

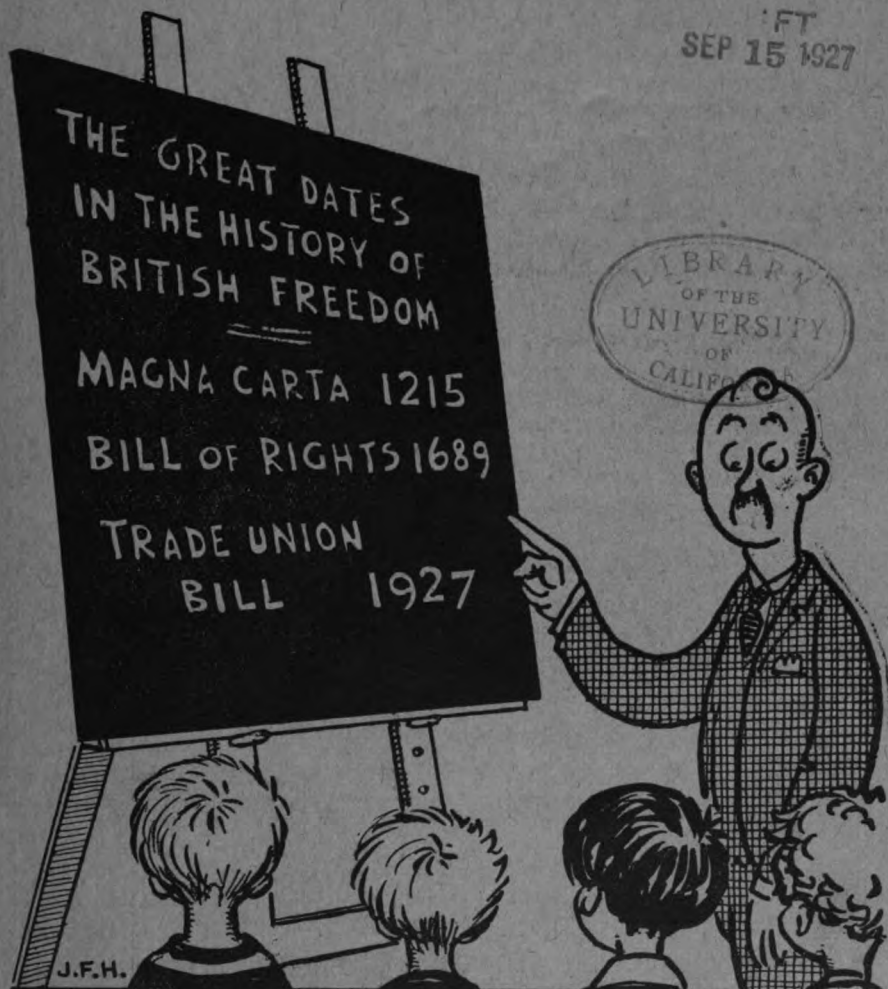
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# THE PLEBS

*The Organ of the National Council  
of Labour Colleges*

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# The Pleb Point of View



**T**HE speech of the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions at the Paris Congress (which is being reprinted by the I.L.P. as a 2d. pamphlet) threw a veritable bombshell into the arena of international Trade Unionism. Well that bombshell is needed! The process by which the Trade Union bureaucracy, reared in the pre-war Reformist, Imperialist stage of capitalism, adapts itself to capitalism, becomes part of the capitalist machine, and abandons the class struggle, is further advanced in several continental countries than it is here. Purcell said many things which have been spoken of in N.C.L.C. classes for many years. He stressed the need for international trade union unity on a class basis against capitalist attacks and against the growing menace of war. And in this unity with Russia and with the workers of the East was the first essential.

\* \* \*

Our rulers and governors have not been slow to profit by the lesson they learned during the General Strike as to the usefulness of broadcasting. An Adult Educational Section of the B.B.C. has now been set up, and a prominent W.E.A. er put in charge. So that, as *Adult Education by Wireless* J. P. M. Millar pointed out in his letter to the *Daily Herald* the other day, "the workers will now be educated by wireless on lines that have governing-class approval." Let us, to avoid misunderstanding, frankly admit that a series of talks on English working-class history by a W.E.A. lecturer which were broadcasted early this year were very good. But if anyone deduces from that that the general tone of the lessons-by-wireless which are now to be given under Government control is likely to be satisfactory from the workers' point of view, he must be an optimist indeed. It is one more proof, if such were needed, of the entire failure of the W.E.A. to grasp the fundamental facts about the position of the workers under capitalism, and about their educational needs, that such a scheme, under such auspices, should receive its sympathetic support.

We want to make a very urgent appeal to our comrades and supporters to help us, NOW, by clearing up amounts owing to us.

The burden of debt we are at present facing is going to handicap all our work this winter. *It could be cleared off please! immediately if our friends paid us what they owe us.*

The idea seems to have got abroad that now that the N.C.L.C. was taking over THE PLEBS, the settlement of accounts doesn't matter—or can be delayed indefinitely. This is not so. The N.C.L.C. has no surplus funds in hand. And even if it had, it could not afford to use those funds to wipe out debts contracted by individual I.W.C.Ers. August, we all know, is a bad business month. We look to our friends to send us a nice little pile of cheques and postal orders as early as possible in September.

*This is serious.*

\* \* \*

We have no definite announcement to make yet as to the reorganisation of the Plebs League, as there has been no opportunity yet to discuss the matter fully with N.C.L.C. representatives. For the present we must content ourselves with repeating what we stated last month: (1) That the League is *not* going out of business—so sport your badges; (2) that the new basis of membership will most probably combine a subscription to the magazine with certain benefits in the way of special reductions in price of textbooks and other publications. Whether it will be possible to give precise details next month we are not sure. But in the meantime Plebs can rest assured that the scheme to be decided upon will be the best we can make it after full and careful discussion with as many comrades as possible.

\* \* \*

This month's issue sees a rejoinder to Raymond Postgate's article in last month's issue from a staunch friend of Esperanto. An article of great importance to all students of Marxism theory discusses the rôle of that important "third class," the peasant small producer, in the class struggle—a question which events in China have brought into prominence to-day and which events in India and Africa may bring into prominence to-morrow. ZED draws some morals from the recent events in Vienna, while a scientific correspondent describes the importance of the researches of the Russian physiologist, Pavlov. The N.C.L.C. National Training Centre is described by F. J. Adkins, while J.S.B. describes the joys of the N.C.L.C. Summer School.

# Straws in the Wind

## THE JULY EVENTS IN VIENNA AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

### AN EXPERIMENT IN PARLIAMENTARY SOCIALISM

THE July events in Vienna constitute, from the standpoint of Marxist political theory, the most interesting happening in Europe for several years. Indeed, the whole history of the Austrian working-class movement since 1918 is of first-rank importance. Of events in Russia and Germany and Italy we know something, although even that is little enough and is studied by us still less. But of Austria our movement knows next to nothing; and the dramatic suddenness of the July events in Vienna call out to us to repair this gap in our knowledge. We badly need in this country a Marxist study of the post-war class struggle in Austria and in South-Eastern Europe.

Austria, predominantly a country of peasants, only since 1848 finally released from feudalism, has at its heart the ancient city of the Hapsburgs, Vienna, with its concentrated industry and highly-developed proletariat, its multitude of rich banking houses which hold the whole trade of the Danube in fee, and its languid and highly-cultured *intelligentsia*—Vienna “the easy-going,” the city of Beethoven, the city ruled by Jews in economics and by aristocrats in politics, the city which is the last outpost of Western Europe against the East. Ruined and starved by the war, her armies in collapse, and her ancient monarchy tottering, it was a city where the workers were highly class-conscious and revolutionary-minded, and the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, such as Dr. Bauer and Friedrich Adler, and of the trade unions spoke and wrote in a revolutionary vein and claimed to be on “the Left.” The troops, disgusted with their officers and the Monarchy, were as class-conscious as the workers in the munition factories of Wiener Neustadt, and prisoners of war, returning from Russia (of whom Otto Bauer was one), brought back the enthusiasm of a country where the workers had seized power. Even the major part of Vienna’s middle class and intelligentsia—lawyers, professors, doctors and journalists—were ready for revolutionary changes and flocked into the Socialist Party in large numbers, and large sections of the peasants were willing to stand solid with the workers of the towns. Workers’ and Soldiers’ Councils and Red Guards sprang into existence on the fall of the Monarchy. A Soviet

Republic was declared both in Buda Pesth to the East and in Munich to the West. The masses only needed a determined lead to carry through a seizure of power which had almost fallen into their hands and to set up a workers' dictatorship ; and a workers' Vienna might have been the beacon light of the revolution to the whole of Central Europe.

An amiable little book by a bourgeois writer,\* though it shows dismal inability to understand the first elements of Socialist and Marxian theory, peevishly complaining of the "materialism and pig-headed adherence to Marx" as the principal faults of the Austrian Socialists, is of considerable interest in giving us a narrative of events from an outside, bourgeois point of view. His account of events shows very clearly the true rôle in the class struggle which the "Left" leaders of the Social Democratic Party played. In Vienna, the home of the powerful younger school of Marxism, numbering Hilferding and the Adlers and Otto Bauer, where the Socialist leaders showed enthusiasm for Russia, talked in terms of the class struggle, works councils, workers' militia, and superseding the bourgeois State, one would have thought that the betrayal of the workers' movement by Noskes and Scheidemanns and Kautskys was out of the question. Yet the actual rôle played by this leadership—whether consciously or unconsciously does not matter—was to put the brake on the mass movement just at the time when it was at its highest point and the situation was most revolutionary. While talking about workers' power, they made no attempt to prepare for a seizure of power, let alone to organise and lead it ; their only difference from Noske was that while he openly called in White Guards to suppress the militant workers' movement, the Austrian leaders sought to "tame" the militant movement and bring it safely under their own control. Otto Bauer has himself explained his position at this time by a theory of "*a balance of class power.*" His conception of the transition to Socialism was that of a sort of diarchy, or a sharing of power between the workers and the bourgeoisie, under which the workers' movement could develop to its maximum extent, could "experiment" with a sort of piecemeal Socialism, until such time as conditions had ripened for a new step forward. But, as any Marxist should have seen, such a "balance" of class forces is a condition of unstable equilibrium which cannot exist beyond a few months : it is as inconsistent with any real measure of Socialism as it is with the continuance of capitalism ; and after a series of clashes of interest and crises it must end either in the workers seizing power altogether and breaking the resistance of the capitalists, or in the capitalists' recovery of lost positions and the

\* *The Social Revolution in Austria*, by C. A. Macartney, Cambridge Univ. Press, 8/6.

suppression of the workers' movement. The failure to face up to this issue of power, and to give an organised political lead to the masses—instead, the attempt to put them in “leading strings” under cover of militant language—led to the second, instead of the first, outcome of the unstable equilibrium of 1918-1920.

The first action of the Austrian Social Democrats, after the fall of the Monarchy and the declaration of the Republic, was to take Parliamentary office on a coalition understanding with non-Socialist parties. The Right-wing of the movement, therefore, centred in Parliament, carried on the “continuity” of the capitalist State at the same time as the Left-wing of the Social Democrats, centred in the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, talked about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Otto Bauer, who “consistently supported democracy against dictatorship,” seeing the immense following which the Councils had among the masses, did not dare to oppose them : on the contrary, he supported them and gave them certain powers, but at the same time sought to discourage them from any revolutionary action, and talked of a combined system of Parliament and Soviets, while some talked of making the Councils into a new “second chamber.” All such talk served to divert the attention of the Councils from their true function as organising centres in the struggle for power ; and even the Communists were for a long time dazzled into regarding the Social Democrat leaders as “allies,” instead of taking a line of their own, and rallying the masses to a new revolutionary leadership through the Councils. As a result, the masses continued to “believe” in the Social Democrat leaders, to follow their directions, and wait on them for a lead ; and the Councils, instead of being revolutionary instruments as in Russia, “for over a year performed most efficiently the function of a safety-valve in constant, explosive use, or a ventilator turning continuously in a rushing wind”—a “safety valve through which the impatient could blow off steam,” and which “provided such a show of concession to revolution that many asked for nothing more” (*Macartney*, pp. 125, 131-2). Similarly, to “side-track” the Communist movement to form a Red Guard, the Socialist leaders organised a legal Republican militia closely under its control, and linked with the Workers' Councils. Meanwhile the Government discussed elaborate “plans” for socialisation, and introduced one or two fancy schemes of State and Co-operative enterprise. But the essential “key positions” were left in the capitalists' hands, and no revolutionary agrarian programme was proclaimed to rally the support of the peasantry—on the contrary, measures were taken which antagonised the peasantry and drove them into the arms of the Church. In the countryside “no direct expropriation from private individuals has occurred anywhere” ; the banks were left in private



hands ; and a plan to nationalise the large mining concern, the Alpine Montan Works, "was frustrated by the sudden action of the Finance Minister, a non-Socialist, in placing the concern in Italian hands" (p. 149). Generally, the measures taken, "as a step towards the ultimate establishment of Socialism, were small" (p. 158). Finally, in 1922, the Socialists lost Parliamentary power and gave way for a reactionary Catholic Government under Dr. Seipel, and retained power merely in the municipality of Vienna, where they were able to continue to secure the adherence of the masses by a kind of "Poplarism" and a number of reformist measures like housing schemes, carried through only in virtue of the large measure of autonomy allowed to Austrian municipalities, and by the exceptional possibility of taxing the rich Viennese financiers.

Now after five years of clerical reaction in Austria, when Fascism had begun to raise its head, we find a spontaneous rising of the masses, aroused by the acquittal of two Fascist murderers—a spontaneous rising of the masses to tell us that the revolutionary spirit in Central Europe still smoulders beneath the surface of temporary capitalist stabilisation, only requiring a little to bring it into life again. Once again, when the workers had virtually control of the whole city of Vienna, when the soldiers would have rallied to them, and the poorer peasantry, if appealed to by a revolutionary agrarian programme, could have been won or at least "neutralised," the Social Democrat leaders played the rôle of "disciplining" the masses and holding them back. They used the Social Democratic militia, not to occupy the "key positions" for the workers and to enforce discipline and order with the workers in control, but to co-operate with the police in restoring capitalist "order" ; and finally negotiated with the Government in private conference, calling off the strike ignominiously like our own leaders in May, 1926. The plea that they did this because Vienna was surrounded by a hostile, Fascist countryside has been contradicted by Dr. Otto Stammer, a prominent Social Democratic writer in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, who points out that the Fascists were only strong in the Tyrol, that in a large number of areas the majority of the peasants would probably have supported a Socialist Government, or at least not opposed it, while in certain industrial districts, such as the district of Upper Styria, there would have been the support of a strong proletariat.

These events are not only symptomatic of the mood of the workers in Central Europe ; they offer to us important material for careful study. They seem to suggest, at any rate, three lessons. First, that in the approach to Socialism, the issue of power is the primary problem to be dealt with, to which organisation and tactics must be adapted ; and to talk about plans of socialisation and "experiments"

before that problem has been faced is useless. Second, the importance of the workers abandoning the isolation which confines their attention to purely industrial questions, and reaching out to secure the co-operation of the peasant food producers. Third, that at the acute stage of the class struggle it is not a question of "spontaneity"—that leads only to riots without conscious purpose—it is not merely a question of machinery—that can be used for wrong purposes—but it is a question of a disciplined, organised and courageous lead being given to the masses. And this lead must be a *political* lead—it must focus their struggle and their attention on the problem of the capitalist State and the problem of supplanting it by a workers' seizure of power. The machinery may be perfect, the masses may be educated and class-conscious, and economic conditions may be "riper" than ever before or ever again, yet if faith in a leadership which will lead only "up the garden" continues, the whole movement will break down as dismally as in Vienna both in 1920 and in 1927.

ZED.

## A WORD FOR ESPERANTO

*The Professor of German and Honorary Lecturer in Comparative Philology in the University of Liverpool here replies to Raymond Postgate's strictures on Esperanto in our last issue.*

IT is a pity that a man of Mr. Postgate's standing in the Labour world should feel moved to "crab" Esperanto, for though Esperanto may not be theoretically perfect, yet it is adequate to all the practical international tasks imposed upon it, and is the sole international language in common world-wide use to any great extent. Still, he has raised certain specific points, and I should like to ask him to consider on hearing the evidence whether some of the alleged "defects" are not really positive merits. And there is abundant literature on the subject, if he seriously desires to go into the question.

After all, the language must be treated as a whole, and not have elements drawn out here and there. If, at the worst, there appear to remain one or two "defects" of a more serious character, these will in course of time be remedied by the Linguistic Committees, which at present naturally err, if at all, on the conservative side.

No Esperantists argue in the way imputed to them in Mr. Postgate's second paragraph. What they do say is that the workers need an international language, easy to learn and handle, developed by actual use, and sufficiently propagated to be immediately useful. So far, the only language to fulfil these conditions adequately is Esperanto.

Unlike Volapük, Esperanto is not stereotyped beyond the reach of change and improvement. But in the initial stage, until it is firmly established, Esperantists believe that adherence to a ground-plan will ensure continuity of development and preclude dialect formation. Volapükists split their movement by evolving completely new schemes, and wasted their strength in internal conflict. Esperanto has made headway in spite of the handicap of the failure of Volapük. To scrap Esperanto would produce such disillusionment in the minds of the public that the whole International Language movement would have a set-back from which it would be difficult to recover. I once heard Volapük spoken by two Germans who had gone over to Esperanto, and not a word was recognised. Whereas I find that audiences can often make out the gist of a sentence pronounced to them in Esperanto without any previous knowledge of the language at all.

As to the alphabet, I grant that Esperanto contains some combinations of letters not common in English (e.g., *sc* in *scienco*, with the purpose of maintaining the international form of the word; or *kv*, which agrees with the normal German pronunciation of *qu-*, e.g., *kvalito*). It may, however, be indicated that these are but a few small points, the removal of which would involve greater disadvantages, e.g., the substitution of unsatisfactory forms like *sienco* or *cienco*, or the insertion into the alphabet of the redundant *q*. In any case, possible small deviations of pronunciation, like *s* for *sc*, do not interfere with understanding, and it is significant that some Idists are now advocating a return to *scienco*! When English children of four or five pronounce Esperanto with ease, is it worth while, in a discussion supposedly serious, to talk of horrible noises unpronounceable without injury to the jaw? This might surely be left to the comic press.

The six accented letters of Esperanto may be compared with thirteen such in French, nineteen in Lithuanian, seven in Spanish, etc. Do we, then, "have to smash up our typewriters and alter our printing machines" to print French, which has more than twice as many accented letters as Esperanto? Did the compositor of PLEBS alter his machine to use his excellent Esperanto type in two founts when setting up Mr. Postgate's article?

Mr. Postgate is apparently unaware that Esperanto may easily be printed on both the monotype and the linotype. As early as 1908 the Monotype Co. gave a quotation of 2/6 per matrix for the Esperanto type, and of 27/- for the set of twelve accented letters (including caps.), from which an unlimited supply of "movable" can be obtained. The Esperanto newspaper *Heroldo* is printed on a linotype machine. If the Esperanto accented type, although perhaps theoretically the best solution of the problem of a phonetic

alphabet, nevertheless presents such formidable difficulties in practice, how is it that printers throughout the world are producing an ever-increasing flow of literature of all kinds, and that Esperanto, which alone of international languages uses these letters, is the only one to achieve this practical success? The "naïve Esperantist reviewer" was not ignorant of these facts.

The example chosen to demonstrate the Esperanto system of derivation as being *à priori* is not quite happy, for *bo-* is the phonetic form of French "beau" in *beau-pere*, and, as a matter of fact, relationship by marriage is indicated in most European languages as in Esperanto, by a compound in which the first component denotes this specific form of relationship, e.g., Germ. *Schwieger-*, Dutch *Schoon-* (translation of *beau-*), etc.

I suppose many languages could, if they wanted, form long compounds of the type Mr. Postgate invents to ridicule. The question is simply that of the extent to which a given writer or speaker cares to use this liberty. When writing on technical matters one finds it most useful to be able, as in Esperanto, to improvise new compounds and derivatives beyond the fixed vocabulary of Latin.

The few Slavic and the rather more numerous German roots have been adopted by Esperanto not out of an irrational sentimentality, but either (1) because of their greater suitability in practice, e.g., the word for "and," where the possible use of *et* or *e(d)* would involve practical difficulties, and where the Esperanto *kaj* was justified by Zamenhof as early as 1891, or (2) to avoid certain ambiguities, as when *varma* is chosen in preference to *kalda*, lest the Romance peoples take the latter in the sense of "warm" when a German or Englishman might take it for *cold*; and *ŝafo* (German) for "sheep," because a root from the Latin *ovis* might be confused with *ovo* "egg." *Klein-* does not exist in Esperanto, and if it did, why should it mean "famous"? The Russian *черпат*, giving the root *черп-* is short and—though not related—does suggest the German *schöpfen* (and cognate forms in the other Germanic languages).

In criticising the grammar of Esperanto, Mr. Postgate forgets that the tense-system of the verb, when once learnt—and experience in teaching it proves how easily it may be acquired!—stands good for all verbs. If he had had to teach foreigners the subtle differences between *shall* and *will*, he would appreciate the simple Esperanto form in *-os*, always used for the future and for nothing else.

It matters little whether you insert a whole word, or suffix a syllable, *provided that the application is made without exception*. It would be just as easy to learn, say, the Finnish ending *-sta* for "out of" in *kirko-sta* (out of church), *Liverpoolista*, "out of Liverpool," etc., as to learn the words "out of." We have to be able

to express (a) present, (b) future, and (c) past tense, (d) conditions, and (e) wishes *somehow*. And to learn once and for all that these are expressed by adding to the root (a) *-as*, (b) *-os*, (c) *-is*, (d) *-us*, (e) *-u* respectively, does not seem to be any more difficult than to have to learn, e.g., separate particles like the Interlingua *i* for the future and *e* for the past. The participial tenses, while adding precision to Esperanto, may cause some difficulty to learners; it must, however, be pointed out that these expanded constructions are not often used, and their possibility offers considerable practical advantages.

I candidly admit that the alphabet of Esperanto does give it at first sight a rather strange look to English eyes, but familiarity soon makes it appear perfectly normal and undisturbing. Also there are bound to be details (*mal-* is one) which may not meet with the approval of all. But the essential point is that Esperanto is in actual use to a very great extent in varied fields, and all who have written letters in it, or—as I have—spoken in it to international audiences, e.g., at Geneva in 1922 and Edinburgh in 1926, know that it is already a medium of great practical utility. It seems wise—even if we may not think it theoretically perfect in all details—to accept it as a working basis, and see to it that it is gradually developed in accordance with international desires. The point is that it is already very useful now. I could hope that Mr. Postgate would lay aside any initial misgivings, and after a week or two's study (which would suffice a man of his linguistic equipment) write a letter in Esperanto to some foreign correspondent interested in his particular subjects—or, better still, attend some international Esperanto Congress, and see how neatly and thoroughly the business is there transacted. I assure him that I have no prejudice against *Interlingua* as such—it is a very skilful adaptation of Latin—but when I see the manner in which Esperanto appeals to the Central and Eastern Europeans and to the Oriental peoples, I should feel very reluctant to abandon it in favour of a new scheme on a purely Western European basis. In Lancashire I have met many workers who had previously learnt no language except English, but who transact business in Esperanto. So far I have never heard of any single person using Interlingua who had not a prior knowledge of Latin, and I fail to see how any purely theoretical argument can carry conviction to those who have had personal experience of the value of Esperanto.

W. E. COLLINSON.

## SOCIALISM AND WORLD PEASANT PROBLEMS

UNTIL recently British Socialists were apt to ignore the peasant problem in its various aspects, as having no direct bearing on the struggle for Socialism. To-day the very prominence of the question in other countries is forcing us to sit up and take a sleepy notice, and a suspicion is stealing into our minds that certain very vexed "problems of empire" are inextricably connected with a problem of native races, which in turn is largely resolvable into a peasant problem.

Engels' *Peasant War*,\* brilliant historical study though it is, does not afford us much guidance on general peasant problems as they present themselves to-day. Only in a brief introductory preface does he draw any general conclusions as to the place of the peasant in the march towards Socialism. And in that chapter he goes little farther than to analyse the peasantry into the categories of wage-earners, small, medium and large-scale landowners, and the part that each of these plays in the agrarian struggle. The problems arising from present-day relationships between peasants and workers were outside the scope of his history, and did not press for consideration in 1874 as they do in 1927.

In view of contemporary peasant movements in four continents, one is justified in asking how far the peasantry can be regarded as a positive factor in the achievement of the social revolution. Do the interests of the peasantry always coincide with those of the proletariat, and if not, at what point do they diverge? And assuming that they do diverge, how can they be brought again into harmony?

It will hardly be challenged that in practice the interests of the peasantry do at a certain stage of economic development tend to diverge from those of the proletariat. Perhaps an answer to the vitally important question of the point of divergence may be found by considering various countries in which a peasant problem exists for Socialists.

In France and certain other European States the peasantry take a purely reactionary attitude to Socialism. It will be at once noted that the significant phenomenon common to all these countries is that an agrarian revolution has definitely taken place, not the last, perhaps, but one which for the time being satisfies the peasantry by putting the land into their hands.

\* *The Peasant War in Germany*, by Friedrich Engels, introduction by D. Riazanov, Allen & Unwin, 4/6.

In certain other countries—Poland, etc.—we observe an agrarian revolution in transition. Of these countries it may be safely postulated that in so far as fresh sections of the peasantry are being brought into the category of smallholders, they are being changed from a potential revolutionary into an actual counter-revolutionary element.

In the U.S.S.R. the agrarian was contemporaneous with the proletarian revolution. What course the latter would have taken if the former had preceded it is difficult to say, but had it done so, without doubt the Russian proletariat would have had a much more formidable task in taking over power. But in actuality the two revolutions went hand in hand, mutually assisting each other—up to a point. For it cannot be denied that even in Soviet Russia a point is reached at which the interests of proletariat and peasant have diverged in practice. For Socialists the vital question is: Where is that point fixed? Clearly, it is fixed at the moment of actual occupation of the land by any large section of the peasantry; once this is achieved their attitude to the proletarian revolution is governed by the extent to which their right to the land and its produce is accepted or challenged.

It is true that from the moment of entry into possession of the land a process of stratification into classes begins among the peasantry. At first sight this factor seems to render any generalisation anent the reactionary nature of the peasantry too hasty, for while it is true of the upper and middle peasant, it is not altogether true of the landless or almost landless peasant, who remains a potential revolutionary factor. None the less, he is not a *social* revolutionary factor, since relations between the strata of peasantry are dynamic, and the bottom peasant is as agraro-centric as his richer brother. Only in countries which are predominantly industrial—where the Gordian knot of the peasant problem has been cut by the creation of a permanent stratum of landless and really proletarian agricultural workers—does the general conclusion that after the agrarian revolution the peasant becomes a conservative, anti-social element not entirely apply.

Nor is the Russian peasants' attitude to the workers' government determined merely by the question of land-ownership. For since 1917 the economic relationship between town and country in their capacities as producers of manufactures and food and raw materials respectively has also served as a touchstone. The problem of ratio of exchange is acute not only in U.S.S.R.—it is found in all countries with a land-working class. But in U.S.S.R. the fact that the owners and chief sellers of manufactures are the State institutions and proletarian co-operatives focusses the peasants' antagonism directly on the workers.

Hence the solution to U.S.S.R.'s distinctive peasant problem was correctly indicated by Lenin as the industrialisation of agriculture. To which, however, has to be added that the mere statutory nationalisation of the land is not of itself any real solution to the peasant problem. To recapitulate :

1. The question of the antecedence or coincidence of the agrarian with the proletarian revolution has a vital bearing on the course of the social revolution, and consequently on the programme of the workers in relation to the peasantry in any one country.

2. When the agrarian revolution antedates the proletarian revolution in countries predominantly agricultural, the peasantry become a strongly anti-social, reactionary factor.

3. When the agrarian coincides with the proletarian revolution it assists the latter up to a point, but where the agrarian revolution results in placing the land in the hands of individual peasant holders the latter become potential and often an actual anti-social force, the struggle being focussed on the problem of economic exchange.

4. The peasant problem is not solved by mere statutory land nationalisation. The only permanent solution is the industrialisation of agriculture, which brings the economic interests of workers and peasants into unison.

We may now consider other countries where the peasant problem is a large factor in the dynamic of events. One such country is China ; others, perhaps still more important to British Socialists, are India, Egypt and British Africa.

The Chinese peasant problem is the biggest of all that modern China raises for Socialists. Meantime our data on the Chinese peasant is incredibly small, for there are few intensive and no adequate economic surveys of his conditions. Still greater is our ignorance of his psychology. From such little information as we have we know that more than 50 per cent. of the peasantry is without sufficient land to keep alive on. We know that in consequence there is a strong drift to the towns, which process is continually enlarging the ranks of the working class, with the latter's consequent disorganisation and temporary weakening. We further know that although the predominant form of land tenure is peasant holdings in various forms, the owners or leaseholders are so completely at the mercy of the usurer or large landowner that their plight is hardly better than that of the landless labourers. In other words, an agrarian revolution has already largely been achieved, but its effects are completely nullified by onerous economic burdens. The problem of removing those burdens without transforming the peasantry into a reactionary element is the central problem before the Chinese workers.



We also know that the Chinese peasant possesses distinct powers of organising. The rise of Peasant Leagues and Red Spears movements is of great significance, for they reveal the ability of the peasants to take organised action in defence of their interests. At the same time it is to be noted that so far the Peasant Leagues' programmes reveal no very radical tendencies, and aim more at removal of abuses than of abusers! Land nationalisation, or even expropriation of large landowners is not a regular part of their programme. It would seem that the peasant psychology is more that of a man tied to the soil than attached to it, and if that be so, this simple psychological fact is of great significance, especially when the workers become strong enough to take over government.

But with the possibility of the peasants' premature development into an active and coherent, independent political element, the likelihood of a successful workers' government recedes far into the background. For, as we have seen, in a predominantly agricultural country the workers' movement depends for its success on the passive support of the peasantry. If, however, a workers' government can remove or take over the economic disabilities of the peasant holders, at the same time pursuing a vigorous policy of industrialisation of agriculture, the necessary temporary union may be achieved which may suffice to allow for the education and more general industrial development necessary to ensure permanent control by the working class.

Here the nationalist revolution enters to complicate the situation. In China's comparatively undeveloped industrial condition it is a moot point whether it is not ultimately better to allow Western capitalism into China. The encouragement of the nationalist movement tends to hinder the assistance of the international working class, it retards China's own development, and temporarily deflects the activity of many of the Chinese workers. Against this has to be set the doubtful and opportunistic advantage that the nationalist movement is a thorn in the side of Western capitalism. The net effect of encouraging nationalism is to enhance the likelihood of China becoming a reactionary peasant State, and this will probably be the outcome of the present situation.

The Indian peasant presents a somewhat similar problem, for economic conditions are fairly approximate. Here the nationalist movement is indubitably reactionary, in so far as it proposes the retention of Indian economy in the swaddling bands of patriarchal civilisation. The negative, anti-imperialist policy would appear to be almost as dangerous as its imperialist, anti-nationalist counterpart. Nationalism is no more an inevitable stage on the road towards Socialism than is capitalism. Any future British Socialist Government will be faced with the fact that under present conditions "India for the Indians" means the continued exploitation of the Indian

workers and peasants, and that Government will not be able to escape censure from some quarter. But by sound and comprehensive agrarian reforms, directed to freeing the Indian peasant from caste-class exploitation, that Government will do much to ensure that censure does not come from the peasant element.

Ignoring Egypt, the problem of which would appear to be much more amenable to solution along class lines than the others we are considering, we are left with East and West Africa. In Kenya and Nigeria the problem is kindly being simplified for us by the action of British Governments in sanctioning or directly effecting the expropriation of the natives. By so doing they have effectually initiated the development of class stratification, and the East African natives will form excellent ground ere long for Socialist organisation and education. In the economic field the expropriation of the expropriators is the only possible Socialist policy. None the less, Socialists cannot contemplate the reversion of the land to the native in his own right, for that would involve placing him at the mercy of any capitalist interests that chose the method of indirect exploitation. We can more easily leave the Chinese, Egyptian, or Indian, with their centuries of cultural tradition and civilisation, to take their own course than we can the African native. The chief danger in both East and West Africa lies in the operation of the law of reversion to type, a tendency which is overwhelmingly strong at their present stage of development. Socialists must take in hand the education and development of the African native races before capitalist civilisation has completed its present work of developing an intense national and racial consciousness.

West Africa's problem is different from that of East Africa, since the form of exploitation is different. In East Africa the official policy has turned the natives largely into a low-grade proletariat, but in West Africa the natives have "retained their lands," the exploitation taking the more indirect forms of trading and finance. Hence Socialist policy can only be directed towards eliminating these forms of exploitation, leaving the land in the hands of the native, but encouraging more advanced methods.

The problems raised by the peasantry in various parts of the world are vast and complicated, and unfortunately they are far too little considered by Socialists. This short article can do no more than indicate the problems, in the hope of arousing a realisation of their urgent nature. For on the peasant populations of the world depends the ultimate fate of Socialism, and in some form they must be brought into the Socialist order. The task of unifying the interests of peasants and workers falls on the workers because of their superior organising and educational experience, and it falls on the European and British workers in the first place, if only because that unity is the pre-requisite of their self-preservation. H.C.S.

## PAVLOV'S STUDY OF "CONDITIONED REFLEXES"\*

*The writer of this article, who is a well-informed scientific authority and scientific writer, describes the results and significance of the researches of the great Russian physiologist, Pavlov—researches which may prove epoch-making in the scientific study of the mind.*

**I**N a book called *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism*, by Fülöp-Miller, there is an attempt to throw cold water on the Bolsheviks' application of the ideas inherent in the works of the great Russian physiologist, Pavlov, to the mentality of man. Pavlov has succeeded in sketching out a physiological theory of certain states in the dog known as sleep, hypnotism, unconscious cerebration and suggestion. These states are usually regarded as having something to do with the "mind." If it is so, then Pavlov has succeeded in giving a physiological explanation of certain "mental" phenomena. Now physiology deals with matter, and in so far as "mental" states can receive a physiological explanation, they can receive a materialistic explanation. Pavlov is a scientist, and his interests are primarily scientific; in his book, which has recently appeared in English, he makes no reference to any animals except dogs. He specifically states that he wishes his work to be regarded, in so far as it is a contribution to physiology, merely as the record of the results of experiments on dogs. He is not himself concerned with the *reasonable implications* of his experiments for animals other than dogs, such as man. Though Pavlov himself refuses to draw any such conclusions, there is no reason why others should not. The great conclusion is simply this. If certain "mental" states of the dog can be given a physiological explanation, is it not likely that some, and perhaps all, "mental" states in man can be given a physiological, i.e., a materialistic explanation? Though practically nothing has been done to substantiate this conclusion, Pavlov's work suggests that in the future a great deal may be done to substantiate it. Many of the less complicated common "mental" states of men may one day receive fairly complete physiological explanations, and a great deal of the mysticism associated with the operation of the "mind" and "spirit" of man will evaporate.

The "conditioned reflex" researches of Pavlov and his collaborators occupy a peculiar position in modern science. For the last twenty-five years he has directed an extensive research on the physiological activities of the cerebral cortex, i.e., of the top part

\* *Conditioned Reflexes*, by I. P. Pavlov. Oxford University Press. 28/- net.

of the brain in the highest animals, such as men and dogs. This work has been done in Leningrad and the results published in about 150 papers nearly all written in Russian. Owing to the language difficulty and the Russian Revolution, Western European scientists have not been able to obtain a detailed knowledge of the results of this extensive research. Pavlov was world-famous before he commenced his cerebral cortex researches, as he had laid the foundations of the modern theory of the physiology of digestive processes.

Dogs, like men, salivate at the suggestion of food. Obviously such "psychic" reflexes have to be investigated in researches on digestion, and Pavlov soon came to the conclusion that it was futile to try to explain their nature by subjective analogies. Instead of speculating why the dog should suddenly start thinking about food, he began to record all the external stimuli falling on the animal at the time its reflex reaction was manifested. He began a strictly objective investigation of the relations between stimulus and response; and subjective states in the dog, if any, were ignored. He has succeeded in producing the phenomena of sleep and hypnotism and states analogous to suggestion and "unconscious cerebration" in dogs, and has outlined a theory of their mechanism in terms of nervous excitation and inhibition, without making any assumptions about the dog's "state of mind." It is hardly necessary to observe that the substantiation and wide extension of such researches may ultimately produce a theory accounting for all the actions of men without assuming that they have "minds."

Pavlov starts from Descartes' idea of a nervous reflex, and remarks: "This is a genuine scientific conception, since it implies necessity. It may be summed up as follows: An external or internal stimulus falls on some one or other nervous receptor and gives rise to a nervous impulse; this nervous impulse is transmitted along nerve fibres to the central nervous system, and here, on account of existing nervous connections, it gives rise to a fresh impulse which passes along outgoing nerve fibres to the active organ, where it excites a special activity of the cellular structures. Thus a stimulus appears to be connected of necessity with a definite response, as cause with effect. It seems obvious that the whole activity of the organism should conform to definite laws. If the animal were not in exact correspondence with its environment, it would, sooner or later, cease to exist . . . Reflexes, like the driving-belts of machines of human design, may be of two kinds, positive and negative, excitatory and inhibitory." Instincts are regarded as complex inborn reflexes.

Among the inborn reflexes is the alimentary reflex, one factor of which is salivation in the mouth. In newly-born puppies this reflex acts only when they actually have things in their mouths.

they do not "know" that meat is food until they have tasted it, they cannot "recognise" it at sight. After they have learned that meat is good food, they always salivate on seeing it. If a buzzer is started just before meat is presented to them which they are subsequently allowed to taste, they ultimately come to salivate at the sound of the buzzer alone. This is a simple example of what Pavlov calls a "conditioned reflex"; the inborn alimentary reflex has been "conditioned" to respond not only to food, but to a noise. This may not seem very extraordinary at first, but consideration soon shows how important is the principle involved. Consider a man reading a political pamphlet; he sees print, he reacts to the print as if he were denouncing the injustice described, yet it is the print he is seeing, not the injustice. He has a "conditioned reflex" based on his fundamental social reflexes or instincts. It is due to conditioned reflexes that words may be more stimulating than the experience of the events described, and conditioned reflexes are one of the factors that sometimes makes the pen quite definitely stronger than the sword.

It is possible to train a dog to salivate on (give it "conditioned reflexes" to) the presentation of a vast range of stimuli, such as scratching its skin, touching it with warm objects, electric shocks, lights, smells, etc. If the cerebral cortex is removed from the dog, all these reflexes disappear, and the dog will salivate only when things are actually placed in its mouth by the experimenter. Thus the rôle of the cerebral cortex is to make the dog more "intelligent," since it enables the dog to have "conditioned reflexes" by which it may discover food from significant sights, sounds, etc., instead of the mere contact of the food with the inside of the mouth. In general, conditioned reflexes cannot be formed unless the dog has its cerebral cortex intact. When a stimulus calls forth such a reflex, some part of the cortex must be stimulated. If the stimulus calls forth a positive reaction such as salivation, that part of the cortex stimulated is said to be excited. Now suppose that a stray cat or bitch or a rustling under the floor appears at the same time as the sound of the buzzer that caused salivation. This new stimulus is so strong that the dog does not salivate at the sound of the buzzer. The excitation in the cortex due to the new stimulus has caused an inhibition in that part of the cortex concerned with the salivation. The dog has been "distracted." Pavlov has investigated and analysed many other forms of inhibition. A stimulus can be given the property of positive inhibition, e.g., a buzzer may be sounded, and the dog may take no notice (dogs are, of course, normally very sensitive to sounds). Though the dog does nothing, much happens in its cortex. The nervous impulse from the ear passes into its place in the cortex and causes an inhibition, i.e., the cortex is stimulated

to take no action. That the cortex is stimulated can be proved by giving the animal another stimulus normally causing, say, fifteen drops of salivation. On giving this stimulus after having given the inhibitory stimulus, the salivation has increased to, say, twenty drops, showing that the cortex was stimulated by the inhibitory stimulus. This fact suggests that being "bored" may be an active, not a passive condition; and may explain why it is so exhausting. If this is so, it follows that monotony in itself can tire the cortex however easy the movements in the job may be. There is a footing here for an attack on mass-production labour conditions. No matter how easy a machine-minder's job may be normally, his brain can nevertheless be thoroughly exhausted owing to continued active inhibition, from lack of variety in the job. The cerebral cortex (the brain) is in a continual state of flux between excitation and inhibition. Sleep, hypnotism, suggestion and "unconscious cerebration" correspond with particular states in this twofold flux. Pavlov has commenced an analysis of the flux into its many strands of simultaneous excitation and inhibition, by quantitative experiments, i.e., by strictly objective and scientific methods. This is his great scientific achievement. Previous workers have discovered important but isolated facts about the behaviour of the brain, but he has resumed most of these facts in one general theory of excitation and inhibition of the cortex. By "conditioning" a vast range of stimuli to cause salivation, he has measured the strengths of the various stimuli, since the number of drops of saliva caused by each stimulus can be counted. The stimuli can then be played off against each other, and the resultant effect measured by the corresponding variation in the number of drops of saliva.

Pavlov considers that the desire for freedom is based on a complex of physiological reflexes, i.e., it is instinctive. He was experimenting with a dog that refused to be placed under the slightest restraint, and after much elucidatory experiment and reflection he decided that its desire to be free was instinctive and reflex. On looking up the list of instincts given by William James in his treatise on psychology, he found no reference to the freedom instinct. Accepting Pavlov's view that the desire to be free is based on a physiological reflex, it follows that the thwarting of that desire must lead to reflex defence-actions. The worker who feels that he is not free will make reflex defence-actions, however comfortable his mere conditions of work may be. In fact a physiological reflex inspired Milton to write:

But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,  
And by their vices brought to servitude,  
Than to love bondage more than liberty,  
Bondage with ease, than strenuous liberty?

Pavlov's detailed experiments are too intricate to be described here, but some of his remarkable results may be mentioned. He

can give a dog a combination of stimuli causing it to lie down and snore, or to be hypnotised. He can give it "psychoses" or "neuroses" and in some cases cure them with bromides or other treatment. Incidentally, he observes that excitable dogs respond to bromide treatment, whereas quiet inhibitory dogs require long periods of rest for recovery. It would seem that by analogy "choleric" persons should benefit more from bromides than the "melancholy" sort. He can show that dogs have little or no sense of colour, but extremely fine discrimination of shade, being able to discriminate between two shades of grey utterly indistinguishable to human eyes. This is done by giving the dog a salivary "conditioned reflex" to one shade, and then showing it the other shade. Little or no salivation results. But such experiments are in themselves trivial compared with the way he interprets them in terms of his general theory of excitation and inhibition. His work is a masterpiece of scientific method and reads like the discourse of a genius.

The importance of Pavlov's work rests on his resolutely deterministic approach to the behaviour of the higher animals. He has shown that animal behaviour, hitherto apparently not to be explained by ordinary scientific methods of objective measurement and observation, *can* be explained by those methods, thus rendering superfluous hypotheses about the inherently "higher" nature of behaviour associated with mental phenomena, and undermining the foundations of the belief that there is some mystical superiority in the realm of the spirit that forever places it above and beyond the scrutiny of science. A quantitative investigation of the realm of the spirit may turn out to be a lengthy business, but Pavlov's work suggests that it is not impossible. In the future types of behaviour now considered by many to have a mystic and inexplicable, and consequently divine, significance, will have been analysed into a complex of more familiar types of behaviour already generally recognised as being without any mystic significance. The recesses of the human spirit will be seen to be no more and no less mysterious, though certainly much more complicated, than the recesses of a coal-scuttle. It is certain that the elimination of mysticism from the explanation of the behaviour of man will assist in the elimination of mysticism from the explanation of the nature of his social institutions.

"C-THREE."

## Reviews of Books

Chance recently put me in possession of *The Mills of Man (L'Ephémère)*, by Marcelle Vioux (Philpot), 7/6; and it is no exaggeration to say that it made a deeper impression than any previous book read purporting to describe working-class conditions and life.

It is an extraordinarily powerful, vivid and intimate study of life among factory girls in a French garrison town. The brutal realism is, we are informed, the result of the author's own bitter experience of factory life; how the poverty of the peasants compels them to part with their children to "live in" a silk mill under conditions only paralleled by the appalling exploitation of our own child life in the early days of the modern factory system. The terrific struggle of the peasants to live makes them lose all natural feeling, they look upon their children merely as encumbrances or as a means to augment the miserable family income.

The same conditions operated in Russia in Tzarist days and in China today as a result of the industrial revolution now taking place. In the hopeless atmosphere of these robots can we wonder at the cynicism expressed by Céline, who says in one of the dormitory discussions: "Men, in order to lower women, invented the story that God in the Garden of Eden created a woman out of one man's ribs. If that were true there's no reason why we shouldn't go on having children that way. It's just bare-faced conceit of themselves, the humbugs; they never remember, once they're weaned, that woman bore them nine long months."

She related how a machinist had tried to entice her away from her work; they knew she was a feminist, and they counted on her to stir up her comrades. There was talk of a strike in support of the claims of the town workers. But she had soon put him in his place.

"'I'm no feminist to play the idiot on men's account,' I told him. 'The claims of the workers!—thank you, I know what they are, and so do my comrades. That means more drink and, on going home at nights, more blows for the wife and kids. And in the end, lick-

ing the boss's boots. It's no good your trying to put that sort of thing over on us. Before worrying out the happiness of humanity, you might do worse than look after that of your wife and your anæmic kiddies. We're not going to join you; no fear!'

"Everyone applauded Céline for having so effectively shut him up. The mill-girls detested the factory hands, for they had too often seen them of an evening exciting themselves and bandying fine phrases about Socialism or Communism, or jabbering politics in smoky bars, while their poor wives awaited them at home, trembling."

But enough of quotations, one reads with absorbed interest as the tragedy of these robots' lives unfolds itself, as in poor little Babet's case, soul-destroying drudgery, filth, brutality, ignorance, premature maternity or prostitution, until one gets red-hot with indignation over the eternal tragedy of man's inhumanity to man.

This is a book that every worker should read; once read it cannot readily be forgotten. Besiege your local library for it.

J. HAMILTON.

I didn't know anything about Newfoundland—few people do—but after reading this enthusiastic and rather breathless sketch of W. F. Coaker, the founder of the Fisherman's Union there (*Coaker of Newfoundland*, by J. R. Smallwood, Labour Publishing Co., paper 1/-, cloth 2/6), one gets the "feel" of that country. Fishing is the basis of Newfoundland's industry, but the men were exploited at both ends by the middlemen who provided the supplies (at their own price) for the fishing season, and bought the product from the men (again at their own price). Coaker, who was a farmer, just got fed up and told the fisherman that it wasn't fair, and they all agreed, and they founded the Union, and then they dictated the price to the middlemen, and they founded a co-operative society to secure their own supplies. It sounds simple, but behind it was the driving force of an obstinate man with an iron



constitution. Coaker is the perfect type of the American self-made man who might just as easily have become a millionaire, but whom circumstances made into a Labour leader. The founding of Port Union, a great town with its own fishing quays, shops, cinemas, etc., is on the lines of Port Sunlight or one of Ford's enterprises, the difference being the all-important one that it is the Union and not the employer who owns and controls it.

The Fish Regulations, which would have prevented the competition between the middlemen, so ruinous to the standard of life of the fishermen, are the kind of schemes which have always been used to make private fortunes, but which Coaker planned to save the livelihood of his men.

Coaker is no Socialist, but it is interesting to the Socialist theorist to see the working out of big business ideas as a trade union theory.

The frontispiece portrait of Coaker is drawn by J. F. Horrabin; an interesting obstinate face. E. C. W.

It is no easy task to attempt a survey of China at the present moment, especially as many of the available statistics are extremely inaccurate. However, the figures given in *China: A Survey*, by Sing Sen Fu (C.P.G.B., price 1/-), are on the whole reasonable and chosen with an eye to what is most essential and least liable to inaccuracy; in addition the "facts" throughout the book are well set out and analysed. When one comes to the chapter upon "Prospects" and to general social analysis the information tends to be out of date (written March-May, 1927) so rapidly does the kaleidoscope of Chinese affairs change.

"Nanking or Wuhan?" So runs a quotation from the last chapter. "Naturally for every sincere supporter of the National Revolution there cannot be the slightest hesitation in the choice between these two centres." Subsequent events have confirmed the opinion that the petit bourgeoisie government of Wuhan was potentially quite as disloyal to the revolution as the bourgeoisie of Nanking, seeing that the petit bourgeoisie are largely composed of middlemen traders who make their living by commerce with the foreign powers.

The historical section of the book is brief and rather incomplete, even in the history of the Kuomintang, for it gives no information whatever with regard to the Shanghai Kuomintang, that right wing organisation which was the chief supporter of the Chiang Kai-shek coup at the end of March.

With regard to the Cantonese "Red Army" and the use of Russian "Red Army" officers, it says, "The Soviet Government as such had absolutely no relations with this affair. It remained neutral." Why this clumsy concealment of the obvious? Just as it is the duty of every Socialist to support the one country in which Socialism has been established, so it is Russia's duty to help other Socialists. It seems that the Soviet Government could learn something from MacDonal upon the subject of "open" diplomacy.

Apart from minor points such as these, however, the book is one in which there is little to criticise. The print and general "get up" are excellent, and in every way it may be recommended as an admirable summary of the Chinese problem. D. N.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Bolshevism, Fascism and Democracy*, by F. Nitti, trans. by Margaret M. Green (Allen & Unwin, 7/6).

*Meanwhile*, by H. G. Wells (Ernest Benn, 7/6).

*Night: a Drama in 3 Acts*, by Marcel Martinet (C. W. Daniel, 5/-).

*Britain's First Municipal Savings Bank*, by J. P. Hilton (Blackfriars Press, 1/6)

*Plan of Educational Colonies Association* (E.C.A., no price).

*India and China*, by Internationalist, foreword by S. Saklatvala.

*How Psychology Can Help*, by Rupert Croft-Colne (C. W. Daniel, 1/-).

*Warum*, von John Pepper (Carl Hoym, Berlin).

*Imperialism*, by Emile Burns (L.R.D. Syllabus No. 19).

*The Problems of the Chinese Revolution*, by N. Bukharin (C.P.G.B., 6d.).

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

**T**HE *Patriot* is very much annoyed because as the N.C.L.C. is not a political but an educational organisation, unions may finance educational schemes out of their general funds.

## THE N.C.L.C. IN THE DAIL :

At least one N.C.L.C. Correspondence Course Student in Southern Ireland was successful in being elected to the Dail, the Southern Irish Parliament, at the recent election. That student, John F. Gill, has our heartiest congratulations.

## A MAN OF IRON.

A Tailors' and Garment Workers' student writes that he has decided "to undergo a correspondence course in Social History." Although, perhaps, a believer in painless dentistry, he does not disguise the fact that he is prepared for the worst so far as education is concerned.

## BUNK FROM BAYLIS.

"Every city, especially every manufacturing city, should have a Shakespeare Theatre," said Miss Lilian Baylis (*Scotsman*, 1/8/27) speaking at Oxford on Saturday night in connection with the University Extension Summer School. She was sure there would be no coal strike if the workers were within reach of beautiful plays. Some people said that Shakespeare despised the working man because he drew anything but a flattering picture of them. She thought that Shakespeare appreciated the working man. He wrote so much about Court life because he knew that working men were interested in the doings of those in a higher state of life. He had a real insight into the minds of the workers. Shakespeare realised that the Theatre was a real relaxation from toil and that a man did not want to be reminded of his own daily surroundings.

A party of Swinden railwaymen attended the lecture and one of them proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Baylis."

We gather that the rest had succumbed.

## SCOTLAND NOT GUILTY.

N.C.L.C. Correspondence Course students are required to send stamped addressed envelopes for the return of their papers. In sending in his last lesson one student who did not hail from Scotland said, "I believe Lesson 12 terminates the course, therefore I am omitting to send a stamped addressed

envelope." The following is the N.C.L.C.'s office's reply, which is almost as brief and equally to the point:—

"A hard-hearted Postmaster-General makes no allowance for the fact that a student has succeeded in completing his course and insists on the envelope being stamped in the usual way."

## ALL OF A DITHER.

Writing on a Night School a correspondent of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* said:—

"But one room is to my mind, the holy of holies. It is, by the kindness of the Education Committee who provide also light, warmth, and seating accommodation, consecrated to the W.E.A.—the Workers' Educational Association. Here come, as well as youths, middle-aged men and women, to supplement if it be not too late (and it never is!) that which life has dealt out in somewhat niggardly fashion to them. They are passionately curious after knowledge; eager for, and infinitely humble towards understanding. They come, some of them, panting and perspiring with the rush to get in in time after day has taken its toll of them in hard, demanding toil. Or they come, knowing that they go straight from class to a night's work; in the pit, perhaps; perhaps in the forge; at the furnace. But they come! And they work, taking copious and laborious notes. And they listen! Oh! How they listen, with such drinking faces!"

We have said some hard things about the W.E.A., but we have never gone so far as to allege that its students had "drinking faces."

## GREEK INSTEAD OF WAGES.

"The dope papers," says the *Labour Voice*, "have been jubilating over the fact that at Rhos, near Wrexham, mere miners are actually studying *Greek*, under the auspices of the W.E.A. Prime Minister Baldwin is also elated, and has sent to the tutor an autobiographed copy of his speech to the Classical Association, together with a letter expressing admiration of his zeal. No doubt he feels that while the cleverest of the colliers can be induced to waste time in studying a dead language they won't bother much about causes of low wages and depressed conditions in the coal-fields."

## THE TRUTH WILL OUT.

"The question whether the Workers' Educational Association was succeeding in its classes or whether it was failing to attract those for whom they were primarily intended, the manual labourer, was raised at the annual meeting of the South Wales district of the association, held at Plymouth on Saturday.

A member contended that the W.E.A., while nominally existing for the education of manual workers, was not succeeding in getting them to attend its lectures. He considered the trade unions

in the South-West distrusted the association and it was time something was done to remove this feeling and persuade manual workers to enter the classes."

*Western Morning News and Mercury.*  
18/7/27.

## GOVERNING CLASS EDUCATION BY WIRELESS.

Mr. R. S. Lambert, of the W.E.A., has been appointed to take charge of the Adult Educational Section of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Now we know what to expect.

## NATIONAL TRAINING COURSE

THE third N.C.L.C. Training Course was held at the Labour College, London, from July 30 to August 12. D. J. Williams took a group in the Development of Modern Capitalism; J. Hamilton took another in Economic Geography and Imperialism; while F. J. Adkins was responsible for Methods of Teaching and the students' practical work in lecturing. The number of students, seventeen, was double that of last year and they came from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. One, Eric Godfrey, was a second year student at the course, while another member of last year's group, S. C. Hills, was also present at one of the practice lectures. The students possessed among them a wide range of experience of conditions of employment—and unemployment—as well as of Trade Union and Labour organisation; while several had served on local governing bodies. There was thus plenty of first-hand knowledge for the tutors to call upon when stimulating their respective groups to the team effort which was the outstanding feature of the work throughout the course. The most notable improvement was to be seen in the use of the blackboard—a medium which the students had apparently forgotten from the moment of leaving school, but which they re-discovered and used with increasing effectiveness as the course proceeded.

The course was an intensive one and the work correspondingly strenuous. Apart from an afternoon break, work was continuous, from 9.15 till such hour (frequently a small hour) as the preparation for the next day required. Some of the students indeed wished that

there had been more time provided for seeing London!

The continuous mutual criticism which was the keynote of the practice lectures generated an atmosphere of good feeling and good humour which gave reality to the word Comrade. Excellent catering added to the general sense of well-being.

When every student had given his criticism lecture the practice periods were then used for debates; and the improvement in these was as rapid as had been that in the individual lecturing and criticising in the earlier sessions.

J. F. Horrabain gave a lecture on the use of maps, and G. Wyver, of the A.U.B.T.W., a friend of J. Hamilton's, very kindly took a party of students over Hampton Court. To go over this well-known building with one who was responsible for its upkeep was indeed a novel experience. The other event in the course which calls for special mention was the display by J. Ganley (of the Education Department of the London Co-operative Society) of a new portable lantern made by the Visual Information Company, which fits into an attaché case and carries slides in the convenient form of film spools.

A fortnight devoted completely to study and practice was an entirely new mode of life to the great majority of the students and they had not grown really accustomed to it before the end of the first week. Many of them felt, in consequence, that, if the course could have been prolonged by another week the benefit of the third week would have doubled the benefit of the course as a whole. But, for all that, the fortnight's training yielded some remarkable results.

F. J. A..

## OUR SUMMER SCHOOL

**T**HE 1927 Summer School, held at Kiplin Hall, Scorton, Yorkshire, marks yet another stage in the history of the I.W.C.E. Movement. The comrades who came from all parts of the country, including Ireland, many of them direct from the factory and workshop, had an opportunity of spending a week or two in an old world mansion set in beautifully kept grounds and gardens. It is a place where one might hope to find that much-sought-after spirit of peace and tranquillity. J. P. M. Millar and the Social Committee saw to it that peace and rest were only to be had in small doses and then only after the work of the school had been done.

The lecturers this year were well up to the standard and for variety of subjects even exceeded former schools. The lecturers were J. R. Leslie (Shop Assistants' Union) who spoke on "The Development of the Distributive Trades"; W. M. Citrine on "Trade Unionism and General Strikes"; Miss E. C. Wilkinson, M.P., on "Factory Legislation"; J. P. Hilton on "The Birmingham Municipal Bank"; Colonel Malone on "China"; J. F. Horrabin on "Marxism and Literature"; J. S. Clarke (two lantern lectures) on "History of Militarism"; H. S. Redgrove, B.Sc. on "The Teachers' Labour League"; V. F. Calverton (U.S.A.) on "Sex Expression

in Literature"; J. Stuart Barr on "Democracy and Dictatorship"; and Bob Holder on "The Problem of the Masses." The lectures were full of interest and a large number of students took part in the discussions. J. S. Clarke provided the school with an intellectual treat by taking us round and through the whole house, explaining the old paintings, pottery, armour, implements of war, books, etc. I heard it said that this talk by Clarke was in itself worth coming for.

On the social side the school was very successful. We had play readings by the Edinburgh comrades, revues, fancy dress dances, tennis and bowling tournaments. All kinds of field sports, including a game of cricket with a team from an adjacent village in which we *almost* pulled off victory.

One of the most enjoyable features of the school were the trips to the various places of interest in the neighbourhood. The chara trip up Swaledale was a treat and most of the students took advantage of the opportunity of visiting the old castle at Richmond during their stay at Kiplin.

Those who attended the school this year can look back on a very pleasant time and those who were not there must certainly try to be with us in 1928.

J. S. B.

# Lecturers

Dear Comrade,—I presume your correspondent W.H.M. is W. H. Marwick, the W.E.A. Tutor Organiser in Scotland. If so, one wonders why he stays in the W.E.A.

His letter last month was a contemptuous indictment of Oxford as a reactionary governing class institution. The "spiritual home" of the W.E.A. is Oxford and such like ruling class educational centres. The great majority of the W.E.A. lecturers are drawn from them.

Surely W. H. Marwick must feel intellectually and morally embarrassed in the company he keeps as a W.E.A. Tutor Organiser.

But, then perhaps he considers his rôle somewhat in the light in which

he sees that of the Trade Unionist at Oxford—the zealous missionary amongst the benighted heathen. Perhaps he will tell us why he prefers the company of the "false prophets."

Yours frat., CHARLES L. GIBBONS.

Dear Comrade,—Who is this Kol whom the writer of *Notes by the Way* recommends to us as a historian of British Trade Unionism? Can he be some illegitimate relation of G. D. H. Cole?

And why is the first donkey on the cover of last month's mag. labelled J.F.H.? Are we to conclude (impious thought!) that the other donkey should be labelled J.P.M.M.?

Yours frat., THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD.

# 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 affiliations obtained in July by the local Colleges:— Glasgow, 3; London, 3; S.E. Lanes., 2; Ayrshire, 1; Bradford, 1; Bristol, 1; Lanarkshire, 1; and Woolwich, 1.

**IS THE NAME OF YOUR COLLEGE HERE? IF NOT, WHY NOT?**

**LANTERN SLIDES: NEW SET:** A set of slides on the "New China" has been prepared for the N.C.L.C. by Colonel L'E. Malone. The great majority of slides are made from his own original photographs. The slides number 36 and the price is 1/6 each, postage extra. The slides may also be hired. Colleges are urged to take advantage of both this set and the other sets now available.

Jack Hamilton has drawn up a synopsis on the lecture of "Primitive Man" for use to those lecturers who desire some guidance.

**OUTLINE LECTURES—MODERN CAPITALISM:** The N.C.L.C., through the instrumentality of D. J. Williams, has prepared a series of Outline Lectures on Modern Capitalism. A set of these will be sent to any N.C.L.C. Tutor who is thinking of taking the subject at his class next year.

**UNIONS ENTITLED TO FREE ACCESS TO CLASSES:** Class Secretaries are reminded that the following Unions through their N.C.L.C. Schemes are entitled to free access to classes:—

Amalgamated Engineering Union, Amalgamated Society of Dvers, Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, Bury and District Textile Warehousemen, Nat. Amalgamated Furnishing Trades' Association, Managers' and Overlookers' Society, National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Braziers, National Association of Plasterers, National Union of Shale Miners and Oil Workers, National Union of Textile workers, Scottish Painters'

Society, Tailors' and Garment Workers' T.U., Dundee and District Calender Workers' Union, Electrical Trades' Union, Padiham Weavers' Union, National Union of Shop Assistants, Scottish Bakers' Union, \*Liverpool Carters' Union, \*Nelson Weavers' Union and the \*Lanarkshire, \*Stirlingshire, \*Fife Reform, \*West Lothian, \*Mid and East Lothian, \*Ogmore Valley, \*Maesteg, \*Afan Valley and \*Rhondda Miners' Unions. Members of the above Unions (*except* those marked \*) are also entitled to have free Correspondence Courses on sending their Union Cards to the N.C.L.C. Office. In addition a number of other Unions have local schemes which provide the same facilities. Class Secretaries and College Secretaries are reminded that on enrolment, students of the above Unions must show a current Union Card.

## DAY AND WEEK-END SCHOOLS.

*Ilkley*, 10th and 11th September (F. Shaw, 1 Fernleigh, Longwood, Huddersfield.)

*Nevedigate*, 24th and 25th September (G. Phippen, 13 Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.5.)

*Widnes*, 4th September (J. Hamilton, 11 Channel Road, Liverpool.)

*Birkenhead*, 18th September (J. Hamilton, 11 Channell Road, Fairfield, Liverpool.)

*Loch Lomond*, 4th September (R. J. Gray, 805 Dalmarnock Road, Glasgow, E.)

*Rothsay*, 24th-26th September (R. J. Gray, 805 Dalmarnock Road, Glasgow.)

*Peterborough*, 18th September (M. Starr, 25 New Street, London, S.W.1.)

*Blackburn*, 4th September (A. L. Williams, 5 Infirmary Road, Blackburn, Lanes.)

*Edinburgh, Roslin Castle*, 4th September (A. Woodburn, 1 Viewforth, Edinburgh.)

*Edinburgh, Musselburgh*, 4th September (C. L. Gibbons, 9 Northfield, Broadway, Piershill, Edinburgh.)

*Galashiels, Edinburgh*, 18th September  
C. L. Gibbons, 9 Northfield, Broad-  
way, Piershill, Edinburgh.)

*Inverness*, 11th September (J. Fraser,  
1c Reay Street, Inverness.)

*Lincoln*, 25th September (C. Brown,  
George V. Villas, Garden Lane,  
Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts.)

*Bathgate*, 18th September (C. L.  
Gibbons, 9 Northfield Broadway,  
Piershill, Edinburgh.)

#### WHAT THE DIVISION ARE DOING.

*Division 1*: Readers are reminded of the week-end school to be held at Newdigate Camp, Surrey, on 24th and 25th September. Comrade J. Jones, residential lecturer at Labour College, London, will give three lectures on Sociology. Inclusive charge for school and board from tea on Saturday to tea on Sunday is 9/-. Further details from the London Organiser, G. Phippen, 11a Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.5. The Organiser met the Brighton Labour College Committee on Thursday, 4th August, and it was agreed to convene a conference on local organisation on 21st September in order to arrange for the winter classes and thereby shake off the apathy which has lain so heavily on Brighton during the past twelvemonth. The Shop Assistants' Union is a live one. Within a few days of the completion of the arrangements for an N.C.L.C., the London Branches made application for about four or five classes. The Organiser is addressing the Sittingbourne Trades Council and L.P. on 7th September and it is hoped that it will result in the establishment of the N.C.L.C. locally.

*Division 2*: The Oxford College organised one of the outstanding successes this summer in the river trip to Day's Lock, on 17th July. A party of 90 enjoyed the programme arranged by the Committee, which included, after tea, speeches on board by E. C. Wilkinson, M.P. and the Organiser, both of whom emphasised the part to be played by the N.C.L.C. in developing the Tory Southern Counties to be real Labour in Education. Next winter's class is expected to beat all records in attendance and affiliations. For September there are three outstanding events, viz., Conference at Aldershot on 3rd, to be addressed by the Organiser and H. S. Redgrove; Divisional Conference on the

17th at Bournemouth and Southampton, and District Conference on the 24th, to be addressed by H. S. Redgrove and others. A record winter is aimed at all round. The Dorchester programme for the Agricultural Workers is better than ever. Branch lectures were highly appreciated by the members of the Wyke, Portsmouth and Farnborough Branches of the A.E.U. Eric Godfrey, of Guildford, took the place of Miss Trowbridge at the Training Centre.

*Division 3*: Classes have been already fixed for Norwich (Oct. 2nd), Braintree (Oct. 4th), High Wycombe (Oct. 7th), Southend (Oct. 6th). Final arrangements are being completed at Peterborough, Colchester, Ipswich, Bedford, Grays and Cambridge. Brentwood is pleased because Comrade Jack Jones, of the Labour College, London, has promised to take again their class. Comrades Parsons and Cohen will probably assist at Slough and St. Albans. All Class Secretaries who do not wish to be omitted from the Divisional List should confirm suggested arrangements immediately. Meetings have been attended and organised at Long Ditton, Richmond, Woking, Staines (2), High Wycombe (2), Southend, Kingston, Grays, Chalfont St. Peter's, Wandsworth, Westminster, and S.W. Ham, with the Anti-T.U. Act as the chief topic. In the case of High Wycombe and Staines the invitations came from the N.A.F.T.A. and the A.E.U. Branches respectively, who opened out their meetings to other trade unionists. Comrade Dan Stephenson gave a special lecture to the Norwich A.U.B.T.W. on 15th August. At Braintree the local Conservative M.P. had a last-minute convenient illness when the T.U.C. had billed him, according to his promise, to speak on the T.U. Bill, and N.C.L.C. speakers, including a barrister, Comrade Whittall, stepped into the breach. Schools have been run at Southend and Slough and two are forthcoming at Peterborough (18th September) and Bedford (October 2nd). The Organiser held a watching brief for the N.C.L.C. at the Lyons Congress of *Sennacienca Asocio Tutmonda* and has assisted the T.L.L. and helped in other Divisions.

*Division 4*: Successful schools were held at Barry and Swansea with the cooperation of Comrades Nun Nicholas, A. Horner, S. Rees (Organiser Division

9) and the Divisional Organiser. The discussion on I.W.C.E. was splendid and indicates that sound progress is being made. Aberavon L.C. is holding a Day School on Saturday, 23rd September with the co-operation of Comrade J. F. Horrabin. Swansea Valley will also hold a Day School on Sunday, 24th September, with Comrade J. F. Horrabin. To meet the tutorial difficulty the Divisional E.C. are holding a six weeks' central tutorial training class in Cardiff. It is anticipated that this effort will enable the Division to extend its class work this winter session. Almost all colleges are now actively preparing for a record winter session. Swansea Valley, with the assistance of its full-time tutor and local students, has planned ten classes and a tutorial class in Swansea Town. From the latter it is expected that we shall soon be able to extend our work in West Wales. Rhondda L.C. promises fifteen classes, Newport four and Cardiff four. Ogmores, Garw, Maesteg and Aberavon are co-ordinating to run eleven classes. We should like to know what the others are doing. Congratulations to Comrade Ness Edwards on his appointment as full-time Organising Secretary of the Penalta Miners' Lodge. We shall soon be active in the East Glamorgan Area now that Comrade Edwards is there. Following an address by the Organiser, Aberavon N.U.R. No. 3 decided to link up with the S.W. Scheme on 2d. per member basis—branch strength 500.

*Division 5:* Mr. W. Coldrick, of South Wales, has been appointed Organiser for Division 5. Comrade Coldrick takes up his Divisional duties at the beginning of September. It is hoped that all College Secretaries and Class Secretaries will co-operate with Comrade Coldrick in his efforts to extend the I.W.C.E. Movement in Division 5.

*Division 6:* Nnueaton College has organised a fête for the 27th, and Mrs. J. Stuart Barr will perform the opening ceremony. A procession is being arranged to march through the main streets and literature will be sold en route. The comrades here are working hard and are looking forward to the building up of a strong and effective College Movement in the district. Meetings are being arranged in all the College areas to prepare for the winter's work.

*Division 7:* No report.

*Division 8:* Day Schools have been arranged for the I.L.P. Hall, Chapel Street, Widnes, 4th September, and "Beechcroft," Birkenhead, 18th September. J. Hamilton will lecture at Widnes and W. T. Colyer (London) at Birkenhead. Teas will be provided at both schools at 1/- per head. The Birkenhead students are organising a concert and dance at "Beechcroft" on Monday, 5th September—7.30 p.m. to 12. Tickets 1/6 to include refreshments and spot prizes. M.C., Comrade J. Bennett. S. O. Davies (S. Wales Miners) has been booked to give lectures at Earlestown and Wigan on September 24th and 25th respectively. This should result in a good send-off for the local classes this winter session. A class will be held this winter under the auspices of the Women's Section, Birkenhead North End Labour Party. The Organiser addressed a committee meeting and later a members' meeting of the Padiham and District Weavers' Association. As a result a full educational scheme has been decided upon, providing for a class in the Weavers' Institute and Correspondence tuition. Our Leigh District Secretary, Comrade T. Lowe has been

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elected a member of the Board of Governors of Leigh Infirmary in recognition of his services on behalf of that Institution. Though the weather was bad, the residential week-end school, held at Ribbles Valley, was the most successful of any yet held in North Lancashire. M. H. Dobb gave three excellent lectures and the Preston Arts Group presented Yaffle's *Foiling the Reds*. The total number of students in attendance was nearly 100. The Leyland Class is meeting as a study circle regularly throughout the summer and the Blackburn Class students hold week-end rambles. Arrangements are in hand for a Day School in the Blackburn Area, and it is hoped that Speakers' Classes can be organised in Blackburn and Nelson during September.

*Division 10 (Scotland)*: Ayrshire Labour College held two successful Day Schools. Arrangements have been made to hold Day Schools at Loch Lomond, Rothesay, Roslin Castle, Musselburgh, Galashiels, Inverness and Bathgate during September.

*Division 11 (Ireland)*: D. R. Campbell, Secretary of the Belfast Trades Council, will preside at a public meeting in Bel-

fast under the auspices of the N.C.L.C., on 30th September, with George Hicks as speaker. In connection with our Annual Conference, to be held on 1st October, all known working-class organisations in Northern Ireland have been circulated and invited to appoint two delegates. George Hicks will address the conference on "The Limitations and Possibilities of Modern Trade Unionism." The winter arrangements include classes on "The Economic and Social History of Ireland" and "The Science of Reasoning."

*Division 12*: The most successful week-end school that Nottingham College has run was on 16th and 17th July. M. H. Dobb was the lecturer; interest was keen and the discussions good. The school undoubtedly intensified interest in the Labour College Movement. Lincoln is holding a Day School on 25th September with M. H. Dobb lecturing on "The Economics of Soviet Russia." Comrades are hoping to make this a big thing with all supporters of I.W.C.E. in the Lincoln area. Most of the College Committees are meeting during the next three weeks to arrange their autumn and winter programmes.

## Martin Lawrence ANNOUNCES

THAT the following books from his Autumn List will be *READY* on *SEPTEMBER 12th*

\***KARL MARX: MAN, THINKER AND REVOLUTIONIST.** A remarkable symposium edited by D. RYAZANOFF, Director of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. *Cloth, 6s.*

\***THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS.** Russia's leading Economist, N. BUKHARIN, deals devastatingly with the theory of 'Marginal Utility.' *Cloth, 7/6.*

\***KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS.** A fascinating study by D. RYAZANOFF of the famous lifelong collaboration. *Cloth, 7/6.*

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# The PLEBS Bookshelf



**H** G. WELLS' new novel, *Meanwhile*, might appropriately have been entitled *Mr. Britling Sees Through Himself*. It may or may not take rank with his best work; but it certainly has a very special interest to the student of Wells since it marks, or seems to mark, a very definite and significant turning-point in his intellectual outlook. Hitherto, Mr. Wells has very emphatically ranked himself with the Utopians. In the earlier portion of this book he draws a portrait of a 'Utopographer' (or Utopologist, or Utopolitan) who talks pure Wells; only to make him look rather silly, even to an ardent disciple, later in the book, by viewing him against a background of certain actual events in the real, existing world.

It is the Great Strike of last year which opens Philip Rylands' eyes to the futility of Utopianism. And it is apparent that, in this particular, Philip's reaction is Mr. Wells' own. The Utopographer is going to get down to Brass Tacks.

"It is all very well for old prophet Sempack [Sempack is the name of the Utopographer in the book] to lift his mighty nose and talk of the great progressive movements that will ultimately sweep all these things away, but will they? . . . England, 1926. Sempackia isn't Reality; *this* is Reality. . . ."

"All very well to talk of the ultimate reasonableness of mankind, but what chance has ultimate reasonableness when some atavism like Winston collars all the paper for his gibberings [i.e., the *British Gazette*] and leaves you with nothing to print your appeals to the ultimate reasonableness on; or when a lot of young roughs like your Italian Fascists break up everyone who writes or speaks against their imbecile ideas about the universe and Italy? . . ."

And so Philip resolves that he and his wife and their £22,000 a year must DO

THINGS—not dream them all day long. Not, perhaps, a particularly new or thrilling resolution; but an interesting one when Mr. Wells himself makes it, and sets about keeping it by turning his pen to the job of drawing from the life, instead of drawing visions. After all, if Mr. Wells will go on giving us snapshots of the world we live in, and of its rulers and governors, on the lines of his little history of the Strike in this book; he'll be giving very practical assistance indeed in the work of re-organising society. Could anyone so well as he have dissected so remorselessly the fools who can only explain the decline of "their Empire" by insisting that there must be a "conspiracy" somewhere?

"There is an enemy bewitching us and there ought to be a witch-smelling. . . . They call the witch

## The LABOUR MONTHLY

SEPTEMBER - SIXPENCE



- War Preparation and the T.O.C.  
C. P. Dutt.
- The Paris Congress of the  
I.F.T.U. Harry Pollitt.
- The Economic Progress of the  
U.S.S.R. M. H. Dobb.
- Wages and Working Conditions  
in China Earl Browder.
- British War Preparations in  
India A. N. Bhaduri.
- World of Labour. Book Reviews.



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3/6; Foreign, 4/-. Send 6d. for  
specimen copy to the Labour  
Monthly, 162, Buckingham  
Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

Bolshevism. . . They pretend to themselves that there is a great special movement afoot to overthrow British trade, British prestige and the British Empire. Wicked men from Moscow are the real source of all our troubles. The miners are just their 'tools'. . ."

And all the time what is the enemy that is undermining the great British Empire?

I say it is time and fate, geography and necessity.  
Dead right!

I mustn't start quoting from the pages which tell the story of the Strike, or I shall exceed my space limit. But you can gauge the quality, and the point of view, of this little supplement to the *Outline of History* by the unanimity with which Lord Rothermere's reviewers have chanted "This book is dull." Somehow or other people must be kept from reading *Meanwhile*; and "dullness" is a good deterrent. . . But *Meanwhile* isn't dull—it's exciting. And though its leading characters are a little boring, its minor personages are in the very best Wells vein. Colonel Bullace, the British Fascist, who went on being fierce even though his wife was signalling to him that he'd got egg on his

moustache; Mrs. McManus, the nurse—with views on Italian Fascists, Roman Catholics, and foreigners generally; Lord Edensoke, the eminent industrialist, with a partiality for pink champagne; Lady Catherine, who dashed back to England to drive a car and help break the Strike, and who "if she can't be a whore, will be a hoarding—anything to be looked at"; all these people live and breathe. And since they're very definitely *typical* of twentieth century capitalist Britain our education ought to include a careful study of them, and their little ways. *Meanwhile* will prove a very useful textbook!

If it's in your local library get out *The Private Life of Helen of Troy*, by an American writer, John Erskine. It sounds like Mark Twain, but it isn't. It's much more like Shaw. In fact, I was reminded of *Candida* again and again while chuckling over it. It's a beautifully quiet onslaught on conventional morality and conventional ideas generally. Nominally it's about the Greece of two thousand odd years ago. Actually its subject-matter is a good deal closer to our own day and generation. Very emphatically a worth-while book.

J. F. H.

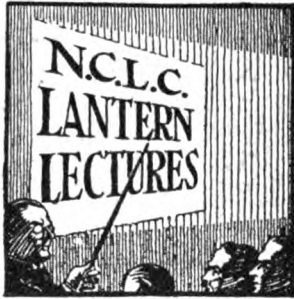
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While it is more economical to purchase sets than to hire them, sets may also be hired by Colleges at 7/6 (by other bodies 10/-) for the first three days. After the first three days an extra charge of 2/6 per day is made. Borrowers are responsible for breakages.

Lists of Slides can be had by sending a stamped addressed envelope to J. P. M. Millar, General Secretary, N.C.L.C., 62 Hanover St., Edinburgh.