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THE PLEBS

AGITATE EDUCATE ORGANISE

THE PROLETARIAT is not oppressed because its oppressors despise it & mistrust it, but because IT DESPISES & MISTRUSTS ITSELF

Bernard Shaw

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Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges

THE PLEBS

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

Vol. XIII November, 1921 No. 11

CONTENTS

10,000

We print these figures again this month—a size larger than last time—just to remind you! They represent the goal we're aiming at this winter—10,000 readers. There are considerably more than 10,000 students in the Labour Colleges and Classes. If tutors, organisers and secretaries everywhere will PUSH THE "PLEBS," energetically and perseveringly, we can reach that figure quickly. If a beginner pleads that the PLEBS is too advanced for him, remind him that it *won't* be in a few months' time, and that then in all probability he will be spending extra pence on postage to buy back numbers.

We haven't fixed on this figure just for fun. We've fixed on it because it's necessary to give us a margin to help finance other, equally important, activities. The movement needs textbooks, propaganda leaflets and sundry other weapons in the war against proletarian ignorance and indifference. The only way in which the Plebs League can raise funds for this work is by increasing the sales of the PLEBS. And the only way in which it can do that is by asking its friends to PUSH as never before!

The CONFERENCE *on* CLASS CO-ORDINATION

WE will not open our comments on the Class Co-ordination Conference, held at the Yardley Club House on October 8th—9th, by saying, in the conventional way, that it was a success. Whether or not a Conference is a success depends on the extent to which its decisions are carried into effect afterwards. If the decisions of the Yardley Conference are actually realised in practice, then that Conference will indeed prove, as we hoped that it would, to have been a landmark in the history of our movement.

Over 40 delegates attended, representing the Labour College (London), the Scottish Labour College (Nat. Ctee.), the Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, Derby, Wolverhampton and N.-Eastern Colleges; the class centres in Edinburgh, Rochdale, Mansfield, Middlesbrough, West Riding (Leeds, Bradford and Halifax), Birmingham, London, Ashton-under-Lyne; and the Plebs League.

A fairly full report of the discussions and decisions has already been circulated to the various districts,* so that a summary of the main points is all that is necessary here.

The most important decision—and it was not only arrived at unanimously, but in a spirit which showed unmistakably that the delegates meant business!—was that the various districts should ask no one to do for them the work of co-ordination, but that they should tackle the job themselves. It was agreed that a National Council be set up, and that its name should be the National Council of Labour Colleges. The object of the Council is to *bring together* the various colleges, districts and groups already in existence, with a view to extension and mutual help. *It will not attempt to interfere with local organisations*, but will aim simply at strengthening their hands by bringing them into touch with one another. Each educational area or centre, as at present constituted, is to elect one representative to the Council; the Labour College Governors are to be invited to appoint two representatives, and the Plebs E.C. two representatives. It rests with the Council to carry into effect the co-ordination which is so urgently needed. *It rests with I.W.-C.Ers everywhere to see that the Council is backed up and encouraged in every possible way.*

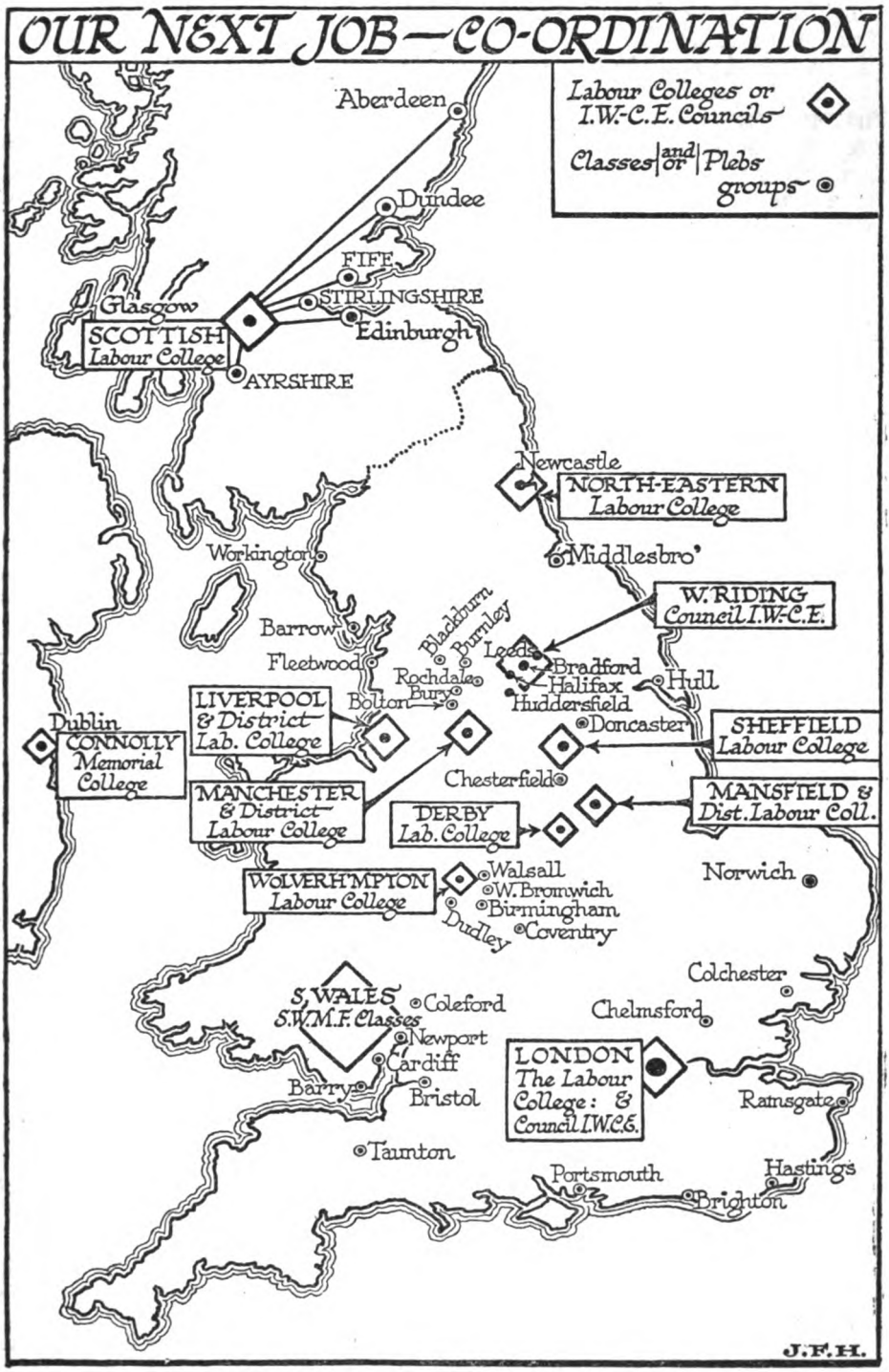
Pending the election and first meeting of the Council, an exec. committee consisting of J. Hamilton (Liverpool), J. P. M. Millar (Edinburgh) and T. D. Smith (Wolverhampton), with, in addition, one representative each appointed by the Labour College Governors and the Plebs E.C. (five members in all), was elected to take all necessary preliminary steps.

It was agreed that a minimum contribution of £1 1s. per annum be made by each district to the Council.

It was further agreed that affiliations, from local branches or Councils to the local Labour College, should form the financial basis of educational work in the various districts; the precise amount, conditions, etc., of such affiliation fees to be decided by each district for itself.

The proposals made by the Plebs E.C. to the Governors of the Labour College were endorsed; with, in addition (i.) a request that the Governors

* Any district or class which has not received a copy is urged to apply for one to the Secretary (*pro tem.*), National Council of Labour Colleges, 11, Penywern Road, Earl's Court, S.W.5.



Is your class or district marked on this map? If not, let us know about it.

consider the possibility of adding *lantern-slides* and *wall charts* to the leaflets and syllabuses which they have already promised to provide for the classes; (ii.) an appeal to the Governors to undertake more *publicity*, in T.U. journals, etc., and by propagandist speakers among their own members; (iii.) a request that they reconsider their decision as to a Summer School at Kew next year on "non-residential" basis, and state on what terms and under what guarantees they would be prepared to allow the use of the College premises for a school on *a full residential basis;* (iv.) a request that they assist in the provision of tutors for Summer Schools held at other centres.

Finally, it was agreed that the PLEBS should be the recognised organ of the National Council.

These were the main decisions made. It remains to add a word as to the immediate tasks to be undertaken.

Firstly, it is of the utmost importance that a full and complete "directory" of *all* classes and their activities be compiled. Is your class or group marked on the accompanying map? The map is as complete as we could make it with the material in our hands at the moment. If you know of any omissions, send particulars along *immediately*. It's impossible to co-ordinate until one has full and complete information about all the organisations to be co-ordinated.

Secondly—and the map comes in useful here—there is the important question of the geographical areas best suited to form the several districts, and the best centres for those districts. As the map makes clear, there is co-ordination only in Scotland as yet. Glance at the Midlands district—Wolverhampton, Birmingham, etc. Here is an obvious district area, awaiting local co-ordination. Then there is S. Wales. Into how many districts can this area be best divided? (S. Wales was the only important area not represented at the Conference, but we trust that it is going to take no small share in the work of the Council.) If the Council is to act efficiently, the sooner reports on this subject are in the hands of the sub-committee the better; and the more *local* co-ordination, initiated by the districts themselves, precedes national activity, the better also.

We shall deal in future issues with these and other important aspects of the big job ahead of us. Meantime, let us end as we began by pointing out that co-ordination is not achieved by passing resolutions about it. Co-ordination means *work*. Let us put our backs into it!

OUR NEW TEXTBOOK

THE first textbook in our new series—*An Outline of Psychology*—will be ready on or about December 10th; in ample time for use by classes during the after-Christmas Session.

It is *a first-rate piece of work*, and (please note this) it will be found to be of absorbing interest, not only to students taking courses in the subject, but to everyone interested in the application of Marxism to new fields of study and inquiry. It will, for example, give the Economics or Industrial History tutor or student a whole series of new and forceful illustrations. It will especially appeal to students of the Science of Understanding. And it states the case for Proletarian Education with admirable clearness and downright force

So much for its subject-matter. In other respects also, we venture

to claim, it will prove to be a model textbook. Suggestions for Students, Glossary, Index, Syllabuses and illustrations—all these important " extras " have been done carefully and well. The limp cloth binding and the quality of the paper have both been chosen from the point of view of producing a book which will *wear* well—an essential factor in a book primarily designed for class use.

Now we've done our bit by getting the book out—and *every bit of work on it* (except that of the printer) *has been voluntary.* It's your turn now ! Will YOU see to it that the new Textbook Series is successfully launched by ordering your copies NOW, and by sending cash with orders wherever possible ? We could only keep the price as low as it is—and if you compare the book's bulk, binding and price with other publications, you'll decide that it is dirt cheap !—by pledging ourselves to pay our printer promptly and by foregoing any long credit. *We've got to get the money in.* If we get it in promptly we shall have a margin in hand to use for Textbook No. 2—which will then become an immediately practicable proposition. If not—well, the other Textbooks must remain roseate dreams, for we've no Cassel or Carnegie to look to for subsidies !

Every Pleb worth his salt will get busy pushing this book. Every Labour College or class secretary will see to it that the Plebs, *as the publishing department of the newly-formed National Council,* gets adequate backing in this inauguration of a vitally important scheme.

Let the Plebs Office get busy *to-morrow* booking orders !

SEA-POWER *in the* PACIFIC

The forthcoming Washington Conference on Disarmament makes the following article on the Pacific Problem—the fundamental problem with which the politicians and diplomatists will be dealing—of especial interest.

DURING the Great War, " Westerner or Easterner ? " became a burning question of war policy and strategy. The problem of West and East has since assumed a new significance. Nine months after the signing of the Armistice, the United States Pacific Fleet sailed through the Panama Canal to take up its new position, with San Francisco as its base ; and therewith opened a new era in the history of naval power and policy.

Although European competition in naval armaments from the beginning of the century had influenced construction across the Atlantic also, it was not until 1916 that the armament builders in U.S.A. were able to stir up any very serious interest in their patriotic task of providing for their country's defence ; but in that year a carefully organised, vigorous campaign resulted in an unprecedented addition to America's naval preparations, and within three years the definite purpose of giving U.S. the biggest navy in the world was already embodied in her legislative programmes. By 1924, U.S., so far as battleships and battle-cruisers of the all-big-gun type are concerned, will be the most powerful country in the world.

She has 28 dockyards and naval ports, of which, however, only nine are on her Western Coast—on the Pacific. This latter figure seems hopelessly inadequate in view of the strategical problems of the Pacific ; and in 1919 the wisdom of forming a Fleet in that ocean without sufficient bases being prepared for it was widely and clamorously questioned. In

the whole of her Pacific island possessions there is only one dock capable of taking a Dreadnought, viz., Pearl Harbour, Hawaii; and even that requires considerable extension and improvement. Moreover, Pearl harbour is at best of value only in the N.-E. Pacific. Manila Bay in the Philippines is quite incapable of supplying the needs of a single battleship, to say nothing of a whole Fleet. In fact there are altogether only four docks available for the Dreadnoughts of the Pacific Fleet: the Union Ironworks at San Francisco (a private establishment), Mare Island, Bremerton and Pearl Harbour.

In 1924 the U.S. Fleet will include 29 battleships and six battle-cruisers. Recent experience suggests that there is here a great and dangerous disproportion—and in particular that it contrasts very unfavourably with the programme of Japan, which provides for 13 battleships and eight battle-cruisers in that year. Fast cruisers, in the opinion of the experts, are indispensable, and the numerous destroyers which U.S. possesses—she has no less than 316 owing to large war-time building—cannot adequately compensate for her small proportion of such vessels. She has also 154 submarines, of which 60 are ocean-going, the rest being small vessels for coast defence.

Meanwhile the man-power of the U.S. Navy, which had suddenly shot up from 4,376 officers and 62,667 men on 1st April, 1917, to 10,400 officers and 220,000 men, together with 20,000 officers and 285,000 men on the reserve, on 1st November, 1918, has been dwindling just as rapidly. Demobilisation at an extraordinary pace, an alarming rate of desertions due to the low rate of pay as compared with the money to be earned in land occupations, discharges and retirements have all combined to reduce the Navy to a total strength of 160,000 officers and men in December, 1919. A vigorous recruiting campaign in no way served to "stop the rot"; in March, 1920, the number had dropped to 103,000. So may such campaigns ever prosper!

Meanwhile across the Pacific Japan is also building. In addition to her 1923-4 programme, a new one to be completed in 1927-8 is already launched, consisting of four battleships, four battle-cruisers, 12 light cruisers and 30–40 destroyers; and the Big Navy-ites are insistently urging the adoption of the "Three 8–8 scheme," that is, at least three squadrons each to consist of eight battleships and eight battle-cruisers. On the other hand there are frequent, if vain, complaints concerning the vast expenditure. The Navy has, in fact, become of late years Japan's senior service, and is the instrument to which her rulers look as the means of maintaining and advancing her interests in Manchuria and China.

She has, moreover, striven strenuously to render herself self-supporting in the matter of naval supplies; and all the warships now being built will be constructed and equipped throughout by Japanese labour with Japanese materials; but notwithstanding these efforts and the success achieved we read that

> last year two of the leading firms in England received inquiries from the Japanese Government, and in October a contract was placed with Vickers, Ltd., and earlier on another British firm had received a large order for armour-piercing projectiles.

Japan's great difficulty has been her inadequate supplies of native iron ore, but the difficulty is said to have been overcome. On October 18th, 1920, the War Office issued the following statement:—

> Iron sand is so general throughout the entire length and breadth of the Empire that it has long been plain that if some method were discovered of smelting the iron from it Japan would never suffer from want of steel. On the strength of the above the necessary

investigations were started as early as September, 1919. . . . The experiments of a year have now been crowned with tolerable success and the process has been experimented with on a practical scale with very satisfactory results.

The Imperial Navy has further benefited by the phenomenal growth of the shipbuilding industry, which has more than doubled its resources since 1914, and in which further great extensions continue. By 1922 seven private firms will be able to turn out the largest ships, instead of only two of them, as in 1914. At least five other firms are able to build light cruisers, torpedoes and submarines. And the big Government programmes will keep most of them busy for some years to come.

It was this rapid growth of Japanese naval power which was the immediate cause of the formation of an American Pacific Fleet. To divide her naval forces and resources in this fashion is contrary to all the accepted canons of strategy, and it remains to be seen whether events will justify so bold a departure from " fundamental principles."

The possibility of a sudden and successful attack on the Panama Canal has been frequently discussed in Japan, but the Canal's heavy sea batteries, powerful field works and strong submarine flotillas render such an attack a rather hopeless enterprise.

On the other hand, when we turn to the islands of the Pacific it is clear that as things now stand the Philippines can easily be taken by Japan whenever she cares to resort to force. And not only that, Guam, an island of the highest strategical value, has scarcely been developed at all as a naval station by U.S., and it, too, must fall an easy prey before a determined attack of the Japanese—more especially now that Japan is in possession of the Marshall, Caroline, Pelew and Marianne Islands, thereby surrounding Guam with potential strongholds and bases. Naval bases and coal and oil depôts have already been established at Yap, Jaluit (Marshall Islands), Angaur (Pelews), Pulap and Ponape (Caroline Islands)—from which it is clear that Japan does not permit her mandatory obligations to lie too heavily upon her conscience.

Henceforth the value of Guam is greatly reduced—and all the more so because the island is no longer self-supporting in the matter of food supplies. The U.S. has the further problem of the defence of the Aleutian Islands and of Alaska, that " storehouse of the future," where at present the only naval station, and that a poor one, is at Sitka.

These considerations show the strong position of Japan in the Western Pacific, particularly since her acquisition of the former German possessions. By selecting her own moment for striking, Japan could count upon having taken Guam and the Philippines within a fortnight, thus depriving U.S. of any naval base, and completely establishing her own supremacy in those waters.

But all this would be changed if action be deferred until Guam is properly fortified and made, as it is capable of being made, impregnable. Moreover, by retaking the Philippines, if Japan had already seized them—though it would doubtless be a very difficult, dangerous and costly enterprise —U.S. would then be in a position to assume the offensive against Japan itself. In that case, far more important than any probable success against the more exposed parts of Japan's coast would be the terrific pressure which she would be able to exert by an economic blockade. With her cruisers, destroyers and submarines she could with ease intercept practically all vessels bound for Japan, while aerial attacks upon the naval ports and industrial centres would intensify the rigours of the blockade.

What then is beneath all this growing bitterness and naval rivalry between Japan and the U.S. ?

The outstanding issues are two—the problem of Japanese immigration into the U.S. and that of Japan's attitude and policy towards China.

Of the two the former has loomed largest in the public eye. Its importance has been over-estimated; and the view of Putnam Weale, a recognised authority, is valuable and interesting :—

> Overspill of population should be ruled out of any serious discussion as a vital factor in the clash between the races inhabiting the shores of the Pacific. . . . The so-called overspill of Asia in this year of 1921 is nothing more than a phrase.—(*Review of Reviews*, Sept.-Oct., 1921.)

At any rate it is quite clear that the problem of China is now rapidly overshadowing in importance that of immigration.

During the Great War, Japan took advantage of the preoccupation of the Western countries to put forward demands from China which meant nothing less than the complete subordination of China's resources to Japanese interests. Some of her demands were openly published, and were conceded by China. Others, preposterous even for an Imperialist Power, were for a time kept secret. China screwed her courage to the sticking point and rejected them; and the other Powers, who had their own views as to the future of China, intervened against the Japanese.

But though rebuffed in that instance, the Japanese have by no means surrendered their hopes of achieving complete economic predominance in China. The military and naval convention which they forced upon China in 1918—though ostensibly only " for the duration of the war "—is still being enforced. Nor does the China banking Consortium of Japan, U.S., Britain and France by any means guarantee a change of her policy; " that Japan seriously intends to concede the principle of the equality of international interests in that country is difficult to believe in view of her past record." Not —— likely!

The more sophisticated nations begin to look askance at a Power which pursues its policy of economic Imperialism in so naked and unashamed a fashion; and to ask themselves whether this " Prussia of the East " is worthy of a place among the democracies of the world. The waters of the great ocean—pacific no longer!—are ever more widely and deeply stirred by the rising tides of Imperialist expansion and naval preparations.

T. ASHCROFT

LABOUR *and the* WORLD CRISIS

V.

THE present insolvency of nations, as expressed in their failure to purchase in some instances and the failure to develop industries in others, can be fully understood only if the methods adopted in financing the war are clear in our minds. Most people realise that the war was not paid for—and will not be yet awhile—but this does not mean that they understand what enabled the nations to carry on as they did.

It is not intended—it would be impossible—to cover the whole of the methods adopted, or even to outline the question of finance as a whole, in these articles. In its wide ramifications, its divisions and sub-divisions,

finance is as difficult to understand as are the most complicated technical processes in industry. All that can be done here is to give in broad outline the main features of the process by which bank credits and purchasing power were created during the war.

Fortunately, the Government itself assists us in giving the explanation so that no one need suppose that we are drawing on our own imagination. The facts are contained in Government publications, and the following may be taken as a summary :—Assuming that the Government, in any given week, after having used the whole of its current revenue and loans, is in need of an additional £10,000,000. Remember, the war cost £8,000,000 per day, so that a deficit of ten millions in any one week is nothing to be surprised at ! But where is the money to come from ? The Government has taxed and loaned ; what other source is there ? There is the Bank ; the Bank of England, which can be asked for credit money.

Does the Bank then *create* money ? If so, why does it not go on with the process and make us a nation of millionaires ? Up to a point it does make money, of a kind. Let us explain. You, fellow-workman, provided you are not unemployed and that you have been careful with your wages, can lend a " Bradbury " to one man, but you cannot lend the same " Bradbury " (at the same time) to two men. That, indeed, would be a miracle. But it is just this kind of miracle which forms part of the everyday activity of a bank. It can lend the same sum of money to five, possibly ten, men.

How ? Why ? Well, it knows from long experience and practice that these men will not all come together for the money. The sums loaned would be drawn upon over a long period, and what is still more important the money may not leave the Bank at all. If the Bank lends money to one customer who owes an equal amount to another customer of the Bank and with this credit squares the account, nothing need leave the Bank. All that the Bank does in these transactions is to agree to cash, if necessary, all cheques drawn upon it by those who have money at the banks or by those to whom the bankers have given permission to draw. In practice very few are cashed. What is drawn out in the name of one individual is immediately received back in the name of another. The money that runs out just as rapidly runs in again.

So the Government approaches the Bank authorities and states its requirements—a ten-million credit loan. The Bank agrees. The Government asks the Bank to pay on its behalf £10,000,000. Outside, an army of Government contractors are awaiting payment for goods and services rendered. Cheques drawn upon the Bank of England for the amounts due are sent to each and they, in turn, send them to their own individual bankers who credit them with the amounts of the cheques. It now depends upon these banks whether anything other than paper will leave the Bank of England. The central institution is mainly a bank for bankers, and just as individuals imagine their own deposits to be safe in the vaults of their respective banks, and that they will certainly be paid out upon application, so do individual banks regard their deposits in the Bank of England. Everybody and every bank assume their deposits to be there and trust that they will be paid upon demand ; and yet all of them know how utterly impossible it would be if all came together for their money.

A bank is an institution whose normal state is that of insolvency. Bank profits are made by lending other people's money, as often as possible. A loan once made appears in the bank books to the credit of the individual

to whom it is granted, as if he had actually deposited it there. It forms part of their liabilities, so that banks always owe more than they possess.

Unfortunately, there is a limit to the extent to which this can be carried on. Some customers will insist upon calling for actual money. Some cash must be retained in order to meet these demands. The bank, therefore, must always keep within a given proportion of liabilities to cash reserves, and experience has long since taught it what that proportion can safely be.

Let us now revert to the cheques drawn by the Government upon the Bank of England, posted to contractors who, in turn, deposit them with their bankers.

The individual contractor (or firm) receiving a cheque for £10,000 "pays" this into Barclays, shall we say, the bank with which he deals. Barclays credit him with having done so, and send the cheque on to the Bank of England, who now place the £10,000 to the credit of Barclays Bank.

Now the effects, thus far, are: First, the Government credit is exhausted because it has been distributed by cheque amongst its various creditors. Secondly, these Government creditors upon receipt of their cheques pass them into their own bank and thereby increase their deposits, and, judged from the point of view of accounts, are richer to that extent. Thirdly, the various banks amongst whom the cheques were deposited in turn send them back to the Bank of England and increase *their* deposits. They, too, are credited with these amounts, as if they were gold. Here comes the important point.

The outer banks regard their deposits with the central institution as being what they pretend to be, namely, gold. They act upon this assumption. Their business as bankers, as already explained, is to lend other people's money, and to lend it as often as possible. But, so far, this money, and we assume all of it to have passed into the hands of these bankers, has not been lent at all. It simply lies to their credit at the Bank of England to be paid out if called upon by themselves, and they in turn are subject to the calls of the contractors who paid them in.

These banks can now lend or invest this money on their own again. This we shall assume to be done four times. That is, they grant or create credit, incur liabilities of four times the amount originally created by the Bank of England, which means that during the whole process fifty millions of credit has been created. This is the process repeated over and over again, credits mounting ever higher and higher. Let us consider the effects.

When the Government found itself compelled to go to the Bank for loans it gave nothing in return for the money. The Government is not a producer whose goods can ultimately cancel this debt. For the Government this is possible only by putting its hands in the pockets of the community. The credit received had no material basis. It was simply the right to go into the market and make purchases, and use the name of the Bank to pay for them. In effect, it was an addition to the purchasing power of the community without increasing the goods produced.

With this manufactured purchasing power the Government enters the market. Its appearance in the market as a buyer is marked by other effects. Prices begin to rise. Other causes would already have commenced the process, but we are here dealing with the effect of Government purchases with manufactured money.

The rise in prices brings us back again to the Bank of England. Not only is it the central banking institution but it is the institution from which

demands for additional currency are met. If a rise in prices necessitates an addition to the currency, the Bank will be called upon to find real money for this purpose. Where is it to get this gold from? And if it finds it the whole process now appears to be a costly one, as far as the Bank is concerned. Fortunately, however, the contingency did not arise. Gold payments had already been suspended, and this difficulty, which would have made the whole scheme impossible, removed. Additional demands for currency were met by the printing press. Untold millions of bank notes and "Bradburys" could be turned out at will. A paper currency was in circulation and could be increased with little difficulty.

The currency of this country became expanded, or inflated as it is commonly termed, and with this came a further rise in prices; for paper, unlike gold, is of no use apart from its function as a medium of circulation. There followed, of course, a rise in the cost of living. The purchasing power of money wages fell, and the working class, at least the organised section, were compelled to take steps to increase the amount of this wage. This increase in wages could never keep pace with the advance in prices because the process above outlined was going on all the time.

W. H. MAINWARING

(To be concluded.)

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

III.—The Climax of Mercantilism.

WE have seen how the early colonial expansion was the result of the growth of Merchant Capital, requiring monopoly of markets for its trade. Colonies specially "regulated" and "protected" supplied these monopolised markets. We have seen that it was because the Stuart kings inclined to the interests of landed property, and did not sufficiently aid this commercial expansion, that the Stuart monarchy was overthrown, and William III. installed by the Whig Revolution of 1689, to rule, not absolutely, but subject to Parliament. We have seen that although the landed aristocracy had almost the entire representation in Parliament in the 18th century, yet a section of the aristocracy had interests in commerce, and furthered commercial expansion. Therefore, in fact, during the 18th century the State was the instrument of merchant capital.

Consequently the 18th century saw a succession of wars having their main roots in commercial rivalry, and undertaken to secure our commercial monopoly from the intrusion of our new trade rival, France. "We have seen that our rivals in world dominion were first Spain and then Holland. . . . The 18th century saw the beginning of a Hundred Years' War with France . . . the struggle was for colonial power."[1] Armies of the State were sent to wrest Canada from the French, and thereby to further the expansion inland of the North American colonies. Our Navy made valuable conquests for commercial enterprise in the West Indies. Our armies fought in India to secure the monopoly of the East India Company against the French. Seeley says:—

[1] Townsend Warner, *Landmarks in English Industrial History*, p. 245.

> The expansion of England in the New World and in Asia is the formula which sums up for England the history of the 18th century. . . . The whole period stands out as an age of gigantic rivalry between England and France, a kind of second Hundred Years' War.[1]

The 18th century, in fact, is the time when Mercantilism most closely resembles modern capitalist Imperialism. "No thought of territorial dominion appears in the policy of the Company till the 18th century. To secure liberties to trade . . to protect the Company against 'interlopers' . . . to pay good dividends to the shareholders, these are the early objects of the (merchant) Company."[2] Now, however, "the State had taken over from private enterprise the business of acquiring territory." But whereas modern Imperialism demands the conquest of new countries, in order to subject the native civilisation and impose on it capitalist civilisation, with its concomitant, a propertyless proletariat, these conquests of the 18th century were the result merely of the rivalry of France and England, each trying to safeguard and enlarge its colonial monopoly. In India the wars with Indian rulers arose merely because the French had adopted the policy of alliances with Indian princes against the English; and "war in India was merely a part of the all-pervading war with France."[3] In fact, towards the end of the century in the Act renewing the East India Company's charter it was expressly stated that "schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant alike to the wish, the honour, and the policy" of the British nation.[4]

But the wars of the 18th century, like the present-day imperialist wars, were products of rivalry between economic interests of countries struggling for colonial monopoly. The War of the Spanish Succession arose because Louis XIV. tried to unite the thrones of France and Spain and thereby add the trade of the Spanish Netherlands and the wealth of Spanish America to France. The Peace of Utrecht in 1713, which concluded the war, had as its result that "England had got practical control of the Mediterranean, and made a beginning of wresting from France her possessions in the New World."[5] "Merchants made the peace—as the Tories found when next year they tried to negotiate a Commercial Treaty with France, of which the merchants did not approve."[6] "The war which (nearly?) broke out with Spain in 1727 was partly caused by Spain's recognition of the Ostend Company, a dangerous rival of our own and Dutch trade in the East."[7] In 1839 during the Ministry of the Whig Walpole, the great champion of the interests of merchant capital, the War of Jenkins' Ear broke out with Spain. Says Egerton, "The trivial matter of Jenkins' ear served as a cloak to its real purpose, the command of the trade of the West Indies."[8] It was called the War of Jenkins' Ear, because a Captain Jenkins stumped the country stirring up popular passion by displaying an ear which he said had been cut off by the Spaniards. Then as now the emotional "stunt" was a good way of camouflaging for the people the real naked facts of capitalist wars!

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[1] Seeley, *Expansion of England.*
[2] Townsend Warner, *Landmarks in English Industrial History*, p. 204.
[3] Jose, *The Growth of the Empire*, p. 186.
[4] Quoted by Jose, *loc. cit.*, p. 180.
[5] Myers, *General History*, p. 617.
[6] Jose, *loc. cit.*, p. 66.
[7] Townsend Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 250.
[8] Egerton, *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, p. 144.

The object of the Seven Years' War was in Pitt's phrase " to conquer America in Europe." After the Treaty of Paris, which ended the war, in 1763 England was " left without a rival in America; while in India, though Pondicherry was restored to the French, their power was shattered and the ultimate spread of English influence over the peninsula assured. . . . This treaty marks the high-water mark of English colonial power in the 18th century . . By 1815 . . . England had risen from the position of one of many rivals for colonial territory, to be the one great colonial Power of the world." [1] Truly, merchant capital had used the State well to serve its own interests. But as the miseries, the degradation and the hideous oppression of the working class in the industrial shambles of the new factories in the first half of the 19th century showed, the working class had little to gain by all this " glorious greatness."

MAURICE H. DOBB

Next month: " The Decline of Mercantilism."

PRODUCTION *and* POLITICS

Walton Newbold, in this series of articles, is doing the same kind of work, and using the same method, as in those studies of contemporary problems by which he is better known; that is, he is interpreting the facts of history from the Marxian point of view. Certain of our readers, referring to these articles, have quoted L. B. Boudin's advice to us—" Don't get academic," and asked whether such studies as these are not thereby condemned. We think not. And we would refer such critics to another remark of Comrade Boudin's—" History—that's our groundwork! "

IX.—The Holy Catholic Church

NO study such as that we are making would be complete if we were to pass from the economy of ox and plough to that of commodity production, founded on sheep rearing and the fabrication of wool, without devoting some consideration to the most powerful institution in the West of Europe throughout the Middle Ages, viz., the Holy Catholic Church.

In dealing with a state of society wherein all men, of whatever rank or occupation, were at least professedly communicants of a single universal religious organisation, which claimed and exercised over them an authority extending over their whole lives from the cradle to the grave, we must of necessity seek to understand what such an organisation signified. When we remember that this body, laying solemn claim to have received in due apostolic succession from the first Bishop of Rome, St. Peter, reversion of his power to bind or loose all things in earth and heaven, asserted its right to regulate and, in certain circumstances, to supersede the authority of kings and emperors, we realise how tremendous an institution it was. When, furthermore, we find that, in the decline and after the fall of the Roman Empire, it assumed many of the duties of that government and everywhere modelled its dominion on its municipal and provincial organisation, so that it became heir to its prestige, and repository of its culture and law, we see that we have to do with a political system of the most formidable character.

[1] Townsend Warner, *Landmarks in English Industrial History*, p. 250.

The Holy Catholic Church, as it had developed through the early centuries after the death of its more or less historically authentic founder, and in accord with creeds ennunciated and approved by successive councils of its elders, had become the Church of Rome, and as such the Church Universal. It taught and it administered the civil law of Imperial Rome. It carried down through the centuries of barbarism and of societies developing from kindred to agrarian feudalism and the commercial state the legal formulæ arising out of a highly-evolved system of private property.

When one stands in some great church of the Catholic Faith there comes over one, sometimes, the thought—and it is a true one—that one is looking up the long aisles of history, across the centuries of Mediævalism, to the glory and the power of the Eternal City, Rome of the Cæsars, Rome of the Pontifex Maximus, to Rome of Latium and of Alba growing dim amid the legends of the heroic age. But in such a church, or in one of the churches of the Anglican or Nonconformist communions, one is face to face with something still more venerable. One is contemplating the ghost of the patriarchate, the wraith in the Catholic communion of the matriarchate, and a memorial to the common life of the consaguine society.

Let us get away from these symbols, so appropriate to the commencement of a study of any of the systems of imagination institutionalised in the form of a church, and examine a parish church dating back before the Reformation and remaining substantially unaltered from that time.

We notice that, unlike the cathedrals and most abbey churches, it is not built in the form of a cross but consists of two distinct parts—chancel and nave. We shall discover that the chancel belonged to and was used by the owner of the advowson or living, whether secular or ecclesiastical. We shall, probably, find one or more local families of position with graves in this portion of the church, or in chapels attached. In the east end of the chancel we shall find the communion table, formerly the high altar.

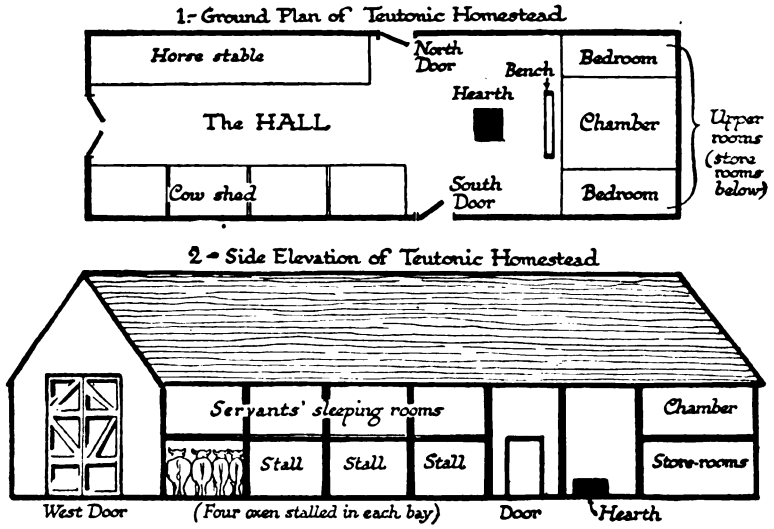
Then, to the west of the chancel and, generally, one or more steps down was the nave, reserved to the use of, and often the property of, the parish, i.e., of all freeholders in the parish, with whose *messuage* went a pew. This part of the church was the common hall of the parish and was cared for by the vestry, which seems to have been, at one time, identical with the manor court. It was used as meeting place, market hall, store-house, etc. The nave is divided into sections by arches which, in old churches, were of uniform width and known as "bays." This "bay" was the standard measurement of land. On either side of the nave we generally find aisles. Sometimes there are, or were, over these upper stories called *triforia*.

Next note the situation of the great west door and of the north and south doors, at the transepts between the nave and chancel. Note, finally, the tower or belfry, normally at the west end of the church, sometimes detached and at a distance.

Now, this typical structure of the parish church is in all essentials identical with the great manor house, the old Teutonic farm house, the patriarchal homestead, substantially the same in plan as the patriarchal homestead out of which evolved the *basilica* or municipal building of Rome. The nave conformed to the common hall, where dwelt and worked the members of the patriarchal family; the chancel or "shut off" to the chamber of the lord and his lady. Hall and chamber—these were the two apartments "The Gothic cathedral," says Mr. Seebohm, "simplified and reduced in style and materials to a rough and rapidly erected structure of

green lumber and wattle, would give no bad idea of the tribal house of Wales or Ireland" (*Village Community*, p. 241).

The plan and elevations below depicted should make even plainer the enormously significant conclusion that the parish churches of Christendom have evolved from the patriarchal farmsteads of the Celts, the Germans and the Latins.



We know that many of the earlier churches were, in Great Britain and Ireland, barns and halls given to the missionaries of the Celtic and the Roman Churches. We know, also, in Ireland and everywhere within the Communion of Iona, that "a great monastery was a centre of family relation, and served as a school or asylum for all who were of the founder's kin."

In Ireland—that bridge between Pre-Christianity and the Church of Rome—we have a people to whom came naturally the conception of a Holy Family, under the patriarchal absolutism of the Father, revealed in the Son and its justice tempered by the prayers of a lower member, the Mother. Such a household, assuredly, would have its officers and its troop of retainers —Gabriel, Michael and All Angels. Our ancestors, convinced of a spirit world, imagining agents to explain the phenomena they could not understand, naturally thought of a church in terms of their experience, actual or believed.

All that architecture, ceremonial and music could contribute to enhance the majesty and infinite power of the Father in Heaven was brought to erect and beautify the edifices which, through successive centuries, the Church built to house its family. Symbolic art and priestly concept made of the Holy Family something withdrawn from the world of matter, raised above reality to the realms of an ever more esoteric mysticism.

Yet this Church was something much more carnal in its origin, much more human in its teaching. It was the reconstruction in intangible ideas of a social system which no longer conformed to economic conditions and the interests of the governing class. Rome, relying on the legionaries, had fallen. Rome, relying on the soldiers of the Church, might endure. Authority, depending on terrestrial executive functions, had broken down. Authority, depending on control of men's minds, might prevail.

The Catholic Church had an extraordinary genius for knowing when to compromise and what and how to absorb. It recognised, however, what all who have the will to power must recognise, viz., the folly of compromise in fundamentals. Above all, it would permit no calling in question of its authority. It insisted upon the authority of a hierarchy, claiming to be inspired and appointed by a divine master. It functioned in such a way as to extirpate the influence of kinship and to enthrone in men's minds the conception of obedience to a supreme over-lord. It was at once the rival and the counter-part of feudalism. Both were forms of social organisation seeking to stabilise an agrarian economy and to render absolute the sovereignty of the lords of the soil.

The Church profited by the system of primogeniture to enrol the disinherited in its monastic orders where, vowed to celibacy, they advanced its interests. The monks helped to make the Church in every locality an independent institution and to increase its control of territorial administration and of the courts. They became the counsellors of kings and the ministers of State. Seeking to avail themselves of their influence over men's minds and of their administrative opportunities, the monastic orders supplemented their political power by the acquisition of economic power, i.e., ownership of landed estates. In doing this, they prepared the way for their own downfall and with it the overthrow of the authority of the Holy Catholic Church in England and in Scotland.

J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

(To be continued.)

"ADMIRAL" PARKER

(Concluded.)

THEIR new-found freedom, and this carefully constructed machinery of self-government, both made the men unwilling to go back to work when Admiral Buckner communicated to them the news that the Spithead men had returned to work, satisfied by the arrival of the pardon and concession of the major portion of their demands. Delegates who arrived from Spithead to induce the Nore men to return were to their surprise met with bitter reproaches for going back without making a clean sweep of all grievances. Throughout the fleet there was a general reluctance to return to the prison-house after so short a spell of liberty, and it seems probable that Parker threw his influence on the side of remaining out at least until the Lords of the Admiralty had been forced to come down to Sheerness as they had gone to Spithead.

But though this almost puerile decision was adopted, further demands had to be put forward in order to excuse it, and in the drafting of them the delegates realised that there were serious reasons for remaining out and grievances that really needed righting. They handed in on May 20th a list of new demands. To this the Admiralty replied, through Buckner on the 22nd, with a flat negative Parker and the delegates received the reply with unconcealed indignation and rowed off to the Fleet without showing any signs of submission. For six days the situation remained thus in suspense, neither the fleet nor the officers on shore yielding in the

least, but each facing the other with growing exasperation, and Parker and Buckner exchanging sharper notes than ever. Then, on May 28th, in spite of their proclaimed decision, four members of the Board of the Admiralty appeared in Sheerness.

They had been sent there by special order of the Cabinet. But they came as bearers of an ultimatum. They refused the delegates an interview, and informed them that they would consider nothing but surrender and a prayer for pardon. The Government had decided to crush the mutiny.

It is difficult for us to recapture the spirit of the latter end of the 18th century. We have to leave behind us all thoughts of Trade Unions and capitalist combines, of great warrens like Manchester and Liverpool, or of democratic Parliaments and vote-catching politicians. It was the age of the dignity of Dr. Johnson and the solemnity of Edward Gibbon; the age of a class which lived in dignified and unquestioned leisure upon the efforts of the rest of the mostly agricultural population. There did not enter into the minds of the members of this class, nor of their supporters, any doubt as to their right to occupy this position. Between them and their inferiors was a gulf which was hardly to be bridged. They could not even talk, except in the relation of master and servant. There was no community of ideas, or even religion. The upper classes listened, if at all, to unemotional sermons by wigged divines to whom Latin was nearly as easy a tongue as English: their inferiors heard either the simple but autocratic instructions of the local parson or the hysterical and wholly reprehensible enthusiasm of a wandering dissenter.

The security of this dominant class had been rudely shaken by the French Revolution. They had seen their class driven out, its property seized and its leaders executed, by the lower orders whom they so despised and patronised. Great as had been their security, their panic was even greater. Frightened beyond measure, they had passed the scandalous Six Acts and repressed savagely the most innocent Liberalism. They now had become convinced that the Nore Mutiny was a Jacobin adventure, and were prepared to destroy it.

Though the delegates could not know this, they at least seem to have realised that a crisis had come when they received from the Lords of the Admiralty a flat refusal. Parker had by this time found that his position was no sinecure. Like most leaders, he had his Right and Left wing to manage. He had to cope with delegates whom he rightly suspected of only awaiting a suitable opportunity to desert, and with others who regarded him as weak and shuffling. These latter were mostly United Irishmen, and were well infected with the equalitarian principles of the French Revolution. They wanted a revolution, and failing that would desert to France.

The discussion was long and bitter. At length a delegate was sent to the Secretary of the Admiralty delegation, curtly informing them that a majority had decided to continue the mutiny (May 29th). The Lords of the Admiralty left for London. The first and only attempt at negotiations was over. The two parties faced each other in straight opposition. Henceforward it was war, and, as though to mark it, Sheerness was put in a state of defence and the mutineers excluded. The seamen were disconcerted. The *San Fiorenzo* and the *Clyde* raised the white flag and escaped. There were struggles on other ships, including a dispute on Parker's flagship, the *Sandwich*. The mutiny seemed about to end in defeat.

As the *San Fiorenzo* escaped out to sea down the Thames estuary, she met with a number of larger ships, flying red flags and putting in to the Thames mouth. Not knowing what they were, the crew for safety's sake rehoisted the red flag, gave three cheers and were allowed to pass undisturbed. Then, on Tuesday evening (the 30th), these same mysterious ships, to the astonishment and discomfiture of the waiting officers on land, came dropping down, one after another, to Sheerness.

It soon became known that they had arrived from Yarmouth, and were the body of Admiral Duncan's fleet. Duncan's fleet was no unimportant aggregation like the Nore Fleet, but practically the sole defence of England against the Dutch. Duncan was at that moment blockading the Texel with only two ships, all that were left of his fleet. The Lords of the Admiralty had foolishly instructed him to suppress the Nore Mutiny. But when he gave the signal to stand out to sea only two ships went with him. The rest came down to the Nore in batches to aid the mutiny, the last group arriving on June 6th.

With the number of mutinous ships more than doubled by this addition, there was no more talk of surrender. On June 2nd Parker gave an order which might almost have led to victory. His Committee ordered the blockade of London. The fleet was drawn up across the Thames mouth, with roughly half-mile intervals between each ship. Four ships—two sloops and two battleships—in the channel between the Nore and Southend captured every merchantman or provision boat that arrived. The chain of ships drawn up behind prevented any escape. In four days a hundred and more ships were in their hands.

This was the high watermark of their success. A fortnight before the Admiralty had been certain of triumph. Since then it had been forced to come down to Sheerness, and been sent back with a rebuff. The mutineers had been joined by fourteen more ships, another of England's fleets had disappeared from her defences, and the capital of the country was blockaded. The Government was stung to vigorous action. They completed the isolation of the fleet from the land, stopping all supplies and communications. Parliament passed a Bill authorising the Admiralty to declare any ship it chose to be "in a state of rebellion"—in other words handing over the mutineers to the discretion of the Lords Commissioners.

We know very little of the internal life of the fleet during this time. Some jack-in-office at the Admiralty has destroyed the *Promiscuous Letters* which contained the most valuable information. We are in the position of any landsman observer at Southend at that date. He could have seen the long line of graceful, high-pooped ships of the line, with red flags fluttering from the intricate rigging, and the entangled mass of masts rising from the hundred and more merchant ships held idly near the Nore Light.

Such an observer would have seen, on June 5th, the traffic of the river beginning to move again, and on the tenth he could have seen the mass of trading ships held prisoner separately and slowly resume their voyage upstream. Parker had signed an order permitting all but naval storeships to pass, and, although the reason given was to placate London opinion and to show the seamen's loyal intentions, there is little doubt that it was really an evidence of discouragement.

Then the Admiralty took the step which defeated the mutiny. They had the lights and buoys removed. The fleet was pinned, a prisoner. It dared not sail up the river; it could not sail out. It would be starved out.

The delegates were deeply alarmed. For the moment desperation gave matters into the hands of the revolutionaries. Parker seems to have let things slide and merely carried out the orders given him by his Left wing. They decided that the fleet would sail to the Humber, there take prizes, and then to the Texel and surrender to France. An alternative project, scattering the fleet, some to France, some to Ireland, some to America, was apparently rejected. Therefore, on June 9th, the *Sandwich* gave the signal to sail. The rest of the ships acknowledged it. The *Sandwich* waited, but not a ship moved. Whatever the delegates might say, the seamen would not face the sands of the Thames estuary uncharted. The last effort of the mutiny had failed.

So during the next week the mutinous ships one by one drifted down to Sheerness and surrendered. The *Leopard* and *Repulse* started the rot, and each ship, after a fight between the two parties inside, followed them in. Some few ringleaders escaped in open boats, but most were caught for the bloody revenge the Admiralty was preparing.

On board the *Sandwich* there was no struggle. Parker had by now fallen back entirely under old influences. He had become again the 18th century English gentleman. Oppressed by a feeling of the wickedness of rebelling against his King and his class, he was now only concerned with making a proper submission and atonement for what seemed a ghastly mistake. He quietly submitted to being put in irons.

It had originally been intended to bring Parker before a civil court but, for reasons which may easily be guessed, an order issued on June 19th arraigned him before a court-martial. The Admiralty did not desire any of the scruples which might have hindered a civil court to save Parker from death.

The trial took place on board the *Neptune* in the Long Reach, on the Medway between Chatham and Sheerness. The prisoner was by this time completely broken in. He was no longer upheld by any enthusiasm for the cruelly oppressed seamen whom he had led: he thought only of assuming the dignifiedly, contrite but resigned attitude befitting a man of gentle blood who found himself in such a position in the reign of His Most Excellent Majesty King George the Third. In his trial he attempted merely to prove that he had been a moderating influence and had assumed power only in order to check the extremists.

He was condemned to death. His wife made vain attempts to save his life by proving him a lunatic; the Admiralty brushed her appeals aside. At his execution he was careful to maintain the proper conduct of a "gentleman"; to protest his loyalty and to meet death courageously with aid of religion but without any signs of emotion or of the "enthusiastic" expressions of a Wesleyan. "His conduct," writes the historian, "was rational and religious without ostentation or sublimated ecstasy."

He spoke very briefly, saying that he did not desire to address the ship's company, but merely expressing the hope that his death might be held a sufficient atonement for the mutiny and that others would be spared. The crew, drawn up to witness his death, remained silent and motionless, but their feelings must have been unenviable as they watched the fate of the man they had so enthusiastically acclaimed and so basely deserted.

R. W. POSTGATE

ECONOMICS *without* HEADACHES

XI

THE workers in modern society produce great quantities of commodities, which they hand to their employers. Some of the goods they have produced return to them, as for example the margarine, the dungarees, the cheap boots, etc.; the motor cars and the dress suits do not return to them. Because the wages received by the workers are less in purchasing power than the value of the goods produced, a certain amount of these goods remains in the hands of the employers. The latter consume a great deal, they live well, they have fine houses, and they have servants who must be kept out of the surplus products retained. But this does not account for all the wealth produced.

We have seen that the capitalists generally, being unable to consume all the wealth remaining in their hands, allow a part to be used as capital with which to open up new enterprises which in turn will bring them a return. But if all the surplus value not immediately required by the capitalists was turned into capital for investment at home it could not find profitable fields for exploitation—because the workers, who are in the last analysis the great market for commodities, could not consume the goods produced without a great increase in their purchasing power.

Therefore, much of the wealth unconsumed in this country has to be exported.

Goods must be exported from this country in payment for goods imported, but much more than the amount necessary for that purpose goes out. What becomes of those goods?

Let us see first of all what the goods are.

A hundred years ago Britain was the only manufacturing country of any importance. Her chief articles of export were textile goods. Now textile goods could be sold fairly easily. A missionary sought out the poor benighted heathen and, having explained to him the moral necessity of wearing trousers, gave way to the Lancashire trader with trousers cloth to sell. There were—barring accidents—no complications.

But countries to which clothing materials were sent began to find it possible to make those things themselves. In this knowledge they were assisted by British textile machine makers, who, having supplied the home market with looms and mules, sought foreign markets for *their* wares. Every loom sold meant of necessity a diminution in the demand for home textiles, but that did not concern the loom maker.

The process did not end there. The foreign buyer who bought one or many looms began to consider how he might make the looms himself, or have them made in his own country. In this consideration *he* was aided by the British machine tool exporter, who, having supplied the home market with lathes, drilling machines, etc., was anxious to find a foreign buyer for his goods.

The exports of British machine tools for the following years are of importance in this connection :—

	£
1908	416,000
1910	715,000
1912	935,000
1914	1,020,000
1916	1,117,000
1918	1,268,000

"The countries to which British machine tools were exported in 1913, in the order of importance, were, Japan, France, Italy, Russia, Brazil, Belgium, Argentine."*

The process does not stop with machine tools, because the means to make the machines can be exported, or perchance can be developed in the country desiring them. So we find that British exports of iron and steel (wrought and unwrought) were :—

	£
1840	2,515,918
1882	31,000,000
1914 (affected by the War) ..	28,000,000

The general process is therefore something like this :—

Articles of clothing sold.
|
Demand for textile machinery.
|
Textile machines sold.
|
Demand for means of making textile machines.
|
Machine tools sold.
|
Demand for means of making machine tools.
|
Iron and steel, colliery plant, haulage machinery, etc., sold.

The original customer who wished to buy the wherewithal to clothe his nakedness could pay for what he wanted. Sometimes he paid well and perhaps gave a good ivory tusk for a pair of inferior breeches; but he paid, that is the point. When his descendant desired to buy a lathe, or two, and set up a factory in which the lathes could be housed, it was not so easy. Probably he had not the means to do it, and it was there that the capitalist from overseas stepped in. He had the goods required, but could wait

* "1913 is given because it is free from the complications of the war."—*Machine Tool Review*, March, 1919.

for payment; he would leave his goods and draw interest year by year—better still, perhaps, he would found a factory himself.

Because the workers cannot buy back their own products the capitalists have goods on their hands that they wish to sell. The standard of comfort enjoyed (!) by the worker may tend to rise, *but it does not rise in anything like the ratio his productivity increases.*

Because the home market does not expand at the same rate as productivity increases, the quantity of goods for export tends to increase. These goods are not something mystical. They are nuts and bolts, spinning frames, railway engines and so on. As they cannot be paid for by goods—who would consume the goods if they were sent as payment ?—they remain in their new homes as exported capital, capital upon which the home capitalist draws interest. So the worker is exploited at home, and the goods he makes but may not use become additional capital in the hands of the employers, and ultimately push him out of his job by creating new competitors to supply the market he once supplied.

Above we saw that Japan was the most important purchaser of British machine tools in 1913, and so we read :—" It appears necessary to sound a serious note of warning with regard to Japanese competition which is rapidly becoming more threatening. Japan is destined to become Lancashire's principal competitor in years to come."—(*Manchester Guardian*, October 17th, 1918.)

The development of Capitalism proceeds in such a way that every movement tends to destroy something that has gone before. If Alfred Herbert's of Coventry send a number of high-speed machines to Japan, it is of no interest to them that they destroy the market for Lancashire goods.

The cycle may be written as :—

" This is the lathe, that turned the wheels
That revolved in the looms, that wove the cloth
That was sold in the markets John Bull lost."

This change in the *dominant* form of the exported product has certain other features connected with it. (We have used the word dominant because textiles are still of supreme importance to Britain as an export commodity, but those who export them do not wield the power they one time did.) If two competing stall-owners in a public market find themselves in opposition, one can move to another " pitch," but if two established businesses, each with premises valued at many thousands of pounds, are in commercial conflict they cannot pack up and find a new sphere. Similarly with the capitalist with goods to deposit on loan in another country. When he had shirts and trousers to sell he could move if political conditions were unsettled, but the British capitalist who has deposited £100,000 worth of machinery in a given country cannot move them if things become somewhat warm. The best thing to do then is to prevent things becoming warm, and the best way to do that is to prove to the Home Government that British " interests " are at stake (it should be " British *interest* is at stake ") and persuade the Home Government to protect the " interests " by means of a battalion or two. Better still—annex the country.

The international history of the last 60 years or more is the history of the protection of capitalist " interests " in different parts of the world.

W. McLAINE

(*To be concluded.*)

STUDENTS' NOTES *and* QUERIES

A student (S., Muswell Hill) cannot reconcile the Marxian Theory of Value with his own experience as a pieceworker. This is how it appears to him :—

	£	s.	d.
Raw Material	1	0	0
Wages (6 pieces at 2s. each)	0	12	0
Other Expenses	0	8	0
Six pieces	£2	0	0

He suggests that the value of each piece according to Marx is 6s. 8d., but that in the office they add 20 per cent. to the above costs (£2+8s.=£2 8s.) and sell the articles at 8s. each. Where then does Surplus Value come in ?

In the first place 6s. 8d. is not the value, but the *cost of production ;* and the 8s. is *the price of production.* The first is the necessary expenses of the capitalist, and the second that sum *plus* the average rate of profit. Surplus value comes in because the labour-power bought for 12s. imparted a greater value than 12s. to the product. Let us assume that the rate of S.V. was 100 per cent., i.e., that only half the day's output was returned to the worker as wages, or that he imparted a value of 24s. to the six pieces which, sold at their value, would bring in 8s. 8d. each. But competition between capitals varying in their composition has fixed the rate at 20 per cent., and this alone can be added to the cost of production. *The S.V. is already there in the product.* Following out our example there may be go-ahead concerns whose *cost of production* is less, yet who sell at the same *price of production* and thus get a more than average rate of profit. This struggle for a greater individual share of the S.V. explains the constant improvements and economies the capitalist introduces.

Houghton (Kelso) raises the question of "slag, dross, and similar refuse" in relation to exchange and use value. Upon these things, he says, a great deal of labour has been expended. True; but if any firm purposely produced only slag and dross they would soon find themselves ruined. The value of any material wasted, *if that waste is socially necessary*, goes over into the finished commodity, just as do the oil and grease used in a spinning factory. Nowadays chemists are making the waste of one industry the raw material of another. Any economies made in the use of such constant capital increase the rate of profit, but not of exploitation.

A. S. (Swansea).—We have not dealt in the PLEBS with the Russian famine simply because information was and is easily available elsewhere. "Hands Off Russia" Committee would be pleased to supply you with leaflets and information. See also the excellent *Russian Information and Review*, published fortnightly (6d.), by the Russian Trade Delegation (Information Dept.)

Prompted by the appeal for further books useful in the teaching of History to young students, R. Hocking (Ealing) recommends *England in Her Days of Peace* (Phillips, 2s. 6d., reviewed in our March number) and *A History of Everyday Things in England*, by M. and C. H. B. Quennell (Batsford, 16s.). The latter, he says, is full of excellent illustrations.* He also praises *A Bibliography for Teachers of History*, edited by Eileen Power (Women's International League, 2s.).

In reply to "Drudge": Yes, the domestic servant is certainly exploited in the sense that she works long hours for small pay in conditions often peculiarly bad. But she is not a productive worker and does not create S.V. Although she sells her labour-power it is only to minister to the comforts of her employer, who does not sell the product of her labour. M. S.

TRA LA MONDO: *Esperanto Notes*

ACCORDING to the October number of *Der Arbeiter-Esperantist*, a resolution on the international language question brought forward in the names of the delegates of France, Switzerland, Sweden, Yugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Luxemburg and the French Young Communists was accepted by the Congress of the Third International. After a long preamble, the resolution proceeds: ". . . the Congress decides that a committee of investigation be appointed to consider the question of the introduction of an international auxiliary language for the Third International, that it be instructed to make a thoroughly scientific survey and present to the next Congress its report and recommendations (1) as to whether the acceptance of an international auxiliary language seems to be practicable, and (2) in what way and to what extent the Communist International can further the practical application of it."

Another gathering of an entirely different character has recently made a decision with regard to Esperanto. The assembly of the League of Nations has definitely placed on the agenda of the next Assembly the question of the teaching of Esperanto in the schools. Here, if anywhere, any moral authority which the League possesses may possibly have effect.

LA SATANOJ

Sube aperas la teksto de rezolucio unuanime akceptita ĉe la fino de la subkongreso de la "ruĝuloj," okazinta en Praha samtempe kun la ĝenerala Esperantrota kongreso. La nove fondita organizajo, kiu titoliĝas "Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda" (SAT), adreso: 23, rue Boyer, Paris 20, jam kalkulas pli ol 400 SAT'anojn. Ĝi do estas jam forto konsiderinda. La rezolucio estis prezentata de s-o E. Adam, redaktoro de "Esp. Laboristo."

I.

Konsiderante unuaflanke.

(a) ke nur per faktoj ni sukcesos veki veran intereson pri Esperanto ĉe niaj klasbatalaj organizaĵoj;

(b) ke la sperto jam montris, ke UEA estas la sola organizaĵo, kiu en la praktiko montriĝis fruktodona;

(c) sed ke ĝia politika neŭtraleco malpermesas, ke ĝi povu efike labori sur nia proletaria kampo.

II.

Konsiderante duaflanke,

(a) ke la ĉefa tasko de nia Asocia povas neniel esti politika, ĉar jam ekzistas klasbatalaj organizaĵoj;

(b) ke samkiel antaŭ 20 aŭ 30 jaroj estis nepre necesa, ke ĉiuj praktikantoj de Esperanto—ĉu pastroj, ĉu anarkiistoj, ĉu policanoj—ariĝu por montri per faktoj, ke artefarita lingvo povas esti uzata en la praktiko, estas nun necese, ke ĉiuj esperantistoj, anoj de diversaj klasbatalaj organizaĵoj ariĝu en unu solan asocion por montri al la proletariaro per imponaj faktoj, kiom utilega Esperanto estas por la batalo kontraŭ la kapitalista sistemo.

III.

Konsiderante triaflanke,

(a) ke la kunlaborado kun la t. n. burĝaj esperantistoj povus per tia kompomiso nur malutili al nia propagando;

(b) ke jam multaj faktoj montras klare, ke niaj klasaj kontraŭuloj fute ne deziras,

* It is.—ED. PLEBS.

ke Esperanto disvastiĝu en niaj proletariaj rondoj.

Pro la ĉi-supre diritaj motivoj la l-a Kongreso de SAT :

Konfesas, ke oni devas profiti je la sperto jam farita ĉe la neŭtrala asocio UEA ;

Deklaras, ke nur je teknika vidpunkto nia Asocio povas kontakti kun la aliaj esperantaj asocioj ;

Petegas ĉiujn klaskonsciajn batalantojn, ke ili dediĉu sian tutan energion al la kreskado de la unua klasbatala esperantista Asocio tutmonda ;

Sendas al ĉiuj esperantistaj proletarioj sian elkoran saluton kaj petas, ke ili aniĝu la Asocion, vor ke per komuna, frata kaj sindonema kunlaborado ni metu kiel eble plej rapide en la manojn de ĉiuj proletarioj la ilon, kiu permesos al ili la forrenversiĝon de la lingvaj baroj.

For la hipokritan neŭtralismon, for la kapitalismon, vivu SAT ! (El *Esperanto Triumfonta.*)

POPOLANO

The BERGSONIAN DOPE

EDEN & CEDAR PAUL have caught me napping. My reference to their study course in Psychology as "excellent" has been read as recommending Bergson to PLEBS students. If it conveys this impression I would ask Plebeians to turn to my letter (p. 277, Sept. PLEBS) and strike out the word "excellent."

Their course may be suitable for advanced students, well grounded in Marxism, who propose to teach psychology, or to use it in teaching other subjects. Such students, and only such, could read a series of books containing so many diverse and incompatible views, without coming out hopelessly muddled. The advanced student who wants to be abreast of contemporary knowledge must, of course, have a general familiarity with these conflicting views, if only for teaching and debating purposes. Apart from the case of these specialist students, I cannot see in what way the study of Bergson will help the average Plebeian. Nor do I think the Pauls have yet shown us where he is of use.

The element in Bergson which seems particularly to appeal to the Pauls, the emphasising of the distinctive way in which living matter acts, is not peculiar to Bergson. This problem has long been exercising the minds of thoughtful students of the natural sciences. What is peculiar to Bergson is that he gives this phenomena a name (vital impetus—*elan vital*), and treats it as something mystical and inexplicable ; whereas Marxians, together with the vast majority of biologists and physiologists, see no reason to doubt that it will in time be brought into line with the known laws of matter and energy, or with extensions of those laws yet to be discovered. The latter view makes for clear thinking, and stimulates to further research ; the former makes for muddle-headedness, coupled with a vague reverence and awe for something beyond the comprehension of our poor finite intellects. (I may here say that the two quotations from the Plebs Psychology Textbook, which are supposed to support the Bergsonian position, are liable to mislead, as quoted without the context.)

To make my position still clearer, I will add that I consider Bergson likely to be positively harmful, not only to beginners, but to many case-hardened materialists, if read as anything but "poetry" (to use Russell's expression). The place for poetry is in a literature course, not in a psychology course.

In dealing with questions like life, behaviour, "will," as soon as we allow ourselves to be drawn from the scientific method—observation of facts and deduction from them of theories—to the methods of intuitional philosophy, we pass from the field of action to the field of *contemplation*. Whatever may be the ultimate value of contemplation, the present is, for Plebeians, a time for *action*, and for studies which will qualify them for action. We shall do the contemplating better when we have secured a system of production and distribution which will ensure us not having to do it on empty bellies (while our enemies do the *acting* on full ones).

Bergson is obsessed with the idea of the dominance of the human will over matter, which must tend to weaken the position of the idea of material determinism. But so long as we find that the M.C.H. works in practice, in enabling us to interpret the past and foresee the future, better than any other theory or "philosophy of life," we have no time to waste on alternative points of view which cannot be shown to satisfy this pragmatist test.

Also, for a psychological reason, Bergson is dangerous. Even among those who no longer accept the "atavistic beliefs in God, immortality, etc.," there are many who, owing to the misfortune of having been brought up in a religious and superstitious environment, have developed powerful religious-mystic-theological complexes or habits of mind, which are as strong as ever, though repressed into the unconscious by a secondarily acquired rationalism. Bergson appeals to this complex. That is why he is so insidious. We unconsciously put the "vital impetus" in the niche from which we think we have expelled "God." We put "intuition" in the place of the "guiding of the Holy Spirit." The idea of the triumph of the mind over base

matter touches our craving for a belief in a soul superior to the body. And the old dope, in the new bottle, is just as effective as a means of drawing us away from the realities of the class struggle. Metaphysics and mysticism are, for minds of a higher type, as effective dopes as conventional religion and sport are for those of a lower level of intelligence.

Finally, let us compare nineteenth century determinism, still kept alive by Marxians, and also by a large majority of the most active and efficient workers in scientific subjects in the bourgeois universities *so long as they are dealing with the special subjects on which they are authorities*, and the essentially twentieth century Bergsonian philosophy, using our standard measuring tool, the M.C.H. The more or less materialist and essentially determinist outlook of the great scientists of the second half of the nineteenth century, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, etc., was the natural course for philosophic thought to take in a period when, in the field of material production, man was apparently conquered and powerless, in the grip of the forces of nature which he had harnessed to his use in the rapidly expanding industrial system. This outlook commended itself to the ruling classes, for whose benefit, at the time, mighty and unforeseen world-forces were at work. These forces could be seen consolidating the position of the bourgeoisie, and completing the subjugation of the workers.

Marx, carrying the same line of thought into the economic field, saw the inherent contradiction and the inevitable nemesis which must ultimately transfer power from the owning to the working class. This idea has gripped the minds of the workers, who, by virtue of their economic status, offer as ready a soil to determinist philosophy now as the bourgeoisie did 60 years ago (the relative coldness of the English bourgeoisie to the naturalistic outlook in the nineteenth century, is explained by Pannekoek, *Marxism and Darwinism*). For the same reason Marxism, though the logical extension of the theory of natural determinism, was rejected by the bourgeoisie. It spoilt their pleasant dreams.

The writing on the wall is now so patent to the more intelligent of the possessing class that they are ready to grasp any philosophy which declares that the will of man is supreme, and can triumph over the forces of material determinism. They think they see this message in Bergson. He seems to " prophesy smooth things " to them ; very different from the coarse and blasphemous materialism of the " old German Jew." They troop to hear him lecture ; the front seats are thronged with fashionable women, as little capable of appreciating the subtleties of his philosophy as a tom-cat is capable of appreciating Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata. They just feel that he is offering them some sort of an escape from the working of the material forces they so greatly dread.

But such smooth prophesying cuts no ice with Plebeians, because we, as workers, are in a material environment which makes us desire the downfall of the present system ; and we instinctively lean to the outlook which treats the forces which are breaking it up as inevitable and unalterable, because that outlook satisfies best our unconscious complexes. And this time we have got the right end of the stick and the bourgeoisie the wrong one. Our point of view is supported by knowledge and reason, on which hitherto all material progress has been founded ; theirs is based on a system of intuition which repudiates reason and which has never led to any practical achievement in the world of material reality in which we have to live.

From one point of view only, therefore, Bergson's bourgeois philosophy is of use to us, as a contemporary illustration of the principle that the philosophic outlook of a class, like its religion, ethics, laws, etc., is determined by the material conditions of production for the time being.

NORDICUS

DEAR COMRADE,—E. & C. P. start a good many hares in their letter in last month's PLEBS. As they refer me back to their otherwise admirable Plebs publication I venture to cite two of the most offending passages in the chapter, " Creative Revolution " :—

(i.) " Freud reinforces Bergson in the overthrow of the superstition that man is a rational animal " (p. 198) ; (ii.) " Now that materialistic science has exorcised the spooks and demons . . . we can recognise that the fundamental unity of human society is not man the machine, but man that is simultaneously machine and something more " (p. 186).

(i.) Admittedly in this Bergson is right. However, since he approaches the subject as an artist, and not by the objective analysis of human behaviour, the correctness of his guess has no special educational value.

(ii.) The Pauls join issue with Bergson in deploring that mechanistic science leaves no place for " the will." This is too big a question to discuss in one issue. But since they appear to infer from the importance which the " will " assumes in Freud's psychology that the New Psychology is anti-mechanistic a word of protest is due. Of course, if by the new psychology the Pauls mean the species of Baker-Eddyism which Baudouin calls auto-suggestion they find confirmation for this belief. If not, they may pause to consider whether, when all due recognition is made to the constitution of Freud to our understanding of how early experience influences subsequent behaviour, investigators of his school have not taken over many of the terms of the introspective psychologists with all their metaphysical implications. The Pauls' use of the unhappy phrase " New Psychology " seems to leave

out of account that body of scientists who believe that, if psychology is to become a true science, its scope must be defined by the correlation of behaviour with stimuli from the outside world. It is one of the chief points of the new textbook that it does not leave this out of account.

This point of view is set forth with wholly praiseworthy care in Russell's *Analysis of Mind*, and I join with the Pauls in recommending its perusal, and add that the most searching discussion of the determinist question I know is to be found in the same author's "The Notion of Cause" (in *Mysticism and Logic*).. And I think Russell would agree with me and with most Marxists in denouncing the use of the term "artist" (p. 184, *Crea. Rev.*) to describe the activities of such thinkers as Newton and Darwin—if not Marx.

Yours fraternally,
P. L. E. B.

LETTERS *from* PLEBS

We invite contributions from readers on all subjects of interest to working-class students. The only condition is that they must not exceed 400 words—and preference will be given to those shorter than that.

G. B. S. on Biology

DEAR EDITOR,—George Bernard Shaw may have "taken the veil," as "P. L. E. B." says (see August PLEBS). but to me it seems that in his preface to *Back to Methuselah* he has at least endeavoured to put Weismann's mouse-tail cutting experiments in their proper perspective.

I do not lay claim to the encyclopædic knowledge of biological science possessed by "P. L. E. B.," but to me it appears that the truth or otherwise of the inheritance of acquired characters is largely a question of "relativity"—how to define exactly the terms "*inheritance*" and "*acquisition*" and the border-line between them.

Had our primordial amœba-like ancestor such attributes as eyes, legs, brain, tuberculosis, heart disease, venereal disease, etc., or not? Doubtless it had the embryonic cellular capacity for developing these attributes, but somehow, somewhen, somewhere they must have been developed and transmitted, otherwise the whole theory of biological evolution (with all the side-lines of Mendelism thrown in) falls to the ground.

Yours, etc.,
A. P. L.

The Douglas Scheme

DEAR COMRADE,—I think the summary dismissal of this scheme in the October PLEBS is bad tactics. True, we have two weighty reasons for not taking it seriously. In the first place we do not believe that those who control credit would submit to expropriation by a process of slow torture, any more than they would submit to summary confiscation, without putting up a big fight. In the second place many of us have a profound distrust for the group of bourgeois dilettantes who have taken up and are exploiting Major Douglas, and intuitively feel that any scheme which they espouse will be one calculated to induce the workers to relinquish to somebody other than themselves the power which the flow of time and events will place in their hands.

It is, nevertheless, very desirable that we should have an authoritative examination of the scheme from the Marxian standpoint, so that those of us not sufficiently learned to pick it to pieces ourselves can meet its supporters properly armed. The Douglas scheme is being pushed largely by persons whom nobody would suspect of being in sympathy with the aims of the workers, in such circles as among the more "radical" members of the upper divisions of the Civil Service, professional men, the more intelligent of the clergy, the more reactionary and bourgeois in outlook of the Trade Unions, etc.

In short, it tends to attract those members of the bourgeoisie whose common sense warns them that the capitalist system, as it exists at present, is likely to collapse, and who are on the lookout for some alternative as like that system as possible, which will prevent the upsetting of their own pleasant surroundings, and the temporary loss of some of the "freedom" which the enslavement of large numbers of the workers makes possible for them.

While we are not afraid that the workers will unship the capitalists off their backs only to put in their place a crowd of middle-class mensheviks, political hermaphrodites, and long-haired unemployables (the workers can at least respect the average capitalist as a *man*), we ought nevertheless to be in a position seriously to expose the economic defects of the scheme in discussion and debate.

Yours fraternally,
G. P. D.

A Friendly Critic

DEAR COMRADE,—I am not a Pleb but a warm sympathiser with the I.W.-C.E. movement—one of your despised "M.A.'s," and a student of economics of some 11 years' standing; an omnivorous reader and an admirer of the work of Marx. My philosophy of history (especially after reading

Muller Lyer three times) inclines me to the view that you are on the right track.

May I offer a few words of friendly criticism ? The recent correspondence on the Douglas Scheme somewhat blunts my sympathy. Is this your usual method of dealing with opposition schemes ? Why be *so* partial ? Why, again, be so partial in your reviews of economic literature ? In this connection I note your omission to quote such an admirable introductory book to Social Economics as Hook's *Social and Industrial Problem*, which I am using in class this year, a first-rate piece of work which will inculcate socialism without arousing opposition. Why have you failed to note such works as Ward's *Can our Industrial System Survive ?* and Stone's *History of Labour ?* " Progress crawls on a thousand feet," says Muller Lyer, and can you afford to put all the weight on *one* foot, and ignore cross-currents in the stream ? Why, still again, insist that all so-called orthodox economists are " chaplains to the pirate ship " (E. & C. Paul, *Proletcult*), or simply apologetic for the capitalist (Ablett, *Easy Outlines*) ? Is this an honest judgment of, say, J. S. Mill's treatise, Toynbee's *Industrial Revolution*, or even Marshall's *Principles ?*

These few remarks will, naturally, not disturb your equanimity. They may, however, serve to indicate a point of view which I find hinders less radical inquirers from taking the I.W.-C.E. movement more seriously.

With every wish for success in your 10,000 campaign,

Yours fraternally,
H. V. W. LEWIS

[In answer to certain of his queries we would point out to our critic that but few publishers cultivate the excellent habit of sending review copies to the PLEBS ; and that (being ordinary mortals with ordinary limitations) we have therefore to rely to some extent on our friends bringing useful books to our notice. . . . As for the " orthodox " economists, it was not a Pleb but a Fabian who labelled them " chaplains to the pirate ship." The fact that we cheerfully make use of this description does not imply that we regard them, in every instance, as *conscious* of their proud position ; nor need it blind us to the useful material contained in many of their works.—Ed. PLEBS.]

THE COMING REVOLUTION

DEAR COMRADE,—Gould is responsible for this letter.

He said that Marx held it probable that a British revolution would be constitutional. Challenged on this, he produces a passage where Marx says (according to Engels) that this was possible but highly improbable.

Gould has re-read Marx, as I asked him, but, alas, immovably in his old arsyvarsy position. He owes me a pound on this argument, but I don't suppose I'll get it.

Yours, R. W. POSTGATE

THE "SIMPLE LIFERS"

DEAR COMRADE,—At the end of his review of G. B. Jaw's latest, "P. L. E. B." speaks of the indecency of coupling the proletarian movement with the "simple life" reactions of the middle-class. I have noticed similar remarks in the PLEBS before, and want to point out that these manifestations have a deeper significance.

A PLEBS reader, who is supposed to possess that divine curiosity which questions everything, surely knows that the system of production for profit, in order to foist its quite *use*-less articles on the market, has invented a thing called Fashion, which it brings to bear on the herd instinct in man, so that "P. L. E. B." probably *could* (I don't say would) sooner murder his grandmother than parade the city in his bare feet.

Now as "P. L. E. B." knows that the new era, especially in its initial struggle, must concentrate on the production of useful things, he ought to recognise the "indecency" of allowing men to produce and distribute umbrellas, hats, razors, curtains, carpets, dress suits, bedroom suites, jewellery, and ornaments (and allowing housewives to ruin their health attending to such rubbish) when they should be doing work of real social value. Has he never walked down Regent Street and thanked God for the number of things he can do without? The man who wanders about hatless, with a beard on his face and sandals on his sockless feet, probably is a middle-class charlatan, but he *may* be a proletarian, scornful of Fashion, knowing that his demands on society are reduced to the minimum, and conscious that his action is an expression of the Will to Power over middle-class herd psychology which requires a peculiar determination.

In our eagerness for economic history and kindred subjects (the main thing, I admit) let us not minimise the value of the teachings of Thoreau and Carpenter. Ultimately, *through* economic emancipation, we hope for a new mentality—a "spiritual" change; but if the strong hand of the worker itches to wear kid gloves, I'm damned if I'll help him.

Yours frat.,

Berlin. BERNARD WRIGHT

MARXISM AND LITERATURE

DEAR EDITOR,—Concerning the "attempt to subject literature to the Marxian test," so sternly opposed by Comrade Westrope, I feel prompted to make one or two comments which I think are *apropos* of the subject.

Let me first express my agreement with your editorial comments about the "contracting tests of science," and art as "a medium of self-expression." It seems to me that Comrade Westrope might profitably re-study the M.C.H. in all its implications.

Human nature is the summation of inherited tendencies which, being subject to biological evolution, change very, very slowly. Character, personality, or any of the other high-sounding names which psychologists give to the combination of human nature and its superstructure as built up by ceaseless reaction to environment, is a much more variable thing. Since the most important and most variable factor in the environment is the economic factor, then the extent and direction of this variability depends upon the extent and direction of the variability of this economic factor. This is nothing else but Marxism.

It is only of late years, however, that further light has been thrown upon the original human nature. Modern psychology has made revolutionary changes in our knowledge of inherited and pseudo-inherited tendencies; the static factors in social development. The result of all this is and will be a much clearer insight into human behaviour.

Since it is proposed to analyse one form of behaviour in particular, namely, that manifested in literature, I would strongly recommend Comrade Johns, or any other Plebeian desirous of undertaking the analysis, to read Mordell's *Erotic Motive in Literature*. Mordell is an American literary critic of no small ability and standing, so that one is not here dealing with a dabbler.

I note that Comrade Johns is interested in Shelley. He will, I feel sure, find the aforementioned book will add to that interest. Tolstoi, Goethe, Byron, Nietzsche—these and many others receive attention.

In conclusion it must be emphatically stated that the scientific analysis of literature or of any other form of human activity by no means detracts from our appreciation of its beauty.

Yours fraternally,

J. B.

P.S.—May I endorse the recommendation of Shann's *Criterion of Scientific Truth* recommended by E. & C. Paul in the August PLEBS?

SHELLEY

DEAR COMRADE,—Still more about Shelley! Of course Johns finds it impossible to prove that his inspiration was purely capitalist, even though he consult till his eyes are tired those excellent bourgeois critics, Rossetti and Dowden, and the terrifying tomes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th Edition) and the *Dictionary of National Biography!* So long as he doesn't consult Shelley himself, Johns will be able to maintain his comical illusions as to the nature of the poet's inspiration.

I have quoted liberally from Shelley in my other letters, but as this line of argument makes no appeal to Comrade Johns I will attack him with his own favourite weapon of giving other people's opinions on Shelley's political views. To deal first with Godwin, on whom so much turns in this controversy. So far as I know no historian of any responsibility, modern or contemporary, socialist or bourgeois, has ever treated Godwin as other than what he was, the pioneer in England of communist anarchism. Still less does a careful reading of *Political Justice* leave any room for doubt on the matter. As for Shelley—Max Beer, H. N. Brailsford and Bernard Shaw are three socialists of different schools who all accept him as proletarian in outlook. Mrs. Shelley, a great woman whose opinion cannot be disregarded, Thomas Medwin and Trelawney all continually spoke of him as a communist or socialist, coupling his name naturally with Owen and St. Simon.

Before I finish I should like to protest against the laughable argument that because Shelley's intimates were all liberals the poet himself was necessarily a liberal also. If that is to hold, where shall we all be? Has Comrade Johns no compromising acquaintances? Then there is the question of that shortlived enterprise of Hunt's so unhappily named the *Liberal*. Well, the *Liberal* (I have it by me as I write) is a very harmless literary review, containing only two even remotely political articles. Shelley and Byron both protested against the ridiculous title, and of Shelley's two contributions one was posthumous. I don't think that connection can seriously be brought up as condemning Shelley to liberalism.

I think Johns suffers from an intellectual indigestion which prevents his seeing the past in its proper relation to the present. It is this that prevents him from understanding the mentality of the Utopian socialists, a very confused mentality I admit. It is this, too, which makes him sneer at any one writing of the liberation of Italy as "a grand object and the very poetry of politics," which, at the time the words were written, is precisely what it was.

Yours fraternally,
RALPH FOX

DEAR COMRADE,—I don't think R. Fox used the best quotation from Shelley to illustrate his point against E. Johns. No doubt the latter was correct in calling Swinburne and Kipling bourgeois poets, but how he can place the author of the following in the same category I fail to understand:—

Men of Britain, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay you low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Bourgeois poets don't usually ask such questions.

Yours fraternally,
P. E. M.

THEISM AND THE M.C.H.

DEAR EDITOR,—Why is it inconsistent to believe in the M.C.H. and at the same time profess Theism? (Ref. "Students' Notes and Queries," September PLEBS.)

The M.C.H., or the Economic Interpretation of History, can surely be expounded in terms of Theism or any other "ism": the whole question being whether Theism or any other "ism" is logically in accordance with the whole general facts of life available, not whether it fits Economic History as interpreted by Marx.

The idea of Law ruling our economic and social life, and the belief that it is taking a certain course just now, does not imply the absence of God; it only shows that, if true, certain ideas about God must go.

Theism, Religion, and Psychic Science should not be judged from the writings of anti-Communists, or from newspapers. It is a pity these subjects are referred to in the PLEBS in the off-hand manner one usually finds. I suggest that they deserve an article now and again. I have never seen one yet, and this makes one rather shy of submitting anything.

Yours sincerely,
THEOSOPHIST

POSTER COMPETITION

As announced last month, we are offering a prize of £1 worth of books, to be chosen by the winner and supplied by the Plebs Book Dept., for the best "home-made" poster advertising the PLEBS.

Posters may be either original designs; colour prints or magazine illustrations "adapted" to PLEBS purposes; or worked out in any other method favoured by competitors.

The only condition is that not less than six Plebs Stamps figure somewhere in the design.

Posters should reach us not later than

NOV. 12TH.

If they are to be returned, stamps for postage should accompany them. Otherwise, we shall make use of posters ourselves and send them around for the use of districts.

Come along, you idea-merchants!

REVIEWS

INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

An Introduction to the Psychological Problems of Industry. By Frank Watts. (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

In the February PLEBS we reviewed an excellent little book on Industrial Psychology, by Muscio. The book now under review has nothing of importance to add to the clear exposition of the methods and results of the application of psychology to the problems of large-scale production contained in that work; while in place of Muscio's "colonial" directness of vision—only needing the point of view of the scientific socialist to make it really constructive—this book is shaped by a bourgeois class-complex which takes for granted that society must continue to consist of "We" and "The workers." The bulk of the book resolves itself into a discussion of psychology as an instrument for the elimination of industrial unrest, in the two-class community. In spite of the good stuff in it, it is not worth 12s. 6d. to a Plebeian. Too great a part of this sum would go on discussions which to the Marxian must appear as futile as schemes for a perpetual-motion machine, or as the efforts of a man running round and round a tree trying to catch hold of his own coat-tails.

The really useful work, which has yet to be written, will be a book applying the principles of Industrial Psychology to the problems of production in a communist commonwealth. Such a book will have to be the product, either of a worker trained in the Marxian schools and still engaged in productive labour, who makes a study of the extensive and growing literature of Industrial Psychology, or of a rather exceptional bourgeois psychologist who both foresees and desires a state of society in which he and the rest of "Us" will have to do a share of the necessary drudgery of the productive work of the community; an occupation which will probably be quite as healthy as many of the recreations in which intellectuals now have to blow off their surplus physical energy. We fancy such a book is most likely to be written in Russia. NORDICUS

The Psychology of Industry. By James Drever. (Methuen. 5s.)

This is not the book for which "Nordicus" asks in the above notice. The lecturer on psychology in the University of Edinburgh could hardly be expected to write it—and Russia is not ready.

No matter for this, and no matter that the volume was "written partly with the purpose of meeting the needs of W.E.A. classes"—the Plebeian with five bob to spare will find that the intelligent study of Drever's facts and inferences will enable him to save a good deal more than two half-crowns' worth of time within the first month after reading them. This story is alone worth the money (p. 79). It relates, of course, to the war-time push, but applies to any form of indiscriminate speeding-up.

"A woman worker in a factory for surgical dressings refused to work overtime with the others from six to eight in the evening, and also before breakfast from six to eight in the morning. She asserted that she could do more work in the remaining eight hours worked than if she worked for twelve hours with the others. Her claim was tested by comparing her output for a month with the output of other hands. Three first-class hands were selected, who worked twelve hours a day during the first fortnight, and ten hours a day during the rest of the month. Although she stayed away one whole day and three half days during the month. (wise woman!), the output of the 'slacker' for the period was 52,429 bobbins, against the best output of the others, 51,641, and an average output of the others of 48,529. She had worked 160 hours against their 237."

As Drever sagely remarks on the next page, the result in such experiments depends a good deal upon how the worker's free hours are spent! But one wonders, when one reads this and similar instances, whether our Russian comrades have really gained anything by the revival of overtime to meet the terrible difficulties of their industrial situation; and whether they have really gained anything by what Lenin calls the Great Initiative—the institution of Communist Saturdays. Is it not likely that they lost on the swings more than they gained on the roundabouts?

And what is the bearing of the fact that shorter hours mean increased production upon the Marxist theory of surplus value—at least in the terms in which it is sometimes crudely stated for propaganda purposes? But here we trench upon economic mysteries,

a hallowed region where the mere psychologist, like the midge, " dare not venture, lest herself fast she lay. . . . !"

E. & C. P.

Foreign Exchange

The desire to apply the Marxian theories to modern problems is one of the best signs of the vigour of our movement. We have before commented on the *Assurance Agents' Chronicle*. Now its editor, A. Waight, has published, at 6d., in pamphlet form a series of articles, *An Introduction to the Study of Finance and Foreign Exchange*. He makes a genuine attempt to apply Marx, to popularise the ideas of Cahn, and make more widely known the facts and descriptions of Spalding's *Primer* and the conclusions of the recent Brussels Financial Conference.

To those whose appetite has been whetted by Waight, *Foreign Exchange, Before, During and After the War*, by J. E. Gregory (World of To-day Series, 2s. 6d.) will be useful. After a good summary of the normal process there is a description of the means mainly used by Governments to keep the exchanges as near to normal as possible during the war : (*a*) by increasing the means of purchase available abroad, (*b*) by decreasing the necessity for payments abroad, and (*c*) by regulating the *fluctuations in value* of the local currency. This last method meant chiefly the " pegging " of the exchanges.

There is a short survey of the remedies for a very sick world now being discussed by the experts. Mr. Gregory thinks inflation is the prime evil which must be stopped, or Europe will suffocate in a flood of paper money. Lecturers will find much material for their class work and much to make them wonder whether world capitalism will be wise enough to adopt the remedies here suggested for the mess it has made.* M. S.

Three Accounts of Peterloo. Edited by F. A. Bruton. (Longmans, 6s.)

Most of us have heard that Waterloo was followed by Peterloo. This book contains plain, unvarnished accounts by three eye-witnesses of the Massacre of August 16th, 1819, when a great gathering of workers and radicals, assembled peacefully in St. Peter's Fields, Manchester, to demand a Reform of Parliament, was broken up by the military. We get the clue as to how this butchery occurred when we learn that the principal defenders of " law and order " were a troop of Manchester Yeomanry, consisting chiefly of " wealthy master manufacturers." These gentlemen found satisfaction for their very natural desire to hurt rebellious wage-slaves by charging into the unarmed crowd, killing eleven people, and wounding between five and six hundred—some of their victims being women and children. An exploit which has doubtless earned for the British bourgeoisie an honoured place on the Roll of Chivalry.

The unadorned tale which this book tells is not without present-day significance.

R. H.

The Miners' Conflict with the Mineowners. By John Thomas, B.A. (International Bookshop, 8d.)

This pamphlet deserves all the praise Geo. Barker gives it in his Foreword, as a concise and lucid account of the coal dispute. Especially to South Wales' students and propagandists its figures concerning wages and profits and its details of the recent Agreement will be very valuable. It was written too soon after the collapse of July 1st to give more than " probable " reasons for that breakdown and the remedies proposed are good but perforce general.

In any future edition it would be well to relegate the many Government Regulations to a small-type appendix, and thus either reduce the price or leave room in the 70 pages for a clear statement of the practical difficulties and differences to be overcome if the General Council is not to repeat the disastrous failure of the damned and apparently dead T.A.

By the way, when is that booklet going to be finished in which two old and prominent Plebeians (one of whom was certainly on the inside of events) were to give us the lessons of the lockout ? It is badly needed to help rally the disappointed elements in the M.F.G.B. M. S.

* Students should obtain the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* (Oct. 27), containing complete text of Prof. G. Cassel's Second Memorandum to the League of Nations on World Finance. The *M.G.C.* invariably contains valuable matter.—Ed. Plebs.

NATIONAL COUNCIL NOTES

We propose to print monthly under this heading those items of "News of the Movement" which deal more directly with the work of co-ordination and the activities, actual or proposed, of the new National Council of Labour Colleges. All matter for inclusion should be sent to the Hon. Sec. (pro tem.), *N.C.L.C., 11 Penywern Road, Earl's Court, S.W.5.*

OUR main immediate objects are (1) to seek information, (2) to offer advice. Later when the Council is formally constituted we hope to join the results together and DO THINGS.

The Council aims at helping, not interfering. Colleges, Districts, etc., are asked to *give* information of their doings, past, present and proposed. To consider suggestions offered as being friendly attempts to assist locally and co-ordinate nationally. To GIVE and to RECEIVE.

The Liverpool and District Labour College have the honour of being the first in with the Affiliation Fee of £1 1s.

The first National Meeting of Council is fixed for December 31st, 1921, and January 1st, 1922, at (or near) Manchester. Send along name and address of your delegate before November 16th, 1921.

If your area is not marked on the map (printed elsewhere), WHY NOT?

Educate, Agitate, Organise and—ADVERTISE your work in the local and national Press, trade-union journals (see the *Signal* effort below—and go thou and DO LIKEWISE), etc. J. Hamilton, of Liverpool, and J. P. M. MILLAR, of Edinburgh, are very happy and successful exponents of the art of I.W.-C.E. Press advertising. Don't forget to forward copies to H.O. of any Press notices.

Any area committee requiring copy of Birmingham Conference Report should apply to the General Secretary, N.C.L.C., 11, Penywern Road.

A long pull and a strong pull for national co-ordination and area extension.

The following manifesto appeared in the October number of the *Signal*, official organ of the Association of Wireless and Cable Telegraphists. It is reprinted here as an excellent model for members of other Unions to imitate:—

"OUR EDUCATIONAL POLICY

THE THING OF THE MOMENT

At the Cable Section Conference on September 3rd, an INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL POLICY was unanimously adopted, which means that systematic education is now embraced as an integral part of the Association's business.

To deal effectively with present-day problems, it is obviously essential to first thoroughly understand those problems, how they were brought about, and generally the nature of the forces which are arrayed against the working class as a whole in its ever-sharpening struggle for freedom.

The objects of our INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL POLICY are, therefore, to provide the members with adequate facilities for equipping themselves with a full and clear knowledge of the social and economic forces which mould their lives and shape their destinies, to build up a powerful intellectual vanguard in the movement, and, particularly, to help present officers and committee-men to play a more useful part in the work immediately in front of them.

The Association will meet the educational needs of the Members through the medium of

STUDY CLASSES

and it is hoped that a sufficient response will be forthcoming from the rank and file, or at least from the enthusiasts, to warrant the establishment of a STUDY CLASS at *every* branch.

In order to maintain a fair measure of co-ordination and uniformity in class work at the various branches, it is desirable that all classes shall affiliate with the LABOUR COLLEGE (from where invaluable assistance can be obtained) and follow a similar course of studies, which shall essentially include ECONOMICS, INDUSTRIAL HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY, and PUBLIC SPEAKING.

All members are strongly urged to interest themselves in this "forward" movement and thereby take advantage of a golden opportunity of improving themselves and the organisation of the Association in general.

Those willing to devote one evening a week to study are asked to hand in their names to their local branch Secretary forthwith.

Further particulars, together with useful suggestions for running study classes, will be sent to all branch Secretaries during the month.

FRANK HOGBIN,
Organising Secretary
(Cable Section)."

The way to get our educational movement firmly established is to make education (on I.W.-C.E. lines) "an integral part" of your Union's activity. WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT IN YOUR UNION?

NEWS *of the* MOVEMENT

The CARDIFF N.U.R. District Council are running and financing two classes (Economics and Industrial History) this winter, on I.W.-C.E. lines. Students will have to pay for textbooks only; and unemployed students will have these presented to them. Mark Starr is taking the Indust. History class (Sundays). Members of the old class met on October 2nd, and decided to give the N.U.R. classes all the support in their power. Ten new Plebs Leaguers were enrolled, so that there is a strong "leaven" of keen educationists in this centre; and we are glad to learn that the members regard the work of PUSHING the PLEBS as one of their chief tasks. Best wishes for the success of their efforts, and congratulations to the Cardiff N.U.R. on its "forward" educational policy. It has set an example which N.U.R. Councils in other districts might well follow.

The provisional committee for I.W.-C.E. formed by ILFORD Plebs convened a conference on September 25th, which was addressed by Robt. Holder (London Council I.W.-C.E.). Nineteen organisations sent delegates, and it was decided to set up a District Council. Appeals for affiliations have been sent out.

Last year the evening classes held in Glasgow were run under the auspices of the National Committee of the Scottish Labour College. As it has been found, from experience in other Districts, that the most successful method of running evening classes is by means of local District Committees, supported by affiliated bodies, it has instructed its Glasgow area members to take immediate steps to call a conference for the purpose of forming a Glasgow District Committee to cater for the educational needs of the Glasgow area. Every live member of the local Labour Movement should see that his organisation not only sends delegates to the conference, but also affiliates to the District Committee.

AYRSHIRE District Committee of the Scottish Labour College held their annual conference at Kilmarnock on the 25th September, under the chairmanship of Comrade Pollock. Seventy-two delegates were present, representing 43 societies. Wm. Joss, B.Sc. (Staff Tutor), and R. Climie, jun. (District Secretary), reported a very successful first session's work. Classes on Industrial History and Economics had been run at Darvel, Galston, Hurlford, Kilmarnock, Crosshouse, Irvine and Kilbirnie. The affiliated societies (fee 2s. 6d., plus 2d. per member per annum) numbered 15; the average weekly attendance of students was 192. J. P. M. Millar then gave an address on "Science and Labour," after which the Executive for the present year was appointed.

ROCHDALE has commenced winter classes in Industrial History and Science of Understanding. A conference, addressed by that indefatigable worker, Com. J. Leach (Bolton), was held on September 27th. . . . We also hear of a class at BARROW with Leach as tutor—and Bolton to Barrow (and back again) is no light railway journey, particularly on Sundays. . . . OLDHAM is holding a conference of T.U. delegates on November 5th, at which again Leach will speak on I.W.-C.E.

The MANCHESTER Labour College has adopted an excellent method of educational propaganda which might well be followed in other centres. They advertise a list of some half-dozen different lantern lectures—"Man, the Tool Maker and User"; "The Growth of Trade Unions," &c., &c.,—which they are prepared to deliver to any T.U. branch or other working-class organisation. The organisation provides the room (and the audience); the College, the lecturer and the lantern. This is good business. It's like travelling *with samples* of the goods you're out to sell. We shall be interested to hear how the scheme succeeds.

Bethnal Green, Hackney and Shoreditch Committee of the LONDON Council I.W.-C.E. has issued an excellent syllabus of two courses of lectures by W. McLaine, and included in it an effective advertisement of the PLEBS and the Plebs pamphlet, *What is Independent Working-Class Education?* Com. Vandome, the Secretary for these classes, is obviously a PUSHER! . . . Other centres which have inserted free advertisements for the PLEBS in their class syllabuses are Halifax, Sheffield and Edinburgh. Best thanks!

Geo. Barker, M.P., has presented to the Abertillery class his set of PLEBS volumes. We trust the Abertillery boys will reciprocate by ordering more present-day PLEBS than ever before!

W. H.

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