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THE PLEBS

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

Vol. XIV

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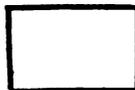
OUR POINT of VIEW

48 PAGES next month! That's what we want you to get firmly into your mind—and then go and plant it kindly but firmly in somebody else's! We've watched and prayed for the chance of affording that extra elbow-room for quite a long time. And now it's going to materialise. A 48-page PLEBS will give us scope to do a lot of things we've been wanting to do.

And it will give YOU scope to get busy as a circulation agent for us.

Not that we think we've been giving bad value for sixpence hitherto. Remember, *nobody subsidises* the PLEBS. Ever since we started (and we're in our 14th year now) we've had to pay our way on our circulation alone. It's just over a year and a half since we went up to 32 pages, at 6d.

A blue X in this square means that your subscription has lapsed. Please renew without delay, as we can't afford either to lose you or to send you THE PLEBS gratis.



We've done our damndest to pack those 32 pages full of *meat*. And as a matter of fact, if you'll take the trouble to tot up the number of words in this present issue, you'll find that it actually contains more reading matter than some periodicals of greater bulk and more imposing appearance. (If it's too hot to make the effort, take our word for it. It's true.) A critic here or a critic there has objected to this or that feature of the Mag.—and nobody can say that we've stifled criticism! But old friends and new alike have made it clear, by the very fact of their support, that in the main we've been turning out a magazine that was worth while.

And it's going to be more worth while in future!

We—which means every single worker in the Plebs and I.W.-C.E. movement—are entitled to pat ourselves on the back, just once at any rate, about the fact that, at the very time when the monthly journal published



by our dear old foes, the W.E.A., is compelled to suspend publication for two or three months, the one periodical devoted to the interests of Independent Working-Class Education is able not merely to carry on, but to increase its size by 50 per cent. We don't want to do anything so futile and so easy as to crow over other folks' misfortunes. But it's significant of the fact that *the future is with us* that the PLEBS is able to increase its size just when the advocates of another kind of working-class education are finding it something of a struggle to keep the doors open. We know—quite as well as anybody else—what *struggle* means. Every honest Pleb would own up that there

have been times when he wondered whether after all the game was really worth the candle.

But we've kept the candle burning!

In fact, the I.W.-C.E. movement is getting to look more like an arc-light than a candle these days. We never aimed at hiding our light under a bushel! And a steadily increasing number of workers has realised that the light was helpful—and backed up our efforts. With the formation last year of the National Council of Labour Colleges the educational work for which the PLEBS has always stood was at length put on a sound footing and the movement which had its small beginnings in Oxford thirteen years ago this summer became a national movement, organised on a national scale.

But—there's always a But, and always will be, until after the Revolution anyhow!—we can't afford to waste either time or space on self-congratulation. A bigger movement necessitates a bigger magazine. And a bigger magazine means more work, more energy, more determination, on *your* part and on ours. Let's live up to our motto, and be candid! If we were just playing for safety, we should not be going up to 48 pages next month. We're taking a leap—not quite in the dark, it's true, because

by this time we know our friends and the measure of their faith in the principles we stand for. All the same, we're taking risks—to win, if possible, a bigger success.

ARE YOU GOING TO LET US DOWN ?

As always before, we're looking to you—to our supporters in every district up and down the country—to put a bit of extra push into your efforts, and to make the new PLEBS a winner right from the very start. Will you do your bit for us? Write and tell us by all means how we can help *you*—what sort of stuff you want in the magazine, and what the people want whom you're trying to get as new subscribers. We shall probably be unable to please everybody—though we shall do our best. Don't forget we're an *educational* journal, and that we can't therefore hope to sell in thousands—yet! Don't waste time trying to persuade chaps who're keener on the struggle for the Cup than on the class struggle, that the PLEBS is the magazine they're looking for! Choose your man—and tell him what our aims are before you try to book his subscription. But *get busy on somebody*. We shall need all the support we can get. And remember that the success of the PLEBS is essential to the success of the I.W.-C.E. movement. Put your back into it—here and now.

Yes, let us say it again—“NOW”! Not next autumn, or next winter—“NOW.” We've decided on going up to 48 pages now, and not in two or three months' time, because we're quite determined to do away with that Summer Slump in I.W.-C.E. which in some quarters seems to be regarded as inevitable. If our educational movement is as important as we believe it to be, what in the name of the F.B.I. has the weather got to do with it? If we're out for the emancipation of the workers are we going to mark time because the thermometer goes up? The notion that it's right and proper for us to slack off because of a bit of summer sunshine would be excusable—if our professed aims were not what they are. We can't afford to be Cool Weather Socialists. There can be no “close season” for our propaganda. Wage-slaves are wage-slaves—as much in June as in December. Then for the sake of the cause we believe in let's be quit of this habit of slackening our efforts just because the weather makes some revision of our ordinary methods necessary. If we're not equal to tackling the warm weather problem, and making our programme of activities run from January 1st to December 31st, let's make way for somebody with more ginger in their composition!



How many extra July PLEBS are we to print? What's your order going to be?

We're asking you these questions. We can run a Boom Number if you'll help us. Let's have a word from you about it—*now*. The Heat Wave be hanged! Why shouldn't *we* try and break a few records?

A PAGE from TRADE UNION HISTORY

Tutors and students of working-class history will be greatly interested in this extract from early 19th century records which Com. Fred Shaw has sent us. As illustrative material for lectures, as well as for its own "human" interest, it is, we think all Plebs will agree, exceedingly valuable. We shall publish a further instalment next month.

THE following page of Trade Union accounts is taken from an old ledger found in the A.E.U. Huddersfield No. 1 Branch box, and shows that the branch has had an unbroken record from November 19th, 1831. It dates from the formation of a branch of the Journeyman Steam Engine and Machine Makers' and Mechanics' Society, which was originally founded in Manchester in 1826, two years later than the Old Steam Engine Makers, and it was this Society which formed the backbone of the A.S.E. when the amalgamation took place in 1851. It was familiarly known as the "Old Society," or the "Old Mechanics."

To the student the items should prove very interesting. The period was one of turmoil and strife, with unlimited political and military power in the hands of the land owners and the developing employing class. The workers, in their effort to improve their status, had been largely driven underground into forming secret societies and various forms of illegal organisation. Their ritual, oaths and the "twisting in" common to radical movements, and the Luddites in particular, were just passing away, although we have the transportation of the Dorsetshire Labourers in 1833.

The formation of this Engineers' branch then is in a period following the repeal of the Combination Laws of 1826. The seven men who formed it must naturally have been more mentally alert than their fellows and, overcoming their fears, founded a branch of a Trade Union. Their signatures in the book give a good indication of the education of those days, remembering that the craftsman would be the best educated of the workers as a body. William Rhodes is Wm. Rodes, there is a Thomas Haddyman and a John Olroyd.

These seven men send to Manchester and get seven cards and 60 rules. They must have been optimistic about getting another 50 to join in! The Branch is instituted November 28th with two more men proposed and an income of £3 3s. 4d. Then with cash in hand they get their materials. [The spelling when in doubt is always phonetic, as in "Memerhandam" later on in the book.] Note the 10 yards of maroon curtains to hang up during the business hours, to ensure privacy, in a room hired at a beer-house; and the pistol and Bible on which to take their solemn oaths. One can imagine the aspirant, Bible in hand, repeating his oath, while the chairman held the pistol at his head. These rituals were passing away in the Unions about 1835, for we learn later that in the May of that year the Bible is sold for 3s. They had doubtless formed the impression that God was not on their side, so He was turned out of the Society for acting contrary to rule!

The six locks and "keas" (as it is spelled later on) represent an old custom. Of 3 locks to open the box, and 3 smaller locks for the inner

		November 19 1831		
Nov.	19	60 rules and 7 Cards from Manchester..	1	2 4
	28	10 yards of Moreen for Cortons at 14d. per yard	11	8
		rings and Making	1	..
		1 pistil	8	6
		1 Bible	3	9
		1 Ledger	7	..
		2 A Count Books	1	..
		<hr/>		
		1 writing Book	2	6
		Seal Wax .. ..	..	6
		<hr/>		
			1	15 11
Dec.	14	3 hammers	3	..
		6 locks and Co	6	10
		1 stamp	6	6
		1 Box Making	11	..
		Letter from Manchester .. ..	..	8
		1 Indenter framing and glass .. ..	..	13 4
		<hr/>		
			2	7 4
Jan.	21	<u>*1 letter from Manchester,</u> .. ..	..	8
Feb.	4	Officers liquor	2	..
		<hr/>		
			2	8
	18	Officers liquor	2	..
		<hr/>		
			7	0
March	3d	Officers liquor	2	..
		1 bottol of ink .. ..	..	6
		1 quear of paper .. ..	..	9
		<hr/>		
			3	3
	17	1 letter from Leeds.. ..	..	6½
		do. 1 Letter from Manchester .. ..	..	8
		Officers liquor	2	..
		<hr/>		
			3	2½

		Nov. 19 1831		
Nov.	28	7 properitions and Makings	2	12 6
		7 Contrabutions with 4 rules .. ..	..	5 10
		2 properitions .. ..	..	5 0
		<hr/>		
			3	3 4
		take of	1	2 4
		on hand	2	1 0
		<hr/>		
Dec.	14	2 Makings and 1 pro- persion	0	12 6
		6 Contrabutions with 5 rules .. ..	..	7 8
		<hr/>		
			3	1 2
		take of	1	15 11
		on hand	1	5 3
		<hr/>		
Jan.	9 1832	Contrabutions 16 .. ..	..	16 ..
		on hand	2	1 3
		<hr/>		
			..	5 4
		2 properitions with 2 rules .. ..	..	5 8
		8 Contrabutions with 1 fine .. ..	..	8 6
		<hr/>		
			3	0 9
		take of	2	7 4
		on hand .. ..	..	13 5
		<hr/>		
Feb.	4	Contrabutions .. ..	..	7 0
		on hand	1	0 5
		1 properition .. ..	..	2 6
		10 Contrabutions .. ..	..	10 ..
		on hand	1	12 11
		2 Nights liquor of .. ..	..	4 ..
		on hand	1	8 11
March	3	2 fines 6 Contrabutions .. ..	..	7 0
		3 Makings 1 Card 1 Rule .. ..	..	15 8
		<hr/>		
			2	11 7
		take of .. ..	..	3 3
		<hr/>		
			2	8 4
March	17	16 Contrabutions 1 fine .. ..	..	16 6
		<hr/>		
		<u>*take of</u>	3	4 10
		<u>*Officers liquor</u> .. ..	..	3 2½
		take of .. ..	..	3 1 7½

* The words underlined were crossed through in original.

drawer where the branch money was kept, the treasurer and trustees usually had a key each of the inner drawer, whilst the chairman, secretary and treasurer had a key each to open the box. This was to prevent funds from vanishing, as the law offered no redress for theft of T.U. funds. (This practice is quite common yet, despite the development of banking and the voucher system.) This cash book, which covers the period to the amalgamation, has numerous items of box repairs—"new lock," "new keys," "March 30th, 1833, 1 new kea and lock repairing 1/4½"; "Sept 14th 1833

repairing Box II/II." When all the "officials of the keys" do not turn up, there was of course nothing else to do but burst open the box! One item follows these box episodes—"Expenditure with the Defraud."

Sealing wax is a common item used in conjunction with the Stamp mentioned—now known as the Branch Seal. Quills and wafers occur, whilst the cost of postage is indicated by items "Letter from Glasgow" 1s. 0½d., Bristol 11d., Leeds, Bradford, Halifax 6d., Manchester, Oldham, Blackburn, Preston 8d., Johnstone 1s. 0½d. registered 2s. 1d., Dundee, 1s. 1½d. Branch secretaries were not much troubled by correspondence in those days.

It will be noted that the item "Officer's liquor" ran to 1s. 8d. per branch night, but on audit night it sometimes runs to 7s. 6d. As the beer-houses were not restricted to time, these laborious functions used to go on up to 3.0 a.m. chasing the elusive halfpence, with a pint for every advance achieved in the audit! One of our old superannuated members, a past branch secretary, whose father was one of these early members, informs me that as a child he has distinct recollections of these committee-men taking each other home in the small hours.

The general method of book-keeping is quite primitive but in those days would be well in advance of the general cultural level of the workers. The Expenditure and Income sides are reversed from modern practice whilst the method adopted is an early edition of "put and take."

For a short time there are pages of the most beautiful handwriting, equal to copper-plate engraving, with delicate flourishes, but up to 1839 the handwriting, blotches, crossing out, etc., suggest that they could make better water-wheels and textile machinery than book keep!

There are records of the Plug-week, and of the financing of an Owenite productive scheme, but these—along with the tramps, their provisions and beds—I will leave for another issue.

FRED SHAW

PREHISTORIC INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS

Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age. Written and illustrated by Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell. (Batsford, 5s. Postpaid from PLEBS, 5s. 4d.)

TO teach history solely by means of broad generalisations is to run a grave risk of boring and then of losing one's students. The average man or woman—and most of us *are* "average"—loves concrete details. To interest us you must fill in the main outlines of your story. The old-time preacher knew the value of "illustrations" in holding the interest of his hearers; and the modern I.W.-C. Er who is wise will, in precisely the same way, make history from the working-class point of view real and vivid to his students by giving them as many little side-lights on the actual course of events as he can fit in.

We make the development of the tool, of technique, the "key idea" of our history teaching. And for that reason the study of the very earliest stages of human development, remote from our "utilitarian" educational purposes

as at first sight it might seem to be, has a particular interest and value to us ; not only because we can trace the first shy steps on the road leading to turbine engines and 150-ton locomotives, rotary printing machines and 16-inch guns, Handley-Pages and Rolls-Royces ; but also because it is easy to see, in the scant "records" of pre-historic times, how basic was this development of the tool and how direct was its influence on the development of human institutions. The very names given—by "orthodox" historians, too !—to the various periods—Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age—indicate this clearly enough.

And what epoch-making "industrial revolutions" took place in those days ! Think of the dominance that group would exercise who first discovered, at a time when their fellows were using wooden implements,



hardened and sharpened by fire, that *flints* could be flaked into tools and weapons. Or of the further step, when some one used tendons, or grass plaits, to fasten the flint axe- or spear-head on to a wooden handle. Think of the countless developments which would follow the power to work up bone into tools and implements finer and more delicate than anything that had been possible before.

A few months ago we recommended Norman Ault's *Life in Ancient Britain* to tutors and students. Here is another book, full to the brim of useful material for I.W.-C.Ers. With its wealth of finely drawn and intelligently-planned illustrations, it is an encyclopædia in little, summarising the results of recent research for the student with only limited leisure. A phrase altered here and there, a point or two stressed rather more emphatically—and the book would be a Plebs Textbook (than this, of course, there can be no higher praise !).

The illustrations to this book are very largely "reconstructions." Reconstructions, like several other things, may be divided into two classes—good and bad. Moreover, when reconstructions are good they are very, very good ; but when they are bad they are horrid. These are good ; very good indeed. By the courtesy of the publishers we are able to reproduce

two of them, to show just how good they are. The artists (who are also the authors) had the excellent idea of not merely drawing, say, a flint implement, but of adding to this a sketch showing how that implement was used.

In the first of our illustrations a man of the Aurignacian period (i.e., of a time later than the last Ice Age, say, 12,000 or 14,000 years B.C.) is using a spokeshave, a flint tool cleverly shaped for shaving down shafts for lances, arrows or wooden handles to various tools. It was the men of this age who first began to use bone; and from bone arrow-heads and bodkins the



way was clear to bone needles—and tremendous developments in clothing and textiles. “To realise the joy of a Solutrean woman who first used a needle, let us imagine ourselves sewing to-day like a shoemaker, punching holes one at a time.”

Illustration No. 2 shows a Solutrean needlemaker at work—say a couple of thousand years later. “First she cut a splinter of bone out of reindeer horn, as at 1. This was done by cutting a groove on each side with a flint graving tool as at 2. The splinter was then shaved down with a scraper (3) and polished with a piece of stone (4), and the eye-bored with a flint borer (5).” So started the march towards the sewing-machine!

This is a book to make a very special note of.

J. F. HERRABIN

Have you ordered your supply of the new N.C.L.C. pamphlet?

“MORE PRODUCTION—& MORE POVERTY”

A SHORT SYLLABUS on "HISTORICAL MATERIALISM and LITERATURE"

IT is quite clear, from numerous recent communications to the PLEBS, that many I.W.-C.E. tutors and students are anxious to include courses on Literature in the curriculum of our classes. Such a desire is, we think, an eminently sensible one. For not only as an extension of their own studies, but as a valuable means of getting into touch with new students, the field of general literature opens up important possibilities to Marxians.

The following syllabus for a short course of lectures, based on a series delivered at the Labour College (London) last summer, makes no attempt at being even an outline survey of the history of English literature. It is frankly no more than a few introductory "talks" about certain periods and certain authors, designed simply to illustrate the application of the principles of Historical Materialism to the study of Literature, and to show that Historical Materialists may derive from that study a greater pleasure than the ordinary, uncritical reader gets out of it.

Every tutor will, it is hoped, adapt the syllabus to his own requirements; substituting, if he likes, for the authors quoted others with whom he, or his students, are more familiar. He will also vary the order of the lectures as he pleases; beginning, if he is addressing Marxian students, with Lecture 2, on "Historical Materialism and Art"; or, if his audience consists mainly of "newcomers," reserving such generalisations to the end of the course, and ensuring interest at the outset by giving comparative quotations from actual authors (e.g., Scott and Dickens), which would illustrate the conclusions he is going to draw later.

The syllabus will, at any rate, serve as a basis for discussion among tutors and students interested.

J. F. H.

LECTURE I.—*Art and Literature, and their place in Independent Working-Class Education*

To "take pleasure rightly" the ultimate aim of rational living. No need to forswear that aim entirely because present-day condition of working-class necessitates concentration, primarily, on studies with an immediate practical value.

Usefulness of general reading (i.) as a means of applying our *historical method* to new material, so testing its usefulness—and our own intelligence in using it; and (ii.) as of practical importance to propagandists and tutors, who need a *background* of general knowledge (and sympathy) if they are not, as specialists, to lose touch with ordinary folk.

LECTURE 2.—*Historical Materialism and Art*

(a) Hist. Mat. throws some light on *origin* of art. Man, the tool-maker, takes increasing pleasure in the actual work of moulding things to his purpose; hence, proceeds to *beautify* useful things, and so develops *aesthetic impulse*. Later, proceeds to express thoughts and emotions by means of the art-power so developed.

(b) How do *social conditions* affect the artist? (i.) As a contributory influence in formation of his individual temperament; (ii.) by deciding, to a great extent, the particular *art-form* in which he will work.

[E.g., an Elizabethan artist would write blank verse *plays*; the same artist, in the later 18th and 19th centuries, would most probably have written *novels*; to-day, he would write novels, or *realistic prose dramas*, or both. Note in this connection the influence of *technical development* in the theatre on the form of plays.]

(c) Stress importance of *individual temperament* in all arts. This makes the arts a much less direct reflex of social conditions than are Law, Ethics or Religion—forms of *social consciousness*; since a single individual rarely embodies all the typical characteristics of an age or class. Need for careful and detailed study of social conditions of any period before attempting to relate its art to its main social characteristics.

LECTURE 3.—*Literature and the "Spirit of an Age"*

Scott and Dickens compared and contrasted; the former as expressing the feudal ideals of pre-Industrial Revolution days (note relative late survival of the old social order in Scotland); the latter as illustrating the outlook and temperament of the new nineteenth century bourgeoisie.

[E.g., Scott's idealisation of "birth" and "blood"—Dickens' scorn for these, and his "Manchester School" respect for the "self-made man." Scott's enthusiastic admiration for all the "military" virtues and his love of the fighting man; Dickens' horror of violence and bourgeois respect for Law and Order. Scott's outlaws, smugglers and raiding tribesmen are his heroes; such characters are Dickens' villains—the "criminal classes."]

Or compare and contrast the personality and writings of Cowper or Gray with those of Shelley, Byron, or any of the school of poets who wrote during the generation following the French Revolution; or these latter again with the bourgeois complacency and optimism of the Victorians, Tennyson and Browning.

LECTURE 4.—*The Middle-Class and Literature*

The *novel* the great contribution of the bourgeoisie to literature. Early attempts in that form as far back as Elizabethan period, when literature was pre-eminently an activity of the Court; but only after the triumph of the bourgeoisie (Revolution of 1688) did the novel become the dominant art-form.

[*Defoe* the pioneer; his idealisation, in *Crusoe*, of the "practical man" and the "middle station of life." *Fielding*; complete reaction from earlier Puritanism—significant of the fact that the new class was now enjoying worldly prosperity. *Goldsmith*; balance between Puritanism and "worldliness"—bourgeois "sentimentalism" the result.*]

LECTURES 5 AND 6.—*Some Present-day Tendencies in Literature*

Artists and writers increasingly hostile to, and critical of, bourgeois ideals during later nineteenth century (e.g., Kingsley, Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris). Beginning of modern chapter of literature roughly coincident with Imperialist phase of Capitalism. Though great majority of writers of the first class are hostile to the Imperialist spirit—some, indeed, definitely inspired by the *reaction* against it, i.e., by modern Socialism—yet certain parallel characteristics traceable in their work and in the Imperialist "philosophy"; e.g., realism (cf. *Real-Politik*) and a striving after *strength* rather than *beauty*.†

* See Leslie Stephen's *English Literature and Society in the 18th Century* for a mass of suggestive material for this lecture.

† Cf. Lenin's remark to Mrs. Sheridan about "prettification" as a characteristic of bourgeois art.

Period when all conventional standards—of art, ethics, politics and economics—are being challenged; not as yet (in art), except in one or two instances, from a definitely *proletarian* standpoint; but in majority of cases decidedly *anti-bourgeois*.

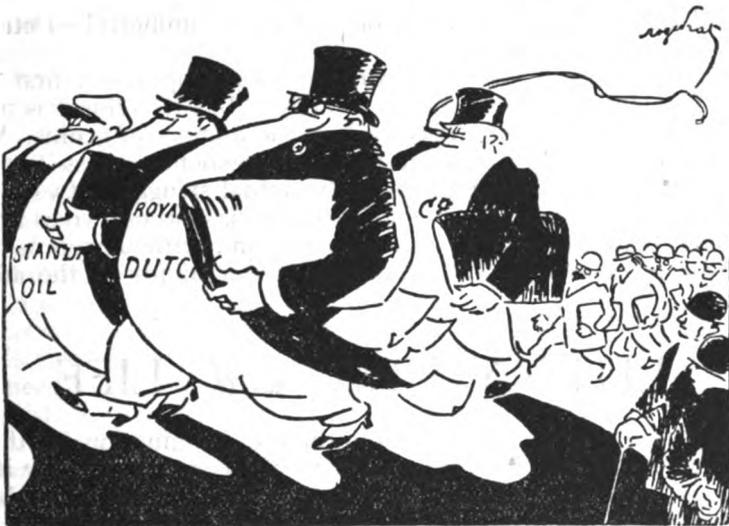
[**DRAMA.**—*Ibsen* the pioneer; *ideas* in drama. *Shaw* carries on revolt, and extends it to actual structure of plays. *Wilde*, reaction against Victorianism. *Galsworthy* and *Barker*, "pamphleteers" in drama form. *Synge*, in reaction against super-artificial life of cities, turns to peasants and peasant-life for subject-matter.

NOVELS (and Short Stories).—*Kipling*, alone among first-class writers, is Imperialist in spirit. Not, however, a mere reactionary; note his vivid realisation of the powers and possibilities of *machinery*, and his idealisation of efficient administration and constructive work, i.e., of the permanently valuable side of Capitalist Imperialism. *H. G. Wells*, in earlier work especially, Socialist in outlook; though in his strenuous idealism more of a bourgeois Victorian than most of his contemporaries. *Galsworthy*—humanitarianism; a critic rather of various abuses of the social system than of the system itself. *Arnold Bennett*, never—or rarely—obviously propagandist; but a Defoe of the 20th century, a "non-idealiser" with a genius for verisimilitude. *Conrad*, like *Synge*, turns from modern cities to less crowded and sophisticated parts of the earth for his material; but essentially modern in the intensity of his psychological realism, and in his highly specialised technical methods.

Since good translations of their work are available—and since, as Internationalists, we ought not to confine our reading to English writers—*Anatole France* and *Tchekov* should be added to the above list; the former as the arch-satirist of bourgeois ideals; the latter as the "complete sceptic," the questioner of all current values.]

A good history of English Literature, e.g., Compton-Ricketts' (11s. 3d. postpaid), will assist the tutor or the individual student very considerably in amplifying the above brief notes. (Also see articles overleaf.)

BIOGRAPHICAL FOOTNOTE to CURRENT HISTORY



THE REAL NEGOTIATORS

"Who are these people who take precedence over the diplomats?"

"Don't you see—Finance and Big Business."

[Cartoon from *Le Progrès Civique*, Paris.]

SOCIAL CHANGES *as seen in* LITERATURE

In his "Thomas More and His Utopia" (as yet untranslated into English), Karl Kautsky has an interesting passage on the way in which literature reflects the dominant tendencies of any period. He is describing the decay of the old feudal knighthood:—

“THE contrast between the actual powers and the pretensions of knighthood became more and more apparent; it was a notable characteristic of the New Age. This contrast was often tragic enough; but the contemporary town-writers, who rejoiced in the new money power, did not see it in that light. The knight, along with the monk and the peasant, stood for the old order, and all three came to be hated and despised by the populations of the great towns in which mental life was now concentrated. But the bourgeoisie, so long as it was revolutionary, was neither sentimental nor hypocritical. Moral indignation was a weapon it rarely used. It fought its opponents by mockery and derision. The stupid peasant, the lascivious priest, and the decayed and needy yet proud knight are favourite figures in the literature of the Renaissance.

“We meet them first in Italy, where the new mode of production had earliest developed. But soon these same figures are familiarly known in the literature of all Europe. From the *Decameron* (c. 1352) to *Don Quixote* (1604) a long series of works of fiction held up to ridicule now one, now another, and soon all three of the above-named classes.

“The greater part of that literature is now forgotten. But two figures among the many which appeared in this mocking funeral sermon over knighthood are still known to every one; they are immortal—Don Quixote and Falstaff.

“*The Merry Wives of Windsor* (written 1602) appears at first sight to be a very harmless and insignificant comedy; but its subject is in reality an embittered class struggle, travestied by the humour of genius. Whether Shakespeare consciously aimed at political ‘tendentiousness’ we do not know; but he pictured what he saw—the actual struggle between decrepit knighthood and the upward striving capitalist class whose wives are bolder and cleverer than the knight ‘without fear and without reproach.’ *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is the exuberant shout of joy of the advancing bourgeoisie.”

LITERATURE *and* LIFE

TWO great influences go to form the imagination of the artist. First and most important is that of his own age. By its ideas, social conditions and history his outlook on life must be determined. No artist can rise above these and look at life entirely unaffected by his environment. The very fact that some have tried to do this only proves the truth of this contention. For those poets who turn away from life as they see it are only reacting to something unpleasant in the conditions about them and to that extent are a very true indication

to the state of the society in which they live. Next there is the influence of tradition. No creative artist can help but be moved by the accumulated work of all those who have preceded him. Artistic tradition is for him a source of inspiration as fertile as life itself. Lastly we should note that every artist should by nature be an internationalist, for in all times the artistic movements in different countries have exercised a profound influence upon one another. For instance England, France, Italy and Spain have each at some time or other affected one another's literature. Frontiers have no meaning for a poet, for he considers the exchange of ideas with writers of other nationalities as one of the conditions of his existence.

Let us glance for a moment at the body of English literature for illustrations of these general ideas. The Mediæval conception of the State was that of a Christian feudal republic and was essentially international. French and, to a lesser degree, Italian were the chief languages and our mediæval literature is largely translation from contemporary French and Italian literature. Even when it becomes national at last in Chaucer the foreign influence is still predominant. Naturally enough this literature is all inspired by the social ideals of mediæval Europe; that is, it is feudal, Christian and international.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century this social conception had already begun to disintegrate and from Langland to the Elizabethans we can see reflected in literature the rise of another set of ideals, national, aristocratic and authoritarian—though influenced strongly by the growth of a wealthy merchant class who under the Tudors were themselves to become aristocrats. The nationalism of this new age was far from being the narrow jingoism of the Victorian epoch, being in itself only a natural reaction against the stifling influence of the Holy Roman Empire. The exchange of ideas went on as before. The Elizabethans borrowed from France and Italy, the Restoration from the France of Louis XIV., and France in turn borrowed from England all through the 18th century, for our revolution of 1688 had given to English thought that special humanitarian and constitutional outlook which France, groaning under a collapsing despotism, so ardently desired.

The French Revolution and the rise of industrial as opposed to mercantile capitalism opened a third great epoch. Modern capitalism implies the exploitation of a class-conscious industrial proletariat and this side of the revolution, though hardly developed, did not escape attention, finding its special expression in the poet Shelley. Byron was the trumpet-call of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, and Keats settled the course of the art of the whole industrial period by deliberately turning away from the ugliness of the new society to seek an ideal beauty in faery worlds of the imagination. He is thus the first great writer of the decadence of modern society. For art needs a society animated and unified by a social ideal in order to give a satisfactory picture of life. The class antagonisms of the nineteenth century have failed to supply that ideal and its poets have sought relief in the unreal. Shelley was able to visualise the only social ideal which can make industrialism bearable, and therein lies his peculiar greatness. It is to him that the new age will turn when it seeks to carry on the great tradition of art and build up out of a reunited society an ideal picture of its beauty.

The importance of literature to the proletarian student will thus be easily grasped. By its study he will be able to see that he is the inheritor of the great traditions of the past, that it lies in his hands to create the conditions

for a true and abiding national literature. By the resolving of class antagonisms imaginative thought will receive an inspiration, a feeling of liberty, of unity, which it has never yet possessed, not even in the Middle Ages. The student, moreover, will find in literature an exact mirror of contemporary life through all ages, and from the study of this raw material of social history can draw his own inevitable conclusions. But in this respect one last word. Let the working-class student beware of fixing class names to art. In dealing with great artists such words as feudal, bourgeois, proletarian, *may* lose all real significance. Let us remember that the greatest work is all inspired by pity for the common sufferings of humanity, and that a worker may obtain as much—probably more—enjoyment from a play by “feudal” Shakespeare as from the work of any so-called “proletarian” artist.

For while a great poet may be essentially the child of his age he yet rises above that age to become the possession of humanity in so far as he relates his age to the eternal stream of life.

RALPH FOX

A W.E.A.'s CASE *against* the LABOUR COLLEGES

In our April Editorial Notes, after referring to the “Daily Herald” correspondence on “Working Class Education,” we invited Mr. W. H. Marwick, a champion of the W.E.A., to explain in the pages of the PLEBS certain charges he had made against the Labour Colleges and the Plebs’ movement. Somewhat rashly, as it turned out, we offered Mr. Marwick “whatever space he required.” For he has accepted our invitation, and he requires so much space that we are compelled to publish his indictment in instalments. (He has himself agreed to this.) Our replies to his criticisms are appended to each section of his letter.

To the Editor the PLEBS.

SIR,—I thank you for your courteous invitation, and am glad to have the opportunity of elaborating my position, as by limitations of space I was precluded from doing in the *Daily Herald*. May I say that I should not consider it worth while to carry on controversy with people who start by the oft-refuted falsehood that the W.E.A. is run by capitalists in their own interest, but am very pleased to continue discussion with any one who takes up the attitude that there is a sincere and honest division of opinion between W.E.A. and Labour College as to the *best method* of education.

Mr. Marwick crowds “infinite errors in a little room” in this polite sentence. It might not be strictly accurate to say, without qualification, that “the W.E.A. is run by capitalists in their own interests.” But it would be an exaggeration rather than a “falsehood.” For Mr. Marwick can hardly deny that the W.E.A. has had capitalist subscribers; and it is to be presumed that these financed the W.E.A. as at any rate less dangerous to their interests than were certain other workers’ educational bodies. Also, he is hopelessly wrong in stating that the difference between us and the W.E.A. is concerned with the *best method* of education. That difference is a question of *aim*, and of *content*; not *method*.—ED.

Let me further emphasise the qualification which you properly inserted, that "*in my view*, the principles and policy of the Labour College are antagonistic to those of Trade Unionism, Labour, and Socialism." I make no dogmatic assertion; I merely express my personal opinion as to the principles and policy of the movements in question: your interpretation will no doubt differ.

Mr. Marwick, in short, makes a dogmatic assertion; then inserts the words "*in my view*"—and the statement promptly becomes "no dogmatic assertion." So that whether or not you speak dogmatically would seem to be simply a question of whether or not you remember to remark that you are only giving expression to your "personal opinion." Which, coming from an opponent of "dogmatic education," is interesting.—ED.

I do not propose to argue the whole case once more, but to concentrate on the points as to which you have challenged me. I will take the last point first, as it gets to the root of the difference between us.

"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." You ask a further elaboration of this statement. Well, what I mean is this. So far as I understand, from your writings and from conversation with your supporters, you claim to have an interpretation of social facts, which, if not absolute truth, is sufficiently true for all practical purposes. You agree that the majority of men do not accept your views, you claim that that is due to their ignorance, that it is essential in their interest that they should realise the truths you assert, and that the main purpose of education is therefore that the more enlightened should impress their conclusions upon the rest. I do not know how far "Plebs" in general accept the anti-democratic theory so ably expounded, on psychological grounds, by your late esteemed contributor "Nordicus" and others; but it seems to me the only possible basis on which you can justify your position. The ordinary worker is obviously not "class-conscious": he apparently cannot by his own unaided effort evolve to that outlook: he is at the same time "suggestible," that is, liable to accept beliefs suggested to him by the more informed, and you consider it your business to convey these suggestions and so make him realise his true position in spite of himself.

I, on the other hand, find that there is just as much diversity of opinion on all controversial matters among workers as among any other section, that this is much more a matter of temperament than of economic status; and that the ordinary man is sufficiently intelligent and fair-minded not to be "confused" (as is sometimes suggested) by the impartial presentation of divergent opinions, but rather to be enabled to form his own judgment upon them. Personally, as a Socialist, I have sufficient faith in the strength of my cause to believe that it can triumph in fair contest with rival doctrines, and doesn't require their suppression. I prefer to dispense with the support of people who can be won only by the latter method. Further, while thus having my own opinions on matters of public controversy, I consider that they are of no more interest and importance than anyone else's, and that I should be violating my duty as a teacher if I abused my position to impose them upon anyone else. To possess the truth is the claim of religion, whether theistic or secularist; to be in quest of truth is the claim of education.

We agree with Mr. Marwick that here we get to "the root of the difference between us." And the difference is this:—Our study of the facts of history and of present-day society leads us to certain definite conclusions. We believe these conclusions to be

true. And we teach what we believe. Mr. Marwick, on the other hand, believes nothing; or, at any rate, doesn't believe it firmly enough to want to teach it to other people. Truth, in his view, does exist; but it is better to spend one's life "questing" after it, than to catch up with it, and make it the basis for definite action. Education, to him, consists in this harmless if pointless game of running round and round in a circle—chasing Truth; but never chasing too strenuously, or the game would stop. Education, to us, is futile unless it leads somewhere. Mr. Marwick wants a ride on a roundabouts. We want a vehicle which will take us along the road to a definite goal.

That is certainly a root difference. And we don't mind how clearly Mr. Marwick emphasises it. He is quite welcome to his rather easy little gibes about "the supermen of the Plebs League . . . prescribing to the mere worker what they ought to think." He himself, as he admits, has "his own opinion"; and he is not above writing to the *Daily Herald* in order to "prescribe to the mere workers what they ought to think" about working-class education. Further, if—as appears doubtful—he has any clear ideas on social facts at all, he can no more help "imposing" these on his students than he can help omitting all reference to (i.e., "suppressing") thousands of historical facts. To talk about "violating one's duty as a teacher" if one *teaches* is just cant, and nothing more; though a highly fashionable piece of cant among teachers at the present day.

His cleverly contrived suggestion that the Plebs League either has or has ever claimed any sort of monopoly in the ideas for which it stands is likewise bunkum. Those ideas, and the point of view on which they are based, i.e., *working-class independence*, are implicit in the whole Labour movement. Our job is to make *conscious* what is, by the majority of our fellows, as yet but dimly understood.

And the reference to the "anti-democratic theory" so ably expounded by "Nordicus" is just a red herring. If it be "anti-democratic" to seek to arouse that class-consciousness which the majority of the workers lack, then every Labour propagandist and every Labour paper is "anti-democratic."—ED.

Next I take up my declaration that the "principles and policy of the Labour College are in my view antagonistic to those of Trade Unionism," and associate with it the allegation of "un-Trade Union practices." Well, in my judgment, the principle of Trade Unionism is this. It means an organisation of workers concerned with their peculiar interests as *producers* (whether of goods or services). Some such association is therefore essential under any form of society—capitalist or socialist. What I gather to be the Labour College view is, that Trade Unionism is merely a necessary incident of capitalism, now growing obsolete, futile as an agency for serving the workers' interests, and indeed rather providing a bulwark for the existing order. From this I infer that, if you are logical, you are opposed to the *principle* of Trade Unionism.

What Mr. Marwick "gathers" the Labour College point of view to be is neither here nor there. What it is, is that the Trade Unions are the principal weapons by which the workers will achieve their emancipation from capitalism and wage-slavery. The N.U.R., the S.W.M.F., and other Unions would be very likely to finance a Labour College which was opposed to the principles on which they were based, wouldn't they? . . . But the charge is too silly to waste space about.—ED.

The *policy* of Trade Unionism I take to be the maintenance of certain standards of qualification, remuneration, and working conditions. An advocate of Trade Unionism will apply that policy to all occupations alike, and there's the rub. The teaching profession has had a hard struggle in the past to save itself from being swamped by the incursion of unqualified and under-paid teachers, and its present insistence upon adequate professional status and minimum rates of pay is one which will commend itself to all Trade Unionists. Now, what teachers are securing in primary and secondary education is being threatened in the sphere of higher education. The Labour Colleges are putting into competition tutors who are not required to have the usual academic training, and do not receive the standard rates of pay. This objection may be dismissed as indicating self-superiority and snobbishness; but I maintain that adult education is just as much a skilled craft as is engineering, and that the tutor is as entitled as the engineer to object to "dilution." I am sure that nothing

is farther from the minds of most Labour College tutors than blacklegging on the tutorial profession: probably it has never occurred to them in that light, and I must pay a tribute to the missionary zeal with which they often accept overtime work and under-pay in order to propagate their doctrines more effectually. (That devoted self-sacrifice, incidentally, seems to me the best refutation of the materialistic philosophy they preach.) If they were to accept the rôle of propagandist, I should have no more to say, but you presuppose that the type of education they offer is in itself all sufficient under present circumstances, and under a new regime would continue on the lines indicated by the Pauls for Russia; and accordingly that the other existing agencies, such as the W.E.A., are worthless and must be destroyed. To destroy a profession is justifiable only if it is socially useless or harmful: I take it you will agree there. I obviously do not agree that the existing higher educational system comes under that head; and, therefore, I say that in seeking to undermine its position, you are guilty of un-Trade Union practices. I do not necessarily demand stereotyped academic tests for all professing educationalists; what I do insist on is an accepted professional *standard of qualifications, remuneration, and conditions of work.*

W. H. MARWICK

A highly ingenious, not to say tricky, piece of pleading. Mr. Marwick, indeed, seems to be just the least little bit conscious that he is on thin ice here, so many compliments does he hand out to the men he is slandering. They, forsooth, are blacklegs—and by the same token those of us who work voluntarily for this magazine are blacklegs, too—on the journalists.

We have not space to waste on a lengthy reply. We will say only this:—That in so far as the "tutorial profession" organises, as wage-slaves, to resist exploitation by the capitalist class, it has the sympathy of all class-conscious workers. But that if the "tutorial profession" organises to set up "craft" barriers, not against their exploiters, but to prevent their fellow-workers from hearing truths which the exploiters do not wish them to hear, then the "tutorial profession" is likely to be swept out, along with all other parasitic professions, as "socially useless and harmful."—ED.

(To be concluded next month.)

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A la LANTERN!!

Make your Plans now for next Winter's Work

AS requested by the Annual Delegate meeting of the N.C.L.C., a sub-committee of the Liverpool and Dist. Labour College has been at work preparing sets of lantern slides to illustrate lectures suitable for our educational work and propaganda. The preparation of the slides has been the joint effort of a number of enthusiasts on similar lines, as was the production of the Psychology Text Book.

For the coming winter season the following sets of slides will be completed:—

1. Primitive Man (with comparisons with modern races).
2. The Evolution of Society.
3. The Evolution of Machinery.
4. The Evolution of Ships.
5. The Industrial Revolution.
6. The Cotton Industry.
7. The Co-operative Movement.
8. The Paris Commune.
9. Snapshots of British Industrial History.

It is hoped to add:—

10. The French Revolution.
11. The Russian Revolution.

Other lectures will be arranged to illustrate Economics, Economic Geography, etc., when suitable material has been got together.

About 35 slides will make up each set. This we find from experience is quite sufficient to illustrate a lecture. A lecturer prone to be prolix is usually boring to the audience.

The following scheme for the issue of slides has been adopted:—

For the HIRE of a single lecture set—5s., plus postage. (Slides to be returned within five days. Broken slides to be paid for at 1s. 6d. each.)

For the PURCHASE of a complete lecture set, 1s. 6d. per slide, i.e., a single lecture set, say, of 35 slides will cost £2 12s. 6d., plus postage. Payment for same can cover a period of six weeks. Cash down, however, will be more appreciated. A small profit will accrue to the N.C.L.C. from the hiring and sale of the slides.

Those Colleges or Districts desiring to purchase sets should send in their orders at the earliest, accompanied by a cash instalment, to J. Hamilton, 99, Botanic Road, Edge Hill, Liverpool.

A synopsis of each lecture will be prepared and will be obtainable from the Sec., N.C.L.C., 11, Penyvern Road, London, S.W.5. The following is a sample:—

"Primitive Man" (with comparisons with Modern Races):—

1. Evolution Chart: Formation of Vertebrate Life in Geological Strata.

2. Evolution Chart: The Tree of Life.
3. Chart: Duration of Time from first Glacial to Post-Glacial Period, indicating periods of existence of primitive types of man.
4. *Pithecanthropus Erectus*: The Ape-man of Java.
5. Restoration of *Pithecanthropus*.
6. The Piltown Man of Sussex.
7. Primitive Palæoliths from Piltown.
8. The Rhodesian Skull.
9. Restoration of Heidelberg Man.
10. Restoration of Head of Neanderthal Man of La Chapelle.
11. Chimpanzee. (Comparison with No. 10.)
12. Early Pleistocene Animals contemporary with earliest Man.
13. Neanderthal Man of La Chapelle-aux-Saints. (Mousterian.)
14. Palæolithic Age Implements.
15. Neanderthal Man at the Station of Le Moustier.
16. Restoration of Neolithic Man.
17. Map: Europe and W. Asia at maximum of Fourth Ice Age.
18. Head of the "Old Man of Cro-Magnon."
19. Head of Cro-Magnon Man.
20. Flint Implements of Industrial Use, of the Chase, and of Fishing. (Aurignacian.)
21. Reindeer Age (Aurignacian) Engravings and Carvings.
22. A Reindeer Age Masterpiece.
23. Profile of Skull of Essex Woman.
24. Map: Europe and W. Asia in later Palæolithic Age.
25. Chart: Duration Neolithic Period in which early thought developed.
26. Neolithic Implements.
27. Reconstruction of a Lake Dwelling compared with a modern ditto in Borneo.
28. Bronze Age Implements.
29. Comparative Skulls, Anthropoid Ape, Prehistoric Types of Man, and Modern Man.
30. The Evolution of the Brain.
31. Chart: Human Brain of high type.
32. Chart: Civilisations from Egyptian Dynasties to Industrial Capitalism.
33. Map: Europe, W. Asia, N. Africa in Forest Period.
34. The last Tasmanian.
35. Bushwoman.
36. Negro Types.
37. Mongolian Types: Kalmuck, Chinese Woman, Amerindian Woman.
38. Caucasian: Mediterranean (Algerian Jew: Berber): Nordic.

Some information may be useful as to the obtaining or hiring of a lantern for the lecturers:—

(1) *Buying lantern and outfit complete*: These can be bought from most large dealers in photographic materials, or from Newton's,

Covent Garden, London, W.C.2, who will supply particulars on application. The cost varies, the condenser and achromatic lens being the most important part of the lantern. A complete outfit suitable for a reasonable sized hall should be obtained for £20. This will include an electric arc lamp for attachment to any ordinary electric lamp, or an acetylene generator for use where there is no electric current. But for a powerful light for a large hall a limelight jet should be used. This will necessitate the hiring of a cylinder of oxygen for each lecture. Any person, particularly if conversant with electrical engineering, can learn to manipulate a lantern very easily. Incidental expenses will be covered by a shilling or two per lecture.

Those Colleges who can afford to buy a complete outfit will find it a very profitable and useful adjunct to their work. In Liverpool the initial cost has been cleared off within two seasons, by charging a small fee to organisations desiring lantern lectures of a popular character. And the use of the lantern for the Biology and Industrial History courses has stimulated increased interest.

(2) *Hiring a lantern*: Lanterns can be hired from dealers in most large centres, with an operator in charge, suitable for any hall. The cost varies, but the usual charge per lecture is about 25s.

We will conclude with the usual appeal for financial assistance, to help cover the initial cost of producing the sets of slides for hiring purposes. This will amount to about £20. The Liverpool College will defray at least 50 per cent. of this, as a considerable number of negatives has been given or loaned by sympathisers. But it is obviously unfair to expect Liverpool to defray the whole of the cost. Therefore, those who are desirous of developing this most useful side of our Educational work can help by remitting a donation. The Plebs' E.C. has weighed in with £1; who is the next to follow this excellent lead?

Individuals who have photos, drawings, historical documents, etc., likely to be useful can send them to be re-produced. The careful use and return of same can be assured.

J. HAMILTON

WORKERS' EDUCATION *at the* SCOTTISH T.U. CONGRESS

AT the Scottish T.U. Congress held in Edinburgh about a month ago, the Parliamentary Committee presented a very favourable report on the work of the Scottish Labour College. They recommended the Trade Union movement to give the College every support, urged T.U. branches to affiliate to the College's District Committees, and decided that the question be again remitted to the Committee to continue negotiations with the S.L.C. with a view to a closer connection between the two bodies.

The Parliamentary Committee also presented a report on the W.E.A., which concluded with the statement that "it will be seen that the Committee believe there is room for every educational effort in our movement."

When the Congress came to discuss the educational section of its Committee's report, many delegates perceived—what was, no doubt, clear to the Committee—that the Committee were recommending two utterly opposed types of education. A delegate, therefore, moved that the paragraph regarding the W.E.A. be referred back, on the ground that the W.E.A.'s education was calculated to create confusion among the workers and to make for the perpetuation of the present order. The reference back was seconded by the president of a very large branch of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation—the Union that officially supports the W.E.A. and W.E.T.U.C.

An official of the Confederation naturally took up the cudgels on behalf of the W.E.A. He accused the S.L.C. people of being intolerant; said the W.E.A. was far more "democratic" than the S.L.C., because it allowed a class to choose any subject it liked; went on to urge that the fact that Marx was not educated at a Labour College was a weighty argument against the I.W.-C.Ers; said he was not quarrelling with the S.L.C., but wanted it not to "stultify" the work of the W.E.A.; and concluded by arguing that "no matter what education might be given to people, the development of their thoughts could not be prevented; the problems they saw round them determined whether they were going to be Socialists or anti-Socialists."

Let us for a moment examine those arguments. Is intolerance necessarily a vice? As a T.U. official, the speaker, I am sure, is intolerant of blacklegs and free-labour associations. Why? Because blacklegs do not make for the welfare of the working class. The supporters of the S.L.C. are thoroughly satisfied that the W.E.A. does not make for working-class welfare. Must they tolerate it? Just as the Steel Trades official is making it his business to weed out blacklegism from the working class, so is the S.L.C. busy weeding out W.E.A.-ism—and must continue doing so.

The S.L.C., we're told, is not as "democratic" as the W.E.A.—the latter allows a class to choose any subject it likes. Notice

it is not denied that the S.L.C. classes have some say. The speaker probably knows that, with few exceptions, S.L.C. classes have a representative on the Controlling Committee. His conception of democracy is that a single class should have the right to choose a subject rejected by all the other classes and the Unions providing the finance. We think he will revise that opinion.

The fact that Marx received tuition under University auspices is urged against the Labour Colleges. But did not Marx spend the best part of his life discarding much of what he had been taught and revolutionising a great deal of the remainder? Is it argued that the T.U. movement is to provide the same type of education for its members and put them to the same trouble?

"Go on with your own work," the S.L.C. is urged in so many words, "but don't attack the W.E.A." Apparently it is not yet clear to some of our friends in the Labour movement that such advice is meaningless. The S.L.C. can no more go on with its work without attacking the W.E.A. than the working class can go on extending its power without "stultifying" that of the capitalists. It does not yet seem clear to some T. Unionists that the most elementary lesson the Labour Colleges have to teach is that ideas and education on social problems—the education that matters to Labour—are not "above" the worker's battle for bread, butter and leisure, and that an organisation, such as the W.E.A., which does not recognise that,

is quite unfitted to be Labour's teacher and guide.

What does the speaker's final argument amount to? It implies that it doesn't matter what education is given to the workers. A union can cheerily finance any educational body, confident that, even if the teaching provided discourages thinking in a working-class way and breeds doubts about the destiny of Labour, the conditions of industry, the strike, the lock-out, etc., will provide the antidote. That is certainly a new educational policy for Trade Unions, and few would have the courage to champion it.

As the reference back was directed against the Parliamentary Committee's report, it was naturally lost, but that that was no indication of the views of the Congress was made clear in a subsequent session, when after an address from a S.L.C. representative, a resolution was passed approving of the I.W.-C.E. movement and urging the Congress's affiliated societies to give financial support to the Scottish Labour College and the Labour College, London.

The question of workers' education is certain to come up at the forthcoming British T.U. Congress, and it is up to the whole movement in England as well as in Scotland to see that its delegates are instructed to vote down W.E.A.-ism, and to support the educational policy of the N.C.L.C. Get a resolution forwarded to your Union Executive *now*.

J. P. M. MILLAR

N.C.L.C. NOTES

THE Summer Season has begun satisfactorily. The *London Council* is running eight classes in Philosophy, Economics, Industrial History and Economic Geography. *Edinburgh District* is running classes in Esperanto, Public Speaking (2), Philosophy and a training class for tutors in Industrial History. The latter class is free, but all students are expected to write essays in advance and be prepared to make their essays the basis of class discussion. This important part of our work should be followed everywhere as the growth of active interest in I.W.-C.E. will make big demands for lectures on our movement in the near future.

Although not many classes have yet started in connection with the Building Trade Workers, considerable activity has been displayed by our affiliated bodies in many centres. We must remember that educational organisation is quite a new departure in Trade Union work, and we must therefore expect some delay in getting the details fixed up. Our job must be to provide all the needed material in the shape of syllabuses, suggestions for class centres, fees and the periods of their payment and

similar information. We suggest that, wherever possible, arrangements should be made to cover the entire Divisional Area of the A.U.B.T.W. by joint agreement between our Councils, where the B.T.W. Divisional Areas overlap. That a definite offer of classes in various subjects be made to the Divisional Council, and some sort of agreement proposed for the payment of fees, say 25 per cent. quarterly, based on the whole of the Divisional Area membership; and that such payments cover free tuition of B.T.W. membership in any of the classes arranged or postal courses where desired. Of course, these fees will not cover the total cost of running the classes, and this should be made plain to the Divisional Council, so that they understand that all classes, even where primarily arranged to meet B.T.W. needs, are open to the members of other Labour organisations.

As it is quite possible that new prospective students will be hearing of classes after they have actually started, and as our work during the summer months will mainly be the popularising of our educational aims the following suggestions are offered. Arrange *Short Courses* and prepare syllabuses, with

a view to enabling new students to join at any time during the course. (Such subjects as "History of Trade Unionism"; "Revolutionary Periods," etc.) A course of lectures covering our primary subjects of study, e.g., (1) I.W.-C.E.; (2) Economics; (3) History; (4) Philosophy; (5) Economic Geography; (6) Imperialism—a brief outline of what the subject matter includes, and the methods of inquiry adopted. "Imperialism," a short course briefly reviewing Boudin's book and some specialised aspect of the subject in the politics of Great Powers, e.g., Delaisi's *Oil*. All these subjects lend themselves to more or less complete summarised aspects dealt with in single lectures, and prepare the ground for the more detailed courses of study arranged for the Winter Session. A number of other subjects on the lines suggested above will readily suggest themselves. *The thing is to get to work to extend our field of operations.*

A special meeting of delegates of the A.U.B.T.W., representing all the Branches in the London Division, was held on Sunday, 7th May, for the consideration of an educational policy and programme for their members. After hearing an address by Robert Holder, Organising Secretary of the London Council for I.W.-C.E., the delegates decided in favour of their Executive Committee's recommendation, that arrangements be made to commence educational classes on I.W.-C.E. lines.

The N.C.L.C. pamphlet, *More Production—More Poverty*, is selling well. Districts already supplied with local editions are—Sheffield (1,000), West Riding (1,000), London (2,000), Edinburgh (3,000), Ayrshire (1,000). National editions—S.L.C. and N.C.L.C. (2,000 each). Districts requiring limited quantities can get the latter editions at 13s. a 100 or 11s. a 100 for orders of 300 or more. The orders should be sent direct to J. P. M. Millar, 18, Westholme Gardens, Musselburgh, N.B., or to the Plebs Book Dept. London. This pamphlet will pave the way for a more popular understanding of our aims and work. Get it sold!

Will all comrades who have not yet sent in their returns to the Manchester L.C. "Penny Ticket" Building Fund please do so without delay? And if any district or individual enthusiast has not heard about this scheme, and would like to do so, write quickly to Sec., Lab. Coll., Dale Street, Manchester.

ACCRINGTON report the close of the Winter lecturing season. Classes were held in Padiham and Accrington—the latter class being strongly supported by the Dyers and Finishers' organisation. The lecturer, Com. R. Pickersgill (45, Devonshire Street, Accrington), believes an extensive field for propaganda exists in Colne, Burnley, Blackburn, Haslingden, Padiham, Accrington, etc.,

and would like to hear from friends prepared to give a hand in organising an Area Council in preparation for an extensive winter campaign. Who is prepared to help the formation of an East Lancs. Area Council? The N.C.L.C. will guarantee a supply of propaganda literature!

DARLINGTON AND DISTRICT Labour College has affiliated to the N.C.L.C. and the energetic Sec., Com. E. Turner (103, Waterloo Road, Middlesbrough), wants to hear from I.W.-C.E. supporters in Darlington, West Hartlepool, Stockton and Thornaby, South Bank, and adjacent towns. Lecturers will be particularly welcomed! Here, too, exists an area of A.U.B.T.W. Branches that want roping in to the I.W.-C.E. fold.

Com. J. Hamilton, of Liverpool, is contributing a series of outlines on "The State" to the *Southport Weekly Herald*, a series that should be exceedingly useful to our classes. Com. J. E. Holt (135, Chester Road, Southport) will be pleased to supply copies of the paper to any I.W.-C.E.s. at the rate of 1s. a dozen, in quantities of not less than six. Single copies 2d. each.

HULL Trades and Labour Party Club Educational Committee are planning classes for next winter session. Local I.W.-C.E.s. should get in touch with Mr. J. Jervis, 83, Charles Street, Hull.

OLDHAM'S winter's work has been the most successful yet experienced. Two classes held—in Industrial History and Economics. Tutor, Geo. Penlington, who has also done good work by visiting various T.U. branches, and urging support of Labour College Classes. Anyone desirous of getting in touch in this district should write Com. J. Hill (217, Horsedge Street, Oldham).

THE SCOTTISH LABOUR COLLEGE are calling two Conferences: (1) On June 10th at 3 p.m., 13, Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, for representatives of all S.L.C. Districts. Business very important. Classes, where no District Committee exists, are invited to be present. (2) On Saturday, July 1st, of all LANARKSHIRE Labour organisations and classes, with the object of forming a Lanarkshire District S.L.C. Committee.

THE NORTH EASTERN LABOUR COLLEGE is holding a Week-end School at the Co-operative Hall, Ashington, in Whit Week, June 3rd to 5th. For particulars write, Will Coxon (5, Byron Street, Newcastle). Lecturer: T. Ashcroft, author of the brilliant series on "Imperialism" now running in the *Railway Review* (weekly, 2d.). Don't miss these!

Reports should reach the National Secretary, N.C.L.C., not later than the 18th of each month, and should be reduced to the barest summary of most important items of news. This owing to pressure of space.

STUDENTS' NOTES and QUERIES

WHEAT and meat and the Argentine are generally associated ideas. But in the Argentine, as in other agrarian countries, industrial capitalism is getting a hold. In the Province of Jujuy there are being introduced *weaving machines* of European manufacture (*Daily News*, 13/4/21). The older capitalist countries will soon be like the dove when it was first sent out of the ark.

S. N. C. N. asks *Is man a commodity?*

Man in general is not, but certain men under given circumstances can be. The man who was a chattel-slave was a commodity, bought and sold as an article of merchandise. The modern wage-slave is not a commodity, but a *commodity owner and seller*. It is true that labour-power cannot be separated from its seller until it is expended as labour. If the modern wage-slave was a commodity he would often be in a better position. For example when a pair of boots loses its value the loss falls upon the owner. It is the same with labour-power in times of unemployment; the problem of preservation troubles the worker, not his capitalist hirer.

The Riddles of Finance, by William Leach (International Bookshops, Id.), is a useful 8-pp. pamphlet, but it asks more questions than it fully answers. Memories of the run on Farrow's Bank make us sceptical about the success of a general overdraft as pictured. Nationalisation of banking is the remedy proposed. We hope the Big Five will agree.

Confirmation of the view that the ruling few in big companies "do themselves fine and plenty" is seen in the report of the meeting of the English Insurance Company (*Daily Herald*, 21/4/22). A critic pointed out that all the directors with one exception held only just sufficient shares to qualify them for the position. Lord Errol, the chairman, had done this, and by buying 1,000 shares drew £1,000 in director's fees free of income tax. Such is the price of directive ability! Much useful information was also given by the series in the *Herald* commencing 24/4/22 concerning the abuses and rogueries of the City sharks. The articles are well worth reprinting as a pamphlet. Given the creation of surplus-value in production, its owners, potential and actual, can skin each other by rogueries in its division and the thrifty small investors' frail barque is swamped in the great boom tides which help the greater ships safely into the harbour of fortune.

Teachers and students will find much useful material in Knowles' *Industrial and Commercial Revolutions in Great Britain during the XIX. Century* (Routledge, 6s. 6d.). It is modern, comprehensive and reliable, with a mass of useful figures. As nearly as

possible objective treatment has been attained, though there is a tendency to white-wash the dark side of the Industrial Revolution, to emphasise the greatness of the British Empire, and to enlarge upon the continual advance in the well-being of the workers without an examination of their position relative to profits. The distinctive feature is the importance given to transport and the results consequent upon the introduction of the railways and steamships. The idea is not wholly new, for in Seeley's *Expansion of England* (1883) there is a clear recognition of these things as the basis for Empire.

The following is part of the synopsis preceding Part VI. which will give an idea of the quality of the book and which will appeal at once to any Plebeian who has read Boudin:—

SYNOPSIS

The coming of machinery and mechanical transport gave a new value to continental colonies.

I.—Periods of Colonial History.

(1) *The first Empire and its disruption*, 1603-1776.

Causes of the Revolt of the thirteen continental colonies.

(2) *The Period of Drift*, 1783-1870.

General dislike of colonies. England organised for world exchange had no use for the narrower limits of the colonial system.

(3) *The creation of new colonial values by the development of mechanical transport*, 1870-1895.

The scramble for colonies by the European Powers. The new chartered companies a link between the old policy and the new.

(4) *Reaction from world economics to imperial economics*, 1895-1920.

The period of constructive Imperialism. Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary. Great Britain influenced by the growing rivalry of Germany, the colonies influenced by the pressure of Russia and Germany in the Pacific and the rise of Japan.

Economic students will have noticed that either the author or the translator of *Foundations of Imperialist Policy* (p. 124) speaks of "constant" and "variable" capital when the sense demands "fixed" and "circulating." Pavlovitch also omits any reference to the work of Rosa Luxembour in unveiling Imperialism.

Lord Haldane may know a lot about Relativity but his economics are poor. This is what he says in the official *Labour Magazine*

(May, 1922), of all places in the world:—
 "More and more it is becoming evident that it is neither capital nor labour but intelligence that creates wealth." As if there could be labour which is not more or less intelligent and an intelligence which does not labour. Must we understand that a man like Seymour Berry is so intelligent that he creates the profits of all the concerns of which he is a director? (See Emil Davies on the Organisation of Capital in the very same magazine.) Then he goes on to show how these wonderful directors have to be bribed and won over. No wonder he thinks that the ideals of the Labour Party will take a long time to accomplish!

The *Manchester Guardian Commercial* is publishing 12 "Reconstruction Numbers" (1s. each) the first of which appeared on April 20th, and dealt with the Problems of the Exchanges. J. M. Keynes is the chief physician in charge of this attempt to find a physic for a sick world. He proposes to stabilise the exchanges by fixing new parities and even this can only be done by loans from the Federal Reserve Board of the

U.S.A. In addition to this there is a vast quantity of descriptive and statistical material concerning dealings in currencies. The fact that a wire can be sent from London out to New York and a reply received within eight minutes enables speculators to buy and sell dollars, marks, etc., profitably if they have correctly anticipated the changes. Keynes explains the difference between "forward" and "spot" exchanges.

An American professor analyses the indebtedness of Europe to America (which he totals at about \$15,000,000,000) and the difficulties of its repayment. The U.S.A. holds now 37.1 per cent. of the world's stock of gold money.

These are only a few crumbs from the table at which sit experts from every country giving authoritative information about their own particular currency and exchanges. Teachers should not miss these numbers. The next topic will be Shipping and Inland Water Transport and among the subsequent ones: Russia; The United States and Europe; Railways; Coal; Iron, Steel and Engineering. M. S.

TRA LA MONDO : *Esperanto Notes*

Brita Ligo de Esperantistaj Socialistoj.

Kara Popolano,—Mi volus atentigi la legantojn de PLEBS pri tio, ke kunveno de la B.L.E.S. okazos dum la 13a Brita Esperanto-Kongreso ĉe Pentekosto. La kunveno havos lokon ĉe la Elizabeth Tea Rooms, 16, Hart Street, W.C.1, (en la domo najbara al la B.E.A.) je lla matene Pentekostan dimanĉon. Ĉiuj legantoj de PLEBS kiuj sin interesas pri la propagando de Esperanto inter la laboristaro estas invitataj.

Ĉar la B.L.E.S. dum kelka tempo ne funkcias bone en Londono, mi proponas ke iu provinca Laborista Grupo prenu sur sin la gvidadon de ĝiaj aferoj.

Via frate, P. J. CAMERON
 (Povizora sekretario)

69, Schubert Road, S.W.15.

Ceko-Slovakio.

Terurajoj en Sudkarpata Rusio.—La malsato kaj mizero estas tie grandega. La popolo havas preskaŭ nenan alian okupon ol faligi arbojn en arbaro por hejti siajn loĝejojn. Ĉar la registaro decidis forpreni la arbarojn al komunumoj (krom nobelaro, fremdaj riĉuloj kaj bienuloj), la loĝantaro elsendis en Praha'n al Prezidanto Masaryk deputacion, prezentintan siajn plendojn al plej alta instanco. Inter multaj promesoj kaj certigoj estis ankaŭ tiu, ke la soldataron oni telegrafe forvokos k.t.p. La deputacio estis sciigita pri tio, ke la loĝantaro dum tri monatoj povas libere uzadi komunumajn arbojn kaj ke post tri monatoj oni decidis per speciala ordono.

Post tia rezultato, la loĝantaro de vilaĝo Pertua denove veturis kun ligno hejmen, sed tuj estis alvokita soldataro de regimento

No. 45 kun leŭtenanto, kiu diras ke li havas ordonon tuj uzi ĉiujn rimedojn en la okazo se la ligno ne estos remetita en arbaron. La loĝantaro menciis la rezultaton de la deputacio. Ĉiuj viroj, kun virinoj, maljunuloj kaj infanoj, restis trankvile kaj senmove starantaj antaŭ la soldatoj, kiuj havis bajonetojn sur pafiloj. Dum preparado al atako, la viroj kun virinoj en unuaj vicoj suprenlevis manojn kaj alvokis soldatojn pri ilia senkulpeco kaj senarmileco. La soldatoj efektive ne volis pafi. Sed la oficiro lasis pretigi la maŝinpafilon antaŭ la vilaĝo, kaj celante sur stratojn pafadis ne domo al domo. Li trafis Ivan Romanov, kaj tuj tiun malfeliĉulon mortigis. Nur pli poste la oficiro ĉesigis sian amuzon.

La telegramo pri tiu okazintaĵo sendota al la registaro estis rifuzita en la poŝto kun noto, ke plendojn al ŝtataj organoj oni malakceptas.

(*Ricevita el Praha.*—S.A.T. Informa Servo en Ĉeko-Slovakio.)

S.A.T. (*Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda.*)

La 2a Kongreso okazos de la 12 ĝis 16. de aŭgusto en Frankfurt (samtempe kun la Internacia Sindikata Kongreso de la Ministoj) en la festhalo de la Restoracio "Frankfurter Konzertgarten," Ecke Lange-strasse meze de la urbo.

Kongresadreso: K-do Jean Roth, Rödelheimerlandstr. 131-III, Frankfurt a. M., Rödelheim (Germ.).

Aligoj: valoraj estos nur la aliĝiloj akompanatĵaj de la kotizo.

Komunikoj: Ĉiu n-ro de *Sennacieca Revuo* (organo de SAT) publikigos detalan komunikon de la Kongreskomitato.

LETTERS *from* PLEBS

FREE WILL

DEAR COMRADE,—In your last issue, W. Walker, criticising the *Outline of Psychology*, says that we cannot "dispense with the free will hypothesis." In the sense that "free-will, being a part of existence, must be explained," we cannot deny or dispense with it. But in the sense that the free-will hypothesis is put forward as a working theory we can dispense with it entirely. If Com. Walker would only read the context of his quotation he would see that the word "dispense" is used in this sense only. And if he read the book still further, both before and after his quotation, he will find it quite interesting and well worth reading.

Yours, J. B.

THE "DAILY HERALD" LITERARY PAGE

[N.B.—This letter is a reply to Gerald Gould's in last month's PLEBS, and was written before the receipt of Gould's epistle appearing below.—Ed., PLEBS.]

DEAR COMRADE,—As you know, I signed my letter by your request "One of the Plebs E.C.," in order specifically to make it not personal, but since Gould tries to ride off and evade answering my criticism by talking about "anonymous abuse," I have the greatest pleasure in signing my name to this.

He attempted to score a debating point about Villon, because I chucked in at the last minute a minor correction of fact. The point was irrelevant in any case, because the main charge was simply that the *Herald* had not bothered to state whether there were any translations, and what they cost—which effectively disposed of that page's claim to be a workers' literary page. It is an absolute falsehood to suggest that I have studied Villon and, as a "superior person," wish to "prevent" others studying him.

Let the workers study Villon—written in Old French and a dialect suitably called Jargon. By all means, but why stop there? Shall we not urge them to study Catullus and Lucretius in the original Latin, Pindar and the *Pervigilium Veneris*, and to search Aristophanes for the as-yet-untranslated jests of the *Lyssistrata*? Greek is so bully for the style, you know. Moreover, I am assured that Confucius in the original Chink possesses remarkable beauties.

Yes, it is all true, and it is most desirable that the workers should study all these. That happens to be one of the reasons why I want a revolution. For you and I, Gerald, tend rather to forget certain difficulties which encircle the proletariat. They have not gone to a University first, like you and me, Gerald, where they could kick their heels and read Villon, Æschylus, or Catullus, like

you and me, Gerald, or take too much drink if they found the idle day too long, like you and me, Gerald. They have not gone on to slow and gentle jobs giving much leisure and some pay, like you and me, Gerald, nor even can they acquire free review copies of books, like you and me, Gerald. All your mornings, even when you are working, Gerald, you have to yourself to read Villon or anything else you have in your library.

If you can, just try for a moment to imagine what study means to a worker—say one who has just completed his day's work in a mine. I cannot imagine it for you, but at least you will see that there is only a limited amount of energy left to him for his study: and that precious strength must be conserved like gold. He cannot afford to waste it. And therefore he takes his studies on the principle of first things first. That is all.

Yours frat.,

R. W. POSTGATE.

DEAR EDITOR,—With all respect to Mr. W. J. Turner, the *Herald's* literary page is far from what it should be and from what it easily might be, and it compares very badly in this respect with the French paper, *l'Humanité*, to which Georges Chenneviere, Victor Cyril, Marcel Martinet, and Georges Pioch contribute. Recently there was, for instance, an admirable and educative article—of particular interest to proletarians—by Cyril on Bernard Shaw and Mrs. Warren's *Profession*. I have seen nothing like this piece of writing in the *Daily Herald*.

Let us glance at the Literary Page and its "Great Names" in two recent issues—12th April and 26th April. In the former we have nearly a column on Milton by Lascelles Abercrombie, but in the column next to it actually more space is devoted to a particularly trivial outburst by the "fumiste" Wyndham Lewis on *Modern Art and Its Critics*. Lewis is apparently more important than Milton. Abercrombie, now Professor of Poetry in the capitalist University of Liverpool, does at least give *Herald* readers a slight account of Milton's environment and of the political atmosphere of the period. But any such account is entirely lacking in Herbert Farjeon's article on Carlo Goldoni (26th April).

Mr. Farjeon enumerates some of Goldoni's plays, and speaks of his "reforming Italian comedy" and of his being "Venetian to the core"; but he entirely omits to mention that some of his plays were written in *Tuscan*, the language of Dante and the "literary" language of "Italy," while others were written in the *Venetian* idiom. Mr. Farjeon might have linked this up with some allusions to the political and separate status of the Venetian Republic and shown how this fact exposed one of the *greatest lies*

of the recent war for "democracy"—the claim that *Italy* in acquiring the old Habsburg territories of Gorizia and Trieste was merely regaining her *lost* provinces. For the Venetian Republic had for a thousand years been an entity quite independent of the rest of "Italy," had indeed frequently waged war against other States in the peninsula, such as Genoa, and only crumbled into ruins in 1796 under the cannon of Napoleon.

The last two decades of Goldoni's life were spent in France as an honoured dependant of the French Court. He died in 1793 and his death was doubtless accelerated by the privations arising out of the "Bolshevik horrors" of the French Revolution.

Yours, etc., A. P. L.

MR. GOULD HAS THE LAST WORD

DEAR COMRADE,—J. F. H. pretends that the issue was whether he was like or unlike "most writers of *Daily Herald* reviews." This wriggle is so feeble that it seems barely necessary to recall the real issue: why did my other critic suggest that it was all right for *himself* to read Villon, but not for the *workers*?

J. F. H.'s other insinuations—that I suggested free libraries were "good enough for the workers": that I have no personal experience of the poverty which confines one's reading of new books to free libraries: and that "most writers of *Daily Herald* reviews" are not workers in precisely the same sense as he himself is—are all untrue, and the first and third of them at least must have been known to him to be untrue.

With people of this intellectual and moral temper further controversy is useless. The last word must necessarily remain with the PLEBS, and all fair-minded readers will by this time be convinced that you will use it to make false allegations and try to score personal points. To these last I confess myself indifferent. The aim of honest controversy is not the giving of personal offence; but even in this latter object you will always fail until you improve your technique and learn to conceal the pettiness of your object.

Speaking as a worker (I have earned my own living since I was 17), I reaffirm that my difference with Plebs such as J. F. H. and my other critic is very simple. They consider that they are in a position to tell the worker what is good for him; and that he is incapable—through lack of time, opportunity, or intellect—of choosing his own subjects and forming his own judgments. I consider this attitude undemocratic, arrogant, and pernicious. I have known various manual workers better educated, more capable of judgment, than any of you; but they would never have been so had they confined themselves to the curriculum you dictate.

Yours etc., GERALD GOULD

[As Mr. Gould so well puts it—"With people of this intellectual and moral temper, further controversy is useless." This correspondence is accordingly closed.—ED., PLEBS.]

THE PROBLEM OF THE EXCHANGES

DEAR EDITOR,—Mark Starr in this month's notes makes two assertions, which I think, require either explanation or correction. (1) "Stabilising the exchanges means getting the rates back between the old gold points." If "getting the rates back between the old gold points" means "Stabilisation," then, paradoxically, it also means a continuous or drastic "alteration" of the present exchanges.

J. M. Keynes, in the *Manchester Guardian Commercial Supplement*, "Reconstruction of Europe" (Section 1, page 3), says, "The foreign exchanges compare in value the money of one country with that of others. Thus their *fluctuations* necessarily affect merchants who buy in one place and sell elsewhere. But it is only *changes* which affect merchants, and it is of no consequence to them whether a dollar is worth 5 marks or 50 marks, provided the figure is always the same and is known beforehand. To ensure this invariability is the problem of Stabilisation." Again, "not only is the aim of improving an exchange distinct from stabilising it, but it is an opposed idea. If the dollar is worth 200 marks or the pound is worth 4 dollars the project of raising the value of the mark so that no more than 100 go to the dollar or of raising the value of the pound so that it may be worth nearly 5 dollars, so far from fixing the exchanges, means a deliberate policy of altering them."

(2) Comrade Starr says, in the same column, "The deviation from par is much greater between Germany and England than the case taken above" (between London and New York). "So great is the deviation that Central Europe will have soon been bought out owing to the huge purchasing power of the £1 and \$1 there." Does Starr not know that the German prices for export are some four and a half times those current for the home market, the increase being, of course, imposed by the German Government, which takes the difference between home and foreign prices in the form of "export tax"? Take, for instance, basketware prices at the March Leipzig Fair, which were 4000 per cent. above those of 1914 (reckoned in marks). Export prices of such ware were then 50 per cent. above inland, and were, in fact, rather above the world market price. The Soviet Republic are also aware of this danger of "buying out" through the exchanges being heavily against them. According to Krassin, "to permit unrestricted foreign trade would mean the complete ruin of the country. The importer of foreign goods could suck Russia dry in a month," etc., but, he says, "under no circumstances can the Soviet Power permit this." Therefore, while theoretically (Starr seems to think inevitably) the exchanges should result in stripping Central Europe of enormous wealth, such denudation, at least solely through the agency of the exchanges, seems highly improbable in Germany and Russia.

Wishing your monthly every success in its struggle to overthrow that baneful enemy Apathy, with the weapon of knowledge-created Interest,

Yours truly,
J. BAIN

[My notes of last month were drafted some months ago, long before Mr. Keynes had proposed a new "par" to be kept steady by the U.S.A. Federal Banks. Therefore my use of "stabilising" was in the older and more general sense. The arbitrary fixing of "export" and "home" prices is the natural attempt to stop the "buying out," and the Allies have an interest in doing this because it lessens the effectiveness of German competition, besides supplying a part of the indemnity payments. One cause of the high prices in Germany is certainly the foreign buyers.—M. S.]

know the difference between so and so." The untutored eye perceives similarities, where the eye that has knowledge and experience may see so many technical differences that it fails to notice the general similarity of objects.

Before closing, I should also like to say that I could have wished that the authors had chosen a happier example of a complex than that given on p. 4. It may be true, but it does not convince, and might have the result of many readers saying "Bunkum," and throwing down the book right at the start. Surely, with all the works on the subject at their disposal they could have chosen an example which would not strain one's credulity so much.

Yours fraternally,
L. MADELEINE WERTHEIM

LABOUR RESEARCH DEPT. SUMMER SCHOOL
To the Editor

Outline of Psychology, p. 79, § 68

DEAR COMRADE,—Whilst adding my voice to the chorus of appreciation of the above book, I venture to disagree with paragraph 2 of the above section *re* the perception of similarities. My own experience, drawn from memories of my own childhood and the recent observation of other children, has been to the effect that the difficulty does not consist in not perceiving similarities, but in the inability to perceive the *differences* between similar objects.

To make this point clear, I will quote actual examples. When about five years old I recollect being sent to collect the eggs from our hens; I not only collected the real eggs, but also the china ones put there to encourage the hens to lay. It is evident also that the hens perceived the similarity, but not the difference.

Now, to take other children. I have found numbers of them, and they cannot all be colour-blind, who do not distinguish between various colours or between shades of the same colours, though this faculty develops when they are older. Again, all flowers similar to daisies will be called daisies.

You will, in fact, often hear grown people say: "Oh, well, you can't expect me to

Owing to the success of its Summer School last year, the Labour Research Department is holding another school this year for three weeks from August 10th to September 9th. The Department has secured the Cober Hill Guest House, Cloughton, nr. Scarborough. The house stands in beautiful grounds and gardens, which include tennis courts, cricket pitch, bowling green and croquet lawn. Cloughton is only ten minutes from the sea, with excellent bathing, and within easy walking distance of the moors.

The programme of lectures for the three weeks will appeal to all those interested in Labour questions, at home and abroad. The first week is to be devoted to Immediate Problems of Labour at Home; the second week will deal with International questions; the last week is to be a special students' week, with lectures on (a) Education and the Working-Class Movement; and (b) the Achievement and Maintenance of Power by Labour. The inclusive charge per week is £3 3s. As the accommodation is limited any Plebeian interested should write *at once* to the Secretary, Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.

REVIEWS

20TH CENTURY MARXISM

The A B C of Communism. By Buharin and Preobrazhensky. Trans. by E. & C. Paul. (Communist Party, 5s. cloth; 3s. paper.)

THIS is not an easy book to review, for every section invites comment and expansion. Despite its excellent "get up" and cheapness, I confess to taking it up with a fear that it would be heavy, abstract and learned, or full of arid polemics between persons for the most part unknown to us. Therefore let me hasten to

say that it is a book of standard and permanent value which neither friend nor foe of Communism can ignore.

Communists, in deed and in name, are perforce engaged in the everyday struggles of the working class. But Communism is not merely the winning of this or that reform; it is a complete body of ideas, touching profoundly every aspect of life. Buharin and Preobrazhensky in explaining the 1919 programme of the Russian C.P. in this book leave no possible place untouched. It is a splendid armoury, and for many years to come sentences from it will be quoted as from a new *Communist Manifesto*.

One profitable way of approach for any student would be to compare this programme with that of the *Manifesto* and other succeeding ones before the actual test of practice in Russia changed old and developed new theories—before and after Marxism had to don its working-clothes. The authors of this book—men of action as well as theory, *not* of book lore and slipped ease—would be the first to admit that the three years intervening between 1919 and now have brought many changes which could again be used as a profitable line of study.

For example, they speak of the growing abolition of private trade and evidently think capitalism has no chance to re-stabilise itself. But those modifications and the unavoidable compromises do not lessen the value of the ideas behind the attempts made in Russia. A clear understanding is all the more imperative to limit these deviations, to remember the aim despite changed tactics, and to avoid running to pessimistic extremes, in Brailsford fashion, and talking about a whole nation returning to its hunt for gain. The last thing a United Front means is to forget the original aim.

Part I. summarises the chief features of capitalism as the causal factors of Communism. Thanks to the author and translators, this is in no uncouth jargon. (Incidentally words like "redintegrate" are not so good as "renew" in a popular edition; and why not give "labour-power" a hyphen?) When Buharin wants to bring home the ideal of capitalist production being for *sale*, he speaks about the capitalist who does not want to use all the coffins he has made, or to sew on his jacket all the buttons turned out from his factory or—however disordered his digestion—to drink all the castor-oil produced in his establishment. When he wants to show the fallacy of political democracy and a "common will" he asks: Can wolves and sheep have a common will?

This Part includes a summary of Financial Capital and Imperialism, with references to the 2nd and 3rd Internationals and the League of Nations. Part II. deals with the practical problems of the upbuilding of Communism. It is a frank discussion of the details and dangers of the workshops and the Army, law and education, trade union control and agriculture, the protection of the worker, the co-operative movement and many other matters.

At the end of each section the suitable portion of the Party Programme is printed in big type which, with the glossary and lengthy index, increases the usefulness of a valuable book.

K.

THE MECHANISM OF PERSONALITY

The Glands Regulating Personality. By Dr. Louis Berman. (Macmillan Co., New York. 18s. net.)

Readers of the Plebs Psychology Textbook will have noticed that the Textbook Committee have treated mental processes in terms

of conscious and unconscious "urges" or impulses. These are accepted as working hypotheses, "valid until we acquire a fuller knowledge of the underlying material mechanisms" instrumental in what we call our mentality. This point of view, which most elementary books on psycho-analysis tend to avoid, is one which appeals to the Marxian; and its success is indicated by the rapid advances that are being made on the physiological and behaviourist sides of psychology. In taking this line the Committee were, therefore, on safe ground.

It has long been known that there are certain glands in the body that discharge their secretions into the blood. These are the "ductless or endocrine glands," and the general activity of the body is powerfully influenced by them. In Chap. X. of the "Textbook" the importance of the endocrines is illustrated by reference to Steinach's experiments on sex-behaviour in rats, but there has rapidly been accumulating a very abundant literature on the results of such experimental work—especially on the medical side, and, right up to the time when the *Plebs Psychology* went to press, this work had not been described in a popular way in any book. Just at that time, however (October, 1921), the work now being noticed was published; and, in the words of the author, the facts on which it is based are like a "long sword of light illuminating a pitch-black spot in the night," this darkness being our want of knowledge of the bodily mechanisms that underly the Freudian "urges." Differences in various mental qualities—endurance, pugnacity, etc.—are shown to be due to the over-development or under-development of these various endocrine organs.

Thus we are on the way towards a description of the nature of the mechanisms which we believe are at the bottom of the Freudian complexes and urges, towards the formulation of a "Chemistry of the Soul." While the conceptions of complexes and obsessions and urges are still the most convenient tools for us to employ in our efforts to comprehend human and social behaviour in the individual and in the mass, Berman's book will continue to remind the Plebeian student of psychology that, while using these hypotheses, or tools, he must endeavour to keep his feet on the solid ground of material reality as disclosed by physiological discovery. If students lose this contact with mother earth they may find that psycho-analysis, and the various methods of psychology that have grown up with it, are apt to degenerate (as we see in the case of certain amateur Freudians and bourgeois intellectuals) either into semi-mystical cults or into parlour games that can mean nothing but harm to our movement.

TWO BIOLOGISTS*

* One of the writers of this review was the late Dr. Jameson. He sent us the MS. a few days before his death.

UNIVERSITY GENTS

Nineteenth Century Europe and Britain. By C. Raymond Beazley, D.Litt.

Britain as a European Power. By Andrew Browning, M.A. (Collins, 3s. 6d. each.)

Both of these books are "advanced" schoolbooks. They are both written by University men of presumable erudition. It is probable that in the future a number of children and adolescents will be forced to read them, and a number of Adult School attenders be induced to attempt them. They are worth a second glance as types of the text books officially provided nowadays.

Most striking, in its faults and its virtues, is the first. Dr. Beazley deals with the political history of the nineteenth century. Now in this period the two leading political movements are: (1) the growth and consolidation of bourgeois nationalism (ending in Imperialism); and (2) the uprising of the Labour movement. Of these two Dr. Beazley has a fair grasp of the first, and is completely ignorant of the latter. Worse than that, he has absolutely no conception, not of the importance, but of the mere existence of economic history.

Knowing purely political and diplomatic history fairly well, he is able to give an interesting, accurate, generally informative and at times well-written account of the intrigues between European Powers right up to the close of the world war. He is not blinded by patriotic prejudice and makes attempts even to be fair to Germans. He avoids atrocity stories in discussing the war, and with pathetic valiance offers the defence that it was all caused by the Kaiser, who was probably not quite all there, you know.

But throughout the whole story there is no suggestion that there might be any economic causes for the war. Nowhere is it remarked that there had been any economic progress in Germany since 1866. We are left subconsciously assuming that Germany in 1914 was much like Prussia fifty years before. And so all through his history. There appears to be no reason why these wars, these alliances, should have occurred. Perhaps it is in the nature of the beast, just as a bishop moves sideways and a knight does a slanting hop on the board. But, just as few of us could carry a Lasker game in our heads, so most readers of this book will forget all the complicated, meaningless tangle a week after they have read it.

In a few "Notes on Culture History," in small type at the end of each chapter, Dr. Beazley summarises among other subjects what he calls "Social Movements" or "Social Progress." In these he puts the "legalisation of Trades Unions" in 1871. There is no possibility of a misprint: the place in the book forbids that. It is a magnificent howler. Fifty years, nearly. How far-reaching must be the ignorance of a man who could publish it! Yet he is "D.Litt., F.R.G.S., Professor of Modern History,

Univ. of Birmingham, Late Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, Hon. Vice-President of the Royal Historical Society, Corr. Fellow of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences."

In the same section dealing with social movements of the years 1870-71 we do not find the Commune or the First International. What we do find are—"The Creation of Board Schools, the Prohibition of Infanticide in British India, the Foundation of Keble College, Oxford, the first piercing of the Alps . . . the Foundation of Catholic and Protestant Socialist Parties in Germany (!), the Foundation of Newnham College, Cambridge." If one had invented this list people would have called it a malicious and improbable parody!

I have left little space to deal with Mr. Browning's less astonishing book. It is, nevertheless, more valuable. Mr. Browning's summary of British foreign relations, which is more or less what it comes to, is very creditably done. It is accurate and readable, and, moreover, based on a sound knowledge of economic changes, such as the industrial revolution. It is vitiated by patriotic blindness and a lack of comprehension of the Labour Movement. (He thinks the Communards of 1871 were Communists.)

Both books are readably printed, strongly but ugly bound. Bad maps and no real index in Browning's.

R. W. P.

Getting and Spending, by the wife of the Minister of Education (Collins, 2s. 6d.) is one of the many volumes which reveal the growing interest in economics. And like many others it makes painful attempts to be "above the battle." Truth about these matters (if it exists at all) is always in some mystic hinterland, for upon all important matters there is room for an honest division of opinion. Sir W. Ashley, in an introduction, refers to a time when it was not so in political economy, when, if "economic laws" created social evils for the working people, well—so much the worse for those people. In the usual manner Mrs. Fisher makes the first store of corn "capital." She never faces how a surplus is created but tries to show what governs the respective shares of the national income into rent, interest, profit and wages. It is true, however, that later she suggests that the surplus comes from the use of machinery made possible by capital. Profits are to her the payment of management and if there is any extra profit left then this is struggled for by the opposing interests. The selling price is determined by the expenses of production and the demand of the buyer depends upon marginal utility. These are only a few of the points out of this rehash of the old mixed with a little new flavouring to make an "impartial" dish. But there are admirably simple explanations of banking and exchange and Ricardo's Differential Rent, which would be useful to beginners.

M. A.

ANOTHER BOOK OFFER!

¶ The PLEBS Cheap Edition of Postgate's "Revolution, 1789-1906," has aroused much interest among worker-students who could not afford to buy the original expensive edition.

¶ Here is another offer which we believe will arouse equal interest:—

SPECIAL PAPER-BOUND STUDENTS' EDITION OF MY REMINISCENCES OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

By M. PHILLIPS PRICE

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WILL YOU BE ONE ?

Read this Note by a Pleb:—

THREE SORTS OF BOOKS ON RUSSIA

Books on Russia are of three kinds. Firstly, the "horrible atrocity" kind. These are really a subdivision of the obscene; their interest is mainly psychological, not historical. Example: Lord Denbigh's speeches on the Nationalisation of Women.

Secondly, the *descriptive* kind. A revolution is journalistically remarkably good copy. It is dramatic, tragic, inspiring and sometimes beautiful. Its events call for artistic description. And from this description one may sometimes get a clear idea of the fundamental truth of what was happening. Example: John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World*.

Thirdly, the *historical* kind. Ultimately

this is the most valuable. And of its kind far and away the best is Phillips Price's *My Reminiscences*. Hitherto 18s., it was not an unfair 18s. worth—if anyone had got eighteen bob. Written absolutely from the working-class point of view, it is a classic of Marxist literature. Its 400 large closely-printed pages will at 6s. be astonishing value for money. It is the nearest that we shall get, for 20 years at least, to a genuine working-class history of the Revolution. It deserves to rank alongside *The 18th Brumaire* and the other historical writings of Marx himself. It is excellent, champion, magnificent. It really is a work that enables one to use those much-abused words in their real meaning. If you don't already own it, seize your chance now!

Send a post-card without delay to—

PLEBS BOOK DEPT., 162a, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.

The Individual and the Community. By R. E. Roper, M.A., M.Ed. (Allen & Unwin, 8s. 6d.)

"Nowhere are words more vaguely and varyingly used than in connection with the activities of the human mind," we read in the Preface to this book. After wading through the book we should like to refer the author to this very acute piece of self-criticism. Mr. Roper gives us a whole host of definitions of mind, soul, psychology, etc., which as relics of a 19th century mentality will undoubtedly prove interesting. For instance, a subtle scientific distinction is this: "Desire is elemental, will is spiritual."

To remedy the present state of society we are told that "we need no special training in Imperial History, in civics or in the science of government, or the works of Marx or Machiavelli." No, what we want is a good

old "change of heart," except that Mr. Roper, being cultured, prefers to speak of "internal harmony" and "the harmonising of vibrations."

The only good points in the book are the recognition of the difference between the State and the Community, and the criticism of the modern school.

J. B.

SPECIALLY GOOD

Labour's Case. By Fred Henderson. (2d. Postpaid from Plebs, 3d.)

The return of Henderson is an event in itself. This pamphlet (20 pp.) shows him at his best. As a popular review of recent politics and a presentation of Labour's social needs and political aims it should be in the hands of every worker, irrespective of sex or voting qualification. Literature Secretaries, note!

G.

PARS for PLEBS

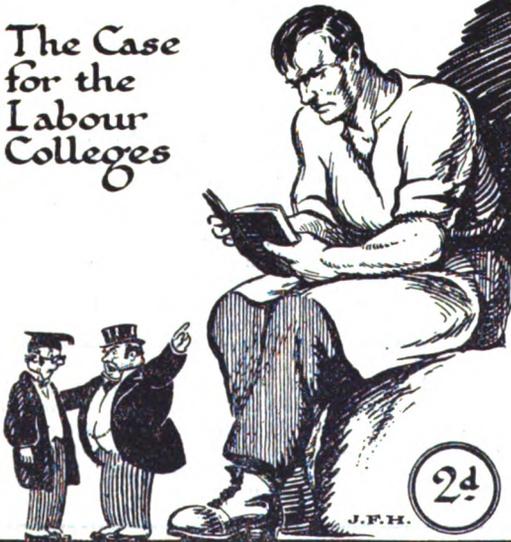
At least two snapshots of ardent Plebeians struggling under May-Day banners have reached the Office. BIRKENHEAD has been the first group to use the badge on a banner and very effective it looks too. The group is now 40 strong, and the energetic secretary

hopes for big things next winter. And not merely "hoping"—but preparing for them now. Many groups seem to hibernate—or the summer equivalent for hibernate—and the members thus lose interest and then drop out.

Will any comrades in the Gillingham (Chatham) area interested write to H. J.

MORE PRODUCTION — & MORE POVERTY

The Case
for the
Labour
Colleges



The Boss, (to his University Person)—'Ere, we can't ave this feller thinkin' for 'imself'!

The New N.C.L.C. Pamphlet

(12 pages, with coloured cover and three illustrations)

This pamphlet, written by J. P. M. Millar, and with a Foreword by

ROBERT SMILLIE

puts the case for Independent Working-Class Education freshly and pithily.

EVERY N.C.L.C. DISTRICT AND CLASS SHOULD ORDER A SUPPLY FOR SUMMER PROPAGANDA.

See "N.C.L.C. Notes" (p. 181) for terms.

Trotter, c/o PLEBS Office. He is anxious to get a group together and ultimately to run classes. He has been working with the Millars of Edinburgh, and their enthusiasm seems to be catching.

CHESTERFIELD ("gingered" by Frank Rogers) is also "moving." Their latest is a good propaganda scheme for distributing the PLEBS. They sell four copies for the price of three, on condition that the buyer plants the odd copy for propaganda; and also guarantee to supply subscribers with free copies during unemployment.

ILFORD is another group which refuses to hibernate during the summer. The secretary uses to the full the advantages of a local Press and one can generally find letters or "points of explanation" that manage somehow to drag in a reference to Plebs work and publications. Other groups please note. Use the local Press, and never let a challenge to explain your point of view go by. Publicity is the breath of life to a propagandist organisation, and every chance should be seized with both hands.

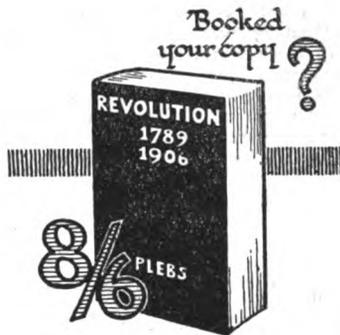
The group at STAFFORD is running a summer class and looking forward to strenuous work this winter. Link up, all sympathisers and friends. Write Sec., 4, Browning Street, Stafford.

JUST TO REMIND
ME—



HAVE you studied the particulars of our scheme for a cheap edition of Phillips Price's *Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution*? If you're a live book-buyer, and appreciate the difference between a real book and mere "news from the graveyard," you'll be sending us a post-card about this without delay.

Have you got your copy of our special edition of *Revolution, 1789-1906*? You'll be kicking yourself in the near future if you miss your opportunity. Read what William Paul says about the book—and about us—on another page.



Occasionally comrades ask us if we can put them in touch with others who would be willing to form parties for holidays abroad. It is of course quite possible to get such a holiday as cheap, or even cheaper, than staying in England at overcrowded watering-places. The Workers' Travel Association will be glad to send particulars of trips to Normandy, Bruges, etc., at remarkably cheap rates—mostly £5 to £8, week or fortnight. The office is at Toynbee Hall (28, Commercial Road, London, E.1). Don't write us—write to the Association direct.

Holiday jaunts offer many opportunities for fruitful intercourse, and the parties organised by the Association should prove useful in exchange of ideas, as well as enjoyable—and well within the means of many Plebeians. One wishes that it were possible to take every English worker to the magnificent Gewerkschaftshaus at Hamburg, with café, offices of all the Unions, hotel, cinema, theatre—all under one roof, and all run for the benefit of the workers. They would come back with a healthy distaste for the local pub, as a meeting house for the branch, and perhaps begin to think about fine houses for their organisations as well as their officials!

W. H.

The PLEBS BOOKSHELF

And the Plebs Book Department

Here's news about a forthcoming book which is going to sell in thousands. If you're a reader of the *Railway Review* you know something about it already; if not we'll put you wise right now, as our gentle American cousins would say. Thomas Ashcroft, an N.U.R. student at the Labour College, 1919-21, and a frequent contributor to these pages, has written a Short History of Modern Imperialism—from the beginnings of the modern period in the 'eighties of the last century down to Genoa. It is a first-class piece of work. It aims at no new interpretation or original critical judgment. It just compresses, into one handy volume

(which it will be possible to produce at not more than 2s. 6d. at the outside), the main facts of the international history of the last half-century; just those very facts which are absolutely essential to the student of world affairs of to-day, but which the ordinary student, unless he can afford to buy a small library of books on the subject, cannot lay his hands on. It is written, easily and forcefully, from the proletarian point of view.

The twelve chapters are appearing serially in the *Railway Review*, the editor of which, Willett Ball, was quick to recognise the enormous value of the material Ashcroft had got together. We hope next month to be able to announce particulars of its publication in book form—in our Textbook Series. Meantime, make your plans for courses on Modern Imperialism next winter. The textbook will be there.

[I note, just as we go to press, that the learned editor of the *Labour Monthly*, reviewing the Plebs Psychology Textbook, complains that "the Marxism the PLEBS teaches is a non-party Marxism," and brands us as "academic" in that we "teach without deducing the lessons from what we teach." Without prejudice to a further discussion of this criticism next month, I will just remark here that he will have to tender his apologies when he gets his review copy of Ashcroft's book. And, by the way, his whole criticism of our aims and our work is a fine sample of academicism—new style.]

You will also need a good atlas to use with Ashcroft's book. I have just found one that perfectly fills the bill from the point of view of the ordinary student. It is a miracle of cheapness—and quality. Make a note of it now:—Philip's *Elementary Atlas of Comparative Geography*, price 2s. (postpaid from Plebs, 2s. 4d.). I have turned over a good many different atlases in the search for a really good one for class use.

This one is the thing.

For advanced students, Bartholomew and Lyde's *Atlas of Economic Geography*, now revised to date (6s. net, postpaid 6s. 6d.) is still the standard work. But the Philip's *Elementary Atlas* is admirably suited for the beginner. It has 40 coloured plates, containing 90 maps and diagrams, and a good Index. Its physical (contoured) maps are excellently done, and beautifully clearly printed. It is, in brief, and once and for all, the atlas for the worker-student; and the Plebs Book Dept. will keep a stock of it ready for immediate delivery henceforth.

You don't only need an atlas if you want to keep abreast of current affairs. You need to be a diligent (which doesn't mean an omnivorous) newspaper reader; and to study cartoons, for example, as well as leading articles. Therefore you should make a point of getting "Espoir's" *Communist Cartoons* (2s., postpaid 2s. 3d.). Since Dyson's palmy days in the pre-war *Herald*, there have been no cartoons on our side with anything like the "kick" of these. Every

Labour Institute and class-room in the country ought to frame and hang up such a drawing as "The Anglo-Irish Conference," with the great ghost of Connolly behind the conference table—just for remembrance! And every I.W.-C.E. class should stick up the cartoon here reproduced in miniature, writing below it the words, "We can—when we KNOW HOW!"



Mister MacDonal, writing in *Forward* (May 20th) on "The Fruits of Genoa," pays you and me a pretty compliment. "The Russian reply to Capitalism," says he, "bears the stilted impress of a Plebs Study Class. . . ." I don't mind the least bit being shoved into the same galley as Tchitcherin and Krassin—do you?

The May issue of the *Highway*, the W.E.A. monthly, contained one of the brightest and breeziest short statements of the Plebs point of view in education, as compared with the W.E.A. attitude, that I have ever read. This was an article on "Rival Philosophies of Working-Class Education," by Eden and Cedar Paul. Every Pleb who has to join issue with W.E.A. apologists should keep a copy of this issue by him for reference—and underline a sentence or two in the editorial reply to E. & C. P.'s home-thrusts. The notable points in this reply were: (i.) that the writer admitted that State educational institutions are "controlled by the capitalist class"; and (ii.) that nobody in the W.E.A. (to-day) believes in "the fundamental unity of modern society"—or if there be such a believer then he is a "remarkable anachronism." It only remains now for the W.E.A. to discover that this fundamental dis-unity of society has some bearing on the question of working-class education, and then it will be coming along and affiliating to the N.C.L.C.

To conclude:—Make a note of the atlas, of Ashcroft's book, of the scheme for a cheap edition of Phillips Price—and of the 48-pp. PLEBS next month. Don't wait until the summer's over to get busy. What about a Plebs Push now?

J. F. H.

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