelligible—Major Watts Morgan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., came to this conclusion (*a*) because he himself had found "the Marxist doctrines" unintelligible or (*b*) because though he had perfectly understood those "doctrines" himself, he considered them as beyond the comprehension of mere ordinary workers, with no alphabets after their names? I wish he'd tell us.

* * *

Whether Postgate is right or wrong in his argument that only modern history has "utilitarian" value for proletarian students—and I think he is wrong—he has certainly, in his *Revolution*, 1789-1906, produced a modern history "source book" which is absolutely indispensable to every intelligently class-conscious worker. But its price has hitherto placed it out of the reach of a good many covetous Plebs. I hope, therefore, that all these have taken note of—and will quickly take action about—the Labour Publishing Co.'s scheme for supplying it on a basis of payment by instalments. You pay 5s. down, and three further fortnightly instalments of 5s. (on September 15th, 29th, and October 13th). In return you get *Revolution* (published at 18s.) and either Sidney Webb's *How to Pay for the War* or Barbara Drake's *Women in Trade Unions*, whichever you choose. Total price 24s.—for £1, in four instalments. You'll of course choose Barbara Drake's book, which is a useful, well done piece of work. Don't write to our Book Department for these, but direct to the Labour Publishing Co., 6, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

* * *

If you've read *Creative Revolution*—and if you haven't you're slow to take advantage of your opportunities—you'll be interested to know that French and German editions of that book are to be published shortly. The letter from a German Pleb on another page is evidence of the interest aroused by the book among our continental comrades. In the Berlin "Räteschule" (Labour College) it has been used as a topic for discussion circles. T'other side of the Atlantic, Scott Nearing—the economics professor who lost his university job for talking 'radical'—writes of the book:—"I am at total variance with the authors. . . . At the same time I welcome their contribution because of the splendid effect it will have in clarifying issues that have puzzled and baffled so many during the past few months." Moving south from the U.S.A. we find *C. R.* being issued in serial form in certain Spanish-American Socialist journals. Pretty widespread testimony to its interest! And the cheapest edition in the wide, wide world is the PLEBS edition—2s. 6d. (post paid, 2s. 9d.).

* * *

The *Liberator* is one good thing that comes out of America. And another—not perhaps, quite so much "up *our* street," but jolly good—is the weekly *Freeman*. The *Freeman* is Left Radical, and isn't afraid of calling a spade a spade. There is a particularly interesting article in the issue for August 3rd on "The Mexican Trinity"—Land, Oil and the Church. Also a review of Hyndman's *Evolution of Revolution*, which remarks, quite in the PLEBS manner, that H. M. H. is "eminently qualified to be a college professor of economics"; and goes on to say that the book develops three propositions, of which the third is "that the Russian Revolution, not that of the wise Kerensky but the present one of the wicked Lenin, did not happen according to the rules laid down by the S.D.F. of Great Britain, and therefore cannot be what it is, because it ought not to be what it is according to the Marquis-of-Hyndman rules."

I notice, by the way, that Mr. Grant Richards has been telling *John o' London's Weekly* that Hyndman's *Evolution of Revolution* is one of the books he is proudest of publishing. I have too much respect for Mr. Richards' critical intelligence to believe him—particularly since he also published Postgate's *Revolution* (which he didn't mention). I can only assume that the sale of *E. of R.* is hanging fire, and that he was anxious to help it along a bit.

J. F. H.

The PLEBS invites contributions on Labour problems in general and on subjects of interest to Working-Class Educationists in particular. All contributions should be as concise as possible, as space is limited, and "cutting" is a thankless (and tiresome) job. Articles or letters intended for following month's issue should be sent in not later than the 15th of the month. Will correspondents also remember to write on one side of the paper only, and to enclose full name and address, whether for publication or not? N.B.—No payment is made for any contribution—you get your reward in heaven.

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