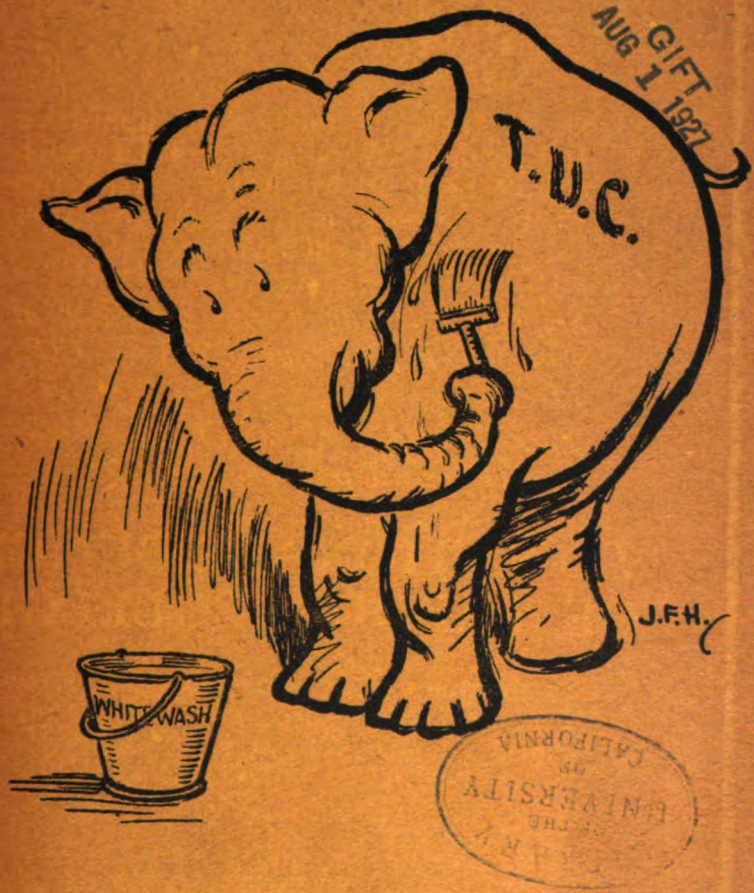


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## Straws in the Wind

*The Parting of the Ways—The Report of the General Council  
"Striking a Bargain"—Industrial Parliament Proposals  
Building a Class Tradition—New Leadership.*

THE issue raised by the Conference of T.U. Executives on January 20th and the report of the General Council to it, as well as by the growing wave of discussion about an Industrial Truce, is really an issue not of persons or of minor detailed differences on tactics, but an issue between two fundamentally divergent conceptions of the functions of the Trade Union movement in general. In this sense, as we said in the last issue, the new year 1927 finds us at the parting of the ways. To discuss the matter merely in terms of "individual mistakes," whether one leader is subjectively better than another, in terms of "wise cautiousness" against "hot-head impetuosity" and so forth, is to miss the whole significance of the present stage of the class struggle which we have reached. The real issue behind all these questions is this: Is the Labour movement an organisation whose function is to adapt itself to capitalism and to what is "practicable" under capitalism, and merely to "strike a bargain" with the capitalists in order to extort a few reforms? Or is its function to be a "spear-head" against capitalism, building up its power so as finally to challenge and supplant capitalist dictatorship, rallying the masses round its banners, and using struggles for specific reforms in the workers' position, not as ends, but as rallying slogans for the masses and as footholds for the wider challenge to capitalism later on? The former represents the old pre-1914 reformist conception, adapted to the interests of a "labour aristocracy" in an epoch when capitalism was advancing and strong, and could afford to concede "reforms" when pressed. There logically follows from this a view of the Labour movement as divided into numerous sections, each concerned with its own problems of sectional reforms, consulting and taking common action in a few cases, but only as exceptions. It implies a denial of class struggle in fact and in the present, even though it may be mixed with some Socialist hymn-singing on Sundays and sermons about "the day" and a Socialist utopia some-time ahead in the future "when the masses are educated," "when conditions are ripe," etc., etc. The continuance of this tradition into the entirely new post-war situation, when capitalism, on the contrary to conceding "reforms," is beating down the workers' standards everywhere and tightening its dictatorship, is a drag on the whole movement, and amounts objectively to a betrayal of it.

The whole report of the General Council breathes this conception. Its aim ever since April in its negotiations with the Government had been merely to "strike a bargain" with the Government for the miners and get the best reformist terms out of the existing situation—just like a salesman on an Eastern market, bluffing and haggling over a price. The last thing they thought of was to rally the masses, to throw down a challenge to capitalism; and when they found the General Strike was being treated by the Government as such a challenge, they ignominiously called it off. What is the meaning of their criticism of the miners, and the galaxy of vile abuse of Cook ranging from the *Daily Mail* to Mr. Snowden in *Reynolds* and Mr. Thomas in *Answers*? It is that Cook was the first leader of a big Trade Union ever to think primarily of rallying the rank and file and organising them in a struggle, which has done more to forge solidarity among British workers and educate them in the class struggle than years of formal propaganda, instead of tamely "striking a bargain" with the capitalists at what the General Council considered the most favourable time. Is it not clear that the General Council considered itself, not as a G.H.Q. of a single army fighting on several sectors of a common front, but merely as a sort of conclave of autonomous chieftains, reporting back to a conference of executives of separate unions, thinking each primarily in terms of its own section? (Hence the talk, not of organising a common struggle, but of "generosity" in lending aid to "a section of the movement.") The whole of the chairman's speech at the Bournemouth T.U.C. was an eloquent exposition of this rôle of Trade Unionism as "one of the recognised institutions" of the existing system.

This conception is responsible also for all the talk about an "Industrial Truce." We now find Bevin coming out with what amounts to an appeal to the Government and the capitalists to "strike a bargain" with Labour. "Let them drop their legislation against Trade Unions and ratify the Washington 8-hour convention, then Labour will be more ready to talk about Industrial Peace"—that is what this new talk of a "bargain" amounts to; and we shall hear more of it. On January 11th Mr. A. Henderson, in a speech at Falkirk, in less militant tone than Mr. Bevin, made a proposal for Mr. Baldwin to call a joint conference of Labour leaders and capitalists and to set up an Industrial Parliament. At the same time a new "Industrial Institute," supported, among others, by Messrs. Cramp, Snowden, R. Williams, MacDonald, J. H. Thomas, and Sir Robert Horne, Sir Max Muspratt, Sir Alfred Mond, Lord Ashfield, has been set up to research into the problem of Industrial Peace and "to discover the formula" for bringing about co-operation between Capital and Labour. *The Saturday*

*Review* of January 8th welcomes these various proposals in a leading article, beginning with the statement that "only a new spirit of co-operation between capital and labour can save our industrial supremacy," and ending with the opinion that "every argument against the General Strike is also an argument against any other strike" on a large scale. *The Times* of January 17th begins a series of articles on "Trade Union Reform" by the notorious Dr. Shadwell, and in introducing the series in a leading article takes up the proposal of "striking a bargain" with the Labour leaders, and exhorts the too extreme Tories to moderate their tone a little lest they should frighten away the moderate Labour leaders from making a bargain. "Accommodation is possible with the right-wing," says *The Times*, and appeals for "official Trade Unionism" to separate itself from the "left-wing" and "co-operate in shaping legislation best fitted to serve the national interest." We all know the rôle that the short-lived Industrial Parliament served in 1919—a time of rising working-class militancy—in giving the Government time to prepare to smash the railwaymen and then the Triple Alliance and the miners. We know the rôle played by a similar Parliament of Industry in Germany in sidetracking the workers' councils movement in 1918-19. It is significant that this new proposal comes after the General Strike and at another period of rising working-class revolt against lowered standards.

There is at present no third way between those two conceptions of the functions of the Labour movement; and those who try to hide the fact of this clear-cut choice are merely throwing dust in the eyes of the rank and file. The reason why British workers still tolerate Industrial truce-mongers and elect Black-Fridayists to leading positions, the reason for the "apathy" which leaders so often quote as an excuse for not leading, is the lack of a class tradition in the British movement. The builder of that tradition is the experience of the struggle itself—the solidarity bred of events like those of the last nine months. Unless our movement takes the new road of organising that struggle and building that tradition, our movement will lose its class character and become merely "one of the institutions of (capitalist) society." We need in our lessons on Trade Unions to cease talking merely about organisational machinery (a lathe will turn out different things according to the aim of the mind which guides it), and more about functions and aims in relation to the struggle as a whole. The question of a new leadership is not only a matter of "personnel"; it is a more fundamental matter of changing entirely from an old to a new conception of the functions and aim of leadership.

## EDUCATION AND THE PROBLEMS OF THE NEW YEAR\*

THE value of independent working-class education is determined by the manner in which we relate such education to our immediate day-to-day problems. I know of many men in our movement who have regularly attended N.C.L.C. classes, who have read the Plebs textbooks and have deeply studied industrial history and Marxian economics, but who seem incapable of applying the really profound knowledge they have obtained to the realities of the present situation. They possess a wonderful background of affairs—but it just remains background. I suppose that actually the percentage of those who have thoroughly grounded themselves in the history and theory of the working-class movement, as compared with the great mass of workers altogether, is small. But of that small percentage, how many turn their knowledge to living, practical account in the movement itself? I am sure that if *all* those men who have attended N.C.L.C. classes, and who have given many arduous hours to intensive study, were in the thick of the movement, as it were—were actively at work, wrestling with the problems of the workshop, the Trade Union branches, the Trades Councils and local Labour Parties, the Co-operative Guilds, and so on—the movement would be stronger, more advanced, and infinitely more clear as to its aims and purposes. Theory is only useful as a guide to action; all theory extraneous to that, while it may provide intellectual entertainment to the individual himself, is like so much useless lumber.

I am interested in independent working-class education, because I believe it to be a very essential prerequisite towards preparing the workers to overcome the difficulties and dealing with the problems which beset them. Knowledge, particularly the special knowledge imparted by the N.C.L.C., is, in my opinion, the most valuable means with which the workers can equip themselves. It is the lamp which lights up the dark places, and shows them the road along which they must travel to obtain their emancipation.

The class struggle is a struggle which is waged on many fronts; it finds expression in all our agitations and campaigns, in strikes and lock-outs, in great political struggles, and so on. And all the time is going on the struggle of ideas; the struggle to win the workers to the working-class point of view as expressed by the press and propaganda of the movement, as against the efforts of the ruling class, through the capitalist press and the other organs of capitalist

\* Delivered as an address at Nottingham on 8th January, 1927.

publicity, to keep the workers intellectually and morally bound to capitalism.

So soon as the workers begin to appreciate their position in society, so soon did they realise the domination of ruling class ideas, and the monopoly by the ruling class of the educational institutions, the press, and every other avenue of enlightenment.

It was the relentless pressure of economic conditions which compelled the workers to form their Trade Unions in order to protect and advance their wage and living standards. It was the pressure of those same conditions which led to the formation and rise of the Co-operative movement and of the working-class political movement. As these movements have grown, so has grown the need to explain the why and the wherefore of them, and to inculcate in their increasing memberships a knowledge of their aims and purposes. In short, in order to make a member of a Trade Union a better and more efficient Trade Unionist—and not merely a ticket holder—the need has arisen to give him a kind of class education which the ruling class does not provide. The same is true in regard to members of co-operative organisations and working-class political parties. This is the work of the National Council of Labour Colleges.

The question of workers' education is one of the great problems which beset us to-day. How can we impart knowledge to the millions of workers? How can we give them a clear theoretical understanding of the mighty industrial conflicts and political struggles in which we are engaged? How can we arm them with the facts of life and make them realise their true position in society? How can we provide an antidote to the deadly daily poisoning of their minds by the capitalist press?

These are some of the questions to which we must find answers. Our educational movement is growing, but it is not growing fast enough. We must strengthen it in every way conceivable. More and more Trade Unions must be drawn into active participation in the education of their members. The co-operative organisations must also be induced to participate. The classes must be extended, increased in number, and held in every town and village. Those classes are the fountain from which the young men in our movement can obtain the knowledge which will give them strength, certitude and conviction, and which will keep them firm in the faith and active in the cause. The development of our educational movement is an imperative necessity. Responsibilities are crowding on the active men in the working-class movement. Every forward move the workers make leads to their increase. We are all the time faced with the problem of having to find capable men to fill positions of trust and responsibility.



I am hoping that great strides will be made in our educational work this year. The movement does not realise the potentialities contained within itself. Why should not every Workmen's Club, every Labour Hall and Trade Union Institute become a centre of educational activity? If that were done it would greatly deepen our assurance as to the ability of the movement to face up to the problems besetting it to-day, and as to the ultimate triumph of the working class.

Education is the groundwork. What are the problems of 1927? During the past twelve months we have experienced the greatest industrial struggle of our history. The General Strike and the long weeks of the mining dispute have tested the Trade Union movement as never before. Many unions have experienced severe financial strain. Several bodies of workers, in addition to the miners, have met with reverses. Victimisation of known Trade Unionists has been and is still rampant. As I have previously stated, the Trade Unions are like battleships after a fierce naval engagement and are in need of overhauling and repairs. One of the great problems, one of the great tasks of the year is to do that overhauling and accomplish those repairs. That will not be done by calling one another names. It will only be done by applying our knowledge of the position to the steady, purposeful work of strengthening and rebuilding the Trade Union organisations. Those of you with a knowledge of industrial history can do fine work now in spreading that knowledge amongst your workmates and friends, giving them a clear understanding of the part the Trade Union movement plays in the class struggle, and how imperative it is that they should stand steadfast to their unions and help in the work of recruiting non-unionists. We have got to rehabilitate Trade Union finance, and to make the machinery of the unions more efficient. That can only be done, basically, by increasing the members, and by developing the power and influence of organisation. We have got to initiate and carry through a wider, more intensive and more purposeful recruiting campaign during 1927 than ever before.

Another of the great problems of the year is still further to strengthen and solidify the political conquests our class is making with every election. The municipal elections and the Parliamentary by-elections indicate a deepening of the political consciousness of the workers. Much of the support Labour candidates are getting may be due, however, to an emotional mood. We must confirm this mood into settled conviction. When our movement does obtain control of the Government of this country, as inevitably it will, and that within a comparatively short time, then we must have a large stratum of thinking men and women throughout the country, clearly

understanding what that Government should and must do, prepared to support it to the utmost.

Another of the problems of 1927 is to build and spread the co-operative societies and guilds, and to bring them into closer relationship with the general working-class movement. This year should be a year of unification, of marshalling all the sections and phases of the movement for purposeful and united action. Still another of the problems of the year is that of International Trade Unity, and international unity generally. Some time in August we shall be holding our International Trade Union Congress. Before then I hope we shall be conscious of the actual practical steps to be taken to achieve international unity. We are very insular in this country. Our outlook still retains many nationalistic prides and prejudices. Here is an immense field for study. What is happening in Russia, in China, in India, in Mexico, and in many other places, very intimately affects us here at home. The world is becoming linked into one great industrial economy. The development of transport, and of the ramifications of international capitalism, is making it more so with every day that passes. In this connection, the educational movement can be tremendously helpful in spreading a knowledge of the movements in other countries, and of what our foreign comrades are attempting to achieve.

I want 1927 to be a year of growth in understanding and class consciousness; a year of rebuilding and steady development for all sections of the movement; a year which will witness the successful repulse of the attacks our enemies launch against us, and of preparation for the speedy triumph of the working class in fulfilment of its great historical mission.

GEORGE HICKS (*Chairman, T.U.C. General Council*).

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## SOUTH AFRICA

**S**OUTH AFRICA to-day resembles a miniature edition of the pre-war British Empire. Here we have white bourgeoisie, "aristocracy of labour," and coloured colonial people all living together in the same country. Of the seven million inhabitants of the Union of South Africa, approximately one and a half million are whites. There are four and a half million blacks, as well as half a million "coloured" people, largely of mixed descent.

Except in the Cape Province, where the "coloured" people enjoy a certain amount of political freedom and are employed in many cases as skilled workmen, South Africa's non-European population consists almost entirely of unskilled industrial workers, agricultural labourers and domestic servants. In the three northern provinces (Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal) skilled work is the strict preserve of the whites, and this is true to a more limited extent in the Cape. The difference in standard of living between the two sections of the working class is so great that the white artisan is often able to employ a native servant in his household. Generally speaking, native wages range from £2 to £4 per month, and white wages from £25 upwards (cost of living rather higher than in Britain).

White labour was fairly well organised during the "boom" period at the close of the war, but since the establishment of the Pact Government many unions have completely disappeared, while others exist with a sadly depleted membership. The strongest white unions are in the building and engineering industries. The once flourishing S.A. Mine Workers' Union has almost ceased to exist, and the same is true of the railwaymen's union. In the Cape there are a few coloured workers in the white unions, but generally speaking the trade unions are for whites only, and these pursue a policy of limitation of entry into their skilled "preserves," much like the English "Old Unionism," in order to maintain their privileged position.

The native trade union, known as the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, has grown rapidly in recent years and has a membership probably greater than all the white unions combined.\* There are no other native unions. In practice the I.C.U. resembles a loosely organised political party rather than a trade union. Its leader, Kadalie, is a clever opportunist who founded the Union in Capetown in 1919. In 1924 the first branch came into existence on

\* The membership of the I.C.U. is said to be nearly 50,000, but it must be understood that many thousands of members have merely paid an entrance fee and then ceased to take any further part in the life of the organisation.

the Witwatersrand. The I.C.U. has up to the present made no appreciable headway in the difficult task of organising the native miners. These live in "compounds" shut off from contact with other natives. They are recruited from the tribal reserve areas and transported back home on the expiration of their term of service.

The white Labour Party is essentially a party of the "labour aristocracy," although it also has a very large following among those sections of the trading and professional classes who look to the high wages of the white workers to provide a market for their goods and services. The Labour Party has remained an almost exclusively British party, the Dutch working class vote being strongly Nationalist. It goes without saying that the party is fairly strongly anti-native.

The main industry is agriculture, but the Witwatersrand gold mines still produce over 80 per cent. of the world's gold, and for a considerable period the mining interests have dominated the politics of the country. The struggle between mining and farming interests (chiefly for the control of sources of native labour) has taken a racial form. The farmers are generally Dutch speaking and nationalist in sentiment, harking back to the days before British imperialism conquered the old Boer republics with their semi-feudal, semi-patriarchal type of organisation. The mining interests are cosmopolitan and imperialist in outlook. Most of the profits of the mines are exported from S. Africa. The farmers as well as the manufacturers and traders desire "to keep this money inside the country" for obvious reasons.

Since the beginning of the war there has been a considerable growth of home industry, and this has continued to develop as a result of the Government's protectionist policy. The leather industry has reached quite respectable dimensions, but cannot exist without the aid of very high import taxes directed against British and American footwear. The home market for this commodity is somewhat limited, however, by the fact that the majority of the natives go without shoes.

The party of the imperial and mine-owning interests (South African Party) was defeated at the general election in 1924, following the unsuccessful strike and "revolt" of the white gold miners in 1922. The present Nationalist-Labour "Pact" régime represents the petty trading, farming and white working class forces, all of which are interested in taxing the mining industry, developing local manufactures and preserving the "white standard" by "keeping the nigger in his place," *i.e.*, preserving the existing relation of whites and blacks, by means of which the white population has been able very successfully to maintain its standard of living at the price of the helotage of the native workers.

The election promises of the Pact for increased direct taxation of the gold industry have, of course, not been carried out, but an attempt to stabilise the position of the white miners and prevent the employment of native labour for skilled or semi-skilled work is seen in the "Colour Bar Bill" which was only forced through by the Government last year by a joint sitting of the lower and upper Houses, the S.A.P. majority in the Senate having twice rejected the Bill. In general, the Government has tackled the problem of white unemployment and "poor-whitism" by opening up relief works and employing whites in unskilled work on the Government railways at a wage slightly above the native wage. As the mines and farms are always crying out for more native labour, there is no large army of native unemployed. After the end of the war there were 22,000 white employed on the Rand mines as against over 200,000 natives. After the "Revolt" the number of whites fell to about 16,000. It has now risen again to 20,000. A black-white ratio of about 10 : 1 is usually maintained.

In general, the relative stabilisation of capitalism and of the white standard which the Pact has achieved has been made possible by the continued economic and political repression of the native workers. It is felt by all white South Africa that this position can only be maintained by a further series of anti-native measures on the part of the Government, coupled with strict limitation of immigration from Europe. In view of the big demand for cheap native labour (a demand which the Union alone cannot satisfy, many thousands of indentured natives being recruited annually from the Portuguese territory of Mozambique), it is obvious that native wages are only kept at their present low level by the most oppressive system of laws imaginable. These laws are continually being extended and stiffened. They include (1) the "Pass Laws," which place every native under permanent police supervision and involve curfew regulations of the most oppressive kind; (2) the Master and Servants' Act, which loads the scales heavily against the native worker and in favour of his white employer, for instance, by compelling him to give a month's notice before leaving, while he may be "sacked on the spot" if his master so desires; (3) unequal justice for black and white in the law courts, allowing white employers to terrorise their native servants and the whites to terrorise the natives generally by the use of fist, whip and gun; and (4) a whole host of complicated and one-sided land laws, the general effect of which is to drive the natives off their tribal lands into the industrial areas.

Legislation of this type has been piling up for generations; Hertzog and his "Labour" allies are now making it their special task to consolidate the whole system. The so-called "Segregation Policy," which Hertzog proposes to introduce during 1927, is an

attempt to solve the "native question" once and for all by a comprehensive system of laws definitely establishing an immutable economic and political colour bar which will condemn the "sons of Ham" to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for their white bosses for all eternity. Most important of all, the 20,000 natives of the Cape Province, who at present have the vote (they are the only natives in South Africa with any political rights whatever), are to be disenfranchised.

The only reason that this "segregation" scheme has not yet been adopted by the Legislative Assembly is that the white rulers have been quarreling among themselves. The Government's "Flag Bill" brought forth the opposition of all the imperialist forces in the country, headed by the powerful daily newspapers, which are controlled by the mining houses. The Government had to call a halt. Now that the Imperial Conference is over it is obvious that South African Nationalism has been forced to compromise with British Imperialism, at least for the time being. "Unity among the whites" is Hertzog's first consideration at present. How far agreement will go on questions of economic policy is difficult to foresee. If S. Africa can obtain cheap loans from Britain for the development of her agricultural and manufacturing industries, she might give a certain amount of preference to British goods in return. At the moment there is no indication of any big move in this direction. While American and German goods are cheaper than British, British capitalists are at a distinct disadvantage in S. Africa.

If the "Flag Bill" can now be satisfactorily disposed of, Hertzog will proceed to carry into effect his native policy. The growth of native trade unionism and the development of native political consciousness must be stopped at once, or they will prove too strong for "White South Africa" in a few years time. And, while the white trade unions have been very quiet indeed since the Pact came to power, it does not follow that they will stand unreservedly on the side of the Government in the forthcoming struggle. Already the S.A. T.U.C. has shown a tendency to recognise the existence of the native trade union movement; for at Johannesburg last Easter it criticised the Government for interfering with the movements of native trade union organisers, while it endorsed the demand of native workers at Bloemfontein for a rise in wages. The conference was very largely a leaders' conference: a meeting of rank and file white workers would probably have turned down these resolutions. The leaders of the S.A. T.U.C. (strange to say) can see further than the membership, and this must be taken as an important indication of the way things are moving.

In a country where the total native intelligentsia only numbers a bare two or three thousand, it is a comparatively easy task for the

bourgeoisie to influence native leadership. Kadalie's revolutionary fervour of a few years back is plainly subsiding, while the capitalist press now pays much attention to his speeches. His organisation, however, is not likely to follow its present leader into the camp of the so-called "good boys." Any organisation of black workers in S. Africa must from the very nature of things be revolutionary, if the mass of its membership has any say at all. And although the rank and file of the I.C.U. has played a largely passive rôle in the past, there are already indications of the development of political consciousness among the masses of black workers. This will provide in time the necessary ballast for the at present all too top-heavy ship of the native labour movement.

In conclusion, it may be said that the apparent immediate acceptance of the "Mond policy" by South Africa, at least as far as Hertzog's "recantation" is concerned, was brought about by the intensity of the struggle going on *inside* S. Africa at present. It represents a temporary *political* alliance of national and imperial capital in order to shackle the native workers. If this is successful it will mean a bad set-back for the Labour movement in South Africa. But the quarrels of the Nationalists and Imperialists are bound to break out afresh. South Africa's economic trend has been away from the Empire for some considerable time. It is unlikely that the dropping of the "Flag Bill" (or even its adoption with the Royal coat of arms on the flag!) will make any essential difference.

EDWARD ROUX.

## A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE MINERS' STRUGGLE

**T**HE resistance of the miners during the recent lock-out to district settlements is based on vivid recollections of past disputes and the way in which the coal barons played off one district against another. For the purpose of refreshing our memories we shall describe a number of disputes that have occurred in recent years in the mining industry, and also for the purpose of indicating the urgent need for reorganisation of the Mining Unions in a single powerful National Miners' Union.

The Welsh miners in 1898 fought the Associated Colliery Owners of S. Wales and Monmouth. The struggle was one of twenty-five weeks' duration, during which time the suffering was terrible, and as had more than once previously occurred, other mining districts hustled the coals to bank, and actually in some cases had their wages increased.

There was discontent among the Durham miners, and the owners, in granting them an advance, admitted that the price of steam coal was affected owing to abnormal market conditions. Here was a practical illustration of the use of the sectional lever, and of Durham, with other districts, acting in effect as strike-breakers. The South Wales Colliery Enginemen and Stokers also worked during the strike. Nevertheless, although so handicapped, the S. Wales miners succeeded in destroying the old sliding scale, and a move was also made towards the fixing of a minimum on the standard.

The Coal Mines Regulation Act came into operation in 1908, establishing the eight-hour working day. It became applicable to South Wales in 1909. What were its fruits? The coal barons in S. Wales thought that, on the plea that there would be a reduction in the working power of the miner, it would be the opportunity to reduce wages. Eventually they demanded compensating concessions in the form of establishing the double shift system, etc. On the other hand, the loss of wages to the men working in abnormal places, together with reduction of allowances for dead-work (preparation etc. of the working places), led to renewed efforts for a minimum wage. A crisis rapidly developed, and from a local affair it grew to a national issue. Negotiations were prolonged, expenses heavy, and at the eleventh hour the miners were let down. A double shift was conceded except where a third party thought it to be too dangerous to do so. There was a special clause in the Act allowing for the working of sixty extra hours per year, and this was settled in the owners' favour in the law courts.

The Scottish miners in 1909 were tied up until 1912 over the wages question under Board of Trade auspices: an owners' policy easily understood, as the South Wales Conciliation Board agreement was due to terminate in 1910.

During 1910-1911 the embittered Cambrian dispute took place. This arose through the huge Cambrian Combine (chairman, the late Lord Rhondda) trying to enforce a starvation price-list in a newly-opened seam in the Ely Colliery. During eleven years ending December, 1909, this combine had made a profit of £795,446 on a capital of £500,000. Or, in other words, it had in eleven years received its capital back with an additional £295,446, and *still owned the mines*. The men contended that a price list fixed for this pit would automatically become the price list for the whole of the Cambrian Combine pits. After a stubborn resistance the men were forced to return to work.

The minimum wage principle was secured by the M.F.G.B. in 1912 after a six weeks' national strike. The Minimum Wage Act, hastily passed, while not establishing any specific rates of wages in any district, or for any grades of workers, empowered the setting up



of District Boards, composed of owners and men with independent (?) chairmen, whose awards would have the force of law. Prior to the strike discussion went on for months, during which time the coal barons laid their plans and stacked coal for a prolonged struggle. The *Morning Leader* stated that "a well-known Midland coalowner is reported to have made the following extraordinary statement on hearing the official figures of the ballot: 'It will be a godsend to the collieries if the men will strike. There were many thousands of tons of coal in stock before the minimum wage was discussed. Now there are none at the collieries. They are cleared, and stocks are on the railways, in works and factories. Seven or eight weeks' stoppage will wipe these out, and we should have a glorious summer with high prices. If the miners stop, they could not have arranged it better for coalowners than they have done. It will be a fine holiday for the men, the distribution of union funds, the much required rest in the colliery world, considering the present output.'"

Sympathy was expressed by politicians with the miners during the passing of the Act through the Commons, but Mr. Asquith really expressed what this sympathy really meant when he said on March 9th: "Parliament would be justified, if compelled to do so—which Heaven forbid!—in taking other measures to defend the industries of the people against paralysis and starvation." (Loud cheers.) We may recall here that the railwaymen's leaders were informed by him during the Rail Strike which occurred a little later: "His Majesty's Government will place the whole civil and military forces of the Crown at the disposal of the railway companies."

The Minimum Wage Act embodied four points:—

- (1) Recognition of the principle of the Minimum Wage.
- (2) Safeguards and qualifications protecting the owners.
- (3) Machinery for District Boards and further sub-divisions of Districts if required. (This bound the miners to no less than twenty-two different Boards and Umpires.)
- (4) Government compulsion of settlement if the District Boards did not agree.

Sufficient history has been glanced at in the above to show the weakness of the miners' present position in district settlements, and the need for building up one National Union of Mineworkers. The M.F.G.B. consists of about a score of trade unions, many of these, as several of the county associations, being also federations of smaller unions. (See valuable article in *L.R.D. Circular*, Dec., 1926, "Structure of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.") Unification must come, but while power should be centralised, effective control must be in the hands of the rank and file.

J. HAMILTON.

# *The* FUTURE *of the* LONDON LABOUR COLLEGE

*We referred in our editorial last month to the matter of the future of the London Labour College, and to the possibilities of making such changes in its curriculum, terms of residence, etc., as would meet the urgent need of our whole movement for a tutors' training centre. Obviously, before any such changes could be made, the College would have to be brought into more direct connection with the rest of the movement, particularly as regards finance and control. In the following article J. P. M. Millar outlines the scheme which the N.C.L.C. has put forward to the Unions at present controlling the College.*

**S**OME time ago the N.U.R. Executive announced that it proposed to withdraw from its half ownership and control of the Labour College, London, at the end of June or beginning of July, the reason given being finance.

For some time the Executive of the N.C.L.C. have felt that the lack of a closer relationship between the residential college and the class work throughout the country was not satisfactory. Last month, therefore, with a view to keeping the college in existence and also to bring about a closer contact between residential work and class work, a Sub-Committee of the Executive met a joint sub-committee of the N.U.R. and the South Wales Miners' Federation who together control the college.

The following proposals were submitted by the N.C.L.C., and it was indicated that the same arrangements could be made with the S.W.M.F. if the latter so desired :—

The N.C.L.C. is prepared, subject to the S.W.M.F. continuing its financial support, to take over completely the Labour College, London, subject to the following arrangement :—

- (1) That the N.U.R. is willing to contribute about £2,500 per annum to the N.C.L.C. as compared with the figure of about £3,000 which we understand the Labour College on the average costs the N.U.R. each year.
- (2) That the N.U.R. in return appoint a representative on the National Executive of the N.C.L.C. and on the sub-committee which the N.C.L.C. would set up to administer the College. The Union would also be represented on the N.C.L.C.'s twelve divisional councils, and any of its branches could send a voluntary delegate to the local college committee covering the branch's area.
- (3) That the N.U.R., in return for the above payment would have six residential students each year and also free access for the whole of its members to the N.C.L.C.'s existing classes.

The advantages of the above scheme from the N.U.R. point of view are :—

- (1) The N.U.R. would be relieved of the responsibility of running the College.
- (2) The Union's liability would be a definite figure.

- (3) There would, in addition, be a National saving of about £500.
- (4) There would be a saving of the Local Affiliation Fees (usually at the rate of 2d. per member) paid by N.U.R. Branches.
- (5) As the question of an N.C.L.C. scheme is at present a live issue in the N.U.R., the above arrangement would meet the desires of many of the members.
- (6) The Union would have a scheme which would provide educational facilities for thousands instead of a handful of members.
- (7) Much better results could be had from the residential scholarships, as no such scholarships would be awarded to members unless they had gone far to educate themselves at the Evening Classes (or Correspondence Courses) beforehand, and had shown that they had the capacity to benefit from the training.
- (8) The number of residential scholarships available every two years would in all probability remain the same, i.e., 12, as the N.C.L.C. is satisfied that the preliminary training at classes plus some changes at the College would enable the students to get as much out of one residential year as they at present obtain out of two.

It was suggested to the N.C.L.C. representatives that, as an alternative to the above, they should ask their principal unions to subsidise the Labour College to the extent of £500 per year each. The N.C.L.C. representatives pointed out that this was not a feasible proposition. The fact that the principal unions supporting the N.C.L.C. were already paying more per member per annum for educational work than was the N.U.R. made it obviously unfair for them to be asked to increase their contributions in order to decrease the N.U.R.'s.

The only feasible way of keeping the college in existence and to improve its capacity for serving the trade union movement is for the unions interested in Independent Working-Class Education to pool their funds, and by pooling maintain the residential college without in any way sacrificing the class work. The result of such pooling would be that the N.U.R. would not limit itself to residential work, while the unions presently limiting their efforts to class work would be encouraged to participate in residential education.

The N.U.R. representatives stated that their average expenditure on the Labour College was £3,500 per annum. In that case the N.C.L.C. proposals would apparently involve a saving of as much as £1,000 while at the same time providing educational facilities *not merely for a dozen members over two years, but for a dozen residential students and thousands of evening-class students.*

An annual expenditure of £3,500 on a membership of 360,000, a very low estimate, works out at only 2½d. per member each year, while £2,500 would work out at one penny and two-thirds per member each year. Most of those unions that have a full N.C.L.C. scheme contribute 3d. per member per year.

We hope the above proposals will be accepted by the N.U.R. Executive and trust that the branches will give them the careful consideration they deserve.

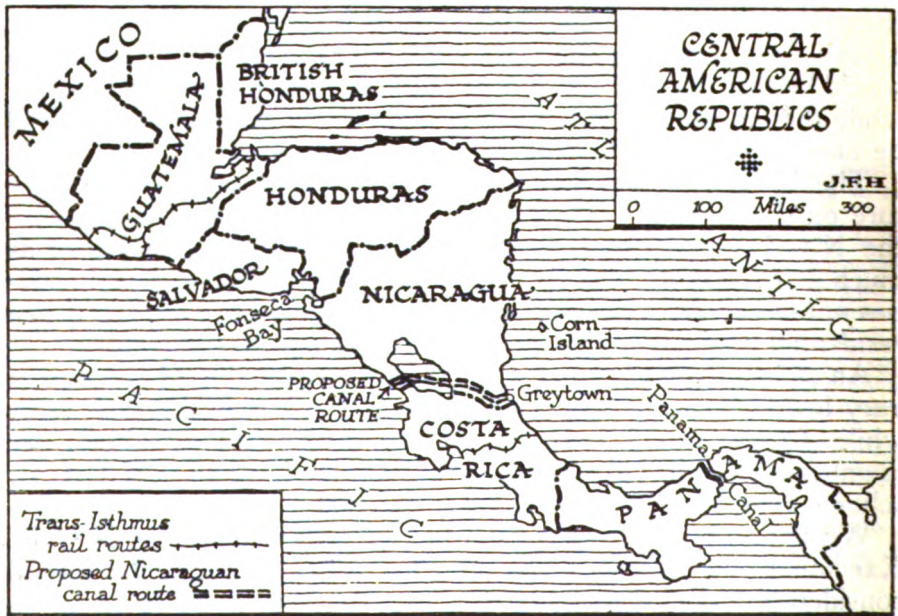
J. P. M. MILLAR.

# Geographic Footnotes to Current History : NICARAGUA

**A**MERICAN Imperialism has relied, to a greater extent than some of the older Powers, on "peaceful penetration"—and loans from Wall Street ; but whenever the older and cruder method of armed force seemed desirable it has not scrupled to use it. It is doing so now in Nicaragua, where American marines have been once again landed, as they have been landed on various occasions during the last 15 years.

There are rival claimants to the presidency of the Nicaraguan Republic ; and the *Times* admits that "there need no longer be any concealment of the fact that the United States has forcibly intervened in order to maintain its chosen man in power." (Trust these Imperialists to tell the truth about one another !)

Nicaragua is of especial importance to the U.S. because across its territory is going to run another Atlantic-Pacific Canal. The U.S. war chiefs want a second canal—for safety. Moreover, Panama is more open to attack than the Nicaraguan Canal would be. As long ago as 1911 a "treaty loan" was negotiated in Wall Street giving the U.S. a certain amount of financial control over



the republic. That control has since been extended and consolidated. In 1916, a further treaty secured to the U.S. full rights for the construction of the proposed canal, as well as naval bases in Fonseca Bay on the Pacific side, and in the Corn Islands on the Atlantic side. On various occasions American marines have been landed to quell "revolutionary [*i.e.*, anti-U.S.] uprisings"; and when elections take place, American marines guard the polls.\*

Nicaragua, in fact, though nominally an independent State, has been made into a virtual protectorate of the U.S. The *Manchester Guardian* (Jan. 14th, 1927) remarks that "no one is concerned to deny that it is the settled policy of the State Department to dominate Nicaragua."

The Nicaraguan situation is of importance, also, in its bearing on the position in Mexico. There the Radical-Labour Government of Pres. Calles insists on giving systematic effect to the new land and mine laws, which affirmed the national ownership of all mineral resources. Those laws have always been strenuously opposed by the U.S. oil interests; and it is these interests which, by a display of the "strong hand" in Nicaragua, are seeking to frighten Calles. "The important thing to remember," says the *Times* again (Jan. 7th), is that all this is really directed against the Calles Government in Mexico . . . Events are clearly moving to the point of virtual intervention in Mexico, unless Pres. Calles, as seems unlikely, should give way all along the line."

J. F. HORRABIN.

## RESEARCH WORK

### The Use of Public Libraries

**P**UBLIC libraries range in size and scope from the British Museum Reading Room with its three million volumes and more, through the medium-sized institutions such as the Guildhall and the larger municipal libraries, down to very small places indeed. There are also, of course, specialised libraries, dealing with particular topics. For the most part we are concerned here with the fairly large municipal libraries such as are available to N.C.L.C. students in large towns. For London facilities, consult *Rye's Guide to the Libraries of London*, which you will probably find at the nearest municipal library.

In using such a place, the student should, first and foremost, *make friends with the librarian*. Not out of office hours, but on the

\* For the full detailed story of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, see *Dollar Diplomacy*, by Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman (Chap. V.).

job. He is there to help you, and you will find him very willing to do it—as a rule. He won't do your work for you, but he will tell you where to look for what you want. Regulations vary in different libraries, and he will tell you which shelves contain reference books you can consult without any formalities, and what formalities must be observed in the case of other books. But it will save time and trouble all round if you have an intimate who has frequently made use of the particular library, and can show you the ropes.

Make your *notes* of the information you seek and find, not in note-books, and not on miscellaneous slips of paper, but on *index cards*. Standard cards, three inches by five, can be bought by the hundred or thousand from any stationer. Write a main head, and perhaps a subhead as well, above the red line, and the information you are in search of will follow.

For instance, you are working at Chartism, and want to know something about the part played in the movement by particular individuals. This leads you, let us say, to Ernest Jones. Then your card will have as main head, CHARTISM and as subhead, *Jones, Ernest*. Now follows your item of information. Or you are studying the history of utopian socialism. Then your index cards will probably have as main head, UTOPIAS, and as subheads, *Plato's Republic, Campanella's City of the Sun, Wells' Modern Utopia*, and so on. (We purposely choose trite instances, for obvious reasons.) If you need more than one card for a particular item, rehead another and add "2." For the moment you may clip them together, but when you file the cards in your card index, clips will be in the way, and are superfluous. As your index grows, you will come to require some A B C cards to divide it up. These can be had for a few pence from the same stationer. Filing cabinets are expensive luxuries. Cardboard boxes of suitable size are continually finding their way to the dustbin. By the way, get *unperforated cards*. The kind with a rod running through are for library catalogues.

Now, where and how do you get the information? You get on the track of it in *books of reference*, and often you will find all you want there. But the books of reference will guide you to *biographies, histories, bibliographies, and monographs* (books devoted to one particular topic).

The principal works of reference are *dictionaries, encyclopaedias, atlases, gazetteers*. Of course, if you are a serious student you will have an English dictionary of your own. When buying this, don't get a reprint of some venerable antique. Have a modern dictionary, such as the *Oxford Concise* or the *Twentieth Century Dictionary*. In the reference library you will be able to consult the larger kind of dictionary, and, above all, the *New English Dictionary*. In this

last, one of the numerous quotations given to illustrate the meaning of a word will often put you on the track of some fact of which you are in search.

There are many encyclopaedias. The three best known are the *Britannica*, *Chambers'*, and *Everyman*. The last named is in twelve small volumes, and is a most useful "boil-down" of the *Britannica*. It is pre-war (its pre-war price was only 12/- !), but is excellent for its time. So is the *Britannica* pre-war. That is to say, the "twelfth edition" and the "thirteenth edition" are reissues of the eleventh edition (1910), with post-war supplements. The thirteenth edition, which appeared last year, has the disadvantage of being printed on a paper quite unfitted for encyclopaedia use, and the public library copies will be in a hopeless condition ere long. But most municipal libraries will have the eleventh edition on a workable thick paper. The new *Chambers'*, a medium-sized work, is really a new edition.

In consulting an encyclopaedia you do so partly for the actual information it provides concerning the topic you are studying, and partly for guidance as to other books you should consult. This bibliographical matter is generally in small type at the end of the article, and is often of priceless value. In using the *Britannica* do not forget the General Index, which will give you cross-references ; and do not forget the supplementary (post-war) volumes, if available.

*Bibliographies* are lists of books on particular topics. Monographs often contain a bibliography at the end, but in your library you will find more comprehensive volumes of the kind. There will also be an M.S. (or Card) Subject Index, which is only a big, classified bibliography.

The best *Atlas* for general purposes is the *Times Atlas*—but worker students should never forget to supplement its use by reference to their own copy of Comrade Horrabin's *Plebs Atlas*. The same remark applies to other information than geographical. The information you get from works of reference is coloured by the ideology of the writers and compilers. They do not (as a rule) deliberately misinform, but they make you look through their spectacles. They cannot help doing so. You cannot help looking through your own ! As William James, the American psychologist, remarked : "Each one of us envisages the cosmos from a different angle." But the angle of most books of reference to-day is that of the existing system, that of the powers-that-be . . . .

It is not only lack of space which makes the foregoing notes sketchy. The kind of books we have been writing about are *tools*, and the handling of tools has to be mastered by *using* them, and not from an essay or a book. The use of a library is a practical matter, and an ounce of practice is worth a pound of theory. The present

writers have been frequenters of the British Museum Reading Room for many years, and they find it as difficult to put on paper the methods they use in hunting up stray facts as any other craftsman finds it to describe his methods. But with more space, more could be told. There are good books on this subject. For instance, J. D. Stewart's *How to Use a Library*, and W. E. Simnett's *Books and Reading*. The latter (Allen and Unwin, 5/-) is a very recent publication. It is rather W.E.A.-ish in tone, but the chapters, "Aids to Study," "Libraries and their Use," and "Further Suggestions to Readers," are most valuable. The whole book is valuable. Tell your librarian about it, if he does not know. But you need not bring in the W.E.A. versus Plebs controversy when you are talking to *him*! Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

EDEN AND CEDAR PAUL.

## THE GREAT STRIKE

*A Workers' History of the Great Strike.* By R. W. Postgate, Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and J. F. Horrabin (The Plebs League, Price 1/-).

**E**LLEN WILKINSON'S model prayer for Labour leaders, "God make us worthy of the men we lead!" is the keynote of this book. It is a story of unpreparedness—unpreparedness manifesting itself in the General Council's handling of the strategy of the strike; unpreparedness in the lack of any planned arrangement with the Co-operative Movement, and hence a chaotic relationship between the Unions and the Co-operative Societies; unpreparedness even in the co-ordination of policy pursued by different unions in a single Federation; and unpreparedness in the finicking and hampering restrictions on useful and necessary activities in furtherance of the strike by a number of Unions whose leaders had not enough imagination to differentiate between what is required in a time of working-class crisis and what is legitimate in safeguarding union prerogatives in the face of capitalist control.

There is evidently to be a minor tussle before it is settled what we are to call the great happening of 1926. The General Council has decided on the rather meaningless description of the "National Strike"; the L.R.D. insists that it was the "General Strike." The *Plebs* authors have done well to content themselves with the description, the Great Strike. There is no doubt about this, as there is no doubt about the greatness of the men and women who bore the brunt of it throughout the country.



Already there is a considerable literature of the strike, and readers of *THE PLEBS* who are following this will do well to start with the *Plebs History*, because they have here in a small compass a means of keeping their reading in focus. Those who will confine their reading on the strike to one book will also do well to make it this one, because there is no other single volume which is so comprehensive in its survey. The authors have had a difficult task. In one small volume they have had to attempt an all-round account of the different aspects of the strike which are being treated in a series of separate volumes from all quarters. They have done their work well. One may quarrel with their treatment of some of the aspects of the strike—and, as a matter of fact, I do—but they have gone about their job conscientiously and within the limits of their space they have brought out practically all the essential facts.

I should like to have seen the meeting of Executives prior to the declaration of the strike given more space than the page it is conceded. So much turns upon it. It is important that those of us who are left-wingers should be much more concerned with a resolute working-out of the principles of trade union solidarity than with an emotional sympathy for any type of amorphous extremism. That the principles formulated for the proposed Industrial Alliance should be adopted by the Trade Union Movement as a whole is of supreme importance for the future of the working class. When the great emergency drove the General Council to the acceptance of these proposals, did the attitude of the miners, a party to the Alliance plan, square with these principles? This the *Plebs History* does not make clear. It is a question which ought to be dealt with from a left-wing standpoint and disposed of. We must do all possible to obviate future unpreparedness.

The space the Editor is able to afford me will not admit of my dealing further with this point or with others I might be tempted to raise. In any case, I have so much respect for the admirably objective manner in which the authors have handled their material that I am prepared to concede that it must be *their* space limitation which accounts for any slight tendenciousness that may show itself.

The book is one which all in the Labour Movement—left-wingers and right-wingers; Communists, Plebs, I.L.P.ers, and even S.D.F.ers can read with profit.

J. A. SKINNER.

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this remarkable offer.

# MARX-ENGELS ARCHIVES

**A**FTER Comrade Ryazanoff's visit to London two years ago, he sent us the first Russian volume of the Archives issued by the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. The first volume of the German edition has recently come to hand. Since there is no prospect, or no immediate prospect, of an English version, we will give a brief notice of the German work without further delay.

It is a large octavo volume of 550 pages, published by the Marx-Engels-Archiv Verlagsgesellschaft in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, the same organisation that is producing the German version of the complete critical edition of the works of Marx and Engels (edited by Ryazanoff). We cannot attempt more than a synopsis of the contents.

Section I. contains original essays. The most important of these is a contribution to the history of the First International, "The Origin of the International Workingmen's Association." This comprises more than eighty pages, and is from the pen of Ryazanoff. Perhaps some day it will be made available as an English booklet in the land where the International was born.

Section II. contains papers from the literary remains of Marx and Engels—"Marx and Engels on Feuerbach, being Part I. of German Ideology." This occupies nearly a hundred pages of previously unpublished material, penned almost eighty years ago, just before the date of the *Communist Manifesto*. Included are four facsimile pages of Marx's almost illegible German script.

Section III. comprises letters exchanged between Karl Marx and Vera Zassulich in February and March, 1881.

Section IV. is the "Literature" section. It contains review-articles dealing with recent works on historical materialism, political economy, and the history of the labour movement. To English readers, the most noteworthy article among these will be Theodore Rothstein's review of the newer literature on Chartism. Schlüter's, Rosenblatt's, Slosson's, Mark Hovell's, and Julius West's books are here considered.

In Section V., "Communications," we have Raymond W. Postgate's valuable six-page note, "Papers of the First

International, the George Howell Collection preserved at the Bishopsgate Library, London" (this is the only contribution to the Archives in English); an account of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow; and a detailed prospectus of the forthcoming collected edition of the works of Marx and Engels.

The sixth and last section is bibliographical, compiled by Czobel and Hajdu, "The Literature concerning Marx, Engels, and Marxism since [the Outbreak of] the World War," with appendixes on the Marx-Engels Institute and on Lassalle literature since the outbreak of the war. These bibliographies, with their indexes, occupy eighty pages; there are 1,029 entries, many of them multiple. The work has been done with the utmost care and thoroughness. The only error we note in a casual inspection is a mis-spelling of Bertrand Russell's name. (Our German comrades have a fixed idea that his name is "Russel"!). The PLEBS, the fountain-head of modern Marxist literature in Britain, has not been overlooked. There are frequent entries under the names of Ablett, Craik, Dobb, Paul, Postgate, Starr, etc.

Ryazanoff and the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow are doing magnificent work, and the first volume of the Archives is earnest of the fact.

Socialists have always maintained that the question of the "endowment of research," which has agitated the "progressive" bourgeois mind for a couple of generations, could only be satisfactorily solved under Socialism. Certainly it has not been satisfactorily solved under capitalism, though one may ungrudgingly admit that the least harmful way in which millionaires can dispose of their accumulated surplus value is by founding or financing such bodies as the Rockefeller Institute in New York and the Pasteur in Paris. But the capitalist State (which actually grudges the British Museum Reading Room its meagre allowance for the purchase of books) is not likely to expand its disbursements in these directions. . . In Soviet Russia, admittedly as hard up as many of the post-war capitalist powers, the expenditure on the numerous Institutes shows what can be done in this way, even by an impecunious Socialist

State. But the interesting point here is that in respect of quality of work the output of the Marx-Engels Institute compares favourably with the best that can be done by any learned society under the famous system of private enterprise. We are talking now of scholarship, not of finance. The volume under review is ample proof of the assertion. If you want further evidence, turn to Scott

Nearing's *Education in Soviet Russia*. On p. 87, writing of "Higher Educational Institutions," and referring to the Marx-Engels Institute, he says:

"I have never been in an institution of social science where the facilities seemed to be better, and where the atmosphere was more scholarly and conducive to good results."

E. & C. P.



## Notes by the Way



### ESPERANTO

#### Esperanto Helpas

#### II.

Pri la movado Esperantista en Budapeŝto: Gi estas tre bona. Tie vivas du societoj. . . la laborista kaj la tiel nomata "burĝa." Mi povas feliĉe diri, ke la laboristaj grupoj Esperantistaj estas tre fortaj, kaj vere ili parolas bonege. La Hungara Esperantista Societo Laborista havas 1234 anojn kontraŭ la Hungarlanda Esperanto-Societo, kiu havas nur 500 anojn. Mi ofte miris kiel rapide la simplaj laboristaj lernas Esperanton, kaj tiel bone ĝin paroli. Precipe, en Budapeŝto mi ofte demandas al laboristo, kiu perfekte parolas, kiom da tempo vi studis Esperanton. Nur kelke da monatoj estas la respondo. Vere anoncas al ni, ke Esperanto estas por ni laboristoj por universaligi la mondon en kamarada rondo. Lastan Junion mi estis en Budapeŝto por renovigi mian restadlogej-permeson, kaj nur per la helpo de kamarado nia mi sukcesis ĝin ricevi post tri tagoj. Se mi estus estinta sola, povus esti, ke mi estus devinta resti tie pluajn semajnojn. Ankaŭ tiam, kiam mi vojaĝis al Prago, Ĉekoslovakio, mia amiko, Esperantisto, min gastigis en sia propra domo duon pli ol monato, kaj ĉien mi iris en la respubliko ĉekoslovakia mi trovis Esperantistojn pretaj al mi helpi. Mi vojaĝis tra Bohemio, Slovakio, Moravio, Silizio, kaj en ĉiu urbo mi trovis la verdstelulojn. En Prago mem, oni petis, ke mi parolu ĉe la radio kaj de tie mi fariĝis 15 minutan paroladon la 4an de Aŭgusto. Per tio mi ricevis honoraron de 50 ĉekaj kronoj, kiu

valoras en mono angla 6/-. Kaj de tio Esperanto sin montris kiel vere pratikan helpilon. Alian aferon mi citos al vi. Mi volis aĉeti novajn vestaĵojn en Prago, ĉar en Hungario la vestaĵoj estas terure multekostaj. Per la helpo de S-ro Ginz la vicdelegito en Prago mi estis povinta aĉeti tre bonan kaj malkaran vestaĵon kun granda rebato. En Hradec Kralové la loka Esperantistaro de tiu malgranda bohema urbo min akceptis tutkore. Ili aranĝis specialan kunvenon en mia honoro kaj krom tio ili ricevis specialan permeson por ke mi povu viziti la tiean grandan kaj interesan muzeon, kiu tiutempe estis fermata al aliaj homoj. En Bratislava (malnovaj nomoj Pressburg kaj Pozsony) la tieaj Esperantistoj min informis pri la vaporŝipoj, kiuj iris sur la Danubo, ĉar mi el tiu urbo iris vaporŝipe al Budapeŝto. Fakte, dum mia dumonata restado en Ĉekoslovakio mi estis ĉiam inter la Esperantistoj. Oni jam scias, ke en Hungario kaj en Ĉekoslovakio la lingvoj estas tiel malmulte konataj kaj malfacilaj, ke vere Esperanto estas tute necesa por la vaganta kaj vojaĝanta homo.

En Budapeŝto la nuna regadistaro malpermesas la eniron de la gazeto "Sennaciulo" en la landon, kaj ankaŭ malpermesas, ke oni estu ano de tiu societo sed oni ridas je ili, ĉar laboristaj Esperantistoj en Budapeŝto estas preskaŭ senekcepte anoj sekrete, kaj ĉiu ankaŭ ricevas la gazeton kaŝe. Nun, en Hungario oni ne kuraĝas paroli pri la komunistoj, k.t.p., ĉar tiu ĉi regadistaro estas abomena kaj tuj persekutas ĉiujn ruĝulojn.

#### Post-war Crises.

The Report of Bucharin which was summarised in the last issue of the PLEBS has been amplified in a further

exhaustive Report presented to the E.C.C.I. on November 23rd, and given in full in *Inprecorr*, December 3rd. Additional facts and figures are cited,

bearing on capitalist "stabilisation." A section deals at some length with the Theory of the Post-war Crises. Bucharin denies that these crises are the same as the normal pre-war crises. These latter were characterised as being "expressed by an outburst of capitalist contradictions on the basis of the upward curve of capitalist development. The crises solved this contradiction, only once more to commence the cycle of development, but at a new stage of the capitalist productive process, at a higher level than the former stage." But in the post-war crisis: "The state of affairs now is that disproportion between production and consumption has been brought about, not so much because the productive apparatus has grown (though it has in some branches) but because the war has caused quite extraordinary impoverishment and has greatly restricted the internal market." In addition, "the war upset the economic equilibrium of the nations, and the various branches of industry; it Balkanised Europe, set up an infinite number of new customs barriers," etc. A very useful analysis and detailed description of German "Rationalisation" (or Scientific Management) is given; and some very useful figures of the industrialisation of China and the grouping of peasant holdings. For instance, the following figures are instructive:—

China	Coal Prod.	Textile Spindles	Factories (millions)
	(million tons)		
1902	—	7	.5
1916	15.5	42	1.1
1920	20.3	65	1.4
1923	22.6	190	3.1

#### *New Imperialist Groupings.*

In *Inprecorr*, November 30th, Varga has his usual quarterly survey of Economic Conditions. He summarises the situation thus:—"In the U.S.A. the wave of prosperity continues; there are only a very few preliminary signs of a possible decline. Building activity has obviously passed its climax. The new buildings erected of late cover the housing requirements of the towns. Even the motor car industry appears to have almost glutted its markets. Business is, however, still good in the U.S., despite falling prices.

"The most important economic political event which has taken place is the formation of the steel cartel on the con-

tinent of Europe. There is no doubt whatever that the steel cartel will soon be followed by similar agreements in the raw iron industry and in the trades working up iron and steel.

"The formation of the continental European steel cartel, and the economic and political rapprochement between Germany and France is giving rise to various hostile economic-political combinations. We hear of a Franco-German bloc, of an Anglo-Italian bloc. The trustification of European heavy industry is a severe blow to Italy, which has to import large quantities of coal, iron and steel. And it is to be easily understood that England, which has for generations made use of Franco-German antagonisms in order to dominate the European continent, is seeking a counterweight against the Franco-German rapprochement. We are of the opinion, however, that everything is still in a state of flux, and that the interests at stake are too intermingled to be simply separated into a Franco-German bloc opposing an Italo-British bloc.

"On the other hand, the formation of the steel cartel, and the rapprochement between Germany and France, signify in a certain sense a combination in Europe against the U.S. But even this tendency is by no means consistent, for England and America act together on many points, whilst on the other hand the basis of the Franco-German rapprochement, the realisation of the railway bonds, cannot be maintained without the aid of the U.S. There is only one constant factor: the struggle of all capitalist States for markets, and for sources of raw materials, and the pursuit of these aims by a preparation for new imperialist conflicts, thinly veiled by peace treaties and League of Nations ideology."

Details and figures concerning the Steel Cartel, special sections on Germany, France and England and U.S.A. follow.

#### *Tutors' References.*

Two useful reference articles for tutors are to be found in *The Economic Journal* of December, 1926: one by Flux, of the Board of Trade, on the figures of British Exports, and another on "the Holding Company in American Public Utility Development." Flux's figures show:—(a) the great fall in

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## NOTE.

Publication of this book was postponed until after the meeting of the Special Conference of T.U. Executives in order that *all* the facts should be available. A special supplementary chapter discusses the General Council's Report and the Miners' Statement. The body of the book tells the actual story of the Nine Days throughout the country, and is based on a unique collection of Strike Bulletins and on reports contributed by comrades in every part of Great Britain.

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textile exports to China, India, etc.; (b) an increase in the proportion of exports going to the Empire from 37 to 39 per cent. (though a decrease in *their total imports*), and a decrease in British export trade with non-Empire countries; (c) the considerably increased price per unit of British exports post-war. *Economica* for November contains a useful biography of a famous financier of Tudor and Stuart times, Burlemachi, whose reputation was Europe-wide, and financed the English Crown considerably and provided the money for the 30-Years' War.

#### *Bribery of Labour Leaders.*

One often finds the suggestion that bribery of Labour leaders is one of the habitual methods of capitalist dictatorship scoffed at as only "exceptionally" true. Official Labour treated the fact that Farrington, the American Federation of Labour delegate to Bourne-mouth, had accepted a job as "labour adviser" to a large Illinois coal company at £5,000 a year as a somewhat surprising and regrettable "exceptional" case, not as a symptom of the general corruption and treacherous rôle of the whole A.F. of L. officialdom—a corruption which is certainly worse and more crude in America, but nevertheless has its parallel in European countries. So far from it being an "exceptional" case, we find the *New York Nation* of September 15, a Radical weekly, hinting plainly that John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers of America, who "exposed" Farrington, is probably equally "crooked" and corrupt. Farrington's crookedness has been mainly directed against the "left-wing," and here he has been openly hand-in-glove with the police and law-courts. At Ziegler, a mining town, the union local was captured by the left-wing, headed by Henry Corbishley. A Farrington official, D. B. Cobb, was sent down to announce the removal of the local officers for declaring an unofficial strike. An uproar and free-fight followed, in which one left-wing miner was killed and Cobb

beaten up. The Farrington machine then proceeded to hunt down the rebels. "No one was indicted," says *The Nation*. "for killing the left-wing miner, but twenty miners, mostly of foreign birth, were rounded up and accused of pummelling Cobb, eight of them were convicted by an all-American farmer jury, and seven, including Corbishley, are now under sentence of from one to fourteen years in the Illinois penitentiary. . . The case against the leaders has all the earmarks of a frame up."

*The Nation* then proceeds to ask some pertinent questions concerning J. L. Lewis. How did he get hold of the contract between Farrington and the Peabody Coal Coy., which led to the ousting of Farrington? "Did the mine-owners buy up Farrington and then expose him, in order to get rid of him? Can it be they prefer Lewis to Farrington in the coming fight in the coal-fields?" "Lewis's record as international president has been marked by badly-conducted strikes, the complete destruction of the union in W. Virginia and Kentucky, and indifference to the nationalisation programme. . . It is not surprising that some of the mine-owners want Lewis re-elected and want his candidate Sneed to replace Farrington." This gives a very good instance of how, when the capitalists want to suppress the militancy of the workers, they use the trade union bureaucracy as their "handy-men."

#### *Casey among the Prophets.*

Time was when the Labour College Movement was almost entirely dependent upon the Kerr publications. High prices in U.S. and the growth of our own Plebs literature altered that. Now the Kerr new issues are few, but we are glad to notice that Frey Casey's *Thinking* is among the latest and at \$1.25 (cloth) will certainly be of great use to worker-students in the U.S. Incidentally a newly-translated volume of Dietzgen's *Knowledge and Truth* will be published by Kerr in the fall of 1927.

# Reviews of Books

## EDUCATION

*Our Public Elementary Schools.* M. E. Sadler (Thornton Butterworth, 1/6).

*Procrustes, The Future of English Education.* M. Alderton Pink (Kegan Paul 2/6).

*Memorandum on The Teaching of History* (Cambridge University Press, 2/6).

*The Rise and Progress of the Dalton Plan.* By A. J. Lynch (Phillips, 4/-).

The reason why education is coming under criticism and review and being discussed is given in part by Sir M. E. Sadler himself when he writes (p. 30): "While the social tradition is still firm and effective the course of teaching in the elementary schools can be narrow [confined to the Three R's] without harm being done. But when the social tradition fades or has never been strong, the schools are constrained to aim deliberately at the encouragement of a new sense of duty to the community." In other words there is a conflict between those who want the education of the six million children in the schools to be a factor for the necessary change and those who want it to be a stabilising and conservative aid for things as they are. The essay of the Master of University College is a preface to curriculums which were awarded prizes by a yellow journal under his and a colleague's decision. While praiseworthy in some respects, on the whole with their religious instruction and the British Empire study outlined, they can be warranted "safe" and Sir M. E. Sadler will not have to prosecute the users for "sedition" and "disloyalty," as he suggests the State might have to do with some schools, however widely it recognised religious differences.

Mr. Pink is more challenging to modern education. Using the findings of the modern psychologist, he asserts that money is wasted on incapable children and that the cult of research is reducing itself to absurdity by collecting useless masses of trivial information. His reliability and judgment are certainly put in doubt when he assumes (p. 14) that the Labour Party's demand for equal educational opportunity is now "flogging a dead horse"! Incapacity does not apply when the father's purse is big in Mr. Pink's future. He should notice that an official investigation found

that while 75 per cent. of elementary school children are capable of benefiting from secondary education, there are places for only 10 per cent.

The fundamental weakness of this and the previous writer is in presuming a united ideal community for which education must turn out efficient and loyal units. Now under capitalism there is an opposition between *life* and *livelihood*. Certainly a great deal of nonsense is talked about education and Labour is often too indiscriminate in its praise, but vocational training must be regarded with suspicion until the ideally united community does really exist. If some of the teacher's journals in their reviews of Nearing's *Education in Soviet Russia* had noticed how the factory school has developed in Soviet Russia (instead of quoting Emma Goldman and the discredited adventurer Luboff against the book) they would have been nearer to solving the difficulty.

English History was only taught in the State schools after 1875 because apparently the fear of Mr. Mundella that political controversies would be thereby introduced, was shared by others. Since that time it has been invoked to teach "citizenship" and the Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools recently carried out an investigation published later as a *Memorandum*. There are many suggestive points in this on the matter and methods of history teaching which could be adapted by our own teachers who incidentally would not claim to treat Socialism "to the satisfaction of all parties" as one teacher in his Syllabus claims to do! We would like to suggest to the Committee which is "disinclined" to accept "the material conception of History" and generally be "above the battle" that the most dangerous bias is that which operates unconsciously upon its victims and that is how a conservative bias works.

Mr. Lynch is primarily concerned with a new *method* of education, although he would certainly maintain that the Dalton Plan does not produce mere robots for capitalist workshops. As in his former book he describes his experiences at his school at Tottenham where for three years the plan has been used in a work-

ing-class area. This latter fact and also that Mr. Lynch is himself associated with the Labour Movement adds interest to the book. Elsewhere we give his opinion upon the Soviet use of the Plan. Our own teachers will find suggestive and useful matter which they can adapt for a more fundamental purpose.

M. S.

**Education in Soviet Russia.** By Scott Nearing (Plebs, 2/-).  
(The writer of this additional review is one of the leading exponents of the Dalton Plan in Britain and we believe the point he raises is of general interest.)

This book contains a most interesting account of one of the biggest educational experiments the world has ever witnessed. It is an experiment that will be watched with tremendous interest by educators everywhere. As with all true experiments, it is impossible, at the beginning, to say what its end will be. Moreover, not only is the new movement young, but its effects have not yet reached the whole of Russia. There is a good deal of ground yet to be explored, and information is not at present too definite or too plentiful. Mr. Scott Nearing, careful observer as he undoubtedly is, has, however, during his two months' stay, seen a good deal in his jaunts from town to town. He visited a large number of schools of varying types in districts fairly wide apart, and by keeping his eyes and ears wide open, saw and heard very much. All this he tells us in an informed and attractive way in the book before us. Whether Mr. Nearing is an entirely safe guide it is impossible to say. He is certainly enthusiastic about what he saw, and his story, to be quite frank, though enthusiastic, is told with moderation and certainly bears within itself the marks of truth. We can say at once that it is a story that no teacher should miss.

Not only is educational change shown in this wide provision for old and young alike, but it is also shown in the change of method within the school. The present writer has written and lectured pretty extensively on the Dalton Plan as a method of re-organising our schools for the better. It is now nearly three years ago that his first book was translated into Russian. In the new educational arrangements of the Russian schools the Dalton Plan and the Project Method were very widely adopted. Indeed, in a letter to the present writer,

dated September, 1925, Dr. Lucy Wilson, Philadelphia, says: "More than a thousand schools, mostly secondary schools and colleges, experimented with the Dalton Plan last year. This year it has been officially adopted for secondary schools and higher schools with adequate equipment." According to Mr. Nearing, however, Russian opinion as to the Plan seems to be undergoing some change.

At the Edison School in Moscow, when asked about the Dalton Plan, the professor of chemistry shook his head doubtfully. "Perhaps," he said, "if you could reduce the classes to half their number it would be possible to proceed on a basis where each child or group of children is working on an individual problem. But that would mean doubling our laboratory space, and we have no extra room." He was, says Mr. Nearing, keen and eager, but he did not see the scheme as a practicable one with large classes. This is uncommonly like the criticism one finds in this country.

"We have abandoned the Plan," said the head of the school at Dimitrievski. He claimed that it produced too much individualism by setting each student to do his own task. We want the students to learn group work. That is what they will be called on to practise when they get out into the world (p. 46)." As a matter of fact he did not abandon the Dalton Plan. The basis of the Plan consists in a greater child-freedom, on the child taking a greater share in his own schooling, and on community life. These are worked out in one direction by using subject-rooms instead of classrooms for the greater part of the day. The Russians follow this arrangement exactly. Where they differ from us, and the Americans, is in what is best to be done with the children who, at any moment, gather either from interest in



the subject, or for some other reason, in the subject-room. We ask that, having selected his subject (that is, his room) the child pursue his task on his own account (this is the way he will pursue his knowledge in later life) till he meets his difficulties when he will consult his friends, including his teacher. The Russians call this individualism; we view it, if the task is rightly set, as an opportunity to develop individuality (not quite the same thing). They prefer to work entirely on group lines (we do not ignore the group). Doubtless, in

time, and with further experiment, they will solve their problem; but there seems no good reason for assuming that the development of individuality (personality) is antagonistic to the spirit of the group. There might be a strong case made out for the development of personality to its fullest degree as a most valuable contribution to the life of the community.

But be this as it may, Mr. Scott Nearing has given us a vastly interesting book which should be read by all teachers and administrators who are interested in experimental education.

A. J. LYNCH.

### ECONOMICS

*The First Year of the Gold Standard*, by Prof. T. E. Gregory (Benn, 5/-).

*Wages and the State*, by E. M. Burns (P. S. King, 16/-).

*Social Progress and Educational Waste*, by Kenneth Lindsay, introd. by Viscount Haldane (Routledge, 7/6 net).

*Some Problems of Wages and their Regulation*, by Alan G. Fisher (P. S. King 12/6).

*Fundamental Thoughts in Economics*, by Prof. G. Cassel (Fisher Unwin, 5/-).

**A**S references the first four of these books are in parts distinctly useful, and should be looked at in a Library. The first by Prof. Gregory, is more within our reach from the price point-of-view, and should be upon a tutor's shelf. It is full of useful facts and figures and tables of monetary stabilisation in the last two years, not only in this country but also in Denmark, Holland and Germany, about which we have so far had little information in English. Though rather diffuse and tending to be "snowed under" by the technical phrase, it is a useful account of monetary events. In viewpoint it represents the City of London in being pro-deflationist, and it crosses swords in several places with the opinions of Mr. Keynes.

The books of Mrs. Burns and Dr. Fisher survey wage problems from a Fabian anti-class struggle point of view. The former contains a useful and detailed summary of the various forms of minimum wage and arbitration machinery in existence in America, Australasia and Europe, and discusses the results and the problems involved. The latter gives a summary of wage disputes and State wage regulation machinery from the Munitions Acts to the mining situation in 1925. In general he adopts the "impartial" standpoint of the capitalist State as

guardians of Industrial Peace; but one enjoys gentle ironical thrusts at the capitalists every now and again.

Mr. Lindsay's book studies, from a W.E.A. standpoint, the effects of capitalist class monopoly of education. It is a painstaking piece of research in certain industrial areas into the opportunities (or, rather, lack of them) of children of workers to get decent education. Under 10 per cent. of those leaving elementary schools get the chance of a secondary education, while only one per thousand get to a University; and only 3.2 of those in secondary schools are children of unskilled workers. 50-60 per cent. of those getting scholarships have to refuse them through poverty. "Proved ability of at least 40 per cent. of the nation's children is at present being denied expressions" and wasted. Such are the very significant figures Mr. Lindsay collects. They clearly point the need to attack capitalist monopoly at its base and destroy it. The book merely appeals to the Government to make "the educational ladder" a little less of a "greasy pole."

Prof. Cassel's book is a reprint of some lectures in which he expounds in his usual pleasant and extremely lucid style his theory of Price. Those who wish to understand the latest development of orthodox economics

should not fail to read it. He drops overboard ideas about marginal utility, and claims to put in the place of a theory of value a theory of how prices in a market are actually determined. The theory he formulates as a simple equation, grouping the various quantities on the variation of which the fluctuations of market price depend. He concludes that Price is merely a "function" (in the mathematical sense) of scarcity, whatever the cause of that scarcity may be. As a theory of price, what Prof. Cassel says is suggestive, and affords a useful systematisation. Of course, he starts, as usual, by saying that a knowledge of economics will teach people the difficulty of trying to abolish capitalism! M. H. D.

The interesting thing about all the books that have so far appeared about the General Strike is that although they have been written about one series of events covering such a short period of time, they have each of them dealt with entirely different aspects of that important period. *The British Public and the General Strike* (by Kingsley Martin, Hogarth Press, 3/6) discusses the effects of the strike on British public opinions, and the means that were taken to "educate" that opinion into the correct capitalist attitude. It is written with a suave irony that makes one want to quote chunks.

Martin does not put the strike into its historical setting. He sees it purely as a dramatic conflict, written up in "war style" by a Press that has discovered that truth is not a commercial asset. "And so the great middle class returns to business as usual, with nothing settled except its character, content with the achievement of an exciting victory over those on whom its prosperity depends."

This is a book that somehow or other ought to be got into the hands of the middle classes, with the soothing assurance that it is written by a nice young University man with just quiet liberal ideas. I should like to watch the effect on a few people I know.

The average labour audience is getting a little tired of the "New Jerusalem" that someone is going to build in "England's green and pleasant land." The domes of that shining city have

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been sketched so often that people would like to know how and when the foundations are to be built. Dr. Addison, in two little shilling books (*Practical Socialism*, by Dr. Addison, 2 vols., 1/- each, Labour Publishing Co.), gives some practical directions for getting ahead with certain of the preliminaries. As Minister of Munitions in the darkest days of 1916-17, he saw just how ugly and sinister a thing the capitalist system can be. In the first volume he shows what enormous sums were saved by the nation through the enforcement of collectivist control, even when that was done by men who were convinced individualists.

In the second volume he shows how many of our present troubles could be solved by the application of State powers to the production and distribution of food, the building of houses, the abolition of slums, and the utilisation of coal. The man who has to debate on "Is Socialism practicable?" will find a mine of information in these books. Dr. Addison's work is not a handbook for revolutionaries, but if the facts such as he gives for certain traders were carefully investigated and as clearly set forth for all the main commodities of life, it would do more towards forming an

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atmosphere of revolt against the appalling capitalist exploitation of our day, than most of the merely denunciatory speeches which bore one so after the fiftieth time of hearing. E. C. W.

The *Co-operators' Year Book*, 1927, published by the Co-operative Productive Federation, is of considerable value to all those interested in the various activities of the Co-operative Movement.

The objects of the Co-operative Productive Federation are to aid Productive Societies, forty-two in number, by united action, to open up markets for the sale of their goods and to obtain capital. Summarised statistical information is given of these societies and a statistical table inserted at the end of the book. Disregarding the formidable competition from capitalist concerns there is even competition prevailing within the voluntary co-operative movement in production and manufacture, between Retail Societies, Special Productive Societies composed of workers engaged in the Society, together with retail societies, National Wholesale Societies, District Federations, etc. Hence purely productive co-operation shows relatively little progress and is unlikely to do so.

An article on "Workers' Education" by the General Secretary of the N.C.L.C. has since been very severely criticised by the Co-operative correspondent in a recent issue of the *Railway Review*. This writer trots out the usual charge that Labour College education is of a completely one-sided character. The fact that in the N.C.L.C. Correspondence Courses is included one on "Orthodox and Marxian Economics" is sufficient in itself to refute this. Our curriculum includes an examination of all the schools of political economy and as a result of this we come to the conclusion that the Marxian theories are scientific and correct.

There are other articles by such well-known writers and publicists as Margaret Bondfield, Pethick-Lawrence and Norman Angell. Altogether a jolly good six-pennyworth.

J. HAMILTON.

### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Artifex: or The Future of Craftsmanship*, by J. Gloag (Kegan Paul, 2/6).

*English Verse: Part II. From Wordsworth to Tennyson*, by H. Somerville (Johnston).

*Procrustes: or The Future of English Education*, by M. Alderton Pink (Kegan Paul, 2/6).

*Marx, Lenin and The Science of Revolution*, by Max Eastman (Allen & Unwin, 7/6).

*An Evangel of Unrest*, by Bonar Thompson (21 Molyneux St., London, W.1, 1/-).

*The British Public and The General Strike*, by Kingsley Martin (Hogarth Press, 3/6).

*British Imperialism in China*, by Elinor Burns (Lab. Res. Dept., boards 1/-, paper, 6d.).

*Morones of Mexico*, by J. H. Retinger, D.Litt. (Lab. Pub. Co., cloth 4/6, paper 2/6).

*Wages and The State*, by E. M. Burns (P. S. King, 16/-).

*Health, Wealth and Population*, by M. Buer (Routledge, 10/6).

# Letters

## A TRIBUTE FROM CANADA.

**D**EAR EDITOR.—We are deeply interested in your movement and wish you well. We came to Canada from England (Bolton and Oldham) to seek fortune and fame in the land of opportunities (?). Alas! Where are the opportunities for wage slaves? Our opportunity—the usual grind in a factory ten hours a day for little pay. Our experience—a realistic lesson on the “hokum” of Capitalistic idealogy. Never again will we be doped with such “stuff”.

We had, in theory, certain ideas on Capitalism, wage slavery, etc., but three years here gave us an awakening to reality. Coming from homes where semi-bourgeois ideas prevailed, we have learned from experience the necessity of working-class education.

Our three years in the industrial trenches, and your text books, have re-conditioned us, and produced a real working-class outlook. “Ideas do not fall from heaven,” but are developed from our experiences on earth; all the rest is “H——” and priestcraft!

Fraternal greetings,

Ontario.

P. F. and F. H.

## EASTMAN EXPLAINS.

**DEAR COMRADE.**—I want to correct an erroneous statement in your January number about my book, *Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution*. Your reviewer says: “In his zeal to defend himself and his super-Trotskyian friends from the orthodox gang in Moscow, Eastman denounces the Marxian dialectic as a method of withdrawing science from the people and creating a post-revolutionary aristocratic caste.”

However sincerely the reviewer may have made this statement, it is completely erroneous. I do not “denounce the Marxian dialectic as a method of withdrawing science from the people.” I simply point out the fact that the legend of “dialectic thinking” and the

attempt to keep it up, *automatically does* withdraw science from the people. This legend is just as firmly believed in, and just as rigorously kept up, by Trotskyists as by Stalinites, and therefore what I say has no bearing whatever on the conflict between them. My criticism *applies* to all Russian Bolsheviks, all orthodox Marxists neither more nor less.

Nor do I “denounce the Marxian dialectic as a method of . . . creating a post-revolutionary aristocratic caste.” I simply point out the fact that after the conquest of power “when the danger of a ‘revolutionary’ aristocracy arises—a danger which only fools will deny,” then this legend of “dialectic thinking” will automatically play into the hands of that new enemy. My reviewer should know that Stalinities proclaim the danger of a ‘revolutionary’ (in phrase) aristocracy just exactly as much as Trotskyists. I point out the *inevitable tendency* of a theoretical attitude upon which they are all absolutely and unanimously agreed.

I took the greatest pains to keep my book out of this temporary battle between Trotskyists and Stalinities. I urge any who may read my book not to seek for political inuendoes. There are no inuendoes.

Marx believed that all things should be regarded as processes and studied in their origin and development. But one thing Marx never studied in its origin and development, and that is the thinking mind. The science of genetic psychology was just barely born when Marx died. Every person really imbued with the theoretic spirit of Marx will go forward with that science boldly, and will apply its findings to Marxianism itself, no matter how drastic a reconstruction they may entail. That is what my book does, and that is why my reviewer finds it “interesting.” It is far too important to be approached as a foxy and indirect attempt to defend myself, or my “super-Trotskyian friends.” It is nothing of the kind, and it contains nothing of the kind.

Yours for the revolution,

MAX EASTMAN.

# The N.C.L.C. at Work



(Reports for this page should be sent to J.P.M. Millar, General Secretary, National Council of Labour Colleges, 62 Hanover Street, Edinburgh.)

**NEW LOCAL AFFILIATIONS:** The following is a list of the *new* (not renewal) affiliations obtained in December, 1926, by Local Colleges:—Carlisle, 4; London, 3; Aberdeen, 2; Sheffield, 2; South-East Lancs., 2; Glasgow, 2; Barnsley, 1; Birmingham, 1; Keighley, 1; Liverpool and District, 1; March, 1; Swansea, 1. **IS THE NAME OF YOUR COLLEGE HERE? IF NOT, WHY NOT?**

**LABOUR COLLEGE, LONDON:** Tom Ashcroft, recently acting Principal of the Labour College, has now been appointed Principal.

**TEACHERS' LABOUR LEAGUE:** All I.W.C.E.'ers will follow with great interest the activities of the Teachers' Labour League in its endeavour to build up a spirit of real trade unionism amongst teachers and in its desire to stop the process under which education is used as a means of maintaining the existing order. The Annual Conference of the League was addressed by a fraternal delegate from the N.C.L.C., Mark Starr, and the Conference itself carried the following resolution:—

"This Conference urges that steps be taken to secure closer co-operation with the N.C.L.C."

**A PIONEER:** We are much interested to hear that Harold Kershaw, who claims the honour of starting the first classes for the C.L.C. at Rochdale in 1910, is now living at Torquay and is taking a class in Logic.

**ELECTRICAL TRADES UNION:** The Electrical Trades Union is the latest to arrange an N.C.L.C. Educational Scheme providing free access to classes, free correspondence courses, etc. The N.C.L.C. is very glad to have the support of such a progressive Organisation.

**N.C.L.C. WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEES:** It is hoped that these Committees are now being set up on the

lines already advised to College Secretaries.

**FRANK AYRES:** Wanted the present address of F. Ayres, late secretary of the Doncaster Labour College, who has still to produce the College books.

## WHAT THE DIVISIONS ARE DOING.

**Division 1:** Thursday evening lectures on Industrial History are being given at the Plumstead Radical Club. Among the lecturers are C. T. Pendry, T. Ashcroft, J. Jones, J. F. Horrabin and the Organiser. The series was preceded by a big propaganda meeting, addressed by A. J. Cook. The Bethnal Green class is running lectures on topical matters on Monday evenings at Cambridge Road Public Library. Some of these lectures are illustrated with N.C.L.C. slides. The Westminster Labour Party continues its series of Sunday evening lectures with N.C.L.C. lecturers. W. Coxon, Durham, lectured on "The Class Struggle and the Teacher." New classes have been arranged in Mitcham and Holborn. The Division's report for 1926 shows that one hundred classes were run during that period with 3,616 students. 560 meetings on behalf of the miners were addressed. The Organiser will be glad to send a copy of the report upon application. Tutors' Training Classes on Industrial History, Psychology, and Economic Geography, will be run during the coming summer. London workers who have some knowledge of any of these subjects and who want to become Tutors for the London Division are asked to communicate with the London Organiser, 11a Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.5.

**Division 2:** The number of voluntary tutors is increasing—a most satisfactory feature. The Dorchester Agricultural Workers, in order to pay part of their Educational Scheme, in which they are taking such a great interest, ran a dance which resulted in a £10 profit.

**Division 3:** The number of Branch Lectures is considerably increasing.

*Division 4:* Excellent developments have taken place in Swansea Valley, with the result that Nun Nicholas has been appointed a full-time Tutor-Organiser.

*Division 5:* The National E.C. has arranged for Mark Starr to give assistance in Bristol.

*Division 6:* Nuneaton College is now under way and classes have started in Nuneaton, Atherstone, Bedworth, and Arley. A successful conference was held at Nuneaton, over 60 delegates attending, and an enthusiasm was manifested which augurs well for the future of our work in this area. Birmingham College has arranged a "Nicht wi Burns" on January 25th, to be held at the Clarion Club and a great programme of song and story has been arranged. The classes are doing well and new students are being steadily enrolled. Walsall College had a special week-end campaign during the month and good work was done. Dudley College is also satisfactory and an extension of its work is anticipated at an early date. Conferences are being arranged at Stoke, Wolverhampton and Coventry. Our staff of tutors is gradually increasing and what has seemed an insuperable problem is surely being overcome.

*Division 7:* The Divisional Council has secured the services of A. J. Cook for Sunday, February 27th. The meetings will be held with the Brighouse and Huddersfield Labour Colleges in conjunction with the local Trades Councils. Brighouse meeting will be held in the Albert Theatre at 2.30 p.m. and the Huddersfield meeting will be held in the Palace Theatre at 6.30 p.m. The Divisional Organiser will speak at both meetings. Tickets can be obtained from the College Secretaries. Hospitality can be arranged for at the time of application. The Doncaster College is to have a District Conference on Sunday, February 6th, with Wm. Paul as speaker along with the Organiser. The College has just lost a stalwart supporter through the death of J. Sargeant of Bentley. On resumption of work after the Miner's Lock-out, he was crushed by a fall of roof and died at the Royal Infirmary, Doncaster. The Hebden Valley classes have now decided to form the various local classes into one administrative centre known as the Todmorden Labour College with G.

Northcott, 4 Pollard Street, Lineholme, Todmorden as Secretary. The Hull College is to have a Delegate Conference in the local Trades Hall on Saturday 22nd January with the Divisional Organiser as speaker. Comrade A. Wright will take the chair. The Divisional E.C., after considering the National E.C. minutes, congratulate the E.C. on the splendid manner with which they are attempting to save the London Labour College. W. Brooke has been appointed the Dyers' representative to the Divisional Council.

*Division 8:* Merseyside A.U.B.T.W. Juveniles' Section is to have a special series of lectures. Barrow and Crewe are to have Day Schools during the summer. Plenty of demands for classes: more tutors are required.

*Division 9:* The Durham and District L.C. held a Day School at Red Hills, Durham, when J. F. Horrabin lectured. T. A. Westwater took the chair for the first lecture and J. E. McCutcheon for the second. We regret that Bob Holder has again had a breakdown in health. Comrade Holder has been doing good work in the Carlisle Area. The North-Eastern L.C. is still keeping up its activity. The Durham and District L.C. has now 18 classes attached to it and demands for classes are increasing.

*Division 10 (Scotland):* J. Wilson, of Lanarkshire, who has been unemployed, has been taking five classes each week. The Burntisland Class appointed a committee with Miss McRae and Mrs. Aitken as secretary and convenor respectively, with the purpose of raising funds, and over £6 has already been forwarded to the College Secretary. The Fife Reform Miners' Union has renewed its Educational Scheme. F. J. Adkins, who was in charge of the N.C.L.C.'s Tutors' Training Centre, gave a lantern lecture under the auspices of the Edinburgh College. The lecture included slides showing feudalism as it exists to-day in Czecho-Slovakia. Ayrshire College is arranging to have a full-time tutor for the remainder of the winter. J. Kerr, Ayrshire's able secretary, has had to retire for the time being but will assist the new secretary. Fife reports a record winter session. All other Colleges are very active.

*Division 11 (Ireland)*: The successful October-December session in Northern Ireland is a suitable reward for those who have put their shoulder to the wheel in Ulster. Seven classes have been held. At two, conducted by A. Ellis in Belfast on Public Finance and Social Science, the roll call was 113 and 117 respectively. (A good number of students have been on active service during the Belfast January elections). Twelve new affiliations have been obtained during the three months and twenty trade union branch and public lectures have been given, including six lantern lectures. Londonderry has arranged a lantern lecture for February 4th. Newry is making preparations for a bumper N.C.L.C. concert, with Councillor Myles Connell and an able committee in charge.

*Division 12*: The most important events of the month has been the visit of George Hicks to Nottingham. The Conference, though arranged rather hurriedly, was very successful. Comrade Hicks was in good form and a lively discussion followed his speech. Nottingham comrades are hoping to reap the fruit of the visit in increased affiliations to the College and increased attendance at classes. Lincoln College is contemplating a conference in the near future. It has appointed a Propaganda Committee to push for new affiliations and increased publicity for the College. Classes are being commenced in new areas. More tutors are required. We welcome the interest shown in our work by the Co-operative Societies at Nottingham and Netherfield; our thanks are due to the Education Committee of these two Societies.



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# The PLEBS Bookshelf



*To the German edition of The PLEBS "Outline of Economic Geography" a special preface is contributed by Comrade H. Walecki, who raises one or two points of special interest to students. We give below a translation (by Comrade H. E. Wilde) of the more important parts of this preface, together with a brief reply by J.F.H.*

**T**HE proletarian student who wishes to investigate the nature of Imperialism often sticks at the difficulties resulting from a deficiency of geographical knowledge. This deficiency is not obviated by a study of the ordinary geography textbook, in which the reader negotiates a considerable number of more or less systematically grouped facts. What is needed is a survey of Geography "in relationship to History and Economics" which "out of a great mass of material selects the facts which from the working class viewpoint are more significant than others." The task of giving such a survey has been excellently achieved by the writer of this little work. . . . Throughout it shows a complete mastery of the material and a masterly, clear, lucid and precise presentation.

As regards certain trains of thought of the author, which appear to be handled from a consistent revolutionary, Marxist standpoint, the publisher of the German edition feels tempted to make some reservations. . . .

The author is a decided opponent of Capitalist Imperialism. In the concluding chapter, wherein the conclusions from the entire book are drawn, he confronts the world, torn by rival imperialisms, with a proletarian world group whose task is the organisation of conquest by the world proletariat. He emphasises, quite rightly, that the welding together of the world cannot be achieved through "economic evolution" alone, for "history is made by human action." But this action which will deliver the death blow to Imperialism must, according to him, be an action of the entire world proletariat, which some time in a more or less distant future, after the fulfilment of in-

numerable conditions, will be brought to fruition. He does not see that the effective struggle against Imperialism is already at the present moment raging. He under-estimates the fact that an important portion of the earth has torn itself free from Imperialism and stands as a bulwark against it, and that a number of colonial and semi-colonial peoples are engaged in open and partially successful struggles.

This sceptical suspension of the authors' judgment comes to its clearest expression in the paragraph which bears the significant title: "Who is to exploit China?" The answer runs: "The question is not yet finally settled. We may take it for granted that China will fall under the virtual control of one or other of the outside powers, even if she retains any sort of nominal political independence of any kind. It is exceedingly unlikely that any sort of reorganisation from within will happen in China. . . . Or will the exploited workers of China, of Japan, of America, and of Britain, forgetting their racial differences, and remembering only their common interests, put an end to capitalist exploitation East and West?" One remarks: a Chinese anti-Imperialist, national revolution (any sort of re-organisation from within) appears to Horrabin "exceedingly unlikely"; only the simultaneous and concerted action of the working class of all three interested Imperialist states with the working class of China can remedy this, and the mention of this possibility he dresses in the form of a sceptical and melancholy interrogation.

In spite of his subjective, though honestly meant, enmity against Capitalist Imperialism, the author is so gripped in this spell that many of his essential lines in the "Workers' World



Group" are only seen and longed for in a distant and misty future. "The working class has to know," he writes at the beginning of the book, "that its task is to organise the world's sources of wealth for the needs of the masses instead of for the profit of a small minority." This thought is enlarged upon in the concluding chapter: "National liberty, like individual liberty, will have to be subordinated to international needs; and the resources of any one area will have to be used, not as the inhabitants of that area decide, but as the needs of the world's peoples dictate." This argument—setting the people of the world, organised in a proletarian world group, against "what the inhabitants of any area may decide"—employs the same argument as the Imperialist groups of the present-day; and so gives superfluous proof how little understanding the author has of the powerful anti-Imperialist struggles for liberty of the Asiatic and African peoples, for struggle is one of the most important conditions for the unification of free peoples in the proletarian world group. (This false outlook drives the author to make a parallel between the "interference" of Soviet Russia in Georgia and of England in Persia. He accepts the position that both have ignored national sensitiveness, and justifies the first that it "aimed at gaining control for a workers' Republic of a vital raw material." In reality the Georgian Soviet Republic, similarly to both the other Transcaucasian republics, is a free member of the U.S.S.R. enjoying equal rights, and for the first time Soviet Georgia has created the fundamentals for a development of the national Georgian culture.)

The author emphasises rightly: "The international organisation of the workers must be based on as full and accurate a knowledge as possible of world affairs and world problems," and he deduces therefrom the necessity for "a World General Staff for the Workers' Movement." The guiding thread which he sketches for this world general staff points to the fact that he cannot recommend the proletarian revolution as practical in any land. "The problem of the food supply, the problem of communications, and of access to raw materials—these and other similar questions have to be faced and solved before the workers can successfully take over and maintain

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control." In this sense he finds in the failure of the Hungarian revolution a standing warning for revolutionaries, and finds the chief cause of this failure in the lack of foresight regarding "geographical factors." It goes without saying that the outbreak, maintenance, and victory of the power of the proletarian dictatorship depends on the factories; the geographical is not the primary nor the decisive factor.

These critical remarks from the publisher of the German edition of this admirable little work will, it is believed, be appreciated by both the readers and author.

H. WALECKI.

J.F.H. writes:—The author certainly appreciates Comrade Walecki's stimulating criticisms; he is by no means convinced by all of them. He will be as brief as possible in reply.

1. "*He under-estimates the fact that an important portion of the earth has torn itself free from Imperialism and stands as a bulwark against it.*" I submit that this is a matter of individual "feeling." The Geography Textbook certainly stresses the importance of what has happened in Russia to the world revolutionary movement. I am ready to agree with Com. Walecki that perhaps this might have received greater emphasis in the final chapter. But he must remember that I was writing, primarily, a textbook of geography; and that comment of any kind had therefore to be vigorously kept short.

2. "*Who is to exploit China?*" I readily—and joyfully—admit that events have to a very large extent (but not yet entirely) falsified my "answer" to this question. But I must remind Com. Walecki that I was writing in 1923; and I would ask him whether he or anyone else would have written very differently at that time. Happenings in China since July, 1925, have shewn my prophecy about "re-organisation from within" being "exceedingly unlikely" to be wrong. But I wrote on the basis of such knowledge as I possessed in 1923. And I submit that I should not have been justified in prophesying otherwise merely because I *hoped* otherwise.

3. "*National liberty, like individual liberty, will have to be subordinated to international needs.*" I still think so—and I don't see how anyone but an anarchist can think otherwise. Com. Walecki says this is employing the same argument as that used by Imperialists to-day. But, if it happens to be a sound argument, this is no reason for not using it.

4. *Georgia.* I still assert that Soviet Russia's chief—and justifiable—aim in Georgia was to "gain control for a Workers' Republic of a vital raw material." He says Georgia is a "free member" of the U.S.S.R. I would like to ask him whether Georgia is "free" to do as she likes in the matter of foreign trade? Of course not—and rightly so. "*National liberty, like individual liberty, must be subordinated*" to the needs of a greater group.

5. "*The geographical is not the primary nor the decisive factor.*" I don't think any reader of my book would assert that I said or implied any such thing. I said that geographical factors should not be ignored—that is all.

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