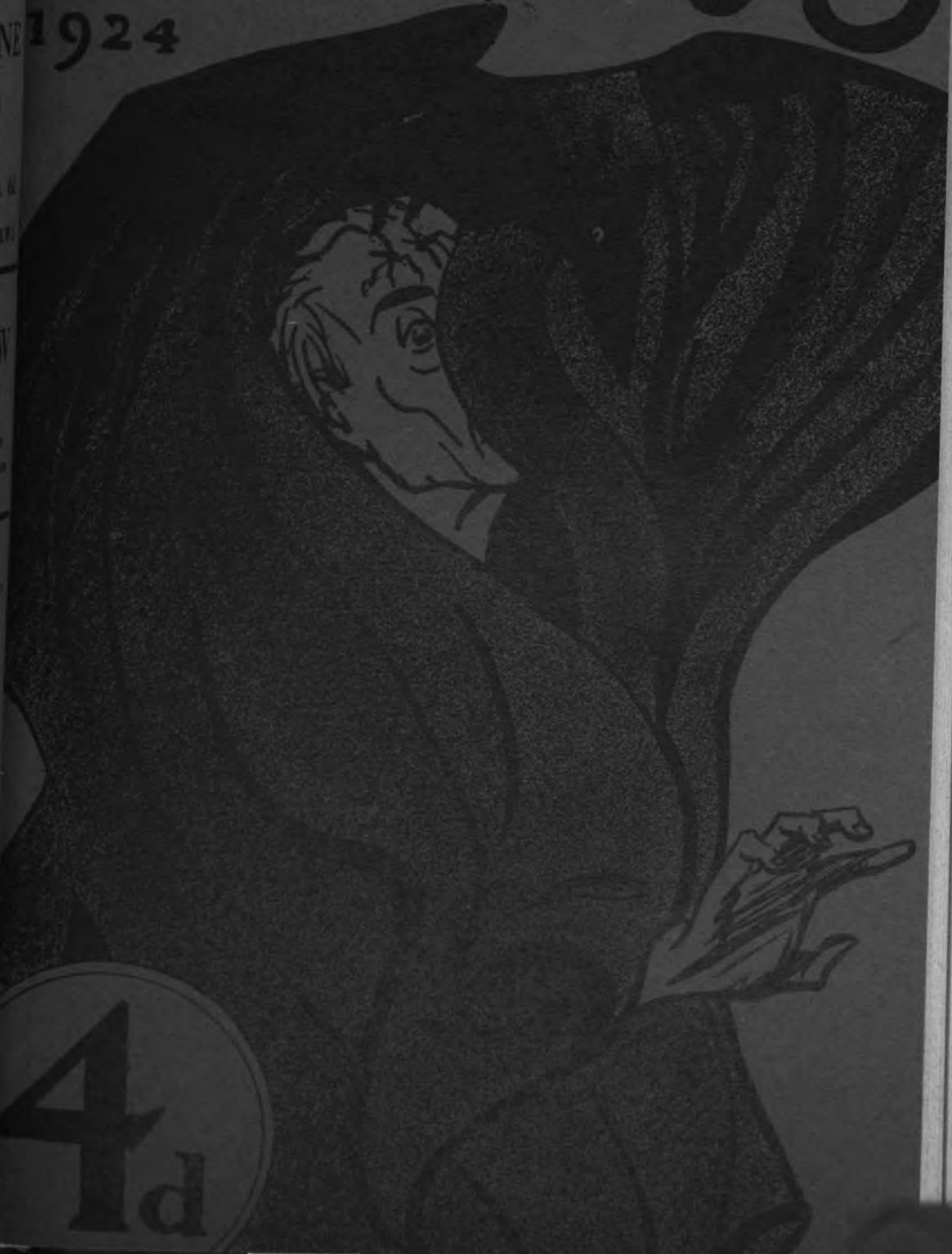


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No. II

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WE EXAMINE OURSELVES

THE new class session has opened upon the rush and pressure of a Parliamentary election ; but we must not allow this to hide from us the fact that it opens too upon what may well be a new era for Independent Workers' Education in this country. In the first place, the establishment of the Dawes Plan as an attempt to stabilise capitalism and to fasten the chains of servitude more securely on the workers, gives to the class struggle new problems and a new urgency. In the second place, the increasing recognition which our movement is beginning to obtain calls for us to take more and more the work of trade union education into our charge, and imposes upon us burdens greater by far than those which we have hitherto known.

The new political conditions must not be thought to mean a postponement of militant struggle. On the contrary, they merely

point the need for intenser struggle than before, and for its organisation on a more comprehensive scale. Hence the vital necessity which faces us is to set before the workers the class issue in sharp and simple terms, so that they may see behind the wordiness of politicians and the chaos of detailed happenings to the chief lines of the most relevant facts. This must be the prelude—but will be no more than a prelude—to the rallying of the workers on clearly defined class issues in conscious opposition to the power which stands over against them as their master and receives its most polished embodiment in the Dawes Report.

In this rallying of the workers on definite class issues our function, of course, is not to supply the actual political slogans of the struggle or to make pronouncements as to the actual forms which the struggle from time to time must take. Our work is to supply *a knowledge of the relevant facts* of the situation—facts of the past and of the present—so as to demonstrate what the true issues are. Coupled with this is our work of providing *the means of interpreting these facts*, and this requires us to develop among all the active workers in the movement the capacity for clear dispassionate thinking—a subtly wrought tool of the mind which the working class needs for the problems which confront it more than any other class has needed it in times of stress before.

We are, therefore, faced with a double task, to which it is imperative that all Plebeians should bend their backs in the coming winter. First is the need to *relate our teaching more closely to the actual struggle*, so that we may quickly sense the changing needs of the struggle which our teaching must serve. Second, we must *raise the quality and standard of our education* above its present level. We shall only persuade trade unions to entrust their education to us, if we can prove, not only that our aims and intentions are better than anybody else, but that our execution is also superior in quality.

The first need means that we must probably have less of theory and abstract phrases and more attention to present day facts than has been customary in the past. At any rate, our education must have a greater elasticity, so as continually to adapt teaching to meet the ever-changing needs of the moment. We must not be content to prove that economic conditions produce class struggle, and then to imply airily that Socialism follows as an "inevitable" "effect." We must stress the need for *conscious, active struggle*—and must *apply* our education to an examination

*Less Words
and
More Fact*

of the forms which that struggle takes, and to a careful dissection of the detailed problems to which that struggle gives rise.

At the same time our second task requires us to caution ourselves against a pressing danger. We must not confuse our educational work with the distinct task of the propagandist agitator, whose aim is to stimulate the emotions of his audience by the use of words, as does the musician with sounds and rhythm and the artist with colour and design. The agitator plays the important rôle of rousing men to take specific action. Our task is to provide the mental tools by which a wise choice of action may be made. For the agitator words perform the part that the red rag to the bull plays for the toreador. For us words must be what lines are for the draughtsman or the map-maker—shorthand symbols for complex facts. A principal part of our education, in fact, consists in disentangling words from their emotional colour and associations and in teaching their use in strict relation to actual fact. For, words are the vehicles of thought, and only in the degree that we can separate them from our emotions and use them as strict representatives of things will our thinking be realistic, scientific and practical, in contrast with the emotion-tinged dreaming of the mystic and the utopian. It is probably in improvement in this direction that much of the second part of our task lies. The duty of the teacher is not to overlay the mind with a new set of prejudices or to induce a transitory mood of anger and resentment against a monster labelled "capitalism." On the contrary, it is to clear the mind and to give to students that apprehension of facts and power of realistic analysis of them which has made the teacher himself a fighter in the class struggle. And let us remember that vague abstract terms are much more likely to be suffused with emotional colour, and so to be a cloak instead of an instrument of thought, than are concrete words which can be easily related to something in our experience which they represent. In this fact lies the heart of the problem of simplification!

Here, then, is a task for our Plebs groups. Let them be the pioneers in the various districts in undertaking this double task.

*Work for
Plebs Groups
To Do*

Let them be the centres to which tutors and advanced students can congregate to discuss informally teaching methods and the more detailed aspects of our studies which do not find room in an ordinary class. Let them arrange open conferences and discussions on vital political questions. Let them meet and plan how to develop our studies in directions which will better serve the needs of the workers' struggle. All too often we satisfy ourselves by concluding an exposition of theory with a

pious moral about the solidarity of the workers or a sneer at those who think the workers can be emancipated by democratic means. But that is to leave the major task of workers' education untouched. Recently there have been welcome signs of increased attention to modern imperialism in our studies. Our pamphlet on FASCISM is already selling rapidly. But there is much yet to be done in this way—valuable lessons to be gleaned from the history of working-class politics in Russia prior to the Revolution, from Labour in Australia, from the failure of the experiment in a Workers' Government in Saxony last autumn, from Lenin's theories about the correct tactics in opposition to War, from the history of our own Trades Councils, etc. Why should not Plebs Groups prepare material for the study of questions such as these, and urge the necessity of such study upon tutors, secretaries and classes? Again, the methods of teaching in our classes and our standard of tutors are capable of great improvement. Why cannot Plebs groups be the pioneers in popularising more modern methods, in helping to develop more tutors, and in setting for them a higher standard of proficiency?

Let us, therefore, revive the Plebs groups. Let them see to it in the present session not only that the numbers in our classes are swollen and that the circulation of the magazine is pushed up to that 10,000 line! Let them see to it that there is improvement in what our movement teaches and the way it teaches! Only so shall we be equal to the burdens which the future holds in store for us.

M. H. D.

ARE YOU

**A FASCIST OR
COOPERATOR?**

SEE

PAGE

431

WHERE CAPITALISM ENTERED ENGLAND

LIBEL OF ENGLISH POLICIE (XVth Century).

. for the wolle of England
Susteineth the Commons Flemings I understand.
Then if England should her wolle restraine
From Flanders, thus followeth in certaine,
Flanders of nede must with us have peace,
Or els shee is destroyed without lees.
Also if Flanders thus destroyed bee
Some Marchandy of Spaine will never ythee: [develop]
For destroyed it is, and as in cheeffe
The wolle of Spaine it commeth not to preeffe,
But if it be costed and menged [mixed] well
Amongst the English wolle the greter delle.
. what is Flanders also?
As who sayd, nought, the thrift is agoe [without profit]
For the little land of Flanders is
But a staple [market place] to other lands ywis [I think].
What hath then Flanders, bee Flemings liefte or loth,
But a little Mader [Madder dye] and Flemish Cloth:
By Drapering of our wooll in substance
Liven her commons, this is her governance,
Without which they may not live at ease.
Thus must hem starve, or with us must have peace.

IF we are to believe Kipling it was somewhere upon the luscious meads of Romney Marsh that the fairies left England for more pleasant surroundings, and, doubtless, a more agreeable climate. Ever from boyhood's days it had been my desire to see what manner of place it was from which they had taken their departure. There, not remote from the silted-up roadstead that had lain between Winchelsea and Rye, harbours of long dead pirates and reformed sea-beggars, appointed wardens of the Narrow Seas, one could almost have expected again to have come upon some green-jacketed waif that having strayed aside had been left behind. So desolate and so sparsely populated is that corner of Kent that one could dream away into the lost ages of Romance, into the England that, if it ever was—and I, at any rate, believe most fervently in fairies—must have been a very long time ago, away back before even that last fine summer we had. Equally anxious had I been, if not so long, yet for many a year, to discover that other corner of the country where—Capitalism entered England.

The other day, careering round the villages behind Lowestoft in a "tin lizzie" that, with its owner, had been pressed into the service of the North Suffolk Labour Party, I came upon that very corner.

Slipping down a slight declivity, along a roadway lined with fir and crab-apple trees, we ran out across a bridge over the Waveney upon the reclaimed estuary of that river which forms, with the Yare, a part of the inter-lacing Broads of North Suffolk and South Norfolk. There, on that flat expanse of reed-fringed land, away to the sea at Lowestoft or at Gorleston in one direction and up country towards Bungay in the other, was where Capitalism made its appearance in our midst. Up the tidal waterways that pierce the line of the Saxon shore, up the Orwell, the Stour, the Waveney and the Yare, but particularly up the last two, came in the ninth century to settle for the first time in this country, the Danish marauders who, as time went by, became as much and more traders than free-booters. Not, of course that there was, from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, much to differentiate them from each other. In the beginning, a trading, a pirate and a war-ship was each in turn and all in one. The "black heathen," whose long-ships ran in and out of every creek and fiord of the Northern Seas, and whose colonies spawned each spring their vigorous bill-men upon the neighbouring and richer coasts between seed-time and harvest, gradually formed the *nuclei* of the German Hanse.

The merchants of the Hanse, ship-men all, became the carriers between the lordships and the enfranchised and ever more wealthy and privileged town on the shores of the Baltic and North Seas and the rivers flowing into them across the German, Polish and Lithuanian plains.

The free-men of Frisia, Holland, Zealand, Flanders, Norfolk and Suffolk, owning their own ships and following the commingled occupations of fishermen, free-traders and free-booters, developed across the generations of Viking adventure and enterprise an ever more continuous, an ever less intermittent commerce in the yield of the grazing lands and the harvest of the sea.

They carried over from East Anglia, from the manors of Norfolk and of Suffolk—one hundred out of four hundred and fifty-three townships in the latter were in 1316 the property of Holy Church—the wool that the monastic graziers had for export to the weavers of the Flemish cities. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, they took an even more considerable proportion of this wool in the form of rough cloth from such villages as Kersey and Worsted, which gave their place-names to the characteristic fabrics that they produced. They conveyed out of the country, cloth dyed with the woad and mallow grown in the marshes and fields of East Anglia.

Going through the country-side in Suffolk one is struck by the extraordinary number of churches—there were 398 recorded in the Domesday Survey—many of them with old round towers of obvious Norman style and date, standing on mounds or high ground, evi-

dently stockaded settlements of an early and very troublous past. One notes that, often, super-imposed on the rude round towers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are upper courses of fourteenth and fifteenth century work of finer finish. The villages are of great age, the chancels and the porches, the naves and the aisles of their churches embellished with the craftsmanship of the period of the French Wars. The population has declined, the houses have long fallen into decay. It is a dead and yet a speaking past whereon one looks.

The Saxon settlers must have been most numerous. In the period of the Danish raids, of the sombre visitations that the cunning clergy attributed to the approach of the Millenium and the preparatory unchaining of the Devil to go ravening over the earth, the manors of Suffolk seem to have come to have quartered upon them more churches than almost any other part of Christendom. The clergy were cashing the credulity of their flock into donations of their earthly goods as security for celestial seats and golden harps.

When the Norman and Plantagenet kings established stable government, when brigandage by land and sea became negligible, Holy Church put its lands under the mild-eyed sheep, those bleating prototypes of the shorn flock of Christ. Richest of all the English monasteries of the Middle Ages was St. Edmunds at Bury, with its 300 manors, many of them in Suffolk. The tenantry of Holy Church were encouraged to weave and full and dye, contributing tithe of their industry to their patrons.

By 1315, so considerable had become the trade in cloth that "worsted" and "aylehams" were ordered by the King, at the instance of those Flemish merchants who lent him money in return for the right of export, to be of a carefully regulated length and breadth.

In 1336, Edward III. settled at Sudbury and elsewhere in Suffolk a whole colony of Flemish *master-weavers* whose activities in his cause and against their lord, the Count of Flanders, had made their native land too "hot" for them. The King's dependence on his Flemish capitalists may be judged from the fact—kept out of the school-histories, of course—that, when he returned home to plead with Parliament and his merchants for money, the said capitalists kept the Archbishop of Canterbury or even the Black Prince as security and, on one occasion, kept the King himself till they got "something on account."

By 1376 dyed cloth had become a staple manufacture of Suffolk, and in 1381, at Hadleigh, one in five of the adult males was in the cloth trade.

The antagonism of the small tenants, weavers, especially the smaller men, to the landed interest of the Church, was revealed

in the Peasant Revolt, when the two parties, joining forces, slaughtered a number of high-placed clerics and the whole shire seems to have risen almost *en masse*. Lowestoft and Bungay were especial hotbeds.

In the next half century, the Waveney Valley was saturated with Lollardism and, we are told, "the offenders were mostly of the working classes."

At this same time, the merchant clothiers, who employed the weavers, were, in their piety and their self-advertisement, building new churches, restoring chancels, naves, aisles and belfries, founding charities and endowing chantries. Some, like Spring of Lavenham, were marrying their daughters into the earldoms and were buying up manors right and left.

In the sixteenth century, when these same merchant clothiers were glutted with merchant capital, ready to invest in industrial expansion and wanting not to resist but to reinforce usury and to buy land, they welcomed with aplomb the Protestant Reformation. "Foreign elements," we are assured, were strong amongst them. They bought up the gold and silver of the churches and, as churchwardens, deflected the proceeds of the holy vessels not to providing for the starving, but to defray the outlay on ordnance and harness for armed forces, charges that had otherwise fallen on their tax revenue. They let, in the Suffolk Archdeaconry alone, in 1561, 136 parishes be without a resident ordained minister, and, by 1602, had permitted the chancels of twenty-four churches to go to ruin. They had even stripped the linen from the communion tables. In 1528 they had caused such a clamour against the King's foreign policy and had dismissed so many weavers on the plea that they could not sell their cloth, that Cardinal Wolsey had summarily threatened to take the cloth trade into the King's hands! In fact, in the shady years of Bluff King Hal and the spacious days of Good Queen Bess, the audacity and brass-faced impudence of the Suffolk capitalists had to be encountered to be credited!

J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD.

HAVE YOU SEEN THE TWO
NEW BOOKLETS?

SEE

PAGE

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LENINISM :

A SUBJECT FOR PLEBS STUDIES

Com. Rothstein here makes a suggestion as to a possible way in which our studies may be developed by a study of working-class politics. This article presents the view of one who is both a Pleb and a Communist ; and although The PLEBS is entirely non-party, it has no hesitation in recommending these suggestions for the consideration of its readers and for discussion.

LENINISM is Marxism in the period of imperialism. It is not *practical* Marxism, or *applied* Marxism ; for Marxism is not only a theory, it is a practice itself. But "classical" Marxism was the application of Marx's theory and practice to the problems of the nineteenth century—the period of "peaceful" development of capitalism. Leninism is the application of Marxist theory and practice to the problems of the twentieth century—the period of aggressive imperialism, the *last* stage of capitalism.

Why do we call it "Leninism" ? Because Lenin was the only Marxist leader who led the working class through the storms of imperialism into an actual assault on capitalism. Lenin was the only Marxist leader who actually led the working class to "the expropriation of the expropriators." Lenin was the only Marxist leader who, both in practice and in theory, developed Marx's principle of "the dictatorship of the proletariat." Lenin was the only Marxist leader who, both in practice and in theory, began "the Socialist organisation of production."

Is there such a thing, though, as the study of Leninism ? There is. Literally hundreds of thousands of workers throughout the Union of Soviet Republics are studying it, at weekly classes, study-groups, and trade union colleges. Scores of textbooks, big and little, are being published. The study of Leninism is Independent Working-Class Education—in an independent working-class State.

Is it worth while British workers studying Leninism ? What has it to offer them ? It shows them imperialism as "the last stage of capitalism" ; and consequently imperialist conflict as the *gateway* to the overthrow of capitalism. It shows us the peasantry, either at home or in the economically subjected colonies, as the natural allies of the proletariat, and therefore equally interested with the proletariat in the overthrow of Empires. It shows us the proletariat as the *only* revolutionary class to-day ; not merely "revolutionary to the end," but the only class which is revolutionary

at the beginning. From this we get the rôle of the proletariat as the leader and organiser of all the other classes interested in the overthrow of capitalism. Leninism analyses and destroys the bourgeois theories of the State, and revives in a sharper form Marx's principle that the State is the machinery whereby the ruling class maintains its domination. From this Leninism draws the conclusion that every epoch in the class struggle has its own form of State ; and it seeks the working-class State in the machinery whereby the proletariat imposes its own domination most effectively—the Soviets.

Independent Working-Class Education in Britain presents from the proletarian point of view the subjects hitherto controlled and twisted by the bourgeoisie—economics, history, geography, psychology, literature, the Labour movement. There is one branch of knowledge, however, of immediate importance in the class struggle, which it has neglected. That is "political science," not the emasculated, illogical and eclectic political science which the bourgeoisie teaches (because it dare not teach any other), but revolutionary Marxist and monist political science (which the workers require). Leninism gives us that Marxist political science. It gives the Marxist *method of approach* (not the answer) to the problems facing the British workers to-day—relations with the colonies, relations with the middle class, dictatorship, imperialist war, and so on.

True, there is a final principle of Leninism to which many Plebs do not subscribe. Leninism sees the hopelessness of the proletarian struggle on so many fronts unless it is co-ordinated and led by a single proletarian party ; and because capitalism in the imperialist stage is world-wide and world-organised, the proletariat in the *revolutionary* stage must also be world-organised, and the proletarian party must be an international party. The only Marxist Party which accepts *all* the principles of Leninism is the Communist Party.

But many Plebs do not yet admit this final conclusion, which the Communists press. Very well, let us leave this point for the time being, if we are talking of study and not of political activity. We Communists will go on building our Party and putting our Party point of view to the workers. But we say to you Plebs who stand for Marxian education : "Take Leninism as a subject for study—for study with the workers, of course. Leninism must be tested by its replies to the questions they ask, not by an academic criterion. You will find that every principle in Leninism gives you the answer to some question amongst those which are uppermost in the workers' minds to-day. Go through those questions systematically one by one, and see what Lenin and Leninism have to say on them. We Communists are certain that, if you are as frank

with yourself as you are with your worker pupils (not so easy), you will have to accept the principle of the Party too, when you come to it. But we are content to leave that to the future. Meanwhile, we are ready to co-operate with you in bringing Lenin as close to the British workers as he was to the Russian."

I have perhaps been too summary in this article. But time is short, and this is not a question which bears postponement. What do Plebs say about it?

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN.

WORLD HISTORY—SCIENCE OR FAIRY-TALE ?

I THINK most of us have an admiration for H. G. Wells, however we may despise his limited political outlook, which makes us unduly tolerant of anything he sets his hand to. Certainly I began this book (*A Short History of the World*, Labour Publishing Co., paper 1s. 6d.) in a state of some excitement, hoping to have found at last that succinct account of the development of human society for which we have long been waiting. Moreover, it has been re-issued at a price which brings it within the reach of every worker. But when I laid it down I was not only disappointed; I was angry and resentful. It is, on the whole, a dull, wordy, rhetorical piece of typically ruling-class historifying.

It is not merely the effect of compression. Margaret Cole has shown in her brilliant sketch, *An Introduction to World History*, that even a syllabus of forty-four pages can be made a valuable guide. And moreover, the book is not merely a condensation of the well-known *Outline* (which I am not criticising here). We are told in the preface that it is an entirely new book, written with a different aim, meant to be read "almost as a novel is read." (But none of Mr. Wells' novels are so tedious.) The whole purpose and conception and tone of this book is fundamentally obsolete and misleading. Let us ask ourselves first what we mean by a short history of the world. We want a generalised description of the evolution of *society*, discussing mass movements and tendencies, linking them up with each other and showing which is supreme at different periods and *why*. (Mr. Wells never tells us *why*.) We have no time for dynasties and long lists of proper names; great men must be seen in the perspective of the great social trends which alone give them power and opportunity. And, above all, man must be set against the background of his physical environment, reacting to it, gradually

extending his control over it, and creating in the process certain social arrangements suitable at first to the existing mode of production. I have tried to state this simply, to appeal to a non-Marxist. In essence, it is the scientific method applied to history. Mr. Wells does not believe in history as a science; he refuses to look for any general rules, far less to improve them. He is content to regard world history as a story of the "great adventure of mankind," a fairy tale in which sequence and cause and effect have no place, in which men and institutions appear as by magic, and events just happen.

Now for some detailed criticism. To begin with, Mr. Wells shows a distinct lack of plan and perspective. He has tried to write both a history of the world and a history of mankind, giving the first 2,000,000,000 years some twenty pages and the subsequent 40,000 of man's existence the remaining two hundred. Surely it would have been better to stick to the history of man or of human society, and left the amoeba to its primeval slime. Later on there are some remarkable omissions. Nothing is said of the beginnings of the division (or co-operation) of labour, nor of ancient social institutions, nor of the rise of the state. There is nothing about the origin and economic function of slavery. In the three chapters devoted to Greece no mention is made of the fact that Greek civilisation rested on the basis of a slave-economy, nor of the class-war element in Greek citizen-struggles (perceived even by Aristotle). Wells does not tell us *why* the Vandals and Goths and other tribal peoples invaded the Roman Empire; he calls them "robber armies of barbarians," ignorant of the pressure of their numbers on their means of subsistence and their snatch-crop agriculture.

In the chapters dealing with the Middle Ages there is actually no reference to serfdom, to the manorial village community, to guilds or any other mediæval social institution outside of the Church! The rise of capitalism and the transformation of a town into a national economy after the twelfth century are described as "trade was reviving." More, in the chapter called "The Industrial Revolution," the word capital, or capitalism, and the whole *conception* of such things, are entirely absent! No reference is made to Chartism, to the socialist element in the '48; while the Paris Commune and the German Revolution of 1918 are not so much as mentioned. (No, I am not joking.) Finally, we are told that Marx held that "men's minds are limited by their economic necessities" (whatever that may mean), and that the Great War was due to the growth of armaments.

For any sort of economic interpretation of history, for any recognition of the fundamental importance of the class-struggle as the social dynamic, Mr. Wells has nothing but contempt. Writing

in the interests of the few, the ruling-class, he attributes most influence to great men, such as the Emperor Charles V., who gets six pages, and whose fondness for eel-pasty is immortally recorded. (Napoleon, on the other hand, whom he dislikes, receives less than a page.)

Do you realise now why this blind book angered me, and why our heart's desire is still to seek?

J. L. GRAY.

BIRTH CONTROL

ROSE WITCOP'S reprint of Margaret Sanger's pamphlet, *Family Limitation*, has been sent to The PLEBS for review; and the time is certainly ripe for Plebeians to consider the bearing of birth-control upon the working-class movement. Numerous resolutions in favour of official (municipal and governmental) aid in the diffusion of knowledge of the methods of family limitation, came up for discussion at the recent Labour Party Congress.

There is no space here to consider the theory of birth control at any length. Unfortunately there is not much literature written avowedly from the working-class standpoint to which the student can turn—not much in the English language, at any rate. *Population and Birth Control, a Symposium*, edited by Eden and Cedar Paul, is one of the most comprehensive, for it contains articles by well-known Continental and British socialists, as well as contributions from the outlook of those who recommend birth control as a cure-all for the diseases that afflict society. But the work is costly, and has never been published on this side of the Atlantic. The price is three dollars, postage extra, and it may be obtained from The Critic and Guide Company, 12, Mount Morris Park West, New York.

The Malthusian belief that over-population is the essential cause of poverty will not be accepted by any socialist, as far as contemporary society is concerned. On the other hand, as Karl Pearson wrote a good while ago, in the days when he was an avowed Marxist (and he has never, so far as I am aware, repudiated Marxism), Marx did not solve the population problem by abusing Malthus. The population problem is very much alive to-day, and it is independent of forms of government. It is equally urgent in Soviet Russia and in Fascist Italy. In the former, we learn that population is now increasing by two millions annually. In the latter, the yearly excess of births over deaths is half a million, leading the Fascist Dictator to rattle the war-drum in a recent speech. Italians, he said, were too intelligent to practise birth control, and the only

alternatives were to make war or to "seek an outlet" for over-population. War to-day, or imperialist expansion to-day and war to-morrow—if you are "too intelligent" to apply human knowledge to the control of the natural environment! Pass Russia and pass Italy. Here in Britain we shall have in the near future to face the need, not for a mere checking of increase, but for a drastic reduction of population. The conditions that rendered possible the vast increase of population in Britain during the nineteenth century have vanished never to return. It seems likely that by the year 2000 this country will have to be content with half its present population.

But, in an age of transition, we are much more concerned with birth control as an individual problem than as a social problem. As an actual fact, even for men, family limitation is almost essential to active participation in the working-class movement; for women it is absolutely indispensable. The "blessed" woman whose quiver is full has no time or energy to spare for activities outside the home. "Her place is the home," perforce. If you glance at the list of women who are taking a prominent part in the labour movement to-day, you will see that almost all of them are either unmarried women or women living in what the American Professor Knight calls the "companionate" rather than "marriage" in the ordinary sense of the term. That is to say, they are living in a sexual partnership from which the idea of child-bearing is wholly or almost wholly excluded. A pity, you will object, that these women of exceptional energy and intelligence should leave the task of perpetuating the race to the dullards! Agreed, but we are living, let me repeat, in an age of transition, and cannot attempt to-day to settle the eugenic problem of to-morrow. We must fight our own battle first, and in our own way, for thus only can we fight the battle of to-morrow's children.

But, apart from the "militants," as the French comrades call them, apart from the active champions of the working-class movement and of I.W.C.E., ordinary workers, both men and women, are clamouring for information upon the methods of family limitation. The knowledge exists. Obviously it exists. How else could the institution of the "companionate" have arisen to challenge the institution of the "family?" How else explain the fact that, in the profession by which I gained my livelihood for five-and-twenty years, the families of doctors are, on the average, the smallest of any class or profession? Yes, the knowledge exists. It has existed for many years, and it must no longer be withheld from the workers of this country.

Comrade Rose Witcop has done good service in reprinting Margaret Sanger's pamphlet, and in bearing the brunt of a prose-

cution. It is a good pamphlet, and gives trustworthy information. The price is sixpence, from Rose Witcop, 17, Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush, London, W. 12. In bulk it can be supplied at 4s. per dozen, or 42s. per gross, carriage paid.

It is a good pamphlet. But I am not quite sure that it is the *best* pamphlet on the subject. It describes quite a number of methods, perhaps too many! We are still awaiting a perfectly trustworthy and entirely satisfactory method, and must make the most of the methods that actually exist. We must advise those who wish to practise birth control as to the method best suited to their particular case. I am inclined to think Norman Haire's *Hygienic Methods of Family Limitation* an even better pamphlet than Margaret Sanger's, but I believe that it is out of print. Those interested in the matter had better write to the New Generation League, 31, Palace Street, London, S.W. 1, and worry that excellent organisation for a speedy reprint. Meanwhile, Margaret Sanger's pamphlet holds the field.

What is needed more than all, however, is the foundation of *clinics* and other centres *where men and women who desire to learn the methods of family limitation can receive personal and practical information from experts.* Speed the day!

EDEN PAUL.

OUTLINE OF ECONOMICS

Reissued and Available for Classes

CLASS secretaries and literature sellers should note that the Textbook No. 3 *Outline of Economics* has now been re-issued. We thank all those who forwarded suggestions for improvement and regret that financial reasons forbid any serious enlargement. As we anticipated, every word has been scrutinised. Two comrades gravely challenged us to name any other sciences that "lead men away into the skies," but astronomy—forgetful of geology, geometry, mathematics and physics. Another rebuked us because in quoting Marx upon the fixed capital "incorporated or taking root in the soil," we did not make it clear that there were other forms. One comrade has been offended because we have not treated "value as a substance of which exchange value and use value are the phenomenal forms." One stalwart has forwarded fifteen pages of typescript to prove how the W.E.A. has captured the editorial committee.

We, however, feel sure that, with such amendment as has been possible, it will be of further use to our classes.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

STABILISATION in PRACTICE

VIENNA, with its church spires, its baroque art, its gardens, and its "blue Danube," is a city rich in beauty and in the charm of historical associations. As the historic seat of the Hapsburgs, it has always felt itself to be the outpost of Western civilisation holding the marches against the spirit of the East which meets one before one has travelled many miles down the Danube beyond the city. Commercially it has been the centre where most of the financial threads of the trade of that great highway, the Danube, have crossed. It has been called the City of Banks; politically it has been the seat of an imperial power ruling over numerous subject races; culturally it has been the home of some of Europe's finest art and music, gathered where wealth, historic tradition and aristocratic patronage attracted them. It was this city which three years ago was in the grip of famine—ruined by war, deprived of coal and minerals by the Peace Treaty, shut out from former markets up and down the Danube. It was here that the anger of the masses was expected at any moment to break bounds in a Soviet Revolution. Now, however, this has passed, and Vienna is quiet again, striving in its unmethodical way to pick up the threads of its pre-war traditions and way of life. Vienna has been "stabilised" by the Powers; and for us who witness a new plan of stabilisation on a larger scale—the Dawes Plan for Germany—this preliminary experiment of Austria can provide us with some valuable lessons.

Already in 1921, Sir William Goode, more far-sighted than his countrymen, saw what a danger to capitalist Europe a starving Austria was. Communism had come and gone in Hungary. Communist refugees had now transferred their energies to Vienna. To save Austria from Bolshevism he pleaded for relief measures and for a loan to help the Austrian Government on its feet again. The Social-Democrats when in office had proved themselves powerless to deal with the situation. Their scheme of nationalisation of the banks had met with fierce resistance from the bankers, and so had not been insisted upon. Their heavy expenditure on unemployment relief and in bread subsidies, and their failure to increase taxation sufficiently to meet this had necessitated resort to inflation, which by 1922 had set up a "vicious circle" from which there seemed no escape. The catastrophic "slump" of the kronen continued. When the crisis was at its height the former Cabinet resigned, and a new Government of the Clerical Party, under Dr.

Seipel, a priest, drawing most of his electoral support from the peasantry, came into power. This new Chancellor "united all non-socialistic parties on a common programme," and proceeded to "protect state and society against revolutionary movements" by "introducing the 'index' as an automatic regulator of wages and salaries."* He immediately summoned to his aid the leading bankers of Vienna, and prepared a final desperate effort to balance the State Budget and to stabilise the kronen by the reestablishment of a new Bank of Issue.

But these attempts were not likely to have any permanent success unless the Austrian Government could secure a loan from outside, and it was not till October, 1922, that Dr. Seipel persuaded the League of Nations to guarantee a loan to the Austrian Government—a loan of 650 million gold kronen which was to carry interest at 8 per cent. But in return for this loan, the creditors of Austria imposed certain *controls*, and as instrument of this control a special financial committee of the League of Nations was appointed. The conditions which the financial committee laid down are significant. First, it provided that by 1924 (now extended to 1926) the Government should completely balance the expenditure and revenue of its Budget. Second, inflation was to be stopped and a new currency issued under the control of a new Bank of Issue—the Austrian National Bank. Third, strict Government economy was exacted, which in practice meant the dismissal of large numbers of railwaymen and civil servants, the leasing of State properties to private capitalists, the curtailment of measures of social reform, and the abandonment of the eight-hour day on the State railways. No provision was made for raising increased revenue by taxation of the rich. On the contrary, a considerable part of the tax-revenue continued to come from indirect taxes, bearing heavily on the workers. To supervise the enforcement of these conditions, Dr. Zimmermann, of Rotterdam, was appointed as Commissioner, and he has never disguised the fact that he really acts as the representative of the big financial houses which have advanced the loan to Austria, and are Austria's creditors. His job is to supervise the economic life of Austria in strict accordance with her creditors' interest.

What, then, is the effect of this stabilisation? What is the present position after two years of it? The first thing one notices is that the main burden of the scheme has fallen on the workers and the lower middle class. Most of the social reforms which the workers were able to secure during the post-war period when the capitalist class were in confusion have been sacrificed. No scheme of social reform to benefit the masses is "practical politics"

* *The Economic Reconstruction of Austria*, by Prof. Karl Rausch.

because Dr. Zimmermann will immediately say "No," declaring it an uneconomical increase of expenditure. Even this year there has been some conflict between the Austrian Government and Dr. Zimmermann, the latter declaring that State expenditure is still too great, the former pleading that they are being pressed to raise the salaries of civil servants—which are surprisingly low in the lower and middle ranks—and that they dare not abandon the scheme of pensions for railwaymen, which the previous Government had incurred. On a rough computation wages are about 65 per cent. of the level of wages in Britain, and the salaries of fairly high secondary school teachers and civil servants are equivalent (after allowing for the fact that rents are lower in Vienna) to less than £3 a week. As a result one witnesses the general impoverishment of the workers and the proletarianisation of large sections of the middle class. The creditors of Austria measure the "worth" of a loan in terms of money profits, not of the welfare of the masses.

What of the political effect of this stabilisation? Quite without question it has in all directions stabilised reaction. Economic power is concentrated, to an extent unknown even in Germany, in the hands of a small circle of banks, in whose debt are most of the industrialists. They are the masters of the economic life of Austria, and in turn seem to be closely affiliated with, if not actually dependent on, financial houses in Paris or London. On the other hand, the workers, though in fighting mood, are weak and in confusion. The Social-Democrats, who under pressure from the workers have been made to fight for certain working-class reforms, such as rent restrictions and requisitioning of houses, still maintain the allegiance of the majority of the workers. Being now in opposition, they can make a show of "extremism" by criticising severely the Seipel Party and the effects of the Zimmermann rule. Actually, however, they have no alternative policy with which to rally the workers in an attempt to seize power. On the contrary, they discourage every manifestation of working-class militancy. In September there was a metal workers' strike for the eight-hour day and higher wages. The Communists and the R.I.L.U. wanted to make it a general strike to rally the workers' resistance. But the Social-Democrats opposed this and arranged a compromise. They have dropped any proposals for nationalisation in their programme, and are nothing more than a Liberal Party, which spends most of its energy attacking such things as clerical control of education. It has no policy towards the peasants—does not seek to exploit the differences between the poor and rich peasants—and accordingly, while winning the support of large sections of the middle class of the towns, it leaves the villages to be strongholds of clerical reaction.

The political situation in Austria shows very plainly the road on which one starts to travel if one *accepts* a capitalist proposal because it is the best of two evils and there is no other practical alternative. There *is* an alternative—to put up some programme which will rally the opposition of the workers. To *accept*—even if one does it under protest—is to give up the struggle for power and to hand the sceptre to the enemy. Those who say in Austria that the Zimmermann regime must be accepted because the revolutionary wave has passed misread the problem. Their acceptance and surrender is itself the chief reason for the passing of the revolutionary wave.

MAURICE DOBB.

The METHOD of SCIENCE

Dr. Jas. Johnston here continues the series of four articles based on his lecture at our Cober Hill Summer School. The first of them on "The Meaning of Knowledge" appeared in our previous issue. They are intended to give a brief introduction to modern scientific method as a basis for the clear, scientific, realistic thinking, which is so necessary in facing the problems of Class Struggle.

II.—THE DESCRIPTION OF NATURE

SCIENTIFIC method is only the method of doing things employed by civilised men *organised so as to economise thinking and observation*. The first step in any scientific inquiry is, therefore, a description. The description always applies to one small province of nature and then another and so on—we attend only to one thing at a time. The description sets forth what that part of nature is like, and it makes use of the mental concepts that we have mentioned. It says how big, or how numerous, some things are ; or how they are shaped, or what are their colours, or temperatures, or consistencies, or masses. Thus the earth is about 8,000 miles in diameter, and very nearly spherical in shape, and cold on the surface but warm inside. In making such descriptions we *observe*.

The Methods of Observation

Thus a traveller, visiting a new land, notices what the inhabitants are like, their height, colour, dress, etc., what they eat, what their houses are like, their habits, etc. All this he can do without any other assistance than that of his eyes and ears. But he may also make a map of the country and there he must use a compass, a sextant, a theodolite, measuring chains, etc. Thus his natural

bodily powers of observation are supplemented by instruments—really tools. And—very important—he now *measures* things.

Measurement is in the very essence of scientific observation. Now all measurements whatever are based on two fundamental concepts—(1) an unit of space, and (2) an unit of time. The unit of space is the *metre*. One of the enduring results of the French Revolution was the measurement of a ten-millionth part of a quadrant of the earth's circumference, and this part was called the metre. The measurement was not precisely correct, but the actual length called a metre has been preserved, and it is now used by scientific men everywhere in the world.

The unit of time is the period of one rotation of the earth on its axis.

All measurements whatever reduce, on analysis, to observations of some space-dimensions based on the metre, and to some interval of time based on the daily rotation of the earth round its axis. In making any measurement we always infer a space-dimension from our mental judgment of a coincidence. Thus we say that a half-penny is one inch in diameter, but what we do in making this measurement is to judge that the two opposite sides of the coin coincide with the marks one and two on an inch rule. We say that boiling water has a temperature of 100 degrees centigrade, meaning that we judge that the end of the mercury thread in the thermometer coincides with the mark 100 on the scale. We say that it is twelve noon, meaning that we have made the judgment that both hands of the clock coincide with the mark labelled XII on the dial—and so on.

Different sciences deal with different aspects of nature, and so the tools, or instruments, employed are different ones. Astronomers use telescopes, spectroscopes, exact clocks, etc.; biologists use microscopes; chemists use the balance, etc.—every science has its own *technique*, just as every handicraft has its own technique. The nature of the tools differs but the mental discipline is always the same.

Thus we make our descriptions of nature and this intensive, disciplined observation is the first stage of any inquiry into nature. For a long time, perhaps, we may not get beyond this stage. Thus meteorologists have described the rainfall, the air temperature, the barometric pressure, etc., in most civilised countries for the last century, but they have not advanced much beyond this bare description. Yet it is absolutely necessary.

Generalisation

In all scientific inquiries we aim at generalising—that is, replacing a great number of statements of bare observation by one

comprehensive statement. Thus English weather "may be anything," yet experience, when it is analysed, shows that the air temperature is highest in July-August, and lowest in January-February. In making this general statement, we have first arranged our observations. We *analyse* the weather data, attending, for the moment, only to their records of temperature. We collect together all the temperatures for January and find their average, and then we do the same for each of the other months. We find, perhaps, that the average for the particular place to which we attend is higher in the Augusts of most of the years than it is in any other month. Hence our generalisation.

That is generalisation by *averaging*. We can also generalise by *elimination*. Thus what are the essential characters of a plant organism? First consider the most obvious one—shape: we see trees, bushes, corn, grass, lichens, etc.—all very different in size and shape. Colour is very different; habits are different (thus there are soil plants and water plants); most plants are rooted, but the marine diatomes are not; most are immobile, but the spores of seaweeds swim like animals; most of them take nutriment from the soil water, but carnivorous plants can capture and digest insects, and so on, one by one we can eliminate most of the obvious characters because there are species of plants in which some one, or others, may not occur. But in the end of our analysis we find there is one character possessed by all plants—they can use sunlight to enable them to build up starch from the carbonic acid and water of the air. This is the essential plant character.

Or take the *operation* called "capital." Surplus value can be acquired, and made to acquire new surplus value in many ways, by the operations of banking, the ownership of land, minerals, machinery, etc. Yet in all these cases the operation of acquiring surplus value depends on a *monopoly* of some kind. Wealth exists in nature as a series of *energy transformations*, and wealth is made accessible to man by some means or other of directing these energy transformations. Capital, in all cases whatever, is essentially *a monopoly of the means of effecting energy-transformations*.

Generalisation and Classification

Analysis shows that all mammals (animals that suckle their young), all birds, all reptiles, all amphibians and all fishes possess a backbone (vertebral column). All mammals, birds and reptiles have lungs and breathe air. All amphibians have lungs in the adult stage and gills in the juvenile stage. All fishes have gills and breathe in water.

These facts of observation we express clearly in a series of generalisations called a natural classification. Thus :—

Vertebrates— animals with backbones	}	<i>Mammals</i> —Vertebrate animals with mammae lungs but no gills	{	<i>Birds</i> —Sauropsida without teeth in the jaws and feathered.
		<i>Sauropsida</i> — Vertebrate animals without mammae but with lungs		<i>Reptiles</i> —Sauropsida with teeth in the jaws and without feathers.
		<i>Amphibians</i> —Vertebrate animals without mammae and with both lungs and gills.		
		<i>Fishes</i> —Vertebrate animals without mammae or lungs but with gills.		

Thus a huge number of facts of observation are expressed in simple, comprehensive form. In our classification we began with the observation of individual animals ; then we made descriptions of them, one by one ; then we compared the descriptions, analysing the latter—finding for instance that all our animals had backbones, but only some had mammae. And so on.

Observational Techniques

Sciences differ according to the nature of their techniques or crafts :—

Natural Sciences.—Observation and comparison. Biology, Geology.

Experimental Sciences.—Chemistry, Physics. Small parts of Biology and Geology.

Mathematical Sciences.—Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy.

Deductive Sciences.—Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy.

Statistical Sciences.—Economics, Biology.

But the student must note carefully that there is overlapping, and that the craft sides of all sciences advance so rapidly that some techniques are common to many sciences. Thus, with the development of statistical technique Economics and Biology have taken on mathematical treatment.

Psychology is partly Biology (Behaviourism) and partly psychical (the method of introspection).

J. J.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

The Economic Value of India

AN article on India, in a special Empire supplement of the *M.G. Commercial* of Oct. 16th, gives some useful information about the trade and industry of India, which shows very clearly why British capitalism maintains such a tight hold on that disturbed part of the Empire and is so afraid of the growth of the Indian nationalist movement. Both before and since the war the trade of India has been the *sixth* largest of any country in the world, as this table shows :—

	1913. (£ million).		1923. (£ million).
U.K.	.. 1,215	U.K.	.. 1,747
Germany	.. 710	U.S.A.	.. 1,723
U.S.A.	.. 680	France	.. 832
France	.. 460	Germany	.. 633
Netherlands.	448	Canada	.. 411
India	.. 284	India	.. 385

(It must, of course, be remembered that owing to the lower value of the £ in 1923, the larger figures in 1923 do not imply an increased *volume* of real trade.)

Of imports into India sixty-three per cent. before the war came from the United Kingdom, and sixty per cent. post-war. America and Japan are the most serious competitors of the U.K., although their share of total imports is only six per cent. each.

In the cotton trade the war stimulated Indian cotton manufacture by giving them a partially protected market, and as a result Lancashire has lost and Indian producers have gained in the post-war period. Imports of cotton goods from U.K. were about fifty per cent. less in 1923 than they were in 1914; whereas the output of Indian cotton mills was about fifty per cent greater.

Similarly, in the jute industry Indian mills have been established in Bengal near to the jute fields, and instead of raw jute being exported to Dundee to be manufactured, as was done pre-war, it is more and more being worked up in Indian mills and exported in the finished state. Whereas before sixty

per cent. of the jute crop was exported and forty per cent. worked up locally, now only forty per cent. is exported in the raw state while sixty per cent. is manufactured in India.

As an importer of iron and steel goods India has declined since the war. This has particularly hit the U.K., but the U.S.A. on the other hand has actually increased her exports to India. The following table, shown in thousands, illustrates this :—

	1913-4	1920-1	1922-3
Total Imports ..	1,018	712	740
From U.K. ..	609	498	359
From U.S.A. ..	22	113	38

The reason why India is not such a good buyer as she was pre-war is said to be due to the fact that India can only obtain for her agricultural exports prices thirty-four per cent. higher than pre-war, whereas she has to pay as much as one hundred and seventy-nine per cent. more than pre-war for her imports of cotton cloth.

These facts show :—(a) The important market which India is for Britain; (b) The fact that that market is getting less favourable for Britain and so is causing British capitalists anxiety; (c) How disadvantageous it would be to British capitalism if India were governed by a nationalist government which decided to protect native industry by a tariff system. It is this latter which many Indian economists are advocating, especially in the case of the Indian iron and steel industry.

Alfred Marshall

The current number of *The Economic Journal* has an interesting and well-written article by Mr. J. M. Keynes on the life and teaching of our great antagonist, the late Dr. Alfred Marshall of Cambridge. Any tutor or advanced student who wishes to get a summary of the chief developments of modern bourgeois economics could not do better than read this article. From this article we see how Marshall in his time (he started teaching in Cambridge in 1868 and succeeded to the Chair of Political Economy in 1885) was on the

side of the progressive, enlightened capitalists, believing in trade unions, high wages and shorter hours. But he believed implicitly in the capitalist *entrepreneur*, and always wrote his books with business men in mind as his readers. His principal contributions—which we may perhaps say were of fairly permanent value—were certain mathematical conceptions for calculating demand, such as the idea of a demand curve (see *Plebs Economics Textbook*, p. 120) and of elasticity of demand and certain new ideas about money. But these things he himself tended to depreciate in favour of getting into closer touch with facts—the facts of capitalism. He was also one of the original supporters of the University Extension Movement, later to develop into the *W.E.A.*, and he wrote his little book, *Economics of Industry*, expressly for trade union readers. To him, therefore, we must attribute much of the liberalising of the educated sections of the workers during the last thirty years.

His chief influence, however, was not through his writings, which in the case of his three chief works appeared about twenty to thirty years after his original composition of them; but his personal influence through lectures and private tuition and conversation on generations of students at Cambridge. Later many of these students became teachers in the *W.E.A.* A foe has passed from us, but we can at any rate recognise in him a worthy foe, and can endeavour to garner from him such creations of his sixty years labour as may be usefully converted to our own purpose. Only as we *understand* him completely can we combat his influence.

Wages and Prices

The *Monthly Circular* of the Labour Research Department for October had an admirable article, with chart, tracing the movement of prices and wages

between 1900 and 1924. This showed that during this period the position of the workers had been gradually worsening. All students should make a point of studying this article carefully, and tutors should make use of it freely in their classes. Here is a chance of getting away from theory down to facts—and, moreover, an admirable lesson in the scientific interpretation of facts. (This has since been issued as a special leaflet.) In the July and September issues of the *Circular* an article on the "Economic Bases of American Policy" should interest all Plebeians.

La Helpa Lingvo Progresas

La Internacio de Poŝt-Telegraf-kaj Telefon-Laboristoj rekomendas, ke ĝia ekzekutiva komitato helpu ĝis plena grado la esperantan movadon. Simila oficiala aprobo ne estas malproksima ĉe la grava Transportlaborista Internacio, kies sekretario por fervojista sekcio, N. Nathans, persone prelegis ĉe la kvara kongreso de S.A.T. Ambaŭ cititaj Internacioj alprenos Esperanton tuj kiam ĝi estos praktikata de sufiĉe granda nombro da laboristoj. La urĝa bezono do estas, varbi kaj instruadi plej efike en la vicoj de S.A.T., kies presservo tradukigis jam en la pasinta jaro artikolojn en 171 gazetoj kaj en 15 lingvoj. *Sennacieca Revuo* eldoniĝas 7,000 ope, kaj la nova semajna *Sennaciulo* kredeble atingos 10,000 legantojn.

It is of interest to notice that the Esperantist workers publish a monthly review, *Sennacieca Revuo*, and a weekly journal, *Sennaciulo*. The review is a literary-scientific-educational organ and the journal deals with all matters which bear on the life of the worker from the social and political standpoint, such as Marxism, trade unionism, co-operatives, etc. Information can be had from Mr. C. W. Spiller, 15, Dewsbury Road, London, N.W. 10.

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The NATIONAL COUNCIL of LABOUR COLLEGES

HEAD OFFICE—22 ELM ROW, EDINBURGH
Gen. Sec., J. P. M. Millar (to whom all reports should be sent)

NEW DIVISION.—In order to carry out our educational work more effectively in Central England, the National Executive have decided to reduce the size of Divisions 6 and 7, and form a new Division of the parts cut off. This Division is No. 12 and its area consists of:—Derby (except north-west corner), Nottingham, Lincoln (south from Gainsborough), Leicester, Rutland and Northampton. The creation of this Division involved the appointment of a Divisional Organiser and the formation of a new Divisional Council. After the applications had been carefully scrutinised the Executive decided to appoint Comrade C. Brown, George V. Villas, Garden Lane, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts. Comrade Brown has the advantage of residing in the area and therefore of knowing the Division, and we wish him all success in his new post.

Shop Assistants' Union.—This Union has now paid its affiliation fee to the N.C.L.C. and we hope that members will go a step further by persuading the Union to have an N.C.L.C. Educational Scheme.

National Schemes.—In order to attract students to the Classes, and to carry on the educational work amongst those members of Unions having Educational Schemes who have not yet attended the Classes, London and other districts are following the excellent plan of circularising the branches of those Unions, offering to provide them with short lectures on interesting subjects, and enclosing a list of the subjects available. This is a very good idea, and should be followed by Colleges throughout the country. The following are some suitable titles:—

Economics and the Bread and Butter Question.

Great Wars, and how they are made. What's wrong with Education?

"The United States of Europe or Europe Limited?"

Epochs in the History of the British Working Class.

Imperialism and the Worker.

Modern Trade Union Problems.

The Future of Trades Councils.

The Growth and Effects of Trusts.

J. W. Thomas Memorial Fund.—

Special attention is directed to the paragraph on this matter that appears elsewhere.

New National Schemes.—No opportunity should be lost of drawing the attention of students and supporters generally to the desirability of our obtaining more National Educational Schemes, and no doubt College Secretaries and others will do their best to see that this matter is not lost sight of.

Stationery.—It is highly desirable that Colleges should use official stationery. Duplicate receipt books, duplicate letter books, notepaper, registers, etc., are now all available.

New Colleges.—It is satisfactory to note from the reports from the Divisions that a number of new Colleges are being formed, and that the activities of the great bulk of the others are being substantially extended.

What the Divisions are doing

Div. 1.—London starts the winter with twenty-five classes, while others are being arranged. A class is being run for the training of tutors and the success of occasional lectures is being followed up by more. London members of Unions having National Schemes are urged to see that full advantage is taken of the facilities being provided.

Div. 2.—It is probable that there will be at least thirty classes in the Division this winter, which will be a marked improvement on last year's figure. Voluntary tutors are coming forward in larger numbers but still more are required. Mr. Bates of the A.E.U. is giving great assistance, as is Mr. Taplin of the same Union.

Div. 3.—The arrangements for the winter classes are being affected by the

General Election but immediately that is over the classes will be in full swing. In view of Jack Jones' appointment as Staff-Tutor for Ayrshire Labour College, the assistance of more voluntary tutors is required.

Div. 4.—This winter we are opening out at Pembroke-Dock for the first time and we anticipate breaking additional fresh ground. Labour Colleges have been formed for Llanely and district and Pontypool and district. Aberavon District Labour College reports a successful fourteen days' tour conducted by J. T. Walton Newbold.

Div. 5.—Arrangements are already completed for the running of twenty-six classes in the first part of the winter. New ground is being broken at Bax, Corsham, Trowbridge, Westbury, Frome, Lydney, Radstock and Exeter. Other classes are being arranged, and we are looking forward to a very successful winter session.

Div. 6.—Classes are arranged for Birmingham, Shrewsbury, Newcastle, Chesterton, Coventry, Leamington, Leicester, Northampton, Wolverhampton and Sheffield. We are glad to have the assistance this year of W. Paul and Dr. Dunstan, amongst other enthusiasts. The great need in this Division is more voluntary tutors. Those willing to assist should write to T. D. Smith, 12, Old Meeting Street, West Bromwich, Birmingham.

Div. 7.—The Divisional Organiser started in a full-time capacity in October. New colleges are being organised in Grimsby, Lincoln and Nottingham. York Labour College held a highly successful demonstration with the General Secretary as speaker in place of A. J. Cook, who was detained in London as result of Federation business. The new secretary, Comrade Yeatman, and our old friend Hatfield look like having a good Labour College behind them this winter. An exceedingly active new college has been formed for Chesterfield and district with A. V. Williams as secretary and the treasurer of the Derbyshire Miners as one of the lecturers.

Div. 8.—Liverpool Labour College has again a very extensive list of classes, several of which are being held in new districts. Lantern lectures are also being arranged in a number of

instances. In the North Lancs. area Burnley T.C. and L.C. has enrolled eighty students for a special course on "Local Government." All sections of the Division are determined to make this a record winter session. Comrade Bowman of Blackburn L.C. is conducting a lively correspondence in the local press.

Div. 9.—Darlington Labour College has held a successful Conference at Stockton. It is hoped to have a class in Barrow this year and to build up a strong local organisation. In order to give special assistance to the Darlington and Cumberland areas of the Division, the Divisional Organiser is making Darlington his headquarters in the meantime. North Eastern Labour College has already twenty-four classes running; others are being arranged.

Div. 10.—Fully eighty classes have already been arranged for this Division and by the end of the winter Scotland expects to have had about 200 classes. Aberdeen L.C. is arranging a class at Inverurie, in addition to its usual classes. Perth and Fife areas have a good series of classes and Stirlingshire will be in full swing immediately after the Election. The latter district has appointed F. Collins as full-time tutor for the winter session. Lanarkshire District comes out with an extensive list of classes and has decided to appoint an additional temporary tutor for the winter in G. S. Aitken. Glasgow has also a good programme, while the work in Dumbartonshire and Renfrewshire is also developing. Ayrshire District has just had a most successful Annual Conference. Jack Jones has been appointed Ayrshire tutor and this year's list of classes is the biggest so far that Ayrshire has been able to produce. The secretary, J. W. Kerr, Cadgers Road, Hurlford, Ayrshire, would welcome the assistance of more voluntary tutors. Edinburgh District still keeps its end up with a very extensive list of classes, a number of new voluntary tutors and a tutor's class.

Div. 11.—Thanks to the efforts of Comrades Gemmell and Kirk in Belfast, we hope to have a strong Labour College there in the course of the next month or two.

Div. 12.—This new Division is made up of parts taken off Divisions 6 and 7

to make them more workable. The new Divisional Organiser will be delighted to have any offers of assistance. His name and address are :—Mr. C. Brown, George V. Villas, Garden Lane, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts.

N.C.L.C. Directory:—Additions and Corrections

- Div. 2.*—Newport Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Pule, 45, Camp Hills, Newport, Isle of Wight.
 " Swanage Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Masters, Nye Timber, Queen's Road, Swanage, Dorset.
 " Portland Labour College, Sec. : Mr. George Peters, 60, Reforne, Easton, Portland.
 " Guildford Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Barlow, 16, Sycamore Road, Guildford, Surrey.
Div. 4.—Llanelly and District Labour College, Sec. : Mr. T. Dolling, 4, Queen's Walk Road, Llanelly, South Wales.
 " Pontypool and District Labour College, Sec. : Mr. D. T. Gullick, 4, Lethbridge Terrace, Pentwyn, Abersychan, South Wales.
Div. 5.—Gloucester Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Rendall, 11, Clevedon Road, Gloucester.
Div. 6.—Birmingham Labour College, Sec. : Mr. W. Howell, 163, Clifford Street, Lozells, Birmingham.
 " Chesterton Labour College, Sec. : Mr. A. Rowe, 10, Dimsdale View, Churchfields, Chesterton.
 " Wolverhampton Labour College, Sec. : Mr. W. Gaden, 8, Cannock Road, Park Village, Wolverhampton.
Div. 7.—Grimsby Labour College, Sec. : Mr. H. Trought, 140, Hainton Avenue, Grimsby.
 " Huddersfield Labour College, Sec. : Mr. W. Blackstone, 28, Kings Road, Huddersfield.
Div. 8.—Blackpool Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Z. Jordan, 12, West Caroline Street, Blackpool.

Div. 8.—Accrington Labour College, Sec. : Mr. Bertram Toit, 111, Charter Street, Accrington.

" Darwen Labour College, Sec. : Mr. A. Holder, 35, Springfield Street, Darwen.

" Fleetwood Labour College, Sec. : Mr. J. A. Holdsworth, 55, Gordon Road, Fleetwood.

Div. 9.—Divisional Organiser : Mr. Stanley Rees, c/o. W. Murray, 86, Arlington Street, Stockton-on-Tees.

Div. 10.—Scotland : Greenock Labour College, Sec. : Mr. E. Wilson, 6, John Street, Gourock.

Div. 12.—Divisional Organiser : Mr. C. Brown, George V. Villa, Garden Lane, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts.

" Wellingborough Labour College, Sec. : Mr. T. Drage, 127, Alexandra Road, Wellingborough.

THE LATE J. W. THOMAS
MEMORIAL FUND.

FIRST LIST.

The following sums have been received by Head Office, N.C.L.C. :—

Collector.	Amount.
	£ s. d.
J. H. Lockwood, Blackpool Labour College	0 13 0
Head Office, N.C.L.C.	21 8 6
A. Biss, Yeovil Class	0 11 0
J. C. Cawte, Heywood Labour College	0 7 6
A. Wilkinson, Ogmores Vale Labour College	0 10 4
D. Dick, Paisley and District Committee, S.L.C.	1 0 0
A. Griffin, Stafford Labour College	0 4 6
A. Hepworth, Dewsbury Labour College	4 1 0
T. Bain, Stirlingshire Local Committee, S.L.C.	0 18 0
J. Hamilton, Liverpool Labour College	2 12 9
J. Hamilton, Liverpool Labour College	0 11 6
A. Hodgetts, N.U.D.A.W.	3 15 0

Collector	Amount		
	£	s.	d.
J. Christie, Perth Local Committee, S.L.C.	0	10	0
A. Taylor, Halifax Labour College	8	8	6
Plebs E.C.	1	1	0
Donations sent to PLEBS Office	1	1	0
London Division N.C.L.C. (first instalment)	3	10	0
	<u>£51</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>

OUR CANDIDATES.

Before this issue of The PLEBS reaches its readers the General Election will be over, when we hope the increased number of I.W.C.E. friends in the field will all be M.P.s! Our list of candidates (with due allowance for possible omissions for which we already apologise!) is as follows:—

Name.	Constituency.
Barker, George	.. Abertillery (unop.)
Barr, J. Stuart	.. Tynemouth.
Charleton, H. C.	.. Leeds South.
W. G. Cove Wellingboro, Northants.
Dr. R. Dunstan	.. Birmingham West
W. H. Hutchinson	.. Bolton
Lawther, Will	.. South Shields.
Lowth, Thos.	.. Ardwick.
Mann, Tom	.. Nottingham South
Maxton, James	.. Bridgeton.
Paling, Wm.	.. Doncaster.
Paul, Wm.	.. Rusholme.
Price, M. Phillips	.. Gloucester.
A. A. Purcell	.. Coventry
W. A. Robinson	.. Wavertree, Liv.
Smillie, Robert	.. Morpeth.
Starr, Mark	.. Wimbeldon.
Stephen, Campbell	.. Camlachie.
Stewart, Robert	.. Dundee.
J. C. Welsh Coatbridge
Wilkinson, Ellen	.. Middlesbrough E.
Rev. G. S. Woods	.. Somerset, Taunton

College Secretaries are reminded that most of them still have subscription forms in their possession, and are requested to bring these before their Classes and Committees. Sympathisers who would like to contribute to this Fund may have subscription forms by applying to Mrs. Horrabin, Plebs League, 162a, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1, or to J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary, National Council of Labour Colleges, 22, Elm Row, Edinburgh. This Fund is being raised because of the great services that our late comrade rendered to our movement, and because of the fact that he left his widow in extremely straitened circumstances, very largely through the enthusiasm with which he sacrificed his personal interests for the sake of the movement.

LETTERS

THE W.T.A.

DEAR SIR,—I should be obliged if you would, in the next issue of PLEBS, correct the inaccurate and misleading report on p. 365 over the initials J. T. D.

The Russian students in question numbered twenty-five and *not* fifty, and only twenty-three returned together. They arrived in London without prior notice as to time or date to anyone, yet within two hours of their arrival the W.T.A. had found a Russian guide, met the party, provided them with a meal and secured accommodation. This in the middle of the holiday season.

The party were received with the utmost courtesy and good fellowship

by the Head Offices of the N.U.R., the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the A.U.B.T.W., Labour Research Department, C.W.S., and other bodies. In the provinces they were met and looked after by local Trade Union and Labour representatives in each case, and at short notice. Mr. A. A. Purcell, M.P., received them in the House of Commons, and George Lansbury, M.P., helped us as to accommodation for one night.

The party were delighted with their reception, and had nothing but praise for those responsible.

It was nothing short of a miracle, that arriving as they did, we were able to look after them so well.

We are advised that another party of students is coming, but when, no

one knows, least of all the W.T.A. who will have to secure accommodation leaders, etc.

I do not write to secure notice for the W.T.A., but to protest against a statement which is unfair to the T.U. Movement and without basis.

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST W. WIMBLE.

FREUD

DEAR SIR,—In this month's issue of *The PLEBS*, R. W. P., your reviewer of *Sigmund Freud*, by F. Wittels, concludes his reply to the letter of E. and C. P. with: "I am still waiting for an answer to my review." I am, therefore, emboldened to send in this small contribution, feeling that possibly I may be able, as a practising Freudian analyst of some years' experience, to give—not an answer which will satisfy your reviewer, but some few important points which he has overlooked. I realise the difficulty of R. W. P.'s situation; it is obvious, in the first place, that no highly technical subject can be fruitfully discussed by those who have not made themselves master of the technique involved, and this would seem to be the case with your reviewer. Naturally, very few people, save those engaged in the practice of Freudian psychology, have been able to make themselves experts, but as in every other profound and technical branch of knowledge the non-experts cannot claim authority to criticise and judge, though they are entitled to their personal tastes—but personal taste is a far cry from expert knowledge.

A second difficulty, perhaps the more insuperable, which presents itself when the non-expert sets out to judge Freudian theory, lies in the fact that this theory is dealing always with, and bases all its conclusions upon, a realm of mind which cannot be handled in the ordinary way, is non-realizable and non-understandable by those who deal only with conscious mind, and therefore seems fantastic and unbelievable by these latter. If one may make some slight analogy (all analogies have gross imperfections, but they serve to make clearer the issue sometimes), to discuss Freudian psychology with one who is untrained in it and has never been analysed, is very like

attempting to convince him that the leaf he is observing with his naked eye is quite different from the leaf one is observing through the microscope. He observes nothing at all of numerous phenomena revealed by the microscope, others he sees in part only, others again he perceives quite differently from the microscopic observation. Freudian psychology is dealing with and observing mental phenomena as demonstrated in *unconscious* mind, not in consciousness. This fact helps to explain why your reviewer is so mystified by certain "axioms" which he has selected for his strictures: naturally, they seem very meaningless to him as cuneiform writing does to the uninstructed. I do not think this difficulty can in any way be solved, except in so far as those who seriously want to understand Freudian psychology can take steps to do so by the method that all must employ—namely, by studying from an expert and putting their knowledge into practice.

Your reviewer may reply that he was criticising a book on Freud, and is perfectly competent, having read that book, to make judgment upon it. I should be more inclined to agree with him in this, had he confined his criticism to the book in question (though it is difficult to see how one can be a good judge of any critique of a thinker until one has understood the thinker himself!); but he has occupied a larger proportion of space in criticism of Freudian theory (or rather, what he imagines is such) than upon Herr Wittels' book. R. W. P. will doubtless feel that I have not answered him in the sense he desires, but at least I hope I have indicated that there is far more in the matter than he has yet understood or dreamed of. In conclusion, may I say that one has a certain disappointment in finding such a review as his in *The PLEBS*. No one—least of all genuine psycho-analysts—is out to stifle free expression of opinion: R. W. P. is perfectly entitled to his, but one would like to see an honest desire to welcome and comprehend new truths, and some reverence for the patient self-sacrificing work of a very great thinker, such as Freud. Surely neither *The PLEBS* nor R. W. P. wishes to merit Neitzche's bitter

approach to his fellow-men : " Mankind has never a good ear for new music."

Yours faithfully,

BARBARA LOW

(Member of the British Psycho-Analytical Society).

W.E.A. AND F.B.I.

DEAR SIR,—I notice that Mr. Okey states in your issue of September last that Sir Frederick Wise, M.P. (of the Federation of British Industries) is president of the Ilford W.E.A. I should be glad if you would kindly publish my assurance that he is not.

Yours fraternally,

H. P. SMITH,

Sec., London District W.E.A.

[Com. Okey has sent us a copy of the printed syllabus of the Ilford W.E.A. for the 1921—2 session, at the head of which " Frederick Wise, M.P." (now Sir Frederick), is described as President. It was on this that the statement was based. Does Mr. Smith mean that Sir Frederick has now ceased to be President?—Ed., PLEBS.]

A GERMAN " LABOUR " COLLEGE

DEAR EDITOR,—Readers of The PLEBS may be interested in a line or two of information about the manœuvres that have been and are taking place on the continent in respect of Workers' Education. At more than one meeting abroad of the Executive of the Amsterdam Trade Union International, education matters have been discussed and even resolutions passed, these things being done in spite of the fact that the delegates, at least the British delegates, had no mandate from any Labour organisation.

In the official Review (issue of July—October, 1923), published by the Amsterdam International, there is an article by Dr. Wilhelm Sturfels on " The Labour College in Frankfort-on-Main." In the article we read (description of T.U. federations is mine) :—

" The Labour College was established in 1921 on the basis of an agreement between the Prussian Board of Education and the following associations :—

" (1) The General Trade Union Federation of Germany, i.e., the A.D.G.B., which is affiliated to Amsterdam and is the biggest German federation.

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- " (2) The General Federation of Unions of Salaried Employees—generally known as the A.F.A. Bund; this is also affiliated to Amsterdam, and, like the A.D.G.B., recognises the class struggle.
- " (3) The German Federation of Trade Unions, known as the D.G.B.—chiefly composed of 'Christian' trade unions. They generally support the Centre Party, but one of their principal leaders, Geissler, is a member of the very capitalist German People's Party, and was one of that Party's deputies in the recent Reichstag.
- " (4) The Trade Union League of Workers, Employees and Civil Servants' Associations. This is the Hirsch-Dunker organisation and rejects the class-struggle."

The article proceeds:—

"The proletarian is a questioner in all that concerns his own sphere of life. Economics, law and the State are foreign to him. . . . All the work in the study circles is at first *concentrated on these incipient questionings*. . . . The aim is to turn out not scholars and experts, but *men*. Only in this way is the ordinary man rendered capable of making decisions by and for himself, when confronted with the manifold problems of life." And much more of this sort of stuff!!

Not a word about the abolition of capitalism; not a word about the improbability of the Prussian Board of Education—a capitalist-imperialist body, although the Prussian Prime Minister, Otto Braun, is a Social-Democrat—encouraging any course of education in Economics and Law likely to be inimical to the present social order! In fact, the whole scheme is typically W.E.A.

To this have the German Trade Unions and Social-Democrats de-

scended! What a fall! Thus has Fabianism, with its clerical and other "nuclei," corrupted the whole spirit of the movement on the continent. It was a lovely war!!

Yours frat.,

A. P. L.

TREASURY NOTES

DEAR COMRADE,—Comrade Woodburn is mistaken in stating in the October PLEBS in his article on "Banks and Tanks" that the terms on which the Treasury Notes were issued to the banks in 1914 were never disclosed.

Upon the passing of The Currency and Bank Notes Act, 1914, the Treasury issued an explanatory memorandum setting forth the conditions of the issue of these notes to the banks. Any bank was permitted to receive notes up to an amount not exceeding 20 per cent. of its liabilities on deposit and current accounts, such amount to be treated as an advance by the Treasury to the bank, bearing interest from day to day at the current bank rate and secured by a prior floating charge on the assets of the bank.

This arrangement permitted the banks in 1914 to take about £225 millions, but they actually took by November less than £13,000,000. The knowledge of the potential reserves of the banks (the £225 millions) dissipated a panic and made it unnecessary to transform these potential forces into actual forces.

The comparative smallness of the Banks' demands for Currency Notes during the first two years of the war shows, incidentally, the fallacy of the reasoning of those currency theorists who claim that the issue of Currency Notes was mainly responsible for the rise in prices. The volume of Currency Notes circulating throughout the country became greater than the volume of gold it replaced only after a few years had elapsed and prices had already gone up.

Yours frat.,

GEO. PHIPPEN.

HAVE

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ACTIVE

PLEBS GROUP IN YOUR DISTRICT?

PRIEST and PROLETARIANS in PREHISTORIC TIMES

The Origin of Magic and Religion, pp. 212 (1923), and

The Growth of Civilization, pp. 224, with 8 maps (1924). Methuen and Co., 4s. 6d. each.

MR. W. J. PERRY, who is reader in cultural anthropology in the University of London, sets forth pleasantly in these two moderately-priced volumes how far back in human history class divisions reach, how from the earliest times religion has been the instrument of ruling classes for the attainment of dynastic ends, and how throughout historic times the common people have been mere pawns in the game of priests and kings. For these reasons his books deserve careful study by PLEBS readers and students.

But Mr. Perry goes much further. His books purport to relate exactly how ruling classes originated and why men began to fight. His conclusions on these points vitally affect sociological theory. They have been hailed with enthusiasm by the believers in primitive communism and other fancies which present in new garb the biblical doctrine of the fall of man. And just because our author's speculations in this sphere are so attractive it behoves students to scrutinise with care the whole structure of the new anthropology and sociology set out in these volumes. Mr. Perry's position is presented as a reasoned whole in which his special thesis on war and government depends upon his general theory of the growth of civilisations and religions.

The general theory is briefly something like this:—We begin in the Old Stone Age with a world of food gatherers—hunters and fishers. Subsequently there arose first in the Nile Valley and then in the adjoining regions of Western Asia and South Eastern Europe food producing communities based upon irrigation, worshipping a Great Mother goddess and

all allegedly closely related. Still later, the Egyptians began sending out expeditions in search of gold and precious stones to which life-giving properties were attributed. Thus colonies characterised by the erection of great stone graves and megalithic monuments were planted in Western Europe, India, the Pacific and Central America, and they constitute the "archaic civilisation." Finally the ruling class of the archaic civilisation ejected adventurers who organised on the borders of the old communities half civilised warrior States who eventually destroyed the parent organism.

In support of this theory Mr. Perry has erected an imposing edifice of "facts" drawn from various parts of the world and from several branches of science. The stability of his whole structure is dependent upon the solidity of the component "facts," but no single individual can expect to be a master of all the specialised knowledge needed to test the structure, and the layman must be overwhelmed by the vast array of "facts" so laboriously collected and ingeniously pitted together.

Yet, when we turn to the specialists, we find that Professor Peet has undermined the very foundations of Mr. Perry's structure by exposing his Egyptological "facts" as precarious speculations,* and a distinguished Americanist has revealed the key stones of Mr. Perry's arches as mere hollow plaster.† In my own sphere, the prehistory of Europe, I discover that the lower courses of Mr. Perry's building are of the flimsiest material. Perhaps I may instance one or two points to illustrate the nature of our author's "facts" so far as I can test them.

On I. p. 63, we are told that the cultivation of cereals was introduced into England by small, brown-skinned

**Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1924 part I.
†*Ibid.*, part II.

(sic), long-skulled men. But we know these people quite well. We have examined hundreds of their tombs and their skulls and, as far as a negative can be proved, we are sure that they did not cultivate grains. The first traces of cultivated plants and a cereal diet are associated with quite different invaders, tall and short-skulled, who came from Central Europe.

Twice (1) p. 89 and (2) p. 158 we read that corbelled beehive tombs were spread from Crete to the Orkneys by Children of the Sun who came to power in Egypt at the beginning of the 5th dynasty, i.e., 2680 B.C., that (2) they were modelled on pyramids of the 12th dynasty (2000—1788 B.C.), that (3) they reached Crete about 2200 B.C., and that (4) they were characterised by a profuse use of gold ornaments. But the statements (1) and (2) seem to contradict one another; the tombs in question begin in Crete some 800 years earlier than Mr. Perry supposes, and as far as our islands are concerned, not one corbelled tomb in England, Wales or Scotland—and many have been explored—ever yielded a trace of gold or any other metal! I will not weary the reader by other instances of more excusable mis-statements to show the number of minor inaccuracies by which Mr. Perry's "facts" are enabled to fit together to form a seemingly coherent structure. When the necessary corrections have been made the framework of the whole is found to be very shaky.

Remembering this, let us go on to scrutinise the superstructure. Among the food gatherers, we hear, a state of peace and communism reigned. Even the first food producers co-operated freely and voluntarily in agricultural labours and the building of canals. But they needed a calendar for their irrigation which some genius in Egypt invented. As a reward, the inventor's family was raised to a position of "privilege" and he became the founder of a royal line (p. 31). Among the royal "privileges" was that of dying for his people; for the early kings were sacrificed to make the crops grow (p. 29). However, a wily priest of Heliopolis discovered that the king need not himself be sacrificed; a slave

would do instead. "Henceforth the king had power over his subjects (sic), and was no longer forced to sacrifice himself for the good of the community. It is in this episode that many of the troubles probably take their origin." Wars, ruling castes and their heavenly counterparts began from that instant. As all this is pure inference, we cannot expect Mr. Perry to say when it happened, but he does incidentally date the next step in the consolidation of royal power. A dead king, Osiris, became a real immortal god through his connection with mummification (p. 32). He was the prototype of all gods; for previously men had worshipped only the Great Mother, and perhaps her mortal spouse. Now mummification began not earlier than 3300 B.C., so that real gods should not have existed before that date. Yet the Sumerians in Mesopotamia were building temples to gods about 4000 B.C.! The final apotheosis of the kingship in Egypt came once more with aid of priestcraft in 2680 B.C., when the Pharaoh became himself an incarnate god, the Son of the Sun.

Mr. Perry asserts firmly that all ruling groups were and still are descended from those of Egypt. All, with the exception of those of the old mother-goddess communities who were derived from the earlier Egyptian dynasties belonged and belong still to the line of Children of the Sun. The States of the archaic civilisation were Egyptian colonies planted by Children of the Sun. The warrior peoples who arose on their borders and eventually destroyed them were the work of nobles and princes who, unable to find scope for their ruling talent at home, set out from the parent community and imposed themselves as rulers on peoples of more lowly culture. So we had the two varieties of class States, and two varieties of militarism arose therefrom.

The food gatherers were peaceable folk, and so, according to Mr. Perry, were the earliest cultivators. The first wars were concerned with securing victims to be sacrificed instead of the king, but the ruling classes were thereby educated in cruel behaviour. Then, when military leaders detached them-

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selves from the communities of the archaic civilisation, their rapacity was unrestrained, and they lived by war and plunder.

So much of this structure is speculation that an exact test cannot be imposed, but some points must be noted. The food-gatherers were probably peaceful, but they lived in no Golden Age. Life was a continuous and precarious struggle for food, and when game was scarce the food-gatherers who survived in East Sweden even into the New Stone Age had recourse to human flesh.

The pacificism and equality of early cultivators is more doubtful. The Sumerian city states, though they excelled in the arts of peace, used to engage in most blood-thirsty wars long before the "archaic civilisation" was even beginning, and long before Sargon of Akkad. But Mr. Perry's account of the genesis of the warrior states can be tested by historical events to which he himself appeals, and appears under scrutiny as neither consistent nor accurate.

He relates that the warrior peoples were purely parasitic and drew their sustenance from the civilised states. After a long period of education through contact with the higher civilisations, these warriors descended upon and dominated the latter (II, p. 140). But since their rulers were, on Mr. Perry's thesis, themselves sprung from the ruling classes of the "archaic civilisation" (II, p. 175) and so presumably in possession of its culture,

why was this long process of "education" needed by contact?

And Mr. Perry has absolutely misconceived the nature of this process of "education." Among the warrior peoples whom he cites, are the Teutons who overthrew the Roman Empire, the Aryan Dorians who destroyed the Minoan civilisation of Greece and the Kassites who overran Babylonia about 1760 B.C. But the Teutons were educated by being brought as slaves to Rome and hired as mercenaries for the Roman armies. Which were the parasites, the Teutonic slaves and mercenaries, or the Romans who exploited their strength and their prowess? The Dorians were prehistoric, but Professor Chadwick, whom our author often quotes with approval, has adduced reasons for believing that the relation of the Aryan tribes to the Minoans was similar to that described. In any case, the Kassites appear in the Babylonian records first as slaves and mercenaries, later as conquerors and dynasts.

We should be cautious about pinning our faith to a theory founded on such dubious promises, and supported by so many fictitious facts.

Mr. Perry's books are well worth reading; even to the specialist they are suggestive and illuminating; to the socialist they provide a store house of useful ammunition; but let sentimentalists beware of relying on their conclusions.

V. GORDON CHILDE.

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THE PLEBS

REVIEWS

FASCIST PROPAGANDA

The Awakening of Italy. By Luigi Villari (Methuen, 10s. 6d.).

MR. VILLARI is a recognised authority on Italian life and history as seen through the eyes of the richer classes; it is not surprising, therefore, that he does not begin to understand the essentials of the situation with which he deals in his latest book. This purports to give an account of the events in Italy since the war, with special reference to the rise of Fascism. Its complete futility follows from the fact that the author entirely fails to realise the existence of the class war, much less to appreciate the point of view of the working class.

The thesis which Mr. Villari expounds is that there existed a state of social and political chaos in 1919-21 which could only be remedied by the firm and high-principled methods of the Fascists, working for "national," as opposed to class, ends. The chaos he attributes to a slight degree to the natural disorganisation following the war, to a greater degree to the weakness of successive governments, and in the main to the "criminal" insanity of socialist, bolshevik and anarchist "agitators."

In support of this not very original argument, Mr. Villari is completely unscrupulous. He makes allegations of personal corruption against his political adversaries on grounds which he himself frequently admits to be the merest hearsay. He distorts historical facts quite shamelessly to suit his own purposes, but, even on his own showing, the facts often tell against him. For example, he is livid with rage at the strikers who held up production in the "red" years 1919 and 1920, and he characterises the strikes of that period as always "criminal" and usually pointless. Yet his own narrative shows that the ceaseless rise in the cost of living constantly preceded the wage advances sometimes gained after strong action by the trade unions.

Mr. Villari's English style and grammar are not of the purest, but he has a complete control of that sort of slang which is used by the lower types of journalists when writing on behalf of their capitalist hirers to attack the working class. Every strike is "criminal," every communist "rabid," union organisers are "agitators," and the strikers are always misled by a minority of "anarchists" or "extremists." He is often torn between his desire to represent a strike on the one hand as a menace to society and on the other as a fiasco. He regards a strike with a political objective as something utterly horrible and he uses much ingenuity in discovering or inventing political motives in strikes whose aims are clearly economic: this he regards as useful. It is amusing to read on p. 232, after repeated diatribes against the political aims of trade unions, a detailed account of the political objects of his own pet Fascist Unions.

After the war, no social class in Italy was strong enough to control the State machine and for two years the country was in a state of semi-anarchy. The rise of the Fascist Party indicated the re-assertion of the power of the industrial class, in open and violent antagonism to the workers and in more or less veiled opposition to the agrarians and the petty bourgeoisie. In these conflicts Mr. Villari is the spokesman of the heavy capitalists and he uses every device of journalistic misrepresentation and innuendo to support his case. In spite of his free use of allegations against the workers and their organisations, when it comes to a judgment of Fascist activities, he admits a realist test: "the really important point is," not the legality or otherwise of the measures, but "whether they are good in themselves and likely to achieve the desired ends." It is not surprising that the Fascist Terror is hardly mentioned. When a Fascist is killed it is a case of "brutal murder"; the killing of members of the working class

due to "not unnatural reprisals" or "outraged patriotism."

The book would be negligible were it not for the writer's reputation as an authority on Italian affairs. It is therefore well that it should be known as a piece of spiteful and unscrupulous propaganda against the working class of Italy and of the world.

L. W.

THE I.F.T.U.

The I.F.T.U. sends us specimens of its more important book and pamphlet publications, which can be obtained from its office at 61, Vondelstraat, Amsterdam. They are of varying value, but contain some matter of interest, some of them of a melancholy interest. The specimen copy of the *International Trade Union Review* (5s. per annum), is largely devoted to articles proving the "Russian fanatics" to have failed, and exalting the I.F.T.U.'s "fight for unity." Again, the reports of the International Congress of Working Women in 1923 (2d.), of the 1919 International Trades Union Congress (6d.), and of the 1922 Congress (2s. 6d.), provoke the reflection that it is very odd there should be so many words and nothing whatever behind them. The same in reality applies to the 1922 and 1923 reports on the activities of the I.F.T.U. (2s. 6d.), the 1921 report of delegations to the Saar (9d.), and two pamphlets by Jouhau and Fimmen (2d. each), discussing the I.F.T.U. generally. Edo Fimmen's speech on "War against War" (3d.), is not up to his best level, while the report of the 1922 General Peace Conference held by the I.F.T.U. (2s. 6d.), seems merely to give free play to the sardonic and grotesque sense of humour of the I.F.T.U. Who else would have called and reported a congress including Radek and the Very Reverend the Dean of Worcester? Dr. Marion Phillips' Report on Women and Children in the Textile Industry (3d.), the Summary of World Legislation Protecting Young Workers (6d.), and the long report on the Position of the Workers in Germany (2s. 6d.), are valuable collections of facts.

What will undoubtedly interest Plebs most is the booklet (1s. 6d.) called

International Workers' Education (1922), which gives reports on the state of workers' education in many countries. It rather flatters us because it gives us the feeling that compared with some—particularly our dear but fat-headed French comrades—we are luminous giants of intellect. Some of them seem to think working-class education is an extension of Sunday School.

B. P.

TROTSKY

Problems of Life. By L. Trotsky. Translated by Z. Vengerova. With an Introduction by N. Minsky (Methuen, 2s. 6d.).

In spite of a footling introduction and a ditchwater translation, this book is an excellent half-crown's worth, and Messrs. Methuen should be cheered for their temerity in publishing these sketchy Russian Home Rulings.

First things first, says Trotsky, first things in 1921 being, he points out:

- (1) The dictatorship of the proletariat (represented by the workers-and-peasant State under the leadership of the Communist party).
- (2) The Red Army—a firm support of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
- (3) The nationalisation of the chief means of production, without which the dictatorship of the proletariat would have become a form void of substance.
- (4) The monopoly of foreign trade, which is the necessary condition of socialistic State-structure in capitalist environment.

First things in 1924 are, he says, the need for technical literature, propaganda by cinema ("the cinema unfolds on the white screen spectacular images of greater grip than are provided by the richest Church, grown wise in the experience of a thousand years"), the new family ("collective family house-keeping units must be carefully thought out and studied"), less rudeness and more civility ("rudeness is not manifested in the aggressive form of shouting and shaking a fist at a petitioner's nose; it is more often shown in a heartless formality"), and much less swearing ("abusive language and

swearing are a legacy of slavery, humiliation, and disrespect for human dignity—one's own and that of other people").

His most interesting chapter (so far as non-Russians are concerned) is headed Bureaucracy, Progressive and Unprogressive. "The bureaucrat hopes (I wonder whether he has some brilliant financial plan handy) that when we get rich, we shall, without further words, present the proletariat with cultured conditions of life as with a sort of birthday gift. No need, say such critics, to carry on propaganda for socialistic conditions among the masses—the process of labour itself creates 'a sense of socialness'." And he concludes with a demand for "local groups in factories for the study of questions relating to working-class life." Working-class Education (State-guaranteed), in fact.

Problems of Life is a healthy, hasty, overbearing piece of work by a man who has helped to pull off one revolution and is getting on with the next, and every worker should read it. Listen to Trotsky on the Disease of Cant, which, "like typhoid, has various forms. Cant sometimes springs from the highest motives and from a sincere but mistaken solicitude for Party interests. . . ." Those that have ears to hear, let them hear!

R. S. P.

THE LAW

The Story of Our Inns of Court. By D. Plunket Barton, C. Benham and F. Watt (Foulis, 10s. 6d.).

The consolidation of the feudal system after the Norman Conquest, and subsequently the efforts of the monarchy to break its power, meant a rapid increase in the importance and number of lawyers in England. They were very formal in those days; and villeinage, the manorial system and landholding were enmeshed in a tangle of legal relationships which provided a fat living for those rich enough to learn the profession of the law. How the law schools came to cluster in Holborn, from the middle of the fourteenth century, is highly interesting. The Knight Templars had hitherto occupied the site, but they were

violently suppressed by Edward II, who confiscated their immense wealth (they were money-lenders as well as Christians), which for the whole of Europe produced for the Order an annual income of six millions sterling. Their successors rented part of their manors to bands of lawyers, who later formed the Inner and the Middle Temple. Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn were similarly founded. Hence the Inns of Court must be added to the institution of Parliament and the Puritan middle-class revolution of the seventeenth century as having been immediately occasioned by the financial exigencies of the English crown!

The profession of barrister is a thorough example of Syndicalism. No one can practise at the English bar unless he is a member of one or other of the Inns. They are self-governing, voluntary bodies, independent of State and community, who run our legal system for us exactly as they please. But they belong to the Middle Ages rather than to capitalist industrialism. They are best regarded as legal guilds, occupying, indeed, a privileged position in so far as their control by the State has always been slighter than in the case of the industrial guilds.

It need hardly be said that they are class preserves of the worst kind, a working-class student not having a dog's chance of earning a living. Even worse is the Scottish bar, an exclusive and sordid oligarchy. The sooner they are reformed the better.

This book has numerous fine photographs, and were it not written by grave and learned lawyers might be called chatty. It is an informal and pleasant account of the history and traditions of the four Inns, written with some eloquence, some pride, and not a little pomposity.

J. L. G.

GLORIOUS WAR

Shootings at Dawn. By Ernest Thurtle. M.P. (Victoria House Printing Co., 2d.).

This is a collection of certain instances which have come to the author's knowledge of the way in which soldiers were shot during the war for "cowardice." Its object is to remove the death

penalty altogether. It shows two things—firstly, the amazing stupidity of and brutality of the War Office machine; secondly, the savagery of the means Capital uses to force men to fight for it. We quote one example (from a letter):—

"On Feb. 9th, 1916, when I was a sergeant in the 1st Battalion West York Regiment, 58th Brigade, 6th Division, I was ordered to take over the guard of Lance-Corporal X. of the same regiment who was to be shot for desertion, having been absent for twenty-three days until apprehended by the police. . . . I was ordered to pick the two worst characters in my platoon to form part of the execution party. X. was a clean, smart soldier, respected by all his comrades. The two men I selected for the firing party went with the adjutant. When they came back, tough characters though they were supposed to be, they were sick, they screamed in their sleep, they vomited immediately after eating. All they could say was: 'The sight was horrible, made more so by the fact that we had shot one of our own men.' X. had been very lucky in gambling with his comrades and had won a fair amount of money when the battalion was back at rest. This had been his downfall, as he had gone on a drinking bout only a few hundred yards away from his battalion."

P.

STATE SOCIALISM AFTER THE WAR

A Retrospect of Reconstruction after the War, embracing a greater Democracy, and founded on the Teachings of Christ. By Thomas J. Hughes.

This is a book which makes one despair! Well may we cry "Religion is the opium of the workers." In this case the use of the drug is not limited to one class!

The book purports to present a perfectly workable scheme of State Socialism, in accordance with the teachings of Christ. Armies of clerks, auditors, accountants, managers are necessary; in fact, so many would be needed that it is feared there would be no one left for productive work.

There must be the encouragement of keen competition to encourage individual incentive, although the book concludes by claiming to have presented a scheme which "accomplished economic equality. . . as great an advance in the world's progress as was the achievement of political equality."

At the same time, of course, "the common labourer, whose earnings are small and tastes simple, does not want nor desire the larger and expensive house of the man of much ability whose earnings are large. Likewise the common labourer does not care greatly for education, culture, and the other refinements of life. His nature is easily satisfied in this respect," so the book goes on, confusion of thought apparent on almost every page. But it is on the subject of the interpretation of the teachings of Jesus that the prejudice and ignorance of the author shows itself most clearly. He still believes in the "inspiration of the Scriptures"; in the establishment of "a kingdom of heaven" upon earth. This will be Equaland. At present it is in the "hearts of men." Like a well-known gentleman he quotes "Scripture for his purpose." Of course he believes in the fulfilment of all the weird prophecies. There is no mention made of the denunciation of the rich, of the religious, such as we read of in Chap. 23, of Matthew, a chapter always conveniently ignored by such people, not a word about that very naturally constituted person, Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, and what is reputed to have been their punishment for having "kept back part of the price!" Such stories must not be taken literally!

The author has evidently read nothing of the origin and growth of religions, nothing of the growth, development and basis of capitalist society. His is a perfectly useless book. As part of the scheme, in Equaland, all the unpleasant tasks are performed by criminals, and if one could imagine the Editor of PLEBS living there, his job should be to stoke up for the "Burning of the Books" such as this, thus saving a hapless reviewer a little time and some irritation.

C. S. T.

CRED IT REFORM AGAIN

The Deadlock in Finance. Maj. Arthur E. Powell. A simplified explanation of the Douglas Credit Theories (Cecil Palmer, London, 5s.).

New Hope and the Road to Plenty, by Robert Fleck (Reformers' Bookstall, Glasgow, 3d.).

A book and a pamphlet, which both diagnose the social disease as a misuse of "credit" and which propose as the cure "National Credit," or in plainer terms printing Treasury notes, viz.:—Inflation.

They differ in some respects, Maj. Powell's "simplification" swinging between his admiration for Maj. Douglas, and enthusiasm for the Utopia to which inflation is to be the key, while Robert Fleck crams a 24 page pamphlet with legislative proposals. Fleck tries to deal with the subject from the workers' point of view, while Maj. Powell deals with it from what he says is "the only point of view that really matters," viz.:—that of the "consumer," of the person who "buys and uses things."

Both rightly start from the stupidity of humanity permitting people to be in want of goods while workers are clamouring to be allowed to produce them, with factories ready for use and the earth ready to yield up its raw material.

Major Powell is a man of nerve—which is a quality in a major—and this is especially evident in the price of the book; but an economist requires deep understanding, and this is not so evident. He has no conception of what constitutes value, making it supply and demand on p. 85 and implying cost or labour on p. 108. All through the book he states "the one and only obvious cure is to arrange that more purchasing power gets into the hands of the public who want things" and proposes "a free gift to everyone of 'money' which they have not earned." These suggest

a kindly generosity, but that they are only the sugar-covering of the Douglas pill is evident when we come to the bitters and learn that the method of giving the "consumer" the free money is to "give the additional purchasing power or money direct to the producer" (this means the producing capitalist) "and enable him to sell his goods to the consumer at so much less."

As in the proposals of Professor Soddy, Major Douglas and others who are going to "save" society by Inflation, the paradise is to be for the industrial capitalist and the worker is still to remain a wage slave.

Mr. Fleck is also anxious to set production free by "the magic of these bits of paper." He proposes the foundation of a National Bank and the issue of credit for social purposes. His detailed legislation, however, is obviously the result of a great deal of work and thought. He points out on p. 13 that "an attack on the financial 'Holy of Holies' means a death struggle for one or other of the combatants" and as this is true he is evidently not clear in his thought when he talks on p. 20 about the existing commercial banks continuing in business.

The real weakness about both writers and indeed about all the "sound currency" group is that they are one-sided in their outlook. Credit finance is only a part of capitalism, and indeed only an instrument. It is extremely important to understand it, but equally important to keep one's perspective. The driving force of capitalism is profit; and profit is obtained by exploitation in the workshop. The fact that the financiers exploit the industrial capitalist should arouse no sympathy with us. It is more important to realise that they both exploit the worker. When Maj. Douglas and his disciples propose to end that, we will welcome their co-operation, not before.

A. W.

DO YOU COUNT?

In the struggle for working-class emancipation, the hub round which current history revolves, *do you count?* Just as the individual, himself weak, adds mightily to his strength by co-operating with his fellows, so can he, with his very limited experience add tremendously to his mental power by drawing on the knowledge of his fellows—by educating himself!

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