

Vol. XIV. No. 4

April, 1922

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THE PLEBS

“I can promise to be candid but not impartial.”

Vol XIV

April, 1922

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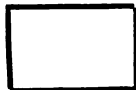
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OUR POINT of VIEW

¶ Before starting to read this month's mag., please make a note of our new address. Our old office quarters have for some time been quite inadequate to the needs of the work. But the new ones, you will scarcely be surprised to learn, cost more money. We're taking the risk—relying on your support.

THE recent correspondence in the *Herald* on "The Workers and Education" was chiefly remarkable for eliciting from Mr. W. H. Marwick, W.E.A. tutor, the amazing declaration that "the principle and policy of the Labour Colleges are, in my view, antagonistic to those of Trade Unionism, Labour and Socialism." J. P. M. Millar and Will Lawther having already replied to this outburst in the

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Herald itself, there is no need for us to deal further with it here. But as the *Herald* correspondence is now closed, we hereby offer Mr. Marwick whatever space he requires in our own columns to substantiate his charge. We are perfectly ready to credit him with being quite honest and sincere in making it; but he doubtless realises that some substantiation of such a statement is desirable, and, if he wants to convince workers of its soundness, it is certainly up to him to say a little more about it.

We also want to know something about "the un-trade union practices" of the Labour Colleges to which he alluded. And if he likes at the same time to elaborate a little further the statement in his first letter (Feb. 17th) that "the supermen of the Plebs League, modestly claiming to be the 'intelligent minority,' prescribe to the mere workers what they 'ought' to think, and the type of consciousness they 'ought' to have," we shall be still more grateful.

We hope to hear from Mr. Marwick in time for next month's issue.

* * *

In the report of the N.C.L.C. Conference on another page will be found the terms of the resolution on co-operation with the Workers' Educational T.U. Committee or any other educational organisation.

The W.E.T.U.C. We think Plebs will agree that the two conditions therein laid down put the fundamental question fairly and squarely. What we want to know is—Does the W.E.T.U.C. accept the N.C.L.C.'s definition of working-class education; or does it stand for the point of view expressed in this extract from a W.E.A. class secretary's letter to a Sheffield paper recently:—

The people to-day are realising their powers increasingly; class consciousness is growing; and an uneducated democracy becomes proportionately more dangerous. Education is needed to give them vision, and to teach them to think—to think in terms of the whole instead of in terms of a section only of the community.

Will Mr. Pugh please answer?

* * *

The discussion at the N.C.L.C.-Plebs Conference on "The relationship of the Plebs League and Magazine to the Nat. Council of Labour Colleges"

Plebs and N.C.L.C. cleared the air of several misapprehensions. The main argument for the continued, and indeed more active, existence of the Plebs League is simply this:—The N.C.L.C. links *organisations*; the Plebs League enrolls in one body *individual workers* for I.W.-C.E. Neither, it seems to us, can take the place of the other. An organisation like the Plebs League cannot undertake the running of classes; nor can the National Council serve as a link between individual propagandists, tutors and students. It is perfectly true that, at first sight, the dual organisation seems superfluous. But we are convinced that it is nothing of the kind, and that, if the Plebs League were abolished to-morrow, it would very quickly become necessary to revive it, or recreate something like it. Nor does this imply any sort of Plebs "dictatorship," for membership of the League is open to every worker in the N.C.L.C. movement. It means separate and specialised organisation for separate jobs—the Plebs for propaganda and the N.C.L.C. for class-organisation; a specialisation which is quite consistent with the closest possible co-operation and co-ordination of activities.

The Plebs League has made its intentions clear by a change in its Constitution, carried by a 90 per cent. majority of its members, which makes

its immediate practical aim "The assistance in every way of *all working-class educational institutions affiliated to the National Council of Labour Colleges.*" We appeal to every tutor, secretary and student in the Labour Colleges and classes to support the PLEBS—and join the League. (Please note carefully in this connection the resolution passed unanimously at the N.C.L.C. Conference urging Colleges, districts and classes to obtain their literature supplies from the Plebs Book Dept.)

* * *

We should like to refer very briefly to a criticism made by one or two individual Plebeians—apparently a good deal out of touch with events and developments during recent years—to the effect that by the change in its Constitution mentioned above the Plebs League has unduly "narrowed" its aims. At the back of this argument, we are pretty sure, is an idea that the N.C.L.C. is some sort of "mushroom" growth which does not really represent the I.W.-C.E. movement at all. To this we have only to say that, in our view, the N.C.L.C. *is* the movement; that the colleges and classes it represents cover practically every active educational centre in the country; and that we shall certainly do our utmost to urge every district not yet affiliated to join up without delay, if not for its own immediate advantage, then for the general benefit of the movement as a whole.

Back Numbers

We are very glad indeed to be able to say that these purblind critics are a tiny minority; and that it isn't a matter of much consequence to anybody whether or not they ever awake from the sleep into which they fell somewhere about 1909.

* * *

The letter from Comrade A. E. Cook printed elsewhere in this issue deserves careful consideration by every I.W.-C.Er. Cook puts his finger on the inherent weakness of all educationists—the tendency to regard education *as an end in itself*, and not *as a means to an end*. The movement for I.W.-C.E. was founded to assert that workers' education should be a means to a very definite end. Yet who will deny that there are I.W.-C.Ers who—whether they have forgotten what should be the very aim and essence of their studies, or whether they have never grasped it—are content to go about airing theories, or reciting formulas, instead of applying their new-found knowledge to the practical problems of working-class policy and organisation? There are even I.W.-C.Ers who resent any attempts at "Simplification" of our studies—lest, presumably, mere rank-and-filers get a grip on essential facts and so rob these learned ones of the prestige due to "educated" people.

If the Cap Fits—

It is very decidedly true, in short, that your I.W.-C.Er can be and sometimes is as "academic," as aloof from the workaday world, as the oldest inhabitants of the older universities. He may (and sometimes does) adopt a patronisingly critical attitude towards all individuals and all organisations engaged in actually fighting the workers' battles. He not only accepts education as an end in itself, but he regards his own education as "completed"—as though anybody's ever could be! To the extent that he does so he is making it quite clear that, in his case at any rate, Independent Working-Class Education has been a failure. He is a walking advertisement—for the other side.

While admitting this much, and admitting, further, that all of us may at times have erred, and still err, in this direction, we may be allowed to

protest that Cook spoils a good case by over-statement. He may have met, in various parts of the country, "dozens" of the two types condemned by him. But when he implies that the I.W.-C.E. movement in the main turns out these two types, and these two only, he must know that he is guilty of a little exaggeration (which is the inherent weakness of all propagandists). It is not for us to compile a list of the scores of Plebs up and down the country, "leaders" and rank-and-filers, who are doing their bit in the real struggle and doing it well. To judge a movement solely by its failures is not exactly "facing facts."

In one other matter Cook hits out a little too wildly. He doesn't like Psychology, so he calls it "this psycho-analysis tosh," and implies that it is of neither use nor value to proletarians. Which is just nonsense. If Cook had read the Plebs Psychology Textbook—instead of adopting the attitude of "aloofness" which he rightly condemns in other folks—he would have known that that book is what it purports to be—a *stimulant to class-consciousness*. True, individual students of Psychology may be "bumptious"; but so may individual students of Economics, History, or even the Science of Understanding. The vice of bumptiousness and the habit of theory-spinning are not confined to students of any one particular subject. They are weaknesses we all are liable to. Let's do our best to steer clear of them.

* * *

John S. Clarke, in the *Worker* of February 26th, talked some sound sense on these two subjects of Bumptiousness and Simplification. "Some folks," he observed, "imagine that a message must necessarily be expressed in pompous language or it won't be accepted; that it must be damnably dry or it won't appear profound." And he went on to refer to the ass who wouldn't lower himself to pen a simple statement like "The fire spread," preferring to write—"The conflagration rapidly extended its devastating career." But an even more egregious ass, whom Clarke omitted to mention, is the individual who has learnt—out of Marx and elsewhere—certain phrases; and who not only insists on the repetition world-without-end of those consecrated words, but is incapable of recognising the truths they express if they come to him dressed in any other terminology. The use of certain words and phrases is to him the only test of "soundness." . . . Well, he also is *not* educated.

* * *

"M. H. D.," reviewing Eden and Cedar Paul's *Proletcult* in last month's *Communist Review*, discussed in a very sensible and readable way the question of *impartiality* in education. He distinguished between two kinds of impartiality, *relative* and *absolute*, and pointed out that I.W.-C.E. must—and, as a matter of fact, does—aim at the former, while denying the possibility of the latter. So far, that is, as impartiality means "to aim at scientific objectivity, *as far as possible*, I.W.-C.E.s must be impartial." The workers, indeed, are the only class which can afford to be impartial, in the sense of suppressing or distorting none of the facts. "But in so far as impartiality is meant in an *absolute* sense, implying that 'human beings can wholly transcend human nature' (which depends on social environment) it is absurd." We agree. To put it in another, more colloquial way, we hereby assert that we are out for the greatest degree of Impartiality achievable; and that we *only* oppose that so-called Impartiality which is merely a cloak for a subtle kind

of partisan propaganda. Also, we affirm that an "impartial" (*i.e.*, objective) study of the facts of history will result in the student very definitely taking sides (*i.e.*, being the reverse of "impartial") in the actual class-struggle of to-day.

* * *

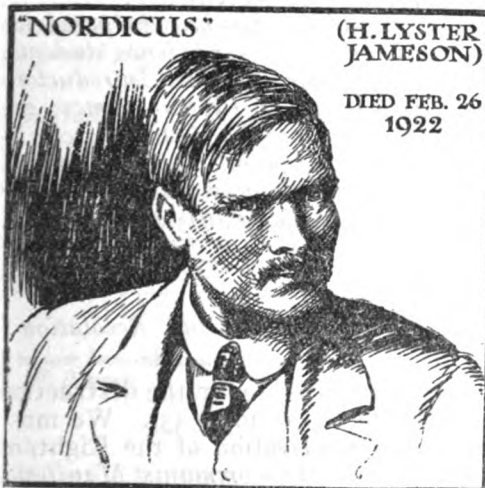
The *Socialist Review*, edited by J. Ramsay MacDonald, had in its March number an article by E. E. Hunter on "National Propaganda" dealing with the Economic Study Clubs subsidised by various employers' associations. The peroration of this article was as follows:—"This is the story of National Propaganda. . . . It contains a warning and a lesson.

*Et tu,
Ramsay?*

The warning is that Labour must examine with the utmost care all educational schemes which come from outside itself. The lesson, that Labour must develop its own educational institutions." Which is exactly what the PLEBS has been saying for quite a long time. But we're always glad to hear of people making discoveries for themselves.

IN MEMORIAM: "NORDICUS"

HENRY LYSTER JAMESON, whom readers of the PLEBS magazine know as "Nordicus," died suddenly at his residence at West Mersea, Essex, on Sunday night, February 26th, aged 47. He was a man of extraordinary ability and of wide interests. He came from an old Scottish and Ulster family and his father was a clergyman in the Irish Church. As a boy Lyster Jameson went to sea, before the mast, "going round the Horn," as he used to say, "with his bare feet."



Then he was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took the degrees of M.A. and D.Sc. After that he went to the Royal College of Science in London for a year, and then to Heidelberg, where he studied zoology under Bütschli, and took the degree of Ph.D. Coming back to England he continued his studies but, later on, went to take charge of a pearling fishery in the Conflict Group Islands of the Pacific. In anything relating to the natural history of the pearl oyster and pearl formation he was the leading authority in Europe. His health broke down—tuberculosis—and he went

out to South Africa, where he was, for a time, in the Education Department in Natal, and, later, at the Mining College in Johannesburg. For two years he was Professor of Biology at the Transvaal University College. His health improved and he came back to England and became a Senior Examiner in the Board of Education (after a spell as Lecturer in the Technical College at Derby). At the beginning of the war he was "seconded" as

District Inspector of Fisheries on the South-East Coast, where he established a small factory for dealing with shellfish waste. At the time of his death he was Adviser on Inshore Fisheries to the Development Commissioners.

Thus few men have had such a wide experience of life, seen from so many different aspects, and this may lead some readers to place particular value on his contributions to the PLEBS. He took an active part in the preparation of the Psychology Textbook, and was, indeed, responsible for the first draft of the book.

He was a man of extraordinarily strong and vivid personality and he had a large infusion of actual genius. His influence over his friends and colleagues was very remarkable, and he brought the Plebs movement before the notice of hundreds of men who would not otherwise have heard about it sympathetically. Ill-health was his fate for the last 15 years but, condemned to a physically inactive life, his mental work was intense and his interest in the independent working-class educational movement as a preparation for the new social revolution became stronger and more ruthless with almost every day of his later life.

This short notice is written by a man who knew Jameson more intimately than anyone outside his own family and who felt the extraordinary mental push of our comrade. Perhaps this short account of "Nordicus" may stimulate and cheer PLEBS readers and deepen their belief in the power and possibilities of our movement.

J. J.

A SYLLABUS on "REVOLUTION : 1789—1906"

As announced in last month's "N.C.L.C. Notes," the following syllabus, based on R. W. Postgate's "Revolution : 1789-1906," has been prepared for use as a short lecture course, for home study, or for correspondence students. It will be issued separately for the N.C.L.C., with some additional Introductory Notes, Suggestions for Essays, Pronouncing Index of Proper Names, etc. We print the main part of it here in order to urge classes and study circles to get down to it immediately, now that the issue of our Special Students' Edition of Postgate's book makes this practicable. And individual students purchasing the book will find this syllabus a valuable aid to a systematic study of its contents.

*First Lecture.—The French Revolution and the Subsidiary Movements.
(Revolution, pp. 1-76.)*

Note :—Numbers in brackets have reference to documents in "Revolution" (Textbook).

The economic task of the French Revolution consisted in the destruction of the feudal system in the towns (9) and in the country (3). We must not look for more than this. Compare the Declaration of the Rights of Man, even as amended by Robespierre, with, say, the *Communist Manifesto*. Division of the uprising elements into classes has hardly begun. Hence we find *Liberty and Equality* genuinely sought for and demanded, as the natural desires of artisans, small working employers and peasants.

The necessities of war forced the left to take up the defence of the suffering Paris artisans without having a social programme (e.g., Hebert, 22). They fail in the end from their own foolish use of the Terror, and their places are

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taken by the first representatives of a new bourgeoisie who had mainly grown rich by war speculation and the confiscation of estates. The last act of the French Revolution is *Babeuf*. His Conspiracy is born out of time—his ideas were esoteric. He was a product of the forcing-house, but his after importance was immense. His influence runs throughout all the secret societies (Carbonari, Blanquists) till 1848, and through Buonarroti and O'Brien appears in Chartism. (*Revolution*, p. 113.)

The feudal system is wrecked in Europe at the end of the revolutionary period (1815) but the small employers, artisans, and peasants have not retained political power, which has been handed back to the more or less precarious hold of their opponents.

Second Lecture.—"The Communist Manifesto."

(*Revolution*, pp. 138-163.)

The argument of the *Communist Manifesto* explains itself. But we must notice the date of its appearance, which is exactly the date of the appearance in arms of the class it heralded, the proletariat. The work of the *Communist Manifesto* is the pointing out of class divisions and class struggle. The advocacy of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the critical analysis of Marxism are later in date. They would not have been historically possible in '48. Note how the suggested immediate demands bear the stamp of their early date.

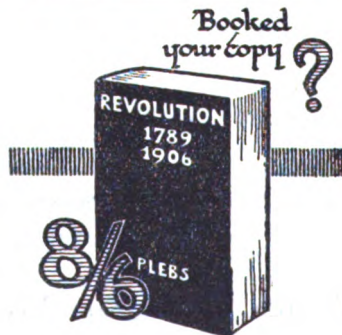
Third Lecture.—Europe and "the Year of Wonders"—1848.

(*Revolution*, pp. 77-80, 164-273.)

The instability of the restored monarchs is shown by continual post-Napoleonic upheavals (*Revolution*, p. 76) and the Belgian and French Revolutions of 1830. Meanwhile the English Industrial Revolution spread to the Continent. Observe in the French Revolution of 1830 (39) that when the workers act as a class they are less revolutionary in sentiment than the bourgeoisie.

The old *régimes* restored after Waterloo rested on no other foundation than that victory itself: they had no economic roots and were upset in '48 without trouble. The Kings fell at the first blow. The attacking forces had the field to themselves—the history of '48 is the history of the split in these forces: THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE CLASS CONSCIOUS PROLETARIAT, June 1848. The *Communist Manifesto* of 1847 is the theoretical counterpart of June.

Observe, firstly, the immaturity of the proletariat (114 and 94, 95, 96a and b) and secondly, the beginnings of anti-socialism (Kossuth and 108).



The end of 1848 is merely apparent defeat (128). Actually during the next 20 years *all* the demands of the uprising capitalists were granted peacefully because of their shrewd show of force in '48. '48 is the final end of noble rule and the stage is clear for the class-struggle of bourgeois *v.* proletariat. Observe in Blanqui the first attack on formal democracy (102)

Fourth Lecture.—The same period in England.

(*Revolution*, pp. 80-136.)

The Industrial states of Europe were in '48:—England I. France II. Germany III. But of these England only counted seriously. In England vast masses of industrial workers were in a condition of great misery, their numbers being continually augmented in great waves by the introduction of new machinery. This gives the reason for the spasmodic character of the agitation. The first, the Grand National, is the most interesting theoretically because of the Socialist theories of Owen and the class war theories of Smith. In Chartism we have three revolutionary points: 1839, 1842, 1848, all failing. The movement is more practical and less advanced theoretically than Owenism. (Cf. 64.)

Fifth Lecture.—The Commune.

(*Revolution*, pp. 276-338, 392-4.)

The Commune of Paris is the first check to bourgeois rule. The horrible massacre that followed shows the real terror it inspired. (Cf. the suppression by Rome of the Spartacus revolt.)

Of the two important sections in the Commune, the Blanquists (majority) were the most realist because they realised the overpowering importance of defence, as against the minority (Inter-nationalists) who were occupied also with strict democratic theory (140) and with aspirations towards immediate socialism. No study of Blanquism exists in English, unfortunately, but it is clear that the immediate collapse of the Commune was accelerated by the absence of Blanqui himself (in prison) which made his subordinates captains without a general.

The recovery of the bourgeoisie after the Commune and the indefinite adjournment of the revolution was finally due not merely to the crushing victory but to the appearance of economic IMPERIALISM, which gave capitalism economic stability and falsified Marx's hopes by adjourning the revolution some fifty years. It became clear that capitalism was too strong to be easily overthrown by an armed workers' attack. Hence the need arises to work within the bourgeois state, the desire for reforms, and the whole period of the Second International.

Sixth Lecture.—The First Russian Revolution.

(*Revolution*, pp. 341-91.)

The Russian Revolution of 1905 is the first break in the constitutional period of the Second International. The actual achievement is this: that it separated the Russian revolutionary bourgeoisie from the revolutionary proletariat, as '48 did in Europe, by forcing the Tsar to conciliate the former. The rôle of the Cadets (Miluikoff) in 1917 was decided by their conduct at the end of 1906. The influence of the Russian Revolution was thus immediately only national, but of profound importance because of its influence in the Soviet Revolution. The Soviet Revolution bears the imprint of two other revolutions: 1871 and 1905.

Suggested additional reading to carry one up to-day. It must be realised that none of these works are historical in the proper sense: events are not enough removed to allow of proper perspective:—

- SYNDICALISM .. Brissenden: *History of the I.W.W.* (King.)
L. Levine: *Syndicalism in France.* (King. 8s.)
- IMPERIALISM .. L. S. Woolf: *Economic Imperialism.* (Labour Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)
Empire and Commerce in Africa. (21s.)
- RUSSIA M. Phillips Price: *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution.* (Allen & Unwin. 18s.)

ADDITIONAL READING

For the use of tutors and students desiring to study periods in detail.

First Lecture.—Paine—*The Rights of Man* (Everyman)—and *A Selection from Paine's Political Works* (Watts' cheap edition) containing his speeches in the Convention on the trial and death of Louis XVI.—typical Girondin matter, and his two famous American Revolutionary works, *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*, which should be compared with the documents in *Revolution* for the difference they show. Kropotkin's *History of the Great French Revolution* (if available). Bax's *Marat* and Belloc's *Danton* (Nelson's cheap edition), especially the latter.

Second Lecture.—None, except Ch. Andler's critical 2-vol. edition of the *Manifesto*, not yet translated into English.

Third Lecture.—G. M. Trevelyan's *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic* (Nelson, cheap edition). (Italy.)

Louis Blanc's *Organisation of Labour* (Clarendon Press) (France), Marx's *The 18th Brumaire* (Napoleon II.), Marx's *Revolution and Counter Revolution* (Germany), Connolly's *Labour in Irish History* (Ireland—and for '98).

Fourth Lecture.—Introductory: J. L. and B. Hammond's *The Village Labourer* and *The Town Labourer*. Parallel: Max Beer's *History of Socialism*, Vol. I., chaps. V., X., XI., XII.; Vol. II., Part 3. (But observe his unhistorical use of the word "Chartist.") Engels' *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*.

Fifth Lecture.—Lissagaray's *History of the Commune* (prejudiced). Postgate's *The Workers' International* (for the First International).

NOTE.—Any of the above books can be obtained from:—The Plebs Book Dept., 162A, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

MARX and MARSHALL:

A Study of the Relation of Bourgeois and Working-Class Economics

In the following article Comrade M. H. Dobb puts forward a case for the study, by Marxists, of the writings of orthodox bourgeois economists. His point of view should stimulate discussion among students of economics.

A GREAT deal of the crude misunderstanding of Marx on the part of orthodox economists is due to their failure to appreciate the fact that Marx's economic analysis is different, in *kind*, from their own. The converse of this is also sometimes true.

What is meant by saying that they are different in kind? First, Marx's aim was different from that of Marshall and Pigou. He approached Capitalism from an historical standpoint and tried to discover the fundamental social laws of capitalist evolution. The aim of his economic analysis was primarily *sociological*. By means of his abstract theory of value he was able to deduce the social laws of surplus-value, the class struggle and the concentration of capital. Marshall, on the other hand, takes the existing social system for granted, and concerns himself with "economic factors" in a much narrower sense—how in actual practice, with the existing system given, price changes and distribution, etc., are brought about. His theory is much more *descriptive*, and less abstract and analytical than Marx's. It does not delve deep enough to discover the roots of such underlying social facts as the class struggle.

When one draws a map or a plan one usually leaves out a number of

minor details, which are of no importance for one's immediate purpose. If the map is a small-scale one, only the most important things will be put in ; but it will suffice for the purpose of finding the *general* direction of roads, etc. In this sense a small-scale map does not coincide with reality, but is an " *abstraction*." Now, it is a common method of scientific analysis for the sake of simplicity to single out the most important facts and neglect minor details of less importance (cf., the Law of Projectiles in Physics). Only when the theory is applied to a narrow sphere, in which these minor details bulk large, is the abstract theory insufficient and has to be modified ; just as a large-scale map need only be used when you are dealing with short distances and want to find every little turn in the road. Marx concerned himself merely with those features of capitalism which were of most importance, omitting minor features of no importance for *his* purpose. He " disregard(ed) all phenomena that (hid) the play of its inner mechanism " (*Capital*, I., 577). Among the things thus—*relatively*—disregarded (in Vol. I.) were :—differences of quality of labour-power ; changes in the technique of industry involving changing compositions of capital ; hindrances to free competition ; natural scarcities ; short-period price fluctuations. This was quite justified because none of these were of sufficient importance to invalidate the *social deductions* drawn from his theory. Marx drew a very small-scale map of capitalism (though he drew it on a large-scale in Vol. 3) ; whereas orthodox economists draw a very large-scale map, which only covers *part* of the ground. Another difference involved in this is that Marx was assisted in arriving at his conception of Value by logical inference, whereas Marshall arrives at his as an empirical generalisation. This involves an important difference, which we cannot go into here.

As a result, when orthodox economists assume the *role* of sociologists and become social moralists, as they always do in implication, if not in actual words, they are in fact biased in favour of the existing system, however impartial they may intend to be. This is because their economic study is only *partial* ; their analysis has not penetrated into the more fundamental features of the economic system, because they take these for granted. Bourgeois Economics is wrong, therefore, in its *social application*, because in relation to social evolution *as a whole* it has only studied facts of minor importance. In just the same way a man with a bicycling map of " 20 miles round London " would be unable to find the road to Glasgow.

But this is not to say that the large-scale map of " 20 miles round London " has not its uses. The man with a small-scale map of the British Isles would be unable by it alone to find his way from Trafalgar Square to Pen-y-wern Road. And it is for this reason that Marxists cannot neglect orthodox economics. We must use such conceptions as Marginal Utility to measure short-period fluctuations of Price, and in cases where, owing to concrete circumstances, purposely " disregarded " by Marx (e.g., natural scarcity, different compositions of capital, hindrances to mobility of commodities and labour, monopoly, etc.), labour-value is not realised fully in the concrete world. Just as Marx gained a great deal from the philosophy of Hegel, when he had " stood it upon its feet," so we can gain a great deal from the researches of orthodox economists when we have fitted them into the foundations of the Marxian analysis, and shorn them of those parts where class-bias has completely nullified scientific accuracy. It was because he did this, that W. McLaine's articles in the PLEBS last year were so valuable.

For instance, the conception of Marginal Utility is useful as a *means of measuring* price fluctuations and prices under monopoly ; only, it must

be emphasised that the fact that Price equals Marginal Utility is no reason for thinking it a "Just Price," and that Marginal Utility is relative to the economic position of the persons in question. Again, the conception of "elasticity of demand" is essential for calculating the short-period effect of a rise of wages in one industry or the price fluctuations during a trade boom and depression. But in *applying* the inductions so made to questions which involve *fundamental* social factors (e.g., questions of changes in the economic system), they are only correct in so far as they are used in strict relation to the more fundamental Marxist conception.

For this reason a study of the first two of a popular series of Cambridge Economic Handbooks,* under the general editorship of J. M. Keynes, is useful. *I should not advise beginners to attempt them.* But second-year students would do well to do so, and certainly tutors. Mr. Henderson gives clearly the orthodox theory of Supply and Demand, which *within the limits* of orthodox theory is sound. His theory is that Price is a function (in the mathematical sense) of Scarcity—it expresses a relation between quantity of supply and volume of demand; and is therefore dependent on both the supply available and the demand, interacting one against the other; just as two books leaning against one another mutually determine one another's position. He says:—

Equilibrium is established by the agency of changes in prices, and . . . the most important thing that can be said about the price of anything (is) that it will tend to equate supply and demand.

This should be compared with Marx's *Wage Labour and Capital*, where it will be seen that Marx considered this true of price fluctuations.

Henderson contends that this relation is the weft and warp of any economic system, and that so long as some commodities are scarce, some such means will have to be found for adjusting demand to supply and *vice versa*. Some means will have to be found of "cutting off" relatively less urgent demands; and on the other hand of "cutting off" those employments of labour that are relatively less "worth while." He neglects, however, to say that the social contradictions of capitalism to-day are putting up barriers to this adjustment, and that this is one of the main reasons for the "world crisis of capitalism," of which Trotsky and Varga write. In one place Henderson refers to Marx, but hopelessly misses the real point of Marx's conception of capital. He analyses very ably distribution between Land, Labour and Capital, the distribution taking place according to the "marginal utility" (or "indispensability") of each; but since he takes existing institutions for granted he, of course, accepts payment to individuals for waiting (saving) or for educated ability as necessary costs, and does not analyse the nature of these payments as an "institutional rent" or "surplus value." Nor does he distinguish (as does Gide) between waiting as a mere *condition* and as a *cause* of increased productivity. But it is interesting to notice that he does not support the old view that Interest is a reward of Abstinence. He says:—

We have insufficient evidence to warrant the assumption that the rate of interest . . . is a measure of the sacrifice involved in saving.

Another passage is worth quoting:—

Economic laws do not work "in vacuo." They work through the medium of the acts of men. *The acts of men are greatly influenced by their institutions, . . . Both institutions and ideas may serve to smooth (or) obstruct the path of economic laws.*

* *Supply and Demand*, by H. D. Henderson, M.A., and *Money*, by D. H. Robertson, M.A. (Nisbet, and Cambridge Univ. Press, 5s. each.)

In Mr. Robertson's book Marxists will find the Quantity Theory very much modified from the crude form in which it existed when Marx attacked it. Robertson merely claims that the level of Prices is a quantitative relation between Goods and Money ; and admits that under a gold standard the *quantity* of money will depend upon the commodity-value of gold. His explanation of how inflation took place during the war is both clear and interesting, as are also his chapters on the gold standard and the foreign exchanges. His chapter on "Bank Money and the Price Level" is a useful alternative to Douglasism and other "more-money" fallacies. The book is enlivened from time to time by a subtle wit. As a simple and comprehensive explanation of the mysteries of money and credit the book is very useful.

Forthcoming books of the series of interest to Plebeians are *The Distribution of Wealth* by G. Shove, and *The Control of Industry* by Mrs. Barbara Wootton. The present writer has been privileged to read the latter in manuscript. Mrs. Wootton deals with such things as Joint Control and Workers' Control excellently ; she recognises that capitalist control of industry is failing to work owing to its inherent contradictions, and on the other hand is fully aware that the State is a *capitalist* State, and that State Control has to operate within the "milieu" of the existing system. It is a surprising book to appear from Cambridge, but it is perhaps the exception which proves the rule.

MAURICE H. DOBB

GEOGRAPHICAL FOOTNOTES to CURRENT HISTORY :

The Near East and India

ONCE upon a time—until the Treaty of Versailles ushered in a new and better world—you turned up your map of the Balkan Peninsula when you heard that any international trouble was brewing. Nowadays the storm-centre has shifted south-eastwards, to the "Near East," the lands around the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean. And if you want to keep a grip on world affairs of to-day you'll keep a good map of those parts handy and study it often.

The scene has been moved ; but a good many features of the post-war drama are still the same. The corpse about which the vultures gather is still the Turkish Empire—what there is left of it. And still the corpse obstinately refuses to be quite dead.

If the Turk, when he forced his way into Europe five centuries ago, had not settled down where he did—in lands commanding important routes, and containing valuable raw materials—he might long ago have faded out of world-history, if not out of existence. But he made his capital at Constantinople, at the crossways between Europe and Asia, between Russia and the West. Modern capitalist Powers, however piously at times they may chant "Self-determination for all peoples," cannot afford to take no interest in places of so much geographical significance.

Our map shows what happened to Turkey after the war. All but a few square miles of her remaining European territory (including Adrianople) went to Greece ; so did Smyrna, her one port of importance on the coast of

Asia Minor. Armenia was to become an "independent" State. Syria was "mandated" to France; Mesopotamia, Palestine and the Hedjaz (the most important part of Arabia) to Britain. A "Zone of the Straits," covering the Dardanelles and Bosphorus—the gateway to Russia, note—was handed over to Allied control; and in Constantinople itself the Sultan was left only a sort of limited sovereignty.



The Sultan had to accept these terms. He could hardly, indeed, do anything else, with Allied armies garrisoning his city. But certain of his subjects on the Asiatic side of the Straits were not so docile. They set up another government at Angora, and defied the Allies.

Now if the Allies—France and Britain, that is—had been at unity one with the other, the enforcing of their will on the Turkish nationalists would not have been an impossible, though it might have been a difficult, task. But in all this region France and Britain is each playing for its own hand. And while Britain backed Greece (a relatively highly-developed commercial nation and, therefore, a desirable "junior partner" in trading enterprise), and while Greek armies marched towards Angora, nominally to enforce the settlement the Allies had dictated, France secretly negotiated with the rebellious Turks, with a view, doubtless, to getting the Turks, under her own protection, back into Smyrna, and the Greeks, with their British allies, out of it.

Now what have the Moslems of India [cf. recent dramatic political events] to do with all this? Just this:—They recognise the Turkish Sultan as Caliph, i.e., as head of the Moslem Church. One of the forms their growing dislike of British rule in India has taken is a demand that the Caliph (Khalif or Kaleef) be restored to proper dignity and independence; that the Allied garrison evacuates Constantinople; that Adrianople and Smyrna be handed back to the Sultan; and that his suzerainty of the Moslem "holy places"—Mecca and Medina—be restored. This, in brief, constitutes the "Khali-fat" question. Whether the religious enthusiasm of the Indian Mohammedans would be so intense if it were not closely interconnected with quite distinct political and economic issues may be open to question. It is none the less, as things are, a very real factor. And it is a factor which Britain cannot afford to ignore, for a good reason. There are two creeds in India—Hindu and Moslem. Devotees of both are working together in the cause of Indian Nationalism. But the alliance is not—yet—close; and if Britain can detach the Moslems by acceding to their demands somewhere else, she will—so certain people reckon—to that extent weaken the Nationalist movement. That is the policy of the Montagu-Reading "Liberal" school; at present apparently defeated by the "blood and iron," mailed-fist champions of Imperialism naked and unashamed.

The fact that there is trouble in India therefore weakens Britain's hand in the Eastern Mediterranean. France will doubtless play her cards accordingly. And the financiers, shipping magnates and oil kings of London and Paris will be busy 'phoning and cabling instructions and counter-instructions to their dutiful servants, the diplomats.

Study the geography of the Near East and watch their moves. The more we know of their activities, the better equipped we are for the fight against them.

J. F. HORRABIN

NINETEEN MILLION PEOPLE ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION

And half of this number will almost certainly die, we are told, because help cannot reach them in time! Of course they're only common people, and the Christian Government of Great Britain has decided NOT to vote any money for their relief. Common people must come to their rescue!

SEND YOUR MITE

to—*Workers' International Famine Relief Fund (British Section), 16, King Street, W.C.2*; *Labour Party's Russian Famine Fund, 33, Eccleston Square, S.W.1*; or *Friends' Relief Committee (for Russia), Russian Famine Fund, Room 54, General Buildings, Aldwych, W.C.2.*

DOUGLAS *in a* NUTSHELL

The following summary of the main points of the Douglas Scheme has been contributed by a PLEBS reader, who characterises W. H. Mainwaring's article in our February issue as "inadequate" and "misleading." A reply to this article will appear next month.

UNDER the present system industrial undertakings must normally recover their outlay plus profit, or they cease to function. This means that the final individual consumer pays in price the whole cost of production and that all industry depends upon individual consumption. As the individual's ability to consume is limited by his purchasing power, let us consider the latter in relation to production.

The wages, salaries and dividends of industry are the main source of individually distributed purchasing power. Over any period of time, the wages, salaries and dividends of any firm are together less than the selling price of that firm's production, because that price must also include the cost of raw material, plant charges, etc. This, true of any firm, is true of all industry. Further, the main portion of those wages and salaries are often absorbed in living costs while production is going on. Hence the rate of flow of prices of the final consumable goods entering the market is much greater than the flow of effective purchasing power distributed in respect thereof. New labour-saving devices continually widen this breach between distributed purchasing power and final price, by diminishing the proportion of wages to other costs. Hence, though the community by inventions may have cheaper goods, it is at the same time less able to consume them.

As production ceases when sales cease, it follows that industry could not have been carried on with individually distributed purchasing power only. What actually bridges the discrepancy is credit (bankers' credit in the main) and exports.

Export (of the surplus, not of goods sent to balance imports of things unproducibile here) is only possible in so far as openings exist for capital abroad, because imports to balance the exported surplus cannot be absorbed any more than the surplus itself.

Credit is for all practical purposes manufactured money and the immediate effect of such new purchasing power in the market is to raise prices. Though cancelled by repayment there is normally a constant flow of new creations which maintain or augment inflation. These credits are granted in anticipation of production, chiefly of an intermediary nature, machinery, factory extensions, etc., because the return on these is usually more profitable than on agriculture and similar industries. As the flow of credit so distributed in wages, etc., exceeds, equals, or is less than the flow of prices of final commodities unabsorbable by the effective demand distributed in their creation, the level of prices tends to rise, stagnates, or falls (except where rings are able to interfere with supply).

But as the increasing production resulting from these credits comes to market, the discrepancy between price and distributed purchasing power has again to be bridged by further credit. Hence only by the continual export of capital, the continual expansion of credit (with the simultaneous enrichment of the credit controllers at the expense of the community) and constantly rising prices, can industry continue running. When credit is restricted, industry is immediately restricted too, as England knows to-day.

Yet after a period of credit expansion, restriction is inevitable, because the supply of legal tender is limited (even when paper) and rising wages, following rising prices, tend to draw an increasing amount of currency into hand-to-hand circulation, which increased demand if not curbed would eventually smash the banks.

For the effects of such an industrial system, the abolition of profit is as futile a remedy as "increased production" or wage cuts, as the difference between price and distributed purchasing power is but widened by each. It should be noted also that it is in his home, as the consumer, who pays in price for factories and everything, that the worker is robbed much more than elsewhere.

The Douglas remedy has as its ideal an eventual equal and guaranteed income or communal dividend for every citizen, with decentralised public service graded according to capacity, offering promotion in grade as incentive to efficiency and initiative; the assured income giving the economic freedom which, no less than the political variety, is essential to the full development of man. Meanwhile it deals with realities, and the private appropriation and control of credit, which is a communal creation, is the central evil to be attacked. Financial Credit is the measure of ability to deliver money. It depends for its creation on the ability of the producer and his staff, the existence of visible consumers, and presupposes generally the co-operation of a stable community. It is in short the joint creation and inheritance of the whole community, and should be at the service thereof. The measure of ability to deliver goods as required, in contradistinction designated *Real Credit*, is thus the basis of Financial Credit.

For the purpose of building up a wider distribution of dividends Douglas proposes Producers' Banks, which would claim and organise for the workers the Financial Credit that their Real Credit helps to create. This Financial Credit would be used to provide the greater portion of all new capital needed for the industry, and the proceeds from the latter would be distributed *per capita* through the banks to the workers in the industry. This process would also give the workers an eventual majority control of the industry's capital. The dividends of the proprietors (old and new) would be fixed at some agreed rate, because, as explained above, profits are not the essential evil and they would secure the co-operation of the industrial capitalist against his financial master, both of whom would stand shoulder to shoulder against anything confiscatory. And the final product would be sold at the "Just Price," which, in some forms, is essential to any Labour, Communist or other *régime* intending to be any more than a mere profitless capitalism.

It will be found on examination that the value of our annual production greatly exceeds that of our annual consumption, when we reckon as production all factories and other capital creations and improved values thereof, besides consumable goods and imports and count consumption similarly. The difference or surplus can be taken as the measure of our increased capital or means to produce, and, thus of the increased Real Credit of the nation, against which it could issue Financial Credit for division among its citizens.

Instead of dividing this Financial Credit into lump sums at the end of the financial period, the Just Price distributes it to the citizen at the time when he needs it, i.e., when buying personal goods or services, by charging him only that fraction of the retailer's costs that the total national consumption is of total national production as reckoned above. The difference between price received and costs incurred would be periodically reimbursed

to the retailer by Treasury notes, drafts, or other convenient media, issued against the increased national credit as defined above. Prices also would be adjusted periodically according to the Board of Trade ascertainment of the fraction, and, as only in very unusual circumstances would production, assured of effective demand, lag behind consumption, so normally the price of ultimate produce would be less than cost, and constantly decreasing as the resources of the community increased.

The immediate result of the general application of the Just Price would be a reduction of the cost of living by more than half, a tremendous stimulus to production with a quick absorption of most of the unemployed. The great new creations of money so disbursed would not inflate prices because these would be controlled by the consumption's relation to production, and not by the relation of money to goods, as hitherto. Consideration of the amenities of such an application combined with the Producers' Banks I must leave to the reader.

In concluding, I would like to ask Com. Mainwaring where, and when, in the two hundred years he spoke of, this "Just Price" is enunciated by anyone previous to Douglas?

OUT-OF-WORK

The N.C.L.C. CONFERENCE and PLEBS MEET

The following "informal" report makes no attempt to cover all the points discussed during the Conference; aiming only at giving a summary of the more important decisions for the benefit of PLEBS readers. Colleges and classes affiliated to the N.C.L.C. will have already received a full report of the proceedings; and a few copies of this will be available later for individual supporters (apply Nat. Sec., N.C.L.C.).

THERE was a much bigger muster at Handforth on March 4th and 5th than any of us expected. Of the 23 Colleges and class-centres affiliated to the N.C.L.C., 19 were represented at the Conference; and there were in addition a good many Plebs, tutors and I.W.-C.E. workers, who took part in the discussions, though, of course, they did not vote on questions on the N.C.L.C. agenda. Those discussions, moreover, did not end with the adjournment of a particular session! They raged furiously (with perfect good temper) at mealtimes, during billiards contests, and after "lights out" in the dormitories. That's the best of meeting at a Club House—you're able to make the most of every minute from the time you arrive to the time when you're shaking hands all round and telling everybody you hope another Conference will be fixed up soon. And you can "get forrader" in a discussion over the tea-table or during a stroll round the grounds than in a formal debate, with a watchful chairman sternly keeping you to the point.

N.C.L.C. AND PLEBS

There is no need to report separately the discussions at the N.C.L.C. Conference and

those at the Plebs Meet (held on the Saturday evening). That the work of the two organisations must be, and is, closely interrelated is clear from the fact that discussions began in the one were continued in the other—and concluded during a later session of the first. The relationship of Council and League* was considered from the point of view of both organisations; and the decision arrived at—that the League continue its existence, as an organisation affiliated to the Council and concentrating on propaganda and publicity activities—was a unanimous one.

It was raised during the N.C.L.C. opening Session (Agenda, Item 5) by a resolution from SHEFFIELD in favour of the dissolution of the Plebs League, and the taking over by the N.C.L.C. of full control of the Magazine and publications. When the matter came up on the Plebs agenda, R. W. Postgate, for the Plebs E.C., moved a resolution formally endorsing the change in the League Constitution (*re* "support of all educational institutions affiliated to the N.C.L.C."); and declaring opposition to any proposal for the dissolution of the League.

* Discussed also in "Our Point of View," p. 98.

The discussion which followed made it plain that the general feeling was strongly in favour of the resolution. It was pointed out that, apart from all other considerations, any proposal that the N.C.L.C. take over the Magazine and publications was quite impracticable, since its present financial basis would not permit of its undertaking any such heavy liabilities.

SUPPORT FOR THE "PLEBS"

J. P. M. Millar's following resolution—that the N.C.L.C. be invited by the Plebs League to appoint two E.C. Members to sit on a joint Publications Committee with representatives appointed by the Plebs E.C.—was carried unanimously.

It was accepted next morning by the N.C.L.C. delegates as giving ample guarantee for the closest possible co-operation between both bodies; and it was further resolved:—

That in view of the fact that all financial responsibility for the issue of the PLEBS Magazine, Textbooks, etc., is undertaken by the Plebs League, the National Council recommends Colleges, Districts and classes to obtain all supplies of magazines and publications direct from the PLEBS Office; to settle all accounts as promptly as possible; and, further, to consider the desirability of obtaining all literature supplies from the same source. The Council also urges every district to make arrangements for the supply of the PLEBS to students and others during the summer months; and to *guarantee payment for at least two-thirds of their usual supply while making every effort actually to increase the sales of the Magazine.*

The (Plebs) Secretary's and Editor's reports made it plain that the fullest and most whole-hearted support, both of organisations—Colleges, classes, etc.—and of individual workers, was urgently needed. That did not mean that the movement was not making headway. The PLEBS, though its circulation (like that of every other Labour journal), has gone down somewhat during the past few months, has probably suffered as relatively small a percentage decline as any periodical. But though it is at present just paying its way—in the sense of meeting actual *net* costs—it must *increase* its circulation in order (1) to meet greatly increased office expenses necessitated by the rapid growth of I.W.-C.E. work; and (2) to provide a margin over and above *net* expenses for financing further propaganda publications, textbooks, etc. Suggestions from friends as to ways and means of getting new subscribers would be welcomed.

THE BOOK DEPT.

The Book Dept., especially if supported by the National Council, could be made a valuable asset. The new PLEBS premises afford more storage capacity, and the supply of books can now be handled more efficiently. It rested with Plebs and

N.C.L.C.-ers to make full use of this facility, and "by helping themselves, at the same time help on the I.W.-C.E. movement."

The PLEBS Balance Sheet and Financial Statement will be published next month, when finally audited.

THE W.E.T.U.C.

The Plebs League was not the only educational organisation which came up for discussion on the N.C.L.C. agenda. The recent correspondence in the *Daily Herald* on the subject of the Workers' Educational T.U. Committee—the W.E.A. under its new name—led to a resolution on the subject of co-operation with other educational bodies, as follows:—

The N.C.L.C. expresses its willingness to co-operate with the W.E.T.U.C. (or any other similar body) on two conditions:—

1. That all classes and tutors be entirely controlled by Trade Unions, Trade Councils, or other working-class organisations.
2. That the definite and avowed aim of all such classes be the education of the workers with a view to equipping them for the class struggle and aiding them in the fight for the abolition of capitalism.

We shall await with interest any reply from the W.E.T.U.C. to this clear statement of policy and aims; and Plebs everywhere are urged to make the fullest possible use of this challenge when pressing the claims of the N.C.L.C. on the organised workers.

TACKLING THE UNIONS

After a long and interesting discussion on methods of local organisation and propaganda, it was resolved:—

That the National Council strongly recommends its constituent organisations (1) to adopt periodically special propaganda efforts for particular Trade Unions, etc., utilising for this purpose the services of class students belonging to the particular organisation approached; (2) to arrange that all affiliation fees from Unions, etc., carry with them the right to one or more free scholarships.

Special reference was made in this connection to the pamphlet on Education issued by the A.U. Building Trade Workers, and the question of similar pamphlets, appealing expressly to the workers in other particular industries, was referred to.

A NEW PAMPHLET

The EDINBURGH District (S.L.C.) reported that they had prepared the draft of a new propaganda pamphlet on Education, of which they intended to make special use at the meeting of the Scottish T.U. Congress in April. They were also planning to use it for summer-time propaganda among groups of workers not yet won over to the support of I.W.-C.E. The pamphlet would have a pictorial cover, and two or more small illustrations inside; and any District ordering a

supply for their own use could, if they ordered at once, have their own local matter (*re* classes, syllabuses, etc.) printed on the last two pages. The Council recommended that all Districts consider this matter immediately and send orders without delay to the National Secretary, or to J. Millar (Edinburgh Dist. Sec.) 30, Newhaven Road, Leith.

CHARTS, SLIDES AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

With a view to the provision of sets of charts and slides for national use, the Manchester College was invited to take preliminary steps for preparing *charts*, and the Liverpool College *slides*.

With regard to Summer Schools, the Council gladly accepted the offer of the Governors of the Labour College, London, for the use of the College premises at Kew at a date to be fixed; and it was recommended that Midlands and Northern Districts endeavour to arrange Summer Schools in their respective areas. (Full particulars of any such arrangements will, of course, be given in the PLEBS as soon as fixed.)

Among the matters discussed during the Conference were forthcoming Textbooks. The E.C. was instructed to write to Comrade W. W. Craik, requesting him to make some statement in the April PLEBS as to date of publication, approximate price, etc., of

the book he is writing on Working-Class Philosophy.*

THANKS

The best thanks of all who attended the Conference are due to our Manchester comrades, who made the preliminary arrangements for the meeting at Handforth; to Com. J. Hamilton, who took the chair during the N.C.L.C. Conference; to Com. J. W. Thomas, who presided over the Plebs Meet; and to the Steward and Stewardess of the Handforth Club House for their kindness and courtesy to everyone.

At the commencement of Saturday's proceedings the chairman (Com. Hamilton) made sympathetic reference to the loss the movement had suffered by the death of Dr. H. L. Jameson ("Nordicus"); and a unanimous resolution of sympathy with Mrs. Jameson and her daughters was passed by the delegates standing.

We have since received from Mrs. Jameson a letter asking us to convey to the delegates and friends present the thanks of her daughters and herself for their message of sympathy.

* W. W. Craik informs us, at the time of going to press, that he cannot give any precise details at present, but hopes to be able to do so next month.

GERALD GOULD *and* T. A. JACKSON

Discuss the Plebs "Outline of Psychology"

Gerald Gould very considerably exceeds our 400-words limit for letters in the following reply to T. A. Jackson's criticism of his "Daily Herald" review of the Plebs "Outline of Psychology." But we think all readers of the Textbook will agree that it is desirable to allow him the extra space—this month; not again!—in order that he may further explain his reasons for describing the "Outline" as a "bad book."

DEAR COMRADE,—It passes my understanding why a paper which devotes so much space to really violent and savage reviewing of people it does not agree with should apparently so much resent a hostile review when it comes its way, particularly when it knows that it is a perfectly unbiassed expression of opinion. When I say "unbiassed," of course I am not attempting to answer your argument that I have an instinctive dislike of everything which adversely affects my "religious complex"; that sort of argument leads nowhere. I could equally well retort that you had an instinctive dislike of everything which adversely affected some complex of yours; and even if all this were true, it would reduce argument to a farce.

To come now to Jackson's specific replies to my points.

I said that on p. 2 the authors repudiated conscious intelligent choice. Jackson quotes a sentence from p. 2 which does not contain

that repudiation. The repudiation is contained in the sentence: "Modern psychology is determinist"—especially when that sentence is considered in connection with the other passages which deal with what the authors mean by determinism. For they make the crude, elementary mistake throughout of supposing that because no action can be without a cause, *therefore* there is no such thing as free will; and so, by identifying the theory of cause and effect with the theory of determinism, they rule out all conscious intelligent choice.

Not only do they do this, but they do it repeatedly and insistently, as every reader of the book knows. Jackson's only way of getting round this is to say that free will is not the same as free choice. If he really thinks that choice can be free when will is not, I am afraid I cannot argue with him. That is the sort of thinking which vitiates the *Outline of Psychology*. It is the use of words without attaching any meaning to

them at all. (It is true that a few lines after he has distinguished "free will" from "free choice," he treats them as indistinguishable! But I cannot keep pace with all his self-contradictions.)

The authors "make chance the basis of their whole psychology," as I said in my review, because when they carry back their analysis of conduct and intelligence from point to point, the only starting point they find, as is shown clearly in the passage which Jackson himself quotes from them, is a chance movement. They make chance the basis of their whole psychology, just as the old theologians, with whom for some queer reason you and Jackson seem to confuse me, made that basis an act of creation by God.

Then, as for the contradiction between pp. 45 and 86. On p. 45, I asserted, the authors think that mental phenomena are caused by physical phenomena. Jackson seeks to refute this by saying that I have summarised the statement "crudely," and that anyway it is only a quotation from Bertrand Russell; and he underlines his point by putting the words "*quote Bertrand Russell's definition*" in italics.

If your readers turn to p. 45, they will find the following paragraph:—

For the purposes of psychology, we may, following Bertrand Russell, define materialism in its present-day sense as the view that all mental phenomena are causally dependent upon physical phenomena.

In other words, they say, at slightly greater length, precisely what I summarised them as saying. Jackson is surely not so ignorant as not to know that if one thing is causally dependent upon another, it is caused by that other. What other meaning can he attach to the words? The attempt to discredit me by pretending that I have attributed to the authors as their own what they really only quoted is so obviously unfair and ridiculous, in view of their plain words, that—since I do not want to accuse Jackson of definite and intentional falsehood—I honestly do not know how to interpret it.

He goes on to p. 86, and again says that my summary is not fair.

On p. 86 the authors state that "thought is not something different from the rest of the bodily processes." I summarised that in the words: "thought is a physical process." If the words do not mean that, they mean nothing.

So on with each of the other points. I will not exhaust your space and your patience in following them out. Your readers can judge for themselves. They can also judge whether it is Jackson or I that is slovenly.

About Pragmatism, Jackson's ignorance would appear to be so complete that one really does not know where to begin tackling it. I never attributed the Jamesian doctrine of Pragmatism to the authors of the Textbook. What I attributed to them was Pragmatism—which they definitely state that they embrace. If Jackson really thinks nobody is a Pragmatist who does not embrace the whole philosophical theory put forward

by William James, then his remark may mean something to himself, but it cannot possibly mean anything to anybody who knows what Pragmatism is. As it happens, Pragmatism is perfectly accurately defined in the Textbook itself (see p. 141, and the indexed reference to same).

He asks me, on another point, a question: Are "absolute," "certainty" and "end" words with interchangeable meanings?

No. Nor does my argument require that they should be. They have interdependent meanings. If there is an absolute, there is certainty, and if there is certainty, there is an end. But, really, this is the A B C of metaphysics.

I will end by asking Jackson why he accuses me of flagrant and spiteful misrepresentation? Why in the world should I feel any spite? Why should I want to misrepresent your textbook? The suggestion is ludicrous on the face of it. As it happens, it is Jackson who either completely misunderstands or completely misrepresents both me and the Textbook; but I don't accuse him of either flagrancy or spitefulness. I have no doubt that he means what he says and says what he means.

I am all the more puzzled as to why Jackson should suppose I could possibly *want* to misinterpret, because he accepts me as a fellow-worker in the Labour cause. That I am proud to be; and one of the jobs of fellow-workers in the Labour cause is to denounce in no uncertain terms lines of propaganda which seem to them likely to do the cause harm.

Yours, etc.,

GERALD GOULD

T. A. JACKSON writes in reply:—

I have no desire to make this discussion a "wrangle" so I make haste to clear the ground of purely personal issues.

I gathered from Gould's review, its form, its contents, its tone and its conclusion, that he (for some reason still in dispute) has an uncontrollable dislike to the doctrine of "determinism." That, therefore, he, finding the Plebs *Outline* to advance that doctrine, looked through it only to find reasons for calling it a thoroughly bad book, and suggesting that its authors were pretentious incompetents bent on imposing a shoddy work upon defenceless working men. The style of the review and its prominent position in the only Labour daily made it seem to me likely that many fellow-workers would be deterred from buying just the very book they were seeking.

These were my reasons for the terms "spiteful" and "misrepresentation." I said "spiteful" because he seemed eager to give pain. I said "misrepresentation" because his attack gave a disproportionate importance to what was a minor and incidental portion of the *Outline*. And that portion considered, moreover, in a "metaphysical" rather than a "psychological" connotation. My justification—if any—is found in his contribution above.

If Gould asserts that he had no such intention I will withdraw the term "spiteful" and so much of my reply as imputed to him conscious ill-will against the book and its authors—provided always that he will accept my assurance that the above-described impression left with me by his review was that left with many others.

The concrete points at issue between us can be thus summarised:—

(1) Is the *Outline* worthless from self-contradiction? I challenged Gould's assertion that certain cited passages were contradictory. Whether in his rejoinder he maintains his case I am content to leave to the judgment of your readers. The plain truth seems to be that the authors wherever possible used colloquial rather than technically precise terminology. This is to me a virtue: to Gould it constitutes not merely a blemish but a crime. For instance:—

(2) Gould summarises the statement that "thought is not something different from the rest of the bodily processes" in the words "thought is a physical process." A reading of the passage makes it obvious that the stress should be laid on the word "different"—the obvious sense being "of a different order of causation." The passage reads straight on, "but the manifestation of the working of a part of the ordinary nervous and muscular equipment of man, the operation of which is accompanied in consciousness by a process which to distinguish it from, say, feeling, we call "thought."

The fact that the term "thought" is in this section used in its limited sense (i.e. as meaning "reasoning" as distinct from other mental operations) is quite clear in the book and quite obscured in Gould's critique.

(3) Gould accuses me of "ignorance" of the meaning of the term "Pragmatism." A plain answer should turn away alike accusation and wrath. William James sought to wrest the old and time-honoured "pragmatic test" of the truth of a proposition (i.e., "that it works") to the service of Christian apologetics. In his hands it became the appalling assertion that because it produced morally salutary results, and therefore "worked," Christianity could be accepted as morally true quite apart from

its historical or philosophic validity. With this he coupled the corollary that a thing could be made morally "true" by pragmatically insisting upon believing it.

In the literature of Christian Apologetics this doctrine of James passes as "Pragmatism." It is not the doctrine of the *Outline*. When, therefore, I read Gould's accusation against the Textbook that it upheld the exploded doctrine of Pragmatism I naturally supposed that in his haste to slay he had been misled by a word with two incompatible connotations. If I am wrong in this Gould is equally and more seriously wrong in asserting the scientific or "pragmatic" test to be obsolete, or exploded, or anything but the basis of all scientific advance.

(4) The statement that "mental phenomena are causally dependent upon physical phenomena" is NOT the equivalent of "mental phenomena are caused by physical phenomena" even though both are equally true. A coal fire is "causally dependent" upon the oxygen of the atmosphere, but the oxygen is not "the cause" of the fire.

(5) The whole of Gould's attack is aimed at those parts of the book which directly or by inference advance the doctrine of determinism. He asks if I think that "choice can be free when will is not"?

Here again he has fallen into the logical and metaphysical pit concealed by the ambiguous senses of the term "free." My choice is "free" (in ordinary language) either when no other person has the power to dictate my choice, or when either through ignorance or indifference I am perplexed which of two or more lines of policy to pursue. My "will" being part of "me" and therefore "conditioned" by the rest of "me" and my relations to the universe can never be free in the metaphysical sense of unconditioned.

In strict logic the term "Free Will" has no more meaning than "Green Sleep." As a doctrine it belongs to theology. If the will is "free" from ordinary material causation then no science of psychology is possible at all.

In short the *Outline* is a good and useful work and Gerald treated it with shocking unfairness.

THOS. A. JACKSON

STUDENTS' NOTES *and* QUERIES

HOWELL (Derby).—We do not know of a book which deals specifically with the "bloody" side of revolutions. Any general orthodox history would supply you with evidence. R. W. P.'s *Revolution* in its summaries and documents would be useful from 1789 onwards; it contains the details of the most terrible expression of class hate known—the pitiless wholesale butchery of the French workers after the Commune of 1871. Do not, however, go to the other extreme of the social pacifist and think that bloodshed *must* necessarily accompany social change.

A correspondent points out in relation to the March Notes that Marx in 1847 in *Wage-Labour and Capital* (chap. 8) noticed why the capitalist introduced more machinery so that he could undercut his rivals, and that cheaper production meant greater production and a consequent ever-increasing rivalry for markets.

Most Plebeians probably made a cutting of a short article by Charles E. Turner (*Daily Herald*, 8/3/22). It gave valuable evidence concerning the way in which *means*

of production are being exported instead of means of consumption. While the spindles and looms of Lancashire stand idle the makers of textile machinery are enjoying a boom. Six of these firms made in 1921 a net profit of £1,125,000. The largest portion of this machinery is exported. India, Japan and China are the chief customers, and their imports in 1922 are still showing a steady increase. The figures for January, 1922, were: India, 6,205 tons; China, 3,483 tons; Japan, 3,329 tons.

It needs little imagination to realise that this acceleration in capitalist development brings it nearer to its end.

Points for Students regarding the engineering and shipbuilding lock-out:—

(1) "Reparations" have helped considerably to make effective the attack on coal

miners and workers in shipbuilding trades. The Capitalist Offensive has received particular assistance at these two points.

(2) Note the significance of the struggle over control of the workshop. It is not merely a matter of overtime. Victory for the employers here will mean the introduction of new machines and new processes, without any consideration of workmen. The harvest of wartime "dilution" will be fully reaped by the employers.

(3) The strongest survival of craft unionism is in the machine-making trades. Despite attempts at amalgamation rival unions still exist, and weaken the chances of resistance; this weakness still appears in the General Council and makes it ineffective. Are the employers in their ruthlessness going to end our task of transforming the craft unions by smashing them? M. S.

TRA LA MONDO : *Esperanto Notes*

Educational Conference in Geneva

From the 18th to the 21st April there will take place in Geneva a Conference of teachers of Esperanto, in which many countries will be represented. The language used will, of course, be Esperanto. The objects are to study teaching methods and to organise the demand for the instruction of Esperanto in the elementary and secondary schools of all countries. This gathering will be unique in that it is the first technical conference specially organised in which Esperanto has been used. It is true that there have been small gatherings of doctors, teachers, scientists, etc., who have met on the occasion of the large Esperantist Congresses, but the present Conference will probably be quite a feature in its way.

Italy

En Milano komenciĝis la 1. febr. la instruado de Esperanto en popolaj lernejoj (5-a kaj 6-a klasoj). Estas la dua jaro en kiu la infanoj de Milano lernas Esperanton.— Okaze de la malfermo de unuagrada kurso de la Proletaria Universitato, la 1. febr., d-ro Angelo Filipetti, urbestro de Milano, prezidanto de "Esperanta Domo," faris efikan paroladon. La lecionojn, kiujn partoprenas 125 persunoj, gvidas s-ano Pietro Rota.

En Milano, Riparto Bovisa, estas starigita lab. grupo "Nova Homaro," al kiu aliĝis pli ol 40 gesamideanoj. Je 14. febr. s-ano Umberto Valli malfermis unuagradan kurson kun 40 partoprenantoj. Adreso: Esp. Grupo "Nova Homaro," ĉe Circolo Familiare, Riparto Bovisa, Milano.

En Torino kaj Mantova la Esp. Movado inter fervojistoj estas vigla. En Torino ĉe la Rondo de la Fervojistaj Vojaĝistoj (Via silvio Pellico 1) post parolado de s-o B. Broglio kaj s-o Franco Ramolfo, prez. de

"Esp. Fervojista Unuiĝo," oni fondis novan "Vojaĝistan Grupon." Ĉiuj ĉeestantoj rekonis de granda utileco la enkondukon de Esperanto ĉe la fervojistoj apartenantaj al la vojaĝa servado, vro la oftaj kontaktoj kun fremdaj vojaĝantoj. Kurso komenciĝis.— En Mantova s-o Umberto Toni gvidas kurson da 22 kolegoj ĉe la Fervojista Rondo.

(*El Esperanto Triumfonta*)

La Historio

"... Historion oficialan lia klara komprenemo trapremetis ĝis la funda vero. Pri milito kaj lertaj politikaj temis ja la tuta instruado. Ne nur en litva lando malfeliĉa, la gentoj sin malkonis kaj malamis reciproke. Ne nur tie floris la incitoj anonimaj. Ĉe potencaj ŝtatoj registaroj zorgis tion. De centjaraj ili jam kutimis gvidi la publikan opinion kontraŭ unu aŭ alia gento, laŭ la celoj politikaj de l'momento. Dum pafitejoj fakrikiĝis, jam laboris gazetistoj, parolistoj, eĉ poetoj ŝovinistaj, por formi senton generalan.

"Agentoj oficialaj disvastigis ĉie rakontaĵojn, suspekton kaj eksciton. Per bildoj kaj presaĵoj ili tuŝis korojn de l'virinoj, vekis la indignon de l'popolo, kreis eĉ koleron— ĉion nur por preni peceton de lando aŭ afrikan kolonion. Eksplozis milito. Amase falis junaj viroj. Funebris la virinoj. Miszeris logantaro de vilaĝoj detruitaj. Paco fariĝis. La ŝtato perdis cent mil homojn proprajn, kaj aneksis kvindek mil nigrolojn. Gloras generaloj, bruas, tamburoj, sonas muzikoj. Mirinda la sukceso. La venkita ŝtato petas aliancon. Jam finiĝis incitado. De nun vidu la bonaĵojn kaj forgesu ĉiujn pekojn! Sed amiko jam malnova ekjaluzas, postulas 'kompensajon.' Kontraŭ tiu nun ekmarŝu la impresmaŝino, kaj ĉio same rekomencu! . . . k.t.p."

(*El Vivo de Zamenhof*)

The PLEBS Page

THIS page is for the Plebs League. Got that? "News of the Movement" has got lost—merged itself with "N.C.L.C. Notes." And all reports of classes, etc., and who presented whom with a silver teapot in recognition of his services, etc., must be looked for under that heading. . . . ALL YOU PLEBS PAY UP! Your subscriptions are now more than due, and as the said sub. is now only ONE SHILLING (from Jan. to Dec.) send the bobs along. No use moaning or gnashing your teeth and saying you've been left out of any ballot votes—only those folks who have paid up will get any consideration whatever! We want to be nice to you—please let us. The chap in the diagram is setting you a noble example.

JUST TO REMIND ME—



We all know, of course, where flies go in the winter time; but what we want to know is where PLEBS subscribers get to in the summer-time. This year we cannot afford a summer slump. So if you care anything about the Magazine, you'll do your utmost to guarantee the circulation during the summer months. We are trying to get class-secretaries to guarantee two-thirds of their orders, and if individual members of the League will get on the trail after new subscribers, or get local newsgents to take small bundles, we shall smile all the while.

By the time you read this we shall be in our new office. You will notice that we are now in *Buckingham Palace Road*—but don't write to ask us to reserve you a window for the next Royal Wedding procession, because we're in the basement! The Labour Research Dept., to whom we owe the chance of occupying the rooms, and the *Labour Monthly*, occupy the floors above, so we beg you to judge us by the company we keep rather than by the name of the street we live in! (If you *must* judge us!)

The furnishing of the office will have to be undertaken bit by bit, and donations towards office exs. will be gratefully received. If anyone likes to organise a dance or whist drive on our behalf we shan't say no to the proceeds. A word of advice. There are any number of people who would rather *pay* than go to a social, so the thing to do is to collect the money off them there and then.

The ballot for the Plebs Executive resulted as follows:—R. W. Postgate 229, Mark Starr 229, G. F. Sims 219, C. T. Pendrey 204, M. H. Dobb 196, T. Ashcroft 192, C. Terry 178, A. Vandome 168, J. Burns 163, A. H. Okey 150. The first seven were accordingly elected.

T. Ashcroft, who is at present in Lancashire, being unable to attend E.C. meetings, has resigned and A. Vandome (Hackney) will take his place.

The resolution altering the membership sub. to 1s. was passed; 190 for and 78 against.

The other E.C. resolution altering the Methods to "assist all educational institutions affiliated to the N.C.L.C." was passed; 212 for, 15 against.

Plebs League members are asked to remember once more that the E.C. will be happy to consider suggestions and resolutions from members and groups. Let's all keep in touch.

A resolution was passed at the Meet (see Report on another page) that a Publications Sub-Committee should be appointed by the Plebs League E.C., and that the N.C.L.C. Executive should have two representatives thereon. This course is strongly recommended to members by the League E.C., as it will help to ensure close collaboration between the two organisations. A ballot vote of Plebs members will be taken on this resolution during this month.

One branch of our work that we want to develop, both for its general usefulness and because it will help finance the other branches, is the Book Dept. We can get anything from Dell (Ethel M.) to Douglas (Major), so send along the orders. We are going to do our utmost to get a reputation for promptness in despatching books, and as we have arranged for extra help in the office we hope to send orders by return. All profits go to help Plebs work—no one draws any "divi." from us. If you can *assemble* your book orders (*i.e.*, send for a *parcel* at one and the same time, and not for a lot of separate oddments at separate times) you will save time—and time is money, as the man said when he pinched a watch.

W. H.

¶ EVERY KEEN N.C.L.C.ER SPORTS A PLEBS BADGE

N. C. L. C. NOTES

FOLLOWING the enthusiastic adoption of a programme of immediate summer activities our members everywhere are getting a move on. Ambitious schemes for working up T.U. support have been planned and our members everywhere are urged to make the Big Push for I.W.-C.E. a success commensurate with the schemes suggested in the various districts. These include a series of single lectures dealing with the scope and material of Economics, History, Philosophy, Economic Geography, Psychology and, in some places, Literature; short courses on each individual subject; propagandist lectures on education and T.U. history—where possible with special reference to the organisation addressed, etc. Then courses for prospective tutors, Summer School intensive courses, rambles and social outings combining pleasure and instruction, and any other ways and means of maintaining touch with students and interesting others in our work preparatory to the more formal Winter Session.

The Ayrshire District having succeeded in convincing the canny Scot that it is cheaper to pay for the S.L.C. variety of education than have the free-gift brand of the W.E.A., has incurred the wrath of the local Superintendent of Kilbirnie Continuation School. Needless to say, the dominie has not scored in the duel carried on in the local "rag."

The Ayrshire District Secretary writes us:—"In view of the approach of the Education Authority Election in Scotland, I have been wondering if any general line of policy could be taken up by those of us interested in I.W.-C.E.

"I do not know if any of our members are aspirants for this body, but I think it desirable that in such an event our policy should be a national one."

Will any comrades interested write Robt. Climie, 3, Fairhill Road, Kilmarnock?

ROCHDALE weighs in with another item of disgruntled W.E.A.-ism. The local lights complain that in spite of Mansbridge having advertised them as deserving of "credit for revealing the work in its many-sided richness," they'll have to shut down unless financial support is speedily forthcoming. Seeing that their aim is "the presentation of knowledge on which to form sound judgment," and that it has "no concern with propaganda, whether political or economic," we are not surprised that Rochdale workers have no concern about it.

STIRLINGSHIRE District is busy but quite willing to do a little overtime, particularly in Alloa. PLEBS readers in that area (and elsewhere) should make a dead-set at the Building Trade Workers' branches.

DARLINGTON and District Labour College Committee is the latest recruit to our movement. The Committee was set up following a Conference held at Darlington on 4th March and addressed by W. W. Craik, Principal of the London Labour College. All interested should write the Secretary, Edgar Turner, 103, Waterloo Road, Middlesbrough.

The NORTH EASTERN Labour College are holding a Week-End School at Easter, with Mark Starr as lecturer, and another at Whitsun, besides umpteen other activities. All inquiries to the energetic Secretary, W. Coxon, 5, Byron Street, Newcastle.

ALTRINCHAM Council I.W.-C.E. (4 months of age) have made good progress with an Economics Class, Com. Redfern (of Manchester L.C.) as lecturer, and an Evolution Course conducted by Com. J. Taylor (of Openshaw). Anxious for fresh fields to conquer, the Chairman, A. Clark, 17, Tipping Street, Altrincham, would like to link up the local Plebeians in preparation for a good Summer propaganda campaign.

That good Pleb, Tom Campbell of KILMARNOCK, invites all others of the brand, particularly in Leicester and Northampton, to make sure of getting the I.W.-C.E. Education resolutions boosted at the Boot and Shoe Operatives' Whitsun Conference. "Get it in the Rules"—that's the slogan!

N.U.D.A.W. readers are urged to make a final effort towards the successful passage of the I.W.-C.E. Resolution down for the Easter Conference. Keep working and winning!

ABERDEEN District, having no branches of the A.U.B.T.W. to work on, but knowing that there are building-trade workers up there, have intimated their readiness to do a bit of T.U. propaganda for a live organisation. That's the sort of reciprocity that's wanted! Educationists should make Trade Unionists and Trade Unionists should make Educationists!

LEIGH and District Council send along great accounts of the work of our friend, Tom Ashcroft, in converting the previously unregenerate to the I.W.-C.E. faith. They also wish to note that rooms for meeting are provided free of charge by the Labour Club; and that the Council's affiliation fee includes one free scholarship.

Don't forget to write at once to J. Millar (Edinburgh Dist. Sec.), 30, Newhaven Road, Leith, for particulars of the new N.C.L.C. pamphlet, "More Production—and More Poverty!"

LETTERS from PLEBS

IS THE "PLEBS" ON THE WRONG TRACK?

DEAR COMRADE,—Between "Mar-enghol's" flamboyant damnation of the PLEBS and all its works, and the pedantic verbiage about "neurones" and "complexes" of the psycho-analysts, I think there is room for a little legitimate criticism.

The point I want to make against both the PLEBS and the I.W.-C.E. movement in general is this:—Are we getting the right results from our educational activity? I submit that we are not. Latterly, our education seems to be turning out two types that are of no use to the militant working-class movement. One type is of the Labour fakir species—the ambitious ex-student who, although chock full of "Marxian knowledge," is only concerned with angling for a job, and when he gets it is only concerned in demonstrating to the boss-class how orthodox and reasonable a T.U. official he is. I could name dozens in the S. Wales coalfield alone of this type. The other type is the bumptious "briny" individual who is more concerned with airing theories on every subject than applying his knowledge to the task of building up a revolutionary working-class movement. These Olympians prefer to dwell up in the clouds, and hide the uncultured proletariat who is hewing away below at the foundations of capitalism, rather than take a hand themselves. No doubt, when the task work of the Revolution is done, they will condescend to pose for the camera as "leaders" of the masses.

What's the fault, Comrade Editor? To me, it appears to lie in the dangerous tendency of the I.W.-C.E. movement to regard education as an end in itself instead of a means to an end. The PLEBS should resolutely set itself against this. There are fields of important research in the workings of capitalism, of international finance, of the trusts, and the new tendencies in organisation of Capital. The rank and file propagandists of the movement want ammunition for the everyday fight with Capitalism. The researchers of the PLEBS can provide it if they will. Let them get busy and turn their attention to delivering the goods that will help the success of the Social Revolution.

A. E. COOK.

DEAR COMRADE,—You invite comments on Comrade Lewis's letter, and I feel moved to support his main contentions.

I do not depreciate the academic side of our work, but much less attention must be paid to it, and besides being wise as serpents we must try to approach a little nearer to the simplicity of the dove, if we are either to increase the circulation of our Magazine or capture the masses for the cause of I.W.-C.E.

Yours frat., L. J. HUMBERSTONE

THE "HERALD" LITERARY PAGE

DEAR EDITOR,—I quite agree with J. F. H. that the PLEBS is entitled to "pass some criticism on to other people," but I don't agree with all he says in "Bookshelf" about the *Daily Herald* Literary Page.

His point that we have not yet included in our Great Names Shakespeare or Scott or Milton would be perfectly sound if the series were concluded; but it would surely be a mistake (as the series, I hope, is going on for a long time) to huddle all the biggest names together at first, and then have nothing left but the smaller. We are saving up Shakespeare and Milton and Scott; why shouldn't we?

Secondly, I want to protest with all the vehemence of which I am capable against his question: "Of what importance to workers, for instance, is François Villon—or Bishop Berkeley—or F. O. Morris?"

This assumption that the workers are some special kind of thing, without the common human appreciation of excellence wherever it is to be found, vitiates what would otherwise be the admirable work of the PLEBS.

Villon happens to be a great poet; Berkeley happens to be one of the very greatest psychologists who ever lived—and PLEBS readers are reputed to take an interest in psychology. To suppose that, if you are a worker, you can't or mustn't appreciate Villon (who, incidentally, differs from almost all other foreign poets in that some of his best work is available in English translations as beautiful as the original) is the sort of assumption that leaves one gasping.

Yours, GERALD GOULD

[I, too, disagree with J. F. H.'s criticism; it was far too mild. Take the issue which prompted his criticisms—Jan. 18th. Here we have one "Great Name"—a Frenchman. The essay tells you nothing about any of his works. It contains only vague generalities and does not even tell the reader what translations there are, what are the best of them, and what price.

As for the rest of the page, here are the books reviewed, which are supposed to be of interest to the workers:—

Three novels, apparently of ordinary merit, costing 8s. 6d. each.

One travel book—price 18s.

Another travel book—also price 18s.

A free verse poem—price £1. (I am not joking.)

And the usual inevitable review of a 6s. book on sex.

On the whole page there are only two items which could be of any interest to workers—a few lines on a 3s. 6d. book of Zionist stories and a review of a (bad) 6d. pamphlet.

One wouldn't mind if the *Herald* reviewed these books for the sake of getting publishers' ads. But the poor dafts don't get the ads.—and still review the books.

Gould is talking rubbish when he says the PLEBS "assumes the workers are a special kind of thing without the common human appreciation of excellence," etc. The PLEBS "assumes" that the worker is not interested, at the present rates of wages, in travel books at 18s., free verse poems at a quid a time, eight-and-sixpenny novels—or even in foreign authors, however virtuous, of whom translations are not available or not mentioned.

And, by the by, there are no good translations of Villon. And what about Alf. de Musset?—A MEMBER OF THE PLEBS E.C.]

DEMOCRACY

DEAR COMRADE,—I want some information from the authors of the Psychology Textbook on their conclusions regarding democracy.

Can they tell us what is the level of "inborn intelligence" needed to equip a member of a democracy? Assuming they know this, then is the American test sufficient evidence that the majority have not this level?

I am also anxious to know more about the conditions under which this test was carried out. For instance, in a memory test of the birth and death rates of kings, a democrat with a good general memory, but to whom monarchy is repulsive, may be counted down among the "incapables." Can such a test give safe conclusions as to inborn mental faculties while equality of opportunity in education is denied us?

Admitting the validity of the test, does it follow that those of the mental age of 12 and under (45 per cent.) do not possess the "inborn mechanism" to fit them for self-government?

And if it were so, 55 per cent. of capables remain and—democracy is saved!

In § 82 are we to infer that because "not even the most confirmed democrat" would dream of entrusting a child of 10 or 12 or even 13 with a voice in the government, an adult of corresponding mental age is unfit for democracy? Surely, a more thorough knowledge of environment is very helpful?

I'd like to know whether the authors' conclusions extend to the future. If so, can't it be urged that the application of the laws of Eugenics would in a few generations almost totally eliminate the unfit?

While the Textbook is admirable for class-work, I think it would be more authoritative were the democracy question omitted, for the evidence brought forward is too slender to bear the conclusion.

Yours, F. P.

[Some of our correspondent's points are dealt with in the article on "Democracy" written, at the invitation of Gerald Gould, for the *Daily Herald*. They need not, therefore, be repeated here. For the rest we think it will be best to leave the Textbook Committee to make a short statement on this question later.—Ed. PLEBS.]

PHYSICAL ECONOMICS

DEAR EDITOR,—May I reply to a few of the criticisms which Comrade L. B. Boudin has made on my article on "Physical Economics"?

(1) The adoption of a unit of value, the labour-hour, obviously implies the measurement of value. This was recognised by Marx when he equated the values of two commodities:—"E.g., 1 quarter corn = x cwt. iron . . . tells us that in two different things—in 1 quarter corn and x cwt. iron—there exists in equal quantities something common to both." (*Capital*, chap. 1, p. 3.) This quantity is expressed in labour-hours. If this is not measurement, I'm afraid I don't know what measurement is.

(2) Comrade Boudin says that I think the Marxian theory of value is a theory of what should be and not of what is. I suggest that he re-read my article, in which I stated "in analysing the working of Capitalist society, Marx came to the conclusion, a correct one to the mind of anyone not saturated with bourgeois superficialities, that value is labour-time, which remains true as long as *Capitalism remains in existence*."

These are the only points of importance. The rest of Comrade Boudin's letter consists of a mass of words and a number of pretty parlour tricks, such as playing with the word "discovery" (which I did not use), criticising bits of the article without consideration of the context, and changing the order of treatment.

In conclusion, I should like to say that I agree with the criticism of your correspondent, "Long Jim," in the February PLEBS.

Yours, A. S.

THE YOUNG MAN POSTGATE

DEAR COMRADE,—On perusal of the March PLEBS I am inclined to agree that there is some ground for the complaint voiced by John Lewis, viz., that the PLEBS has become a "tilting ground for intellectuals" who have largely no other interest to serve than the expansion of their particular "Ego."

It appears a strange procedure to spread the review of an admittedly useless book over 2½ pages; while reviews of useful literature are generally compressed into half a column of small print. If Postgate requires 2½ pages to state the good points of a book, I suggest that he devote himself to books which show promise of being useful to the student. The puzzling part is, what on earth was the Editor up to, to allow such waste of valuable space?

Yours fraternally,

H. KERSHAW

[Until such time as the body of proletarian literature has grown to much bigger proportions, a good deal of PLEBS space must perforce be devoted to slanging bad books. And when the bad book in question is a book about Marx, written, moreover, by a gentleman who professes to take a great interest in Working Class Education—of the "sane"

and "safe" variety—we think PLEBS space is well spent in an exposure of its utter worthlessness. Which was why we invited "the (PLEBS) young man Postgate" to let himself go at the Webbs' young man, Laski.—ED. PLEBS.]

WHERE STANDS THE "PLEBS"

DEAR COMRADE,—As one of the original members of the Plebs League, I am glad to see a discussion on the subject-matter of recent PLEBS. I've spent some hours looking over old volumes of the mag., in order that I may put my opinions forward. First thing to be recognised by critics or admirers is that there is a need for a journal to deal specifically with the hammering out of those theories which the working class need—even if they don't desire them! That being understood, it may not suit the popular taste in the movement. We all know the difficulty of persons who have not had opportunities

for study in the past, but that is no reason why study should be neglected now.

If I may indulge in praise, current international events are easier gripped by the Geographical Footnotes and their maps. There is a lot of truth in some recent observations of J. S. Clarke's in the *Worker* about using language and examples which grip, instead of, well, "high-falutin'" attitudes. We could also do with those two- or ten-minute talks to new students as a regular feature.

Above all other things, the movement lacks understanding, and there being no other avenue, except through PLEBS, it must if it is to keep its place, dissect, in order to prevent the patient (the working class) having a series of relapses. More than any other magazine or journal in Britain, the PLEBS has provided the "meat."

Yours sincerely,

WILL LAWTER

REVIEWS

"BUSINESS" ECONOMICS

Prices and Wages. By P. and A. Wallis. (P. S. King, 25s.)

What a fluttering there must be in the bourgeois economist dovescotes at this entrance of two practical business men into the sphere of economic enquiry. There has been hitherto a rigid division of labour; the theorising has been done by the professional economists at the Universities, and the practical work left to hard-headed business men who usually did not bother about the theory of their practice. The writers of this book are not professionals but men of commercial experience. But the wedding of practice and theory in this case has not brought forth a bonny offspring.

They scoff at present-day political economy as being too abstract and incapable of being applied to the solution of everyday economic and political problems; declaring that it is not a science at all. But their own inability to see the class structure of society vitiates the whole book, and leaves them at the end just as far from making political economy a science as their predecessors.

They find that their conclusions come nearer to the classical school of economy than to the present marginal school. Consequently, they declare that they find themselves very near Marx. Value is determined by labour time, but there is no need to confuse the question by adding the Marxian view that this value contains surplus value. The value of a commodity is its price, which includes the cost of the labour time of all concerned in its production. And (here the "broadmindedness" of the writers comes in) capitalists and so-called workers contribute their labour time. Wages and profits, therefore, represent the share which workers and capitalists get for their labour effort. The price of an article is the sum total of the

expenses incurred in producing and conveying it to the seat of consumption—expenses considered in their broadest aspect, including even the cost of the policeman who stands on point duty at Leicester Square directing the G.W.R. goods van to the house of the recipient of the article. Competition among workers and capitalists keeps this cost down to its lowest limits. This viewpoint makes unnecessary the Marxian theory of surplus value, for "Marx is particularly unsatisfactory in this respect and gives the impression that he regards the capitalist as a person who sits and laughs while the misguided worker toils to produce surplus value for him." Of course, we have now given up that old-fashioned view!

Readers will notice at once that the brothers Wallis have merely resurrected the old cost of production theory—although in new clothes. This view is extremely advantageous to capitalists at the present time. Workers are complaining of low wages. Let them increase their effort and their reward in wages will be greater. At the present moment, their labour effort is low and their wages are therefore low. Clynes should buy this book and carry it around with him when preaching "increased production."

The writers aver that the measure of prices arises from the quantity of labour in gold production—labour, of course, of the "broad" kind, including the cost of sending the military to shoot down the gold miners when on strike, seeing that "society" considers this necessary. When prices rise gold is reduced in value, gold production is less profitable and the supply is reduced. Prices then fall and a trade depression results from "the difficulty of sufficiently reducing wages, which difficulty by reducing profits leads to unemployment and decreases production of commodities." This is the cause of the modern crises! There is here no hint of

the modern withdrawal of the function of gold as a medium of circulation, its confinement to the smaller sphere of measure of value and the consequent need for less gold. No, the worker, in refusing to accept less wages, is the cause of the industrial depression!

The writers say that the possession of capital implies some previous social service on the part of the possessor. What social parasitism the present reviewer's pecuniary difficulties must represent—and what colossal social service the millionaire must have performed to entitle him to his huge wealth!

It is not surprising to find that the book winds up with a defence of capitalism. The workers' share of the wealth produced has increased 500 per cent. since 1809, while the capitalists' share has remained practically the same! If the brothers Wallis can convert the capitalists to this view then we can quite expect a big influx of them in the various Socialist and working-class organisations in order to abolish the social system which uses them so unjustly.

The book is extremely tedious, full of repetitions, and could, with gain to lucidity, be condensed to one-third its size. Its most valuable features are the numerous tables and diagrams of prices, income and production. These could be handled with profit by a Marxian student.

G. P.

GERMAN PUBLICATIONS

Among the many recent publications of the German Communist Party have been a cheap edition of Phillips Price's great book on the Russian Revolution, and the first volume of *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte* by Julian Borchardt (U.I.V.A. Berlin: foreign price, 45 marks). About the first we can only say that we envy our German comrades.

The second is worthy of attention if only as an example for PLEBS primers. Borchardt believes that workers should go to history not to satisfy antiquarian curiosity but to learn its meaning, and to get a grasp of the factors behind the rise and fall of social classes. This, for reasons of time and money, they can never do from the huge works of the specialists. Hence the need for a general outline embodying the chief points of the recognised authorities with an emphasis on the economic side.

The scope of this book is from 100 B.C. to about 1300 A.D., a period in which German social development passed from the hunting, nomadic stage to the development of trade

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Red International of Labour Unions

(British Bureau)

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS.

Literature Secretaries please note.

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A. Losovsky. 6d. each, 4s. per doz.

THE REDS IN CONGRESS

J. T. Murphy. 3d. each, 2s. 3d. per doz.

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STOP THE RETREAT!—An appeal to Trade Unionists.

J. T. Murphy. 1d. each, 9d. per doz.

"ALL POWER"—The Monthly Journal of the British Bureau, R.I.L.U. Published first Saturday each month.

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and town life. The method is to take a survey of the political events in the initial chapter of each period, e.g., the Roman invasions, the success of the Franks and the coming of the Merovingian and Carolingian dynasties. Then the conditions of the life of the people are examined and changes in the method of production are linked on to the changes in the administrative and political institutions, as for example, the change from the sovereignty of the tribal and mark meeting to that of the hereditary monarch and his nobles. We shall look forward to the other volumes.

M. S.

Stop the Retreat: An Appeal to Trade Unionists. By J. T. Murphy. (Red International of Labour Unions. 1d.)

An attempt to get down to an actual outline of immediate policy for militant Trade Unionists. Somewhat rhetorical here and there, but nevertheless clear-cut and practical in essential points, and a good stimulant to discussion. Some good douches of cold water for the theorists—e.g., "Craft Unionism has been heavily defeated, both theoretically and practically. . . . But organisation by industry has *not* taken its place, though theoretically triumphant. Organisations do not change as rapidly as theories of organisation take shape in the minds of the advance-guard."

We wish that among his practical proposals for a Trade Unionism more adapted to 20th century needs Murphy had included the provision of I.W.-C.E. for Trade Unionists.

A Trade Unionist who doesn't know *why* he is a Trade Unionist is more of a danger than an ally; and an *educated* rank and file, conscious of its purpose, is essential to the success of all sound schemes for the future. F. L.

TWO VOLUMES OF VERSE

Moonshine. By "Tomfool." (Lab. Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)

Writ on Cold Slate. By Sylvia Pankhurst. (Dreadnought Publishing Co. 1s. 6d.)

There are many solemn-minded comrades who dislike a light treatment of serious subjects; who think facetiousness about the class-war "out of place." There are others who believe that a really good comic paper written from the workers' point of view would substantially help the cause. Both sorts are catered for in these two small volumes of poetry.

Probably the most read column of the *Daily Herald* is "The Way of the World"; and the most-looked-for part of that the daily verses by "Tomfool." "Tomfool" is no fool at writing witty verse. One wishes she would write some songs for revolutionaries; for we have been told that he (or she) who makes the songs of a nation is greater than he (or she) who makes its laws, and "Tomfool" would not bore us by telling us everlastingly to Rise and Break our Chains, or Lay the Tyrants Low, etc., etc. Her songs, indeed, might even help us to keep steady and sane when we had risen! Yet their appeal is none the less poignant.

. . . It is, of course, a matter of temperament. But all those who like light verse should buy and read *Moonshine*, not only for its wit and grace, but also for its expression of the workers' point of view.

Very different is Sylvia Pankhurst's booklet. There is a certain wistfulness about these poems written in prison, a tenderness that one does not often associate with their author, who has become a sort of Cassandra of the movement, embittered and in a way hardened by the fierceness of the struggle. Her versatile mind (she was a Prize Student at the Manchester School of Art before she "went suffrage") struggles to express her hatred of the prison system which attempts to crush its victims and stamp out all love of beauty and of humanity. The spirit of these poems is better than their form, which is at times too vague and at other times too cramped by hackneyed "poetic" phraseology. The general tone of the whole, rather than any particular poem, wins one's sympathetic respect, and leaves the impression of an artist in revolt against ugliness and futile waste. Both books deserve a place on the shelves of working-class students. W. H.

Your Part in Control: An Appeal to the Rank and File. (Nat. Guilds League. 2d.)

An effective piece of propaganda. All the more interesting to I.W.C.Ers because it emphasises the fact that "even a roo per cent. membership [of a Trade Union] is not sufficient in itself—you have to unionise a man's soul as well as his body before he can be called saved." "The blackleg within the

WAGES, PRICES AND PROFITS. A Report prepared by the Labour Research Department. Preface by SIDNEY WEBB. 6s. "This book is far and away the best study of the subject that has been issued since the war . . . Each chapter is illuminated by tables and charts, and the explanatory portions are so lucid that even some members of the present Government might understand them . . . the most brilliant and least academic exposition of index figures that has yet been written."—A. Emil Davies in *The Daily News*.

OIL: ITS INFLUENCE ON POLITICS. By FRANCIS DELAISI, translated by C. Leonard Leese. Paper 2s. 6d., Cloth, 3s. 6d. "It is a wonderful story of twentieth century high politics. . . . The epic of oil is by no means finished, and those who wish to read it aright will do well to peruse this revealing little work."—*Book Post*.

THE LAND QUESTION SOLVED. By ROBERT MURRAY. With a Foreword by Robert Smillie. Cloth, 2s. 6d.; Paper 1s. 6d. Land reform is always impeded by the fact that compensation relieves the farmer at the expense of the taxpayer, while no compensation benefits the many at the expense of a few. Robert Murray offers a solution which accomplishes the restoration of the land to the people without injustice to the landlord and with immediate relief to the tenant.

THE HELPING HAND. An Essay in Philosophy and Religion for the Unhappy. By GERALD GOULD. Reissue. Stiff Paper Covers, 2s. 6d. "A philosopher with a deeply religious conscience. . . . There must be many people to whom this little book will bring comfort, and I hope it will fall into their hands."—J. D. Beresford in the *Saturday Westminster Gazette*.



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Union is as common, and as dangerous, a phenomenon as the blackleg without. This is mainly to be remedied by education—not the capitalist article."

SOUL WITHOUT SENSE

The Revival of Italy. By Prof. Geo. D. Herron. (Allen & Unwin. 5s. net.)

A well-known writer of Beauty Hints for women has recently told us that she once decided to try and work in a more "spiritual" note among her paragraphs on the flesh and how to preserve it. Promptly there came a wire from her editor—"Less about soul; more about pimples."

Prof. Herron is mainly preoccupied with "soul"; "pimples" (such as Fascisti, financiers, or Fiume) he either does not see at all—or sees the "soul" beneath. An American, with an O-such-artistic temperament doubtless repelled by the coarse realities of New York and Chicago, he finds nothing but Beauty and Romance and Earnest Idealism and Spiritual Renewal in Italy. He sees a soul even in politicians, and invents noble-sounding names for their pimply schemes. Thus, Giolitti's co-partnership programme, designed to "dish" any real workers' control, is hailed as "Industrial Monism"—"a monism dissolvent of the industrial and social dualism, destructive and diabolic, which arraigns and arms workers and owners over against each other in hateful camps of deathful purpose." And Giolitti is the heir of Mazzini, "whom not a few believe to be the most illuminated of the sons of men since Jesus of Nazareth," and whose message (about "soul") can alone deliver the world's workers from "the strong delusion laid upon them by the materialist Messianism of Marx."

And so on. Till one longs for a floor-cloth to wipe it all up. Q.

Left Wing Trade Unionism in France, by P. Monatte, T. Argence and A. Hercelet (Lab. Publishing Co., 1s. 6d.) is not in the least descriptive but a collection of reflections

and general suggestions on the future of Trade Unions and workers' control. Monatte regrets that so little attention was paid to the educational work of Léon Clément and others (see PLEBS, May and June, 1921), whereby the dry bones of Trade Unionism alone can be stirred; and he pleads for a new conception of the revolutionary part to be played by the unions.

His two pupils get nearer to the practical problems of control. They deal very briefly with the setting up of workshop committees which would control the dismissal and engagement of workmen, the conditions of the workshop, the price of the goods and the training of the apprentices. Now that the General Strike is often impractical, because of unemployment, the "general walk in" must replace the "general walk out." They have no doubts as to what this attempt would mean, but hope by successful propaganda and wide organisation thus to accomplish the revolution without any attempt to capture political power.

M. S.

Language. By Prof. Otto Jespersen. (Allen & Unwin. 18s.)

An account of the development of linguistic science, of how language is influenced and some theories of its origin; the work of a specialist who has gathered together many interesting things. Language grows and develops with man's mentality, and that gains in power with social development. Terms for the concrete and special in all cases precede those for the abstract and general; e.g., the Zulus have a word for "red cow" and "white cow" but not one for "cow." The growing power of the mind to generalise is seen in the breaking up of inseparable irregular conglomerations into freely and regularly combinable short elements.

The author thinks that a language constructed on scientific principles for international use is not only possible but necessary. S.

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lot in a pillar-box. Two days after you will receive (or should do) a parcel containing said books, and an invoice. With all convenient speed you then obtain a postal order for the amount therein stated, and despatch this to the address already mentioned. The transaction being now completed, you read, lend, sell, or give away the books—and save up to buy some more (from us, of course). I trust I have made it all quite clear.

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I don't need to tell I.W.-C.Ers that this is Some Bargain. Not many Plebs could afford to treat themselves to the original edition at 18s. But the few who did so spread the fame of the book around, and there have been innumerable inquiries as to when a cheap edition, within the reach of Pleb purses, would be available. Well, in a fortnight's time an edition, which differs only from the original in being bound in limp cloth, will be on sale, to *Plebs and N.C.L.C.-ers only*, at less than half the price hitherto charged for the book. That has only been made possible by the generosity of the author, who has handed over all rights in this edition to the Plebs League. He has done so because he is a keen Pleb, and is anxious that the book shall be available to "our" chaps. And if I know anything about "our" chaps they won't delay in seizing their opportunity. *Revolution* is one of the few books which no worker-student can afford not to possess. It is a small library in itself. The introductions to the various sections form a history of the militant proletariat during the 19th century; and the documents which make up the body of the book are a mine of information and inspiration.

Don't miss this chance—the edition is limited.

Meantime, the 2nd Edition of the Psychology Textbook is selling out rapidly. And a whole heap of other volumes, big or little, await your orders. Henderson and Freeman's *Essay Writing*, for instance (reviewed last month)—a rare good little handbook for all students, and "the one good thing" that has come out of the W.E.A. It's price is 2s. 3d. postpaid—and we can supply it on demand. . . . Or you're interested in Economic Geography? Have you got Delaisi's *Oil* (postpaid, 2s. 8d.), that brilliant little "key" to a good many recent international happenings? It's not a bulky volume; but it's *meaty*. Have you got Pavlovitch's *Foundations of Imperialist Policy* (postpaid, 3s. 9d.) or Newbigin's *Aftermath: A Geographical Study of the Peace Terms* (same price)? Have you read Trotsky and Varga's masterly pamphlet, *The International Situation* (post paid, 4d.)? These are only miscellaneous items, mind; you choose your own volumes, from any list you like—we can supply them. Or do you want

another Special Bargain—very limited this one, as the first three or four applicants will exhaust our stock:—second-hand copies of J. M. Keynes' fine book, *Economic Consequences of the Peace Treaty*, 8s. 6d. for 4s. 6d. postpaid? (N.B.—The cheap edition of this book has long been out of print; your only chance is to bag a second-hand copy.)

Another recent book which Plebs will doubtless be ordering this month is Wm. Paul's latest—*Communism and Society* (postpaid, 2s. 9d.). Paul is personally known to not a few I.W.-C.Ers; his previous volume, *The State*, is on all our bookshelves. *Communism and Society* is not a work of quite the same kind, being much more general in its subject-matter and more conversational in style. It was at first accepted—nay, more, asked for—by a well-known London publishing house, who, however, "shied" when they got the manuscript. They publish a "Social Economics" Series—but this book went just a *leelle* too far!

The most interesting thing about the book to me is the abundant evidence it contains of Paul's omnivorous reading. All's fish that comes to his net—daily papers, pamphlets, official biographies, volumes of reminiscences, scientific works—he gets, and uses, effective quotations out of them all. The following few consecutive items from the Index give some idea of the range of the book—"Demosthenes, Denikin, Dickens, Dictatorship, Dietzgen." And of course there are some excellent pages on I.W.-C.E. and the Plebs movement.

Lastly I must mention a book which I don't suggest every individual student should purchase, but which I do urge should be acquired by every class library, or obtained from the local Free Library:—*The New World: Problems in Political Geography*, by I. Bowman (Harrap's, 21s. net—postpaid from Plebs, 22s.). This is an invaluable reference book, illustrated by more than 200 maps, and constituting a sort of handy encyclopædia to current world problems. It is written from a perfectly orthodox bourgeois point of view; but the bourgeois is an American, and allows himself, therefore, a fair degree of candour in discussing European and Asiatic affairs. Apart altogether, however, from his point of view, his facts, figures, summaries and maps are excellent—and invaluable to students. I hope to review the book at greater length later.

J. F. H.

The PLEBS invites contributions on Labour problems in general and on subjects of interest to Working-Class Educationists in particular. No contribution should exceed 2,000 words. (This is a maximum—not a minimum.) Articles or letters intended for following month's issue should be sent in not later than the 15th. Will correspondents also remember to write on one side of the paper only, and to enclose full name and address, whether for publication or not?

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